

**EFFECTIVE CLASSROOM PRACTICES TO SUPPORT THE
ENGLISH LITERACY DEVELOPMENT OF PRIMARY AGED
BILINGUAL STUDENTS**

by

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A Project Submitted to the Faculty of

The Evergreen State College

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

for the degree

Master in Teaching

2007

This Project for the Master in Teaching Degree

by

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has been approved for

The Evergreen State College

by

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Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge the Master in Teaching faculty who assisted me in completing this project. Sherry Walton guided me in finding resources and formulating my critiques of the research, as well as read and edited preliminary drafts of my paper. Scott Coleman read the first complete draft of my paper and offered me invaluable assistance in editing the final draft. I would also like to thank the staff of Evergreen Elementary School in Shelton, Washington, where I completed my fall quarter student teaching. The final draft of this project was definitely informed by my experiences within this Spanish-English bilingual school and I am grateful for all of the teachers there who allowed me to observe, and participate in, effective bilingual education in action.

The completion of this project would not have been possible without the emotional and physical support of the many wonderful people who fill my life daily. In particular, I owe much thanks to my daughter Sonora who has sacrificed much mother-daughter time for the sake of this project (and for the Master in Teaching program in general) and who encourages me to turn off the computer and dance.

Abstract

This paper reviews the current literature and offers recommendations for classroom practices that best support the emergent English literacy learning of bilingual students in pre-K through first grade. Evidence that bilingual students may be able to transfer literacy skills in their first language to literacy skills in English supports the idea of instruction or early intervention in students' primary language. Bilingual students benefit from a balanced literacy curriculum that allows them to develop their English literacy in a non-threatening, social context while receiving individualized and differentiated instructional support. In addition, culturally relevant curriculum, home-school communication, and holistic assessment methods further support the classroom adjustment and English literacy learning of primary aged bilingual students.

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CHAPTER ONE: Introduction and Rationale

Introduction

English literacy instruction has become a core focus of the primary elementary grades within our public schools. Research has shown that literacy learning begins far before students enter the classroom and that the nature of literacy events encountered by children in their homes and communities greatly impact their adjustment to the more formal literacy events encountered in school (Heath, 1983). For students who speak a language other than English at home, this adjustment may be more significant and the issues encountered more complex. This paper will explore a question that is vitally important to educators today: What classroom practices best support the emergent English literacy of bilingual students in the primary grades?

The student population of the United States is steadily increasing in cultural and linguistic diversity. According to a 2002 U.S. Department of Education survey, English Language Learners (ELLs) represented over one in ten students in elementary schools during the 2000-2001 school year. (Graves, Gersten, & Haager, 2004). Among these students, over 460 different languages were spoken with Spanish-speakers representing the largest (79.2%) linguistic group. Vietnamese, Hmong, Korean, Creole (Haitian), and Cantonese also had a large representation, representing, as a combined group, another 7.7% of ELLs. U.S. Census Bureau projections estimate that, by the year 2040, the majority of school-aged children will be non-white with Hispanic groups projected to be the largest minority (Spring, 2006). In California, which currently has the highest concentration of bilingual students in the country, it is projected that ELLs will represent 70% of the total student population by 2030 (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004).

As linguistic diversity continues to increase in our public schools, recent federal policy has placed serious limitations on bilingual education. In 2001, The English Language Acquisition Act was passed in conjunction with the No Child Left Behind legislation of 2000. As stated within the act, the primary goal is to help ensure that children who are limited English proficient, including immigrant children and youth, attain and meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic instruction as all children are expected to meet (Spring, 2006). In practice, this translates into a rapid transition from students' native language use to English-only instruction.

While instructional approaches to bilingual education are many and varied, they can be broadly grouped into three categories: two-way, maintenance, and transitional bilingual (Spring, 2006). Two-way bilingual programs include both English speaking and non-English speaking students. Instruction is given in both languages with the goal of making all students bilingual in English and another language. Maintenance bilingual programs provide instruction in students' native language while teaching literacy in English. True bilingualism is the goal of this model as well: students are expected to achieve proficiency in English while maintaining their abilities to speak, read, and write in their native language. In contrast, transitional bilingual programs do not have the goal of making a student literate in two languages. Instruction in a student's native language is used until English proficiency is achieved, after which the student is transitioned to English-only instruction.

Currently, the transitional bilingual model is the most common form of instruction used to teach ELLs in the United States (Wright, 2004). It is also the model that adheres most closely to the guidelines set forth in the 2001 English Language Acquisition Act (Spring, 2006). However, research about second-language acquisition raises questions about

the appropriateness of this model. Students' levels of proficiency in their native language are generally strong predictors of their second language development (Bialystok, Luk, & Kwan, 2005; Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt, 1993; Hakuta et al., 1997; Lopez & Tashakkori, 2004; Qurioga, et al., 2002). Additionally, research has found that oral English proficiency takes three to five years to fully develop and academic English proficiency takes even longer, around four to seven years (Hakuta et al., 1997). If true, this suggests that the rapid transition from a student's native language to English, as suggested by the English Language Acquisition Act, may be unrealistic. However, conflicting research suggests that direct and explicit instruction in English phonological and phonemic awareness is effective in helping bilingual students achieve English literacy in a relatively short amount of time (Leafstedt, Richards, & Gerber, 2004; Linan-Thompson, et al., 2005; Stuart, 1999). Each of these assertions is dependent on what one defines as English proficiency, which varies depending on particular ideological and theoretical assumptions.

Literacy instruction is often considered to be scientific, apolitical, and ahistorical when, in fact, curriculum, pedagogy, and policy are all informed by specific ideologies of literacy (Cadeiro-Kaplan, 2004). A useful framework through which to view this was created by Churchill (Wright, 2004). Churchill's framework located different countries at various points on ascending levels in their ideologically-based policy responses to minority languages. Lampert (Hakuta et. al, 1997) used the terms "additive" and "subtractive" bilingualism to describe the same ideological spectrum. Additive bilingualism considers a student's native language proficiency to be an asset to the development of a second language, representing the "language equality" stage of Churchill's framework. The lower stages of the framework embody the idea of subtractive bilingualism, which considers the student's native

language to be a deficit, or something to be “overcome” as the student gains proficiency in English. According to Churchill’s framework, current federal policy on bilingual education in the U.S. falls within the first few stages of the continuum.

Table 1: Churchill’s Language Policy Framework

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Policy Response</i>
<i>Stage 1</i> Learning deficit	Minority groups lack majority language.	Supplementary teaching in majority tongue with rapid transition expected.
<i>Stage 2</i> Socially-linked learning deficit	Minority group’s deficit linked to family status.	Help minorities adjust to majority society (aids, tutors, psychologists, social workers, career advisors, etc.)
<i>Stage 3</i> Learning deficit from social / cultural differences	Deficit linked to disparities in esteem between own culture and majority culture.	‘Multicultural’ teaching programs for all children, sensitizing teachers to minority needs, revising textbooks to eliminate racial stereotyping.
<i>Stage 4</i> Learning deficit from mother tongue deprivation	Premature loss of mother tongue inhibits transition to majority tongue.	Provide some study of minority language in school, perhaps as a very early or occasional medium of instruction.
<i>Stage 5</i> Private use language maintenance	Minority group’s language is threatened with extinction if not supported.	Minority language used as medium of instruction, usually exclusively in the early years of schooling.
<i>Stage 6</i> Language equality	Minority and Majority language have equal rights in society, with special support available for less viable languages.	Minority language given official recognition, separate educational institutions, opportunities for all children to learn both, support beyond the educational systems.

Source: Wright (2004)

At a much deeper level, the struggle to define English proficiency mirrors the longtime debate between skills-based and whole language literacy instruction. The skills-based approach, advocated by the National Reading Panel, defines reading as a decoding skill built part-to-whole from phonological awareness, language development, vocabulary,

comprehension, and fluency (National Reading Panel, 2000). In contrast, the whole language, or socio-psycholinguistic approach, defines reading as “a complex and purposeful sociocultural, cognitive, and linguistic process in which readers use their knowledge of language, topic, and culture to construct meaning with text (National Council of Teachers of English, n.d.). These two radically different approaches to defining literacy naturally affect determinations of English proficiency for ELLs.

Although the skills-based/whole-language debate transfers easily into discussions of effective bilingual education, other factors often apply to ELLs. Multicultural and multilingual students are often students of color from lower socioeconomic status homes while schools and institutions predominately represent the ideologies and interests of the mainstream, white, middle-class culture (Kucer & Silva, 1999). In her study of two culturally diverse communities in the rural South, Heath (1983) drew attention to the way in which children’s literacy develops within the context of their familial and community cultures. When a student’s home, community, and school cultures are incongruent, learning in school is greatly impacted. Delpit (1995) addressed this incongruence by advocating for explicit teaching of the white, middle class “codes of power” to minority students. She argued that educators need to support students’ native languages, provide them with specific instruction in Standard English, and give them the opportunity to use both languages in a non-threatening and authentic communicative context.

Some critics of the whole-language approach argue that it does not explicitly teach the discourse styles and language skills of the middle class, or codes of power, to the cultural and linguistic minority students who most need it (Delpit, 1995; Kucer & Silva, 1999). On the other hand, explicit instruction has sometimes been interpreted to mean direct, sheltered

instruction in phonics, vocabulary, and decoding for bilingual students (Denton, 2004). Somewhere between the two sides in the polarized skills-based/whole language debate lie advocates for a balanced approach to bilingual literacy instruction (Araujo, 2002; Fitzgerald & Noblit, 2000; Ruan, 2003). This approach recognizes the importance of literacy instruction as the construction of meaning within a social context, while equally advocating that ELLs be given explicit instruction in the codes of power, both culturally and linguistically.

Research methodologies, findings, and conclusions often mirror this debate as well. Studies that support skills-based instruction for bilingual students tend to be quantitative, using test scores in word reading, decoding, and fluency to gauge English literacy acquisition. Support for whole-language instruction, on the other hand, tends to come from qualitative research where the authors are interested in how students are constructing their literacy within a larger social context.

In short, the debate over the best methods of instruction for bilingual students embodies a multiplicity of complex issues. Underlying ideological and theoretical frameworks determine the course of current research and the interpretation of findings around these issues. Additionally, it is impossible to examine bilingual literacy instruction in the U.S. without looking at the larger socio-cultural context. Literacy, bilingual literacy in particular, is a social, cultural, political, and historical topic of study.

Rationale

English language proficiency is crucial to academic and economic success in the U.S. and, increasingly, the global economy. Because of stricter state standards for academic

achievement within public schools and increased standardized testing, as mandated by No Child Left Behind, academic English proficiency is being pushed at earlier ages and grade levels. The norm has become to provide ELLs with intensive, sheltered, and transitional bilingual instruction in the early primary grades (Graves, Gersten, & Haager, 2004). In our current educational system, which predominately holds a deficit ideology of bilingualism, ELLs are often classified as students with language learning disabilities and relegated to special education classes (Ruiz, 1995).

This current approach to bilingual education raises several concerns. First, the labels of language learning disabled (LDD), at-risk, and special-ed, may have detrimental effects on a student's self-esteem (Ruiz, 1999). Secondly, when ELLs are pulled out of the classroom for sheltered English language instruction, often for large portions of the school day, they miss out on the opportunity to become fully participatory members of the social classroom community. Finally, rapid transition into English proficiency with the end goal of assimilating ELLs into English-only classrooms may result in the loss of the student's native language (Hakuta et al., 1997). According to Vygotsky, when children learn language, they are learning "a system of meaning constructed by their culture that shapes their attempts to make sense of the world" (Miller, 2002). Because cultural norms and belief systems are embedded within language, the loss of a student's native language is often equivalent to the loss of a student's culture.

Statistics show that, as teachers, we can expect to have ELLs in our elementary classrooms and, if census projections prove accurate, the number of these students will increase steadily with each passing school year. As linguistic diversity becomes the norm

within public schools rather than the exception, it is imperative that educators understand how to most effectively work with bilingual students.

Statement of Purpose

This paper will describe and analyze current research on the best methods of instruction to develop the emergent English literacy of young bilingual students. In addition, it will explore the relationships between classroom literacy practices and bilingual students' personal, cultural, and linguistic identities. An analysis of these relationships is necessary to arrive at a holistic understanding of my focal question because there are numerous factors, beyond instructional methods, that may or may not affect the English literacy learning of bilingual students.

I will begin with an overview of the history of bilingual education in the U.S. to illustrate the ways in which dominant cultural ideologies have affected instructional approaches and policies of bilingual instruction within public schools. Next, I will offer a review of current literature with attention to four major topics of research: 1) the cross-linguistic transfer of literacy skills, 2) the effects of native language instruction on the English literacy development of English language learners (ELLs), 3) a comparison of skills-based, whole language, and balanced instructional approaches and their effects on the English language acquisition of ELLs, and 4) the relationship between home and school culture and its effect on second-language acquisition. After reviewing and summarizing current literature, I will offer my own conclusions about the most effective and positive approaches to English literacy acquisition as well as recommendations for practice.

For the purpose of this paper, I define literacy as a social and cultural practice (Heath, 1983) that is co-constructed and constantly reinvented through the process of guided participation, or the collaboration between children and the adults or peers in their social and cultural environment (Rogoff, 1990). This definition of literacy draws from Vygotskian theory, which describes language as a cultural tool that both mediates learning and transforms thought (Miller, 2002). Vygotsky believed that while language is primarily a device for communicating with others, it also directs thinking and behavior, organizes reality, and conveys powerful systems of cultural meaning. Just as ideological and theoretical assumptions about literacy have affected research, policy, and practice in the realm of bilingual education, my own underlying theoretical framework will determine my critique of the literature and guide my conclusions and recommendations.

Throughout this paper, I will use L1 to refer to a child's native language and L2 to refer to English. While I prefer the term bilingual, as it conveys the importance of a child's primary culture and language, I will consistently use the term English-language learners (ELLs) throughout, as it more accurately reflects the terminology used in current literature, as well as the social and political realities of contemporary bilingual education in the U.S. The term bilingual will only be used in the context of instructional practices that support both the native language literacy and English literacy development of the student.

Although ELLs represent children and adults of all ages, my focus will be on children from pre-K through first grade. The research selected for critique in chapter three will reflect this focus, with the exception of a few studies that proved applicable to my inquiry even though they were conducted on an older student sample. In addition, the current literature proved to be somewhat limited in terms of the linguistic groups studied. A majority of the

current research on native language instruction and instructional approaches focuses on Spanish-English bilingual students and may not be generalizable to other linguistic groups. The implications of this will be discussed briefly in chapter three and more thoroughly in chapter four.

Conclusion

As public schools become more culturally and linguistically diverse, it is imperative that educators understand the specific challenges and needs of ELLs. Because English-only instruction is the current policy for public schools, and because English proficiency is a precursor to economic success in the United States, attention must be given to helping ELLs achieve proficiency in English. However, pedagogical approaches to English literacy instruction for ELLs vary greatly according to underlying assumptions about the purpose of bilingual education. The additive view of bilingualism, in which a student's native language is considered an asset to the acquisition of a second language, assumes that a child's primary cultural and linguistic identity should be preserved and honored (Hakuta et al., 1997). The subtractive/deficit view of bilingualism, which more adequately reflects current policies of bilingual education in the U.S., assumes that the student's native language is a disability to be overcome while learning English (Hakuta et al., 1997). Definitions of literacy, approaches to bilingual education, and public education policy are informed by underlying ideological and theoretical assumptions that fall somewhere along this continuum.

The next chapter will provide a historical overview of bilingual education in the U.S., with attention to the way that these ideological assumptions have affected both social attitudes and public policy.

CHAPTER TWO: History

Introduction

Chapter one established the context and rationale for my topic of research: What classroom practices best support the emergent English literacy of bilingual students in the primary grades? This chapter provides a historical overview of bilingual education policy and practice in the United States beginning in the 18th century and ending with the current Bush administration. I begin by discussing historical transitions in societal beliefs and attitudes regarding multiculturalism and multilingualism. Next, I describe the evolution of bilingual education policy in relation to specific cultural groups. The chapter ends with a discussion of the contemporary state of bilingual education in this country.

Although bilingual education has a lengthy history in the United States, the debate over the best instructional methods and classroom practices that support the learning of ELLs has evolved fairly recently. Up until the passage of the 1968 Bilingual Education Act, Title VII, there was no federally funded effort to research and implement experimental bilingual instructional models (Allred & Powe, 1994). Prior to this movement, full English language immersion was the instructional norm. In the 1970s and 1980s, the transitional bilingual model became prominent in the public schools, but there were numerous experiments with maintenance and two-way bilingual models as well. Yet, despite the success of many of these programs, the English-only movement started to regain widespread political support by the late 1980s and early 1990s (Porter, 1999/2000). The English Language Acquisition Act of 2001 reflects this return to more immersion-based pedagogy (Spring, 2006).

In order to understand the contemporary debate surrounding bilingual education in the United States, it is important to recognize how this debate has evolved historically.

Bilingual education, and approaches to literacy acquisition in general, have never been socially or politically neutral. Therefore, the aim of this chapter is to describe the social and political currents that have historically shaped bilingual education in this country, thus providing a holistic framework from which to analyze the current literature.

Bilingual education policies and practices in the U.S. have historically reflected the attitudes and beliefs of the dominant culture regarding cultural and linguistic pluralism. They have also reflected power struggles between particular social groups and competing political interests (Freeman, 1998). Historically, societal attitudes and subsequent policy responses have shifted in a somewhat cyclical pattern, moving between phases of acceptance and oppression of linguistic and cultural pluralism. Baker (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004) created a framework of overlapping periods that describe these ideological shifts. Four periods are included in this framework: The Permissive Period (18th and 19th centuries), The Restrictive Period (late 19th to mid-20th centuries), The Period of Opportunity (1950s to mid-1970s), and the Dismissive Period, (1980s to present).

Baker's (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004) periods are not meant to be clear divisions, but are meant to draw attention to significant transitions in ideology, policy, and practice. In the following sections, I will use this framework as a lens through which to view the recurrent cycles of bilingual education policy and practice.

The Permissive Period (18th and 19th Centuries)

The early 18th century marked the movement from oral forms of literacy to signature and recording literacy, in which signatures and written records developed more legitimacy than spoken words or agreements (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004). As forms of writing increased,

the goals of schooling were to teach students to sign their names, read essential words, copy words, and recite devotional books and religious texts.

During this period, linguistic diversity was generally accepted and encouraged through religious practice and the printing of newspapers in different languages. The issue of whether or not to designate an official national language was debated by the Continental Congress, but took a back seat to the more prominent issue of establishing political liberty (Crawford, 1989). The lack of an official language policy during this time, as well as the absence of an official national language in the Constitution, indicates an initial tolerance of language diversity.

Language loyalties were strong among recent immigrants, who had a desire to preserve their native traditions and cultures (Freeman, 1998). Bilingual schools during this period were private and reflected the language of the community. The earliest bilingual schools were German, the first of which was established in 1694 (Crawford, 1989). By the mid-19th century, German-English parochial schools were widespread in Baltimore, Cleveland, Indianapolis, Milwaukee, and St. Louis (Freeman, 1998). In addition, French-English schools were prominent in New England and Louisiana as well as Spanish-English schools in Florida, California, and New Mexico. Other languages, such as Norwegian, Lithuanian, Czech, and Dutch, were part of the curriculum in communities with high populations of those particular linguistic groups.

While bilingual education was widespread during this period of time, it is important to note that schooling, for the most part, was reserved for the elite classes (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004). Thus, political support for bilingual education was based on a need for unification and

a cohesive social order. Communication among diverse linguistic groups was necessary in order to legitimize the political system within the newly established nation.

The Restrictive Period (Late-19th to mid-20th Centuries)

The need for political unification and cohesive social order gave rise to the common school movement of the 1830s and 1840s. Common school reformers were interested in using public education as a means to assimilate diverse cultural and linguistic groups to white, middle-class Protestant values and Republican political ideals (Spring, 2005).

This goal of cultural and political assimilation was reflected in the melting pot ideology that became prevalent after the Civil War (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004). The post-Civil War period also marked an increase in immigration, with a rise in German, Russian, Austrian, Hungarian, and Italian populations on the east coast; Spanish populations in the west and southwest; and Chinese and Japanese populations in California. Increased immigration created a climate of societal fear and concern. In response, patriotism and loyalty began to be associated with competency in English, an ideological shift reflected in national policies of the time. In 1882, The Pendleton Act established the Civil Service Merit System, which restricted government employment to those who could pass an English examination. The Nationality Act of 1906 required immigrants to speak English prior to becoming naturalized citizens. Asian immigration was restricted through the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 and the 1908 “Gentlemen’s Agreement” with Japan (Freeman, 1998).

While bilingual education was authorized by some state laws (in Louisiana, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, Colorado, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oregon) at this point in time, there was also an emerging movement toward English-only

restrictions in public schools. Laws passed in California in 1855 that mandated all school instruction to be in English coincided with movements in the Midwest and the East (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004).

During World War I, an ideological attack on “hyphenated Americans” gained the support of politicians and the U.S. public (Freeman, 1998). Initially, anti-immigrant sentiments targeted the German population in particular, resulting in the banning of the German language from public schools (Allred & Powe, 1994). However, this wave of xenophobia eventually led to the banning of all foreign language instruction, apart from Greek and Latin, in the public schools.

By 1923, 34 states had passed English-only instruction laws. These policies were political manifestations of a long-term trend. Since the passage of the mandatory public schooling law in 1820, community language use had been steadily decreasing, as the goal of mandatory public schooling was the ideological and linguistic assimilation of immigrant children (Freeman, 1998). With another large wave of immigration in the early 1900s and the subsequent rise of labor activity, the push for Americanization increased (Crawford, 1989). Thus, during the first two decades of the 20th century, the prevalence of foreign language schools sharply declined..

In 1923, in *Meyer v Nebraska*, the Supreme Court ruled a Nebraska state law prohibiting foreign language instruction to elementary students unconstitutional (Freeman, 1998). While this was a pivotal decision for the future of bilingual education, it was one that had come too late. By the 1930s, bilingual education, although still occurring in some private, parochial schools, had been mostly eradicated. Where bilingual instruction still

existed, the “cultural deprivation” model was the prominent underlying ideology (Crawford, 1989).

This deficit model of bilingual education influenced the origins of modern ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction in the public schools. Initially developed in the 1930s, ESL was an instructional model intended for college students and foreign diplomats (Allred & Powe, 1994). When introduced as a method of teaching language minority children in the 1950s, it was not initially successful and, as a result, most students remained in English-immersion classrooms. Still, these initial experiments with ESL illustrated that, within the educational community, the need for differentiated instruction for ELLs was finally being recognized.

The Period of Opportunity (1950s to mid-1970s)

The Civil Rights era marked a shift from restrictive to progressive ideals with an emphasis on cultural pluralism and equal educational opportunity (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004). There was a political movement away from the assimilation of other cultures into the emphasis of ethnic and cultural pride.

This period also gave rise to the still prominent debate between phonics and whole language instruction, with the whole language theory gaining in popularity. This debate was mirrored in discussions of the best methods of bilingual education, with compensatory (deficit) models and quality (native language is an asset) models representing either side of the spectrum. This was a significant shift because, although bilingual education had a place in early U.S. history, it had never before been so adamantly debated within the educational community (Allred & Powe, 1994).

In 1963, the first bilingual program in the U.S. since the 1920s was established by Cuban exiles in Dade County, Florida at the Coral Way Elementary School (Crawford, 1989). The success of this two-way bilingual program inspired the implementation of similar bilingual programs across the country.

The re-emergence of bilingual education during this period was supported by significant changes in federal policy. The 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibited discrimination on grounds of race, color, or national origins in programs receiving federal assistance, which naturally changed the dynamics of public education. In 1968, the Bilingual Education Act, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, authorized federal resources to support bilingual education programs, train teachers and aids, develop and distribute instructional materials, and encourage parental involvement (Crawford, 1989). The focus of the law was compensatory in that it specifically focused on children who were “educationally disadvantaged because of their inability to speak English.” In addition, the law did not specify whether the end goal of bilingual education was true bilingualism or transition into English. This polarized the debate between proponents of English immersion and supporters of bilingual education (Porter, 1999/2000). Still, Title VII was significant in that it was the first federally mandated bilingual education policy.

Another turning point in bilingual education resulted from the Supreme Court’s 1974 decision in *Lau v Nichols*. The *Lau* case originated as a conflict between the parents of twelve Asian American students in California, who demanded special instruction in English for their children, and the school district, who claimed that specialized assistance in English was not a student right (Spring, 2001). After the district court and the appeals court initially ruled in favor of the school district, the Supreme Court overturned the initial rulings, arguing

that equal educational opportunity requires specialized programs for students who need it, including instruction in English.

In response to the *Lau* decision, the U.S. Commissioner of Education, Terrel Bell, in conjunction with the Office of Civil Rights (OCR), created a set of guidelines that instructed school districts on the identification, assessment, and instruction of children with limited English skills and created professional standards for teachers (Crawford, 1989). These guidelines came to be known as the Lau Remedies and were enforced by the OCR until the early 1980s.

The Dismissive Period (1980s to Present)

In the early 1970s, changes in urban population, student population, and workforce requirements led to new standards in literacy, with 12th grade functional literacy becoming the new norm (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004). The whole language movement continued to gain in popularity during this time and, by the early to mid-1980s, it had become the core of most literacy instruction. This movement was met by a mid-80s backlash, soon after the publication of 1983's *A Nation At Risk* report that focused on school failure and the need to define clearer standards. The report initiated a gradual return to phonics and skills-based instruction, tracking, cultural literacy, and transitional bilingual programs.

During this period, the two major U.S. political parties were polarized over the issue of bilingual education (Spring, 2001). Organized ethnic groups, who strongly advocated for bilingual education, were traditionally affiliated with the Democratic Party. In contrast, members of the Republican party created a strong movement against bilingual education and for establishing English as the official language of the United States. Founded by former

Republican Senator S. I. Hayakawa, the English-Only movement argued that bilingualism was destroying the cohesive political and social fabric of the country (Crawford, 1989). Although the English-Only movement, as a unified political group, eventually disbanded, a clear movement back to former restrictive policies had been initiated.

The 1978 reauthorization of the Bilingual Education Act, Title VII, stated that native language instruction could be used only for transition into English and that federal funds could no longer be used for language maintenance programs (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004). After the reauthorization of Title VII, government-funded research led to even more funding and support for transitional bilingual programs.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, California became the political arena for the English-Only movement. In 1986, Proposition 63 declared English the state's official language (Crawford, 1989). While this legislation was not meant to directly effect bilingual education policy in the state, it gave the English-Only movement needed political support. In 1984, California voters passed Proposition 187, which aimed to prevent undocumented immigrants from receiving public services in California, including schooling (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004). Although this legislation was stopped by legal challenges in state and federal courts, the fact that it had received over 60% voter support conveyed a strong message.

The largest blow to bilingual education in California came in 1998 with the passage of Proposition 227, titled English for the Children. This legislation, which passed with 61% voter support, called for the elimination of bilingual education and for ELL students to be taught overwhelmingly in English. While the legislation did provide a parental waiver provision that enabled some bilingual schools to remain open, the overall effects on bilingual education in the state were devastating. Following California's example, Arizona and

Massachusetts went on to adopt even more restrictive measures for bilingual education.

Finally, the passage of the English Language Acquisition Act in 2001 brought the restriction of bilingual education to a federal level (Spring, 2006).

Language, Culture, and Public Policy

A general pattern emerges when looking at the way in which government policy has dealt with cultural and linguistic minorities in the U.S. From early in our country's history, policies of dealing with Native American populations set the precedent for the U.S. government's dealings with other minority groups. Throughout U.S. history, language has been wielded as a powerful tool of oppression by the dominant culture (Spring, 2006).

The first Native American written alphabet was created by Sequoyah in 1821, an effort supported by the government with the goal of being able to translate religious and dominant cultural texts into the Cherokee language (Spring, 2006). In 1823, the government funded the creation of the first Native American newspaper, the *Cherokee Phoenix*. Shortly after, in the 1830s, the paper was dismantled and Cherokee printing presses destroyed when the tribes began to speak out against forced removal.

In 1867, the Indian Peace Commission was established in order to deal with warring tribes, advocating the teaching of English as a way to civilize Native Americans and end hostilities. To this end, teachers were dispatched to reservation schools with the goal of converting Native Americans to civilization. As a contrast, the "uncivilized" Choctaw tribe had, by 1869, established their own system of successful bilingual reservation schools, subsequently achieving a 100% literacy rate (Spring, 2006).

The opening of the Carlisle Indian School in 1879 marked the beginning of the off-reservation boarding school era in Native American education. By 1905, 25 non-reservation boarding schools were operating throughout the country. The goal of the boarding school system was to remove children from their tribal communities at an early age and assimilate them into the dominant culture by teaching English, patriotism, and Protestant middle-class values. Students were forbidden from practicing their cultural ways and speaking their native languages, resulting in the creation of what Klug (2003) termed a Pan-Indian culture.

In 1928, the Miriam Report was published, exposing the harsh treatment of students and the inhumane conditions within the boarding school system (Spring, 2006). This report provided a catalyst for the dismantling of the boarding school system. However, the long-term negative effects of this system on Native American language and culture had already been established. It was not until the 1970s, with the Indian Education Act (1974) and the Indian Self-Determination and Education Assistance Act (1975) that the specialized educational needs of Native American students were addressed and individual tribes granted the power to implement their own education programs.

Similar patterns of territorial, cultural, and linguistic domination exist in the history of Mexican Americans and public schooling. When the Mexican-American war ended in 1848 with the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, Mexico lost almost half of its territory to the United States (Spring, 2006). The Mexican population living in the newly conquered territory was granted some citizenship rights, but they were severely limited in terms of voting rights and schooling. Historically, Texas and California have been the arenas in which Mexican-Americans' struggles for equal educational opportunities have played out.

California established English-only instruction in public schools in 1855 (Spring, 2006). Texas mandated English-only instruction in 1856 and, in 1918, went a step further to make it a criminal offense to use any language other than English in school instruction. In 1897, Texas courts ruled that Hispanics were not white, thus making it legal to segregate them into different schools. The same pattern occurred in California where, in 1930, Mexican-Americans were categorized as Indians. The school segregation of Mexican Americans was officially mandated in California in 1935 (Spring, 2006).

