ABSTRACT

Bilingual Education: A Resource for Teachers

By Michelle T. Kimutis

The state of Ohio does not currently mandate a class on teaching English language learners (ELLs) as part of teacher education programs. Therefore, this thesis is a resource to supplement the current program. As such, the present study aims to inform teachers about the terminology used in relation to second language acquisition, the history of bilingual education, current bilingual education programs, and strategies for accommodating ELLs in the mainstream classroom.

In the first chapter of my thesis, I examine the terminology of bilingual education, so that this resource is understandable and usable for all teachers. The second chapter details the history of bilingual education and includes an overview of some bilingual education programs. The history helps the reader to understand how bilingual education has evolved and the policies which have shaped it. I have also provided the reader with some information about the goals and pros and cons of each program. The third chapter outlines strategies for accommodating ELLs in the mainstream classroom. In other words, these strategies should help teachers in schools that do not have established bilingual education programs.
Bilingual Education: A Resource for Teachers

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction ............................................................................................................. 10

Chapter I: Terminology ......................................................................................... 12
   Spontaneous Bilingualism v. Sequential Bilingualism ........................................ 13
   Language Competence v. Language Performance ............................................. 16
   Bilingualism in Children v. Bilingualism in Adults ............................................ 18

Chapter II: Bilingual Education: Past and Present ............................................ 21
   History of Bilingual Education ...................................................................... 21
      World War I ................................................................................................. 21
      U.S.S.R-U.S. Space Race ........................................................................... 22
      The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 ......................................................... 22
      Lau v. Nichols ............................................................................................ 23
   English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic
      Achievement Act ......................................................................................... 24
   Bilingual Education Today .............................................................................. 26
      Submersion Education ................................................................................ 27
      Transitional Bilingual Education ................................................................ 29
      Immersion Bilingual Education ................................................................ 30
      Language Maintenance Bilingual Education ............................................. 33

Chapter III: Accommodating ELLs in the Mainstream Classroom ................. 35
   English Language Proficiency ........................................................................ 35
   Culturally Responsive Teaching .................................................................... 37
   Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream (TELLiM) Model ... 38
   A Few Suggestions ......................................................................................... 39
   Strategies for Lesson Plans .......................................................................... 40

Conclusion ............................................................................................................. 43
INTRODUCTION

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2006), 3.8 million students (11 percent of all students) received English language learner services in the 2003-2004 school year. In the United States today, bilingual education refers to teaching approaches which use the native languages of ELLs for classroom instruction.

The National Association for Bilingual Education (2009) says that “many of the objections to bilingual education are lodged in good faith. Others reflect ethnic stereotypes or class biases. Sad to say, they all reflect a pervasive ignorance about how bilingual education works, how second languages are acquired, and how the nation has responded to non-English-speaking groups in the past” (www.nabe.org). The Center for Equal Opportunity (CEO) says that “students who don’t speak English are locked away in speech programs whose primary purpose is to maintain native languages rather than teach English, often without their parents’ consent” (2009, www.ceousa.org). Instead of bilingual education, the CEO advocates English immersion programs.

I do not pretend to be an expert on bilingual education, which is why I will not venture a guess as to the best approach to bilingual education. This topic does have personal significance to me, though. I am working towards a degree in AYA English/Language Arts Education with minors in Spanish and Latin American Studies. I hope that this thesis and this research will help the reader and me to gain a better understanding of bilingual education. This paper will inform the reader of the available
options for bilingual education programs. It will also better prepare me and other teachers to teach English language learners. Many teachers in my teacher education program will have ELLs in their classroom, so it is important to understand what we can do to help these students learn, even if the school does not have a specified bilingual education program.

In the first chapter of my thesis, I examine the terminology of bilingual education, so that this resource is understandable and usable for all teachers. The second chapter details the history of bilingual education and includes an overview of some bilingual education programs. The history helps the reader to understand how bilingual education has evolved and the policies which have shaped it. I have provided the reader with some information about the goals and pros and cons of each program. The third chapter outlines strategies for accommodating ELLs in the mainstream classroom. In other words, these strategies should help teachers in schools that do not have established bilingual education programs.
CHAPTER I: TERMINOLOGY

Whenever researching or just reading about a subject, it is important to understand the terminology or jargon associated with that topic. Key words and phrases occur repeatedly and if the reader does not understand them, the meaning can be lost or misconstrued.

Thus, this first chapter focuses on the terminology of bilingual education. These terms are important in order to fully understand bilingual education – its history, current programs, and how to implement it in the classroom. The terminology is arranged as dichotomies. This first dichotomy contrasts spontaneous bilingualism and sequential bilingualism, which refers to the process of acquiring multiple languages. Another dichotomy is language competence and language performance. This is the difference between what a bilingual knows about language and how a bilingual uses language. It is imperative to note that this knowledge can vary greatly; just because a bilingual is having trouble speaking, writing, or reading does not mean that he does not know the language. Finally, bilingualism in children and bilingualism in adults are different. It is critical to realize that language learning is often more difficult for adults due to a number of factors, and how to support both kinds of language learners. These dichotomies are common vocabulary in literature about bilingualism and bilingual education.

