

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 453 680

FL 026 742

AUTHOR Valdivia, Rebeca
TITLE Bilingual Preschool Education in the United States and Panama: A Comparative Analysis.
PUB DATE 2000-10-00
NOTE 45p.; Early Research Project, University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign.
PUB TYPE Dissertations/Theses (040) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Bilingual Education; Case Studies; Comparative Analysis; *Educational Policy; Foreign Countries; *Language Attitudes; Limited English Speaking; Parent Role; Preschool Education; Second Language Instruction; Second Language Learning; Spanish Speaking
IDENTIFIERS *Panama; *United States

ABSTRACT

This paper compares bilingual education policy and practice in Panama and the United States. Particular issues studied include the following: the social context of bilingual education in the two countries; programming and policy differences; teacher qualifications; availability of age-appropriate materials; and administrative support, level of community support, and legal backing. Findings include the following: skills and proficiency in languages other than English are more respected in Panama than the United States; second language learning is typically introduced at an earlier age in Panama; U.S. bilingual education programs have transition into English as the primary goal, while Panamanian programs seek to maintain Spanish while teaching English; both countries suffer from a shortage of qualified teachers; and there are much greater expectations for parent involvement in the United States. (Contains 54 references.) (KFT)

Bilingual Preschool Education In the United States and Panama: A Comparative Analysis

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS
BEEN GRANTED BY

Rebeca Valdivia

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)

- This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
- Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
- Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

Rebeca Valdivia
Title VII Fellow
Department of Curriculum and Instruction
University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign
Early Research Project
October 2000

026742

Bilingual Preschool Education in the United States and Panama: A Comparative Analysis

El pie del niño aún no sabe que es pie,
Y quiere ser mariposa o manzana.

Pero luego los vidrios y las piedras,
Las calles, las escaleras,
Y los caminos de la tierra dura
Van enseñando al pie que no puede volar,
Que no puede ser fruto redondo en una rama.
El pie del niño entonces
Fue derrotado, cayó,
En la batalla,
Fue prisionero,
Condenado a vivir en un zapato.

(The child's foot still doesn't know it's a foot,
It wants to be a butterfly or an apple.

Later, the stones, bits and pieces of glass,
Streets and stairways,
The packed earth of the road,
Go on teaching the foot it can't fly,
Can't be round as a fruit on a branch.
The child's foot,
Defeated, went down
In a battle,
A casualty
Condemned to live in a shoe.)

"Al pie desde un niño" / "To the foot from its child"
by Pablo Neruda, 1958

Introduction

Significant demographic shift in the U.S. population promises to be confirmed anew by the recent national census (U.S. Census, 2000). Preliminary results already are showing that the segment of the U.S. population that lives in bilingual/multilingual environments is growing at a faster rate than the segment that is solely monolingual (Newsweek, 2000). This pattern is particularly pronounced for the nation's youngest citizens, children under the age of 18, who account for 30% of the total population. Of the 0-18-year-old stratum,

approximately 45% are expected to be from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds by 2020 (Federal Interagency Forum, 1997). This proportion is likely to be greater for the very youngest age stratum – children 0 to 5 years old – who account for about one-third, or 23 million, of the under-18-year-old population, due to a higher birth rate among some ethnic and immigrant groups than the white population. For example, among Latinos who represent one of the fastest growing ethnic groups in the U.S., 11% of the Latino population is 0-4 years old as compared to 7% of the total population (U.S. Census, 2000). According to the recently completed Census, 14% of the total population considered themselves not to be English-dominant. More than half of this segment identified Spanish as their primary language.

These statistics should be of critical importance to educators and educational policymakers, especially those involved with early childhood education, particularly for the preschool years. Because the federal government appropriates the bulk of its preschool dollars for programs serving culturally and linguistically diverse learners, several key questions and issues have risen to the surface. One of these issues involves federal support or non-support of bilingual preschool education. Concurrently, there is a growing attention on the social-emotional development of young children as more and more are cared for outside the home. Early childhood educators and childcare providers have traditionally tended to be in the forefront of progressive educational movements due to the fact that they have enjoyed a separate reality from the more burdened K-12 system. Within the field of early childhood education, professionals increasingly have stressed the importance of continuity of care

between home and school (Division for Early Childhood [DEC], 1993; National Association for the Education of Young Children [NAEYC], 1996).

One of the elements of continuous care would be to positively recognize and integrate the child's culture within the preschool setting (Nissani, 1990). This requires that bicultural educators or at the very minimum, educators with knowledge about implementation of multicultural education at the preschool level, be the service providers. In addition, the implication for continuity of care means that for children who come from homes where a language other than English is spoken, the children's home language should be honored and respected as well (NAEYC, 1996; Nissani, 1990). Ideally in this scenario, bilingual professionals would be offering the care and education. When this ideal cannot be met, professionals knowledgeable in dual-language acquisition by young children would be the best alternative.

In recent years, the field of early childhood special education has made great strides in promoting inclusive settings where children with and without disabilities are educated or cared for side by side. Partly, as a result, issues concerning native language instruction in preschool education seem to have been pushed aside. Interestingly, those addressing the social-emotional well-being of the child, and all its many facets, cannot do such topics justice unless issues of native language are brought to the forefront. To begin with, early childhood educators want to know, "How, when, and to what extent should we support the use of the home language in these settings?" Along with that same question comes the ever tempting, "Should we start English as soon as possible?" Then there are other questions such as: "As we utilize the home language, how do we offer an appropriate emergent literacy environment? Do

we introduce one language and then the other? Do we introduce print in more than one language simultaneously?"

These are all very legitimate questions and concerns. Some already have at least preliminary answers, though the information has not been neatly packaged and widely disseminated. Some will require careful research so that professionals will be given the training, support, and resources necessary to effectively educate and care for culturally and linguistically diverse preschoolers.

Purpose

This paper is an account of my early research project in which I sought to examine bilingual preschool education in another country, for the purpose of comparative analysis with bilingual preschool education in the United States. A key assumption was that such a comparison could help provide me with a better understanding of conditions and factors that might make for more effective bilingual preschool education policy and practice in the U.S. context. Because of my interest and experience in Spanish-English bilingual education, I decided to select a country in which these two languages were also part of bilingual schooling, specifically at the preschool level. Panama was an ideal setting in which to conduct such a comparative education study. Here was a country with a different political atmosphere and history than the U.S. And Panama had already ventured into the focal arena -- bilingual preschool education -- which was just beginning to be recognized in the U.S.

The overarching research question guiding my study was as follows: How do preschool bilingual education policy and practice compare between Panama and the United States? Two corollary questions stemmed from this: What are

the similarities between bilingual preschool education in the two countries? What are the differences? The resultant comparison in societal context and attitudes, programming, and policy development between the two locales, that comprised the crux of the analysis, was done from a historical-structural perspective. This type of qualitative comparison delved into issues of systemic supports, qualified personnel, availability of age-appropriate materials, administrative commitment, and community buy-in as well as legal backing.

Method

Theoretical Perspective

Much of the current and previous research regarding bilingual education has been done from a neoclassical perspective (Tollefson, 1991). This perspective has the *individual* as the focus of research. "Factors affecting language learning and language use are presumed to be those that vary from individual to individual" (p.27). Therefore, when a person, including a young student, is not successful in learning a second language, it is assumed that that individual did not follow the appropriate language learning path or did not apply him or herself enough to the task. Societal attitudes, political agendas, and educational movements are all completely ignored.

