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How Two-Way Immersion Programs Close the Achievement Gap

Bethany Finneran

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Abstract

This article explores the effectiveness of dual language immersion programs' ability to close the achievement gap between English language learners and native English speakers as well as provide meaningful and challenging instruction at the elementary school level. This project aims to raise awareness for dual language immersion programs in English-only families who are unaware of the benefits of bilingualism, as well as bilingual families who may be unaware that these programs are available in their area. This project quickly and cohesively highlights the benefits of dual language immersion programs in a multi-format booklet that is easily accessible to parents and families.

Literature Review

The United States proudly claims the title of “melting pot” but simultaneously does very little to support and foster cultures and languages other than English in our public school system. The U.S. Census Bureau reported that the number of speakers of languages other than English has grown over 25 million in the past three decades (Gándara, 2015). As of 2014, the Migration Policy Institute reported that the percentage of English language learners now accounts for 25% of all children in the United States and has tripled in the last several decades (Espinosa, 2015). Through current Common Core state standards and rigorous standardized testing, English language learners are given a low quality transitional bilingual curriculum consisting of decontextualized skills involving vocabulary, decoding, and phonics and thrown into mainstream classrooms before they are even given the chance to fully develop English proficiency and virtually guaranteeing that the native English speakers will outperform English learners and further widen the achievement gap (Nora, 2013; Thomas & Collier, 2003). These, among many other problems, have added to the ever growing achievement gap between native English speakers and English language learners.

In two-way immersion programs, students are taught in two languages, one of which being English. Duration of each language during the school day varies from program to program to meet the needs of students, but the majority use both languages equally. The goal of these programs is to develop proficiency and literacy in both languages, as well as academic achievement and positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors (Christian, 1996; Nora, 2013). Two way immersion programs have been proven to rectify these urgent issues facing education’s

fastest growing population by promoting language development alongside academic achievement (Christian, 1996; Gándara 1994; Genesee et al. 2006; Hood 2003).

The United States education system needs a reform from the mindset that English language learners are “broken,” in need of fixing, and that bilingual education is a remedial pathway that should ultimately lead to English-only education (Nora, 2013). Many forms of English-only programs encourage English language learners to abandon their native language in favor of English; when in reality, bilingualism is a strong attribute, rather than a cognitive or linguistic liability to our education system (Baker, 2001; Soderman, 2012; Thomas & Collier, 2003). Too often, English language learners are expected to have a lower-level of cognitive performance than their monolingual peers and are not expected to reach appropriate grade level academic achievement (Chamot & O’Malley 1989). In two-way immersion programs, language is seen as an enrichment solution, rather than the problem (Nora, 2013).

Students learn concepts best in a language they understand. English language learners are successful in two-way immersion programs because they receive native-language support while learning English (Nora, 2013). By giving English language learners access to grade appropriate, high-level academic content in their native language, they are able to engage in critical thinking; an opportunity they would have never seen in their remedial English-only classrooms (Nora, 2013). Research has shown that two-way immersion programs have lead to enhanced creativity and analytical thinking, better focus and attention, increased short term memory, as well as enhanced problem-solving skills (Bialystok, 2001, Diaz & Klinger, 1991, Lauchlan, et al., 2013, Morales et al., 2013, as cited in Gándara, 2015; Thomas & Collier, 2003). Students who attend two-way immersion programs were shown to overtake their English-only peers academically by

grade 5 (Gándara, 2015). Although it is possible to learn a second language later in life, research has indicated that students who begin two-way immersion programs as young as preschool have significantly faster brain development than their monolingual preschool-age peers, as well as higher levels of proficiency than peers who begin bilingual education later in life (Cao, 2013; Medina, 2003).

