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Effects of Academic and Non-academic Instructional Approaches on Preschool ELLs' English Language Development

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EEFECTS OF ACADEMIC AND NON-ACADEMIC INSTRUCTIONAL
APPROACHES ON PRESCHOOL ELLs' ENGLISH LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

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Dissertation Abstract

Effects of Academic and Non-academic Instructional
Approaches on Preschool ELLs' English
Language Development

The population of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the United States has been growing at an increasingly rapid rate (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010), and nowhere is this growth more evident than in U.S. public schools. As of school year 2010-11, nearly 25% of all students in the California public schools were English Language Learners (California Department of Education, 2013).

The focus of this study was to explore to what extent this growing number of ELLs was developing English language in different types of preschool activities. The study investigated whether bilingual preschool children would engage more and use more of their second language (English) during teacher–structured (academic) or free play (non–academic) activities. In addition, the researcher investigated the perceptions of preschool teachers and parents of bilingual preschool children regarding the effects of academic and non-academic instructional approaches on student engagement and English language development.

Study participants consisted of eight bilingual preschool children, twelve preschool teachers, and eight parents of the children participants. The children were between the ages of three and five. The ethnic background of the children varied and included Japanese, Portuguese, Mexican and Indonesian.

The researcher utilized both quantitative and qualitative research approaches in this study. Data sources included 285 preschool observations made at one preschool in Northern California, teacher and parent surveys, and teacher and parent interviews. Data analysis consisted of descriptive statistics that included frequencies/percentages, means, and standard deviations. In addition, children's observed scores were also analyzed by normative scales using standardized z-scores.

The findings of this study indicated that bilingual children engaged and interacted dramatically more during free play (non–academic) preschool classroom activities than during teacher–structured (academic) activities. The free play activities during which children were the most engaged and used their second language, English, the most were: pretend play, free play, and monkey bars. Results demonstrated that unstructured free-play activities served as an affordance for building language, academic skills, and cultural capital. The teacher and parent survey and interview findings indicated that preschool teachers and parents perceive free play (non–academic) preschool activities as being more beneficial toward children's engagement and English language development than academic (teacher–structured) activities.

The study's major implication is that free play (non–academic) activities may be much more helpful in developing preschool ELL students' English language skills compared to teacher-structured (academic) activities. Greater English language development in the early preschool years may help students become more successful as they enter Kindergarten. Moreover, the importance of free-play activities may extend beyond preschool classrooms, and the researcher recommends that more unstructured social-based activities for ELLs be implemented in K-12 classrooms.

This dissertation, written under the direction of the candidate's

dissertation committee and approved by the members of the committee,

has been presented to and accepted by the Faculty of the School of

Education in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education. The content and research methodologies presented

In this work represent the work of the candidate alone.

Ivana Markova-Lama   5/7/13
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The Research Problem

Statistics show that in recent years the number of English-language learners (ELLs) in the United States has grown at an increasingly rapid rate. Over the last three decades, while the overall U.S. population has increased by 34%, the subset of those who speak a primary language other than English has increased by 140% (U. S. Census Bureau, 2010; Kindler, 2002). Nowhere is this growth more evident than in U.S. public schools, particularly at the preschool level where more than one-third of children speak a language other than English at home (California Department of Education, 2009). This growth is not projected to slow down in the future. Shonkoff and Philips (2000) have predicted that in 20 years children under age five whose first language is English will comprise less than half of the entire U.S. preschool-age population.

For many of these ELL children, preschool programs are the only avenue to acquire, or become proficient in, the English language before entering kindergarten. Thus, in recent years many education scholars have focused their efforts on finding new ways to help foster the acquisition of a second language in the early stages of child development. The potential benefits of such efforts are clear: research shows convincingly that children with only basic English proficiency when entering preschool experience greater cognitive growth from attending preschool programs than their more English-proficient peers (Loeb, Bridges, Bassok, Fuller, & Rumberger, 2007). With better English language skills, children do better in other academic areas, and continue to do so into and throughout the elementary school years. When children do better

academically they feel more confident about their future academic abilities, and are less easily discouraged.