At the turn of the 20th century, a large wave of Mexican immigration began (Spring, 2006). Mexican-Americans rose dramatically in numbers through the 1920s, many of them migrant workers. The influx of the migrant population gave rise to a new debate: the children of migrant families were often needed for work and kept out of schools, whereas public education officials wanted to use public education as a means of indoctrinating Mexican-American children with American values (Spring, 2006). The Mexican-American students who were involved in the public education system, however, attended inferior, segregated schools. In 1929, the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC) was formed, a civil rights group who took on school segregation as one of its causes (Crawford, 1989). LULAC was an instrumental force of organizing and protest, ultimately resulting in two major decisions that ended segregation in the two key states: *Mendez v Westminster School District of Orange County* in California (1946) and *Delgado v Bastrop Independent School District* in Texas (1948). However, it was not until 1970 that Mexican-Americans were officially recognized as a dominated group by the federal courts, allowing 1954's *Brown* decision to be applied to them (Spring, 2006).

Educational policies in Puerto Rico mirrored those affecting Native Americans and Mexican-Americans domestically. In 1898, Puerto Rico became a colony of the United States at the end of the Spanish-American war (Spring, 2001). Between 1900-1917, the Foraker Act established a colonial government in Puerto Rico, granting the United States the power to dictate educational policies within the colony. Americanization quickly became the goal of public education. Puerto Rican students were required to celebrate U.S. holidays, participate in patriotic exercises, and learn about U.S. history and culture. Most significantly, teachers were recruited from the United States and English replaced Spanish as the language of instruction (Spring, 2001).

In 1912, Puerto Rican teachers organized the Teacher's Association to protest the educational policies implemented by the United States (Spring, 2001). A focal point of their activism was the restoration of Spanish language instruction in schools. The conflict over language of instruction was brought to the forefront by a student strike in San Juan in 1915 and the struggle persisted intensely for the next 36 years. Under the Padin Reform of 1934, English instruction was restricted to the high school level and Spanish instruction was resumed in the early elementary grades. However, it was not until Puerto Rico obtained commonwealth status in 1951, after which Puerto Ricans regained significant control of their public school system, that Spanish was completely restored as the language of instruction in schools (Spring, 2001).

The experience of Asian-Americans in the United States bears a slight difference from that of Native American, Hispanic-American, and Puerto Rican groups in that they were not initially conquered peoples. However, the patterns of cultural and linguistic domination, reinforced through unequal public education, are essentially the same. Like

many Mexican-Americans in the early 20th century, Chinese and Japanese immigrants were used as a source of cheap labor in the United States. The first Chinese immigrants arrived during the California Gold Rush in the 1850s (Spring, 2006). They worked initially in the gold fields and then building railroads, both at wages far below white American workers. Similarly, Japanese workers were recruited by Hawaiian planters beginning in 1868 and by the California silk industry beginning in 1869 (Spring, 2006). From 1885-1920, Japanese immigration rose dramatically in Hawaii and in the mainland United States. Like other oppressed, immigrant groups, both Chinese and Japanese-Americans were initially denied citizenship rights, based on their non-white status, according to the 1870 Naturalization Law. While naturalized citizenship was granted for Asian-Americans in 1943, it was not until the 1952 McCarran-Walter Act that the original Naturalization Law was officially overturned (Spring, 2006).

In 1884, the refusal of San Francisco public schools to educate Chinese-Americans was challenged in the courts. The resulting Mamie Tape decision initiated the opening of segregated schools for Chinese students (Spring, 2006). By 1906, San Francisco had opened additional, segregated schools for Japanese and Korean students (Spring, 2001). Similar to the experience of other ethnic minorities in the U.S., school segregation and language of instruction were the most significant educational issues. In 1914, the teacher-created Japanese Education Association in Hawaii organized to create the first Japanese-language schools (Spring, 2001). These schools were highly criticized by the territorial government of Hawaii for promoting anti-American and anti-democratic ideas. It was not until 1927 that a U.S. Supreme Court decision upheld the rights of the Japanese schools to remain open. Language of instruction was also the focal issue in the *Lau v Nichols* case of 1974, initiated

on behalf of Chinese students in San Francisco who were failing school because they did not understand the language of instruction (Crawford, 1989). The *Lau* decision, as described in the first section of this chapter, marked the beginnings of federally-supported bilingual education policy.

Historical Patterns of Cultural and Linguistic Domination

According to Spring (2006), there are two major ways in which education is used as a form of social control. The first is to deny a population with the knowledge necessary to protect their political and economic rights. The second is through school segregation. These characteristics of education as social control are identifiable throughout the history of public education in the United States (Spring, 2006). In addition, language policies in public education have been historically implemented as a form of segregation and cultural domination (Cadeiro-Kaplan, 2004).

This chapter does not include, by any means, a comprehensive description of the educational experiences of all non-English speaking cultural groups in the United States. As stated in chapter one, elementary school students in 2000-2001 represented over 460 language groups (Graves, Gersten, and Haager, 2004). Still, there are significant patterns to be found in looking at the historical experiences of Native Americans, Hispanic Americans, and Asian Americans in this country. All of these groups were initially denied citizenship on the basis on being non-white and, additionally, their non-white status justified their use as a cheap source of labor to fuel the United States economy. When children of these cultural groups were finally granted access to public education, they were relegated to inferior public schools and segregated from their white peers. Public education, for these children, did not

have the goal of enabling them to become socially and economically powerful adults within the society but, rather, was used as a way to indoctrinate them with the values of white, Protestant, middle-class culture (Spring, 2001). The English language was used as a means through which to accomplish this indoctrination; denying children the use of their native language in schools severed them from their home and community cultures. This is most evident in the Native American boarding schools (Klug and Whitfield, 2003). Examples of resistance throughout history, as evidenced in the Choctaw schools, Hispanic migrant schools, and Japanese language schools, reveal that cultural groups' attempts to preserve their native languages have been met with accusations such as un-American or un-democratic.

Finally, language of instruction has been, and still is, used as a means of segregation in and of itself. Although school segregation is illegal, it still exists through strict language policies in public education. The Bilingual Education Act of 1974, reauthorized by Bush in 2001 as Title III of No Child Left Behind, mandated native language support for ELLs who do not have access to classroom instruction conducted in English (Wright, 2004). However, the English Language Acquisition Act of 2001, which mandated English as the language of instruction in public schools, placed serious limitations on bilingual education and native language support for ELLs (Spring, 2006). Currently, the most widely used model of support for ELLs is transitional bilingual education, implemented through sheltered English language instruction, or the pull-out model, which isolates children from the classroom environment (Wright, 2004). In addition, lack of English proficiency often results in the labeling of students as language learning disabled, which further segregates them from their English

speaking peers through the special education system (Ruiz, 1995). In effect, at least in the early elementary grades, school segregation still occurs.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I provided an overview of the history of bilingual education and language policy in the United States. I described how the social acceptance of cultural and linguistic pluralism has moved between phases of tolerance and restriction, and how these phases have been reflected in public policy. I also described the evolution of language policies within the public education system and how these policies have both responded to and reflected the experiences of diverse cultural and linguistic groups. Finally, I analyzed themes arising from the historical experiences of various cultural groups in this country: restriction of citizenship, economic oppression, segregation, and language repression. In the following chapter, I provide a review of current literature related to the language of school instruction, the best instructional methods to assist young ELLs in developing their emergent English literacy, and the importance of cultural congruency between home and school literacy experiences.

CHAPTER THREE: Review of the Literature

Introduction

Chapters one and two provided the context and history of my topic of research. In this chapter, I will offer a review of the literature as it addresses my focal question: What classroom practices best support the emergent English literacy of bilingual students in the primary grades? The chapter is broken down into several sections: 1) The cross-linguistic transfer of literacy skills, 2) The effects of native language instruction on ELL's second language development, 3) A comparison of skills-based, whole language, and balanced approaches and their effects on ELL's second language development, and 4) The relationship between home and school culture and the effects of these relationships on the English literacy development of ELLs.

Cross-Linguistic Transfer

There is a large body of research supporting the theory that literacy skills acquired in an individual's native language transfer to literacy learning in a second language. However, additional research suggests that this transfer of skills may depend on the similarities of the two language systems and that some skills may be language specific. The studies included in this section reflect this debate.

Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt (1993) conducted quantitative research to answer the following questions: 1) Does phonemic awareness in L1 relate to word recognition in L2?, 2) What is the role of oral language proficiency in L2 word recognition?, and 3) Can evidence be found of cross-linguistic transfer of literacy skills from L1 to L2? The study participants were 27 Spanish-speaking first grade students from two schools within the same

school district that had a predominately Latino, low-income population. The students were identified by their teachers as beginning, non-fluent readers and all participated in a transitional bilingual program. In the first grade, the students were instructed predominately in Spanish with English taught as a second language. While Spanish literacy instruction in the classroom focused on phonemic awareness and reading skills, English literacy instruction focused on oral language development.

The students were given a series of assessments during March and April of their first grade year. Clay's letter identification test was used to determine the number of letters students could correctly identify, in Spanish or in English. Clay's Ready-to-Read Word Test (List C) was used to assess how many words the students could already read in English and a parallel test was created by the authors to assess word recognition in Spanish. A Spanish phonological awareness test was administered with three different measures that assessed students' abilities to segment Spanish words into phonemes, syllables, and onset-rime units, students' abilities to orally blend sounds into words, and students' abilities to match the sounds at the beginning of words. Because the students had been exposed primarily to literacy instruction in Spanish, the authors did not administer an English version of this assessment, assuming that Spanish phonological awareness would develop first. Oral proficiency in both Spanish and English was assessed using pre-LAS tests, which measured listening comprehension, vocabulary, and language comprehension and production. Finally, the students were given two transfer tests to assess the extent to which their performance in Spanish would influence their English word recognition. In the first test, students were taught to read eight English-like pseudowords through sounding and blending and then assessed on their ability to read the pseudowords from cards. Four of the pseudowords had

letters that were pronounced similarly in Spanish and English and the remaining four had dissimilar pronunciations. The teach-test process was conducted for five trials, with the first trial weighted the heaviest (five points for each correct response) and the last trial weighted the lightest (one point for each correct response). In the second transfer test, six English real-words were created by combining the onset-rime sounds of the pseudowords the students had previously studied. Students were assessed on how many real words they could read during one trial.

In their analysis, Durunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt (1993) considered effects to be significant if they were at least at the $p < 0.05$ level. The students' pre-LAS scores indicated that they were more orally proficient in Spanish than in English. The mean scores of the Spanish phonological awareness tests were 64% on segmenting tasks, 69% on blending tasks, and 78% on matching tasks. Because the three measures were correlated, the total score on all measures was used as a single measure of phonological awareness in the next stages of analysis. The authors then looked for correlations between the various measures and found that: a) total phonological awareness scores were significantly correlated with the number of English words read correctly, b) total phonological awareness scores correlated with performance on both transfer tests, c) the two transfer tests were correlated, d) neither Spanish or English oral proficiency correlated with the transfer tests, and e) Spanish oral proficiency was not correlated with Spanish word recognition, nor was English oral proficiency correlated with English word recognition.

A multiple regression analysis was then conducted with word reading and pseudoword reading as the dependent variables. The authors found that Spanish word recognition and Spanish phonological awareness were better predictors of English word and

pseudoword reading than were English or Spanish oral proficiency or English word reading. Next, hierarchical regression analyses were conducted with the same two variables (English word and pseudoword reading) in varying order. These analyses confirmed that the best predictors of English word and pseudoword reading were Spanish phonological awareness and Spanish word recognition. To further analyze students' performance on the transfer tests, a multiple regression analysis was conducted for the words on the transfer tests with overlapping (Spanish and English pronunciations) and non-overlapping words as the dependent variables. The authors found that the effects of Spanish word recognition and phonological awareness were strongest on the non-overlapping items, indicating that metalinguistic strategies were used by the students for words that could not be decoded by Spanish strategies.

Finally, the authors divided the sample into three subgroups based on their test scores in order to analyze the strengths and weakness of each group and how these characteristics affected performance on the transfer tests. Group 1 had below average scores on all measures, Group 2 scored below average on English word recognition, but above average on Spanish word recognition, and Group 3 scored above average on all measures. Analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were conducted to compare the scores of the subgroups on all three measures. Although Groups 1 & 2 were weaker in English word recognition than Group 3, Group 2 was stronger in phonological awareness than Group 1. Groups 2 & 3 did not differ on the transfer tests, but Group 1 was significantly worse. Therefore, although Groups 1 & 2 were similar in their levels of English and Spanish word recognition, only Group 2 performed well on the transfer test, indicating that the critical difference was the level of phonological awareness.

Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt (1993) concluded from their findings that: 1) phonological awareness in Spanish is related to Spanish word recognition, 2) different aspects of phonological awareness (segmenting, blending, and matching) are interrelated, 3) similar types of processing are involved in Spanish and English word recognition, 4) phonological awareness in Spanish relates to English word recognition, thus providing evidence of cross-linguistic transfer, and 5) phonological awareness is a better predictor of English reading ability than oral language proficiency in either language. The authors suggested that literacy instruction should build on the strengths of students' native language with a focus on developing phonological awareness in L1 that will later transfer to L2. In addition, they suggested that oral language proficiency should not be used to assess the reading abilities of ELLs, as is widely implemented practice.

There are a number of strengths of Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt's (1993) research that lend credibility to their conclusions. The sample population studied was appropriate for research on cross-linguistic transfer; the students had been exposed to very little English literacy learning, in contrast to their high exposure to Spanish literacy at home and within the classroom. A wide range of data was collected and data analysis was thorough, employing several different stages to ensure the accuracy of the findings. The authors accounted for the similarities of the Spanish and English language and its possible effects on the transfer tests by conducting a more thorough analysis of the overlapping and non-overlapping words included on the test. Overall, the authors' conclusion that Spanish phonological awareness transfers to English word recognition is well supported. However, this conclusion would have been strengthened if the students had been administered an English version of the phonological awareness measures, thus providing evidence that the

students were clearly stronger in Spanish phonological awareness. In addition, further study would need to be conducted in order to generalize the findings to a larger population, particularly since the Spanish and English languages are similar in many ways. Similar research, conducted on a student sample whose L1 is dissimilar to English would be useful in determining the contexts in which cross-linguistic transfer occurs. Finally, Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt (1993) studied the improvement of English word recognition, which is only a small part of the reading process. The authors readily admit that their research is limited in this way. While they concluded that oral language proficiency is not a good predictor of word recognition, they did not consider the ways in which oral language proficiency may play into other aspects of the reading process, such as syntactic and semantic cueing systems. Therefore, their recommendation for discarding oral language proficiency as a method of student assessment seems premature.

Using the same study design and methods as Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt (1993), Quiroga et al. (2002) conducted quantitative research to determine how phonological awareness transfers from L1 to L2 when classroom instruction is conducted only in English. The authors found evidence that phonological awareness skills in L1 still predict phonological awareness skills in L2, even when students do not receive instruction in their native language. Unlike the results of the first study, however, Quiroga et al. (2002) found that students' oral proficiency in English did, in fact, affect English word recognition. They hypothesized that this difference in their findings was due to the fact that their sample of students had been exposed to significantly more English literacy instruction than the students in Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt's (1993) study and thus, their vocabulary, syntax, and discourse skills in English affected how they benefited from English-only instruction.

The participants of the study were 30 first grade students (14 female, 16 male) drawn from 10 schools and 15 classrooms within three school districts. The schools represented urban, suburban, and rural environments and no individual school had a high concentration of one language minority. The students' parents had all immigrated to the United States within the decade prior to the study. The authors conducted parent interviews and determined that three of the families were supportive of their child's learning Spanish as a primary language and 27 families encouraged their children to learn and speak English rather than Spanish. All of the students received regular classroom instruction in English and some received pull-out ESL instruction, which was also conducted in English by monolingual, English-speaking teachers.

The participating students were given a number of assessments to determine their phonological awareness, orthographic awareness, oral language proficiency, verbal intelligence, and reading skills in both Spanish and English. A three-task Spanish phonological awareness composite, designed by Durgunoglu et al. (1993), assessed students' abilities to blend phonemes, segment words into phonemes, and match initial word sounds. The Spanish Modified Rosner and the English Modified Rosner were administered to assess phonological awareness in each language through a number of syllable deletion, phoneme deletion, and phoneme blending tasks. Orthographic awareness was assessed by presenting the 26 letters of the alphabet to each child in random order and scoring each correctly identified letter. The Spanish and English versions of the Pre-LAS were used to assess oral language proficiency and included measures of receptive language, expressive vocabulary, listening comprehension, and language comprehension and production in both languages. Verbal intelligence was assessed, in English, using the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for

Children (WISC)- III Verbal Scale and, in Spanish, using the Comprehension-Knowledge cluster of the Woodcock-Munoz Pruebas de Habilidad Cognitiva-Revisada. Finally, the Word Identification and Word Attack subtests of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test – Revised and the Pruebas de Aprovechamiento – Revisada were given to assess real word and pseudoword reading in English and Spanish. All tests were administered by three of the authors, all of whom were bilingual in Spanish and English.

The students' verbal intelligence scores in English and Spanish did not differ significantly, but their pre-LAS scores indicated that they were significantly lower in English oral proficiency than in Spanish oral proficiency. Unlike the students in Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt's (1993) study, the students in this sample read significantly better in English than in Spanish, based on their Word Identification and Word Attack scores.

Quiroga et al. (2002) analyzed the results of the assessments to determine whether or not correlations existed between the students' abilities in L1 and L2. The Spanish phonological awareness measures of blending, matching, and segmenting were significantly correlated with the English phonological measures of syllable and phoneme deletion ($p < 0.001$). The Spanish and English versions of the modified Rosner tasks were also significantly correlated ($p < 0.001$). The correlation between Spanish and English verbal intelligence was not statistically significant. Orthographic awareness correlated significantly with word reading in English, but not in Spanish. Oral language proficiency in English was significantly correlated with both English and Spanish word reading, but Spanish oral proficiency was not correlated with word reading in either language. Spanish verbal intelligence was significantly correlated with word reading in Spanish, but not in English. English verbal intelligence was significantly correlated with word reading in both languages.

Quiroga et al. (2002) concluded, similarly to Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt (1993), that phonological awareness is correlated across languages and phonological awareness in Spanish, as a first language, can predict phonological awareness in English. This would suggest that phonological awareness instruction in both languages is beneficial to ELL students' English literacy development. However, because verbal intelligence was not correlated across languages, the authors hypothesized that although phonological abilities transcend language, the ability to use language to reason is language specific. In addition, only English oral proficiency predicted English reading achievement, which led the authors to conclude that concurrent instruction in oral and written English is a critical component of ELL students' English literacy acquisition.

When combined with the research conducted by Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt (1993), this study strongly supports the idea that phonological awareness transfers across languages. Both bodies of research produced similar findings for students who had been exposed to primarily Spanish instruction and students who had been exposed to primarily English instruction. The student sample studied by Quiroga et al. (2002) represented a much greater variation in socio-economic status, environment, and regular classroom instruction than the more narrow sample studied by Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt (1993). That both studies produced similar findings suggests that the results are independent of socio-economic and pedagogical factors. In addition, Quiroga et al. (2002) assessed students' phonological awareness in both languages, which provided a more accurate depiction of the difference between L1 and L2.

Like Durgunoglu, Nagy, & Hancin-Bhatt (1993), Quiroga et al. (2002) concluded that oral language proficiency should not be used as a measure of students' reading abilities.

However, this conclusion is contrary to their findings that oral proficiency in English was correlated with English word reading. Again, more research would need to be conducted in this area before arriving at a conclusion. In addition, this study still presents a limited picture in that it looks only at one aspect of the reading process, word recognition, and one linguistic group, Spanish.

Bialystok, Luk, & Kwan (2005) conducted research to determine the benefits of bilingualism for students at an emergent literacy level. Additionally, the authors were interested in determining if cross-linguistic transfer occurs in the same way and to the same extent for children of varying linguistic backgrounds. Their findings showed an advantage in reading ability for all of the bilingual children studied, but a much greater advantage for children learning two alphabetic systems. They also found that the bilingual students transferred literacy skills across languages only when both languages were written in the same system. The authors hypothesized that the writing system of a language determines the cognitive skills required for reading in that language and, thus, the role of bilingualism in early literacy acquisition varies among linguistically diverse children.

The study sample included 132 first grade children who represented four linguistic groups: English monolingual, Cantonese-English bilingual, Hebrew-English bilingual, and Spanish-English bilingual. The participants were selected to represent a variety of relationships between language and writing systems: Spanish and English are similar languages (Indo-European) written alphabetically in a Roman script, Hebrew and English are dissimilar (Semitic vs. Indo-European) and are both written in an alphabetic script, but the script differs, and Chinese and English share no resemblance in language or written script. All of the children lived in the same urban area in which English was the primary language

and, in the bilingual groups, all children spoke English in school and their first language at home. The children in the bilingual groups were equivalent in their degree of bilingualism based on parent responses to a questionnaire, test scores, and educational experiences.

The English monolingual group included 40 children (21 female, 19 male) from two schools in similar neighborhoods who had not been exposed to a second language. The Cantonese bilingual group included 29 children (16 female, 13 male) who attended both public elementary school and weekly Chinese classes. The Spanish bilingual group consisted of 33 children (18 female, 15 male) who attended public elementary schools and were additionally enrolled in a Spanish after-school program. In the above three groups, all children received regular classroom instruction in English and a phonics-based approach to literacy instruction. The Hebrew bilingual group consisted of 30 children (20 female, 10 male) who attended a private Hebrew-English bilingual school.

The students were given a number of assessments during midwinter of the first grade year. All of the children received the same English tasks and the bilingual children received adaptations of the tasks in their first language. Versions of the PPVT-Revised in each language were used to measure receptive vocabulary. The Digit Span, derived from the Wechsler Intelligence Scale for Children-Revised, was used to measure short-term verbal memory. The assessment involved two tasks: Forward Span (repeating strings of random digits in ascending order) and Backward Span (the same procedure repeated in reverse order). A phoneme counting task was created by the authors to measure phoneme segmentation ability in which children used chips to mark the number of sounds they heard in a word. This task was administered in all languages except for Cantonese because the phonemic structure of the language is less accessible. Finally, a nonword decoding task was

administered with 20 words included in English, Spanish, and Hebrew that varied in the regularity of their orthographic patterns. The Cantonese nonword decoding task contained 10 words that varied in their pronounceable radicals.

On the PPVT-R, the Hebrew-English and monolingual groups scored significantly higher than the other two groups with no difference between each pair ($p < 0.05$). On the Forward Digit Span, the Spanish-English and monolingual groups scored higher than the other two with no difference between each pair ($p < 0.05$). On the phoneme counting task, the Hebrew-English and Spanish-English groups significantly outperformed the monolingual group ($p < 0.05$). A post hoc Bonferroni comparison indicated that, on the nonword decoding task, the Hebrew-English group scored higher than all other groups, the Spanish-English bilingual group scored in the mid-range, and the Chinese-English and monolingual groups scored the lowest.

Because of group differences in age and initial abilities that relate to decoding success (as assessed by the PPVT-R, Digit Span, and phoneme counting task, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted to compare decoding scores across groups, controlling for all of the above variables. This was done to isolate the effect of bilingualism on decoding from all other effects. The ANCOVA produced a significant language group effect ($p < 0.01$). All of the bilingual groups performed significantly better ($p < 0.0001$) on the English PPVT-R than on the non-English versions, but there were no correlations between the PPVT-R scores across languages for any of the groups. For all groups, the Forward and Backward Digit Spans were correlated between languages ($p < 0.03$) and the phoneme counting task was correlated between languages ($p < 0.01$) for the two groups who completed the task (Spanish-English and Hebrew-English). After controlling for group differences,

significant correlations between decoding scores in each language were present only for the Spanish-English and Hebrew-English group ($p < 0.01$ for both). The decoding tasks for the Chinese-English group were not correlated.

Bialystok, Luk, & Kwan (2005) concluded that all of the bilingual students studied demonstrated an advantage in their reading abilities over the monolingual students. Although the raw scores on the decoding task were the same for Chinese bilinguals and monolinguals, the Chinese bilinguals showed a slight advantage once initial skill levels were controlled for. However, larger differences in performance existed between the Hebrew and Spanish bilingual groups and their lower scoring peers. In addition, only these two groups showed evidence of significant correlations between decoding tasks in both languages. Therefore, the advantage of bilingualism and the transfer of skills across languages were found to be most significant for the groups whose two languages had similar writing systems.

Overall, the data reported from the study supports the conclusion of Bialystok, Luk, & Kwan (2005) that the Spanish and Hebrew bilingual groups had an advantage over the other groups in phonological awareness and non-word reading. In the report of their study, the authors identify and analyze variables that could have affected their findings. The Spanish-English group lived in a different neighborhood, with a lower SES, than the other two groups. If the lower SES of the Spanish-English group adversely influenced their scores, it is possible that this group would have scored higher than all of the others had SES been controlled. While this would lend support to the conclusion that bilingualism is more beneficial when the two languages are similar, more research would be needed to support this hypothesis. Another variable is that the bilingual children were all receiving literacy instruction in their native languages in addition to their regular classroom literacy instruction.

It is possible that their advantage over the monolingual group is a result of more intensive overall instruction rather than of bilingualism only. In addition to these variables identified by the authors, it is important to consider the limited scope of the assessments used. Because the Chinese bilingual students were not assessed with the phonological awareness task, the assessment of their overall reading ability came only from the non-word reading task, which is by no means a broad assessment of ability. Considering the differences between the writing systems of English and Chinese, it would be interesting to see how the Chinese bilingual students performed on word identification tasks at the sentence or text level. This is an area for possible future research. Still, this study raises the important consideration that the effects of bilingualism, both positive and negative, may vary greatly for children of varying linguistic groups.

In a study of Panjabi-English bilingual children, Stuart-Smith & Martin (1997) attempted to define the similarities and differences between the children's phonological awareness skills in both languages and to find evidence of the cross-linguistic transfer of particular skills. The authors were successful in identifying aspects of phonological awareness that were both similar between languages and language-specific. However, unlike the studies previously described, they did not find evidence of cross-linguistic transfer. They hypothesized that the sound structures of Panjabi and English were too dissimilar to facilitate the transfer of skills between languages.

The study sample included 30 children in Great Britain (15 girls, 15 boys) in Year 2 of their schooling (the equivalent of first grade in the United States) with an average age of 7.3 years. The students attended three different schools in Handsworth, West Birmingham, had similar SES profiles, were of the Sikh religion, and were fluently bilingual in Panjabi and

English. Each child was given a battery of 12 tasks to assess their phonological awareness and phonological processing abilities at the end of Year 2. All of the tasks were developed first in English and then translated into Panjabi. Eight tasks were used to assess children's phonological representation skills. The first four of these tasks assessed the ability to recognize and manipulate phonemes and syllables within words and included phonemic judgment (blending), phonemic segmentation (tapping out the sounds of a word), syllabic judgment (identifying a word from the syllables clapped out), and syllabic segmentation (clapping out the syllables of a word). The next four tasks assessed children's awareness of onset and rime and included judging alliteration (identifying similar onset sounds), generating alliteration, judging rhyme, and generating rhyme. The next four set of tasks were given to assess children's psycho-linguistic processing and included isolating and deleting the first and last consonant sounds in a word. In addition to these tasks, the eight measures of phonological representation were used to assess psycho-linguistic processing as well: tasks 1,3, 5, and 7 were used to assess detection and tasks 2,4,6, and 8 required more the more complex processing of generation. Finally, English literacy was assessed in order to make preliminary connections between children's phonological awareness in the two languages and their English literacy development. This assessment consisted of two single word literacy tasks, one to assess reading and one to assess spelling.

The results of all of the tasks were scored and then analyzed for statistical significance between tasks. In both languages, the children were significantly better ($p < 0.01$) at tasks which involved sound manipulation or recognition rather than syllables. There was no difference between children's performance on alliteration and rhyming tasks, but the children could alliterate better in English than in Panjabi. In English, there was no

significant difference between children's performance on the isolation and deletion tasks, but in Panjabi the isolation tasks were easier. In both languages, children found the detection tasks easier than the generation tasks, with no significant differences between languages. Once mean scores were obtained and analyzed, Stuart-Smith & Martin (1997) calculated the values of correlations between the phonological awareness tasks and the English literacy scores. They found a strong correlation between phonemic awareness in English and English word spelling ($p < 0.01$). However, they found no significant correlations between phonemic awareness tasks in Panjabi and English literacy scores. For the psycholinguistic processing tasks, significant correlations existed between English deletion tasks and English literacy ($p < 0.001$) and English detection and English literacy ($p < 0.05$). The authors were unable to find the correlation coefficients for Panjabi tasks due to missing values.

Stuart-Smith & Martin (1997) concluded that there were significant differences between languages in the children's phonological awareness and psycho-linguistic processing abilities. They hypothesized that the children's superior alliteration abilities in English was due to their active literacy training in English received in school. They also hypothesized that the children's ability to isolate sounds better in Panjabi was due to the simpler phonology of the language. An implication of these findings, as suggested by the authors, is that assessments of children's phonological awareness abilities are useful only if conducted in both languages.

In regard to cross-linguistic transfer, the authors found no evidence that the children were transferring phonological awareness or psycholinguistic processing skills from one language to the other. However, there is insufficient data to support this conclusion. The English literacy task consisted of only two words, one to assess reading and one to assess

spelling. The words used on this assessment are not provided in the report of the study so it is impossible to critique the appropriateness of the words used. Additionally, students' performance on a two-word test is hardly sufficient to look for evidence of cross-linguistic transfer. A much lengthier and more thorough assessment was needed in order to draw a conclusion. In looking at the raw data, it seems possible that underlying phonological processes were present for the students in both languages. While Stuart-Smith & Martin (1997) only highlighted the differences between languages in their report of the study, they neglected to hypothesize about the similarities in children's performance in Panjabi and English. Certain tasks, such as manipulating sounds in words, rhyming, and detection, were similar for the children in both languages. Likewise, other tasks, such as syllabic manipulation, deletion, and generation, presented a similar level of difficulty in both languages. This would suggest that a similar underlying construct existed for the students and that much more research is needed before rejecting the idea of cross-linguistic transfer between phonological awareness and processing skills from Panjabi to English.