Two-way immersion programs are not solely beneficial to English language learners; all students, including native English speakers, benefit from meaningful, challenging, and accelerated, non remedial, instruction (Baker, 2001; Christian, 1996). Native English speakers who were originally falling behind in their mainstream classrooms have received the necessary accelerated instruction to close the achievement gap in two-way immersion programs (Thomas & Collier, 2003). Both English language learners as well as native English speakers were found more likely to graduate from high school and attend a four year university (Gándara, 2015; Rumbaut, 2014).

Along with the numerous cognitive advantages that come with bilingualism and biliteracy, two-way immersion programs break down the segregation of native English speakers and English language learners and promote desirable cross-cultural attitudes while simultaneously offering students opportunities to express themselves freely and to develop self-esteem (Cao, 2013; Christian, 1996; Gándara, 2015; Thomas & Collier, 2003). When students are able to learn in their native language, immigrant parents feel more involved in the school system and heritage preservation is strengthened (Nora, 2013; Samayoa, 2014). Diversity in language benefits everyone involved; in two-way immersion programs students' assets, both linguistic and cultural, are utilized to help them prepare to become global citizens with an

appreciation and respect for different cultures, customs, and experiences of others (Cao, 2013; Gándara, 2015; Nora, 2013; Thomas & Collier, 2003).

In two-way immersion programs, students learn on a level playing field. English language learners help the native English speakers learn through a second language, while native English speakers are simultaneously helping the English language learners engage with the curriculum in English. Students receive the structured curriculum from the classroom, as well as the real life interactions experiences and collaboration from their peers (Thomas & Collier, 2003). World language education is often very structured, rigid and disconnected, lacking in real-world contexts. With the two-way immersion program, students are immediately able to practice and implement the knowledge they acquired from the classroom in real life interactions with their peers.

Although the solution has been here all along, our current education system continues to fail to meet the needs of English language learners. Two-way immersion programs have proven time and time again to be extremely beneficial for all students involved. Students learn best in a language they understand; and two-way immersion programs offer an efficient way to promote bilingualism, academic achievement, as well as close the achievement gap at a cost comparable with existing programs (Thomas & Collier, 2003).

Although two-way immersion schools are on the rise, there are simply not enough to reach all the students that desperately need the support offered by these programs (Chandler, 2014; Su, 2013). English is often seen as the be-all end-all of languages in the United States. Therefore, native English speaking parents are often unaware of the limitless benefits and possibilities that bilingual education can bring to their children. There is without a doubt a need

for these programs, but without the knowledge of the benefits of bilingualism, there is not enough demand.

The Project Description

Despite the countless studies all showing the numerous benefits of two-way immersion programs, there is still a lack of demand for these programs. There are a few very interesting reasons behind this problem. First of all, because so many countries around the world are learning English as a second language, English is unfairly treated as superior language in the United States. Many English-only families have a warped idea that because their children already know English, there is nothing else to learn; they are already at the top. Because of these beliefs, many English-only families are not interested in or seeking foreign language education for their children, or are unaware of the many benefits that two-way immersion programs can offer every student. This lack of interest and understanding has accounted for the lack of demand for two-way immersion programs in the United States. There is definitely a need for these programs, but unfortunately, there is not enough demand.

As a way to raise awareness for these amazing programs, I have decided to work with the Dual Language Academy of the Monterey Peninsula (DLAMP), a local charter school implementing a successful two-way English-Spanish immersion program. DLAMP offers its students the opportunity to become fluently bilingual and biliterate in both English and Spanish. From Kindergarten, enrollment at DLAMP is monitored to maintain a balance between native English speakers and native Spanish speakers. From the first day of school, students are immediately immersed in Spanish for half of the school day, and in English for half of the day.

Core subjects areas such as math, science, and social studies are taught through the target language by highly specialized teachers who are trained to facilitate developing second language fluency in children. DLAMP promotes academic excellence in listening, oral, reading, and writing proficiency in both Spanish and English as well as cross-cultural awareness and appreciation for traditions and values of various cultures in our society and around the world.