What is less certain, however, is what preschool program activities are best to facilitate English language proficiency for these children. Generally speaking, preschool activities may be categorized into two groups: academic and non-academic. On one hand, academic (Fromberg, 2002; Stipek & Byler, 1997; Stipek, 2004) where the teacher is in charge and children follow the teacher's instructions. Such activities include: circle time, library time, learning alphabet and numbers time, filling out worksheets, and storytelling time. On the other hand, non-academic activities (Fromberg, 2002; Stipek & Byler, 1997; Stipek, 2004) are child-centered and play-based, where the children are free to interact and explore. Such activities include: free-play time, peer book-reading time, dramatic play, pretend play, and outdoor and monkey bars time.

Gormley, Gayer, Philips, and Dawson (2005) and Magnuson, Meyers, Ruhm, and Waldfogel (2004) found that academically-oriented teaching activities in preschools are most beneficial for promoting children's competency in math, letter recognition, and spelling. Perhaps in part for this reason, academic-oriented instruction in preschools is widely preferred among parents (Vail, 2003) and policymakers (Raver & Zigler, 2004; Whitehurst, 2001) over non-academically oriented, or free-play, instruction (Bodrova & Leong, 2003; Zigler & Bishop-Joseph, 2004). Academically-oriented preschools are generally regarded as "high-quality" preschools, of which the most important elements are considered to be teacher qualifications and an academic curriculum (Cardiff & Stringham, 2006; Yamamoto & Li, 2012). These high-quality preschools have in fact been shown to produce children who perform better in math and reading, are more

socially competent, and have less behavioral problems than their peers who attend other types of schools (Burchinal, Vandergrift, Pianta, & Mashburn, 2010; Magnuson, Meyers, Ruhm, & Waldfogel, 2004).

But the important question facing this present study is whether these teacher-structured academic classroom activities also benefit the development of preschool English-language learners. Elkind (2001) suggests that social interactions that occur in children's play (Elkind, 2001) and linguistic engagement, which are minimal in academic oriented activities, are such crucial components in language learning and acquisition that bilingual preschool children would benefit more from free-play, non-academic classroom activities.

There is a significant gap in our understanding of this issue, as research studies in second language acquisition do not normally focus on the youngest group of learners: preschoolers. Indeed, Saunders and O'Brien (2006) have indicated a lack of empirical research regarding second language development for preschools children as opposed to older children. This is troubling, since so much of cognitive development and learning occurs in the early years of life (Brown, 2007; Doidge, 2007). If U.S. children do not acquire a solid foundation of English in their preschool years, they cannot hope to progress successfully in elementary school (Scarborough, 2005).

Thus, the central issue that will be investigated is whether preschool English-language learners benefit more from academic activities as opposed to non-academic activities in attaining English language proficiency. Ultimately, this study will help identify the most highly efficient classroom activities for bilingual learners' development of English language.

Background and Need for the Study

The purpose of this section is to give a rich description of the diverse and growing preschool population of English-language learners in the U.S. Their development as ELLs is influenced by when they started acquiring the English language; thus, they may be categorized as being either "simultaneous" or "sequential" bilingual learners. Finally, this section will conclude with a discussion of how beneficial different pedagogical approaches (teacher-structured and play-based) are toward these children's English language acquisition.

English-language Learner Population in the U.S.

English-language learners are defined as children whose native language is not English, but who live in an English-speaking environment (Halle, Hair, Wandner, McNamara, & Chien, 2012) and have difficulties in speaking, understanding, reading, or writing in the English language (Espinosa, 2008; Wolf, Kao, Herman, Bachman, Bailey, Bachman, Farnsworth, & Chang, 2008). Other terms have been utilized to describe ELLs, such as: dual language learners, second language learners, linguistically diverse, or language minority children.

The ELL population in the U.S. is very ethnically diverse, with 53% being identified as Latino, 28% as Caucasian, 10% as Asian, and 6% as African American. Over the last thirty years, the largest increase among ELLs occurred among the Vietnamese-speaking population (511%), followed by the Spanish-speaking population (211%). Overall, the latest breakdown of non-English speakers in the U.S. can be expressed as follows: 62% speak Spanish, 19% speak a non-Spanish Indo-European language, 15% speak an Asian or Pacific Island language, and 4% speak some other language. Besides Spanish, Chinese was the most commonly found language used at

home and five other languages – Tagalog, French, Vietnamese, German and Korean – have a decent amount of speakers in the U.S. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). The degree of language proficiency varies widely among ELL groups.

