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Successful Elementary Bilingual Education Programs in the Tri-County Area

Katrina Herrera-Agosti

Abstract

This senior capstone research project examines the many different bilingual elementary programs in the tri-county area where there is a large Latino and Hispanic population. Although the Latino and Hispanic population is one of the fastest growing populations, there are not many bilingual programs to serve them in the tri-county area. This senior capstone investigates the successful bilingual education programs in Santa Cruz, Monterey and Salinas through the use of literature review and surveys. The results reveal the multiple factors that make bilingual education programs successful.

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Introduction and Background

Bilingual education was created in 1968 as part of The Bilingual Education Act (BEA) which part of the ESEA. The BEA was introduced by the Texas senator Ralph Yarborough which “proposed to provide assistance to school districts to establish educational programs specially aimed at ELLs” (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988, para 3). Within the ESEA act, the BEA was Title VII and was the first piece of legislation that recognized the needs of the ELLs. Gloria Stewner-Manzanares states that “the main focus of the BEA was to teach Spanish as a native language, and teach English as a second language, and programs designed to give Spanish-speaking students an appreciation of ancestral language and culture” (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988, para 4). It was thought that this would allow the Spanish-speaking students to cultivate an identity that contain elements from their culture and the new culture that would be around them in their daily life. This was also thought that “it would keep the children from being confused or resentful towards their culture” because they would not be like their peers (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988, para 4). Another reason why the BEA was introduced is because it “largely was a remedy for civil rights violations” because ELLs were not receiving an equal and quality education compared to the students who spoke English. (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988, para 5). This portion of the law ensured that minority groups would receive the same education no matter their socioeconomic status. From here, there have been many different pieces of legislation passed that have helped shape bilingual educational programs and their overall successfulness.

This senior capstone research project will examine the bilingual education programs in the Tri County area in the Central Coast. The tri county area includes Santa Cruz County, Monterey County, and Salinas County. In this paper, I will examine the legislations and laws that have been passed to help the bilingual education in this area. The biggest problem that exists is the fact that there are millions of students who do not speak and write English fluently, but they are being taught like they are native English speakers. The first law that was passed was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), created in 1965. This law helped launched education onto the forefront which caused the federal government to funnel more funds into aiding education. This was created to ensure that all students, no matter what their socioeconomic status are, receive an equal and quality of education.

Another legislation, The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB), was passed into law in 2002, replaced the ESEA. This was created because George W. Bush felt as though our education system was failing our students and they would not be able to compete internationally with other countries. Then, in 2016, California passed Proposition 58 which was named the California Multilingual Education Act. This gave public schools more control over the creation of language programs. This is helpful because in California, there are communities with large Latino populations and other areas with a small Latino population. This allows the school to spend money on programs that reflect the demographics around the school. With any problems, there are people that are affected by it. In the case of bilingual education, there are three main groups of people affected: students, teachers and administration. Students are affected because they are not receiving an equal and quality education. Teachers are affected because they are not able to communicate with their students, meaning they can't help the students. The administration must find the funds, create the program, and find highly qualified teachers to

teach students. In this paper, I will focus on the bilingual education and the successfulness of these programs.

As a prospective teacher, the primary research question that I want to seek ~~I look to~~ the answer to, is: *How successful are the elementary bilingual education programs in the tri-county area?* My related or secondary research questions are: *What are the effects of bilingual education programs in elementary schools according to research? What does this research say about the successfulness of these programs? Are there successful bilingual education programs currently implemented in the Tri-county area? If there are, what are the types of the successful bilingual programs and where are they in the Tri-county school area? How are teachers implementing the bilingual education programs in their classrooms? How do teachers know that their bilingual education programs are successful? In other words, what indicators inform them about the success of the program? What do school districts and teachers do to bring the most successful bilingual education program to be implemented in their schools?* With the aid of literature review and surveys I will look to see what commonalties these programs have with one another.