The main goal of this project was to bring awareness to the many benefits that two-way immersion programs can bring to students. This project aims to serve a wide range of families, from English only families who may not know about the benefits of these programs, as well as bilingual families who may not be aware that these programs are being offered. With the help and support of DLAMP, I have created a booklet that clearly highlights the numerous benefits of two-way immersion programs (Appendix C). This booklet is digitally available on DLAMP's school website (<https://dlamp-mpusd-ca.schoolloop.com>), passed out at the Monterey Peninsula district office, as well as distributed to visitors of the school.

The booklet focuses on the numerous cognitive and social benefits of two-way immersion programs. The cognitive benefits from attending Two Way Immersion programs that are covered in this booklet include: enhanced creativity and analytical thinking, better focus and attention, increased short term memory, enhanced problem solving skills, and faster brain development than their monolingual peers. The total language acquisition gained both peer interactions as well as structured curriculum gained from these programs is also addressed. Finally, the booklet addresses how these programs are closing the achievement gap between English learners and native English speakers, as well as the cross cultural knowledge gained through these programs. The information in this booklet was designed to quickly and efficiently communicate the

invaluable benefits of dual language immersion programs to parents and guardians in the community and consequently raise demand for these programs.

Results

There were two main problems that I aimed to make steps towards fixing with this project. First, the incredibly low demand for two-way immersion programs; and second, the lack of knowledge in English only families of the benefits of bilingualism. Of course, these problems are not mutually exclusive and required a project that would be able to tackle both. My plans for this project did work out; but perhaps not to the extent I had originally envisioned.

The main problem I encountered while carrying out this project was locating my target audience of English only families. I found it more difficult than I had originally anticipated to locate areas in the local community where English only families would have access to this information. However, through my partnership with the Dual Language Academy, I was able to overcome this problem and utilize their previously established locations and connections within the community. This way, the information about dual language immersion programs would be sure to reach the parents of English only families. Another problem I encountered during this project was that I was unfortunately only able to reach out and collaborate with one school in the Monterey Peninsula. In the future, I hope to be able to connect with more two way immersion programs and continue to raise awareness for these programs all over California.

I believe the most successful component to this project was its broad objectives and versatility. This project was designed to easily be molded to fit the needs and wants of my community partner. My partnership with the Dual Language Academy was hugely successful, and both parties came out of this experience that much closer to their goals. During collaboration, we decided to create a base model of information for the project which could then be converted into multiple formats such as a printable pamphlet, or a page on a website. The content of the project was designed in an easy to read, quick, and colorful manner to draw and hold the attention of the busy parents who are reading it.

Because of the timeline of this project, quantitative results, such as a change in the number of applicants to the school, would not be available until the start of the next academic school year. Tracking the distribution of pamphlets, along with a page view counter on the Dual Language Academy website could help indicate the success of this project in coming years. Although these results are not yet available, I anticipate this project will bring awareness to English-only families and yield positive outcomes in the future.

This project provided me with invaluable real world experiences working not only within schools, but with administration and district level board members. It was interesting to learn which aspects of a school were autonomous and which were under the administration of the district. Creating the printable pamphlet to hand out within DLAMP was an extremely smooth

process, however, the online version that was to be put on their website required approval from the district level. I was very fortunate to have a very helpful community partner who helped me throughout this whole process.

Dr. Waltz stated in the beginning of the semester that Capstone was supposed to be a fun and engaging project, and I was extremely skeptical at first. The idea of completing a research paper as well as designing and implementing a project in the community seemed like an overwhelmingly daunting task. Looking back at the work I have done for this project, I can honestly say that I thoroughly enjoyed my time researching and implementing my project. I have always been interested in languages and first had the opportunity to work with DLAMP through my service learning at CSUMB. I completely fell in love with the program at DLAMP and was very curious to learn more about dual language immersion. It was incredibly meaningful to see first hand how this program was affecting and benefiting its students. This project gave me the opportunity to give back to this wonderful program as well as further my own knowledge on the issues surrounding these programs. I hope to one day be a part of a dual language immersion program in my future teaching career.