Spontaneous Bilingualism v. Sequential Bilingualism

12
The first dichotomy important for people, especially educators, to understand is the difference between spontaneous and sequential bilingualism. The term *spontaneous* is interchangeable with *simultaneous*, and *sequential* is interchangeable with *successive*. According to Colin Baker (2006), “When children learn two languages from birth, this is often called simultaneous or infant bilingualism. If a child learns a second language after about three years of age, it is termed consecutive or sequential bilingualism” (p. 4).

Children who acquire multiple languages through *spontaneous bilingualism* often do so in a similar manner to children who learn only one language. The rate and pattern of language development are similar, and the first words are spoken around the same age. Both monolinguals and bilinguals follow the subsequent pattern:

First, they assemble a vocabulary composed of elements from both languages, but usually with only one ‘label’ for each object or action, taken from one of their languages. Later, they begin to separate their vocabularies, using equivalent terms in each language, but using a combination of the grammatical rules of both languages. (Baker and Jones, 1998, p. 37)

The final step for acquiring two languages spontaneously is children “realize that communication in [one] language will break down if elements from the other language are used” (Grosjean, 1982, p. 188). Although there may be some code switching, or language mixing, between the native language and the target language (in the case of ELLs the target language being English), language alternation utterances represent a natural part of the process (Grosjean). For example, a child may use words from their native language when they are excited or cannot think of a word in the target language.
With further exposure and use of both languages, the child will eventually differentiate between the two languages and the will be able to maintain them separately.

Additionally, some bilingual children have a dominant language. This may because the child is exposed to one language more and uses it more than another language. Another reason is if the child is not motivated to speak one language. For example, if the child knows he does not have to speak one language to communicate, then he will not be motivated to use the language. Once again, this is a normal aspect of spontaneous acquisition. However, exposure, practice, and motivation can strengthen the weaker language.

The other side of this dichotomy is successive bilingualism, which is when children learn languages in sequence - one language first and then another. Bilingual children who acquire two languages through the process of successive bilingualism are usually linguistic minorities (Baker & Jones, 1998). Children who are linguistic minorities learn their first language (the minority language) in the home. The second language is often learned in the school through classes or natural interactions. Interestingly enough, “if children learn language in a ‘natural’ environment (as opposed to foreign language learning which is confined to the classroom), there are many similarities between the simultaneous acquisition of two language and consecutive acquisition of the two languages” (Baker and Jones, 1998, p. 40-41). However, Keller-Cohen (1980) identify the major difference between simultaneous and consecutive acquisition: “‘prior experience with language contributes to a child’s second language learning by providing the child…with knowledge about language’” (as cited in Grosjean,
Moreover, “Keller-Cohen mentions particular features of the native language that will lead the learner to avoid certain types of constructions in the second language and to prefer types more similar to those found in the first language” (Grosjean, 1982, p. 197). This makes sense because the learner will want to use language structures with which he is comfortable. For example, in Spanish nouns usually precede adjectives, while in English adjectives usually precede nouns. The presidential residence in Argentina is called Casa Rosada. Casa means house, and rosada means pink. Therefore, a child in the U.S., whose first language is Spanish might want to call our presidential residence House White, instead of White House. This is referred to as L1 (the native language) transfer. In this kind of situation, the learners transfer linguistic knowledge from the native language into the linguistic structures of the target language (Gass & Selinker, 1992). Although this may cause some difficulties, Grosjean (1982) claims that “the simultaneous use of linguistic, social, and cognitive strategies allows the learner to acquire the second language.” (p. 197-198).

An important distinction, when discussing spontaneous and successive bilingualism, can be made between early bilinguals (those who learn two languages simultaneously from birth or sequentially in their early years) and late bilinguals (those who meet their second language after puberty). This difference will be discussed in further detail in regards to the critical period hypothesis.

Language Competence v. Language Performance
Other important terms are language competence and language performance. **Language competence** describes the degree to which a person knows the language (structure, grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.). On the other hand, **language performance** describes a person’s ability to actually use the language. Colin Baker and Sylvia Prys Jones (1998) describe the close relationship between language performance and competence. “Language performance is the outward evidence (e.g. from language tests, conversations) for language competence. By observing general language comprehension and production, underlying language competence may be assumed” (p. 5). However, language performance does not always accurately reflect language competence. “Since competence in language is viewed as an integral part of language performance and not abstracted from it, measuring language competence cannot just use pencil and paper tests, but also need to investigate the language of genuine communication…Communicative performance testing involves creative, unpredictable, a contextualized conversation” (p. 16). Teachers, schools, and parents need to be careful when assessing a student’s language competence. This assessment should not be determined based on one interaction with a student or through only one type of assessment.