Within the neoclassical approach, a researcher would not wonder what historical or current forces are influencing national and local language policy. The entire resurgence of the political "right" here in the U.S. and the anti-immigrant sentiment impacting the lives of those most wanting to learn English would have no place in the bilingual language development or bilingual education discussion. In contrast, the historical-structural approach examines the

acquisition of a second language from a *societal* perspective (Lee, 1996). Research conducted under this theoretical perspective asks questions such as:

1. How do language communities form and how do they come to invest their language(s) with varying degrees of value?
2. Why do some groups learn languages easily, perhaps losing their native language altogether, while other groups cling tenaciously to their native language despite enormous pressure to change?
3. What are the mechanisms by which changes in language structure and language use take place, and how does the language-planning process affect those mechanisms? (Tollefson, 1991, p. 29)

Setting

The larger setting for my study was Panama City, which is known just as Panama in the country of Panama. However, within this city, I concentrated my attention on a number of specific settings to which I devoted more time. For example, a considerable amount of time was spent on the campus of the University of Panama, the largest institution of higher learning in Panama. There I conducted research at the School of Education, the School of English as a Foreign Language, and the Campus Library. Through supports and contacts from the staff of the School of Education, I was connected with Colegio Internacional Oxford (The Oxford International School) in Panama City.

Colegio Oxford is an English immersion school by U.S. definitions although it is known as an English as a Foreign Language school in Panama. It has two campuses. The preschool campus houses programs for 3- and 4-year-olds as well as kindergartners. The main campus houses Grades 1-12. Most of the field research was conducted at the preschool campus that is located in an

upper class section of Panama City. The shops and restaurants in this area are pricey and so are residential values. The tuition is high by Panamanian standards therefore children mostly from well-to-do families attend this English immersion school. In addition, I visited several other bilingual preschools throughout the city of Panama that I selected by means of the public telephone directory. I wanted to visit preschools in different areas or neighborhoods of the city in order to access children from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds -- poor, middle, and upper class.

Data Collection

The historical-structural theoretical perspective of this study influenced the various data sources and research tools used. However, these varied quite markedly between Panama and the U.S. In Panama, I interviewed several key individuals with varying roles in the field of bilingual early childhood education using an informal, open-ended format. Table 1 identifies those individuals who agreed to be interviewed. Most of these interviews were scheduled ahead of time, with an explanation of the nature of the study provided to each interviewee. A few of the interviews, however, occurred spontaneously upon my arrival at a particular preschool site.

Table 1

Persons Interviewed in Panama

<i>Name</i>	<i>Role</i>
Dr. Tomas Garibaldi	Dean of the College of Education at the University of Panama (UP)
Dr. Velkia Rios	Professor in Early Childhood Education (UP)
Dr. Imelda Howard	Chair of Department of English as A Foreign Language (UP)
Dr. Frederic Gornell, Sra. Lydia de Gutierrez, and Ana Estanciola	Directors of bilingual preschools
Ms. Selma Bermudez	Preschool Curriculum Specialist
Ms. Aida	Preschool Campus Director
3-/4-year-old preschool class	Students
Ms. Amarilis Stagnaro	Classroom teacher

On-site observations were conducted at five different preschools but I focused on Colegio Oxford. At this school, I was a participant observer whereas at the other preschools, solely an observer. From these observations, richly descriptive field notes were obtained.

At Colegio Oxford, I collected discourse samples of classroom interactions between 3-year-olds and their classroom teacher. The hope had been to get a more extensive collection of discourse samples, but due to unforeseen circumstances, only a limited amount of samples was possible. These student/teacher interactions were transcribed nonetheless, and from them, I drew inferences about classroom attitudes, nuances, and program philosophy.

Thanks to the support offered by the University of Panama, I was able to do library research there and attend two educational research conferences, which

had not been anticipated at all. One of the conferences was the annual Research in Education conference held at the University of Panama, at which several sessions contained information regarding the use of more than one language in the instructional setting. The other was an international conference focusing on early childhood special education in Latin America, the first Latin American Conference on Early Intervention. Many of the sessions at this conference also featured discussions on provision of school services in more than one language, and dealt with other languages beside Spanish and English.

In the U.S., I drew information for comparison from a broad literature review as well as from personal experience with bilingual education at the preschool level. This experience includes being a teacher for preschoolers from predominantly Spanish-speaking families, a teacher trainer, and consultant in issues of multicultural and multilingual education. Additionally, I have served as a state and local advocate and representative for educational improvement for all young children.

Data Analysis and Credibility

Because the time period for the study was extremely limited by necessity, I was not able to do extensive data triangulation. Whenever possible, however, efforts at triangulation were made in order to assure the most empirically credible study. One approach was to use multiple data gathering techniques in order to obtain a richer base of information from a variety of sources and informants. A second approach was to examine and cross-examine the data during coding and re-coding of the themes that emerged as salient in the interviews, literature reviews, and discourse samples. A third approach was to have several readers with expertise in qualitative methodology, historical-

structural theory, and childhood bilingualism serve as readers of both the preliminary data and the developing written study. A final approach was to present to different audiences the preliminary findings in order to seek additional input and add clarity to the presentation of the findings.

The information gathered from the various data sources was analyzed for commonalities and differences. After careful consideration of recurring themes and ideas, some major points of comparison emerged. These consisted of language prestige, views of child bilingual language development, the goal of bilingual education, forces influencing bilingual education programming, and the role of parents. Before discussion of these findings, I will provide a brief historical sketch of bilingual schooling in each country. A section on implications and conclusions completes my report.

Historical Context

The U.S. Experience

Societal attitudes. No discussion of U.S. bilingual preschool education would be complete without a brief overview of the larger context of bilingual education in this country, past and present. It seems that as a nation we are engaged in a continuing debate in both public and private sectors concerning the merits of bilingual education. Opposing views in this debate are fueled by personal acculturation experiences, personal perceptions of national loyalty and patriotism, individual and group reactions to mass media portrayals of bilingual education, and first-hand experiences of either attaining or failing to attain the rewards of being bilingual.

There are those who recognize the benefits of bilingualism and see bilingual education as a key vehicle for enabling others to reap those same rewards. They see bilingual education as a critical ingredient of a democratic nation. Bilingualism is respected under the United Nations International Bill of Rights, and U.S. supporters see a link to our own Constitution. There are also those at the other end of the spectrum who are opposed to bilingual education. A salient sentiment expressed by supporters of the anti-bilingual education movement is that since English is “the” language of the United States, then schools should instruct students only in English. The anti-bilingual education movement is concurrent with an anti-immigrant sentiment that has resurfaced in stronger colors (Whitfield, 2000). This ethnocentric attitude is not surprising given the ebb and flow of language rights and policy in the United States (Soto, Smrekar & Nekkovei, 1999; Whitfield, 2000).

The irony of the U. S. bilingual debate is that in order to compete within the global market and be effective in international endeavors in the military, scientific, and health realms, we need a bilingual, if not a multilingual workforce (Brecht & Ingold, 1998; U.S. Army, 2000; Zentella, 1997). Yet, instead of tapping into the resources available within our own borders -- our potentially bilingual student population -- we stunt that potential by pushing students as quickly as possible into English without nurturing their primary or home language (Brecht & Ingold, 1998; Krashen, 2000). Tollefson (1991) has noted:

For while modern social and economic systems require certain kinds of language competence, they simultaneously create conditions which ensure that vast numbers of people

will be unable to acquire that competence. A central mechanism by which this process occurs is language policy.