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Appendix A

Community Expert Interview

Interviewer: Student

Interviewee: Adrienne Denny: Spanish teacher at Adolfo Camarillo High School

Interview Setting: Interview conducted in Ms. Denny's classroom Adolfo Camarillo High School. The interview was conducted at 4:00 PM on Friday, February 12.

Affiliation with interviewee: Adrienne is a close family friend and has encouraged my love for teaching and language since I was young.

(Start of Interview)

Interviewer: How and when did you first become interested in foreign language education?

Interviewee: I first became interested in foreign language education when I was taking Spanish in high school. I got to travel with my teacher during spring break to Spain and to Mexico for four different times and I got excited to see that there was a whole nother world out there and I decided that I wanted to teach other students how to experience the same things that I did.

Interviewer: Were you taught a foreign language at a young age?

Interviewee: I didn't have formal foreign language instruction until my freshman year of high school. But, I did grow up in a city that has a very large Spanish speaking population, so I grew up with bilingual education unofficially and was exposed to a lot of speaking Spanish at a young age so I was always aware of it being there.

Interviewer: What age do you believe foreign language education should begin? Why?

Interviewee: Foreign language education is no longer called "foreign language," the wording has now changed to "world language." So, do I think that world language should begin at a young

age? Absolutely! We have more and more school districts that are evolving to an immersion program, which starts from kindergarten, because it takes several years to achieve fluency. Imagine twelve years of education where you can reach fluency, versus just four years of having a great experience and maybe you can speak and read and write just a little bit.

Interviewer: Do you believe it is a problem that foreign language is not taught until high school?

Interviewee: I don't think it's a problem that foreign language isn't taught until high school. Only because I am a product of that, that I didn't start it until high school. I think it takes a lot of work and effort to put into it and you absolutely can't think you're going to be bilingual in one year or two years or three years or four years. I would love to see it taught continuously from elementary school on. Any language, I think it's ideal because we're silly to think that English is the only language that people communicate in, because it's not.

Interviewer: Why is foreign language education important?

Interviewee: Foreign language education is important for many reasons. Number one, the idea of teaching your brain new paths in which to think; not unlike teaching your brain how to solve a geometry proof or to solve an algebraic equation. The brain has so many paths to work with, creating communication in other ways with other words, phrasings, gestures, it's all about growing the brain. And like I said before, it's silly to think that English is the only language that everybody communicates in. The number one language around the world is Mandarin. And hello, why would we think that we wouldn't need to learn that to communicate with the rest of the world? Foreign language education is important because it opens you up to so many new experiences and possibilities. Imagine if you had gone to Japan and you didn't know a word of

Japanese. You know, look at the possibilities of what it opens up to. Expand that concept to one hundred and seventy five kids every year, with every teacher in a high school and suddenly the world gets to be a smaller place because everybody gets to know each other and their thoughts and their ideas. Education is an important thing; foreign language is an important thing. To only speak one language is very isolationist. And, you know, we could go back to the times of Adolf Hitler where everybody can only speak German and can only be of the pure race. I mean, look at the racism that is involved with only doing this or only doing that. I think speaking multiple languages is key to survival of the human race.

Interviewer: Who benefits from foreign language education?

Interviewee: Who benefits from foreign language education? You do, I do, the grocery store clerk that you speak with does, the people standing in line that you are eavesdropping in on their conversation in a different language, the visitor to a place that is desiring communications with you, traveling from one place to another and not being the ignorant American who doesn't know how to speak, government officials who work in embassies around the world and can speak in other languages, the spies who communicate with each other. I mean, you know, it's endless possibilities. We all benefit from foreign education because we all benefit from education. You know, nobody benefits from ignorance.

Interviewer: What do you believe are foreign language education's effects on multicultural education and cultural unity?