Literature Review

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2016), they state “that the percentage of ELLs, English Language learners, in public schools was higher in fall 2015 at 9.5 percent or 4.8 million students compared to the fall of 2000 where ELLs were only at 8.1 percent or 3.8 million students” (US Department of Education, 2016, para 1). This is a significant number of students because in California, the total population of Latinos and Hispanics is about

forty percent (40%). Within the Tri-County area, the estimated population of Latino and Hispanics is 400 thousand. When we consider that 9.5% of students in the public-school system are ELLs, this means that the Tri-County area has approximately 36,000 students who are in need of a bilingual education programs. In the world of education, there is an everlasting debate about bilingual education and whether students who are ELLs would benefit from bilingual education programs. Over the years, this has been a topic that is so widely debated, in that there have been many laws passed, books and articles written about bilingual education.

In order to understand why there is a debate about the need for bilingual education, we must first know what bilingual education is and what it has to offer. Carter (2014) states that, bilingual education is “the practice of teaching in their native language while they are learning in English” (para 1). According to the article, the need for bilingual education arose in the 1970s. The main idea behind the establishment of bilingual education program was to teach the basic school subjects, like math, science, and social studies in their native language. In theory, it would help prevent the child from falling behind in their academics.

Another major reason of the need for bilingual education was the fact that, the Latino and Hispanic population was the fastest growing minority and the federal government could see that ELLs were already starting to fall behind. Because of this, the federal government had to find a way to combat this growing problem.

The first major piece of legislation that was passed was the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The ESEA was passed as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson’s war on poverty. According to Paul (2016), she states that “this act brought education to the forefront and represented a commitment to ensure equal access to quality education for all” (para., 4). This act was put into place to help ensure that the children of the poor were able to obtain an education

that is equal to the quality that the children of the upper class. Part of the ESEA act states that, “funds are authorized for professional development, instructional materials, resources to support educational programs” (para. 4), which means that no matter what the child's socioeconomic standing is, “each will receive all the necessary materials and support needed to have a successful educational career” (para 5). Since the passage of the ESEA, the federal spending that has been allocated to education has increased by almost five times. The ESEA was only the tipping point. This act would allow the government to create newer and better laws that would help meet the needs of ELLs.

After the ESEA was passed and was in action for almost 40 years, it was replaced in 2002 and changed to the “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB). Like the circumstances around the ESEA, the NCLB was passed because our president at the time, was George W. Bush. He felt as though the education system in the United States was no longer able to compete internationally. According to Klein (2015), she states that “this law significantly increased the federal role in holding schools responsible for the academic progress of all students” (para 6). The focus of NCLB was to hold schools responsible for boosting the performance and closing the achievement gap in groups of students like English Language Learners. Part of the law requires that “states bring all students up to the ‘proficient’ level in both reading and mathematics” (para 8). This is the part of the law where “No Child Left Behind” came from. By having this within the law meant that, if the states had major gaps between students of different socioeconomic status, the states would be held responsible. The state must meet an “adequate yearly progress” (AYP) and if a school misses their AYP two years in a row, there are a few things that could happen. In her article, Klein (2015) lists a few actions that take place which include “the school has to allow students to transfer to another school” (para 3) If they miss the AYP by three years,

“the school must offer free tutoring” (para 4). If the school keeps missing the AYP, “they face the possibility of state intervention” (para 10). If the school has reached the level where state intervention is needed, there is the risk of the school being shut down, or being turned into a charter, or the state may implement a significant turnaround strategy for the school. This ensures that the schools are putting in effort and time into the programs. It also goes back to the founding idea that if children are not guaranteed an equal education it is a violation of their Civil Rights.

Proposition 58 is also called the California Multilingual Education Act, but it does not go into effect until June 1, 2017. Ashley Hopkinson (2017) explains that the new law will “give public schools more control over language immersion programs” (para 2) but it also “repeals the English-only requirement of Proposition 227 which requires English learners to be taught in English immersion classrooms” (para 2). This demonstrates that politicians and even voters are becoming more aware of how many students do not speak English as their first language. With Prop 58, schools are not required to create new programs, “but they have the flexibility to create programs that suit the needs of both English learners and students already proficient in English who want to learn another language” (para 5), but if 30 parents from a school want a program, “the school must explore the possibility of creating a dual language program” (para 4). This part of the law shows the understanding that some communities may not have a large Latino presence and may not need to create large programs, but it also ensures that the communities with a large Latino presence have the opportunity and the means to establish a program if they are in need.