(p. 7)

Conflicting policies and practices. Overall, bilingual education as a subset of the more encompassing topic of bilingualism has been characterized in the United States by conflicting language policies and practices enforced at times even within the same department at the federal, state, and local level. Examples of these inconsistent language policies and practices are abundant (August & Hakuta, 1997; Crawford, 2000).

At the federal level, the government has gradually re-defined Title VII, the Bilingual Education Act of the Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Act (Wiese & Garcia, 1998). The latest version both pushes English as early as possible yet acknowledges that students whose native language is supported as they learn English perform better academically. Every ten years the federal government acknowledges the existence of the multilingualism of its people. When Census time comes, legislators think nothing of distributing Census forms in multiple languages and hiring bilingual Census workers in order to obtain an accurate reading of those who reside in the United States (Census, 2000). Recently, the military has launched a campaign recruiting even those who have “marginal” English skills by having recruitment materials written entirely in Spanish (although it is important to note that the military has historically relied on large percentages of recruits from bilingual communities) (Army, 2000). Tollefson (1991) would point to these practices as being enmeshed in the hegemonic ideologies that have clouded the discourse on bilingualism.

Individual states differ in what bilingual or multilingual services they support. On one hand, some states print driver's license tests in more than one language. Others offer applications to social services in a variety of languages. Many have established or are developing policy for educational services for students whose primary language is other than English (Illinois ACBE, 2000). On the other hand, California is an example of a state that has supported continual anti-immigrant legislation (Crawford, 2000; Whitfield, 2000). Such initiatives have restricted many social services in the health, education, and business sectors to being offered solely in English. Often when those services are offered in the native language other than English (Spanish being the most common second language), people seeking those services are not treated in a dignified manner. As a result, that segment of the population with emerging skills in English tends to under-utilize the very critical services that would improve their standard of living and quality of life, and integration into the English mainstream.

At the local level, different communities react differently toward the presence of bilingual or multilingual segments of their population. Some communities, such as the many sections of Chicago, have a history of self-segregation and reflect their linguistic heritage through storefront signs, billboards, religious services, and community newspapers in their community language. Some more enlightened communities such as San Antonio, Texas have experienced the value of bilingualism and are promoting a bilingual community. Still others such as Miami have already adopted a bilingual way of life. There are communities that have yet to be impacted by the presence of multiple languages being spoken within their boundaries. Finally, there are those communities that continually resist the presence of multiple languages

within their borders. Young children attending preschool programs in these various communities will receive very different messages regarding the value of their home language, depending on the attitude of their community toward that language. This, in turn, will impact the likelihood of the children succeeding as bilingual students within the school system.

Schooling and research. Although there has been a substantial amount of research conducted on the language development of students learning two languages, the majority of this research has been focused on school-age children, 6 years and older (August & Hakuta, 1997; Tabors, 1997). Nevertheless, as more and more culturally and linguistically diverse children are entering preschools across the country, even small, rural communities are faced with a host of unanswered questions. Unfortunately, little information has been disseminated on excellent programs that might be in operation currently, and program features generating positive student outcomes have gone virtually unexplored.

Researchers who have investigated the school achievement of U.S. bilingual (or language minority) children have found that maintenance of the native language, as these children acquire English, appears to play a major role in their later academic success (Collier & Thomas, 1989; Hornberger, 1994; Ramirez, Yuen & Ramey, 1991). When young bilingual children in the United States receive English-only instruction, they often lose their ability to communicate with their families and local community in the home language (Wong-Fillmore, 1991) and often show delays in their literacy and cognitive development (Cummins, 1991; Garcia, 2000; Lee, 1996). The earlier a child enters a group or “school” context, the more pressing the requirement to offer an environment similar to their home and community (NAEYC, 1996; Snow, et al., 1998).

But, because there are no mandates to offer preschool education in the native language in the U.S., efforts to honor the child's home language and culture are as varied as the number of programs that attempt to do so. Many preschool programs still implement what is known as the "tourist curriculum" when it comes to a multicultural or multilingual education. Under this approach, young children are exposed to pictures of children around the world in their traditional dress, without regard to more contemporary and everyday ways of dressing. Ethnic holidays provide the impetus for using that culture's language, eating foods from that community, and listening to music from that culture. Another approach is to use greetings, some circle time songs, and some signs around the classroom in the second language. However, most of the instruction and interactions with the children are still done primarily in English. Many private preschools like to offer a second language as an enrichment program much like they would offer dance, martial arts, or music. Families are usually required to pay an additional fee and their children are pulled out for language lessons. What is truly rare is to see a program being promoted primarily because it offers a bilingual curriculum. Even scarcer are preschools with the word "bilingual" in their name. It is safe to assume that this reality is a reflection of the present ideology on language in this country.

The Panamanian Experience

In contrast, bilingual preschool education in Panama has had a different historical-structural course than the one in the U.S. The people of Panama have focused their political energies on decisions surrounding the ownership and maintenance of the Canal, stability in its political leadership, especially after the Noriega fiasco. Underlying these two issues is a concern with economic well-

being (Barry & Lindsay-Poland, 1995) as well as education. All recent leaders have tried to improve access to universal education throughout the country and to improve the system of and access to higher education (Avila, 1998). However, preschool education and its guidelines have gone basically ignored in the midst of these other more pressing educational concerns. Prior to continuing with the evolution of today's bilingual preschool programs in Panama, a brief description of the country and its people will be provided.

The place and its people. The Republic of Panama lies on an isthmus or land bridge and is bordered on the southeast by Colombia and on the northwest by Costa Rica. Because the narrowest landmass that connects North and South America is found in Panama, this was a natural location for the construction of a trans-oceanic route, the Panama Canal. The Bridge of the Americas, which allows land travel between North and South America, is located in Panama City. The Panama Canal is the most traversed canal in the world, allowing for a significantly more efficient form of international commerce (Doggett, 1999; Meditz & Hanratty, 1987). Since both the Canal and the Bridge of the Americas are found in Panama, one of the popular slogans of Panamanians is that they are "El puente de las américas y el corazón del mundo" (The bridge of the Americas and the heart of the world).

About half of the total population of 2.6 million lives in the two principal cities that lie at the two ends of the Panama Canal, Panama City at the Pacific Ocean entrance and Colon at the Atlantic Ocean entrance (Doggett, 1999; Husen & Postlethwaite, 1985; Meditz & Hanratty, 1987). The ethnic population is approximately 62% mestizo, descendants of the Spanish colonizers. The largest minority group (14%) is of African descent (about 8% of colonial/slave descent

and 6% of Afro-Antillian or West Indian origin). The bulk of the people of African descent were brought to Panama to build the Canal. Criollos, mainly whites of Spanish descent, make up 10% of the population and tend to dominate in the political and higher level economic sectors. Five percent of Panama's people are mulatto and 5% are indigenous. The indigenous peoples consist of five principal tribes -- the Gauymi, the Kuna, the Chocoe, the Bokotas, and the Bri-Bri's (Barry & Lindsay-Poland, 1995; Doggett, 1999). Due to the international commerce influence of the Canal, one can always find in and around the Canal area a visible portion of foreign workers who speak various languages. The recent political and economic struggles of the people in Colombia have resulted in an increased migration of Colombian nationals to and through Panama in search of a more stable and safe life. These last two groups comprise the remaining 4% of the population.