There are two different types of language competence that are important to distinguish. The first type, **conversational fluency** or **surface fluency**, “would include the ability to hold a simple conversation in the shop or street and may be acquired fairly quickly (e.g. in two or three years) by second language learning” (Baker, 2006, p. 13). On the other hand, **academically related language competence** is the ability to communicate
within a classroom. This competency requires knowledge of vocabulary that is probably not used outside of an academic setting. For example, directions given on tests are not used much otherwise – circle the correct answer, underline the misspelled words, and mark true or false. Thus, “academically related language competence in a second language may take from five to eight years or longer to acquire” (p. 13). This is important because it shows how much a language learner knows before he may be considered academically language competent. For example, just because he has interpersonal communication abilities and is able to interact with his peers, does not mean that he is competent in the academic language used in the classroom.

Another way to study language competence is through Bachman’s Model, which breaks down the components of language competence – organizational competence and pragmatic competence. The first is organizational competence. This is further broken down into grammatical competence, which can be thought of as linguistic competence, and textual competence, basically written and oral cohesion. Grammatical competence “comprises knowledge of vocabulary, syntax, morphology, and phonology/graphology” (Baker, 2006, p. 15). Textual competence is “the knowledge of the conventions for joining utterances together to form a text, which is essentially a unit of language – spoken or written – consisting of two or more utterances or sentences” (p.15).

The second part of the model is pragmatic competence. The subsections of this term are illocutionary competence and sociolinguistic competence. Illocutionary competence is the knowledge and proper use of speech strategies and language functions. It is the ability to use language to convey meaning, for example to express thoughts,
feelings, and questions, and to solve problems. Illocutionary competence also entails using language imaginatively, for humor or fantasy. Sociolinguistic competence is a “sensitivity to register, dialect, and cultural figures of speech” (p. 15). For example, the manner in which someone talks to his friends might be different from how he talks to his parents, and different still from how he talks to his boss. This also includes the ability to differentiate between different dialects, such as Midwestern U.S. English and Southern U.S. English. Sociolinguistic competence is also the knowledge and use of figures of speech. Therefore, just as it is important to understand the difference between language competence and language performance, it is also importance to differentiate between the different facets of language competence.

**Bilingualism in Children v. Bilingualism in Adults**

A final distinction is *bilingualism in children* and *bilingualism in adults*. An important theory regarding this is Eric Lennenberg’s critical period hypothesis. Lennenberg (1967) claimed that language does not develop until a certain age. Thus, according to Lennenberg, there is a critical age of language acquisition between this time and puberty. After puberty, the ability to acquire language is reduced. Baker and Jones (1998) claim that there is no “critical period” but there is an “advantageous period.” This means that according to research, “acquiring a language before puberty had advantages for pronunciation. After about the age of 12, it becomes more difficult to acquire authentic pronunciation” (p. 660).

Children have an easier time acquiring pronunciation, and they also have more opportunities for learning a second language. These include numerous interactions with
the second languages in schools or community programs. “At the family level, parents may decide on a particular strategy to make their child bilingual…Their reasons range from preparing the child to go to school in the majority language to enabling him or her to communicate with other family members, such as grandparents, all the way to making the child fluent in a prestigious world language” (Grosjean, 1982, p. 173). However, children need to want to learn another language. “Most observers agree that children have great facility in becoming bilingual or multilingual…Such multilingual behavior is possible only if the child realizes that in order to communicate with a particular person, he or she must acquire that person’s language” (p. 176). As aforementioned, children need motivation, a reason, to learn a language. Once a child learns a second language, “language choice is a highly complex subject, in which factors such as participant, situation, context, and function of discourse help the bilingual decide which language to use” (p. 202). This means that bilingual children consciously decide when to use a certain language; it is not arbitrary. “Bilingual children quickly develop a complex language decision system. It is first tuned to the interlocutor (the person-language bond) but soon takes into consideration the situation and the function of the interaction…Other factors, such as the topic of the interaction and the age, status, and occupation of the interlocutor, become important later” (p. 204). A child’s language skills develop in parallel to their rapid physical, mental, and emotional development.

Adults, defined as those above thirteen, have a vastly different acquisition pattern. Many adults “learn a second language in a relatively more ‘artificial’ environment…There are relatively fewer contact hours in such circumstances…Rapid
progress is often expected of the teenager and adult in learning a second language, and this may be unrealistic” (Baker and Jones, 1998, p. 661). Adult language learning is already difficult due to the “advantageous period.” However, “many adults [also] simply do not have sufficient motivation to accomplish the marathon task of learning a second language” (p. 689). In contrast, adults who choose to learn a second language must do so in the little free time they have amongst their responsibilities.