The states that have the largest numbers of ELL students are California, Texas, Florida, New York, Illinois, and Arizona (Walf et al., 2008). In California, the child ELL population comprises 40% of all kindergarten students (Children Now, 2012), and 39% of children in California who are zero-to-five years of age have parents who do not speak English well. In some states, the number of ELLs in the public school system has increased dramatically by 300% to 400% in the past decade alone (Espinosa, 2008). These ELL students tend to be situated in the lower grades, with almost half enrolled in preschool through third grade (Walf et al., 2008). This younger group of ELL students is the fastest growing population among all ELLs; in some states, more than 50% of preschool children are ELL students.

These children face various obstacles that will influence how they learn the English language. English-language learners are very likely to be taught by teachers who are not qualified to teach them (Rumberger & Gandara, 2004). In a study conducted by Gandara, Rumberger, Maxwell-Jolly, and Callahan (2003), where almost 5000 teachers of ELL students in the state of California were surveyed, the teachers themselves expressed concern about not being prepared to teach this subgroup of children. This suggests one of the most important criteria of a high-quality preschool, one where ELL children can successfully acquire English language proficiency, is teacher qualification.

Some other influencing factors for English proficiency besides teacher educational level include: parent education level (Abedi, Leon, & Mirocha, 2003), the

age of the child, issues in the family's immigration to U.S., the language spoken at home, fluency in the language spoken at home, amount of exposure to English, and socioeconomic circumstances (Espinosa, 2008). Socioeconomic status in particular is a major indicator of ELL students' poor language proficiency that eventually leads to poor academic achievement in elementary school (Stipek & Ryan, 1997). Children who grow up in low-income families tend to perform more poorly academically than children from middle to high-income families, regardless of what language is spoken at home (Hair, Halle, Terry-Humen, Lavelle, & Calkins, 2006).

Out of all ELLs, Latino ELLs are considered to be the most economically disadvantaged, as almost 60% live in poverty; thus they are the most at-risk student population for English proficiency and other academic issues. As of 2008, Latino students accounted for 22% of all U.S. public school students (National Council of La Raza, 2011) and 26% of the total U.S. population ages five years and under (Census Bureau, 2010). Many of these Latino children are believed not to have access to high quality preschools and therefore come less prepared for kindergarten than their peers (National Council of La Raza, 2011). Only 48% of Latino four-year-olds attended preschools in 2009, and they started kindergarten two months behind their White peers in math and reading skills, indicating a large achievement gap that starts very early on. Moreover, because most Latino families speak Spanish at home, the achievement gap in English might exist early on (National Council of La Raza, 2011). Since, the largest group of English language learners are Latino (Children Now, 2012) many researchers focus on this population of English-language learners when conducting language

development research, and this will be evident in the review of literature for the current study.

No matter what the cause, ELL students have been struggling to become proficient in English, and because of this struggle they lag behind their native English-speaking peers in terms of academic achievement (Espinosa, 2008). The dropout rate of ELL students is twice as those of native English speakers. Because the number of young English-language learners is increasing at such a rapid rate (Kindler, 2002), it is critically important to consider how these children can achieve the highest proficiency in English during preschool years and before they enter kindergarten (Zepeda, 2008).

Simultaneous and Sequential ELLs

English-language learners are not all alike, especially in preschool classrooms. Some enter a preschool program with partial knowledge of the English language, and others with no knowledge of English at all. Thus, we can distinguish those for whom English-language learning in the preschool years occurs "simultaneously" with their home language from those for whom it occurs "sequentially." Both types of bilingual children, simultaneous and sequential, will be participating in this study.

Simultaneous language acquisition is when children go through the process of acquiring two languages at the same time, from birth; this kind of bilingualism is also referred to as infant bilingualism (Lanza, 1997). Simultaneous bilingualism is considered to be complex because one language has not been fully developed before the development of the second language begins. Interestingly, De Houwer (1990) argued that the term "simultaneous" has been used with different meanings by other researchers and, consequently, should not be used anymore. She has suggested a new term, Bilingual First

Language Acquisition (BFLA), to refer to situations where: a) a child is exposed to the second language no later than a week after the child is exposed to the first language, and b) the exposure to both languages is on a daily basis and regular.