Educational developments. As mentioned earlier, educational politics in Panama historically have differed from those in the United States. The government in power in the 1970's put in place a series of educational reforms. Since it did not have an organized opposition to respond to, the government could take the liberty of instituting many changes. In 1974 a new Minister of Education was appointed, who convened a committee to implement an Integrated Educational Development Program (Cespedes, 1991). This program had as its main aim to improve schooling in the rural areas of the country through the local *corregimiento* administrative unit (Husen & Postlewaite, 1985). Prior to this reform period, preschool education for children 3- to 5-years-old was available mostly through private preschools, which required a payment of fees by parents. "As a consequence, enrollment was restricted to the minority of

the population who could afford the fees and who felt such early training was worthwhile" (Husen & Postlewaite, 1985).

The Canal has dictated much more than economic and political ties with certain countries. The longtime presence of the U.S. military in the Canal Zone impacted the type of schools found in and around the zone (Avila, 1998; Tejeira, 1994). Most of these schools had to provide services at least partially in English to accommodate the children of the U.S. military personnel stationed there. This imperialistic scenario has been repeated in other U.S. ventures overseas. Paradoxically, Panamanian children also attended the same schools. Over the years, Panamanian families began to realize what an advantage it was for their children to have skills in both Spanish and English. In college, these students could succeed in foreign language classes with greater ease. In turn, they had an advantage in the job market upon graduation.

Slowly yet steadily, the rest of the city of Panama began to see a surge in bilingual programs and most visibly so at the preschool level. Interestingly enough, the Panamanian public's interest in bilingualism and the demand for bilingual education programs has resulted in a dramatic presence of bilingual preschool programs, with the overwhelming majority being private programs. Today there is a high percentage of preschools in the city of Panama calling themselves bilingual. More than 50% of the private preschools listed in Panama City's 1999 telephone directory included 'bilingual' in their name or in the description of their program. Because they are private preschools, they require tuition for admission. So, to this day, there is still a parallel to the pre-reform period as to who has access to bilingual preschool services. However, the Panamanian economy has improved since that period so the percentage of

families able to afford private preschool education also has grown. Nevertheless, like in the United States, the well-to-do citizens of Panama can afford the better quality preschools, bilingual or not. Universal preschool education is still a luxury that Panama cannot afford. Not surprisingly, the Panamanian public realized some time ago what research has shown us here in the U.S. -- children who are introduced to a second language at a young age while their home language is also honored and nurtured, can succeed in both languages.

Findings

In the pages that follow, I present and discuss the themes that emerged from my comparative analysis of bilingual preschool education in Panama and the United States.

Language Prestige

Clearly in the United States today, for a person to speak a language other than English as his or her primary language is seen as a problem by many (Ruiz, 1984; Zentella, 1997). The terminology used to describe individuals in the process of learning English is itself reflective of negative sentiments. Students or individuals are labeled "limited English proficient" or as having "marginal English skills" or simply "cannot speak English". There is no mention of the fact that many of the same individuals are already bilingual/ multilingual in other languages and in the process of adding English as one more language in which they will have effective language skills. Schools have been especially notorious for focusing on the lack of English skills a student brings as opposed to highlighting the presence of language skills already developed in another language. Wiley (1996) captured this sentiment when he wrote:

In societies where the majority of the population is monolingual, as in many [English-speaking] countries including the United States, there is often the underlying assumption that monolingualism-- especially in English -- represents the ideal natural state, whereas multilingualism represents a temporarily abnormal condition. (p. 105)

Panama, on the other hand, has not bought into this line of thinking. Its people, due to the international nature of the Canal, have grown accustomed to the presence of multiple languages in their homeland. Bilingualism/ multilingualism is seen as a fact of life, indeed a possible necessity, and not something to be obliterated. Dr. Howard explains the motivation for Panamanians to develop proficiency in at least Spanish and English:

In Panama, we have recognized that having the ability to communicate in English, in addition to the assumption that we can already communicate in Spanish, is the way to survive as an independent country, especially since the ownership of the Canal has been transferred to us. Our international banking and business interests rest on the availability of bilingual professionals. For us bilingualism is not a choice; it has become a survival necessity.

Having knowledge of a language other than the dominant language, Spanish, in Panama is seen as a resource rather than as a problem (Ruiz, 1984). Quite on the

contrary, the people of Panama have maintained honor and respect for their language in spite of the overbearing presence of the United States military and business class over several decades as Tejeira (1994), a Panamanian intellectual, expressed:

Pero he de confesar que a veces siento que se me adentra en el alma la satisfacción de pertenecer a un pueblo que ha dado insuperables pruebas de resistencia vital y que, ante las corrientes extrañas, ha sabido hacerse mas pujante en vez de desmayar y perecer. Y porque sé que es nuestra habla tan española y tan panameña la mas señalada de nuestras fuerzas vitales... (p. 367)

[I must confess that at times I feel it in the core of my soul to belong to a people that has surmounted many trials of vital resistance and that, in the presence of foreign forces, has known how to rise up stronger instead of kneeling down and disappearing. Especially because our language that is so Spanish, so Panamanian, is the most fundamental of our vital strengths...]

In the United States, English is the language of most prestige. In many parts of the country, it is the only language that enjoys prestige. Historically, some private schools have offered foreign language classes, giving prestige to languages such as French, German, and more recently, Japanese (Crawford, 2000). Spanish (along with most indigenous languages) has yet to be given the same value, honor, and respect accorded to these other languages. In the

schools, children have been chastised, humiliated, and belittled for speaking Spanish and not English. Corporal punishment was the preferred method for correcting the natural occurrence of speaking one's mother tongue in the school setting until such punishment was outlawed. Today the punishment is more subtle yet no less damaging. Students are placed in special education classes, given a remedial curriculum, or merely left to their own devices to "survive" in the English-speaking classroom. Definitely, the message given is "It's not cool to speak Spanish" (Soto, et al., 1999).

In Panama, English enjoys a high prestige among the Panamanian people. At the same time, the value of the country's majority language, Spanish, has not diminished. The public is not threatened by the presence of English in their community. They welcome the opportunity to learn English in order to open more doors to employment. Yet, they feel secure in knowing that Spanish will not be replaced by their newly gained proficiency in English. Ms. Bermudez stated, "Parents know that if their children can speak both Spanish and English, they will have more employment opportunities in adulthood than a person who can only speak Spanish." Dr. Howard noted, "Bilingualism is seen as a positive outcome and not something to be feared or avoided."

At the preschools in which I observed, children were never chastised for using Spanish as they were learning English. In fact, classroom teachers said this was part of their training, to accept the children's attempts at communication in either language, while they (the teachers) serve as language models in the target language. Following is an excerpt of a classroom interaction, which illustrates the acceptance of the use of both languages.

August 12, 1999 (second month of school)

(*Observation of a workbook activity.*) Children are coloring at their table and cutting and pasting. There is lots of background noise the entire time. Students are talking aloud about what they are doing, commenting on their own or on their classmates' work, calling aloud when they are finished. (English is in *italics*. I have placed translated words or phrases within brackets).