Chiappe, Siegel, & Wade-Woolley (2002) conducted quantitative research to examine whether the same component processes are involved in English reading acquisition for children with varying levels of English proficiency. In this study, the authors were interested in answering the following questions: 1) Do basic literacy and literacy-related skills in English develop in the same way for native (English) speaking (NS) and ESL children?, 2) Do the cognitive and linguistic profiles of ESL and NS children differ significantly?, and 3) Are the relationships among cognitive, linguistic, and literacy skills the same for NS and ESL children?

The study followed students in a North Vancouver school district through their kindergarten and first grade years. In the kindergarten year, 1,249 children enrolled in 30 different schools participated in the study. The findings were reported for the 898 children who continued their participation through the first grade. Of the final sample, 727 were native speaking (NS) children and 131 spoke a language other than English at home (ESL). The largest linguistic subgroups were Chinese (38), Farsi (23), Korean (7), Japanese (7), Spanish (7), and Tagalong (6). Other languages spoken by one to three children in the study were Arabic, Bulgarian, Dutch, Finnish, French, German, Greek, Hindi, Italian, Kurdish, Norwegian, Polish, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Serbocroatian, and Swedish. Both NS and ESL students lived in the same predominately middle-class neighborhoods. Students were classified either At-Risk or Not-At-Risk based on their scores on the Rhyme Detection Task administered in kindergarten. 140 students in the study, who scored a three or lower, were classified At-Risk, with ESL students more likely to be classified At-Risk than NS students ($p < 0.001$).

The school district in which the study was conducted defined their approach to literacy instruction as a balanced approach. Instructional programs included phonological awareness training and systematic phonics instruction for all children. Additional instruction in each of these areas, conducted individually or in small groups, was provided for students considered to be At-Risk. Teachers within the district also used a variety of literacy activities such as journal writing, Drop Everything and Read time, leveled books, read alouds, the use of big books, discussion, alphabet songs, and cloze activities. The ESL students in the study were in the same classroom and received the same instruction as the NS students.

Several different measures of literacy and phonological processing were administered to students in kindergarten and first grade. During the kindergarten year, individual testing sessions of approximately 30 minutes were conducted in October and November. In the first grade, students were assessed individually in March and April for approximately 40 minutes. Kindergarten literacy was assessed by the reading subtest of the Wide Range Achievement Test-3 (WRAT-3), which measured word and letter recognition. Students were also given a letter recognition task and a spelling task. Students' phonological processing abilities in kindergarten were assessed using multiple measures. The Sound Mimicry subtest of the GFW Sound Symbol Test was used to assess children's oral language skills. Four sub-tests of the Phonological Awareness Test were administered: Rhyme Detection, Syllable Identification, Phoneme Identification, and Phoneme Deletion. Phonological recoding in lexical access (word retrieval) was assessed using the Rapid Naming (RAN) task, syntactic awareness was assessed using an oral cloze task, verbal short-term memory was assessed using the Memory for Sentences subtest of the Stanford Binet, and children's experience with everyday print was assessed using an Environmental Print task. All assessment methods are thoroughly described in the report of the study.

In the first grade, the WRAT-3 was used again to assess students' reading skills. In addition, first grade students were administered two measures of decoding and two measure of spelling. Decoding skills were assessed by the Word Identification and Word Attack subtests of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test. Spelling was assessed using a set of 10 real words and a set of 10 pseudowords. Four measures were used to test students' phonological processing: an oral pseudoword repetition task, the Phoneme Deletion subtest of the Phonological Awareness Test, a phoneme substitution and deletion task with items selected

from the Auditory-Motor Skills Training, and the same RAN task that was administered in kindergarten. The oral cloze task used in kindergarten was modified by two sentences to assess students' syntactic awareness in the first grade and the Memory for Sentences subtest of the Stanford Binet was administered again to assess verbal short-term memory. All assessments are thoroughly described in the authors' report of the study.

Chiappe, Siegel, & Wade-Woolley (2002) used the same methods of data analysis to assess the performance of NS and ESL students in both the kindergarten and the first grade. 2 (risk group) x 2 (language group) multivariate analyses of variance (MANOVAs) were conducted on measures of literacy, measures of phonological processing, measures of syntactic processing, and memory for sentences. These analyses were conducted to identify significant differences in scores between NS and ESL children and significant effects of language group and risk status. Children's experience with environmental print was analyzed using a 2 (risk group) x 2 (language group) x 3 (degree of completeness) repeated measure ANOVA, with degree of completeness as a repeated measure. Students' growth between kindergarten and first grade was also analyzed using a series of 2 (risk group) x 2 (language group) x 2 (grade) repeated measures ANOVAs with literacy, phonological processing, syntactic processing, and verbal memory as the repeated measures. Correlations among students' literacy, phonological, and linguistic skills were measured using Pearson product-moment correlations. Finally, the authors conducted a series of hierarchical regression analyses to test the ability of verbal memory, syntactic processing, phonological processing, and letter knowledge in kindergarten to predict performance on the Woodcock Word Identification in the first grade.

In kindergarten, the Not-At-Risk students scored significantly higher than At-Risk students on all measures (literacy measures, phonological measures, syntactic processing, and memory for sentences: $p < 0.001$; environmental print: $p < 0.05$). NS students scored significantly higher than ESL students on measures of phonological processing ($p < 0.001$) and syntactic processing ($p < 0.001$). The main effects and interactions of language group were significant for measures of rhyme detection ($p < 0.001$) and RAN latencies ($p < 0.01$). In the first grade, the Not-At-Risk students again scored significantly higher than At-Risk students on all measures (reading, Word Identification, Word Attack, phonological processing, syntactic processing, and memory for sentences: $p < 0.001$). NS students scored significantly higher than ESL students on measures of syntactic processing ($p < 0.001$). In the first grade, the main effects and interactions of language group were significant only for syntactic processing ($p < 0.05$). The interactions between grade and language group indicated that ESL students showed greater growth in letter and word recognition ($p < 0.05$) and RAN latencies ($p < 0.001$) than their NS peers between kindergarten and the first grade, while differences between the syntactic processing abilities of NS and ESL students were more pronounced ($p < 0.01$).

Chiappe, Siegel, & Wade-Woolley (2002) concluded that there were only slight differences in a) the development of basic literacy and literacy related skills in NS and ESL students, and b) the cognitive and linguistic profiles of NS and ESL students. ESL and NS students showed similar performance in letter identification, decoding, and spelling in kindergarten and first grade. ESL students began kindergarten with weaker reading skills than their NS peers, but their greater level of growth between kindergarten and first grade closed the gap between the reading scores of the two groups. Similarly, ESL students were

weaker in kindergarten in the phonological processing skills with high vocabulary demands, RAN and rhyme detection, but had closed the gap between themselves and their NS peers in this area as well by the end of first grade. On measures of syntactic awareness and working memory in English, ESL students remained weaker than their NS peers throughout kindergarten and first grade. Based on these findings, the authors concluded that the instruction given to ESL students, which they described as systematic and explicit, caught them up with their NS peers in phonological awareness, phonics, and phonological processing skills. They hypothesized that ESL students lack of significant growth in syntactic processing indicated the need for increased instruction in oral English.

The patterns of correlation between cognitive, linguistic, and literacy skills were found to be similar for both groups, with one key difference. For both groups, letter identification, spelling, phoneme deletion, and syntactic awareness correlated with word reading. Additionally, orthographic knowledge (letter recognition) in kindergarten correlated with word recognition by the end of first grade for both groups. Verbal memory correlated to reading and spelling for NS students, but only to spelling for ESL students. The authors hypothesized that NS students could readily use their syntactic and semantic memory during reading in English, while ESL students might find this more difficult.

Chiappe, Siegel, & Wade-Woolley (2002) concluded that, overall, ESL students acquire literacy skills in English in the same way as their NS peers, have similar linguistic and cognitive profiles, and have similar patterns of correlation between cognitive, linguistic, and literacy skills. The data reported in the report of their study validates these findings. The large sample size (n=898) and the variety of schools and classrooms included in the study make the findings transferable to a wide variety of settings. However, the probability

of variation in instructional methods and individual differences between students makes it impossible to claim, as the authors do, that systematic and explicit instruction in phonological processing and phonemic awareness was directly responsible for closing the achievement gap between ESL and NS students. The school district in which the study was conducted stated a balanced approach to literacy instruction, which means that, hypothetically, students were receiving both skills-based and holistic, literature-based instruction in English literacy. In addition, with 30 different schools included in the study, variations in how individual teachers interpret and implement a balanced approach to literacy instruction are bound to exist. Therefore, it would be impossible to directly associate students' English literacy learning with any particular method of teaching based on the findings of this study. Furthermore, the differences found between the ESL and NS students in this study indicate that the ESL students, after two years of instruction, were still lacking in syntactic and semantic skills, as well as in the ability to orally manipulate the English language. These findings would indicate that the ESL students would benefit from a meaning-based literacy program in which oral communicative competence was encouraged. Further research on a more specific sample population would need to be conducted to support this hypothesis.

Native Language Instruction

The previous section included research that supports the additive view of bilingualism, or the idea that students' proficiency in L1 is an asset to learning L2. This perspective will be explored further in this section. The following studies describe the

effects of bilingual education programs and primary language intervention on the English literacy development of ELLs.

When considering this research, students' primary languages are a significant factor. As Spanish-speaking students comprise the largest group of ELLs in today's public schools (Graves, Gersten, & Haager, 2004), the majority of research on bilingual instruction and primary language intervention focuses on Spanish-English bilingual students. With the exception of the following study conducted by Wright (2004), the research described in this section follows this trend. However, as hypothesized by Bialystok, Luk, & Kwan (2005), the transfer of literacy skills from L1 to L2 may be influenced by the similarity between the two languages. Thus, it is impossible to generalize the findings of research conducted on Spanish-English bilingual students to students of other linguistic groups.

Wright (2004) conducted a qualitative study that looked at the long-term effects of California's bilingual education policies on Cambodian-American students. The study participants were 10 Cambodian-American adults who were former students of the same California school district. All participants entered the United States between 1979 and 1985 and most had experienced some schooling in Cambodia, but received the majority of their schooling in the U.S. Five of the participants were male, five were female, and all were bilingual, to a varying extent, in English and Khmer. All of the participants graduated before the passage of Proposition 227, California's English-only instruction law, in 1998.

The researcher-interviewer was a personal friend or acquaintance of each of the participants. He had been actively involved in the Cambodian-American community in that area since 1988 and had been employed for over ten years by the same school district that served as the basis for the study. In addition, he spent time living and working in Cambodia

and was fluent in Khmer. Interviews were conducted in participants' homes or other places that were comfortable to them. The participants were asked about their schooling experiences, the nature of their English language instruction, family relationships, and their struggles with language both in school and as adults. The interviews lasted from 60 to 90 minutes and were conducted in English, Khmer, or a combination of both depending on the participant's preference. All interviews were tape recorded, transcribed into English, analyzed for major themes, and then made subject to interpretive analysis. The major themes identified were: 1) ESL instruction, 2) Primary language support, 3) Struggles with language demand in the classroom, 4) Proficiency in Khmer and English, and 5) Consequences of education in the district.

All of the participants received ESL instruction at some point during their schooling, but it was often sporadic and inappropriate. Between the participants, the nature of ESL instruction varied. Two were placed in mainstream elementary classrooms with no ESL instruction. The other six who attended elementary school within the district received pull-out ESL instruction. Two of the students received pull-out instruction for reading only with other ELLs. In middle school, eight received one period of ESL instruction and attended regular classes the rest of the day. In high school, only four of the students received ESL instruction and the others were placed in low-track English classes.

While the district was required to assign Khmer-speaking aides to monolingual English teachers, there were not enough aides to assist all students. Seven of the participants never received support from a Khmer-speaking aid. The district was also required to provide content materials in Khmer, but none of the participants received these materials during their

schooling. All of the participants expressed struggling with reading and writing assignments for the duration of their schooling.

All of the interviewees were bilingual in English and Khmer, but most could hold only basic conversations in Khmer and could not engage in higher levels of discussion in that language. Most of the participants expressed difficulty in communicating with their Khmer speaking parents and relatives. Almost all of the participants described difficulties in the workplace or in college due to their limited English abilities. For those who attended college, most took twice the usual time to complete their course of study.

Wright concluded that California's bilingual education program was poorly implemented, which had adverse, long-term effects on this group of ELLs. While the district policy at the time allowed for bilingual instruction, none of the participants received adequate instruction or support in their primary language and some received little or no support in English. As a result, the adult participants found it difficult to communicate in either language. Lack of competency in Khmer affected family and community relationships, while lack of competency in English affected communication within college and the workplace.

While Wright (2004) raised some important points in his report of the findings, it is difficult to draw concrete conclusions from his research. Wright's interpretation of the interviews was supported by his longtime involvement with the Cambodian-American community, his knowledge of the Khmer language, and his association with the school district. However, without an outside perspective available, it is impossible to determine the extent to which his own biases may have influenced his conclusions. Wright did not use member checking to ensure the accuracy of his findings, nor did he state the theoretical framework guiding his interpretations of the findings.

A strength of Wright's (2004) research is that he was interested in longevity. Rather than studying the short-term effects of a specific literacy intervention or program, he aimed to uncover, through the interviews, the long-term effects of having inadequate instructional support for students in both L1 and L2. However, although the adults interviewed had attended school in the same district and under the same state-mandated bilingual program, there were differences in the type and amount of ESL instruction they received. Because there were so many variations in the instruction and support the students received, it is impossible to hypothesize the exact cause of the students' difficulties. In order for Wright to conclude that these students had been failed by the poor implementation of California's bilingual education program, a comparison must be made to another student sample who had received proper implementation of the program.

Although there are many weaknesses in Wright's (2004) study, the opinions and concerns of the students interviewed are still worth considering. Nearly all of the interviewees expressed lack of language support and academic difficulties in school and long-term negative effects on family, community, and workplace relationships as a result.

Critics of maintenance and two-way bilingual programs often claim that instruction in L1 impedes students' abilities to become proficient in L2. In response to this claim, Lopez & Tashakkori (2004) conducted a quantitative study to determine if early-intervention bilingual education is effective in narrowing the gap in English literacy achievement between ELLs and non-ELLs in the primary grades. The study followed two groups of students in the same school through kindergarten and first grade. 87 students participated in the study during the kindergarten year, but the findings are based on the 66 students who remained in the study at the end of the first grade year.

The treatment group consisted of 17 boys and 16 girls. 18 received free or reduced lunch, 24 were ELLs, and 9 were non-ELLs. The school categorized ESOL (ELL) students on a level system of 1-5, with 1 being the lowest. The students in the treatment group were classified as levels 3-5, which means that all had some English language skills, but were not proficient in English and thus qualified for special instruction. The comparison group consisted of 19 boys and 14 girls. 16 received free or reduced lunch. 4 were ELLs and 29 were non-ELLs.

The study was conducted within a public elementary school in a predominately Spanish-speaking school district in the South. Approximately 34% of the school population received ESOL instruction and 90% were native Spanish speakers. 56% of the school population received free/reduced lunch. The school's reading scores were above district average, but there was a discrepancy between the achievement of ELL and non-ELL students. The school had found that this achievement gap tended to remain constant throughout grade levels regardless of ESOL instruction. The treatment group participated in a bilingual program that had been piloted in the school to address this gap.

The treatment group received 2 hours of instruction in English language arts, 30 minutes of independent reading, 30 minutes of social studies in English, 1 hour of math in English, 1 hour of Spanish language arts, and 30 minutes of science in Spanish. (English instruction was used 70% of the time and Spanish instruction was used 30% of the time.) The comparison group received all instruction in English except for a weekly average of 2.5 hour of Spanish language arts. The teachers worked in collaborative teams and switched between groups throughout the day. The only difference in curriculum between the two groups was the amount of time allowed for English and Spanish instruction.

The main instrument used in the study was the Scholastic Reading Inventory (SRI) which provides a measure of students' reading and comprehension abilities. This was given at the end of the second year (grade 1) and the SRI percent correct was used as the main indicator of English literacy development after the two years of the study.

No standardized tests were given in kindergarten or at the beginning of the first grade, but two additional sets of instruments to gauge students' literacy development were used during the first two years. Kindergartners were given the "Kindergarten Assessment Guide" at the beginning and end of the year, which included a survey of alphabet knowledge, known upper and lower case letters, letter production, letter sounds, a rubric to assess student writing, and being asked to read from a list of "High Frequency Words in Children's Literature."

At the beginning of the first grade, students were given the "Emergent Reader Screening Assessment" which assessed alphabet knowledge, phonemic awareness, and a running record of reading ability. Students were also asked to read words from the "High Frequency Words in Children's Literature" list and two writing samples were collected from each student (one expository, one narrative).

The SRI scores of both groups were analyzed at the end of year one. A 2 x 2 multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to analyze the data with two factors (treatment group and SES level) and three dependent variables (alphabet knowledge, sight word mastery, and writing skill).

The difference between the year-two SRI scores of the two groups was "negligible:" the treatment group had a mean SRI score (percent correct) of 46.5 (S.D. 24.1) compared to 52 (S.D. 18.9) in the comparison group. A 2 x 2 ANOVA with treatment group (2 levels)

and SES (free-lunch, other) as factors did not reveal a main effect of treatment, SES, or an interaction effect.

The study also analyzed the differences between the two groups in the assessments given at the beginning of kindergarten. A two-factor MANOVA indicated significant differences between the pretest scores of the experimental and comparison groups. ($p < 0.05$) Neither the main effect of SES or its interaction with treatment was significant.

A MANOVA of test scores at the beginning of the first grade (two factors: treatment group and SES level, and the combination of 6 test scores as dependent variables) indicated significant main effect of treatment group ($p < 0.05$) Neither the main effect of the SES or its interaction with the treatment was significant. At the end of the first grade, a MANOVA on the test scores indicated that neither the main (group or SES) nor interaction effects were significant.

Despite their initial expected risk, the students in the treatment group who participated in the school's bilingual program made adequate academic progress. While the assessments administered at the beginning of kindergarten indicated significant differences between the treatment and comparison groups, the assessment administered at the end of the first grade indicated no significant difference between the groups. The bilingual program was effective in narrowing the achievement gap between the two groups and, in addition, the findings counter the claim that instruction in L1 impedes the learning of L2.

A weakness of Lopez & Tashakkori's study is that the treatment group consisted of students who were ranked at an ESOL level of 3 or higher, which means that the students began the program with a higher level of English proficiency than their peers, who were ranked at ESOL levels 1 & 2. Thus, the initial gap between the treatment and comparison

group did not accurately represent the actual gap between ELLs and non-ELLs in the school. Further support would be added to the authors' conclusions if students ranked at lower ESOL levels had participated in the bilingual program and the same findings had been produced.

In a similar study, Carlisle & Beeman (2000) also examined the effects of language of instruction on the reading and writing achievement of first-grade Hispanic children. They found that the students who were instructed primarily in Spanish showed similar progress in English reading and writing as their peers who were instructed primarily in English. In addition, the students instructed in Spanish showed greater improvement than their peers in Spanish reading and writing.

The study was situated within an elementary school with a predominately Hispanic population that was undergoing an experimental shift from primarily English to primarily Spanish instruction in the primary grades. At the beginning of the study, one participant group of students were in the first grade, had received 80% English and 20% Spanish instruction in kindergarten, and were receiving the same predominately English instruction in the first grade. The other group, students who were in kindergarten at the beginning of the study, received 80% instruction in Spanish and 20% instruction in English. Their predominately Spanish instruction continued during their first grade year. Carlisle & Beeman (2000) used a number of measures, both standardized and experimental, to examine the similarities and differences of literacy acquisition, both in English and Spanish, during the students' first grade years.

The first grade class taught in English (the EI group) included 17 children (9 boys, 8 girls) and the first grade class taught in Spanish (the SI group) included 19 children (11 boys, 8 girls). Spanish was spoken in over 60% of the students' homes, English in 28%, and both

languages in 12%. Over 80% of the students qualified for free lunch. Although the primary language of instruction differed, the school held the same curricular goals for literacy instruction over the two years of the study. Instruction was based on a whole-language philosophy and included activities such as phonological awareness games, journal writing using a process approach to writing instruction, big books, group literacy activities based on thematic units, and word recognition and spelling instruction at the syllable level. The students in both groups worked with the same teachers, although in different proportions over the two years. One teacher was English dominant and taught for 80% of the day during the first year and 20% of the day during the second. The other teacher was Spanish dominant and taught for 20% of the day during the first year and 80% of the day during the second.

The students were given standardized tests in language and reading during the fall of first and second grade. Subtests, in both Spanish and English, from the Woodcock-Johnson Psycho-Educational Battery (Listening Comprehension, Letter-Word Identification, and Passage Comprehension) were given to students in both years of the study. In the first year, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised and the Test de Vocabulario en Imagenes Peabody-Adaptacion Hispanoamericana were given to assess vocabulary knowledge in English and Spanish. In the second year, a Picture Vocabulary measure of the Woodcock battery, in English and Spanish, was used to assess vocabulary in both languages. In addition, Carlisle & Beeman (2000) used experimental measures to assess students' listening and reading comprehension and written compositions. Listening and reading comprehension were assessed using books, in both English and Spanish, written by the same author. For listening comprehension, the teacher read the story aloud and the students completed a multiple-choice and fill-in-the-blanks comprehension test. For reading comprehension,

students had as much time as they needed to read the book independently, after which they completed a similar comprehension test. To assess written compositions, the teacher gave the students a writing prompt (one in English, one in Spanish) and students had as much time as they needed to write a story. Writing was assessed according to productivity (fluency of language use gauged by number of words used), linguistic complexity (the mean number of words in main clauses with all phrases and subordinate clauses included), spelling (percentage of words spelled correctly), and discourse (the fullness, completion, and sophistication of writing). Discourse was assessed using a six-point rubric in which the highest score reflected an elaborated episode or event with causal relations, linked ideas, details, and descriptions. Writing was assessed by two examiners fluent in English or Spanish and agreement of scores on each measure was over 80%.

On the standardized assessments, the two groups performed similarly on all measures with only one significant difference, favoring the SI group, in Spanish reading comprehension at the beginning of grade two ($p < 0.001$). In the experimental measures of listening and reading comprehension, the EI group outperformed the SI group on English listening, but the groups did not differ on Spanish listening. The SI group outperformed the EI group on Spanish reading, but the groups did not differ on English reading. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted with one between-subject factor (EI or SI class) and two within-subjects factors: language of the task (English and Spanish) and mode (listening or reading). The interactions between a) class and language of the task and b) class and mode were both significant ($p < 0.05$). In written expression, the SI group outperformed the EI group on all measures, in both Spanish and English. ANOVAs were conducted for each measure with the class as the between-subject factor and the language of the task as the

within-subjects factor. Significant interactions of class and language of the task were found for productivity ($p < 0.001$) and discourse ($p < 0.001$).

Carlisle & Beeman (2000) also conducted a series of analyses to determine whether the language of instruction accounted for performance in reading comprehension at the beginning of grade two. Two hierarchical regression analyses were used, one for Spanish comprehension and one for English comprehension, with the vocabulary score in the same language as the reading comprehension measure as the first variable and the language of instruction as the second variable. English vocabulary made a significant contribution ($p < 0.001$) to English reading comprehension but language of instruction did not. For Spanish reading comprehension, both vocabulary ($p < 0.001$) and language of instruction ($p < 0.01$) made significant contributions. A second set of regression analyses were conducted to determine the contributions of listening comprehension and language of instruction to second grade reading comprehension. English listening comprehension made a significant contribution ($p < 0.05$) to English reading comprehension but language of instruction did not. Both Spanish listening comprehension ($p < 0.05$) and language of instruction ($p < 0.001$) made significant contributions to Spanish reading comprehension.

Carlisle & Beeman (2000) summarized their findings as follows: a) the SI class was as strong as the EI class on all measures of English reading and writing, but significantly stronger on measures of Spanish reading and writing, b) cross-language correlations gave little evidence that the students performed similarly in the two languages, and c) the language of instruction did not significantly affect the students' English reading comprehension, but instruction in Spanish made significant contributions to the students' Spanish reading comprehension. These findings are well-supported by the data tables provided in the report

of their study. The authors accurately noted that there were large standard deviations in the mean scores of the standardized measures used to assess students at the beginning of first and second grades and, thus, drew their conclusions predominately from the experimental measures used. This seems appropriate, as the experimental assessments more adequately reflected students' typical classroom instruction. Differences in classroom instruction between years one and two of the study present a variable that might have contributed the authors' findings: while each group had the same two teachers, the majority of instruction (80%) was given by a different teacher each year. However, while this might explain the better performance of the SI class in Spanish reading and writing (instructed by the Spanish-dominant teacher), it does not account for the better performance of the SI class in English writing (instructed by the English-dominant teacher). This would suggest that, within the SI class, students transferred their writing skills from Spanish to English. While this transfer of literacy skills from L1 to L2 was not evident in other measures, it is noteworthy that the English literacy skills of the SI students progressed similarly to those of their EI peers. Therefore, instruction in their native language a) did not hinder the English literacy development of these Spanish-speaking students and b) showed positive affects on their writing abilities in both languages.

In a yearlong qualitative study, Araujo (2002) observed, recorded, and analyzed practices within a bilingual kindergarten classroom that supported children's growth in oral language, reading, and writing in both L1 and L2. The participants were 20 kindergarten students in a full-day Portuguese-English bilingual classroom. 6 of the students were Brazilian and the rest were Portuguese. All students had scored below the 40th percentile on the Language Assessment Battery (LAB), which qualified them for bilingual education. The

K-8 school in which the study was conducted was located within a predominately Portuguese immigrant community in the eastern United States. 40% of the school's student population spoke Portuguese.

Araujo was a participant-observer in the classroom over the course of a year. She described herself as having an insider/outsider role in the classroom, occasionally assisting the teacher in routine management tasks, but not interfering with instruction or student work. Data collection took place during 65 classroom observations and sources included: 1) field notes, 2) audiotapes, 3) artifacts from the children and classroom (copies of student work, notes to and from parents, worksheets, test scores, etc.), 4) photographs of wall charts, blackboard entries, and displays of student work, and 5) informal interviews with the teacher.

Audiotapes were transcribed by the researcher. Speech in Portuguese was transcribed in Portuguese and then translated into English. The researcher photocopied student work once a week and took bimonthly photographs of classroom uses of print. Classroom artifacts were used by the researcher to confirm or deny discrepancies between field notes and audiotaped teacher-student interactions.

Classroom literacy events were coded and categorized as: Circle/Reading, Phonics/Handwriting, and Journal Writing. Identification of literacy practices during Circle Reading was mostly obtained through audiotaped transcriptions that were then compared to field note entries. 10 Circle/Reading events spanning from January to May were given a cloze analysis. Identification of phonics / handwriting literacy practices was obtained through classroom artifacts (phonics books, photographs, literacy charts, student work). For journal writing, data sources were field notes and student journal entries. Student journals were copied and analyzed for writing strategies, functions, and purposes. Gillet and

Temple's stages of writing development (pre-phonemic, letter name, transitional, and conventional) were used to identify student writing stages. Field notes were used to compare students' actual performance with stages suggested by the journal entries.

Students' knowledge of high-frequency words was compared between a pre-test given at the beginning of January and a post-test given at the end of the year. Both tests used the same words taken from the Scholastic Literacy Place (1996), which was a curriculum used for some reading instruction.

In her discussion, Araujo described the classroom practices that typified each category. In Circle / Reading, the teacher would begin storybook reading by activating students' background knowledge about the story in an oral discussion. The discussions were conducted in both Portuguese in English and the students could respond in either language. As the school year progressed, the teacher encouraged students to match print to spoken language and speak in complete sentences using either language. Reading instruction was a mixture of decoding and emergent reading with a focus on predicting based on pictures. Of all the teacher-initiated turns observed, a little over half (47) focused on non-conventional reading behaviors (repeating predictable or memorized text and using context clues to derive meaning) and slightly less than half (43) focused on conventional reading behaviors (decoding and sight word recognition). By the end of the year, student were initiating questions and offering opinions about stories. Araujo hypothesized that the students internalized the view that their background experiences (expressed first in Portuguese), picture reading, and opinions were part of the reading process along with conventional reading.

The teacher introduced literature response journals to students in January. Students were instructed to “draw and write something about your favorite part of the story.” Journal work was not checked for accuracy, but students were scaffolded by teacher talk throughout the journaling exercises. Students were free to work collaboratively, discuss topics, and express opinions. Students used drawings, memories of book language, copied words from the book or from peers, and used invented spelling. Students purposes for writing were characterized by Araujo as: 1) label or name a picture, 2) retell a story, 3) express personal opinions, and 4) tell about self in relation to text. Araujo noted that invented spelling was the preferred strategy when expressing opinions and connecting their own experiences to the text.

Phonics / handwriting lessons often started with the teacher asking students to generate words that started with a particular sound or by asking them to name objects with the same letter/sound. These activities always followed Circle/Reading and alternated days with Journal Writing. Vocabulary words were introduced in Portuguese then translated to English with stress on the beginning sound. Students helped to generate words for a wall chart and then drew pictures for a class ABC book using words from the wall chart. Students also completed pages from a phonics workbook. In the handwriting book, students practiced writing upper and lowercase letters with correct strokes through short poems that accompanied the letter of the day. Students had space to draw under the poem. In this book, and also in the ABC book, students often labeled their drawings using invented spelling even though they were instructed to draw only.

At the end of the year, 13 students were in various stages of writing development (Gillet and Temple): 9 were transitional spellers, 1 was a letter name speller, 3 were in early phonemic stage, and 7 did not experiment with writing.

The pre- and post-tests given to assess students' ability to read high-frequency words showed improvement. The entire class recognized 34 words in January and 171 words in June. However, the range between modest and dramatic improvement was widespread and 3 students did not recognize any words at the end of the year. The coefficient of variation in the post-test results (0.7) was lower than in the pre-test (1.5).

From the findings, Araujo concluded that: 1) Oral native language support and a balanced approach to literacy instruction helped students in this bilingual classroom to develop "complex understandings about written language," 2) A balanced literacy program supports ESL students' literacy growth, 3) The emergent literacy behaviors of ESL students develop similarly to those of native English speakers, 4) The students' limited English proficiency did not hinder them from constructing written language knowledge, 5) More developed writing forms appeared when students experimented with a narrative-like style, suggesting that this form of writing should be encouraged in instruction of ESL students, and 6) The students recognized high-frequency words from limited exposures to word learning through contextualized experiences with literature.