This is why Baker and Jones (1998) emphasize the importance of tailoring second language learning for adult learning, in terms of courses and materials, and teaching approaches and methods. Baker and Jones also stress the importance of autonomy, responsibility, and flexibility in adult language learning. An environment that facilitates adult language learning is important, as well (p. 670). Adults also have another barrier – adults often worry about other peoples’ perceptions. Children are often willing to just jump in. They do not worry about mispronouncing words or what other children think when they make mistakes. Adults, though, tend to compare themselves to others and worry about how other people are evaluating them. Therefore, teachers and other people supporting adult language learners need to recognize these difficulties that adults acquiring a second language face and provide a safe and respectful environment for language learning to occur.

**CHAPTER II: BILINGUAL EDUCATION: PAST AND PRESENT**
History of Bilingual Education

In the United States, the attitudes towards bilingual education have greatly changed over the years. Furthermore, the role of bilingual education in the education system has also developed. It is important to note that the United States does not have an official national language, although California and a few other states passed the English Language Act, which declared English the official language for public use. That being said, English is generally the language of instruction in schools across the United States. Thus, bilingual education involves the use of English and a minority language.

Even today many people believe that English language learners should integrate, acculturate, and assimilate. Many “Americans believe that the use of ethnic languages and the maintenance of ethnic culture are to be tolerated, but in no way should they slow down the acquisition of English” (Grosjean, 1982, p. 65). Therefore, it seems as if English is the unofficial language in many people’s minds; they believe that it should be the first priority in education.

Thus, this chapter will investigate the history of bilingual education in the United States, which is closely linked with attitudes towards and the function of bilingual education. According to Baker and Jones (1998), before World War I, education was conducted in the many languages of U.S. immigrants. However, due to the Anti-German feelings of WWI, in 1919, the Americanization Department of the U.S. Bureau of Education recommended that all classes be taught in English. Many states followed this recommendation and “by 1923, thirty-four states had decreed that English must be the
sole language of instruction in all elementary schools, public and private” (p. 546). Thus, monolingual instruction became the norm.

However, education took an interesting turn in 1957 with the U.S.S.R-U.S. space race. Americans began to worry about their competence to compete in an international world. This led to the National Defense Education Act, which promoted foreign language in elementary schools, high schools, and college, in order to compete with the U.S.S.R. (Baker and Jones, 1998, p. 547). This was the first real attempt the U.S. made to embrace global languages and cultures in U.S. schools, and it created some tolerance for speakers of other languages residing in the U.S.

As the U.S. realized the importance of bilingual education, the government then began to allot money to schools for its implementation. The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 was Title VIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The act granted money for the “educational needs of children of “limited English-speaking ability in schools having a high concentration of such children from families with incomes below $3000” (Romaine, 1995, p. 248). Unfortunately, the act was ambiguous about the goals of and approaches to bilingual education, which led to wide variety of bilingual programs, not all effective (Grosjean, 1982, p. 72). The act did undermine the English-only legislation from post-WWI, though. However, consistent with past sentiments, the act was only meant to be a temporary measure for students; therefore, it was only supposed to help students transition from a minority language to English (Baker and Jones, 1998, p. 547). It did not address the maintenance of their minority language. Although this was an important event in the history of bilingual education, obviously the
act was not the end all and be all. Throughout history, the bilingual education budget has always been less than 1% of total U.S. federal education budget (Romaine, 1995, p. 249).

Nineteen seventy four was an important court case for English language learners. *Lau v. Nichols* was a case of Chinese students versus the San Francisco school district. The plaintiffs argued children could not “receive equal educational opportunities when instructed in a language they could not understand,” which was against 14th Amendment and Title VI of Civil Rights Act (Baker and Jones, 1998, p. 547). The case was initially rejected by federal district court and court of appeals, but it was accepted by Supreme Court. They ruled that English submersion (or immersion or mainstreaming) programs for language minorities are unconstitutional and that language programs are necessary for language minorities not proficient in English, in order to provide these students with equal educational opportunities (p. 548). The “Lau Remedies” were created to help provide English language learners with these opportunities. Some examples are English as a second language (ESL) classes, tutoring, and bilingual education. Once again, it is important to highlight that these programs were mostly transitional programs, not maintenance programs.

The Bilingual Education Act was reauthorized in 1974, but it was still vague. The reauthorization stated that in order to receive grants, schools must include native language/home language in instruction, but that act did not specify how much instruction (Baker and Jones, 1998, p. 548). Furthermore, the act was still geared towards transitional bilingual education. The act was again reauthorization in 1978, when the poverty criteria
from the original act in 1964 was removed. It also specified that the funds were to be used for transitional bilingual education programs not maintenance programs.