Interviewee: Multicultural education, cultural unity, those are key. I mean, they solve the prejudice problems of the world. If you have an understanding of somebody else's culture, if you have an understanding of somebody else's background or their history or their education, then

you're not as afraid of that person or that culture. Foreign language is more than just language acquisition, it's learning that Spanish is spoken in twenty-two different countries around the world. It's learning that how you say good morning, good afternoon, or good evening, how you answer the telephone, can be done twenty-two different ways because it's all culturally different. That the Spanish speaking cultures down in South America all have much more of a European influence. Or that the Spanish speaking cultures in Mexico and Central America have much more of a Native American influence. I mean it's...the effects are astounding. To talk about personal space, and how in the Spanish speaking world, personal space, it's no big deal. If you sit next to somebody and you got a sweaty butt, you sit next to each other, and arms touching each other, we think it's gross and for a Spanish speaking person it's no big deal because their idea of personal space is different. You learn that in foreign language education. You know, with culture, God, heaven forbid everybody thinks all Spanish speaking people eat tortillas and beans. You know, there's churros, there's chocolate, there's coffee, there's the tamales wrapped in banana leaves rather than corn husks. It's all education. And when somebody tries to speak to you in a different language, and they appreciate the effort that you make speaking back to them. I mean, oh my gosh, it says it all in a smile. You know, again, it's racism. Do we want to be separatists? Or do we want to be united? I'm all for unity.

Interviewer: Do you have any preference towards bilingual education (teaching non-English-speaking children in their native language, while they are learning English), dual language immersion (where both languages are used equally), or any other foreign language education method? Why or why not?

Interviewee: Preferences towards bilingual education...this one's a toughie. I...my training tells me that education takes place in the brain best in the language in which they know. That doesn't mean that the concept of "one plus one equals two" doesn't work in English and Spanish, because it does. You have to learn the concept. So, now are you gonna get stuck on teaching the concept? Or are you gonna get stuck on "I need to teach you the vocabulary before you can learn the concept?" I'm all for learning the concept. I am absolutely opposed to English only teaching. I believe that a student deserves to be taught in the language in which they are speaking just as much as they are in English. Dual immersion is probably where I'm more comfortable with. Um, I absolutely think that drop kicking them into a program where they only speak English and no Spanish at all for example, um, I'm not good with that. Because I see...it's the mother instinct in me. I want to make it comfortable, you know, I don't like making people uncomfortable. But on the other hand, I am a high school world language teacher and I've got four years to try to do the best with what I can with the kids. So while I don't use Spanish 100% in my classroom, in fact at the first years use very little of it. I think that we can learn it through the other language. I present my grammar in English. I present the lessons in English because they have to associate it. Part of the idea of education, of your brain learning, is that you have to link it to an experience. Your brain can't just learn something on its own. There has to be something that it can attach it to. So, if I can teach you the word, "yellow" in another language, it's only because you already have a concept of what "yellow" is in the language that you already speak. So, I'm... I'm probably more of a bilingual education person. Dual immersion seems to be what's popular out there. Um, I absolutely think it's cruel and unusual punishment to bring a child into their first year in this country, put them in a math class where they have absolutely no concept of what the language is,

and tell them, “here, now you have to learn algebra.” You don’t know the words, teach them the concept in the language that they understand, and gradually bring the words in. That’s...that’s me.

Interviewer: How do you engage students in foreign language education?

Interviewee: You engage foreign language students in, I don’t know, you know, how many different ways are there to do it. We play simon says, where you teach commands. You hold up colorful signs, and you think and you brainstorm about all the different colors and the pictures of what you see in the signs. Um, you know, you go back to the basics and you re-teach what they already know. You know, you’re teaching grammar, you’re teaching nouns and pronouns and verbs and subjects and predicates. Um, I have these magnadoodles, like etch a sketches, and I’ll pass them out to class and I will tell them a word and they have to draw a picture to associate that word. So that way when they see the picture, that word comes to mind. Again, you know, it’s word association. We try to do limericks to help remember, you know, like “i before e except after c,” except we do it with Spanish. Um, I do a lot of colors and pictures and drawing in my classes. You know, they have their vocabulary words and I tell them, “go home and draw me pictures. Draw me a story book that goes along with it.” I tell them they have to write an essay and they groan and it’s like well an essay is eight sentences, you have to indent it, but here’s this great big huge piece of paper like you had in first grade, two thirds of it is picture and one third of it is paragraph. You know, you just...you start on a basic level but it’s amazing, you start that off your freshman year but by your senior year you’re writing three to five paragraphs in another language because you’ve got the experience of your English class to learn how to write an essay so then you get to learn how to do it in the language that you are taking. Um, you can only