With California being one of the biggest states in the United States, it allows many different people of ethnicities to live here which allows many different languages to be spoken. Because of this, bilingual education programs are not exclusively taught in Spanish. According to Krashen (2015), he states that the “most common languages used within a bilingual education

program are Spanish, Japanese, Korean, French, Mandarin, and Arabic” (para 4). Along with multiple languages, there are multiple types of bilingual education programs available and that are widely used. Some of these programs include transitional or maintenance, two-way immersion, foreign language immersion, also known as one-way immersion, and heritage/mainstream language programs.

In an article by Alvarado-Mata (2016), she goes into detail about each program and how it aims to help ELLs. She also goes into detail that the different bilingual programs are classified to two different types of programs. They are either transitional or maintenance. She describes transitional is a way “to seek assimilation into the majority language, culture, and identity” (para 2). And she then describes maintenance as a “way to foster minority language, culture, and identity” (para 2). Within the maintenance programs, there are two classifications. The first is called static maintenance which helps maintain the minority language skills. The other classification is developmental maintenance, also known as enrichment, and this allows the development of minority language skills to full proficiency. Alvarado-Mata (2016) explains the “main difference between the two subprograms is one allows ELL’s to keep developing their native tongue while learning a new language and the other one completely focuses on the new language being taught” (para 2). The next program that is discussed is the most common form which is heritage/mainstream. This program type sees language as a foreign language and is usually taught for about thirty minutes a day. Although we have something like this in the United States, this program is meant to be started in elementary school and taught all the way through high school. The next program that is described is two way, also known as dual language immersion. It is the most effective according to Alvarado-Mata (2016). She describes that in this program, there are two basic models: the 90/10 or the 50/50. In the 90/10 program, the

curriculum is taught in the native language about 90% of the time in the primary grades and the remaining time is taught in the partner language. In the 50/50 model, both languages are used equally inside the classroom. Alvarado-Mata (2016) explains that this is the most effective model because students start this program in kindergarten and will continue through the program for as long as they are at the school. The students who participate in the program are both ELLs and native English speakers. The focus of a two-way immersion program is to promote biliteracy and bilingualism. On the other side of this program is foreign language immersion, also known as “one-way immersion.” This program is designed for English speakers but can be used for ELLs. This type of program uses the 50/50 method and is focused on teaching the students one language. Native English speakers in this program learn another language and ELLs learn English because the goal of the program is proficiency in oral and written English by the time, they exit the program. Depending on the area and the amount of ELLs that they attend the school will determine which program type they want to implement. But in order to have bilingual education programs, you need to have teachers willing to teach within the programs.

A bilingual teacher must be fluent, meaning they are able to read, speak, and write, in both English and at least one other language. The two most common languages that bilingual teachers are fluent in are either Spanish or Japanese. But this is not the only requirement needed to become a bilingual teacher. In an article written by Powell (2015), she states that a “bilingual teacher needs to have a bachelor’s degree in an education-related field” (para 4). Once a prospective bilingual teacher earns their bachelor’s degree, they will have to enter a program that will provide them with classroom training and experience. If a bilingual teacher wishes to work with ELL’s or become an ELL teacher, “they are required to have their master’s degree” because this program includes second language teaching and English grammar and writing instruction

(para 5). Once the necessary degree programs have been completed, the “next step would be for the prospective teacher to acquire the appropriate teaching license in the state they are looking to teach within” (para 6). Powell (2015) goes on to state that the “demand for bilingual teachers at the elementary level is expected to increase by six percent from 2014-2024 due to the continually growing population of non-English-speaking students” (para 8). This means that as the years go on and the population of ELLs grows within the elementary school system, the need for bilingual teachers also increases.