Teacher: *Bring it over here, Belinda*

Another student: *Teacher, mis zapatos saben tronar.*

Teacher: *¿Tronar?*

Same student: *Sí, mira [Yes, look!] (Demonstrates with shoes.)*

Classmate next to Lucy: *¡A ver! [Let me see!]*

L: *¡No, dame! [No, give me!]*

Classmate: *La mía es la más chiquitita. [Mine is the smallest one] (Talking about what he just cut out.)*

{Teacher plays a Sesame Street music tape in English.}

Classmate: *Voy a apretarte. [I'm going to grab you.]*

Other: *¡Yo, yo! ¿Qué estás haciendo? [Me, me! What are you doing?]*

On the right of Liska: *Mira, ven, ¡el mío es más grande! [Look! See! Mine is the biggest one!]*

Another student in the background: *Finished!*

On the right of Lucy: *¡El mío es más grande! [! Mine is the biggest one!]*

L: *¡El tuyo es más grande! (Laughs.) [Yours is the bigger one!]*

L: El tuyo es más grande. [*Yours is the bigger one!*] (A second time, with more emphasis.)

Panama's citizens and its children have a choice as to which language will be used for their learning, entertainment, conversation, and business. This is because Spanish enjoys a high prestige along with English. In the U.S. culturally and linguistically diverse young children and their families usually have no choice as to what language they can be educated in, or use to seek related services, or even to converse in while out in public. Unless a family is wealthy and can pay for native language services, children whose native language is not standard English in the U.S. are relegated to a form of sociopolitical oppression which Garcia, (1995) calls linguistic restraint. Alberto Memmi, as quoted by Macedo (2000), laments the low value accorded Spanish: "that which is sustained by his feelings, emotions, and dreams, that in which his tenderness and wonder are expressed, thus that which holds the greatest emotional impact, is precisely the one which is least valued."

View of child bilingualism

As a group, educators in each country think very differently about the introduction of a second language at the preschool level. In the United States, foreign language instruction has been the preferred method of introducing students to a second language. Unfortunately, most students are not introduced to a second or foreign language until high school, or middle school for a luckier, yet smaller percentage. The offering of a second language at the early elementary or preschool level is a rarity, if not an oddity (Lee, 1996).

Some educators still believe introducing children to more than one language will confuse them and that as a result, they will not master either language. I tend to think this is an extension of our limited view of the benefits of bilingualism. Part of this belief in the “confusion factor” may be a projection of the feelings of the teachers themselves (Lee, 1996). Maybe they expect to get confused if they were to venture into teaching in more than one language. The logistics of how to go about this task and still meet requisite grade-level standards while achieving high test scores must seem like a daunting task to many educators. Yet there are bilingual education programs that have succeeded in doing just this. Longfellow Elementary School in San Diego, California is one such example. Students are immersed in Spanish starting in kindergarten and have the option of continuing through the eighth grade. Valleydale School in Azusa, California is a dual immersion program where half the student population is learning English as their second language and the other half is learning Spanish as their second language.

The teachers at Valleydale and Longfellow have the same belief as the teachers in Panama. They believe that students will progress at expected norms in all subject areas, while learning two languages, and the students do just that. “English is seen as an addition to the children’s curriculum, not a replacement for the language spoken at home,” Dr. Howard explained. Colegio Oxford’s program resembles the program at Longfellow Elementary. One difference, of course, is that the Colegio Oxford program has a preschool component.

Administrative support is key to the success of the Panamanian preschool programs. Administrators also value knowledge of two languages, and they express this belief in their program brochures and highlight it during tours of

their preschools. All the schools I visited were very open to having visitors and all sought feedback on the quality of their programs. As I saw it, there was a commitment to program improvement on the part of these school administrators.

The students at all the former schools referred to here are tested in both languages at key intervals in their educational career to assure grade-level progress in both Spanish and English. These schools have had a history of high test scores, even higher than what is expected in their community. Apparently, the old adage of the self-fulfilling prophecy does hold true in these excellent bilingual programs.

Goal of bilingualism

With the exception of bilingual programs such as Valleydale and Longfellow, schools in the U.S. have transition into English as the primary goal of their 'bilingual' programs. Bilingualism is tolerated only while the student learns English. California has approved the most stringent transition plan -- one year of primary language support and no more (Crawford, 1998). Even other well-intentioned states or school districts try to have a 3- to 4-year phase-out plan so that students eventually will be educated in an all-English curriculum. In sum, in the U.S., we tend to practice the most minimal form of bilingual education conceivable, that of facilitating the child's transition into monolingual-English education (Martin-Jones & Saxena, 1991).

Maintenance of a subordinate first language and bilingualism involving one of those languages is associated in a pre-rational way with intellectual limitation, linguistic deficiency, provincialism,

irrationalism, and disruption. The question has already been decided: if [bilingual] programs are successful at all, they are only to the extent that they are effective in transitions. (Ruiz, 1984, p. 20)

Educators in preschool programs in Panama have maintenance as their primary goal. In other words, they aim to maintain the child's home language, Spanish, while teaching that child a second language, in this case, English. Dr. Howard recalls her impressions of the view towards bilingualism while she studied in the United States,

"My recollection is that [Hispanic] children are placed primarily in transitional programs so that they can exit into an all-English setting as soon as possible. There is very little attempt at honoring their home language -- Spanish--past the point of transition into English. However, here in Panama the situation is very different. The children will always be encouraged to maintain and develop their Spanish since it is the language that will be spoken not only at home but among friends, in the community, at church, in most local business settings, and all social events."

Because of the permanence of English within the city limits, bilingualism is supported, even if indirectly, by the entire community, which extends farther than the family and the surrounding neighborhood. The Panamanians have daily access to newspapers and other forms of media written in English. Many of the television channels are in English with Spanish subtitles. Most of the

movies in theatres are shown in English with Spanish subtitles as opposed to being dubbed in Spanish, providing yet another avenue for hearing the English language.

Many of the street signs and billboards in what used to be the Canal Zone, are in both English and Spanish due to the long presence of U.S. troops and personnel. The Canal itself is as much a tourist attraction as an area of international business. At the Miraflores Locks, for example, tours are given in both Spanish and English. The brochures available for tourists explaining the history of the Canal are also available in both Spanish and English. In the U.S. there are few pockets of excellence in which bilingualism or multilingualism is celebrated at all levels of community life as it is in Panama City.

In the USA and in Britain, linguistic minorities are denied political rights and multilingualism is widespread but officially invisible in the major media, government, and most public discourse. Their exclusion from these areas of discourse comes to be seen as natural and inevitable. This then becomes an example of linguistic hegemony. (Tollefson, 1991, p. 55)

Forces influencing bilingual education programming

Teachers and academics in Panama have grown increasingly aware of the need to respect the child's home language in a second language setting, partly as a result of their proliferation of bilingual programs. At the 1999 Annual Conference on Research in Education at the University of Panama, several sessions addressed the growing interest about what to do for children who come

to school whose primary language is not Spanish. One easily identifiable group of such students consists of the children who come from the indigenous tribes in Panama. Although this population does not tend to enroll in preschool programs, the attention they are receiving at the elementary education level will eventually provide guidance for preschool teachers. At this point in time, the primary thrust for both educators and university professors is identification of strategies to support the transition from primarily oral language to a written and spoken language. The Kuna tend to have a relatively high literacy rate whereas the Gauymi and Chocoe have distressingly low literacy rates (Romeu & Serrano Rehues, 1994). Given the knowledge that educators in Panama have about respecting the child's culture and language, implementing appropriate instruction when literacy materials in the primary language are non-existent becomes a creative challenge to solve.

It should be noted that there are children also attending preschool in Panama who come from homes where a language other than Spanish, English, or an indigenous language is spoken. At Colegio Oxford, for example, two of the twelve children in each of the preschool classes in which I observed spoke Chinese as their primary language. This meant that Spanish would most likely become their second language and English their third. Their classroom teachers did not see this as a problem. They had had previous children who spoke Chinese as their primary language in their English immersion classes and had seen that they progressed as well as their monolingual Spanish counterparts.