Araujo (2002) used a variety of data collection methods (audiotapes, work samples, artifacts, notes, and interviews) to ensure the accuracy of her findings and, if she remained true to her insider/outsider role, the longevity of her research and comfortable position in the classroom likely enhanced her conclusions. However, neither her coding nor her findings were member-checked for possible bias, so it is difficult to determine how her participant-

observer role influenced the study. Although she provided clear examples to support her claims, her conclusion that the students developed complex understandings about written language is vague. The only measurable gauge of student improvement was the students' writing stages and English word recognition; on both of these measures, the range in improvement was widespread.

While the lack of specific information on students' literacy improvement makes it impossible to conclude which instructional techniques and classroom characteristics were the most effective, Araujo's (2002) study design, methodology, findings, and conclusions are all in line with her framework of Vygotskian, social-constructivist theory, which she clearly defines in the literature. Thus, she was interested in looking at students' bilingual literacy development within the larger social context of the classroom and her study successfully did this.

What is important to consider in this study is that the students in this bilingual classroom seemed to be developing literacy skills in both languages at a typical rate. The students were developing their emergent literacy in English without the detrimental effect of losing their native literacy skills. In addition, students could use both their cultural knowledge and knowledge of L1 to make sense of English texts. This study supports the idea that bilingual instruction does not impede English language learning and may, in fact, enhance it.

Hancock (2002) conducted a quantitative study to determine if exposure to age-appropriate books in their native language would affect the pre-literacy skill development of language minority kindergartners. The school district in which the study was situated taught pre-literacy skills to kindergartners using the English version of Families Reading Every Day

(FRED) books, which students took home every day to read with their families. Teachers and administrators within the district were concerned that these books, available only in English, were not meeting the literacy needs of the language minority students who did not read English, nor had parents at home who could read English. The hypothesis of the study was that Spanish-speaking kindergartners exposed to FRED books in Spanish would score significantly higher on an end-of-the-semester standardized test of pre-literacy skills than Spanish-speaking kindergartners exposed to FRED books only in English. Hancock was also interested in the differences in test scores between Spanish-speaking kindergartners exposed to books in their native language and English-speaking kindergartners exposed to books in English.

The study's participants were 77 kindergarten students enrolled in 10 different kindergarten classes at two middle-class elementary schools in a large suburban school district in the southeastern United States. The average age of the students was 5.6 years and 51% were female. 52 of the students spoke only Spanish and the remaining students spoke only English. To avoid confounding variables caused by previously acquired pre-literacy skills, Spanish-English bilingual students were excluded from the study.

26 of the 52 native Spanish-speakers were assigned randomly to a treatment group that would be exposed to FRED books only in Spanish. The other 26 native Spanish-speakers were assigned to a control group that would be exposed to FRED books only in English. The 25 native English-speaking students were assigned to a second control group that would be exposed to FRED books only in English.

During the month prior to the study, researchers assessed the reading skills of the parents of all participating students to ensure that the parents of each group would be able to

read the FRED books in the assigned language. Each school day for the duration on one semester, teachers sent FRED books, in either Spanish or English, home with the students. The instructions written in Spanish to the parents of the treatment group were identical to the English instructions to the parents of both control groups: parents were to read the FRED book to their child, record having read the book on an accompanying log, and return the book to the school the following day. By the end of the semester, students and parents in all three groups had 75 opportunities to read a FRED book. The reading logs completed by the parents showed that FRED books had been read an average of 70 times to children in the treatment group, 72 times to children in the first control group, and 71 times to children in the second control group. These differences were not statistically significant ($p < 0.05$).

The Test of Early Reading Ability-Second Edition (TERA-2) was administered as a pre and post-assessment. The test is designed to assess students' pre-literacy skills, such as finding meaning in print, the alphabet and its uses, and print conventions, through 50 individually-administered items. The TERA-2 is scored on a pass/fail basis with a child's raw score computed from the basal and ceiling levels established by passing five items in a row and failing five items in a row. This raw score is converted into a reading quotient. The reliability and validity of the TERA-2 was established by examining error variance associated with content sampling and time sampling.

The participants in each group were administered the TERA-2 as a pre-test prior to the intervention period. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was calculated to examine differences in pre-literacy scores between the study groups. Pairwise comparisons of group difference were made using Tukey HSD tests. The analysis of variance (ANOVA) to

determine the differences in pre-literacy scores of the three groups was statistically significant ($p < 0.031$)

The participants in each group were administered the TERA-2 as a post-test after the intervention period. The Tukey HSD test determined that the 26 students in the treatment group who had been exposed to FRED books in Spanish had an average reading quotient of 102.35 on the TERA-2. The 26 students in the first control group who had been exposed to FRED books in English had an average reading quotient of 99.08 on the TERA-2. This difference of 3.27 was statistically significant ($p < 0.019$). The 25 students in the second control group had an average reading quotient of 102.20 on the TERA-2. The difference between the average reading quotients of the treatment group and the second control group were not statistically significant ($p = 0.916$).

In summary, the native Spanish-speaking students exposed to FRED books in Spanish scored significantly higher on the TERA-2 post-test than did their native Spanish-speaking classmates who were exposed to FRED books written in English. The TERA-2 post-test scores for the native Spanish-speaking students exposed to Spanish FRED books and the native English-speaking students exposed to English FRED books did not differ significantly. Thus, when exposed to age-appropriate literature in their native language, the Spanish-speaking students developed pre-literacy skills at a level comparable to their English-speaking classmates. The Spanish-speaking students exposed only to books in English developed pre-literacy skills at a slower rate than that of their English-speaking classmates. Hancock (2002) concluded that the findings support prior research that suggests that development of pre-literacy skills in one language contribute to the pre-literacy skills in

another language. In other words, exposing children to literature in their native language fosters the development of their pre-literacy skills in English.

Hancock's (2002) findings could have been influenced by a number of confounding variables. First, although the parents in each group received identical instructions, in both Spanish and English, for how to use the FRED books, variations might have existed in the way that different parents engaged their children in reading, asked questions, or highlighted different pre-literacy skills before, during, and after reading. In addition, there were probable variations in childrens' exposure to print and types of literacy activities commonly experienced at home. Because 77 different families participated in the study, these variables would be impossible to control. The students were enrolled in 10 different kindergarten classrooms. While Hancock (2002) claimed that learning activities and materials were identical between the different classrooms, this does not seem possible. Even if curriculum, daily lesson plans, and resources were identical for each of the 10 classrooms, variations in teaching methods, teachers' philosophies, and teachers' engagement with students would naturally exist. Apart from describing the specificities of the FRED program, Hancock gave no description of the daily classroom literacy practices the students were exposed to. Finally, Hancock did not identify the language in which the TERA-2 test was administered. Because the purpose of the study was, in part, to determine if exposure to books in Spanish would increase native-Spanish speakers pre-literacy skills in both Spanish and English, it would follow that the TERA-2 test would have been administered in English for all groups. However, the omission of this information raises important questions about how the TERA-2 assessment was administered and how valid its results are for the different groups.

In a two-year long quantitative study, Gerber, Jimenez, & Leafstedt (2004) examined the effectiveness of a Core Intervention model in improving the performance of at-risk English learners on English word-reading tasks. This particular study was part of an ongoing, longitudinal research project that aimed to understand the role of phonological-processing abilities for young students acquiring second-language reading skills. In addition to testing the effectiveness of the Core Intervention Model (CIM), the authors were interested in testing the hypothesis that cross-linguistic transfer of phonological skills in L2 reading can be promoted by intervention in L1 pre-reading skills.

The ongoing, longitudinal study, La Patera, involved three elementary school districts in California that enrolled primarily Latino students for whom English was a second language. Within the three districts, 43 percent, 49 percent, and 40 percent of students, respectively were considered to have limited English proficiency. 75 percent of families across the three districts had annual incomes of under \$29,000. The longitudinal study was initiated with data from kindergartners in 23 classrooms and included a final sample of 377 students.

For this particular study, Gerber, Jimenez, & Leafstedt (2004) first identified 20 percent of their entire longitudinal sample (N=377) who performed lowest on a series of bilingual tests of phonological skills. These students comprised 80 percent of the intervention group, with the remaining 20 percent made up of students determined to be at high risk by their classroom teachers. Students in the final risk group came from five schools and 15 classrooms and received interventions, over kindergarten and first grade, to accelerate growth on English word-reading measures. A non-intervention comparison group was

comprised of a random sample of remaining students in each of the classrooms whose selection scores did not fall into the risk group.

At the end of kindergarten, complete data had been obtained for 37 (54 percent female) students in the intervention group and 45 (31 percent female) students in the comparison group. The final results of the study were reported for 43 students for whom complete kindergarten and first grade data could be obtained. Of this final sample, 28 students had received intervention and 15 students were in the comparison group. The two groups of students were, on average, five years, six months of age. All but three students in the final sample were Latino / Hispanic. These three students were identified as ELs by their teachers, although their ethnicity could not be confirmed through school records.

Of the final sample, 23 of the 28 students who had received intervention had been selected jointly by both test performance and teacher judgment. The remaining five were selected only by teachers, but were in the bottom 40 percent on test performance criteria. In the final comparison group, two were considered high risk by test criteria, four were considered high risk by teacher judgment, and nine were not considered high risk by either test criteria or teacher judgment.

The intervention group received ten half-hour intervention sessions facilitated by bilingual undergraduates who were trained to use the Core Intervention Model. In kindergarten, all interventions were given in Spanish and focused primarily on the early phonological awareness skills of onset and rime. In first grade, interventions were given in the language of classroom instruction, which was English for all but two classrooms. Of the final 28 students in the intervention group, 14 received intervention instruction in Spanish during the first grade. Students in the comparison group received only the instruction

provided normally by their teachers with all but two classrooms providing instruction in English.

The Core Intervention Model (CIM) used was designed by Gerber, Jimenez, & Leafstedt (2004). The CIM was designed for direct instruction of groups of four students and based on the hypothesis that direct instruction both maximizes response opportunities for at-risk students and provides explicit language models for students struggling with English skills. Under the CIM model, teachers are required to ask questions in an explicit and concise manner, to proceed at a rapid pace, and provide immediate correction or praise for students' responses. A fundamental part of the model is an explicit correction procedure called the *Correction Staircase*, that requires teachers to systematically reduce the cognitive demand of a question until the student can respond correctly. After a correct response is elicited, teachers can then "step-up" the cognitive demand of a question. Within the interventions given in the study, questions were repeated several times to verify that responses were reliable. Intervention tasks over the course of the study included identifying words with similar onsets, producing rhyming words, segmenting phonemes, and blending phonemes.

All students were assessed individually twice a year by teams of bilingual undergraduates who were trained and supervised by graduate research assistants. Students in both groups were assessed before and after interventions at four data points, the beginning and end of the kindergarten year and the beginning and end of the first grade year.

Assessments were given to all students in their language of preference, Spanish or English. Assessors tallied scores and initialed forms, which were then rechecked by at least two other students. Final data were entered into a database and checked multiple times for entry errors.

Three tasks were used in both Spanish and English to assess phonological awareness in kindergarten and first grade: rime and onset detection and phoneme segmentation. Rime and onset tasks included 15 items each with three pictures included per item. Students were asked which two words either rhymed or started with the same sound as the prompt given by the assessor. In the phoneme segmentation task, students were given a visual representation of a word provided by the assessor and asked to verbally segment the word into its individual phonemes. Two composite measures were also created for all Spanish and English tasks. One, *early phonological awareness* (EPA) was derived from a combination of all rime and onset measures. The other, *late phonological awareness* (LPA) was derived by combining both language measures of segmentation. In addition, students were also given the English Word Attack (WA) and Letter-Word Identification (WID) subtests from the Woodcock-Johnson Tests of Achievement III (2000). On the Word Attack subtest, students decoded a series of letters and nonwords. In the Letter-Word Identification subtest, students identified a series of letters by name and read a list of real words.

The kindergarten pretests showed statistically significant differences ($p < 0.05$) between the intervention and comparison groups in English and Spanish rime, English and Spanish segmentation, early PA, late PA, and word identification. By the end of first grade, statistically significant differences between groups existed only in English onset ($p < 0.05$) with the intervention group scoring higher, on average, in Spanish onset, Spanish rime, and late PA. Rates and patterns of growth in both groups were also examined, based on the hypothesis that in order for the intervention group to catch up to their initially higher-achieving peers, their rate of improvement had to, at some point, be higher than that of the comparison group. During kindergarten, both groups gained skills in all areas at a similar

rate. However, during the first grade year, students in the intervention group gained skills at a greater rate than their higher-achieving peers, ultimately closing the achievement gap by the end of the year.

Gerber, Jimenez, & Leafstedt (2004) concluded that the intervention produced only a relatively weak effect. This conclusion aptly takes into consideration the many confounding variables of their study. First, the participant selection compromised the study's experimental nature. Because students were not randomly assigned to either group, the intervention group consisted completely of students determined to be at high-risk while the comparison group consisted predominately of students not considered to be high-risk. Therefore, it is impossible to generalize the effects of the intervention to all high-risk students. Also, because 20 percent of the intervention group was selected by teacher judgment rather than test scores, the criteria for participant selection was not consistent.

The students who participated in each of the study groups received outside instruction in 15 different classrooms that had no consistency in programs, materials, or methods. Two of the classrooms provided primary instruction in Spanish while all others provided primary instruction in English. This inconsistency creates a number of independent variables that could have influenced the results of the study: teaching methodology, access to resources, availability of school services, curriculum, and language of instruction. In addition, the interventions consisted of only three hours spread out over approximately nine sessions. The brevity of these interventions precludes any conclusion about their ultimate effectiveness.

In addition to studying the effectiveness of their Core Intervention Model, Gerber, Jimenez, & Leafstedt (2004) were also attempting to find evidence of cross-linguistic transfer of phonological processing skills. While all students in the intervention group received

Spanish intervention during the kindergarten year, the language of intervention was inconsistent during the first grade year, with half of the intervention group receiving instruction in Spanish and half in English. Within the comparison group, some students received classroom instruction primarily in Spanish. This variability in treatment makes it impossible to determine the effects of intervention in Spanish on the English reading abilities of the students.

The effects of L1 narrative intervention on the literacy development of ELLs was investigated in a quantitative study conducted by Schoenbrodt, Kerins, & Gesell (2003). The study participants were 12 Spanish-speaking children between the ages of 6-11 who attended an after-school tutoring program within their elementary school twice a week. The participants were all natives of Central and South American countries living in Baltimore City. All spoke Spanish as a primary language and English as a second language, but spoke primarily Spanish in the home.

Each treatment group consisted of five male and one female participant. Participants were grouped using a matched pair strategy according to their age and proficiency level in English. To be included in the final analysis, participants could miss no more than one intervention session.

Narrative samples were obtained from each subject as a pre-test before the intervention and as a post-test after the intervention. Each narrative sample required students to perform a story retell task and a story generation task. The story retell task involved the reading of an age-appropriate passage after which students were asked to retell the story. The response was transcribed in English for the control group and in Spanish for the experimental group. The story generation task involved the presentation of a story stem from

which students were required to generate a story. The narrative samples were transcribed verbatim and analyzed for communicative competence using five measures: communication units (CUs), words, clauses, story grammar, and narrative style.

Narrative intervention was conducted for 8 weeks after the pre-test during the bi-weekly tutoring program the students attended. Identical lesson plans were used for both groups with the only difference being the language in which the intervention was given (English or Spanish). The first three intervention sessions involved presenting the story *The Rainbow Fish* with focus on presenting and defining vocabulary, using visual organizers to categorize vocabulary, and using extensions to prompt students to think critically and infer information about the story. The fourth and fifth session involved using a story grammar marker: a visual organizer using different symbols to represent setting, internal response, the events in the story, the conclusion of the story, and the internal response at the conclusion of the story. The final two sessions involved the same complete intervention using a different story, *Guess How Much I Love You?*

Inter-rater reliability was assessed at a reliability level of 86% after transcribed narrative samples were exchanged between examiners – an outside examiner randomly selected six narratives to transcribe and achieved a reliability level of 89%. A mixed model ANOVA was used to determine if the narrative intervention showed significant improvements between pre and post tests on all subjects. A GLM one-way ANOVA was used to determine which of the communicative competencies were significantly different between the experimental (Spanish) and control (English) groups.

Story grammar elements improved for all students in both story retell tasks ($p < 0.001$) and story generation tasks ($p < 0.05$). Narrative style scores also improved in both story retell

($p < 0.001$) and story generation ($p < 0.01$) tasks. CUs, words, and clauses did not increase significantly for either treatment group in the story retell task. Only the story generation task showed a significant difference between subjects ($p < 0.01$). The experimental (Spanish) group performed better than the control (English) group in narrative style (including transitions, adequate topic, maintenance, sufficient detail, and cohesion).

From the findings, the authors concluded that narrative language interventions increase language skills in children with limited language proficiency, particularly in story grammar elements, and that intervention in children's first language shows an even greater increase in language skills. The shortness of the intervention precludes any conclusion about the long-term effects of narrative intervention in either language. In addition, the small sample size (12 students) and the predominance of male participants make the findings difficult to generalize to larger populations. Still, the slight advantage shown in the findings of narrative intervention in L1 illustrates a need for further research in this area.

Methods of Instruction

The debate between phonics / skills-based and whole language / socio-psycholinguistic literacy instruction naturally extends into the realm of bilingual literacy instruction. Difficulties in comparing research from the two sides of this debate stem from the fact that each instructional approach is based on a different theoretical framework and therefore, defines literacy in a completely different way. The contrast between these theoretical frameworks and definitions of literacy was previously outlined in chapter one.

Not surprisingly, research that supports skills-based instruction is overwhelming quantitative while research that supports whole language instruction is generally qualitative.

This is due to the fact that it is easier to gauge improvement between test scores that measure word recognition, decoding, and words read per minute than it is to quantitatively assess the way in which students are constructing meaning within a social context. Even still, in reviewing the literature, some interesting comparisons between the two approaches can be made.

In addition, this section will examine research that supports a balanced approach to literacy instruction. As defined in chapter one, a balanced approach includes elements of both skills-based and whole language instruction. However, how these different elements are incorporated into practice is dependent on the theoretical framework of the curriculum or the individual teacher.

In a study that included both qualitative and quantitative methods, Graves, Gersten, & Haager (2004) looked at the relationship between the quality of instructional practices in first-grade multiple-language classrooms and the growth of students' oral reading fluency over the course of one year. While the purpose of the study was to define the qualities of successful teachers within multi-lingual settings, the research findings provided an interesting comparison between skills-based and whole language instruction.

The study participants were 186 first-grade students over a period of two years and their teachers. The students attended three different schools in a large, urban district in southern California and represented 11 different languages and a wide variety of cultural groups.

In the first year, three first-grade classrooms were studied in each school. Each classroom was defined as a multiple-language setting in which students spoke at least one of the following: Cambodian, Cantonese dialect of Chinese, English, French, Hmong, Loa,

Somali, Spanish, Sudanese, Tagalog, or Vietnamese. In the second year, five multiple-language first-grade classrooms within the same three schools were studied.

Ten different teachers participated in the study over the two years. Three of the teachers spoke a language other than English, but all of the classrooms were taught almost exclusively in English. One teacher occasionally gave directions or explanations in Spanish.

Students each year were given a pre- and posttest (sample sizes were 116 for year 1 and 70 for year 2). The assessment used was a measure of oral-reading fluency (ORF) that accompanies the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills (DIBELS). This assessment defines students reading at 40 wpm or less as at “some risk” and below 20 wpm as “at risk.” A team of graduate students who were not involved in the classroom observations administered the pre- and posttests. In year one, the tests were conducted in November and June. In year two, they were conducted in September and June.

The 14 classrooms were observed during the 2.5-hour reading / language arts block between five and seven times each. Each teacher was rated on a 1-4 point scale (4 being the highest) according to the English Language Learners Classroom Observation Instrument (ELCOI). The ELCOI is a 30-item moderate inference Likert scale of effective instructional practices with categories that include: explicit teaching, instruction geared toward low-performing students, sheltered English techniques, interactive teaching, vocabulary development, and phonemic awareness. A total score was determined for the ELCOI by finding the mean of each teacher’s scores on the six subscales. There was a 74% median inter-observer agreement on an item-by-item basis.

Field notes, including specific examples of teacher practice, were taken during observation. These notes provided a source for qualitative analysis of the data and were also

used to guide the ELCOI score. Teacher interviews were conducted at the conclusion of the second year of the study. Each interview lasted for approximately 30 minutes.

The study looked for a correlation between student gains in ORF between pre- and posttest scores and teachers' ELCOI scores. The authors described a moderately strong correlation ($r=0.65$) between teacher ratings and gain from pretest to posttest scores on ORF. Classroom practices rated "3" or higher were associated with 0-40% of students reading below 40 wpm at the end of the first grade and only four students reading at 20 wpm or lower. Classroom practices rated "1" or "2" were associated with 64-85% of students reading below 40 wpm and 34 students reading 20 wpm or lower. The numbers shown in the study support this moderately strong correlation.

The assessment tool, the DIBELS ORF subtest, is arguably a weakness of the study. The authors cite previous research that suggests a strong correlation between ORF and comprehension and, from this perspective, argue that the student gains in ORF imply equal gains in comprehension. However, the nature of this correlation is not explicitly described and it is problematic to state that the ability to read a high number of words per minute implies that the student can make meaning out of what is read.

What is interesting to note, however, is that the two teachers in the study that exemplified best practice according to the ELCOI and who had the most significant gains in pre- to posttest ORF scores had extremely different methods of classroom instruction. One teacher, Marlene, stressed decoding and phonemic awareness and used a commercial, skills-based reading program. The second teacher, Dara, stressed comprehension and writing and used authentic, leveled texts for small group instruction. Although oral reading fluency, in

terms of words per minute, was not a focus of Dara's classroom, her students made equally high gains on the DIBELS assessment in comparison to Marlene's students.

The authors found that the commonalities between the more successful teachers were high student engagement, ample opportunities to use newly learned skills, time spent reading, appropriate length for various literacy activities, clear, explicit models of proficient performance, daily attention to struggling readers through specialized small-group instruction, attention to vocabulary development, encouragement for meaningful student responses, and opportunities to speak English in a comfortable environment.

In response to an increased push for higher academic standards, many early childhood educators have noted the pressure to turn preschools and kindergartens into academic programs in which teachers provide explicit literacy instruction. In contrast, many professionals feel that this type of instruction is inappropriate for young children. Genishi, Stires, & Yung-Chan (2001) conducted a two-year long collaborative study in response to this controversy. The authors, a college teacher educator, a staff developer, and a prekindergarten teacher, respectively, approached the study from the theoretical basis that children must develop a deep understanding of symbols and how they work, gained through diverse sources and experiences, prior to applying this understanding to the learning of explicit literacy skills and conventions. Their research looked at how children and adults within one classroom used multiple symbol systems in a social and cultural context and how the creation of these symbol systems facilitated the students' emerging English literacy.

Genishi, Stires, & Yung-Chan (2001) conducted their qualitative research over the course of two years in a pre-kindergarten classroom in New York City. Most of the schools' students live in the nearby community of Chinatown and many are from families of low

socioeconomic status who recently immigrated to the United States. While the classroom is not designated as an ESL program, most of the students speak Cantonese, Mandarin, or Fujianese. During the year of the study, the classroom was comprised of 16 children: 10 boys and 6 girls.

Data collection included handwritten notes, audiotapes, videotapes, anecdotes that the teacher entered into the classroom computer, samples of the children's work, the teacher's portfolio detailing her philosophy of teaching and practices, language experience stories based on experiences such as class trips, and students' writing as dictated to the teacher. 20 hours of videotape were recorded from April to June in order to show children's progress in English literacy development.

Data was analyzed in four different phases. During the first phase, field notes were reviewed and the first theme identified: a core vocabulary had emerged among the children in the classroom in response to classroom routines and expectations. The core vocabulary, which related to classroom events such as describing the weather, morning meeting, and social interactions, was shared by all of the children, including the four children who spoke no other English.

In the second phase of analysis, activity sections of the tapes, such as reading aloud, lunch time, and dramatic play, were transcribed and analyzed. Because only two of the students were primary users of English, most peer dialogue occurred in a Chinese language and illustrated little about the students' English literacy development. Thus, the interactions between students and the teacher were determined to be a more reliable gauge of English literacy development.

During the third stage of analysis, the authors studied transcriptions and other collected materials and identified four additional themes that described reoccurring classroom behaviors: conferring, sharing, responding to the physical world, and enacting an integrated curriculum. Conferring was used to describe the interactions between teacher and student in which the teacher is talking to the child about his or her work process or finished product. Sharing referred to situations in which students talked to each other in small groups or reported to the whole class about something they had done. The final two themes, responding to the physical world and enacting an integrated curriculum, related to curriculum rather than instruction. Within the classroom, students' learning about the physical world often promoted dialogue, writing, drawing, dramatic play, and other forms of symbol making. Thematic units were used to combine various curricular areas, such as math, social studies, science, reading, writing, and art.

In the fourth and final stage of analysis, the authors reviewed all data for examples to illustrate all of the identified themes. During this stage of analysis, differences in children's motivation to learn English were also considered, along with their ability to use English by the end of the year. At the end of the year, some students were speaking almost exclusively in English while a small number were beginning to speak English in certain situations.

In the report of their study, Genishi, Stires, & Yung-Chan (2001) also described ways in which symbolic modes of expression were incorporated into classroom activities. These activities were divided into three categories: modes of symbolizing, routine literacy events, and opportunities for child symbol-making.

Modes of symbolizing included the ways in which children used various symbolic modes of expression during sociodramatic play and in creating art. The teacher provided

paper and writing / drawing tools in every part of the classroom and, thus, sociodramatic play often involved things such as making grocery lists, writing doctor's prescriptions and telephone numbers, and labeling block buildings and Lego creations. Through art, children experimented with the lines, forms, and shapes that would eventually connect to written language. They also learned to express, in symbolic form, objects and events that conveyed meaning in their own lives. The teacher assessed each student's readiness to use abstract symbols and, when deemed appropriate, helped students to link abstract symbols to their prior knowledge.

Routine literacy events involved classroom activities such as morning meeting, read alouds, and stories dictated to the teacher by the students. Abstract symbols, such as letter names, were introduced during routine literacy events only in response to student interest or questioning. The teacher wrote down student stories in order to help them understand that their words could be represented in print and used to communicate ideas and experiences. In read alouds, the teacher encouraged students to connect what is read with their artwork, speech sounds, movements, and life experiences.

Opportunities for child symbol-making were identified in several areas of the classroom. Students recorded their daily activities by copying their daily areas of choice from the classroom planning board. The classroom also included a writing center where students could experiment with writing instruments and materials. Writing topics were both dictated by student choice and assigned by the teacher and student writing ranged from scribbling and drawing to random letters and invented spelling. The teacher encouraged students to write in whatever form was appropriate for them at the time.

Genishi, Stires, and Yung-Chan (2001) relied on the work of previous researchers in classrooms of English language learners to gain insights into their own study, interpret their findings, and support their conclusions. The previous work cited in their report supports the connection between oral and written language development, advocates the metaphorical use of language in classrooms where multiple languages are used, and argues against the use of direct instruction in English phonics for English language learners who are not yet familiar with the sounds of English. The authors use this body of research, along with the data from their study, to support their claim that high stakes, isolated skills literacy instruction is detrimental to students and that students' development of symbols and symbolic forms of expression translates into later literacy development. However, these findings are not supported by this particular study on its own.

The observations, collected data, and findings of the study do not relate to the initial question, as stated in the literature: How do children new to English learn English vocabulary? While the authors explained that the focus of their study shifted to look at symbol systems and the complexities of learning English, a revised researched question was never defined. This makes it difficult to analyze the congruence of the findings and implications to the initial question. While a relationship between students' use of symbolic modes of expression and their English language development is suggested, no clear correlation is made between the two. The authors use vague language (some children at the end of the year spoke exclusively in English while a small number were beginning to speak English in certain situations) to describe the English language development of the students.

However, the data collected by Genishi, Stires, and Yung-Chan (2001) was thorough and varied. Multiple situations over a long period of time were observed and recorded in a

variety of ways. Themes were identified and further developed during several stages of analysis. The same themes could easily be applied to other studies.

In an ethnographic study, Ruiz (1995) analyzed effective instructional contexts for bilingual students identified as having language learning disabilities. For 20 months, she was a participant-observer in a self-contained Spanish-English bilingual elementary classroom for students identified as language learning disabled. In her report, Ruiz does not include information about the grade level or ages of the students, the range of their learning disabilities, or the participating school and its location. While this lack of pertinent information is an enormous weakness of her study, her observations offer insights worthy of further exploration.

The unit of analysis for Ruiz's study was the classroom event, defined as "a socially organized unit of classroom discourse." Data collection included field notes, audiotaped classroom interactions, and conversations with the teacher. To identify classroom events, Ruiz created a database of classroom interactions comprised of 28 day-long observations, 32 hours of audiotaped classroom interactions, and field notes. Contextual features defined by Gumperz (1982) and Hymes (1964) were used to identify and analyze classroom events.

Ruiz transcribed classroom events and coded them according to their formality. Formal events were defined as those with "increased structuring of the rules governing communicative behavior." The characteristics of a formal event included 1) increased code structuring (raising hands, taking turns, limited movement in the room), 2) a central focus (talk is bound to certain topics and the teacher redirects students who stray from the topic), and 3) more consistent co-occurrence of relationships (students have a tendency to use socially acceptable language, tone, and register). Ruiz analyzed classroom events on a

continuum of formality, from the most formal to the least formal. Within this continuum, Ruiz looked for instances in which students showed the highest communicative competence, defined as the understanding of and ability to use socially appropriate language. In addition, events were analyzed for evidence of students' academic competence, defined as the appropriate use of language forms and functions, fluency, extended texts, coherent texts, and well-developed story grammar.

Over the course of the study, three student profile types were identified: Type 1 (moderate to severe disabilities), Type 2 (mild disabilities to normal abilities), and Type 3 (normal abilities). Ruiz looked for variation in the way that students sharing each profile type participated in classroom events.

Three main classroom events were identified and analyzed on the continuum of formality. Class openings were identified as the most formal classroom event in which students' verbal performances were emphasized. Class openings included designating the language of the day, taking care of classroom business, and engaging in conversation about the weather and the calendar. The teacher, Miss Dixon, would ask students questions during this time, using the language of the day, and the students would answer first in that language, then translate their answer into the other language. During class openings, the topics were fixed and students were expected to adhere to those topics using a more rigid structure of oral language.