Methods and Procedures

In the beginning of the semester, I had a capstone idea in my mind, but I knew that I needed to focus on my topic. I was able to achieve this, once I met with Dr. Thao and the completion of my research prospectus paper (see research prospectus section of capstone binder). I was able to find focus in my topic and start my research. To seek the answer to my research questions, I obtained many peer-reviewed scholarly articles from journals that were closely related to my research topic and questions. With the help of library research, I was able to collect current literature that related to my research questions. However, after continued research and positive attitude, I was able to talk to some teachers who currently teach within a bilingual education program and they were able to point me in the right direction. I was able to find the research I was after. Aside from researching, reading, and obtaining new knowledge, I handed out many surveys (See Appendix 1) to teachers who teach within a bilingual education program.

Before I sent out my surveys, I first needed to find out how many schools in Monterey County, Santa Cruz County, and Salinas Valley County had schools with bilingual education programs implemented. In order to find these schools, I went onto the school district office

website to see if there was a list with those schools. I thought that there would be a list that parents could use if they needed to enroll their student into a bilingual program. Unfortunately, I was unable to find a list of the schools with bilingual education programs, so I emailed someone within the district office and asked them for a list of the elementary schools with bilingual education programs. Based on the district, I was unsure of whom to email, so I sent out a few. While looking for the list of bilingual education programs, I found that all the districts had a common committee. With my research, I found that each district has an English Language Advisory Committee. This committee is responsible for advising the principal and school site about programs and services for English Language Learners. The most important aspect of the committee is that they are not a decision-making body, but rather they are the voice of the ELL community. Once I got the list of schools, I emailed the principals of the schools and explained who I was and why I was emailing them. I stated that I was looking to hand out surveys as a part of a research project that I was conducting as a student from CSUMB. When I heard back from the principal, I emailed my survey to them to be distributed to the teachers that teach a bilingual class. Once completed, I had the teachers email their surveys to me.

My Bilingual Education Programs Survey (see appendix 1), contains ten questions that are aimed at helping me answer my secondary research questions. Question one in the survey focused on the grade level and how many students are in the class. The reason behind these questions is to see the spread in responses I received. I also wanted to see which grades had more students and which county has more students in their bilingual education programs. An important aspect that my survey covers, questions three through five, is the successfulness of the program through the eyes of the teacher. Along with this, I also ask the teachers how they measure success of their students and what do they consider to be successful. Aside from looking at the

success of their individual class's success, I ask the teacher to look at the school's overall success in helping their ELL community. Question two and six ask about the type of bilingual education program in place at their school and what language is used. The reason behind asking these questions, is that I can see what are the different bilingual education programs that are implemented in the tri-county area. I also wanted to see if there are any other languages that are being taught other than Spanish in the tri-county area. Questions seven through nine focus on the teacher and what kind of training they had to go through in order to become a bilingual education teacher. The purpose behind these questions is to find out what types of training they received. When conducting my initial research, I found that I could not find very much information. I also asked the teacher what training was provided to them by their district and if this was the only aid received by the district. And finally, question ten asks the teacher whether they would change anything about their program and how it is run. The survey is not the only way I intend to seek the answer to my questions.

Results and Discussion

Through my research, my results indicate that the teachers believe that their programs are successful, but there are always things that they could change to help improve the program. Bilingual education has been an important aspect in the educational field, but it has always been widely disputed because we don't know the beneficial outcomes. Another reason why bilingual education programs are challenged, is because there is no one certain way of tracking the success of the students within the bilingual programs. Although bilingual education programs can take on many forms, they all have the same goal; that is to help ELL students reach the proficiency level in reading and writing in their grade level. With survey results and literature review, I will have the data to support the bilingual education programs in the tri-county area that they are

successful and find the rationale why they are successful. Through the use of literature review and survey with teacher, the following subsequent paragraphs are the syntheses of data from both the literature and the teacher survey to respond to the secondary or related research questions posed in the Introduction and Background section.

What does research say about the successfulness of elementary bilingual education programs?