What is strikingly different is the overall attitude towards the presence of children coming from homes where diverse languages are spoken. In the United States many districts do not explore the possibility of offering educational

services in another language, like Spanish, even when there are large numbers of these students represented in their community. The oft-expressed reason for this is reflected in the following question: "If we offer services in Spanish, what are we going to do about the other languages represented in our community?" Instead of accepting the challenge as Panama has and beginning with one language and then taking what educators have learned from that experience and adapting it to other language populations, the chosen course in the U.S. is often to do nothing.

One concern regarding bilingual education programming at the preschool level that both Panama and the U.S. share is a lack of qualified teachers. However, each country is resolving this problem through quite different means. Panama has chosen to "grow their own." Having an additional certification of English as a Second Language (ESL) attached to the regular preschool or elementary credential makes one a much more marketable teacher. Many of the preschool teachers that I spoke with had lived in an English-speaking country and had mastered their second language in this manner. Ms. Bermudez explained her school's hiring practice, "Some of the teachers have obtained their early childhood certificate in the United States. Although this does not equal a credential, we often look positively on this background, especially because this means that their English will be at a pretty good level." In turn, these qualified teachers are going out and helping to "grow" a new generation of bilingual students who will most likely not need to go through the certification program or be able to develop much more advanced bilingual skills. Thus, the supply of Panamanian bilingual educators will be self-perpetuating.

In the United States, our restrictive transitional focus for “bilingual” programs has resulted in many students losing their home language and having at best marginal oral skills in their once native language (Brecht & Ingold, 1998; Krashen, 2000). Coupled with the preference to introduce “foreign” languages so late in a student’s educational career, the percentage of truly bilingual graduates is embarrassingly small (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1997). We have created a system of education that assures the body of graduating students are predominantly monolingual English speakers (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1997; Krashen, 2000). Few training programs exist to produce adults fluent enough to participate in that second or foreign language in a professional capacity (Brecht & Ingold, 1998). Very few teachers seek the opportunity to live abroad in order to master a second language, a practice entertained mostly by the few who become Peace Corps volunteers and such.

As a result, desperate school districts have turned to the practice of importing qualified bilingual educators from other countries to meet the needs of their linguistically diverse student populations. This, of course, is not an altogether practical solution. First there are the costs of recruiting and relocating the teachers. Second, and most concerning, is the fact that the foreign teachers are not versed in the U.S. educational system nor are they familiar with our student populations. In terms of producing a truly bilingual and culturally sensitive cadre of future educators, Panama’s maintenance approach to bilingual education appears to have more positive results than our transition approach.

Along with the availability of qualified teachers comes the question of availability of educational materials and resources. Fortunately for teachers in the United States, there are organizations such as the National Association for

Bilingual Education (NABE) and the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE) which serve as channels for resource distribution through their Web sites, journals, mailings, and conferences. Commercial distributors continually are developing materials to meet the demands of the educational market. Fortunate teachers have access to school district funds or supplies to assist them in developing some of their own materials.

Panamanian teachers in bilingual preschool programs are much more limited in their options for obtaining developmentally appropriate materials to use with their preschoolers. What most schools do, as Ms. Stagnaro stated, is invest in materials from the United States. "We follow the curriculum that goes with the workbooks that each child has." While some of these are attractively packaged, they may not be altogether appropriate for Panamanian students. For example, many of the preschool English as a Second Language (ESL) materials commercially available include a sizeable section on the four seasons or on the weather. "Now that we finished the weather unit," Ms. Stagnaro said, "I administer the test to each student to measure whether the student understood the vocabulary and concepts presented in the unit." In Panama, however, there are only two seasons: wet and dry (Meditz & Hanratty, 1987). The temperature is in the 80's year-round so concepts and vocabulary related to snow, winter, and fall are not reflective of the children's daily lives. They would be more likely to benefit from vocabulary concentrating on topics such as different types of rain, tropical climate, rainforest, and so forth.

Their animal units should include the animals present in their environment such as the diversity of lizards and insects instead of emphasizing U.S. farm animals. Their foods and dishes are somewhat different than those

depicted in the U.S. preschool materials. Few teachers in Panama have access to funds or materials to assist them in developing their own materials. The diversity of professional organizations and conferences present in the U.S. is not found in Panama, further limiting access to quality early childhood materials for the bilingual classroom. A teacher exchange of ideas, resources, and materials between the two countries would greatly benefit educators in both settings.

The role of parents

One striking difference in the bilingual preschool programs that I observed in Panama was the expectation for parent involvement. My observations were validated by the responses to interviews from classroom teachers and administrators. Just reference to the notion of parent involvement resulted in a puzzling look during interviews. The concept of "parent involvement" is not found in program brochures, enrollment procedures, conference presentations, or in the literature. Ms. Stagnaro asked for clarification upon hearing my question. Her response was, "The parents are involved if they have taken the time to seek out a preschool program, enroll their child in that program, make sure their child attends the program, and send their child dressed, with breakfast, and the required materials (e.g., P.E. clothes, pencils, paper, snack)." All other educators that I interviewed shared her sentiment. Panama educators do not link a child's academic success to the presence of that child's parent in school, for any reason other than to drop off the child or pick him/her up. Certainly the main statement that parents are making in the early education of their children is that it is incredibly important for them to raise a bilingual child.

Entrenched in U.S. popular thought is the belief that non-English language heritage and bilingualism are connected with social problems (Garcia, 1995; Ruiz, 1984; Zentella, 1997). Most preschool “bilingual” programs have been designed as compensatory programs geared for “problematic” communities. A basic tenet of these programs is to have a parent participation requirement. The assumption is that children with involved parents do better academically. In most cases, parents have to be present on-site for so many hours a week or month in order to prove they are involved. However, this tends to be an expectation more often of poor, language minority parents than of others. If we, in the U.S., followed the same definition of involvement as the educators in Panama, then we would be celebrating the overwhelming success of parent involvement across the country. Could this lead to similar academic results as the ones in Panama?

Implications and Conclusions

The findings of this comparative education study point to some interesting directions and questions for continued as well as new research. For example, it would behoove us to know the long-term performance of the preschoolers currently attending bilingual programs in Panama. Can we pursue bi-national efforts between the U.S. and Panama aimed at documenting what is happening? Panama is a much poorer country in comparison to the U.S. so money allocated for educational research and development is not nearly as available. In fact, university education students, especially at the graduate level, rely primarily on professional literature written in the United States. There is a

great need to document successful classroom practices and emerging policy development within the Panamanian borders.

Another line of inquiry would be to see whether those preschoolers currently enrolled in bilingual preschool programs continue to study English in their elementary and later school years. If so, will they all progress in their bilingual development with the same success as those attending Colegio Oxford? How could we integrate their schools' and teachers' successful strategies and philosophical beliefs into professional development efforts here in the U.S. as we look for better ways to serve our linguistically diverse young learners? It will be interesting to note the impact of the "graduating" Panamanian preschoolers on community elementary and secondary programs. Will there be a surge in K-12 programs as families seek to continue supporting their children's bilingualism? Will policy development at the state level follow as a result of the public interest in bilingual preschool education? "In order to transform the curricular hodgepodge," Dr. Rios said, "we (in the field) will need to eradicate the 'mental viruses' that are currently plaguing our system. In other words, we are striving for perfecting the self (as a teacher) so that the individual can turn around and share that improved knowledge."