Bilingual education received a blow in 1985 when William Bennett, the Secretary of Education “suggested that there was no evidence that children from language minorities (whom the Bilingual Education Act had sought to help), had benefited from this Act” (Baker and Jones, 1998, p. 549). The Lau Remedies were withdrawn by the Reagan government, which means that they no longer had the force of law. Instead, local governments were able to make decisions on bilingual education policies. Additionally, in accordance with Bennett’s beliefs, the Reauthorization of Bilingual Education Act in 1988 allocated 25% of funds to special alternative instructional programs (SAIP), which were English only or English monolingual programs (Baker and Jones, p. 548).

In 2001, the Bilingual Education Act was re-named the English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement Act. The goals were for students to “attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging State academic content ... standards as all children” (Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty, N.D., N.P.). However, even with these lofty goals, “the actual number of children in the United States who presently receive bilingual education represents only a quarter of the population for whom it is intended” (Romaine, 1995, p. 251). According to the U.S. Census Bureau, in the 2000 census, 17.9% of those in the U.S. age five and up reported to speak a language other than English at home (quickfacts.census.gov). This is a 3.9% increase from the 1990 census and a 6.9%
increase from the 1980 census (Baker & Jones, 1998, p. 446). Spanish was identified as the language most spoken at home after English in the report.

As attitudes have changed, so have the terms used to define students in the U.S. whose first language is not English. Limited English proficiency (LEP) is defined by federal law as “sufficient difficulties’ speaking, reading, writing, or understanding English as to deny them opportunities to learn successfully in English-language classrooms and participate fully in society” (Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty, N.D., N.P.). These language learners may have a native language other than English and/or the environment they come from may impact their English. LEP is the “primary criterion for participation in state and federal bilingual education programs” (N.P.).

However, this term has been replaced with ELL (English language Learner). According to Skutnabb-Kangas & McCarty this change has “been coterminous with policies to regulate immigration, particularly along the U.S.-Mexico border. As such, the terminology contributes to a larger discourse of containment aimed at regulating diversity deemed threatening to national interests” (N.P.). ESL refers to English as a second language and ESOL refers to English for speakers of other languages. It is interesting to note that many of these terms do not refer to the speaker, but to the language. This may indicate that the focus of education is only to teach English, not to accommodate the needs of the student. Thus, when teaching students whose first language is not English, it is important to understand the laws regarding bilingual education, as well as the historical significance of these laws and terms used to refer students learning English.

Bilingual Education Today
These current policies shape the bilingual education programs that are implemented today. Bilingual education is a controversial topic because it is emotionally charged for parents of bilingual children, educators, those who believe English should be the official language of the U.S., and taxpayers. Therefore, there is no simple solution for the best approach to bilingual education. In reality, different programs are the most effective for different students, schools, settings, and desired goals. For instance, the language makeup and resources of the school may affect their chosen program. Moreover, some of the research is contradictory. One person might use research to support his chosen program, while another person uses different research to support a program with the opposite approach.

According to Baker and Jones (1998), there are ten types of bilingual education (see Table 1 below). They label six of these as “weak forms” and four as “strong forms.” What separates the two forms are the aims in language outcomes and social and educational aims. The language outcome for weak forms of bilingual education is proficiency in the majority language; there is no emphasis on maintaining the minority language. The strong forms encourage the maintenance of both languages, in order for the student to be bilingual, not monolingual. In terms of social and educational aims, weak forms demonstrate a belief that language minorities need to assimilate to the majority language and culture. On the other hand, strong forms reflect the idea that language learners should maintain their language and culture.

| Table 1: Types of Bilingual Education Programs |
Although Baker and Jones (1998) outline ten forms, in reality there are 90 or more because there are so many variations (p. 469). Thus, I have chosen four of the most common, two weak and two strong, to focus on. I will give a description of each program and its pros and cons.

*Submersion education* is a weak form of bilingual education in which minority language students are placed immediately into English language classes. It may also be called monolingual education. This occurs in mainstream schools, where the goal is for students to “be[come] fluent and literate in English as soon as possible so they can work alongside majority language children” (p. 476). In one form of submersion, *structured*
immersion, the teacher will use simplified English at first to aid the student. This would be more difficult if the school had a high turnover rate during the year, for instance, if immigrants enter the school year mid-year.

Sometimes submersion programs are supplemented with withdrawal or pull out classes. These classes are usually smaller, and may even be one on one instruction. The purpose is to “teach English as a second language (ESL) [and] are a way of keeping language minority children within mainstream schools” (p. 484). In other words, the goal is to give students extra time and help with their English. Students may be taken out of the classroom for varying amounts of time, from one class to half the day. However, students may fall behind in the core subjects, as they try to catch up in English. They might also feel isolated from their peers. Submersion programs are cheaper and easier to set up than transitional bilingual education programs, which will be the next type of program discussed.