In a study conducted by The Intercultural Development Research Association (IDRA) “found Twenty-five characteristics contribute to the high academic performance of students served by bilingual education programs” (IDRA, 2013, pg 3). Because of this they studied exemplary bilingual education programs in schools across the nation in order to help identify successful programs and help improve others. Study was conducted now because there are currently 4.8 million ELL’s who have a large achievement gap compared to non-ELLs. Danini Cortez (2013) writes that the IDRA worked closely with ten schools across the country and used “their lessons as a guide for developing criteria that other programs could later use” (para 3). By only using ten schools and all of them being across the United States, the developers can take all the best aspects of each program and create one super program. In the study, IDRA visited, interviewed and surveyed teachers, administrators, parents, and students. According to Danini Cortez (2013), one thing that was “made evident from the beginning was that, all successful bilingual education programs is having effective leadership” (para 6). Leadership was displayed in many ways such as the commitment to the students, the valuing of both the students and the parents involved, and the openness to change if something was not beneficial to the students. Another aspect that all the bilingual programs had in common was “all the students involved had the ability to inspire their peers and the ability to see what was possible” (para 8). Danini Cortez

(2013) believes that leadership is a big factor in the students' ability to see what is possible because it gives the students the confidence, they need in order to believe that they achieve anything they set their mind too. The third factor that creates a successful bilingual program is "the school staff and administration is held accountable for the success of their bilingual students" (para 10). These aspects are very important because it forces the teachers and school administration to be hands on approach. This ensures that the schools are doing everything in their power to help their ELLs succeed by providing the support and tools that they needed. With this idea of holding school staff and administration accountable, is this other idea of parent and community involvement. This includes parents taking a hands-on approach with their student's education. Danini Cortez (2013) states that "in all the bilingual education programs observed there was a heavy parental involvement because these programs also offered English classes for the parents" (para 11). This allowed parents to learn alongside their student which in turn was a motivation factor for the students to learn. If a bilingual education program uses these factors it will benefit the students tremendously and will lead to the creation of a successful bilingual education program.

Are there successful bilingual education programs currently being implemented in the Tri-county area? If there are, what are the types of successful bilingual programs and where are they in the Tri-county school area?

The Tri-county area is made up of Santa Cruz County, Monterey County and Salinas Valley County. In the Santa Cruz County, there were two schools in Watsonville that had bilingual education programs that are being implemented. Both schools used the dual language immersion programs. In the primary grades, K-2, they use the 90/10 version of the dual language. This means that Spanish is the primary language being in the classroom for ninety

percent of the day and English is only used ten percent of the day. Then this is when the schools start to run their programs a little different. In one school, the program switches to the 80/20 for third and fourth grade. And in fifth grade, the program starts to use the 50/50 model. This is when the students will use both English and Spanish equally in the classrooms. In the other school in Watsonville, their program uses the 50/50 model in grades 3-5. Both schools focus is to help foster the learning of a new language while allowing the students the freedom to use their native language. This is also to help prevent the loss of their native language. In the Monterey Peninsula school district, there are currently five schools that have bilingual education programs. Like Watsonville, many of the bilingual education programs that are being implemented in Monterey, are dual language immersion. However, there is one program in Monterey that is a one-way immersion program. This program invites all students, those who may speak some other languages other than Spanish, to join and improve their English skills. This program focuses on children who have just come to America or even California that have very little English skills to none. This program although a one-way immersion will allow their students to use their native language, but the curriculum and instruction within the class are given only in English. This is mainly because all the teachers in the program only speak English. The reason behind this, is because this is the first program of its kind anywhere in the Tri-county area. This means that the program does not have the ability to attract skilled and experienced teachers. Because it also has many students who speak many different languages, the program requires a teacher who can also speak many different languages. And finally, in Salinas, there is also five bilingual education programs that are currently being implemented. And like the two other districts many of the programs in Salinas are dual language programs. Like Monterey, Salinas has one program that is different and one of the first of its kind. In one elementary school on the Salinas district, there is

a mainstream/heritage program being implemented. A mainstream/heritage program is one that views another language as foreign. The focus of this program is to help students who do not speak another language learn one. Parents can sign their students up for the class like they would be able to with art classes or music classes. Because this class is run like an elective, this means that students are only working with the language for about forty-five minutes to an hour.