As for the U.S. context, the move seems to be going in the opposite direction. The presence of successful K-12 programs has prompted school districts to look into establishment of bilingual preschool programs, the majority of which will be public programs. We have existing legal backing for native language instruction yet no clear guidelines for program implementation. Well-meaning teachers are left without guidance and clear direction. How can

educators in both countries assure developmentally appropriate bilingual preschool programs?

It will be critical to avoid the temptation of merely “downsizing” K-12 curriculum and pedagogical approaches. We need to keep in mind that bilingualism at the preschool level should and must be defined very differently than for grades K-12 since children at these levels and ages are still developing their language skills and communication pragmatics. For example, depending on the age of the young child, we’ll need to allow for differential rates of vocabulary acquisition in each language. Research has shown a ‘lag’ in the amount of words used by 2-year-olds raised in bilingual environments with an eventual ‘catch-up’ in later preschool years (McLaughlin, 1984).

Similarly, just as there is considerable diversity among bilingual programs at the K-12 levels, we should expect to see a variety of models for bilingual programs at the preschool level. Importantly, the student population should be the ultimate factor for determining levels of first and second language support. All stakeholders -- teachers, parents, administrators, and community representatives -- should be involved in the program design (Soto, et. al., 1999).

As we continue to explore the bilingual preschool alternative here in the United States, we should urge that all educational research or research focused on children’s development include a representative sample of young children learning a second language. There is an immediate need to document successful elements of those programs that capitalize on children’s native languages while supporting their English development (August & Hakuta, 1997). Changes in service delivery will not come about in the U.S. without attention to underlying attitudes and beliefs. Communities looking to move in the direction of “raising”

bilingual students from a young age “must set aside time for open and continuous dialogue about what [the members of the community] believe about students and schooling” (Wiese & Garcia, 1998, p. 11). Consequently, as communities design bilingual preschool education programs, “teachers, staff, administrators, and family members should all take part in conversations which focus on student goals and instructional strategies, not just programmatic issues” (Wiese & Garcia, 2000, p. 11).

Teacher training and professional development in each country will need to respond to the incoming student population. Bilingual early childhood certificate or credential programs in the United States are a rarity. Most school districts or programs employ bilingual staff members who are not necessarily trained to teach young bilingual learners. In Panama, bilingual education is not recognized as a field of study since the additional certification is done through the English as a Foreign Language department. However, teachers leaving with this certification have taken coursework in theories of second language acquisition and instructional strategies to support dual-language development. They can recognize common dual-language developmental patterns such as Ms. Stagnaro demonstrated in the following excerpt:

At the beginning of the year all the students are very shy; they don't talk much. As they get more comfortable hearing English, they start taking risks and opening up [saying things in English]. Usually by the middle of the year each child has started participating more in English.

Very few U.S. preschool teachers can display the same professional abilities and qualifications. Panamanian teachers, on the other hand, do have to contend with their limited options for continued professional development. Dr. Rios shared her thoughts on this topic:

Here in Panama we have challenges with implementing a staff development program. The teachers demonstrate interest in improving their skills but apart from conferences like this (6th Annual Research in Education Conference), there are few opportunities offered for professional development, especially if you live in the other provinces, away from the city of Panama. What I would like to see are more of these interactive workshops for teachers who are already credentialed and experienced.

Those convinced of the power of bilingualism will need to continue to push for community bilingualism not just individual bilingualism or bilingualism confined to the school grounds. For a language has little function, purpose, or meaning if it exists in a void, apart from others who also use that language (Crawford, 2000). Just as second language acquisition and bilingual education need to be looked at from a socio-historical perspective so too must policy development surrounding these topics focus on the collective aspect of language rights and use not merely on individual rights, educational or not. Then we will be able to nurture the language diversity present in the gardens where children play, and not let those linguistic gifts become casualties in the life of our children,

as alluded to in the opening poem by Neruda and as expressed by Mora in her poetic words below:

Bi-lingual, Bi-cultural,
Able to slip from "How's life?"
To "Me'stan volviendo loca," ...
Sliding back and forth
Between the fringes of both worlds
By smiling
By masking discomfort
Of being pre-judged
Bi-laterally.

Excerpt from poem "Legal Alien" by Pat Mora, 1990

References

August, D. & Hakuta, K. (Eds.) (1997). Improving schooling for language-minority children. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Avila, V. (1998). Panama: Luchas sociales y afirmacion nacional. Panama, Republica de Panama: Centro de Estudios Latinoamericanos (CELA).

Barry, T. & Lindsay-Poland, J. (1995). Inside Panama. Albuquerque, New Mexico: Interhemispheric Resource Center.

Brecht, R. D. & Ingold, C. W. (1998). Tapping a national resource: Heritage languages in the United States. ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics. [On-line] Available: www.cal.org/ericcl/digest/brecht01.html

Cazden, C.B., Maldonado-Guzman, A.A., Erickson, F. (1980). *The contribution of ethnographic research to bicultural bilingual education*. In James Atlatis (Ed.) Current issues in bilingual education. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Cahnmann, M. (1998). *Over thirty years of language-in-education policy and planning: Potter Thomas Bilingual School in Philadelphia*. Bilingual Research Journal, 22 (1) Winter 1998.

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL). (1997). Foreign language instruction in the United States: A national survey of elementary and secondary schools. [On-line] Available: www.cal.org/public/results.htm

Cespedes, F. S. (1987). Paginas de educacion. (2nd ed.). Panama, Republica de Panama: Litho Editorial Chen, S. A.

Cespedes, F. S. (1991). La educacion en Panama. (Vol. 3rd). Panama, Republica de Panama: Imprenta Colon, S. A.

Colegio Internacional Oxford. Informational pamphlet.

Collier, V.P. & Thomas, W.P. (1989). *How quickly can immigrants become proficient in school English?* Journal of Educational Issues of Language Minority Students, 16 (1-2), 187-212.

Corson, D. (1999). Language policy in schools. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum Associates.

Crawford, J. (2000). *Language politics in the United States: The paradox of bilingual education*. In Carlos J. Ovando & Peter McLaren (Eds.) Multiculturalism and bilingual education: Students and teachers caught in the cross fire. Boston, MA: McGraw Hill.

Direccion informatica. Universidad de Panama: Facultad de la educacion. Available: www.up.ac.pa/Direcciondeinformatica/default.html.

Division for Early Childhood (DEC) (1993). DEC recommended practices: Indicators of quality in programs for infants and young children with special needs and their families. Reston, VA: DEC/ Council for Exceptional Children.

Doggett, S. (1999). Panama. (1 ed.). Hawthorne, Australia: Lonely Planet.

Everyone learns a second language. California Educator, California Teachers Association, 2 (6), March 1998.

Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics (1997). *America's children: Key national indicators of well-being*. Washington, D.C.

Fishman, J. (1999, July). Keynote Address. Presented at Bilingualism and Biliteracy through Schooling: An International Symposium, Brooklyn, New York.

Garcia, G. E. (1999). *Bilingual children's reading*. In M. Kamil, P. Mosenthal, P.D. Pearson, & R. Barr (Eds.), Handbook of reading research, 3. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Earlbaum & Associates.

Garcia, O. (1995). *Spanish language loss as a determinant of income among Latinos in the United States: Implications for language policy in schools*. In J. F. Tollefson (Ed.) Power and inequality in language education. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Hornberger, N. (1994). *Continua of biliteracy*. In B. Ferdman, R. Weber, & A. Ramirez (Eds.), Literacy across languages and cultures. Albany, New York: State University of New York Press.