Lessons were identified as a second classroom event and involved small groups of children sitting around the teacher's table to work on language, art, or math while the remainder of the class remained at their desks to work on tasks in their individual work folders. Lessons were described by Ruiz to be less formal than class openings with less

emphasis on verbal performance and less I-R-E sequences. This classroom event was further broken down into subcategories based on the variation in formality between lesson types. Lessons A centered on students' background knowledge and experience with emphasis on communicating meaningful messages rather than language forms. They involved role playing, less formal conversation, code switching, and less restriction on syntactic form or grammatical and phonological accuracy. Lessons B focused on the correct conventions of reading, writing, spelling, and speaking and required students to communicate in a more formal way as they worked with vocabulary and text. In Lessons B, students were immediately corrected and redirected for errors. The final event included in the category of lessons was storybook making, in which students created whole texts based on their background knowledge and experiences. In storybook making, students were allowed to choose their own topics, code, syntax, and vocabulary. Students' texts were revised, published, and displayed in the classroom.

Sociodramatic play was identified as the most informal classroom event and defined as "when two or more children engage in thematic pretend play based on their experiences." In this event, children were able to decide on the use of space, regulate their own turn-taking and topic choice, have choice of the language they wished to communicate in, and form heterogeneous social groups. The teacher remained uninvolved in the students' sociodramatic play unless invited by the students to participate. Of all identified classroom events, this was the only one that did not include evaluation of students' verbal performance.

Ruiz concluded that students' range of communicative and academic competence is dependent on the classroom context. Within the identified classroom events, students displayed their highest range of competency in storybook making and sociodramatic play.

They displayed the least amount of competency in class openings and Lessons B. Students were observed to be in the middle of their competency range during Lessons A.

During class openings, where the lowest range of competency was displayed, students seemed less eager to participate. They produced more long pauses and responses ending with a rising intonation, which is characteristic of hesitant speech. Students also seemed less eager to participate during these events. Ruiz hypothesized that because of the strict adherence to topic and syntactic, grammatical, and code constraints, students understood class openings to be the time during which their responses were most subject to evaluation by the teacher.

Students showed more academic and communicative competence in Lessons A than they did in Lessons B. Ruiz hypothesized that this was due to the fact that Lessons A attempted to bridge content to students' background knowledge and personal experiences whereas Lessons B focused on discrete skills. In analyzing these two lesson types, Ruiz concluded that a more effective strategy would be to combine the two approaches by employing students' background knowledge while making direct links to text conventions, grammar, and phonics.

Storybook making showed the upper range of academic and communicative competence in students. Again, Ruiz hypothesized that this has to do with students' ability during this event to connect their literacy learning to their prior knowledge and experiences and to create a personalized product with a real-life function.

Ruiz hypothesized several reasons for students showing their highest range of communicative competence during sociodramatic play. During this event, students were allowed to code-switch within an authentic context, they could make use of the speech

registers typical of their homes and communities, and the cooperative nature of play allowed for less proficient language users to practice with their more proficient peers. In addition, sociodramatic play was identified as the only classroom event during which there was no differentiation between students' ability types.

Drawing from her findings, Ruiz defined contextual features of classroom events that she believed to be associated with the upper and lower ranges of children's language and literacy abilities. Classroom events in the upper range include an emphasis on communication rather than language forms, student topic choice, increased student initiations, student-directed discourse, functional use of language, whole texts, and lessons centered on students' experiences and background knowledge. Classroom events in the lower range include syntactic and lexical constraints, topic constraints, few student initiations, teacher-directed discourse, language use for teacher evaluation, fragmented texts, and lessons centered on prepackaged curricular materials. Ruiz concluded by stating that holistic-constructivist classroom contexts were most congruent with high competency, while reductionist-behaviorist classroom contexts would most likely produce lower competency. Examples of each contextual model were provided in her report, as well as suggestions for implementation.

As previously mentioned, crucial information about participant selection, participant characteristics, location, and school demographics is absent from Ruiz's report of her study. "Language learning disabled" is not defined, nor are the specific disabilities of the individual students in the classroom described. Although student abilities are described by Ruiz as ranging from "normal" to "severe disabilities," the overall classroom context remains unclear.

Data collection involved various methods, field notes, audiotaping, and interviews, to ensure the accuracy of the data. Ruiz used a clearly defined criteria for analyzing and coding data that would enable other researchers to conduct similar ethnographic studies.

Ruiz concludes from her study that children's communicative competence must be analyzed in context. Her study effectively illustrated how students vary in their communicative abilities depending on the classroom event they are participating in. This has obvious implications for assessment methods used to determine language learning disabilities in children, an idea that will be discussed further in a later section of this chapter. However, Ruiz does not consider that definitions of communicative competence might also vary depending on the context. For example, communicative competence in a strictly academic context might imply different rules and norms than communicative competence in a social context. Because the primary purpose of her study was to examine effective instructional approaches for bilingual students with language learning disabilities, it would be important to consider if and how definitions of communicative competence vary.

Kucer & Silva (1999) conducted a study, using both quantitative and qualitative methods, that examined the impact of a whole language curriculum on the reading and writing development of transitional Spanish-English bilingual students. The study participants were 26 students in a third-grade classroom in a large metropolitan area in southern California. All of the students were Mexican-American, bilingual, and from working-class homes. Most of the students had entered kindergarten speaking predominately Spanish and had been in Spanish literacy programs, based on direct instruction in phonics, through the second grade. Students were selected for the transitional program based on oral

English and Spanish literacy abilities, ability to read at grade level in the Spanish reading basal, and a score of three or better on the Bilingual Syntax Measure II Test.

Kucer was a participant-observer in a third grade transitional whole language classroom for one academic year. Silva, the classroom teacher, was a bilingual, biliterate female from Columbia finishing her Ph.D in whole-language oriented language, literacy, and culture. The literacy curriculum in the classroom consisted of theme-based literacy activities, teacher reading, free reading, and free writing. Lessons involved music, art, and math as well as oral and written language. Students received no isolated instruction in phonics, spelling, or capitalization, but some written language conventions were taught through social interactions and contextualized mediums.

Student literacy growth was assessed by comparing pre and post-assessments given at the beginning and end of the year. The assessments required students to 1) read and retell a short story, 2) write about an exciting experience, and 3) spell 57 words from the third-grade speller. The same readings, writing topics, and spelling words were used in the pre and post-assessment and all were in English.

Oral readings were assessed through miscue analysis and evaluated the degree to which students utilized interacting semantic, syntactic, and graphophonic cueing systems. Retellings were analyzed by a panel of evaluators using a retelling taxonomy that evaluated each retold clause as a match, substitution, addition, summary, or conflict. Growth in writing was assessed using a four-point rubric that focused on organization, development, appropriate vocabulary, and well-formed syntactic structures. The Friedman Two-Way ANOVA Analysis by Ranks was used to evaluate the significance in change between pre and

post-scores in oral reading, writing, and retelling. Improvement in spelling was assessed through a comparison of words spelled conventionally on the pre and post-test.

Pre and post miscue analysis scores showed significant improvement ($p < 0.001$) in language sense. Pre and post analysis of retellings indicated that the overall number of clauses retold by students doubled and that there was a significant ($p < 0.05$) differences in the number of matches made by students in the pre and post analysis.

Student writing grew by .45 on a four-point holistic scale, which was not considered to be statistically significant. However, the analytical evaluation of pre and post stories showed a significant ($p < 0.05$) improvement in story word length, spelling, and capitalization.

The pre and post spelling tests showed significant ($p < 0.001$) improvement in the number of English words spelled conventionally. Kucer found this particularly interesting because the spelling improvement of the students in the transitional program, who received no direct spelling instruction, closely matched the improvement of students in the two other third grade classrooms who received direct instruction on the spelling of the words included on the test.

Kucer concluded that students in the transitional whole-language classroom demonstrated improved reading abilities, comprehension, capitalization, story word length, and spelling but less improvement in overall writing abilities. He suggested that, while the whole-language classroom was mostly effective, differentiated mediation might be necessary for some students who need more explicit instruction in particular skills and conventions.

Kucer & Silva's (1999) study is strong in its use of quantitative data to show the literacy improvement of students in the transitional whole-language classroom. The students made significant gains in their use of literacy skills and conventions without direct, isolated

instruction in those areas. The findings are supportive of the argument that students can learn literacy skills and conventions just as effectively when they are taught through social interactions and contextualized mediums.

The only area in which students did not show significant improvement was writing ability as determined by the holistic, four-point writing rubric. It is possible, however, that this rubric implies cultural biases. For example, the highest score on the rubric includes the criteria “develops a coherent and well organized narrative which includes a correct sequence of events,” while appropriate event sequence in storytelling can vary across cultures. Because Kucer & Silva’s (1999) report of their study gives no information about who comprised the evaluation panel, it is impossible to determine to what extent the subjectivity of the evaluators influenced students’ writing scores.

It is also difficult to determine what effects the students’ previous learning experiences may have had on the study’s findings. Most of the students had received direct phonics instruction in Spanish for two years prior to entering the transitional whole-language program. If the theory of cross-linguistic transfer is accurate, then it is possible that the students’ prior skills in Spanish literacy were a significant factor in their acquisition of English literacy skills, despite the lack of direct literacy instruction in English. This variable could be eliminated if a similar study was conducted on younger students who had not previously been exposed to direct phonics instruction in either language.

Koskinen et al. (2000) conducted a quasi-experimental study to investigate the effects of a book-rich classroom environment and rereading of books at home on the literacy development of ELLs. The authors found that students exposed to a book-rich classroom environment that included small-group instruction tailored to students’ needs increased their

reading comprehension abilities. In addition, they found that encouraging rereading of books at home increased students' enthusiasm and self-efficacy about reading, parents' enthusiasm about their child's progress, and teacher's positive perceptions of student progress. These effects were even greater when students were given audiotapes to assist them in their home re-readings.

The study included 162 first-grade students (98 male, 64 female) from 16 classrooms in seven Title 1 elementary schools within a suburban school district near Washington, D.C. The students ranged in age from five to seven years, with an average age of six years, two months, and all were reading on the pre-emergent or emergent level. 57 students were native English speakers and 105 spoke English as a second language. Of the ESL students, 61 were identified by the school system as eligible for language support services and received ESL instruction in addition to their regular classroom instruction. Of the students, 16 different languages were spoken with the majority being English (65), Spanish (46), and Vietnamese (23). (All other languages represented were spoken by five students or less.) Koskinen et al. (2000) intentionally selected the participating schools and classrooms to ensure a similarity of socioeconomic, linguistic, and curricular variables. The classrooms were heterogeneously grouped and each classroom had five or more students who spoke English as a second language. 16 teachers participated in the study. They were all women with between one to 20 years of teaching experience (an average of 4.1 years) who received similar training within the district on early literacy instruction. All schools used the same language arts curriculum, which was administered by the same district coordinators. Within the study, classrooms were randomly assigned to treatment conditions. ANOVA analyses were

conducted on students' pretest measures and no significant between group differences were found.

Three treatment groups and one control group were designed to study two independent variables: literacy conditions and English language proficiency. The control group received unmodified reading instruction in school, which consisted of daily language arts instruction with a variety of materials including easy story books, children's literature, and basal readers. Instruction included reading aloud, shared reading, focused lessons, and guided reading. Students had daily opportunities for re-reading familiar texts, independent reading, and independent writing. They participated in center-based literacy activities, follow-up activities, and projects within the reading / writing workshop. In the control groups, shared reading was conducted with the whole class using big books, poems, and songs. In contrast, all three treatment groups were given modified literacy instruction that included small-group shared reading in a book-rich environment. Each treatment group / classroom was given a collection of 154 different multi-leveled books to supplement their classroom libraries. Instruction was conducted in small, homogenous groups based on the teachers' observations of students' interests and needs. Three to four books were introduced per week and small-group instruction focused on connecting text to prior experience, goal setting, prediction, print features, language structures, and vocabulary. The three treatment groups were differentiated only by the re-reading activities students were expected to complete at home: the first (SRS) group were not given books to re-read at home, the second (SRS-BH) group was assigned daily homework that required two to three re-readings at home of a text already introduced in class, for the third (SRS-BAH) group, the homework assignment was modified to incorporate the use of audiotapes. Each audiotape included two

readings of a story: a slower, initial reading and a second, more fluent reading. Each student in the SRS-BAH group was given a tape recorder to take home and instructed on how to use it.

Three assessments were used to measure students' literacy achievement during the seven-month treatment period. Pre-tests were administered by the classroom teachers in mid-October and post-tests were administered in late May and early June. Training sessions were provided before each set of assessments to instruct the teachers on the methods of administration. All students were given the Oral Reading Assessment and the Writing Vocabulary Assessment from Clay's Observation Survey (1993). In the first task, students' reading was observed and coded using a running record; in the second, students were given 10 minutes to write independently as many words as they knew. Students were also given a holistic oral story retelling assessment in which students listened to an audiotape of a story while looking at the book and then orally retold the story. The students' retellings were tape recorded, transcribed, and analyzed for story grammar. In addition to the literacy assessments, Koskinen et al. (2002) used a number of measures to assess students' motivation, literacy behavior, and attitude. The students were given the 15-item Me and My Reading Scale as a posttest, which included Likert-scale items and forced choice responses to questions about individual and family reading habits, attitudes toward books, and attitudes about reading and being read to. The students in the SRS-BH and SRS-BAH treatment groups were given an additional posttest measure, the Individual Child Interview, to assess a) their amount of home reading practice, b) the value of their home reading practice, and c) their opinion of the school-home project. The teachers involved in the study were given two parts of the Teacher Survey of Child Behavior as a pretest and posttest measure. Part I

included Likert scale items relating to student reading behavior, social interaction related to books, listening behavior related to books, and general assessment of reading interest; Part II was administered to teachers in the three treatment groups and included items about the project's impact on student reading interest and achievement. At the end of the study, all teachers also completed a written questionnaire and participated in a follow-up interview. Finally, a Parent Survey was used as a posttest measure, with nine Likert-scale items, to assess children's behavior related to project activities, and the impact of the project on reading interest and reading achievement.

Koskinen et al. (2000) used one-way and two-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) and chi-square and t-test procedures to analyze the students' literacy achievement scores. Post hoc comparisons were used to determine statistically significant between-group differences. There were no statistically significant differences between groups on oral reading and writing vocabulary posttests and there were no statistically significant interactions between treatment and English proficiency level for these measures. However, on the oral retelling assessment, all three treatment groups scored significantly higher ($p < 0.01$) than the control group. Again, there was no statistical significance between treatment and English proficiency level.

The same types of analyses were used to analyze the reading motivation, behavior, and attitude data. The authors found no statistically significant differences in student scores on the Me and My Reading Scale and no significant interaction between treatment group and English proficiency level. Analyses of teachers' evaluations of students' behavior were statistically significant between treatment groups on several measures (all at the $p < 0.01$ level). The SRS-BAH teachers reported more often than the other teachers that their students

would choose to read a book during free time, talked frequently about books, and took books home from school. The SRS-BH teachers also reported more often than the control group that their students took books home from school. In the posttest analysis of the project itself, the SRS-BAH and SRS-BH teachers reported more positively than the SRS teachers about the effects of the project on student reading interests and student reading achievement. The results of the child and parent interviews were also positive, in favor of the home-school project. 75% of the SRS-BAH students and 63% of the SRS-BH students reported practicing books at home daily. Of the students in these groups designated as ESL, those in the SRS-BAH group reported significantly greater amounts of practice ($p < 0.01$) than those in the SRS-BH group. 80% of the SRS-BAH students and 77% of the SRS-BH students reported that they liked using the books and / or tapes at home “a lot” and 87% of the students wanted to continue the program in the second grade. Of the parents, there were no statistically significant differences in responses between treatment groups, but there were positive responses overall to their child’s participation in the project. On the four-point Likert scale, mean scores ranged from 3.29 to 3.74 on items related to amount of their child’s reading at home, bringing books home, enjoyment, interest, and impact on reading achievement. In the post-project teacher questionnaires and interviews, responses to the project were overwhelmingly positive from the teachers in all three treatment groups. Of interest is that although only two groups in the study had a home component as part of the treatment, all 16 teachers expressed a belief that home reading is important to literacy and had incorporated some home reading into their instruction.

From their findings, Koskinen et al. (2000) concluded that the students exposed to a book-rich environment in the classroom gained enhanced comprehension of what they were

reading. This conclusion is adequately supported by the students' scores on the oral retelling assessment. Of the home-school project, there were no direct correlations to improvement in students' literacy. The authors identified several benefits of the home re-reading component based on student, teacher, and parent survey responses: increased interest, increased reading activity, and increased achievement. In addition, student interviews after the treatment revealed that many ESL students in the SRS-BAH group found the audiotapes to be useful in understanding text. However, while these perceptions of reading improvement are valuable, particularly in terms of students' self-efficacy, none of the survey responses correlated to the students' English proficiency levels. A number of other variables make it difficult to draw conclusions about the effects of the treatment. First, no systematic method was used to ensure that students were completing the re-reading assignments at home or to track how many books were read and the extent to which parents were involved in the home re-readings. Second, all 16 teachers in the study, including those in the control group, reported incorporating some home reading as part of their instruction, making it impossible to analyze the actual effects of the home-school re-reading project. Further research, in which these variables were controlled, would lend more sufficient support to the authors' conclusions.

Fitzgerald & Noblit (2000) conducted a year-long qualitative study in order to determine the effects of a balanced approach to emergent reading instruction on the achievement of first-grade students in a classroom with a high proportion of low SES and minority students, including students learning English as a second language. The literacy practices of the classroom, designed by the teacher / researcher, included similar characteristics of the treatment classrooms in the previous study, namely a book-rich environment with a focus on intentional, small-group instruction.

The study was conducted in a Title 1 elementary school in a rural area of the southeastern United States. The town the students lived in had a population of around 5,000 people and its principal industries were poultry processing and hosiery and textile manufacturing. The median household income was \$21,987 with around 35% of householders reporting incomes of less than \$15,000. At the time of the study, approximately 800 students were enrolled in the elementary school and a majority of the students represented an ethnic minority and / or qualified for free or reduced lunch. The study sample included 20 students (13 boys, 7 girls) in a first-grade classroom who were enrolled continuously for at least seven months out of the school year. Three of the students were Anglo, five were African American, 11 were Hispanic, and one was Native American Indian. The age range of the students at the beginning of the study was five years and nine months to six years and eight months. None of the students in the classroom received Title 1 reading services, although the teacher believed that at least half of the students would qualify under normal circumstances. At the beginning of the year, only seven of the students could write their name, only 10 could name all the letters of the alphabet and five could name none, no student could give sounds for any initial consonant, and only two could read any words at all. The children at the lowest levels of reading were Hispanic. All of the Hispanic students, all were English language learners and none had parents who were born in the United States. Ten of the Hispanic students spoke Spanish at home and one spoke Tarasco, a native-Mexican Indian language. At the beginning of the year, five of the 11 Hispanic students had little oral English fluency and two spoke no English at all.

The teacher / researcher (Fitzgerald) was on leave from her position as a literacy studies professor in order to conduct the study. She had been teaching at the university for

16 years and, prior to that, taught first through third grade for seven years. The participant observer and co-author (Noblit) was an education professor at the university level who specialized in ethnographic studies of race in schools. The teacher designed the literacy curriculum to embody four central components: a) word study (learning sight words, word meanings, and a balance of reading strategies), b) responding to literature after reading or listening, c) writing, and d) guided and unguided reading practice. The central component of the program was reading meetings. These meetings were conducted with small groups of students, homogeneously grouped according to specific need or ability level. The teacher used literature to introduce vocabulary, followed by guided reading with attention to strategies and word meanings, and mini-lessons to introduce specific skills and concepts based on students' needs. For each reading selection, the students completed enrichment activities during other parts of the day. Although the ELL students in the class did not have access to specialist services, the teacher attempted to accommodate instruction for these students during reading meetings by speaking slowly, using facial expression and gesture, explaining the circumstances in a story or providing background knowledge, and spending more time on vocabulary words and their meanings.

From October of the first-grade year on, a graduate student photocopied student work, videotaped lessons, and helped to administer formal and informal assessments. The participant observer (Noblit) spent one full day in the classroom every other week for the duration of the school year observing, taking field notes, and assisting with classroom instruction. Data collection included assessments of student's reading, writing, and oral language; work samples; academic records; transcriptions of the teacher's audiotaped journals; field notes; videotapes of reading meetings, literature circles, and students reading

to each other; and demographic information about the students and their families. Data analysis was ongoing using the constant-comparison method. Field notes, journals, and other data sources were categorized and coded. Comparisons and re-codings occurred throughout the year. At the end of the study, four significant themes were identified: 1) the children began to construct knowledge about local aspects of reading (phonological awareness, phonemic awareness, sight word vocabulary, word recognition strategies, and knowledge of word meanings), 2) the children began to construct global knowledge about reading (reading and writing as understanding and communicating), 3) the children were developing sentiments of wanting to read, and they were learning about giving and taking from reading, and 4) generative moments signaled children's movement toward more mature communicative competence.

Fitzgerald and Noblit (2000) provided numerous examples of the four themes based on observation, teacher notes, and student work. In addition, students' scores from various assessments given throughout the year were included to show their progress. By the end of the year, almost all of the students had significantly improved their scores on Clay's writing-dictation test, Clay's writing-vocabulary test, and Clay's Letter Knowledge test. In May, the class average on the Slosson Oral Reading Test, which involved reading words in isolation, was 1.6 (with 1.0 considered to be at first-grade level). The running records that the teacher kept throughout the year showed improvement in word recognition strategies; in December, no child could pass the preprimer level but by May, all but five students were reading at or above the first grade level with a wider array of strategies used and increased self-correction rates.

The Hispanic students in the classroom progressed at varying rates throughout the year. Of the 11 Hispanic students, eight increased their English proficiency by one or two levels, as assessed by the IPTI test of English fluency for second language learners. However, the results of the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test, which measures receptive vocabulary, differentiated these students from the rest of the class: the Hispanic students achieved the lowest scores and only two scored in the top half of the class. The same five Hispanic students who scored lowest on the dictation test also scored lower than first grade level on the Slosson Oral Reading Test and did not pass the preprimer running record passage. However, the range of reading levels and the overall average reading level for the Hispanic students, as a whole, at the end of the year were similar to those of the native-English speakers. In other words, while English vocabulary knowledge continued to disadvantage the ELL students by the end of the year, their overall literacy improvement followed the same pattern as the rest of the class: all students improved in their literacy, with some students improving more than others. Another interesting finding, stated by Fitzgerald & Noblit (2000) was that there was no clear relationship between the ELL students' English fluency and the beginning of the year and rate of reading development over the course of the year. For example, one student who had no English knowledge in September progressed as quickly as another student who had been declared "nearly fluent" in English. Similarly, two students with "limited English" classifications, who were expected to progress quickly, had consistently slower progress than the rest.

Fitzgerald & Noblit's (2000) research was, overall, very strong. The authors were interested in the student literacy outcomes after exposure to a balanced curriculum. The teacher / researcher (Fitzgerald) designed the curriculum to reflect her understanding of

balanced curriculum, instructional methods, student groupings, and choice of literature in the classroom. The participant observer (Noblit) had the role of ensuring that the teacher adhered to the initial research goals throughout the course of the year. Data collection included a variety of sources, both qualitative and quantitative, and was analyzed continuously to define and re-define prevalent themes. Clear examples are given for the final themes identified from the research so that further research could be conducted using a similar coding system. Overall, the authors' conclusion that the balanced curriculum was successful in increasing students' local and global literacy knowledge and positive sentiments about print is supported by examples and data. Their secondary conclusion, favoring early immersion in reading for ELL students, is partially supported by the findings. While the ELL students, as an overall group, increased their English proficiency and reading abilities, they were still significantly behind their peers in English vocabulary meaning knowledge. In addition, a large gap still existed at the end of the year between the lowest achieving ELL students, who were still below grade level, and their higher achieving peers. Further attention needs to be given to closing this gap.

Stuart (1999) conducted a quantitative study that compared the success of two different instructional approaches in increasing the English literacy of early elementary aged English language learners. His research compared two groups of students who received either holistic, meaning-based English literacy instruction or systematic instruction in phonological awareness and phonics. Although Stuart hypothesized that systematic instruction in phonological awareness and phonics would capitalize on the strengths of second language learners, his findings were mixed, favoring each of the instructional approaches on different measures.

Six classrooms across five elementary schools participated in the study on a volunteer basis. The participating schools had no statistically significant differences in social, ethnic, and linguistic composition and test performance. Of the 112 children who participated in the study, only 16 spoke English as a first language. The majority of English language learners spoke Sylheti (originating from the north-eastern region of Bangladesh), three spoke Cantonese, and four spoke other languages. Three classroom teachers chose to participate in the Big Books (BB) intervention. Data for this intervention was reported for 57 children with an average age of 5 years and 1 month at the pre-test. The remaining three classroom teachers participated in the Jolly Phonics (JP) intervention, which included 55 children with a mean age of 5 years, 0 months at the pre-test.

The intervention period was 12 weeks. Teachers in each intervention group were asked to spend one hour per day on reading and writing activities. Teachers in the BB intervention were instructed to use big books to teach word level work in the context of whole text. Teachers in the JP intervention group used the “Jolly Phonics” curriculum, which focused on explicit phonological awareness and phonics instruction and used materials such as worksheets, videos, word puzzles, and stencils. Teachers were visited regularly by a research assistant to ensure that all students were receiving each intervention daily for the suggested amount of time.

Students were pre-tested prior to intervention, in January and February, on nine experimental measures of phoneme awareness, phonics knowledge, reading, and writing and nine control measures of oral language, auditory perception, rhyme awareness, alphabet knowledge, and mathematics. Intervention took place from March to May and students were post-tested on all measures in June and July. Delayed post-tests were also administered one

year later to assess the lasting effects of each intervention. Oral language ability was assessed using the British Picture Vocabulary Skills (BPVS) – second edition, the Linguistic Concepts subtest of the Clinical Evaluation of Language Fundamentals – Preschool (CELF), and a Sentence Repetition task (Willows, 1996). Auditory perception was assessed using a Phoneme Discrimination test (Willows, 1996). Alphabet knowledge and Rhyme awareness were assessed by asking children to point to and name letters of the alphabet and identify pictures of objects that rhymed. The British Ability Scales (BAS) Basic Number Subtest was also given to ensure that post-test results were specific to literacy skills. Two tests of phoneme awareness were given: the Initial Phoneme Identification test (Stuart, 1995) and the Phoneme Segmentation test (Yopp, 1988). Phonics knowledge was tested in three ways: phoneme identification (matching letters to phonemes), letter sound recall (verbally identifying the sound represented by a grapheme), and writing sounds to dictation (writing a letter or letters represented by different phonemes). Four tests of reading were administered: the British Ability Scales (BAS) Single Word Reading test (students read a list of words), the Young’s Group Reading Test (students circled words to represent pictures), the Read Words test (students read aloud 14 high frequency words), and the Read Nonwords test (students read aloud 10 nonwords). The delayed post-test, given a year after the intervention, included three measures: the Neale Analysis of Reading Ability – Revised, which assessed both reading accuracy and comprehension, the Schonell Spelling test, which included 100 dictated spelling words, and the Clay Dictation test, which included two dictated sentences.

Pre-test scores for phoneme identification showed significant differences ($p < 0.0002$) favoring the JP group, so the mean gains for each group were used for analysis. During the intervention, the JP group made higher mean gains than the BB group, but these gains were

not statistically significant. After the intervention (gains between the post-test and the delayed post-test), the BB made significantly higher mean gains ($p < 0.003$). Both intervention groups were matched in their pre-test scores for phoneme segmentation. The JP group made more significant progress during the intervention ($p < 0.05$), but the BB group made more significant progress after the intervention ($p < 0.0003$). Pre-test scores for phonics knowledge were significantly higher ($p < 0.00001$) for the JP group on all three tests, so mean gains were used for analysis. During the intervention, the JP group made significantly higher mean gains on all measures ($p < 0.00001$), but after the intervention, the BB group made higher gains on all measures (letter sound recognition and letter sound recall: $p < 0.00001$, write sounds: $p < 0.03$). Pre-test scores on all four measures of reading were matched for both groups. During the intervention, the JP group made significantly higher gains in read words ($p < 0.02$) and read nonwords ($p < 0.00001$), but the differences between the groups were insignificant for the other two measures. After the intervention, the difference in progress between the groups was insignificant. Pre-test scores for write words showed no significant differences between groups. During the intervention, the JP group made more significant progress ($p < 0.00001$), but there were no significant differences between groups after the intervention. On the delayed post-test, the JP group had a higher average score than the BB group on every measure. On the additional measures given with the delayed post-test, the JP group scored higher on reading accuracy, dictation, and spelling. However, the BB group scored higher on comprehension.

Stuart (1999) argued that the findings support the view that early, structured, focused, and rapid teaching of phonological and phonics increases the acquisition of English literacy skills for English language learners. As evidence, he stated that both groups performed as

initially predicted: the JP group made more progress during the intervention, both groups progressed similarly after the intervention, and the delayed post-test scores favored the JP group. However, the data included in the report of the study does not completely validate his conclusion. While the JP group did make significantly more progress on most measures during the intervention, the BB group made significantly more progress after the intervention on all measures except for reading high frequency words, reading nonwords, and writing to dictation. Although the JP group had higher mean scores on the delayed post-test, the BB group showed greater overall gains in mean scores in initial phoneme identification and letter sound recognition. The BB group also achieved higher delayed post-test scores in comprehension. Another possible conclusion from the findings might be that, although the JP group showed greater initial progress at the end of first grade, the BB group had already begun to close that achievement gap by the end of the second grade. A follow-up study would be needed to test that hypothesis.

Denton et al. (2004) conducted a quantitative study to determine the effects of two different tutoring programs on the English reading development of Spanish-English bilingual students. The focal question of their study was: What is the best method of supplemental instruction to increase the English reading abilities of Spanish-English bilingual students?