Depending on the school and how they run their elective classes these students may only be attending this class once a week. Although we have about twelve different bilingual education programs being implemented throughout the Tri-county area, but like I stated earlier that there are 36,000 ELLs that attend school in the Tri-county area. The average class size today has about twenty to twenty-five students and considering the number of ELLs we have in the Tri-county area, this would mean that we need about 1,500 bilingual classrooms to properly accommodate the ELLs community. But this is limited by the fact that, there is a shortage of bilingual teachers not just in the Tri-county area but all over.

*How are teachers implementing the bilingual education programs in their classrooms?
How do teachers know that their bilingual education programs are successful? In other words,
what indicators inform them about the successfulness of their programs?*

According to the surveys, the most common way that teachers implement the program in their class is offering the curriculum in both languages. The teachers from the Watsonville area stated that, within their class libraries, they have a section that is solely dedicated to the Spanish speakers. All the books in the Spanish section of the class library has a copy in the English section. The teacher's reasoning behind this is that the ELL students will read the Spanish version first and then read the English version after. They hope that by reading Spanish first, they know what the book is about, and it will inspire them to try and read the English because they

will not be so lost. This is to help create a positive attitude towards learning the English language. When it comes to measuring the success of the bilingual education program, teachers have many tools they use. At the very beginning of the year, the students within the program are given an assessment. This is to set a baseline for the students. As the year goes on, the teacher will use a mixture of formal and informal assessments. They stated that the difference between informal and formal assessment is that an informal is used to check in during a unit. They will use this to see what the students are retaining and what the students are struggling on. A formal assessment is used to see how the students are progressing throughout the year. These are handed out at the end of a unit and test the student. The formal assessments are what the teachers use to track the students throughout the entirety of the school year. The goal is to have the students reach the “proficient” for their grade level. The formal assessments are logged in and are used to see if the students are continuing to increase their English-speaking skills. As the students move from grade to grade, they repeat these steps, but with material from their grade level. One teacher puts on the survey that, the most important aspect to this, is the reports of each student are carried with them from grade to grade. This means that the current teacher of the student can track and review how the student performed the previous year. This is to make sure that students do not lose the skills that they learned the previous year. This also allows teachers to see what the students struggled with the most and what the students were able to learn quickly. With the aid of these tools, teachers and school administration can track and see the successfulness of the students within their bilingual education programs.

What do school districts and teachers do to bring the most successful bilingual education programs to be implemented in their schools?

The main thing that the districts do is that, they try to attract more students to enroll in their bilingual education programs. More specially, they are trying to attract more students to enroll during the primary grades in elementary school. The districts along with the teachers and school administration want students to start early, to help ensure the most successful outcome for the ELLs community. Another technique used by the school district in Watsonville is that, they hold informational meetings at the schools that offer bilingual educational programs. This allows parents to meet the teachers and staff involved with the program, but it also alters the parents of the schools that the programs are being implemented. This also allows parents to ask questions and get answers from the teachers that would work very closely with their child. Once in the program, individual teachers implement many different things in their classrooms and individual schools implement different things to encourage the successfulness of their programs. At one of the schools in Monterey, there is a program implemented called Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) which helps promotes positive attitudes towards the programs.

The PBIS program allows teachers, school staff and administration have rules set in place that encourage the students to have a positive attitude in towards school and those around them. One school in Salinas uses the acronym S.A.S.S. Each letter stands for something different. The first “S” stands for show respect. This is referring to treating their fellow classmates nicely and keeping their classroom and school facilities clean. This is taught because the school hopes that this will create a safe learning environment which will allow the students to flourish in their studies. The “A” stands for act responsibly. This means to complete and bring your homework, or keep the cafeteria clean. This is intended to teach students responsibility. The school administration hopes that this newfound responsibility will carry over into their studies. The second “S” stands for solve problems. This is to teach students to work out problems on their

own. This helps students learn effective communication skills and problem-solving skills. And finally, the last “S” stands for strive for excellence. This is to encourage the students to always do their best when it come to school. This is the part that is aimed at the ELLs. It is their responsibility to instill confidence in their speaking skills and to ask for help when needed.