Sequential language acquisition, on the other hand, occurs when a child learns one language from birth and a second language at some point later. Sequential acquisition has also been referred to as "consecutive" or "successive," where in some instances the child acquires his/her second language during the preschool age of three years old (Goldstein, 2004). Paradis and Genesee (1996) believe that simultaneous language acquisition is more complex than sequential language acquisition. Acquiring two languages at the same time involves two different linguistic systems (syntax, phonology, and morphology), which is believed by some researchers to place a burden on a child's brain. Paradis and Genesee (1996) call this burden *deceleration,* which refers to the notion that a "double burden of acquiring two languages slows down the process overall, or for particular structures, in both languages."

The acquisition of two languages may begin as simultaneous, but many studies of simultaneous bilingual children have found that even though children may acquire two languages from birth, the actual acquisition is not concurrent. Bilingual children typically end up being more proficient in one of the two languages. The language in which they are more proficient is sometimes called the "dominant" language, and the language in which they are less proficient is called the "non-dominant" language (Genesee, Nicoladis, & Paradis, 1995). These definitions of "dominant" language and "non-dominant" language in simultaneous bilinguals are equivalent to those of "first" language (L1) and "second" language (L2) in sequential bilingual children.

Preschool teachers should be aware of where ELL children stand in English language proficiency when they enter a preschool program. If the child receives no English language input at home, the preschool teachers can take measures to help the child become more exposed to the English language in preschool. The previously mentioned dominance in one of the two languages can change over time and is closely related to the amount of input the ELL child receives in each language, since the input in each language that the child receives is almost never equal (Genesee et al., 1995; Nicoladis, 1995). The language acquisition of a bilingual child who is not exposed to both languages from birth or who does not receive equal exposure to both languages, might develop differently from that of a child who receives constant exposure to both languages from birth (Goldstein, 2004). Without a sufficient amount of English language input and exposure in preschool, the ELL child will not become proficient in English. However, with sufficient amount of exposure to English language, which eventually might become their language of instruction at school, they are very likely to weaken their proficiency in their first language. Thus, in many cases English will become the child's dominant language (Nicoladis & Grabois, 2002) due to the varied exposure and input of the two languages (Goldstein, 2004).

Second Language Development

Sequential bilingualism occurs when children are exposed to English for the first time in preschool or begin preschool with very little English. Their English proficiency will be poorer than that of their simultaneous bilingual peers, who have been learning English along with another language since birth. Educators are particularly challenged in

preparing preschool sequential bilingual children to acquire the English language so that they can be ready to start kindergarten with their native-English speaking peers.

Zepeda (2008) examined bilingual children's English language proficiency across four different components: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Among these four, preschool children might be at different and uneven proficiency levels. For example, some children might find it harder to attain proficiency in pronunciation and articulation in speaking than in recognizing letters and words in the reading areas. Thus Zepeda categorizes three basic levels of second language (L2) development in sequential bilingual preschool children: the beginning, middle, and later levels.

At the beginning level, English language preschool learners should have age-appropriate languages skills in their first language. These beginning level learners will start acquiring the English language by developing receptive English skills, and are already internally processing the elements of the English language such as vocabulary, phonology, pragmatics, and grammar. Beginning-level ELL children do not usually speak very much during this period; however, they actively listen, use gestures, draw, copy, and partake in classroom routines. Indeed, most of their behaviors during this period are nonverbal. In addition, these children will begin to understand the English language based on their first language (L1). During this initial period, preschool children will spontaneously use their home language even though they know that nobody understands them.

Zepeda (2008) found that children move from the beginning level to the middle level of English language development when they start using expressive language markers of speech production such as "onemore" and "lookit." Their vocabulary has been

increasing and they will start combining words and speaking in phrases. Besides the increase in vocabulary, comprehension also increases during the second level of language acquisition and children will use telegraphic and formulaic speech in English. What can be further seen during this stage is children using their home language and inserting some new English words into their utterances. This phenomenon is called code-switching. However, though code-switching is considered to be natural in children's second language development (Bhatia & Ritchie, 1999, 2008; Muysken, 2000), some experts believe it is detrimental to children's development of both languages and that it is an indicator of their low proficiency in the English language (Grosjean, 1982). Another similar phenomenon to code-switching is called *interlangauge*. According to Selinker (1972), interlanguage is a strategy in which the bilingual speaker, who is not proficient in the second language, attempts to use it through language reduction, simplification, transfer, substitutions and omissions. Duran (1994) explains the differences between code-switching and interlanguage as the interlangauge notion being associated with the earliest stages of second language development and code-switching notion being associated with the middle and last stages of second language development. Thus, "interlangauge is the language constructed before arriving at more ideal forms of the target language, code switching may occur during and after the interlangauge phase" (p. 71). These two bilingual phenomena may be less distinguishable for children who are simultaneously acquiring two or more languages from birth. However, both code-switching and interlanguage are part of the stages of becoming bilingual.