Husen, T. & Postlethwaite, T. N. (Eds.) (1985). The International Encyclopedia of Education: Research and Studies, 7. New York: Pergamon Press.

Illinois Advisory Council on Bilingual Education (ACBE) (2000). *Draft recommendations and developmentally appropriate practices of the Early Education Subcommittee*.

International Reading Association (IRA) and National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) joint position statement. *Learning to read and write: Developmentally appropriate practices for young children*. The Reading Teacher, 52 (2), 193-214, October 1998.

Krashen, S. (2000). Bilingual education, the acquisition of English, and the retention and loss of Spanish. [Available on-line: ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/JWCRAWFORD/Krashen.htm].

Lee, P. (1996). *Cognitive development in bilingual children: A case for bilingual instruction in early childhood education*. The Bilingual Research Journal, 20 (3&4) 499-522, Summer/Fall 1996.

Leis, R. (1996). Panama: Luces y sombras hacia el siglo XXI. Panama, Republica de Panama: Editorial Mariano Arosemena.

Lucia de Gerdes, M. (1997). Media, politics, and artful speech: Kuna radio programs. Anthropological Linguistics, 40(4), 596-616.

Lonely Planet: Destination Panama. (1999) [On-line] Available: www.lonelyplanet.com/dest/cam/pan.htm#togo

Macedo, D. (2000). *The colonialism of the English movement*. Educational Researcher, 29 (3) 15-24.

Martin-Jones, M. & Saxena, M. (1995). Supporting or containing bilingualism? Policies, power, asymmetries, and pedagogic practices in mainstream primary classrooms. In James F. Tollefson (Ed.) Power and inequality in language education. New York: Cambridge University Press.

McLaughlin, B. (1984). Second Language acquisition in childhood: Volume 1. Preschool children. Hillsdale, NJ: Laurence Erlbaum Associates.

Meditz, S.W. & Hanratty, D.M. (Eds.) (1989). Panama, a country study. Washington, D.C.: United States Government, Department of the Army.

Mora, P. (1990). *Legal Alien*. In G. Anzaldúa (Ed.) Making face, making souls: Haciendo caras. San Francisco: Aunt Lute Books.

Neruda, P. (1974). Five decades: Poems 1925-1970. New York: Grove Press.

Newsweek (2000). *America 2000: A map of the mix*. September 18, 2000. New York.

Nissani, H. (1990). Early childhood programs for language minority children. Occasional Papers in Bilingual Education from the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, (2) Summer, 1990.

Orellana, M.F., Elk, L. & Hernandez, A. (1999). *Bilingual education in an immigrant community: Proposition 227 in California*. International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, 2 (2), 114-130.

Ramirez, D.; Yuen, S.D. & Ramey, D.R. (1991). Executive summary: Final report: Longitudinal study of structured English immersion strategy, early-exit and late-exit transitional bilingual education programs for language minority children. San Mateo, CA: Aguirre International.

Romeu, J. V. & Serrano Rehues, M. L. (1994). *El desarrollo del niño en diferentes culturas y subculturas panamenas*. In S. H. Moreno (Ed.) Panama en sus usos y costumbres. Panama, Republica de Panama: Editorial Universitaria.

Ruiz, R. (1984). *Orientations in language planning*. National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) Journal, 8 (2), 15-34.

Snow, C., Burns, M.S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.) (1998). Preventing reading difficulties in young children. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.

Soto, L. D.; Smrekar, J. L.; & Nekkovei, D.L. (1999). *Preserving home languages and cultures in the classroom: Challenges and opportunities*. Directions in language & Education, National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, (13), Spring 1999.

Tabors, P. (1997). One child, two languages. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Tejeira, G.B. (1994). El habla del panameno. In S. H. Moreno (Ed.) Panama en sus usos y costumbres. Panama, Republica de Panama: Editorial Universitaria.

Tollefson, J. (1991). Planning language, planning inequality. New York: Longman Group.

United States Army informational brochure, Spanish edition. *Los beneficios del Army*. Available [On-line] www.goarmy.com/spanish/spanish.htm.

United States Census Bureau (2000). *Diverse America*. Available [On-line] www.Census.gov/dmd/www/diccamp.html.

United States Census Bureau (2000). *Projections of the resident population by race, Hispanic origin, and nativity: Middle series, 2001 to 2005*. Available [On-line] www.Census.gov/population/projections/nation/summary/np-t5-b.txt.

Wiese, A-M. & Garcia, E. E. (1998). *The Bilingual Education Act: Language minority students and equal opportunity*. Bilingual Research Journal, 22, (1) Winter 1998.

Whitfield, J. (2000). *What the public should know about bilingual education*. Illinois Association for Multilingual Multicultural Education (IAMME) Bulletin, 24 (3), 8-9.

Wong-Fillmore, L. (1991). *When learning a second language means losing your first*. Early Childhood Research Quarterly, 6, 323-346.

Zentella, A.C. (1997). *The Hispanophobia of the official English movement in the U.S.* International Journal of the Sociology of Language, 127, 71-86.



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)



REPRODUCTION RELEASE

(Specific Document)

I. DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION:

Title: <u>Bilingual Preschool Education in the United States and Panama: A Comparative Analysis</u>	
Author(s): <u>Rebeca Valdivia</u>	
Corporate Source:	Publication Date:

II. REPRODUCTION RELEASE:

In order to disseminate as widely as possible timely and significant materials of interest to the educational community, documents announced in the monthly abstract journal of the ERIC system, *Resources in Education* (RIE), are usually made available to users in microfiche, reproduced paper copy, and electronic media, and sold through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). Credit is given to the source of each document, and, if reproduction release is granted, one of the following notices is affixed to the document.

If permission is granted to reproduce and disseminate the identified document, please CHECK ONE of the following three options and sign at the bottom of the page.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 1 documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

1

Level 1



Check here for Level 1 release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche or other ERIC archival media (e.g., electronic) and paper copy.

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2A documents

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE, AND IN ELECTRONIC MEDIA FOR ERIC COLLECTION SUBSCRIBERS ONLY, HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2A

Level 2A



Check here for Level 2A release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche and in electronic media for ERIC archival collection subscribers only

The sample sticker shown below will be affixed to all Level 2B documents

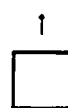
PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL IN MICROFICHE ONLY HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Sample

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

2B

Level 2B



Check here for Level 2B release, permitting reproduction and dissemination in microfiche only

Documents will be processed as indicated provided reproduction quality permits. If permission to reproduce is granted, but no box is checked, documents will be processed at Level 1.

I hereby grant to the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) nonexclusive permission to reproduce and disseminate this document as indicated above. Reproduction from the ERIC microfiche or electronic media by persons other than ERIC employees and its system contractors requires permission from the copyright holder. Exception is made for non-profit reproduction by libraries and other service agencies to satisfy information needs of educators in response to discrete inquiries.

Sign here, → please

Signature: <u>Rebeca Valdivia</u>	Printed Name/Position/Title: <u>Rebeca Valdivia / Doctoral Cant.</u>	
Organization/Address: <u>8823 Hillery Dr. San Diego, CA 92126</u>	Telephone: <u>619-586-0405</u>	FAX:
	E-Mail Address: <u>reelm1@aol.com</u>	Date: <u>05-22-01</u>