Problems and Limitations

When reflecting on the process of obtaining information, I ran into many roadblocks along the way. Some roadblocks were minors, and others did impede on my ability to obtain some of my information. The one area of my paper that I did not have trouble with, was when I was conducting research for my literature review. There was an abundance of articles that related to legislation that pertains to education, requirements needed by a bilingual teacher. Because this topic is something, that is becoming a popular debate in many of the articles are within the last ten years. The areas that I had trouble in were not being able to locate the list with schools that had bilingual education programs, hearing back from people, lacking of survey responses and not having enough time to meet with principals for interviews.

The first obstacle that I ran into when it came to conducting research was, I was unable to find a list on the school district websites that contained all the schools with bilingual education programs. My initial thinking was that, I would be able to look online for a list. It is because this is how parents would conduct research when looking for a school for their child. When I was unable to find this list, I then looked for the person who was the head of student programs and resources. When I found this person, I emailed them. Within the email, I stated who I was and the fact that I was a CSUMB student and I was conducting research for my senior capstone. I also mentioned that my capstone was about bilingual education and I was looking for a list that

contained the schools with these types of programs. After not hearing back for a few days, I went ahead and emailed them again. After a week and multiple emails, I decided to call the person. This proved much more effective because they answered the first time I called. After the phone call, I was able to get the list of the schools and I was able to move onto the next step of my research.

Once I got the list of schools, my next step was to email the principals. I drafted an email like the one I had sent to district offices and sent it to each individual principal. In the email, I asked if it was possible for me to hand out a survey to the teachers that work with bilingual students. The roadblock that I ran into this time around was, like the previous roadblock. It took multiple emails before I heard back from the principals of the individual schools. In some cases, I never heard back. I informed the principals that the surveys could be handed out via email or hardcopy. I stated that the survey was only ten questions and should not take very long to complete. Once finished, the teachers could personally email me the completed survey, or they could hand them back to the principal and send me the scanned copies. Once I sent the surveys out it took a few weeks before I received any of them back. I sent multiple emails to the principals asking them to collect the surveys or to send an email reminder out to the teachers. It was a little over a month after sending out the original email before I started to receive responses. In total, I asked sixty (60) teachers throughout the Tri-county area and received less than twenty surveys back. The surveys I did receive back were spread out between the three school districts. Although my surveys were spread out, this is a considerable small sample group. Because of this, my results may not be accurate regarding all the bilingual educational programs in the Tri-county area.

And finally, the last obstacle I ran into was not having enough time. Aside from handing out surveys, I also wanted to interview the principals of the schools with bilingual education programs. I thought a perspective from outside the classroom would be an interesting point of view. I also wanted to examine how the principal's role within the program affects the successfulness of the program. This never came to fruition because of time and conflicting schedules. When the principal was able to meet, I was either in class or I had work. And when I was available to meet, the principal was unable to, because of prior commitments. Finally, we were able to find a date that worked, but it was well after Thanksgiving. I thanked the principal for their time but that would be too late. Because of this, I abdicated the idea of the interviews and only focused on the surveys.

A common thread throughout all the obstacles that I encountered was time. Many of the principals apologized for their lack of responses and unavailability in their schedules. They went on to say that, this time of year is the busiest for them and for the teachers. The beginning of the year is all about getting to know the students and their strengths. Then, this shift changes to getting regular instructions within the classroom.

Another aspect that played a huge role was this time of year, there were many holidays that lead to the students having many three-day weekends, which means one less day of instruction on some topics. This time of year is when students will have their first parent teacher conferences. And then, followed by Thanksgiving and then, fall break. A lot of teachers stated that, if I were to approach them in the latter half of the school year, they would have been able to participate more. The principals also agreed that this time of the school year is the busiest.

Now that I am done with this project, I feel there could have gone about conducting my research, and/or re-design my project approach if time was not the essence. However, upon

completion of this project, and as a prospective educator, I feel I am better prepared to help support ELLs within my own classroom. I am now aware of all the benefits that bilingual education has to offer ELL students.