As preschool children move to the third level of L2 acquisition, their comprehension skills become stronger. They will begin learning different concepts by

using the English language; their English grammar will improve and become age-appropriate. Their English language acquisition might not be complete, but they are now "able to engage in a majority of classroom activities in English" (Zepeda, 2008, p. 108). These children are still acquiring the structure of the new language and therefore mistakes are very common even at this third level of English language acquisition.

The time it takes for preschool children to acquire the English language varies based on the quality of the preschool classroom environment and the amount of exposure and input they receive from native English language speakers. According to MacSwan and Pray (2005), it takes on average three years for children to acquire English as a second language and five years to achieve a native-like proficiency in English. The input comes from the interactions the child is provided within the preschool classroom and how many opportunities the child gets to interact with native English language speakers while at school.

According to Hamers (2004), all language development happens through interactions that are embedded in the context of social environment. How many opportunities the child gets to interact with other English language speakers depends on the classroom activity the child is involved in. Preschool classroom activities are designed for various purposes and thus provide different learning outcomes. The classroom activities currently being implemented in U.S. public preschool classrooms are more often than not academic-based tasks. This trend toward academic-based activities in preschool classrooms began with the implementation of No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, which mandates that all public elementary and secondary schools that receive government funding give annual standardized tests to their students. In addition, under

No Child Left Behind schools are to focus on children's cognitive development only through literacy-based activities. In 2003, former U.S. president George W. Bush additionally mandated that all children are to be able to read by the time they are in third grade, and he talked about bringing this standard to preschool education as well (Zigler & Bishop-Joseph, 2006).

According to Stipek (2006), the standards established by No Child Left Behind and other accountability measures for preschool children's academic performance could result in serious harm. Children of preschool age learn through non-academic methods such as playing and exploring; they do not learn through academic methods such as sitting down and working on a vocabulary worksheet given to them by their teacher. Indeed, these standards discourage children from learning, suppress child-initiated learning, and make children less motivated to learn in the future (Chang, Stipek, & Garza, 2006; Stipek et al., 1995).

The best method of learning for preschool children is play (Elkind, 2007). "Play is the dominant and directing mode of learning during this age period, and children learn best through self-created learning experiences" (p. 7). In a non-academic classroom, children are engaging in play, drawing and painting, experimenting with water and sand, and listening to stories and songs (Elkind, 2001). These preschool classroom activities are more developmentally appropriate for preschool children than academic-based activities. Children are more engaged in play because it is more natural to them to do so than sit still and listen to a one-hour lecture. Play allows children to be more engaged in things that interest them, and by being more engaged they will learn more (Shonkoff & Phillips, 2000).

Just as important for preschool ELLs, play also allows them to interact with each other and communicate and converse. This is important, as Cronin and Sosa Masso (as cited in Jones & Cooper, 2006) suggest that preschool children learn a second language by interacting with others and using language that they hear others speak; they do not learn a second language by listening to drills and translations. Thus, ELLs need many opportunities to converse to become proficient, and play provides them the opportunity to hear the English language in a variety of contexts and pushes them to be actively engaged in conversations. The development of their English language oral skills, in turn, will provide a foundation for reading comprehension and coherent writing for later literacy success (Jones & Cooper, 2006).

In contrast, proponents of academic preschool classroom curriculum maintained that children benefit more from academic oriented preschool classroom activities than from free play non-academic activities. According to Whitehurst (2001), preschools need to get children ready for schools in an academic sense. Preschools need to focus on academic activities which can be built on later in kindergarten. Preschool children are ready and eager to learn about specific topics such as math, reading, and science and they can learn these things only when adults/teachers take their time to teach them. A longitudinal study conducted by The National Center for Educational Statistics provided evidence of the benefits academic preschool programs provide. Around 22, 000 children, from 1000 public and private kindergarten programs, were involved in this longitudinal study of the kindergarten class of 1998-99. The results indicated that children who attended more academically oriented preschools performed significantly better on math, reading, and general knowledge tests when compared with children who attended more