The study participants included 93 Hispanic students enrolled in 17 bilingual classrooms in five schools in a central Texas school district. The district had a 31.9% Hispanic enrollment and 56.2% of the students in the district received free or reduced lunch. Nine out of the 17 classroom teachers were interviewed prior to the study and these interviews indicated that a variety of instructional approaches were used in the classrooms. Six teachers used no explicit phonics instruction in either Spanish or English and the other

three used phonics instruction in English, but not Spanish. All nine teachers included instruction in English vocabulary as part of their curriculum with a range of instructional approaches: four used English word lists, four used English vocabulary from a grammar textbook, four taught vocabulary in the context of reading, three consistently translated difficult English words into Spanish, and one pre-taught vocabulary in English and Spanish prior to reading.

The study participants were selected both on the recommendations of teachers for additional English tutoring and because of standardized assessments that indicated basic proficiency in Spanish reading and adequate oral English proficiency to benefit from tutoring in English. Of the 93 students, 22 were in grade 2, 37 were in grade 3, 28 were in grade 4, and six were in grade 5. 48 were male and 45 were female. All participating students had been in bilingual reading programs that followed district guidelines. Spanish instruction was predominate through grade 2 with a gradual transition to English-only instruction by grade 5. Four students in each study group received additional tutoring. Four students of the entire sample received special education services in school.

The students were assigned to reading ability groups based on their word attack subtest scores of the Woodcock Reading Master Tests-Revised. Students with scores below grade 1 equivalency were assigned to the emergent decoding group. Students with scores at or above grade 1 equivalency were assigned to the established decoding group. Within each group, students were paired according to the similarity of their pre-test scores and one student from each matched group was randomly assigned to either a treatment or comparison group. Students in the emergent decoding group were assigned to either the Read Well

treatment group or comparison group. Students in the established decoding group were assigned to either the Read Naturally treatment group or comparison group.

The students in each treatment group were tutored three times per week for 40 minutes per session, over the course of 10 weeks. Students attended an average of 22 sessions. The tutors were 23 undergraduate special education students who were supervised by graduate students who had experience in education. Tutors were given training in the implementation of each program prior to the study.

The Read Well treatment group was given explicit phonics instruction with practice in decodable text and contextualized vocabulary and comprehension instruction. The phonics instruction administered focused on letter-sound or letter combinations that differed between English and Spanish.

The Read Naturally treatment group was given instruction consisting of repeated reading of connected text, vocabulary and comprehension in the context of reading, student goal-setting and progress monitoring, the use of audiotapes as models of fluent reading, repeated practice with oral reading to gain fluency and accuracy, and vocabulary introduced prior to reading with a question to stimulate discussion.

Denton et al. (2004) examined the students' progress in English word reading, word attack, and passage comprehension for each treatment group and each experimental group by administering the Woodcock Reading Mastery Tests-Revised before and after the treatment. The word reading subtest involved decoding words in a list format, the word attack subtest involved decoding non-words, and the passage comprehension subtest involved students answering questions about passages in a cloze format. The standard score means and standard deviations, along with the mean gains, were calculated for the students in both

treatment and comparison groups. A mixed analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine the interaction between group and change in raw scores on the WRMT-R subtests. The within-subjects factor was time, or change in raw scores from pre to post-test. The between-subjects factor was group assignment (treatment or comparison), or the effect of tutoring.

Pre-test scores showed equivalent English and Spanish language abilities and equivalent Spanish reading abilities between the Read Well treatment and comparison groups. In the post-test, the standard score group mean for word identification in the Read Well comparison group remained essentially unchanged, whereas tutored students gained an average of 4.06 standard score points from pre to post-test. ANOVA analysis indicated that the interaction between time and group was statistically significant ($p < 0.023$) only for the word identification subtest. The standard group means and mean gains for the word attack and passage comprehension subtests are not reported.

Pre-test scores showed equivalent reading and language abilities in both Spanish and English between the Read Naturally treatment group and comparison group. A repeated-measures mixed ANOVA of the interaction between time and group showed no statistical significance and minimal effect for all variables.

Denton et al. (2004) concluded that the Read Well intervention improved bilingual students' ability to read English words and had a moderate effect on word identification, a low effect on non-word reading, and no significant improvement in comprehension, automaticity, or fluency. They concluded that the Read Naturally intervention showed no evidence of increasing students' ability to decode English words and non-words or of increasing comprehension. It is noted in the report of their study that the emphasis on

fluency during the Read Naturally intervention may have had an adverse effect on comprehension because students were not given adequate time to integrate what they were reading in a language that is not their native language.

Denton et al.'s (2004) research contains a number of significant weaknesses. The intervention period took place over only ten weeks, which is not an adequate amount of time to study English reading improvement. In addition, the research is not experimental in nature due to a wide range of independent variables. The participants were enrolled in 17 different classrooms with inconsistent methods of literacy instruction. Four students received additionally tutoring outside of the intervention and four students received special education services. Given the brief duration of the intervention period, the variation in students' daily literacy instruction are variables that must be considered for the findings to have any validity.

The only significant difference in improvement was in English word reading for the Read Well treatment group. However, the lack of reported data for any of the groups makes it difficult to determine the accuracy of this claim. Assuming that the improvement in English word reading for the Read Well treatment group was significant, the lack of improvement in passage comprehension scores raises questions about the purpose of student reading. While it is not the perspective of these researchers, others might argue that students' ability to decode English words is irrelevant if it does not improve their comprehension of what is read. From their study, Denton et al. (2004) claimed that systematic phonics instruction increases the English reading abilities of Spanish-English bilingual students. However, their findings were insufficient to support that claim.

Linan-Thompson, Bryant, Dickson, & Kouzekanani (2005) conducted quantitative research to determine the effects of explicit, systematic instruction to teach the components

of early reading on the reading outcomes of kindergarten students identified as high-risk. Drawing from research that supports the transfer of phonological processing abilities from L1 to L2, Linan-Thompson et. al were interested in studying the effects of early phonological awareness and phonics intervention on the Spanish reading abilities of native Spanish-speaking students. Hypothetically, the students' Spanish phonological processing abilities would later transfer to their English language development.

The study was conducted in two Title I elementary schools in an urban areas of the Southwest, one experimental school and one comparison school. The experimental school had an enrollment of 80% Hispanic, 10% African-American, 8% European American, 1% Asian-American, and <1% Native American. Students with limited English proficiency represented 61.1% of the student population. The comparison school had an enrollment of 76% Hispanic, 18% African American, 6% European American, and <1% Asian American. Students with limited English proficiency represented 55.7% of the student population. The demographics of both schools compared with state averages. The experimental school had 70 Spanish-speaking kindergarten students in three intact classrooms; 36 male and 34 female. The comparison school had 58 Spanish-speaking kindergartners in three intact classrooms; 30 male and 28 female. The average age of kindergarten students in each school was 5.76 years and 5.78 years, respectively.

Linan-Thompson, et. al (2005) compared a group of intervention students, taken from the experimental school, with two other groups: higher-ability same-school peers and at-risk students in the comparison school. Students were selected for groups according to pre-test scores on the Tejas Lee inventory in Spanish that evaluates reading development and comprehension skills in children in grades K-2 and includes several subtests: print

knowledge, phonological awareness, word recognition, letter knowledge, and listening comprehension. They were also given the Rapid Spelling Test, which consisted of 10 words that students were expected to spell correctly by the end of kindergarten. Based on pre-test measures, students from both the experimental and comparison groups were divided into two groups: Level 1 students (n=71) considered to be typical learners and Level 2 (n=71) students considered to be at-risk for reading difficulties. 21 out of 53 students in the experimental school and 19 out of 58 in the comparison school were considered to be at Level 2.

Students in all groups received core reading instruction that consisted of whole- and small-group activities in Spanish, including reciting letter names, sounds and keywords; reading big books and developing vocabulary in context; and comprehension. Some students were given additional instruction, as needed, in small, homogenous groups. The intervention group (Level 2 students in the experimental school) received focused, systematic literacy instruction in Spanish from the classroom teacher three times per week for 20 minutes per session over a total of 12 sessions. Instruction included phonological awareness (blending and segmenting phonemes using manipulatives), phonics (letter names and sounds using flash cards), word reading in the context of sentences, and spelling (fast write and spell to read at the letter and word level).

After the intervention period, students in each group were administered a post-test using the same measures: the Tejas Lee and the Rapid Spelling Test. Pre-test scores for Levels 1 and 2 in the experimental school showed significant differences in mean test scores for all of the ten measures used. Post-test scores indicated significant differences in between Levels 1 and 2 on four measures: initial sound omission ($p < 0.01$), sound blending ($p < 0.001$),

listening comprehension ($p < 0.05$), and Spanish spelling. No significant differences existed for mean post-test scores between Levels 1 and 2 on initial sound identification, letter names, letter sounds, syllable segmentation, and syllable blending. Pre-test to post-test standardized mean difference (SMD) effect sizes for each outcome measure were computed by dividing the mean difference by the standard deviation of the mean difference and were characterized as a small (0.2), medium (0.5), or large (0.8) effect size. Level 2 students showed greater improvement than Level 1 students on seven outcome measures: initial sounds, syllable segmentation, syllable blending, word identification, letter names, letter sounds, and listening comprehension.

Pre-test scores for Level 2 students in the experimental and control schools indicated differences that were statistically significant. Post-test scores for Level 2 students in the experimental school and Level 2 students in the comparison school were only statistically significant on the measure of listening comprehension scores ($p < 0.05$), with the comparison school outperforming the intervention group. Group differences on all other measures were not found to be statistically significant. Standardized mean difference effect sizes showed that participants in the Level 2 intervention group improved more than the Level 2 comparison group on all measure except syllable blending and listening comprehension.

The findings of Linan-Thompson, et. al (2005) showed that students in the intervention group bridged the achievement gap between themselves and their higher-achieving classmates on a number of measures. The same was evidenced between the intervention group and the Level 2 comparison group. The data tables provided in the report of the study, which include mean pre and post-test scores and standard deviations for each group, support these findings. However, the short duration of the intervention period and the

existence of additional, independent variables precludes a strong conclusion about the findings. The students in the intervention group received a total of 4 hours of supplementary instruction, which is not an adequate amount of time to gauge the effects of the intervention. Students in the comparison school received specific small-group instruction as part of their classroom literacy routine and some students received pull-out instruction as well. It is likely that this additional, focused attention contributed to the literacy growth of the Level 2 intervention students. Because no information is provided for the nature of the daily literacy instruction or additional support services in the control school, it is impossible to compare the two groups of Level 2 students. In order to validate the findings of Linan-Thompson, et al, (2005) a longer intervention period would be necessary, as well as controls for the variation of in-class instruction and supplementary literacy instruction.

Leafstedt, Richards, & Gerber (2004) also studied the effectiveness of explicit phonological awareness (PA) instruction, in English, for at-risk English learners. This quantitative study could be considered as complimentary to the study conducted by Gerber, Jimenez, & Leafstedt (2004), described in the first section of this chapter, in which the effects of explicit PA instruction in Spanish were studied on a similar student population. Both studies are part of the same longitudinal study, La Patera, and use the same Core Intervention Method, which is based on the principals of direct instruction (both the longitudinal study and the CIM were described previously as well).

The participants in the English-intervention study were 64 kindergarten students in a Title 1 school in a semi-rural community composed of primarily Spanish speaking families. Spanish-speaking students accounted for 74% of the student population. The average student score for reading at the end of the second grade was in the 26th percentile of the Stanford

Achievement Test. The kindergarten program was a half-day program that lasted for three hours per day. All instruction was conducted in English.

Both the intervention and the control group had similar demographic profiles and risk factors: low income, limited English proficiency, low parent education level, and limited literacy resources in the home. The intervention group included 18 students at the beginning of the study; eight girls and ten boys. 17 students were English learners who spoke Spanish at home; one student spoke English at home, but Spanish with the extended family. Six students had attended preschool prior to kindergarten and one student received special education services for speech. Two of the 18 students moved before the end of the study and results were reported for the remaining 16. The control group included 46 kindergarten students who had participated in the longitudinal study, La Patera. This group of students was in their second grade year at the time of the current study and data from their kindergarten year was used. 90% of the students in the control group spoke Spanish in the home and 10% spoke English in the home. 40% attended preschool prior to kindergarten.

Assessment procedures were identical for both groups. Each group was administered a pre-test in October-November and a post-test in April-May that assessed for phonological measures, word reading, pseudoword reading, and vocabulary. Early phonological awareness (PA) tasks consisted of onset and rime identification and Late PA tasks consisted of phoneme-segmentation. Word reading and pseudoword identification were assessed using Woodcock Johnson II Tests of Achievement, Word Identification and Word Attack subtests. Weekly progress monitoring of the intervention was conducted throughout the study using two measures, nonsense-word fluency and segmentation fluency, from the Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy (DIBELS).

Intervention students were grouped according to high, middle, and low ability levels based on their pretest word-reading scores. The grouping was re-evaluated after one week of intervention, based on observation and weekly progress monitoring. Four students were in the high group, eight were in the middle group, and four in the low group. The intervention was conducted over a 10-week period, in which students received an average of five total hours of instruction. Intervention was provided in 15 minute intervals on Mondays and Wednesdays as part of the regular class center rotation. Intervention activities were taken from the Early Reading Project curriculum and progressed through various levels: early activities involved the use of picture cards to teach onset and rime, later segmenting and blending activities were conducted orally, and more advanced students worked with reading and spelling words toward the end of the intervention. The teaching methods used were based on the Core Intervention Model, based in direct instruction theory.

The end of kindergarten DIBELS benchmarks were used to indicate how far the students in each intervention ability group progressed during the intervention. Segmentation fluency (SF) was assessed on a scale of deficit, emerging, or established and nonsense-word fluency (NWF) was assessed on a scale of at risk, some risk, and low risk. During the intervention, the low ability group progressed from deficit to emerging in SF and from at-risk to some risk in NWF. The middle ability grouping progressed from emerging to established in SF and from at-risk to low risk in NWF. The high ability group progressed from emerging to established in SF and improved in NWF as well, although early assessments indicated that the group was already low-risk in this category.

A series of repeated-measure analysis of variance (ANOVAs) were used to examine changes in performance between pre- and post-tests on word reading, pseudoword reading,

Early PA, and Late PA. For word reading and Early PA, there was a significant interaction effect for group x time of testing, indicating significant differences in pre to post-test scores (word reading: $p < 0.003$, Early PA: $p < 0.000$). There was no significant difference in pre to post-test scores in Late PA. For word reading, Early PA, and Late PA, there was significant interaction effect ($p < 0.000$, $p < 0.02$, and $p < 0.001$) for ability x time of testing, indicating that the ability groups made differential growth. Interaction effects for group x ability x time were significant only for Late PA ($p < 0.028$): students in the middle and high intervention groups outperformed the control group, although no significant differences were found between the low-ability intervention or control groups. Because many students received a score of zero on the pre-test for pseudoword reading, a one-way ANOVA was conducted and a significant difference ($p < 0.000$) favoring the intervention group was found. Again, this difference was significant only for the high and middle control groups.

Leafstedt, Richards, & Gerber (2004) use the intervention group's gains in DIBELs progress-monitoring outcomes to support their claim that the intervention was successful in increasing the phonological awareness skills of the students. However, the ANOVA analyses showed significant differences between the intervention and control groups only for Late PA and pseudoword reading. On these measures, only the progress of the high and middle ability groups differed significantly from that of their peers who received classroom instruction only. Therefore, it is difficult to validate the conclusion that the intervention itself had a significant effect. In addition, there are a number of confounding variables that could have influenced the findings. The intervention group included only 16 students in comparison to the 46 students in the control group, which inevitably affected the calculation of the mean pre and post-test scores. In addition, the control group included data from a

group of students who had been in kindergarten two years prior. Although the students were enrolled in the same school where the same core reading curriculum was used, differences between the two groups due to time may have existed. Finally, the lack of significant difference in growth between the intervention and the control groups suggest that the students' growth in PA may have been the result of classroom practices rather than the intervention. The report of the study does not include information about the classroom literacy experiences of the students, which makes it difficult to hypothesize which instructional factors most aided the students' growth.

Quiroga et al. (2002) also conducted a quantitative study to determine the effects of early phonological awareness intervention on the English literacy development of ELLs. In a follow-up study to their research on cross-linguistic transfer of phonological awareness skills (described in the first section of this chapter), the authors designed an early intervention model and studied its effects on a group of first grade students. Like Leafstedt, Richards, & Gerber, the authors hypothesized that direct, explicit instruction was an appropriate approach to use with young ELLs. However, Quiroga et al. (2002) hypothesized, based on their previous research, that direct instruction would be most effective when balanced with whole text instruction and a focus on comprehension. They also hypothesized that intervention in both L1 and L2 would enhance the English phonological awareness of the students.

From their original sample of 30 Spanish-speaking first-grade students (see section two), the four lowest achieving males and four lowest achieving females were selected to participate in a series of one-to-one tutorials. Each student received twelve thirty-minute interventions facilitated by one of the authors, who were fluent in both English and Spanish. Interventions occurred twice per week for six weeks and included phonological awareness

training in English and Spanish, explicit instruction in alphabetic principal, practice in reading and re-reading text, and comprehension monitoring. Activities included lessons from the Spanish Phonological Awareness Training Program (syllable segmentation and phoneme segmentation), phonological awareness games in both Spanish and English, spelling-phoneme correspondence lessons from the Talking Letters Program, guided assistance in applying the alphabetic principal to words, both singly and within written texts, and oral reading and re-reading of children's literature, during which comprehension was monitored and students were encouraged to discuss what they had read.

After the intervention session, the students were administered the Word Identification and Word Attack subtests of the Woodcock Reading Mastery Test- Revised and their scores were compared to their previous scores, determined in the authors' initial study. As a group, the students in the intervention significantly improved in English real-word reading ($p < 0.005$), but not in pseudoword reading. The students' test scores were also analyzed in relation to their English and Spanish verbal intelligence and oral proficiency, which fell into the below-average range for all students. In contrast, the post-test Word Identification and Word Attack scores fell into the low-average range, which countered the belief that oral language proficiency and verbal intelligence correlate to reading achievement. Quiroga et al. (2002) concluded that the intervention was effective in increasing the students' English literacy skills and, further, supported the idea that the reading delays of ELLs may be due to missing literacy experiences rather than language or learning differences.

However, there are a number of weaknesses and variables that draw away from the authors' conclusion. First, the sample size (eight students) was very small and, while some demographic information was provided for the original, larger sample, no specific

information is given about the eight students who participated in the follow-up study. In addition, the lack of a comparison group makes it impossible to determine the cause of the students' test score improvement. For the authors to claim that the intervention was responsible for the students' post-test improvement, it would have been necessary to post-test the remaining 22 students from the original sample as well. Extraneous variables that may have contributed to the students' improvement include differences in regular classroom instruction, the extent to which Spanish was spoken in the students' home, and additional assistance (such as pull-out ESL classes) that the students may have been receiving already. Finally, of the seven different assessments given to the students in the original sample, only one assessment was given as a post-test. This cannot be considered a comprehensive measurement of students' English literacy development; only the students' abilities to decode isolated words and non-words was measured in the post-test, although oral language development and comprehension were initially deemed important factors to consider.

The Congruence of Home, Community, and School Cultures

Rogoff (1990) defined literacy as a social and cultural practice in which meaning is co-constructed through the process of guided participation, or the collaboration between children and the adults and/or peers in their social and cultural environment. By the time children arrive at school, they have spent a great amount of time actively constructing literacy in their native language with the adults in their homes and communities. Home literacy learning can take many forms and can embody a variety of purposes. In addition, the characteristics of home literacy events vary greatly across cultures. This section will both

provide examples of these cultural variations and illustrate the potential problems that arise for students when their home and school literacy environments differ.

Wang, Bernas, & Eberhard (2002) conducted qualitative research to examine how literacy-related activities differ across cultural contexts and how these differences impact students' literacy learning within a school setting. Their study drew from theories of emergent literacy that define literacy development as a gradual, emergent process of constructing meanings across social contexts that rely on everyday interactions between children and adults. Because literacy events, attitudes about literacy, and adult-child interactions vary greatly across cultures, the authors surmised that students' ability to succeed in literacy-related activities within a school context is affected by the congruence between home, community, and school culture.

For their particular study, Wang, Bernas, & Eberhard (2002) focused on mother-child interactions within two distinct cultural communities, a Chinese community and an American Indian community. These communities were chosen due to their distinct differences in literacy tradition, child-rearing beliefs, and attitudes toward education. Chinese culture has a long tradition of print-based literacy, while American Indian culture has a long history of oral tradition. Chinese parents tend to prioritize educational achievement for their children, while American Indian parents tend to value life-related learning for their children. In looking at these two different communities, the authors were interested in the following questions: 1) What are the characteristics of the literacy-related activities initiated by adults in Chinese and American Indian families? and 2) How do adults support their young children's early literacy learning in each of the cultural communities?

The Chinese community in which Wang, Bernas, & Eberhard (2002) conducted their study was located in the industrial part of Nanjing province in the People's Republic of China. All of the community's residents were workers in a large vehicle manufacturing factory. Twenty mothers and twenty children participated in the study during the summer of 1999. The average age of the children who participated in the study was four years and one month, with an equal number of male and female participants. All children were the only children in their families. The average age of the mothers was thirty two years and two months. The average length of the mothers' formal education was seven years, 65% worked in the local factory, and 35% were unemployed. 25% of the children studied spent 4 to 6 hours per day in the factory daycare center. The participants were recruited by five local contact persons. Each family was visited by the researchers three times before beginning data collection to ensure that the families would feel comfortable in their presence.

The American Indian sample included members of two tribal villages in the Standing Rock reservation of South Dakota in the United States. Twenty mothers and twenty children participated in the study during the spring of 1995. The average age of the children was four years and one month, with an equal number of male and female participants. All of the children in the sample were first born, 57% of them had one younger sibling, and 43% had two younger siblings. None of the children attended schools at the time of the study, 75% of them spent 2-4 hours per day with a grandparent or other relative, and 25% spent most of the day with their mothers. The average age of the mothers was twenty three years and five months and the average length of their formal education was seven years. 90% of the mothers were unemployed and 10% were working in local restaurants and bars. The mothers were contacted for participation in the study by American Indian undergraduate students who

were originally from the tribal villages. The researchers visited each family three times prior to data collection to ensure that the families were comfortable with their presence.

The mothers and children from each community were observed and videotaped in their homes during their daily routines. Each family was observed during eight sessions over four weeks for approximately two hours per session. 345 hours of videotape was collected from the Chinese sample, with an average of 17.25 hours per each mother-child pair. 322 hours of videotape was collected from the American Indian sample, with an average of 16.1 hours per each mother-child pair. The videotapes were transcribed verbatim and checked by native speakers of each of the two communities with a 95% overall reliability among the transcribers.

Wang, Bernas, & Eberhard (2001) coded their data using several measures. First, they created two categories of coding to examine the overall maternal initiations of literacy-related activities: 1) the initiation of literacy related episodes and 2) the initiation of non-literacy related episodes. The researchers defined the initiation of a literacy related episode as “an interaction between a mother and her child in which the mother initiated an interaction that was related to the process of helping the child to become literate.” Literacy-related episodes, by this definition, included not only interactions during which literacy skills were explicitly taught or related to print, but also interactions that involved narrative talk and oral retellings of an event or story.

After the literacy-related episodes were identified and transcribed, the researchers examined and coded different types of literacy-related episodes initiated by the mothers in the two communities. Three types of maternal support were identified and examined: explicit and implicit support, contextual and event-specific support, and elaboration. Explicit

support was defined as a mother's initiation that was directly print-based, while implicit support was defined as a mother-child interaction that was not print-based, yet implicitly contributes to the child's literacy development. Examples provided included a Chinese mother who offered explicit support by pointing out a particular character and showing the child how to write it and an American Indian mother who offered implicit support by telling a family story in narrative form, thus implicitly teaching about character, setting, plot, story sequence, and theme.

In the second category of coding, contextual support was used to describe literacy-episodes in which the mother reinforced the context of a particular literacy event, while event-specific support was used to describe literacy-episodes in which the mother asked questions that specifically related to the literacy event. For example, when an American Indian child told her mother that her aunt had made corn bread for lunch, her mother offered contextual support by asking questions about how the bread was made, who made it, who else was present at lunch, and how corn grew. She then offered a narrative about the child's grandmother who peeled "days and days" of corn as a child. In contrast, when a Chinese child pointed out a bing tang hulu (preserved fruit with honey or sugar) in a book he was reading with his mother, the mother offered event-specific support by only asking questions about the bing tang hulu and asking the child to point to the characters in the book.

The third type of maternal support identified by the researchers, elaboration, referred to times in which a mother expanded on a child's prior knowledge of literacy-related activities by asking for or offering additional information. For example, when a Chinese child pointed to a picture and identified it as a rabbit, the mother asked him to point to the word rabbit in the book as well.

Wang, Bernas, & Eberhard (2002) randomly selected 35% of their coding to check for reliability. The overall reliability for the coding was determined at 89.2% (93% for the overall literacy initiation, 88% for the types of interaction, 91% for maternal time spent on interaction, 88% explicit/implicit support, 87% contextual/event-specific support, and 88% elaborative support). Different coders checked all of the data.

The researchers found that 43% of the overall interactions initiated by Chinese mothers were literacy-related, while only 10% of the overall interactions initiated by American Indian mothers were literacy-related. An arcsin transformation ($\gamma' = 2 \arcsin(\gamma^{1/2})$) was conducted to examine the significance of this difference. A t-test was conducted on the transformed data to determine that the Chinese mothers were more likely than the American Indian mothers to privilege literacy-related activities with their children. Of the overall literacy-related interactions, 83% initiated by the Chinese mothers were print-related while 22% initiated by the American Indian mothers were print related. The Chinese mothers were significantly more likely ($p < 0.001$) than the American Indian mothers to use explicit support in literacy-related interactions. The Chinese mothers were significantly more likely ($p < 0.001$) to focus on event-specific aspects of literacy events while American Indian mothers were more likely to focus on contextual aspects. Chinese mothers were also more likely to expand on their child's answers in literacy events ($p < 0.001$) while American Indian mothers were more likely to accept the child's version with expansion.

Wang, Bernas, & Eberhard (2002) drew a number of conclusions from their research and suggested several implications. The Chinese mothers in their study were eager to engage their children in literacy-related activities, oriented their children to print, spent longer time interacting with their children in literacy-related activities, and supported their children's

literacy development in explicit, event-specific, and elaborative ways. The American Indian mothers engaged their children in literacy-related activities with less frequency and intensity, placed more focus on life-related rather than print-related narratives, and supported their children's literacy development in implicit and contextual ways. The researchers drew parallels between these findings and the greater social contexts embodied by the different communities: in Chinese culture, literacy is valued as a measure of cultural achievement and adults in that culture will work hard to ensure their children's success in literacy whereas, in American Indian culture, child socialization is considered to be a holistic process in which children are encouraged to seek meanings from daily experiences.

Implications suggested by the researchers for classroom practice are as follows: 1) teachers should find out about home and community literacy practices in order to better design classroom literacy activities that are responsive to children's different cultural experiences, 2) teachers should observe children carefully and provide them with a variety of literacy activities that are sensitive to their learning styles and prior ideas of appropriate adult-child interaction, 3) narratives and personal stories should be included in school literacy activities, 4) children need to choose their own literacy activities in the early stages of schooling, and 5) teachers can support students' language and literacy development by offering supports that are explicit, implicit, event-specific, contextual, and elaborative.

The data collection methods used by Wang, Bernas, & Eberhard (2002) supported an accurate reflection of reality in a variety of ways. Participants were recruited by individuals who were from, and familiar with, the two different communities. The researchers made several visits to each family prior to data collection to ensure that the participant families would feel comfortable with their presence and, thus, the scenes depicted in the videotapes

would represent a more natural picture of daily activities. The videotapes were transcribed verbatim and checked by native speakers from each of the communities, which would help to eliminate some cultural biases or misinterpretations that might naturally arise during data analysis. The method of coding data was theoretically based on Clay's theory of emerging literacy and Bourdieu's theories of social cultural literacy learning. Within this context, various literacy-related events are clearly defined and coded so that further research could employ the same system of coding. Although the coding was checked for reliability, no information is offered as to how many additional coders were utilized and what method was used to rate reliability. This is a weakness of the study.

In addition, there are significant differences between the two communities studied that could also influence the nature of mother-child literacy interactions in addition to cultural differences alone. First, national and regional differences are not accounted for. Political and economic climate, community structure, the organization and characteristics of public schooling, and public attitudes about schooling may vary greatly between the People's Republic of China and the United States. If the authors had chosen a Chinese community within the United States as a focus of their study, some of these variables could have been accounted for. In addition, differences exist in the family structure and economic status of the families in each of the communities. While the mothers in each community group all had a formal education averaging 7 years, 90% of the American Indian mothers were unemployed in comparison to the 35% unemployment rate of the Chinese mothers. Of the employed mothers in each group, the Chinese mothers worked in a factory setting while the American Indian mothers worked in restaurants or bars. Without knowing the nature of the factory work done by the Chinese mothers, it is still surmisable that work-related literacy

may be of more economic importance for the Chinese mothers than for the American Indian mothers, a value that would be transmitted to their children. 25% of the Chinese children attended daycare while none of the American Indian children did. The study did not look at what kind of literacy-related activities these children may have encountered in daycare and how those activities factored into their literacy development. Finally, none of the Chinese children had siblings, while all of the children in the American Indian sample had one or more sibling. The Chinese mothers may have had more time and resources available to give direct attention to the literacy development of their only child, while the American Indian mothers had to divide their time and resources among two or more children.

In a year-long ethnographic study, Li (2004) followed the English literacy progress, school experiences, and home experiences of two Chinese-Canadian English language learners in a Grade 4/5 classroom who were defined as struggling by both teachers and parents. Her research was situated within a socioconstructivist framework, based on Vygotsky's theories, that defines literacy learning as "a dynamic process that involves complex social relationships with members of their particular sociocultural contexts such as teachers and parents." Within this framework, Li was interested in identifying discontinuities between the students' home and school language, culture, and pedagogical influences that may have added to their struggles in developing English literacy.

The two students, Billy and Jake (pseudonyms), were in a combined 4/5 grade class in Taylor Elementary school, located in a middle-class, predominantly Chinese suburb of Riverview, British Columbia. Of the 241 students enrolled in the school, 158 students' home language was Chinese, 32 students' home language was English, and 51 students spoke another language at home. 151 students in the school were registered as ESL students and

placed at five different ESL levels based on yearly reading and writing assessments. The school had 12 regular classroom teachers and three ESL / Resource teachers, all of whom were monolingual English-speaking Caucasians. The three ESL / Resource teachers were also responsible for all of the school's cognitively delayed, special needs students.