engage a student in language if they wanna be engaged. If they don't want to be there, then they just absolutely...they won't learn. You have to... you constantly have to find a way to make it fun.

Interviewer: What difficulties, if any, have you have experienced in teaching?

Interviewee: Difficulties that I have experienced in teaching, is having assholes for administrators. Sorry, wrong word. [laughs] For having less than appropriate administrators in schools. You know, if you get one that makes all of these demands, "you have to do this. You have to do it this way, you have to do it that way." Well, hello, when was the last time they taught your subject? Um, it's the collegiality amongst your department members. It is the educational philosophies that you as a staff all agree upon. It's how well are you supported as a faculty member by your administration. Um, not every teacher is a perfect blend in every class and not every teacher is a perfect blend in every school. It's the administrative support that you get from your peers, from your administration, from your district that can absolutely make or break your experiences in teaching. I've had kids break out into fights in my classroom. I've had kids come charge towards me in my classroom. I've had kids accuse me of being racist and the administration did nothing about it. In fact, the administration believed them. I've had administrators who absolutely backed me, and you know, the kid's a rotten egg. In public education you can't turn anybody down, you accept everybody. You accept those that are mentally challenged, or linguistically challenged, or personality challenged. For all the moaning and groaning for teaching that you hear, it's...it's frustration and it's exhaustion. And I'll tell you, you find a teacher, and you ask them is there anything else they would rather do, and they're not gonna say anything other than they wanna be in their classrooms, they want to be

with their students. Even through all the difficulties, even through all the problems. I've had administrators where my mantra is "I'm going to survive you. I'm going to outlast you." And last year I did cartwheels when they told my principal that he had to retire or he was getting fired. And I was thrilled because sometimes they just make it really really hard. But, you know, when you see the lightbulbs go on in your class, and you know that the kid's got it, whatever "it" was, it's the best feeling in the whole world.

Interviewer: Thank you so much for your help!

Interviewee: You're welcome. Bethany, you're going to have such an awesome career ahead of you. I am so excited for you to see where this is going.

(End of Interview)

Appendix B

Booklet: Online Version



WHY DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAMS ARE RIGHT FOR YOUR STUDENT

What are Dual Language Immersion Programs?



In dual language immersion programs, students are taught in two languages, one of which being English. The goal of these programs is to develop proficiency and literacy in both languages, as well as academic achievement and positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors.

Many forms of English-only programs encourage English language learners to abandon their native language in favor of English; when in reality, bilingualism is a strong attribute, rather than a cognitive or linguistic liability to our education system.

Academic instruction meets the K-8 Common Core State Standards while promoting critical-thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills. Instruction in core subject areas such as math, science and social studies is provided through a target language (either English or Spanish) by highly trained teachers who specialize in developing second language fluency in children.

Research has shown that students who begin two-way immersion programs from Kindergarten have:

- ▶ Enhanced creativity and analytical thinking
- ▶ Better focus and attention
- ▶ Increased short term memory
- ▶ Enhanced problem-solving skills
- ▶ Faster brain development than their monolingual peers
- ▶ Higher levels of proficiency than peers who begin bilingual education later in life.
- ▶ Higher likelihood of graduating from high school and attending university

★ Two-way immersion programs are not solely beneficial to English language learners; all students, including native English speakers, benefit from meaningful, challenging, and accelerated, non remedial, instruction.