non-academic preschools. Another proponent of academic oriented curriculum (Senechal, 1996) found that children's knowledge of sounds, letters, and writing can only be accomplished by explicit teaching. Only those children in her study exhibited the knowledge of sounds, letters, and writing whose teachers presented and taught the alphabet and used books in their classrooms. Preschool programs which focus on academic activities devote less time on play activities; however, this researcher maintains that free-play non-academic activities will be more contributory for preschool students' English language development than teacher-structured academic activities.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is twofold. The primary purpose is to investigate the engagement level and English language usage of eight preschool bilingual children, ages three to five, during two different types of classroom activities: academic (teacher-structured) and non-academic (free-play). The research study took place in three separate and distinct preschool classrooms. The researcher's goal was to investigate which of the two types of preschool classroom activities, academic or non-academic, will lead the preschool bilingual children to higher levels of engagement in listening to and speaking the English language. When researching second language development of preschool children, researchers generally base their assumptions on the notion that language use contributes to language development (Saunders & O'Brien, 2006). Thus, higher levels of linguistic engagement and better quality and quantity of language use are likely to contribute to English language development and linguistic growth of bilingual preschool children.

The secondary purpose of this study is to examine eight parents and twelve preschool teachers from three different and distinct preschool classrooms, focusing on

their perceptions of the effects that academic and non-academic preschool classroom activities have on bilingual children's English language development.

Research Questions

Through observations of bilingual preschool children and through dialogue with preschool teachers and preschool parents, this research study will examine the following questions:

1. What is the effect of free-play activities on second language (L2) development of bilingual preschool children?

    A. What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

    B. What is the quality and quantity of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

2. What is the effect of teacher-structured time activities on L2 development of bilingual preschool children?

    A. What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while interacting with teachers?

    B. What is the quality and quantity of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with teachers?

3. What are the preschool teachers' perceptions of the effect of free-play vs. teacher-structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

4. What are the preschool parents' perceptions of the effect of free-play vs. teacher-structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

Theoretical Rationale

The researcher utilized second language (L2) acquisition theories and social learning theories in this research study. The L2 acquisition theories will be discussed first, in the following order: the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1981a, 1983a, 1983b), the Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), and the Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985). Social learning theories will be discussed second, and will include Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory and Bandura's (1986) Social Learning Theory.

Second Language Acquisition Theory

Interaction Hypothesis

The Interaction Hypothesis, developed by Long (1981a, 1983a, 1983b), suggests that language acquisition is accelerated by the use of the language during interaction. Long suggests that the role of conversation and comprehensible input are critical for second language (L2) learning. He argues that when engaged in conversation, the learner is linguistically interacting, and that this interaction enables language acquisition because language modifications occur only through discourse where the learner receives much needed input. Whether the received input is comprehensible or incomprehensible (White, 1987, 1991), the learner is pressed to negotiate for meaning during conversation.

A study conducted by Mackey (1999) tested the interaction hypothesis by examining the relationship between conversational interactions and L2 development. Participants of this study were 34 ESL learners with a large variety of linguistic backgrounds. The researcher grouped participants into three groups: a first group of learners who were participating in a conversation; a second group of learners who were only observing (listening to) the conversation; and a third group, the control group, which neither observed nor participated in the conversation.

According to Mackey, "This study provides direct empirical support for the claims of the interaction hypothesis" (p. 583). The findings of the study indicated that the group of ESL learners who actually participated in the conversation through interactions demonstrated definite evidence of language development when compared with the other two groups of ESL learners. The second group of ESL learners who only observed the conversation without active participation or negotiation exhibited only limited effects, which did not result in gains of language development – though observing a conversation was found to be a little bit more beneficial than nothing at all. Those who actively participated in interaction, however, received examples of more advanced language structures, and through interactions this group of ESL learners had to "repeat and rephrase" (p. 577) these more advanced language structures, which ultimately resulted in learning.