The classroom teacher, Mrs. Dawson, had been teaching in the district for 22 years and was in her first year at Taylor Elementary. Her grade 4/5 combined class contained 24 students, 10 in grade 4 and 14 in grade 5. 17 of the students were Chinese, 3 were Southeast Asian, 3 were white, and 1 was African-Canadian. 20 of the students were designated ESL. Literacy activities in the classroom included traditional spelling and grammar / vocabulary activities, silent reading, teacher read-alouds, literature circles, writer's workshops, and cross-curricular reading and writing activities.

In choosing the study's participants, Li (2004) used purposeful sampling. The students, Billy and Jake, were chosen due to their family backgrounds, interests, and English literacy levels. Li was a participant-observer in both the students' classrooms and homes. Because she was an ethnic Chinese, bilingual woman completing a postdoctorate degree in Language and Literacy Education, she felt that she was able to achieve insider status in both the classroom and in the homes of the children. Data was collected from October 2000 to June 2001 and included direct observation, participant observation, interviews, and document collection. Li visited the students' classroom once per week, participated in classroom activities, observed and took notes on interactions and literacy activities, and photocopied samples of the students' written work. Near the end of the project, she conducted three focus group discussions that involved the two participants and two other children from the class. In these discussions, which were audiotaped, students were asked about their literacy

experiences in and out of school and their perceptions of reading, writing, and learning. The classroom teacher, Mrs. Dawson, was interviewed at the both the beginning and end of the research project. The participating students' mothers were interviewed near the end of the project.

Li (2004) conducted ongoing data analysis throughout the project in order to identify emerging themes. At the end of the data collection period, interviews were transcribed and a more systematic analysis of the data was conducted. Li examined the data to define major domains: students' home and school literacy experiences, teachers' and parents' perceptions of the students, and cross-cultural differences. These domains were broken down into smaller subcategories that were used to code transcripts and notes. The transcripts were first coded by hand and then entered into the NUDIST computer program, which aids identification of key moments and phrases, all domains and categories relevant to each of the participants, and important themes. In the report of her study, Li profiles each of the students and includes portions of the interviews.

The first student, Billy, was in the fourth grade and classified as a low Level 3 ESL student. His literacy ability showed little improvement throughout the year, although he met the standards of his age group in math, fine arts, music, and physical education. He was described as having a serious personality and while he expressed a high interest in learning, often appeared lost in class. In school, Billy spoke English only to teachers and non-Cantonese speaking classmates and Cantonese in all other situations. He was constantly reminded by the teacher that speaking Cantonese was inappropriate in school and encouraged to use English only. English vocabulary and spelling were difficult for Billy. While he seemed to work hard on vocabulary and spelling assignments, he had difficulty with

retention. When reading, he sounded out some words, but often failed to guess the meaning from context and tended to give up when he got stuck. His low reading ability seemed to affect his understanding of other subjects such as science, social studies, and math. The teacher noted that Billy was more successful in comprehending what he had read when working within a group, but could not comprehend much when working independently. In literacy circle tasks, he could identify main ideas, but had difficulty drawing conclusions or inferring relationships between events or characters. For silent reading, Li noted that Billy often chose books that were too difficult for him, such as Harry Potter, and wandered around the room with his eyes rather than looking at the page.

Mrs. Dawson felt that Billy's personality was one core reason for his difficulties in school. She described him as somber, sensitive, and unforgiving and said that interactions with others often made him defensive. The teacher believed that Billy's lack of improvement in English literacy was due to his frequent use of Cantonese in school. Mrs. Smith, the ESL / Resource teacher who worked with Billy, agreed with this assessment. Both teachers felt that if Billy spoke only English in school, his English literacy skills would improve.

At home, Billy's parents supervised his learning, gave him additional homework tasks, and sent him to private lessons. After school, he practiced piano for an hour each day, after which he met with a private tutor to study math, English, and French. He also attended Chinese language school. The tutor, the Chinese school, and Billy's parents assigned homework in addition to his homework from school. Each night after dinner, he reviewed his various lessons and completed homework under the supervision of his parents. In the home, Billy code-switched between Cantonese, Mandarin, and English, but spoke predominately Cantonese with his family. In one interview, Billy expressed to Li that he

enjoyed learning Cantonese and Mandarin and wished he could learn and use it more in school.

Billy's parents were concerned by his difficulties in reading and writing English, but attributed his struggles to the school's practices, Billy's own attitude toward learning, and his prior education. Mei, Billy's mother, believed that the school should teach more academic content and assign more homework. She believed that the grade 4/5 split was distracting to student learning and that the school gave children too much freedom.

Jake, the second participant, was an 11 year-old boy in the fifth grade at the time of the study. At the beginning of the year, he was below grade level performance in all areas except physical education and finished the year without much overall progress. He was designated a low Level 3 ESL student and received pull-out instruction twice a week. Li described him as generally quiet during class time, but verbal and outgoing in social situations with classmates. Like Billy, Jake preferred to speak Cantonese during lunch, recess, or less structured class time. He often spoke to classmates in Cantonese to clarify English instructions or word meanings. He tended to choose books for silent reading that were too difficult for him and left many of his homework pages for literacy circle blank, making it unclear whether or not he read or understood the assigned books. Jake had difficulty pronouncing hard words, spelling common words, and understanding verbs and irregular verbs. In an interview, Jake admitted that difficult words in science and math caused him problems in understanding. He expressed dislike for reading, vocabulary, and spelling but said he enjoyed writing because "you can play with writing."

Jake's school situation differed from Billy's in that Jake had been experiencing problems with literacy since grade 1. Mrs. Dawson and Mrs. Smith identified four factors

they believed to contribute to his learning difficulties: a possible learning disability, Jake's attitude toward learning, limited parental involvement, and speaking too much Chinese. Jake had been suggested for learning disability testing by the Special Needs Committee, but had not been tested. Mrs. Dawson described him as quiet and withdrawn and stated that his choice to be this way hindered his participation in the classroom. Like Billy, Jake was constantly reminded to use English, rather than Cantonese, in the classroom and his teacher regarded his use of Cantonese as a hindrance to his English development. Mrs. Dawson also expressed difficulty in communicating with Jake's parents and believed that they did not read to Jake at home or monitor his homework.

Jake's home life was less structured than Billy's. He was required to finish his homework every day before he went to play. Because neither of his parents knew enough English to assist with his homework, an older sister often helped him. He also attended Chinese school and completed homework from there that mostly consisted of copying, reciting / memorizing, and writing short compositions. He spoke mostly Cantonese at home and English, occasionally, with his sisters. His mother had previously hired a tutor in reading and math for two hours a week, but it was too expensive for the family to maintain. Although Jake expressed enjoyment of writing at school, he did little writing at home.

In interviews, Jake's mother, Lan, expressed many of the same concerns as Billy's mother. She felt that the school was not traditional enough, did not assign enough homework, and that the combined 4/5 grade class was detrimental to struggling learners like Jake. She believed that more systematic and linear instruction would help Jake learn, including the teaching of reading word-by-word and sentence-by-sentence. In contrast to the

beliefs of the teachers, she felt that Jake's struggles in school were due to insufficient support, ineffective instruction, and insufficient homework.

After reviewing and coding the data, Li (2004) identified several discontinuities between the students' home and school cultures. The first was in instructional methods. Both mothers, Mei and Lan, believed that reading meant decoding words and skills should be taught in sequence through drill and memorization, whereas a more semantic oriented approach, focused on making connections, was used in the classroom. The second discontinuity involved ideas about homework. The parents defined homework as workbook pages, memorization, or drill practice and did not consider the reading practice assigned by the teacher to be homework. Thus, both sets of parents employed outside tutors to provide more homework for the students. The third discontinuity was in ideas about the causes of students' low achievement. While the parents suggested mainly external reasons for their children's literacy struggles, the teachers suggested internal ones. As a result, the actions taken by the parents to supplement their children's learning did not match the recommendations of the teachers. Finally, Li found a discontinuity in the lack of communication between the parents and teachers. The parents had little idea about the rationale behind the school's practices and the teachers had little understanding of the students' home life and parents' beliefs about learning.

Li (2004) also identified the literacy learning and instructional practices within the classroom that she believed could have contributed to the students' struggles with literacy. These practices were coded as follows: 1) lack of instruction, 2) reading materials, 3) attitudes toward children's L1, and 4) assessment of struggling learners. Mrs. Dawson gave little direct instruction in basic literacy skills or comprehension. She did not explicitly teach

word meanings, usages, or how to use multiple cueing systems to read words. In literature circle, Billy and Jake were given the same books to read as the rest of the class, but were not explicitly taught strategies to help them read the more difficult books, nor were students explicitly taught how to participate in discussion groups. Additionally, the books selected for literature circle all featured white, middle-class characters or neutral characters such as animals, which were disconnected from the students' backgrounds. While both teachers, when interviewed, expressed understanding of the importance of students' first language, they adopted an English-only policy in the classroom. Thus, students were not encouraged to use their first language to make sense of materials in English. Finally, the assessment of struggling learners in the school was found by Li to be problematic. Both teachers attributed the students' difficulties to internal factors, yet assessment was not done on either student to follow up on this hypothesis.

From her findings, Li (2004) suggested several implications for practice. First, teachers need to familiarize themselves with students' cultural backgrounds, as well as the cultural beliefs and educational expectations of students' parents. Second, the development of school-parent partnerships is crucial in order to address discontinuities between home and school culture. Teachers must also recognize that conventional ways of communicating, such as through conferences and report cards, may not work for some families who are of different cultural backgrounds or who do not speak English. Finally, students who struggle with literacy in English should be encouraged to use their first language in order to make sense of it.

Li's (2004) study embodies the qualities of thorough ethnographic research. Her theoretical framework (socioconstructivist theory) was clearly defined and her findings and

implications were situated within this framework. Her findings clearly relate to the purpose of her study, which was to identify and describe discontinuities between the students' home and school culture and to hypothesize how these discontinuities may have contributed to the students' struggles with English literacy. The data collected was thorough, represented a variety of perspectives, and was coded in a clear way that could easily transfer to further ethnographic research. Although her system of coding was not member-checked for accuracy, her role as a participant-researcher increased the likelihood that her findings represented reality. As a Chinese woman, bilingual Chinese-English speaker, and professional, she could blend in to the different social contexts described in the study.

Some limitations of Li's (2004) research are the small sample size and the sex of the participants. Only two students were studied and both were male. The experiences of the students' and their families must also be considered in the context of the region where they live and the particularities of the Chinese community in that region, which may or may not be similar to Chinese communities in other locations. Because both students were male, gender differences and attitudes about gender roles are also unaccounted for. It is possible that the expectations for the students, both within the classroom and within the home, may have been different if they had been female. These variables could be explored in further research.

Because Li's (2004) research focuses on students in the fourth and fifth grades, it may not be generalizable to students in the primary grades. However, it is included in this review of the literature because many of the issues faced by Billy and Jake are similar to those faced by the K-1 students described in the following studies by Ruan (2003) and Wan (2000). This

suggests that the classroom difficulties of bilingual students, if not directly addressed, persist over time.

Ruan (2003) conducted a similar study with students in a mainstream kindergarten classroom in the United States. Like Li, Ruan was interested in examining the ways in which culturally incongruent practices in the classroom inhibit the English literacy learning of cultural minority students. Ruan was a participant-observer for 20 weeks in a mainstream kindergarten classroom in a mid-western town in the United States. At the beginning of the study, 18 students in the kindergarten classroom were Caucasian, two were Chinese, and one was Korean. Shortly into the study, the Korean student left and one new Chinese student joined the class. The three Chinese students were the focus of Ruan's study.

Purposeful sampling was used to select the study's site and participants. The kindergarten teacher was a white female who had been recommended by the school administration and her colleagues as an effective teacher. The three students were all Chinese-English bilingual females who spoke Chinese at home. Two of the students, Ami and Xixi, were second-generation Chinese Americans born in the United States. Both were considered by the teacher to be above average in their oral English proficiency. The third student, Juli, had been in the United States for one year and was lacking in oral English proficiency.

The data collection began in the spring and continued through summer. Ruan (2003) assumed a participant-observer role in the classroom. Because she was also Chinese-English bilingual, she could communicate with the students in both languages during the observation. Ruan participated in classroom activities, wrote field notes during and after the observations, and recorded student-teacher dialogues. She also conducted interviews with the teacher and

the parents of each of the students. Data was analyzed using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1978). Ruan conducted open coding with the field notes and interview transcripts in order to identify emerging themes. These themes were re-examined with ongoing data collection. Axial coding was used to group data according to different features and dimensions from which patterns related to the study were generated.

Certain patterns were evident in all three students: they did not readily engage in classroom discourse and did not readily ask for help from the teacher. All three students had difficulty in understanding directions and expectations. The student with less English proficiency, Juli, experienced more difficulty than her peers. Ruan (2003) hypothesized that these behavior patterns correlate to expectations within Chinese families: children do not volunteer answers in front of adults unless they are asked and will not ask for help from an authority figure because it is shaming to do so.

The parent interviews showed that literacy patterns at home differed from literacy practices within the classroom. All three students were exposed to books at home, but read-aloud experiences were infrequent. They were encouraged to read independently and not encouraged to converse with adults about what they read. Ruan (2003) hypothesized that these cultural practices discouraged them from participating in the child-centered discourse model used in the classroom.

The teacher, when interviewed, expressed her opinion that there is no difference in the learning styles and abilities of children from different cultural backgrounds, that all students progress through the same stages, and that literacy emerges through students' engaging in meaningful reading and writing activities. The literacy activities in her classroom included reading aloud to the class and independent reading and writing.

Individual instruction was not given unless requested by a student. Ruan (2003) hypothesized that the teacher's focus on autonomy and student freedom, as well as her "culture blindness," was detrimental to the three students, who already exhibited some culturally determined learning styles and interaction patterns.

Ruan (2003) concluded that it is crucial for teachers to acknowledge the learning differences in children from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. She suggests several implications for teaching English literacy to bilingual students: a culturally congruent classroom, direct student-teacher interaction, explicit instructions in relation to the rules of participation, discourse, and codes of power (Delpit, 1988), and understanding of students' home literacy patterns.

While Ruan (2003) raises many important points, supported by previous research, about the congruence between home and school cultures, her findings are not adequately supported by her own research. The students' home literacy practices were described as independent reading, which was congruent with literacy practices in the classroom. While she hypothesizes that the incongruence of discourse patterns at home to discourse patterns at school may have inhibited the students from participating in discussions or asking questions, it is unclear if she has any basis for this assumption. Although Ruan conversed with the students during classroom observation, the students were never formally interviewed. Furthermore, two of the students were considered to be proficient in oral English so, although Ruan disagreed with the classroom practices, she could not claim that those practices were affecting the students' English literacy development. The third student, who lacked proficiency in oral English, was a recent immigrant who had been in the United States for one year. Thus, it is difficult to determine how this students' emergent English literacy

might have progressed. As a Chinese-American woman, Ruan may have used her own experiences and knowledge of Chinese culture to interpret her observations and findings. However, the lines between her observations and her own prior assumptions are unclear.

Han & Ernst-Slavit (1999) conducted a case study of one Chinese-speaking student's strategies in adapting to classroom literacy events during his kindergarten and first grade years. This study is informative in that it both describes some of the difficulties faced by this student, particularly in regards to language and adaptation to a holistic, student-centered curriculum, and the ways in which the student, the teacher, and the classroom environment converged in order to overcome these initial difficulties. The authors' approached their research from a theoretical framework that defines literacy as a social event and writing as a process of creating personal meaning that involves complex interactions among the writer, the literacy community, and the written text.

The case study was part of a larger, longitudinal qualitative study that followed the English literacy development of six Chinese-speaking children during their kindergarten and first grade years. The study's setting was a first-grade classroom in a Northwest rural college town. Students of the elementary school are often children of faculty and staff at the nearby university and, on average, 10 to 20 countries per year are represented by the student population. The focal student, Tong-bing, joined the school in March of his kindergarten year after arriving from China. The language spoken in his home was Chinese and, at the end of the year, he had English skills that were very limited in comparison to the other five Chinese-speaking students in the longitudinal study. Han & Ernst-Slavit observed Tong-bing throughout his first grade year in order to answer the following questions: 1) How does a limited English proficient student participate in literacy events when his command of English

is very limited?, 2) What were Tong-bing's reactions and strategies to fulfill such a requirement in a language he was just learning?, 3) What type of classroom literacy practices supported his literacy learning?, 4) What role did Tong-bing's family literacy practices play in enhancing or constraining his English literacy at school?, and 5) What kinds of home-school connections were available to Tong-bing's parents?

Data was collected through ethnographic methods that included participant-observation for over a year, informal and formal interviewing with the kindergarten, first grade, and ESL teachers, the focal child, and his parents, and collection of student writing samples. The research focused on "centers" as a classroom event. In the first grade classroom, centers were a one-hour block every morning during which students rotated through four different stations every fifteen minutes. Stations mostly focused on reading and writing practices and included focused literature discussions (around goals such as comprehension or text sequence), skill-based activities (decoding words in context), seatwork (journal writing, spelling, or art), miscellaneous activities (listening center, computer, art), and literacy club (reading and discussing books of choice). Halfway through the year, students began the Writer's Workshop, in which they drafted, edited, and published pieces of writing. The classroom teacher, Mrs. Allen, described her approach to teaching literacy as literature-based. She felt it important to fill her classroom with books and to encourage students to read, write, or draw whenever possible. She also believed in encouraging student writing through topic choice and the use of drawing and invented spelling.

Tong-bing experienced initial difficulties in the classroom in a variety of ways. The authors described him as being frequently unclear about directions or responsibilities, particularly during less-structured activities such as free reading. Because the teacher

separated the Chinese-speaking students into different groups, Tong-bing was unable to ask classmates to clarify directions in Chinese. In journal writing, he experienced frustration over not understanding the purpose of using a journal, not knowing how to “invent” spelling, and in bumping up against his family’s expectations to spell words correctly. In literacy events at home, Tong-bings’ parents emphasized memorizing words and having perfect spelling, particularly in his learning of Chinese characters. The authors hypothesized that the incongruence of home literacy events to school literacy events created difficulties for Tong-bing in school.

Han & Ernst-Slavit (1999) went on to identify the strategies and classroom practices that helped Tong-bing in overcoming his initial difficulties. In journal writing, Tong-bing began to use English words memorized at home or environmental print, such as crayon wrappers, in order to spell correctly. He also learned to use resources like the dictionary and a list of high-frequency words provided by the teacher. Over time and as his English improved, the authors noticed that Tong-bing began to write more and pay less attention to correct spelling. The authors identified Writer’s Workshop as the classroom event during which Tong-bing’s writing most improved. During Writer’s Workshop, Tong-bing had the opportunity to draft pieces, conference individually with the teacher and receive specific support for his writing, and then publish and share his writing with classmates. The authors believed that this balance of self-initiated work and explicit teacher attention enhanced both Tong-bing’s writing skills and perception of himself as part of the “literacy club.” Finally, the classroom teacher implemented a Read-at-Home project, through which she frequently communicated with parents about her pedagogical practices, expectations, classroom literacy activities, and how parents could become involved in their child’s education.

Han & Ernst-Slavit (1999) concluded that, while an authentic literacy club and community can be an initially challenging environment for limited English proficient students, students may eventually adapt to and benefit from this type of literacy environment. They suggested that teachers can enhance the literacy learning of limited English proficient students by providing a variety of meaningful texts in reading and writing centers, establish home-school connections through projects such as the Read-at-Home project, provided opportunities during class to interact with students in a one-on-one basis, and allow students opportunities to write at their own pace and to collaborate with peers and adults in their writing process.

The most apparent weakness of Han & Ernst-Slavin's (1999) study is that it examined the classroom experiences of only one student. However, the difficulties faced by Tong-bing were similar to those of the Chinese-Canadian students studied by Li(2004) and the Chinese-American students studied by Ruan(2003). This suggests that may be some commonalities among the experiences of ethnic Chinese students that influence their adjustment to the school literacy environment. Still, these findings may not be generalizable to students of other cultural groups or students with different home environments and/or socio-economic status.

The authors clearly define their theoretical framework and analyze the data relevantly. Data collection was thorough, employing a variety of methods, and the coding of data was reported so that a similar study could be conducted on another population. The authors give detailed descriptions of some of Tong-bing's difficulties and coping strategies, as well as the classroom practices they identified as most effective. Although little information was given about the specific improvement in Tong-bing's English literacy skills,

this omission is relevant to the authors' theoretical framework, which views literacy learning as a social event in which the individual constructs meaning from text.

Although Han & Ernst-Slavin (1999) stated implications for classroom practice that clearly related to their findings, they neglected to address the issue of students' native language use in the classroom. Because Tong-bing's classroom teacher separated him from the other Chinese-speaking students in the class during literacy lessons, he was unable to ask for help or clarify instructions in Chinese. While the authors mentioned this as a factor that contributed to Tong-bing's classroom difficulties, they did not discuss it in their conclusions or implications. This was an unfortunate omission.

In response to the dilemma of high drop-out rates for students who are English language learners, Bhattacharya (2000) conducted a qualitative study to examine the school adjustment process of children who had recently emigrated from three South Asian countries: Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan. She found that language difficulties and the incongruence of home and school cultures were significant factors affected the school success of students who are English language learners. For the purpose of the study, school adjustment was understood in the context of acculturation: an accumulative social learning process that involves assimilation of the new culture by the individual who also retains the values of their culture of origin. Bhattacharya cited previous research to identify three factors that enable vulnerable students to adjust to school: a strong link between parents and teachers, communication of ideals and expectations to students by both parents and teachers, and children's acceptance of the value of education.

The participants in the study were 75 school children and their parents. The students were between the ages of 6 and 17, attended New York City public schools, and had been

referred for social history evaluations because of their below average or failing grades. The students and their families had emigrated to the United States from Bangladesh, India, or Pakistan and had lived in the United States between 6 months and 12 years. All were legal residents whose immigration was a personal, voluntary choice. In their native countries, the parents had been school teachers, college professors, and landowners; all parents reported working in American jobs that were below their educational qualifications.

Data on family history and school achievement were collected between January 1996 and December 1997. The children and their parents were interviewed separately at either the interviewer's office or in their home. The interviewer was a social worker who spoke several languages appropriate to the study's sample: Bengali and Urdu/Hindi. Each interview lasted about an hour and included both open and closed-ended items. Content analysis was used to identify themes from the interviews, categories were defined (children's current performance in school, proficiency in English, and the level of support received from teachers) and responses were coded accordingly. Data collected from parents were used to further analyze the students' responses.

Bhattacharya (2000) identified three major themes from the interviews: 1) parents' recognition of the school staff and teachers as their allies, 2) convergence of parents' and children's beliefs about the value of education, and 3) children's determination to achieve goals. 95% of the parents were satisfied with the help their children were receiving at school and felt that what they wanted their children to learn was congruent with what was being taught. However, the findings also indicated that most parents did not have direct links to their children's schools and did not participate in school activities. Only 23% of parents attended parent-teacher conferences; English language ability and work schedules were the

two major reasons cited for not attending. 95% of the parents believed that education was an important tool for their children's success, but many parents also noted that the teaching methods in their countries of origin differed so greatly from those in the United States that they were not able to help their children with homework. 95% of the families spoke Bengali, Urdu, or Hindi at home. Of the students interviewed, 90% believed that their teachers were helpful. Many students also noted, however, that because of the large number of students in each class, they were not able to ask for the individual assistance they needed. 92% of children expressed a strong desire to succeed academically and many of them mentioned that they felt an obligation to fulfill their parents' dreams. Many of the students expressed the desire to become proficient in English and linked English proficiency to academic success. However, limited English skills were the most common reason cited for not participating in class discussions or interacting with other students.

Bhattacharya (2000) concluded that several barriers existed for these students that made their school adjustment difficult: limited English skills, the emphasis on upholding their family's reputation, pressure from parents, and guilt over their failure to fulfill family expectations. She suggested a number of implications from her research: 1) further research is necessary to understand the lives and experiences of South Asian immigrants and their school acculturation process, 2) comprehensive needs assessments should be conducted for immigrant students to identify the factors that may influence their school adjustment, 3) a strong link between parents and school is essential for children's school adjustment, and 4) social workers and school counselors should receive cultural diversity training in order to better understand the needs of immigrant students.

In the report of her study, Bhattacharya (2000) identified several weaknesses of her research: 1) the small sample, 2) the restriction of the study population to low-achieving students and the absence of a high-achieving comparison group, and 3) the lack of causal relationships (such as the way pre-emigration perceptions of life may affect school adjustment) in the descriptive findings. In addition, there are a number of other weaknesses that make it difficult to draw conclusions from the research. The age range of the students is incredibly wide (6 to 17 years old) and it is likely that there are different factors that contribute to school adjustment and academic success at different ages. While 95% of the families were reported to speak their native language at home, no specific information is provided about the students' levels of English proficiency. Finally, the students' teachers were not interviewed, thus excluding important pieces of information that might clarify the study's findings. In particular, while 95% of the parents believed their educational philosophies to be congruent with the school or classroom philosophy, most parents also cited a lack of communication with the school due to language or work barriers. Therefore, the parents' beliefs that home and school practices were congruent were based on assumption rather than clear communication. While Bhattacharya (2000) cited a strong link between parents and school as one of the primary factors that ensures the success of at-risk immigrant students, she neglected to address this factor in her findings. Her findings could be expanded through a more intensive study, conducted on a population with a smaller age range, that includes analysis of the students' specific language struggles and the actual congruency of home and school beliefs and practices.

In a qualitative study, Volk & Acosta (2003) examined the home and school literacy practices of three bilingual kindergarten students and their families to determine how literacy

was co-constructed by the children and their networks of support. Their research was embodied within Vygotsky's socio-constructivist theory and Rogoff's theory of Guided Participation and Bakhtin's theory of the social origins of language. The researchers' theoretical framework included the ideas of the co-construction of knowledge between children and the more expert members of their culture, language as a social event, and intertextuality, defined as the collaborative construction of text within a wider process of constructing a context. Most specifically, Volk & Acosta were interested in examining the syncretism of literacy events, or the tension between different texts and contexts and how these tensions are transformed through language. In their findings, syncretic literacy events are identified as instances when children used background information from two, often incongruent, social contexts (i.e. church and school) to derive meaning from text.

The study participants were three Puerto Rican bilingual students (2 F, 1 M) from the same bilingual kindergarten classroom. The school and the children's homes were located in two adjacent working-class neighborhoods with a high Puerto Rican population in a large Midwestern city. The three students were all 5 year-olds who turned 6 during the year of the study. All lived with extensive family networks including parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, cousins, and grandparents. The parents of all three students had attended school in Puerto Rico and had received high school diplomas or the equivalent. The families all spoke Spanish at home and attended Protestant Latino churches. English was spoken by the students occasionally at school and at home. Written texts at home were in both Spanish and English. The participants were selected after three months of fieldwork / observation within the bilingual kindergarten. They were selected in consultation with the teacher, using information from observations, a developmental assessment conducted by the teacher, and an

informal reading assessment. Participants were also chosen with the criteria that they had older siblings and families who belonged to Protestant Latino churches. This was done in an attempt to study families that were statistically similar to many other Puerto Rican families and to create a similarity of characteristics between literacy interactions in the different homes.

Observation and audiotaping was conducted in each home once a month for between two and four months at a time, after school and on weekends, between January and June. Observations and tapings were also conducted in the classroom, and observations only were conducted in the churches and two of the Sunday Schools. Data on reading and writing activity and oral and written texts were collected in all settings. Parent interviews were conducted in March, in which the parents helped to draw network maps detailing people who had interacted with the children in literacy events within the previous year. These maps were used to select literacy events for observation and taping during the subsequent three months.

Two Puerto Rican cultural insiders, the teacher and a research assistant, were used to help organize and analyze data through informal discussions. Tapes and field notes were reviewed throughout the data collection phase. Entire tapes were initially transcribed and, after patterns were identified, transcriptions occurred only for events that involved literacy. Guides and field notes were then used to identify literacy events in the transcripts and beginning and ending turns were noted.

The literacy event was the unit of analysis. In this study, a literacy event is defined as “a situated and socially constructed interaction that involved literacy and was informed by literacy.” Written texts and oral references to written texts were considered in addition to oral routines used in the classroom. For each event, the participants, the task, the text

involved, the language(s) used, and the duration were recorded. Literacy events were coded into two categories: parent-child events and child-child events. Each event was analyzed within a larger context that included information about the homes, the school, and the Puerto Rican community in the city. Literacy practices were analyzed for both the participants' actions and their related personal, familial, and cultural understandings about literacy. Tables were constructed to represent this analysis.

Syncretism was analyzed by exploring references across events and between texts used and referred to, also looking at the contexts in which they were constructed. This analysis was conducted turn-by-turn and also represented by a table.

Volk & Acosta (2003) identified 46 literacy events in the home transcripts: 18 in Julializ's home, lasting 4.25 hours; 9 in Manuel's home, lasting 1.05 hours; and 19 in Fidelia's home, lasting 2.03 hours. On average, the events were 10 minutes long; 15 events lasted 2 minutes or less and 8 were 20 minutes or more. 31 of the events integrated conversations and activities. The other 15 events were literacy lessons that involved some direct instruction by at least one participant. 6 events involved Bible reading, playing church, or using Bible-related texts. The report of the research includes one transcribed literacy event to support each of the following findings: 1) the participants often drew on school texts and contexts and syncretized these with meaningful family and culture related texts. Both phonics and meaning-based instruction was used, 2) the children and members of their networks often syncretized texts and contexts from school and from their religion, creating literacy events with strong personal significance, 3) the syncretism of school and home or church texts was constructed by both mothers and children in literacy events, as well as between the children and siblings or cousins. Children were more active participants in

these events than they were in events with their teacher in school, 4) the children syncretized texts from their lives and from popular culture with texts from school and religious texts and contexts, and 5) the children syncretized Spanish and English texts, using what they knew about both languages to facilitate the development of their English literacy.