Recommendations

Upon reviewing my results from teachers within bilingual education programs, I have a few recommendations to help improve the bilingual education programs in the Tri-county area. The first recommendation I have is for schools to bring bilingual education programs for the forefront of public schools. Like I previously, I was unable to find a list that contained the names of the schools with bilingual education programs. I think that this is an essential element because if a parent is looking for a school with a bilingual program the first place, they would look would be online. And from my experience it was very hard to get this information from the district via email.

My second recommendation would be that schools should make bilingual education programs more readily available. There is a large presence of ELLs in the Tri-county area and we want to help as many of these students as possible. This can't be achieved if there are only twelve programs in the whole area.

Another recommendation would be for schools to offer English classes to the parents of the students who are in the bilingual education programs. If the students can see their parents learning the same things, it will intrigue them more. This will also help the students because they will be able to practice their skills with someone at home. This will help the students learn their skills better and help build confidence in their English-speaking abilities.

And finally, my last recommendation is for schools to offer teachers more training to teachers. As a prospective educator, I have not been required to take a foreign language class. I think that teachers should take one class every semester. This will allow them to learn the necessary words and phrases that are used in an elementary setting. This will also instill confidence in a teacher. When I am unable to communicate to the parents about the students' needs, I feel helpless. This is also another reason why I would not want to teach in this area. I know that I will encounter parents who speak very little English to none. I also think that this should be a requirement for teachers. As stated earlier in my paper, the Latino and Hispanic population is the fastest growing minority population we have in the United States.

Conclusion

In the beginning of my project I set out to answer the question: *How successful are the elementary bilingual educational programs in the Tri-County?* With the help of literature review, and surveys I found that the bilingual educational programs in the Tri-County are on their way to becoming successful. There are many elements already being implemented that lead to a successful program, but there are elements that need improvements. Through my research I found that the biggest area would be attracting more teachers to work within the bilingual education programs. The teachers are the core of the program and without qualified teachers, the program cannot grow and improve to be the best version that will benefit the ELL students. Based on the results from my surveys, many of the teachers that currently work in a bilingual educational program stated that they would like to see more teachers. This would allow the class sizes to be smaller and students could receive more individualized help. Bilingual education is an equalizing force for ELLs to receive a fair and quality education like the English-speaking peers. Teachers also help their students feel confident in their skills and without the leadership that

well-trained teachers contribute the students, the ELL students will not feel inspired to perform well or feel as though they can succeed.

Bilingual education is becoming a topic that many people are starting to take notice, too. This is evident when California voters elected to pass Proposition 58 which gave schools more control over their language programs, but it also gave the parents power. Prop 58 is part of a larger battle for an equal and quality and equity in education. This battle started by 1965 when Lynden B. Johnson passed ESEA and forced the federal government to allocate more money to education. Although this was the right step in the right direction, there were some flaws that George W. Bush noted, which caused him to replace the ESEA with the NCLB Act in 2001. Our education system was not providing an education that allowed our students to compete internationally. Because of the lack of funding for bilingual education, many people are being affected by this every day. There have been many studies done to show what types of programs are effective and their cost per pupil based on the size of the program. Having effective bilingual programs is possible, but funding must become available to those who need it, and teachers need to get the proper training on how to best help these students. Once these are done, our education system will have taken a huge step in helping these students.

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Appendix 1

Bilingual Education Programs Survey

1. What school do you teach at and what grade level do you teach? How many students do you have in your class?
2. What type of bilingual education program is implemented at your school?
3. Would you consider your school's program successful? If yes, why? If not, why not?
4. How do you measure the success of your students?
5. What do you consider to be successful?
6. What language do you teach in your classroom? How much of the day is spent in English and in the other language spoken in class?
7. How did you become a bilingual teacher? What type of training did you have to go through?
8. Did you have to receive another type of degree or credential?
9. How does the school district help in making the programs successful?
10. If you could make any changes to the program what would they be and why? If not, why not?