Historically, submersion education is the type of English-only language instruction that Native Americans received from the late 1800s to the late 1900s. Submersion programs are meant to create a melting pot, assimilating ethnic groups and languages and creating common social, political, and economic ideals (Baker & Jones, 1998, p. 477). This type of bilingual education works for some students. However, many students struggle because they do not understand what the teacher and other students are saying. This makes it difficult for the student to learn content. “What they do learn is that their language is not valued, nor are they, nor their parents or their ethnic group. The
child, the parents, the home language and culture each appeared to be discouraged, disparaged, rejected and rebuffed” (p. 477).

The pros are that this program costs little money and can accommodate many English language learners, even of different languages, at one time. The cons are that many students struggle academically with this type of program. They also might perceive their native language and culture as inferior. Therefore, even though submersion education may be the quickest way for students to learn the majority language, it has “come to be regarded as not the best alternative for children from language minority backgrounds” because it “tends to result in underperformance in the curriculum, with consequent negative outcomes in terms of personality and social development” (p. 478).

Another weak form is *transitional bilingual education*. As the name implies, students are transitioned from their minority home language to the majority language, English. The goal is for students to transition as quickly as possible to using only English in the classroom. Similarly to submersion education, the motivation for the program is to assimilate students. There are two types of transitional bilingual education. The first, *early-exit*, usually gives students about two years before they are transitioned to mainstream classes, but the goal is for students to transition as quickly as possible to using only English in the classroom. One problem with this type of transitional bilingual education is that “the early-exiting of children into the mainstream classroom tends to result in a relative lack of full linguistic, cultural and educational accomplishments” (p. 479). Two years “of English language instruction may be insufficient time for development of linguistic skills to participate and compete in English-only classrooms,”
which is why children may fall behind in their language skills and academic achievement (p. 482). In terms of culture, there may be a hidden curriculum which portrays English and the American culture as prestigious and the minority language and culture as less prestigious.

The second type of education is *late-exit*. Students may have about 75 percent of instruction in the home language in the first grade, and then decreasing to about 40 percent in the fifth and sixth grades. “In comparison, in the first and second grades of US early-exit programs, English will be used for approximately two-thirds or the time and one-third may be in the language of the home” (Baker & Jones, 1998, p. 480). Research shows that students do better in their core subject classes using a late-exit program, as opposed to an early-exit program. Nonetheless, politicians and much of the public support submersion and early-exit transitional bilingual education more than late-exit or strong forms of bilingual education because they are less expensive and focus on the acquisition and use of English (p. 480). It is important to note that transitional bilingual education requires bilingual teachers, an additional concern for administrators.

A strong form of bilingual education is *immersion bilingual education*. This can take many forms based on the age when a child begins immersion and how much of the day they spend in immersion. *Early immersion* begins at kindergarten, *delayed or middle immersion* begins at nine or ten years old (third or fourth grade), and *late immersion* begins at high school. However, this is not foreign language instruction. “Total immersion usually commences with 100 percent immersion in the second language, after two or three years reducing to 80 percent for the next three or four years, finishing junior
schooling with approximately 50 percent immersion. Partial immersion provides close to 50 percent immersion in the second language throughout infant and junior schooling” (p. 496). Table 2 below shows how immersion education was used to teach French and English.

Table 2: Types of Immersion Bilingual Education

![Table 2: Types of Immersion Bilingual Education](image)


Early total immersion seems to show the best results, as portrayed in Table 2 above. The goal is to mirror the process children go through when they learn their first language in the home, which is learning language unconsciously. Thus, students do not have second language classes about grammar and syntax at first. The focus is on listening
comprehension, which leads to students understanding the language and then speaking it. Like some submersion programs, the teacher may use simplified vocabulary and language constructions at first. One form of immersion is *dual language immersion*. The optimal program has a balance of language majority and language minority students, for instance English and Spanish. Languages are separated and compartmentalized, so certain subjects, days, weeks, or semesters are taught in one language, alternated with the other language. In the classroom, students are expected to speak only in the language currently being used for instruction. However language switching and mixing may be permitted at times when students are just beginning instruction or when students are confused.

Immersion bilingual education is considered strong because it aims for bilingualism. However, this type of program is usually used for children who speak the majority language but want to learn a second language. It is usually optional instead of compulsory, as parents choose to send their children to schools who offer the program. Research shows that students in early total immersion learn more of the second language than students in foreign language instruction which offers only thirty minute of second language instruction per day. However, students may not advance as quickly in their English language skills at first because they do not receive English language instruction in early total immersion. The same is true for the core subjects – students initially lag behind, in this case because they have not completely developed their second language skills. However, these results are not permanent: “after approximately six years of schooling, early total immersion children have caught up with their monolingual peers in English language skills” (Baker & Jones, 1998, p. 498).
In fact, it seems as if there are positive linguistic and cognitive advantages for bilingualism. Early partial immersion shows a similar pattern. One major difference, though, is that “unlike early total immersion students, partial immersion children do not tend to surpass mainstream comparison groups in English language achievement” (p. 498). Some cons are that students might not speak the language with a native speaker’s fluency, for instance, students may not be grammatically accurate. Also, the language and vocabulary that students are learning may only be “classroom language.” Students also do not always learn much about the culture of the people who speak the language.