★ English language learners are successful in two-way immersion programs because they receive native-language support while learning English.

★ Students who attend two-way immersion programs have been shown to overtake their English-only peers academically by grade 5.

Along with the numerous cognitive advantages that come with bilingualism and biliteracy, two-way immersion programs break down the segregation of native English speakers and English language learners and promote desirable cross-cultural attitudes while simultaneously offering students opportunities to express themselves freely and to develop self-esteem.

TOTAL LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

In two-way immersion programs, students learn on a level playing field. English language learners help the native English speakers learn through a second language, while native English speakers are simultaneously helping the English language learners engage with the curriculum in English.

Students receive the structured curriculum from the classroom, as well as the real life interactions, experiences, and collaboration from their peers



Diversity in language benefits everyone involved; in two-way immersion programs students' assets, both linguistic and cultural, are utilized to help them prepare to become global citizens with an appreciation and respect for different cultures, customs, and experiences of others.

The Dual Language Academy will prepare students with exceptional language skills and an expanded worldview, both of which can offer greater opportunities in secondary and higher education, the work world, and their everyday lives.

Appendix C

Booklet: Print Version

English language learners are successful in two-way immersion programs because they receive native-language support while learning English.

Students learn concepts best in a language they understand.

Research has shown that students who begin two-way immersion programs from Kindergarten have:

- Enhanced creativity and analytical thinking
- Better focus and attention
- Increased short term memory
- Enhanced problem-solving skills
- Faster brain development than their monolingual peers
- Higher levels of proficiency than peers who begin bilingual education later in life.
- Higher likelihood of graduating from high school and attending university

Students who attend two-way immersion programs have been shown to overtake their English-only peers academically by grade 5.

The Dual Language Academy of the Monterey Peninsula offers a unique immersion opportunity for students to become fluently bilingual and bi-literate in English and Spanish. Academic instruction meets the K-8 Common Core State Standards while promoting critical-thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills. Instruction in core subject areas such as math, science and social studies is provided through a target language (either English or Spanish) by highly trained teachers who specialize in developing second language fluency in children.

The Dual Language Academy aims to nurture a vibrant K-8 learning community in which students from diverse backgrounds speak, read, and write in both Spanish and English and thrive on collaboration among students, staff, parents and the wider community.

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D.L.A.M.P.

DUAL LANGUAGE ACADEMY
OF THE MONTEREY PENINSULA

LOBOS

Why Dual Language Immersion Programs Are Right For Your Student

What are Dual Language Immersion Programs?

In dual language immersion programs, students are taught in two languages, one of which being English. The goal of these programs is to develop proficiency and literacy in both languages, as well as academic achievement and positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors.

Many forms of English-only programs encourage English language learners to abandon their native language in favor of English; when in reality, bilingualism is a strong attribute, rather than a cognitive or linguistic liability to our education system.

Two-way immersion programs are not solely beneficial to English language learners; all students, including native English speakers, benefit from meaningful, challenging, and accelerated, non remedial, instruction.

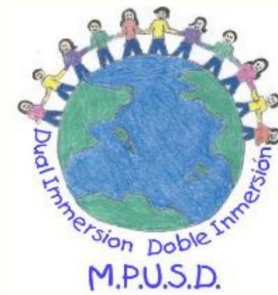
Along with the numerous cognitive advantages that come with bilingualism and biliteracy, two-way immersion programs break down the segregation of native English speakers and English language learners and promote desirable cross-cultural attitudes while simultaneously offering students opportunities to express themselves freely and to develop self-esteem.

Total Language Acquisition

In two-way immersion programs, students learn on a level playing field. English language learners help the native English speakers learn through a second language, while native English speakers are simultaneously helping the English language learners engage with the curriculum in English.

Students receive the structured curriculum from the classroom, as well as the real life interactions, experiences, and collaboration from their peers

Diversity in language benefits everyone involved; in two-way immersion programs students' assets, both linguistic and cultural, are utilized to help them prepare to become global citizens with an appreciation and respect for different cultures, customs, and experiences of others.