Volk & Acosta (2003) also noted a number of additional findings and conclusions. To all of the parents, learning to read meant decoding words and putting letters together to form words, relating to how they learned to read in Puerto Rico. All of the parents in the study expressed that they valued and took their children's schooling seriously. Literacy interactions in the home often used the I-R-E pattern that was used in the bilingual kindergarten classroom. However, at home, greater modeling, scaffolding, and repetition were used in literacy events. The authors related these interactions to Rogoff's model of guided participation. In reviewing schoolwork or homework, parents were more likely to use an I-R-E discourse pattern and to emphasize correctness. In other contexts, such as reading the Bible, parents frequently prompted children to talk about the meaning. All of the parents believed that Spanish would facilitate the development of literacy in English and events at home took place in both Spanish and English. Finally, of all of the events analyzed, sociodramatic play engaged in by the children showed the most syncretizing of oral and written texts from home, school, church, and popular culture.

Implications for teachers suggested by Volk & Acosta (2003) were as follows: 1) teachers need to see and understand the guided participation used in Puerto Rican families. Home visits and interactions with families in community settings are key, 2) the discontinuity between home literacy events and school literacy events needs to be addressed by bringing students into discussions of multiple-literacies (explicitly talking about the codes of power),

3) teachers need to recognize that methods of teaching literacy are not neutral and that each method alone proposed a limited vision of what literacy is and is not, 4) teachers should work to co-construct syncretic literacy with children, just as children co-construct syncretic literacy with those in their support networks outside of school. The literacies that children are already constructing in their homes and communities should be considered important resources for school learning, and 5) teachers need to work with families to identify goals for their children, the resources and strategies used, and the literacies they construct.

Volk & Acosta (2003) recognized that the results of their study were not widely generalizable because the participants chosen represented a very specific sociocultural context. However, the participant selection was appropriate to the authors' theoretical framework, which necessitated examining literacy events as they are embedded within a specific sociocultural context. The study's findings are congruent with the two main questions initially posed by the authors, describing thoroughly the literacy practices co-constructed by children and their families as well as the texts and contexts used to co-construct syncretic literacy events. The authors used a number of data collection methods to ensure the thoroughness of their findings, as well as employed two cultural insiders to ensure for accuracy in their interpretations. Coding is reported and several examples for each category are given. The findings are also validated through clear examples. Using the same system of coding, within a similar theoretical framework, further studies could examine to co-construction of syncretic literacy events on other populations.

The implications for teaching stated by Volk & Acosta (2003) are also congruent with the study's findings. However, while data was collected from the participants' school setting, it is not reported. Since congruency between home and school literacy events is one

of the implications of the study, an analysis of the difference between the participants' home and school environments in relation to the students' competency level would strengthen their argument. The report of the study described the way that the children syncretized Spanish and English texts at home in order to facilitate the development of their English literacy. It would be interesting to examine if and how this syncretization occurred in the school environment.

In a similar qualitative study, Wan (2000) observed and analyzed the home literacy practices of a Chinese-American girl and her family. Like Volk & Acosta (2003), the author found that the adult members of the family used guided participation to help the child construct meaning from text. Additionally, many of the home literacy practices involved the conveying of cultural information, expectations, and morals. Wan's (2000) research was based on the theoretical framework that reading is a social and cultural process and that literacy is co-constructed between children and adult members in their social environment.

The participants in the study were a Chinese-American girl named Yuan, her parents, and her grandparents. All members of the family were Chinese and Yuan was the first child in her family to be born in the United States. At the beginning of the study, Yuan was two and a half years old. Wan (2000) observed the home literacy practices of the family for two years, from December 1995 to December 1997, once every other week. Data collection consisted of field notes, audio tapes, video tapes, interviews with family members, and artifacts collected in the home. Data analysis was ongoing throughout the study and was conducted through reading and re-reading, and comparing and contrasting to check for emerging themes. The author's coding was member checked by members of the participating family.

Wan (2000) described Yuan's home literacy environment, the adults' views of the value of home read-alouds, the impact of home culture on read-alouds, and adult-child interactions during literacy events. Yuan was exposed to a book-rich, bilingual environment at home. She had over 150 children's books in both English and Chinese, conversed in both languages with her parents (but only in Chinese with her grandparents), and was exposed to environmental print in both languages around the home. Yuan was read to daily by either a parent or grandparent. Read-alouds with her parents were conducted in both languages and read-alouds with her grandparents were conducted only in Chinese. In interviews, both the parents and grandparents said they valued read-alouds because they believed they would prepare Yuan for school, help in morals and values education, provide a source of knowledge, provide opportunities to learn and practice the home language, and foster a love for reading. Many of the books shared with Yuan were also used to teach her Chinese cultural values. Wan (2000) identified traditional Chinese themes in Yuan's collection including respecting elders, being polite, having a sense of shame, hard work, filial piety, modesty, self-discipline, and behaving like a girl. Among Yuan's collection were concept books in Chinese, Chinese folktales, ancient poems, and children's rhymes. In home read-alouds, the focus was on meaning making and communication rather than form, although there were differences between Yuan's literacy interactions with her parents and those with her grandparents. All of the adults in the home encouraged discussion of the books read, but Yuan's parents were more likely to adapt, clarify, ask questions, and allow Yuan to initiate discussion while the grandparents were more likely to stress recitation and memorization and take a leadership role in discussions. In the report of the study, Wan (2000) included examples of each of these themes that arose during the two-year observation.

Wan (2000) used the findings of the study to support to the idea that literacy is a social event, a series of meanings co-constructed by children and adults. The examples given of Yuan and her family do illustrate this. In addition, the author recommended that teacher's develop a good understanding of the nature of young children's literacy experiences at home in order to provide appropriate instruction to build on those experiences.

The study is limited in its small scope: only one child and her family were studied and the book-rich, bilingual, interactive literacy environment in Yuan's home may not reflect the home environments of many children as they enter school. Without more longitudinal research, it is impossible to determine how Yuan's home environment might have influenced her adjustment to more formal literacy learning in a school environment. It is also important to note that Yuan's home environment differed in many ways from those of the ethnic Chinese children who participated in the studies by Li(2004) and Ruan(2003), described previously in this chapter. This raises the important point that home literacy environments vary in multiple ways and for multiple reasons, even within cultural groups.

In regard to this particular family, however, the data collection was multi-faceted, the analysis of data was ongoing, and the long duration of the study supports the accuracy of Wan's findings. Although the home literacy experiences of Yuan cannot necessarily be generalized to other children and other families, the author provided a good example of literacy as a socially mediated process.

Schmidt (1995) conducted a year long qualitative study to explore the way in which children who have a home language different from the school language perform in their first school setting. The primary purpose of her study was to observe and describe children's social interactions during informal work and play settings as they developed their English

literacy. Her research was embodied within a theoretical framework, described by Teale & Martinez (1989), which defines literacy learning as a social phenomenon. When children's home cultures differ from the culture of the school, they may not understand social interactions within the classroom. This may adversely affect their English literacy development.

The study participants were two bilingual, ethnic-minority students in a suburban kindergarten program in the northeastern United States. Out of the 500 students in the school in grades K-2, only 10 ethnic-minority children were enrolled. Bilingual students in the school worked with the classroom teacher, reading teacher, and a traveling ESL teacher for English language support. The school's philosophy was to provide ESL students with additional support to enable them to quickly assimilate into the school community. The classroom teacher, Mrs. Starr, was a white woman of European descent.

The two participants were the only non-white students in the kindergarten class. Peley was a Southeast Asian female student born in the United States to immigrant parents. Both of her parents worked in a medical instruments factory and had little understanding of English. Raji was an east Indian male student also born in the United States to immigrant parents. His father was an engineer with a Master's degree in business administration and his mother was studying for her high school equivalency.

Schmidt (1995) was a participant-observer in the classroom for one year. Observations took place two to three times per week during three hour sessions. Data collection included field notes and documents such as student work, report cards, testing information, and classroom materials. In-depth, unstructured interviews of parents, educators and the two children were also conducted. Data analysis was ongoing from the beginning of

the study using the constant comparative method. Data was read and re-read to identify preliminary themes. Themes were further refined to form final coding categories.

From the final coding categories, Schmidt (1995) identified four distinct patterns that emerged from the study. First, both students experienced isolation throughout the school year. Their social interactions during informal work and play were consistently negative and neither child developed friendships within the kindergarten classroom. Schmidt provided examples of this pattern that primarily included interactions during unstructured play in which the cultural understandings of the children made them unable to participate in the cultural scenes their peers were enacting. Second, the school staff had an apparent lack of understanding of the two children and their families. Teachers and assistants often seemed unaware of the social interactions experienced by the children and attributed their lack of social success to personal characteristics. In an interview, the classroom teacher expressed her confusion over the fact that Peley and Raji had not learned to fit into the classroom like the other special needs students, who were autistic, behavioral, or hyperactive white students. Third, the school staff showed an apparent lack of interest in the children's home language and culture. Examples were provided of each of the students attempting to share about their families and culture during circle time, which provoked little interest from the teachers or the students. There were also no classroom materials relating to either child's culture. An example of this was the teacher's surprise when Raji, who she perceived to have little interest in reading, became excited about finding a library book in which the main character looked like him. Finally, the school staff seemed unaware of the cultural biases that may occur in testing and in the interpretation of standardized tests. Both students were given standardized tests in English proficiency at the end of the year, which resulted in recommendations by the

classroom teacher that the students take an English literacy maintenance program over the summer and continue with ESL the following year. This recommendation contrasted with the students' classroom work, which demonstrated English reading and writing abilities that were equal or superior to those of their classmates.

Overall, Schmidt (1995) concluded that her study demonstrated the children's social struggles while in learning centers and in other informal classroom literacy learning centers. She felt that the students were unable to share their home cultures with the class and that the students' knowledge of languages, customs, literature, and their own native lands was predominately ignored or misunderstood.

Schmidt (1995) offers several recommendations for practice based on her findings. Authentic assessment is needed of bilingual students' English reading, writing, listening, and speaking abilities with materials that reflect the students' culture, interests, and abilities. Literature and classroom materials related to students' culture should be used within the classroom. Sharing time should be used as a place to encourage students to listen and learn about other cultures. Finally, informal home visits should be conducted in order to gain information about how to connect students' home and school cultures.

Schmidt's (1995) findings are based on the theoretical framework that literacy learning is a social phenomenon and thus, the socio-cultural discontinuities experienced by students may adversely affect their literacy learning. Thus, the focus of her study is the students' social interactions and connections to English literacy development are assumed. It is interesting to note, however, that the students' classroom work demonstrated English reading and writing skills that were equal or superior to those of their English-speaking classmates. This would suggest that the real issue for these students is not English literacy

development, but rather the problematic assessment of their social and academic skills based on cultural misunderstanding.

Although the duration of Schmidt's (1995) study was lengthy enough to gain an accurate representation of the students' experiences, data collection could have been more thorough. Her field notes were the only product of her observations, whereas audio or video taping some of the observations could have provided greater triangulation of the data. A system of ongoing coding was described, but the coding categories were not defined or reported, nor was the coding member-checked for accuracy. However, Schmidt does clearly describe the four distinct patterns that emerged from her study and provides specific examples to illustrate each pattern.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a review of the current literature related to the emergent English literacy development of primary aged ELLs. The research included covered the topics of cross-linguistic transfer, bilingual education, native language intervention, methods of instruction, and the congruency between students' home and school cultures. In the following chapter, I summarize these findings, drawing attention to prevalent themes and contradictions within the literature. Then, I will offer conclusions and recommendations for further research and best practice.

CHAPTER FOUR: Conclusions

Introduction

Chapter three provided a review of current literature related to classroom practices that best support the emergent English literacy of bilingual students in the primary grades. I described and critiqued research that addressed the issues of cross-linguistic transfer, bilingual education, native language intervention, methods of classroom instruction, and congruency between students' home and school environments. This chapter will begin with a summary of those findings, including suggested areas for further research. Then, I will state my own conclusions and offer recommendations for best practice based on history and research, and drawing from my own theoretical framework.

My summary and discussion of the literature will cover the following topics: 1) language of instruction, 2) methods of instruction, 3) culturally congruent practice, and 4) assessment. Although assessment methods for ELLs were not an initial focus of my inquiry, my review of the literature revealed a number of findings related to this topic. Thus, it will be included in my discussion.

Language of Instruction

Similar cognitive skills and types of processing may be involved in learning to read in different languages (Durgunoglu, Nagy, and Hancin-Bhatt, 1993; Stuart-Smith and Martin, 1997; Chiappe, Siegel, and Wade-Woolley, 2002). Chiappe, Siegel, and Wade-Woolley (2002) showed that these cognitive/processing skills may develop at a similar rate for ELLs and native English speakers. In addition, there is evidence that phonological awareness achieved in L1 transfers to phonological awareness in L2 (Durgunoglu, Nagy, and Hancin-

Bhatt, 1993; Quiroga et al., 2002; Carlisle and Beeman, 2000; Bialystok, Luk, and Kwan, 2005). However, Bialystok, Luk, and Kwan (2005) found that the similarity of the writing systems of each language may determine the possibility and amount of transfer from L1 to L2. If the writing system of the language determines the cognitive processes involved in reading that language, this is a logical conclusion. Stuart-Smith and Martin (1997) also found, in their study of Panjabi-English bilinguals, that some phonological awareness skills may be language specific and Chiappe, Siegel, and Wade-Woolley (2002) found that other skills necessary to the reading process, such as syntactic and semantic processing, may not transfer from L1 to L2.

Findings about bilingual education and native language intervention are overwhelmingly supportive. The research reviewed in chapter three showed that students exposed to bilingual education developed English literacy skills at a rate similar to their native English speaking peers with the additional benefit of increased literacy in their native language (Lopez and Tashakkori, 2004; Carlisle and Beeman, 2000; Araujo, 2002). Bialystok, Luk, and Kwan (2005) found that bilingual students may have lower English verbal abilities than English monolingual students, but higher phonological awareness skills that can potentially help them to achieve literacy in L2 more quickly than monolinguals. In addition, students exposed to bilingual education can use their knowledge of L1 to clarify instructions or make meaning out of text in L2 (Araujo, 2002; Li, 2004).

When classroom instruction is provided in English only, early intervention in L1 may be beneficial for ELLs. Different types of early L1 intervention are described in chapter three, all with varying results. Hancock (2002) found that ELLs exposed to books in L1 developed pre-literacy skills faster than ELLs exposed to books in English. Schoenbrodt,

Kerins, and Gesell (2003) found that narrative intervention in L1 produced similar improvement in story grammar and more significant growth in narrative style as narrative intervention in English. In contrast, Gerber, Jimenez, and Leafstedt (2004) found that direct phonological awareness training in L1 produced only a weak effect on the literacy skills of ELLs.

The majority of research related to cross-linguistic transfer and native language instruction has been conducted on Spanish-speaking children. According to the findings of Bialystok, Luk, and Kwan (2005), Spanish-speaking children may be able to more easily transfer literacy skills in Spanish to literacy skills in English because both are romantic languages written in alphabetic script. Thus, further research is needed to determine correlations between native literacy instruction and English literacy acquisition for children whose L1 has little or no similarity to the English language. In addition, the native language interventions described in chapter three were given for a short duration with a lack of true experimental design. Further research involving longer intervention periods and greater control of independent variables would strengthen the argument that early intervention in L1 is beneficial for ELLS.

Methods of Instruction

There is evidence that direct, explicit intervention in phonological awareness and phonics may improve the abilities of ELLs in phonological awareness (Linan-Thompson et al., 2005; Gerber, Jimenez, and Leafstedt, 2004), English word reading (Denton et al., 2004; Quiroga et al., 2002), English pseudoword reading (Leafstedt, Richards, and Gerber, 2004), and phonics skills (Linan-Thompson et al., 2005). However, these findings are inconsistent

across studies. This is possibly because, although all of the research cited above was quantitative, none of the studies had a true experimental design. The student samples represented many different classrooms and teachers and students in these studies had been exposed to a variety of instructional methods and supplementary ESL services outside of the interventions. Thus, it is difficult to determine the actual cause of students' improvement in phonological awareness and phonics skills.

In many cases, research on the effects of whole language instruction is qualitative and descriptive, which makes direct comparisons between whole language and skills based instruction difficult. However, Stuart (1999) found, in his comparison two classrooms, that the skills-based classroom made more significant gains in phonological awareness, phonics, English word reading, and English spelling in kindergarten, but the whole-language classroom made more significant gains during the first grade. This suggests that explicit, skills-based instruction may initially speed the English language acquisition of ELLs, but that these skills may develop eventually, albeit at a slower rate, within a whole language classroom as well. In the third-grade, transitional-bilingual, whole language classroom described by Kucer and Silva (1999), students showed significant improvement in language sense, writing conventions, and English reading and spelling without explicit skills instruction. In addition, because ELLs may experience more difficulty using syntactic and semantic processing during English reading (Chiappe, Siegel, and Wade-Woolley, 2002), increased attention to context and meaning may be beneficial. Other benefits of a whole-language curriculum may include opportunities to learn about symbols and symbolic expression through play, art, and engagement with text (Genishi, Stires, and Yung-Chan, 2001), opportunities for increased communicative competence (Ruiz, 1995), and increased

comprehension skills (Stuart, 1999; Koskinen et al., 2000; Schoenbrodt, Kerins, and Gesell, 2003).

Additional research supports the implementation of balanced literacy instruction, in which the curriculum is literature-based, focused on context and comprehension, but also includes explicit instruction in skills, strategies, and conventions (Araujo, 2002; Fitzgerald and Noblit, 2000). In the balanced literacy program implemented by Fitzgerald and Noblit (2002), the majority of Spanish-speaking ELLs in the classroom improved their English proficiency and overall reading abilities. However, the gap between ELLs and native English speakers on English vocabulary scores was consistent throughout the year and the same five (out of 11) ELL students remained at the lowest end of the achievement range. This suggests the need for more focused, individualized instruction.

In comparing different instructional methods, more attention needs to be given to instructional time. As stated above, skills-based interventions appear to be effective in improving isolated phonological awareness and phonics skills in ELLs in a short amount of time, while research suggests that these skills may develop more slowly in a whole language classroom. More longitudinal research is needed to determine if and when the English literacy achievement gap between ELLs and native English speakers closes without direct, explicit intervention in English literacy skills. In addition, more research is needed to determine how semantic and syntactic processing skills in L2 develop for ELLs and how the development of these skills is supported by different instructional environments.

Culturally Congruent Practice

The extent and nature of children's literacy practices at home influence how they think about and engage with text. Various studies included in chapter three described ways in which literacy learning is a socially mediated process between children and the adults in their environment (Volk and Acosta, 2003; Wan, 2000; Wang, Bernas, and Eberhard, 2002). Cultural variations exist in the way adults and children co-construct literacy; adult support can be explicit or implicit, contextual or event-specific, and vary in its degrees of elaboration (Wang, Bernas, and Eberhard, 2002; Volk and Acosta, 2003; Wan, 2000). In addition, literacy can be print-based or oral (Wang, Bernas, and Eberhard, 2002) and the purpose of literacy learning can vary; for example, achievement vs. the transmission of history, morals, or values (Wang, Bernas, and Eberhard, 2002; Volk and Acosta, 2003; Wan, 2000; Bhattacharya, 2000).

Incongruent literacy practices between children's home and school cultures can affect their adjustment and achievement in school. Differences between home and school may exist in instructional methods, ideas about homework, ideas about causes for low student achievement, expectations for adult-child interactions, and perceptions of appropriate behavior and discourse (Li, 2004; Han, 1999; Ruan, 2003; Volk and Acosta, 2003; Wan, 2000). In addition, parents of ELLs often have little or no English proficiency, resulting in lack of communication between school and home (Li, 2004; Han, 1999; Bhattacharya, 2000). In the classroom, ELLs may experience difficulties resulting from lack of clear, explicit instruction, the inability to communicate in L1, the teacher or staff's lack of acceptance of L1, lack of culturally representative literature and curricular materials, the teacher or staff's

lack of understanding of students' home cultures, and the lack of opportunity to share home culture with the class (Li, 2004; Ruan, 2003; Han, 1999; Schmidt, 1995).

Further research is needed about the home and community literacy practices of a wider variety of cultural and linguistic groups. It is also noteworthy that many of the authors mentioned above draw conclusions from their findings based on culture and language, but few attempt to draw correlations between home literacy practices, culture, and socioeconomic status. This is another area for further research. In addition, studies describing incongruent literacy practices between students' home and classroom environments largely focus on the negative impacts. Recommendations for culturally congruent classroom practice might be better achieved if research were conducted to explore the correlations between culturally congruent classroom practices, students' self-efficacy, and literacy achievement.

Assessment

Many of the findings described in chapter three had obvious implications for methods of assessment used to determine the English literacy skill level of ELLs. Oral proficiency in English is often used as a predictor of students' English literacy skills (Quiroga et al., 2002), yet some bodies of research have found no correlation between oral English proficiency and English reading and writing abilities (Durgunoglu, Nagy, and Hancin-Bhatt, 1993; Araujo, 2002; Fitzgerald and Noblit, 2000; Schmidt, 1995). Quiroga et al. (2002) did find a correlation between oral English proficiency and English word reading, but found no correlation between oral Spanish proficiency and Spanish word reading. This would suggest that the two years of English literacy instruction the students in the study had been exposed

to may have affected the findings. Durgunoglu, Nagy, and Hancin-Bhatt (1993) and Quiroga et al. (2002) found that phonological awareness was a better predictor of word reading than oral proficiency, within and across languages.

The formality of the assessments used to gauge the literacy skills of ELLs may also factor into the results. Ruiz (1995) found that ELLs exhibited less communicative competence in English during more structured, formal tasks and higher communicative competence during less formal events, particularly sociodramatic play (Ruiz, 1995; Volk and Acosta, 2003). Schmidt (1995) found that the English writing of the ELLs in her study reflected a knowledge of English that exceeded their oral proficiency. Similarly, Araujo (2002) found that ELLs wrote more sophisticatedly in English when allowed to use a narrative style.

All of these findings suggest the benefit of using more holistic assessment methods to determine the actual English abilities of ELLs. These assessments might include a range of measures (oral English, phonological awareness, writing) that vary in their degree of formality. Further research correlating specific assessment methods to students' actual abilities is needed.

Discussion

According to Vygotsky, language not only enables us to communicate with each other, it directs thinking and behavior, organizes reality, and conveys systems of cultural meaning (Miller, 1993). Literacy is a social and cultural practice of co-constructing and reinventing the meanings derived from language through adult-child collaboration

(Heath,1983; Rogoff, 1990). Considering language and literacy in these ways complexifies the contemporary issues surrounding bilingual education.

When children become literate in their native language they are both learning to communicate with others in their family and community and becoming acculturated with the history and values of their culture (Miller, 1993). Thus, the loss of one's native language can be viewed as equivalent to the loss of one's culture. Wright (2004) offered an example of this in his study of Cambodian-American students who had been subject to a poorly implemented bilingual education policy. The students in his study received inadequate support in both their first language, Khmer, and in English. As a result, they experienced communication difficulties in school and in the workplace, as well as a loss of culture that affected their relationships with family members and the Cambodian community (Wright, 2004).

At the same time, there are important and practical reasons for students in the United States to become literate in English; it is the language of social and economic power. Thus, helping all students to achieve English literacy is a matter of equity (Delpit, 1995). However, it should not be done at the expense of their first language, i.e. at the expense of their own cultural knowledge.

Two-way bilingual programs are not represented in the body of research described in chapter three because finding quality research in this area proved difficult. I find this to be an interesting statement of our culture: there is ample research intended to justify the benefits of maintenance bilingual education (learning English while maintaining L1), but little research about the benefits of native English speakers at the emergent literacy phase becoming bilingual in a minority language. Societally, this reflects the current phase of

oppression of linguistic and cultural pluralism (Cadiero-Kaplan, 2004). The research on maintenance bilingual education and native language intervention, summarized at the beginning of this chapter, illustrates the possible benefits of students achieving literacy in both their native language and in English. While the findings vary in terms of how and how much literacy acquisition in L1 benefits literacy acquisition in English, there is little research indicating that literacy acquisition in L1 impedes literacy acquisition in English. In other words, the deficit model of bilingualism reflected by current federal education policy is unsupported by research.

The English Language Acquisition Act of 2001 mandates a rapid transition from students' native language use to English-only instruction (Spring, 2006). Thus, the most common form of bilingual instruction currently used in the United States is transitional: students use their native language only until they have achieved minimal proficiency in English (Wright, 2004). Additionally, the majority of teachers in the United States are white, English monolinguals (Delpit, 1995) who do not have the capabilities to provide students with adequate support in L1, even if they had the option to do so. The question facing educators today, then, is this: if native language instruction for ELLs is not possible, what is the next best alternative?

Reading, as defined by socio-psycholinguistic theory, requires readers to use their knowledge of language, topic, and culture to construct meaning from text (National Council of Teachers of English, n.d.). While this process includes the use of phonemic knowledge to decode words, it also involves semantic and syntactic processes. All three cueing systems must work together in order to derive meaning from text (National Council of Teachers of English, n.d.). Appropriate literacy instruction for all students, ELLs and native English

speakers, should include training on how to use these three cueing systems. Whole language, holistic instruction, and literature-based instruction are all terms used in current literature to describe instruction that embodies the socio-psycholinguistic theory of literacy acquisition. Research described in chapter three shows that when ELLs are exposed to these learning environments, they progress at rates similar to their native speaking peers. Thus, evidence supports that the same methods of literacy instruction that benefit native English speakers also benefit ELLs.

However, the time allotted to ELLs to achieve English proficiency is an enormous consideration. ELLs often begin schooling with a lower level of English proficiency than their peers and are expected to progress towards a proficient level much more quickly (Wright, 2004). While this is not ideal, it is often the reality. In order to bridge the English literacy achievement gap between ELLs and native English speakers, early intervention may be beneficial. Direct, explicit instruction in phonological awareness and phonics is commonly used as a method of early intervention (Genishi, Stires, and Yung-Chan, 2001). While this method may be effective in improving isolated phonological awareness and phonics skills, it does not provide ELLs with the syntactic and semantic knowledge necessary to derive meaning from text. In addition, early intervention is commonly given in the form of pull-out ESL instruction, which isolates students from the classroom literacy environment (Wright, 2004).

An instructional model that shows great possibility for addressing these issues was suggested by Fitzgerald and Noblit (2000). The authors of this study designed a literacy curriculum intended to exemplify the principals of balanced instruction and implemented it in a first-grade classroom for one year. The students in the study were exposed to a book-

rich environment and encouraged to read independently, write independently, make personal connections to text, respond to text through art, writing, or dialogue, and to use their background knowledge to derive meaning from text. The focal point of the literacy curriculum was time allotted for reading meetings, in which the teacher met with small, homogenous groups of students who had similar reading abilities and/or similar instructional needs. Reading meetings included introduction to new vocabulary, guided reading, discussion, and focused mini-lessons tailored to particular student needs. These mini-lessons were used as a way to provide students with direct, explicit instruction on reading skills and strategies. The progress of the Spanish-speaking ELL students in the study throughout the year was mixed: all improved in their oral English abilities and English reading and writing abilities, but a significant achievement gap remained consistent between many of the ELL students and their native English speaking peers. However, the author/classroom teacher (Fitzgerald) stated in the report of the study that she gave no differentiated instruction to these students, whereas much of the research described in chapter three indicates the need for differentiated instruction, at some level, for ELLs. Taking this into consideration, the model used by Fitzgerald and Noblit (2000) could enable a classroom teacher to work intensively with small groups of ELLs in the classroom, offering the support and explicit instruction needed to help them construct their English literacy, while still allowing them to participate fully in the classroom literacy environment.

In addition, research highlights a number of additional instructional considerations that support the English literacy development of ELLs. ELL students in various studies showed ranges in their English literacy abilities that were dependent on classroom context, suggesting that a wide variety of learning activities that vary in their degrees of formality

might offer ELLs greater opportunity to construct literacy in English (Ruiz, 1995).

Sociodramatic play allows students to practice oral English in a non-threatening social situation (Genishi, Stires, and Yung-Chan, 2001; Ruiz, 1995; Volk and Acosta, 2003). In addition, play allows students to experiment with the context of language, thus enhancing their abilities to interpret text semantically (Genishi, Stires, and Yung-Chan, 2001).

Allowing students opportunities to respond to and discuss literature without grammatical and syntactic restraints encourages their engagement with text (Ruiz, 1995). Students should also have opportunities to experiment with narrative forms of writing without grammatical and syntactic restraints (Araujo, 2002). The teacher's positive attitude towards students' native languages is also important. Even if the teacher cannot facilitate learning support in L1, students should be allowed to use their L1 with peers whenever possible to clarify directions and meanings in English (Han and Ernst-Slavit, 1999; Li, 2004).

Because incongruencies between home and school cultures can negatively impact the adjustment and achievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students, teachers should make every attempt to understand students' home cultures and to understand the ways in which literacy events are constructed within the students' homes and communities (Volk and Acosta, 2003). Communication between teachers and parents is crucial in this respect. Students may be more engaged with their literacy learning when they see their own cultures reflected in classroom literature and materials and when they are encouraged to share their home cultures with the class (Schmidt, 1995). However, in working to create a culturally congruent literacy curriculum, teachers should be wary of the tendency to stereotype students based on their cultural backgrounds. This phenomenon is prevalent in current literature. For example, in Ruan's (2003) observations of two Chinese-English bilingual students, the

students' behavior in the classroom was consistently interpreted as being typical within the Chinese culture. While this may be true, Wan's (2000) observation of a Chinese-English bilingual girl's literacy experiences at home illustrated how many stereotypes about Chinese culture, in her case, were inaccurate. In other words, cultivating knowledge of various cultures, their typical practices, and their norms is important as a teacher, but students must be approached as unique individuals with individual needs.

Conclusion

Literacy instruction is not value-free or politically neutral. Historically, denying or suppressing the use of native language has been used as a way to dominate and oppress minority groups in the United States. In schools, English literacy instruction has been used as a way to indoctrinate children with the norms and values of the dominant culture. The current climate of subtractive bilingual education needs to be considered in this respect. Looking at the patterns of language policy and bilingual education policy in the United States, it is apparent that periods of increased immigration and cultural/linguistic pluralism have been generally followed by repressive language policies in public education. This trend is certainly evident at this point in history. As immigration increases and schools become more culturally and linguistically diverse, literacy instruction is becoming more restrictive.

As teachers, we have a responsibility to do everything within our means to facilitate the success of our students. In our society, English literacy is a tool necessary for achieving social and economic power and it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that all students have access to that tool. However, we do not have to do this blind to the patterns of history, nor do we have to do this at the expense of students' unique cultural identities.

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