A final strong form is language maintenance bilingual education. This type of education is distinct because the majority of instruction (50 to 90 percent) is conducted in the minority language. The amount of instruction in the minority language may decrease at the end of elementary school and through secondary education. The goal is for students to become bilingual in the majority language and the minority, home/native, or heritage language. Heritage languages are languages that are indigenous or ancestral (p. 509). Schools in the U.S. which offer this type of program instruct in Navajo and English or Spanish and English. Subjects may be allocated to one language because it is considered more logical. For example, due to the cultural attachments, history may be taught in the minority language. Since information about science is often in the majority language, science is often taught in the majority language. It might be more difficult to find these textbooks in the minority language. As well, the minority language may not have terms for some of the scientific jargon.
One con, though, is that by allocating “the minority language to Humanities and Arts, and the majority language to Science and Technology… the minority language may be seen to be part of the ancient culture, the modern language part of modernity” (p. 511). Baker and Jones (1998) cite this as one reason why some programs use the minority language for more than 50 percent of instruction. Another reason is that the minority language is not used as often in outside of school and therefore more easily lost. Like the other strong bilingual education programs, language maintenance bilingual education advocates bilingualism and biliteracy and promotes the culture of both languages.

In conclusion, it is important to emphasize that this chapter does not intend to offer a comprehensive history or a comprehensive description of all bilingual education programs. However, it aims to provide a basic overview and a starting point to developing an understanding about bilingual education.
CHAPTER III: ACCOMMODATING ELLS IN THE MAINSTREAM CLASSROOM

Although it is helpful for teachers to recognize bilingual education programs, not all ELLs are placed in programs such as these. The current trend is to “mainstream students,” that is to place them in the mainstream classroom as early as possible. Thus, teachers should understand how to effectively accommodate ELLs into their mainstream classrooms. This section provides explanations of English language proficiency, culturally responsive teaching, and the Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream (TELLiM) model, along with strategies for applying these concepts and other instructional tools.

English Language Proficiency

Students will receive the most benefits from mainstream classes if they have intermediate or high proficiency in English (see Table 3 below). Students who are beginner or early intermediate ELLs may feel “overwhelmed, distracted, or exhausted due to the high cognitive demand of content-area language and will, therefore, benefit from substantial additional assistance from an ESOL teacher and a native-language tutor” (Colombo & Furbush, 2009, p. 16).
Two language accommodations for ELLs include written instruction in their native language, if they can read at or near grade level, or oral instruction in their native language if they cannot. Additionally, content area teachers should recognize that their content has its own unique language features, which they need to be able to explain to ELLs. Teachers “know different ways to demonstrate concepts and are able to identify students’ misconceptions. With appropriate preparation, content-area teachers…will learn how to engage ELLs in concept-based conversations that broaden and enhance content-area understandings and promote content-area language development” (Colombo &
In other words, teachers should recognize the vocabulary specific to their content-area and capitalize on their talents at explaining concepts. Teachers need to find new ways to explain because one student learns differently than the next.

In this regard, it may be helpful to use differentiated instruction, in order to provide students with different ways of processing or constructing ideas. For instance, non-verbal communication can be effective for ELLs. Students can write stories using storyboards. They can draw the pictures and then the teacher can write the words that go with the pictures, based on the student’s instruction and approval of the words.

Non-verbal means, such as gestures, pictures, movies, and manipulatives, can also be used by the teacher to explain concepts.

**Culturally Responsive Teaching**

It is also important for teachers to be culturally responsive. The teacher should try to find out basic information such as the country the child is from, the length of time he has lived in the U.S., the language spoken in the home, and the student’s previous school experiences. Furthermore, teachers should spend time talking to the students and their families in order to learn about their cultures. The teacher can either visit homes or invite the whole family to a conference, as this “alleviates the issue of child care and often results in a bilingual family member accompanying the group” (Colombo & Furbush, 2009, p. 21). Conferences and letters home in the native language are important because they promote parental involvement in the child’s education (Peregoy and Boyle, 2008, p. 174-176). Parents of ELLs should not be excluded from having a role and an opinion in their child’s education because they do not speak or read English.
Teachers should recognize and respect that all students come to the classroom with different experiences due to their culture, and teachers should celebrate these unique cultures. It is also important that examples used in the classroom are culturally responsive, as it shows that the student’s culture is valued. Stories, textbooks, and other teacher examples should include aspects of the students’ cultures, not just the majority culture. Teachers should also realize that different cultures value participation and communication in different ways.