D.L.A.M.P.

The Dual Language Academy aims to prepare students with exceptional language skills and an expanded worldview, both of which can offer greater opportunities in secondary and higher education, the work world, and their everyday lives.

Appendix D

Miniature Version of Capstone Festival Poster


How Two-Way Immersion Programs Close the Achievement Gap


Bethany Finneran
 California State University Monterey Bay

Problem

- Our public education system does little to support and foster cultures and languages other than English.
- English language learners pushed through transitional bilingual programs and thrown into mainstream classrooms before they have a chance to fully develop English proficiency.



Literature Review

- English language learners are successful in two-way immersion programs because they receive native-language support while learning English.
- Research has shown that students who begin two-way immersion programs from Kindergarten have:
 - Enhanced creativity and analytical thinking
 - Better focus and attention
 - Increased short term memory
 - Enhanced problem-solving skills
 - Faster brain development than their monolingual peers
 - Higher levels of proficiency than peers who begin bilingual education later in life
 - Higher likelihood of graduating from high school and attending university
- Students who attend two-way immersion programs have been shown to overtake their English-only peers academically by grade 5.

Community Partner

As a way to raise awareness for these amazing programs, I have decided to work with the Dual Language Academy of the Monterey Peninsula (DLAMP), a local charter school implementing a successful two-way English-Spanish immersion program.

From the first day of school, students are immediately immersed in Spanish for half of the school day, and in English for half of the day. Core subjects areas such as math, science, and social studies are taught through the target language by highly specialized teachers who are trained to facilitate developing second language fluency in children.

DLAMP promotes academic excellence in listening, oral, reading, and writing proficiency in both Spanish and English as well as cross-cultural awareness and appreciation for traditions and values of various cultures in our society and around the world.



Project

English is unfairly treated as superior language in the United States. The main goal of this project was to bring awareness to the many benefits that two-way immersion programs can bring to students. This project aims to serve a wide range of families, from English only families who may not know about the benefits of these programs, as well as bilingual families who may not be aware that these programs are being offered.

The booklet focuses on a number of topics such as:
 The cognitive and social benefits of two-way immersion programs
 The total language acquisition gained from these programs
 The cross cultural knowledge gained through these programs

Results & Conclusions

Students learn concepts best in a language they understand. My partnership with the Dual Language Academy was hugely successful, and both parties came out of this experience that much closer to their goals. The content of the project was designed in an easy to read, quick, and colorful manner to draw and hold the attention of the busy parents who are reading it.

Products

WHY DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION PROGRAMS ARE RIGHT FOR YOUR STUDENT

What are Dual Language Immersion Programs?

Research has shown that students who begin two-way immersion programs from Kindergarten have:

- Enhanced creativity and analytical thinking
- Better focus and attention
- Increased short term memory
- Enhanced problem-solving skills
- Faster brain development than their monolingual peers
- Higher levels of proficiency than peers who begin bilingual education later in life
- Higher likelihood of graduating from high school and attending university

Two-way immersion programs are successful because they receive native-language support while learning English.

Students who attend two-way immersion programs have been shown to overtake their English-only peers academically by grade 5.

TOTAL LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Two-way immersion programs students learn on a 50/50 planing 50% English language learners begin to learn English speakers learn through a second language while native English speakers are simultaneously learning the English language learners engage with the curriculum in English.

Students receive the structured curriculum from the classroom, as well as the real life interactions, experiences, and collaboration from their peers.

Students in language immersion programs, in two-way immersion programs students, receive both linguistic and cultural, and will likely have more opportunities to receive cultural education and respect for different cultures, customs, and experiences of others.

The Dual Language Academy will prepare students with exceptional language skills and an expanded worldview, both of which can offer greater opportunities to succeed and higher education, the work world, and their respective lives.

Contact Information

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