Writing is also an important tool because it allows students to express themselves in their own ways. If students are not comfortable speaking up in class, due to their culture or their lack of language skills, writing may give the student an alternative way to participate within the classroom.

**Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream (TELLiM) Model**

The Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream (TELLiM) model (see Table 4 below) is helpful because it outlines specific steps for teachers. The model helps teachers to understand how ELLs acquire academic English, to recognize the strengths and needs ELLs have, and to teach using a pedagogical model that is consistent with the principles for teaching ELLS (Colombo & Furbush, 2009, p. 17).

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**Table 4: Teaching English Language Learners in the Mainstream (TELLiM) Model**
A Few Suggestions

According to Peregoy and Boyle (2008), the U.S. Office of Education makes five suggestions for teaching English language learners:
• conduct formative assessments of ELLs’ reading to identify students who need extra help,
• use small group interventions to provide focused instruction in needed areas shown by the assessment,
• vocabulary instruction is important for content words and common words,
• academic English instruction should be provided to help students’ reading and writing improve,
• peer-assisted learning opportunities or pair/group work.

Teachers can also assist their students by keeping classroom routines, introducing new vocabulary at the beginning of lessons, being aware of rate of speech, paraphrasing to simplify complex syntactical constructions, using visuals (as mentioned earlier), and stopping to clarify confusion (Colombo & Furbush, 2009, p. 83-84). It may also help to seat ELLs near the front of the room where the teacher can observe them and they can observe the classroom. This helps to integrate students into the classroom.

**Strategies for Lesson Plans**

The following are some other helpful instructional strategies. Students may find graphic organizers, which visually represent concepts, helpful. They can be made individually, in groups, or as a class. Some examples are Venn diagrams, tables, charts, and graphs. Another example is a cluster/map/web. The main topic is in the middle of the cluster, then other topics that relate have spokes out from the middle of the cluster. These might spark more clusters (Peregoy & Boyle, 2008, p. 73-74).

Differentiated instruction and group work are two other strategies that were already mentioned as having potential positive learning outcomes for ELLs.
Differentiated instruction allows children to learn in their own way and shows that the teacher acknowledges that all students are different. Conducting an assessment of students’ learning styles may help the teacher to understand how a student learns best and tailor instruction to each student. Group work allows students the opportunity to practice their social and academic language skills. Moreover, “if words are used that are not understood, collaborative group work permits learners to ask for repetition and clarification if needed” (p. 87). One specific type of group work is jigsaw. Each group or person has a different task to complete. After the student completes this task, he then shares what he has learned with the rest of the group or the class (p. 92). Thematic instruction and integrated units may also work well for ELLs. Students have the opportunity to use many different skills, types of learning, and content areas. The connections that these projects make help students to understand them better. The lesson does not seem like an isolated unit.

Scaffolding is another tool. In order to learn, students must be challenged to think beyond what they already know. However, the scaffolds, or the temporary support and assistance of teachers, “permit learners to perform a complex process before they are able to do so unassisted” (p. 99). Figure 5 provided below depicts the steps to gradually move students from assistance to independence.
These general classroom practices and specific teaching strategies are beneficial for ELL students; however, many of them are applicable to all students. For instance, every student wants to feel valued and all students benefit from differentiated instruction. Most of the strategies are about tailoring teaching to individual students instead of viewing the class as one collective unit. Every student can profit from this.
CONCLUSION

Although I had some background knowledge about bilingual education, before I researched and wrote this thesis, I was by no means well-versed in the field. I hope that I am able to share the knowledge that I gained in a manner that is readable and accessible to all readers.

This is why the first chapter regarding terminology is especially important. In order to understand and help ELLs it is crucial to know how ELLs acquire languages. The first part of the second chapter regarding the history of bilingual education is pertinent to teachers because the policies affect how teachers teach and how ELLs receive their education. The labels that have been given to ELLs are also indicative of the perceptions about ELLs. I hope that overview of programs at least gave the reader an idea of what types of programs to expect in schools and how bilingual education programs generally work. Finally, I believe the last chapter may be the most helpful for teachers. Often times teachers are given a classroom and then just told to teach, no matter the lack of resources or preparation for the given situation. I hope that this thesis will help bridge the gap for teachers who have not been instructed how to accommodate ELLs into the mainstream classroom.

I will apply what I learned writing this Honors thesis to my future classroom and my own teaching practices. I aim to practice inclusive education, in which all of my students are integrated into the mainstream classroom. I hope that this thesis will benefit other teachers and English language learners, as much as it has benefited me.
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