The research findings of Ellis, Tanaka, and Yamazaki (1994), however, did not show support for the Interaction Hypothesis. The researchers tested the advantages of non-modified, pre-modified, and interactionally modified input on vocabulary learning and comprehension of 79 public high school English language students in Saitama, Japan. An important goal of this research was to see whether actual participation in interaction results in new English vocabulary learning and in better comprehension than does observed participation. The results of this study indicated that the scores on new vocabulary acquisition and comprehension were not significantly different between the students who actively participated in the interaction and the children who only observed the interaction. These results might be different from those of Mackey (1999) because the authors used pre-modified input, which is input that has been scripted (Gass & Varonis,

1994) to ensure comprehension. The conversational interactions that utilize such input appear not to be naturalistic and are not considered to be as challenging for students because students do not have to negotiate for meaning.

Input Hypothesis

In attempting to explain how learners acquire a language, Krashen (1982) focused on the input they receive. He believed that in order to move from the current stage of language acquisition, which he called *i*, to the next stage, the language input must a little bit beyond the current language competence. This little-bit-beyond he called *+1*. The reason why learners can acquire language that includes grammatical language structures that have not yet been acquired is because learners also "use context, our knowledge of the world, our extra-linguistic information to help us understand language directed at us" (p. 21). Therefore, the Input Hypothesis states that the input that learners receive must be comprehensible and naturalistic. Comprehensiveness is the most important characteristic of input. If the learner does not understand what has been said, language acquisition does not occur. Thus, Input Hypothesis developed by Krashen (1981, p. 61) suggests that comprehensive input is "the only true cause of second language acquisition." According to Krashen (1982), incomprehensible input does not help for language acquisition. He adds that if the input is understood and there is a sufficient amount of it, *i+1* is automatically provided, and this is what he called successful communication. The best way to communicate is to be involved in a naturalistic conversation because it is one of the best ways to attain input.

Krashen's hypothesis that comprehensive input is the cornerstone of language acquisition has been tested by many researchers. Zimmerman (1997) examined two

pedagogical methods for ESL students' English vocabulary acquisition. The sample of this study consisted of 44 ESL students preparing for university entry who came from a variety of linguistic backgrounds, as many of them spoke Japanese, Korean, and Mandarin as their L1; a third of them were trilingual. As part of this study, some students were exposed to a combination of reading and interactive vocabulary instruction whereas others were exposed to their regular vocabulary instruction, which was based on rote memorization and didactic instruction.

It was found that the group of L2 students who were exposed to the combination treatment – which included guided instruction equivalent to Krashen's comprehensible input, and periods of reading – acquired more English vocabulary than those students who had only reading instruction.

The input hypothesis also has critics such as McLaughlin (1987) who stated that Krashen's input hypothesis is inadequately explained. What is missing, according to McLaughin, is the definition of i+1. If i+1 is not adequately defined, it cannot be tested and proved or disproved. Such undefined i+1 will differ from child to child and cannot be scientifically accepted.

Output Hypothesis

Swain (1985) expanded on the idea of interaction and conversation by examining what the actual interactional process really entails besides comprehensible input (Krashen, 1982). She has concluded that it is not only comprehensible input that the second language learner needs when acquiring a second language, but that the second language learner also needs what Swain (1985) called comprehensible output. Especially when it comes to language grammar, "the learner strives toward comprehensibility in

responding to interlocutor feedback" (Gass et al., 1998, p. 301) and not only comprehending the interlocutor's input. It is through conversation that the learner is pressured to produce a comprehensible output in which the complexity of language grammar is applied (in utterances). In producing responses to interlocutor's input, the learner gets a chance to notice what he has said wrong and as a result learns the correct form of language structure.

The Output Hypothesis, proposed by Swain, suggests that a meaningful output in the target language is as important to language acquisition as meaningful input. The reason is that the experience of producing language leads to more effective processing of input.

To explore output, Swain and Lapkin (1998) examined dialogue as not only a means of communication but also as a cognitive tool. They used one pair of students (Kim and Rick) to work on a jigsaw task. Kim and Rick were eighth grade students who had attended a French immersion program school since kindergarten. Swain and Lapkin examined the participants' strength of what they called language-related episodes (LRE), which were occurring during their conversations as they were working on the jigsaw task. They developed a story line together and wrote it out using language to construct and express the meaning. Their ongoing dialogue did not only serve as a tool for communication but also served for L2 learning. Kim was linguistically stronger than Rick, and through their LRE Rick's use of language shifted from incorrect to correct usage as Rick was being pressured to generate more comprehensible output during the task. Thus, these conversations became a tool for L2 learning.

In another more recent study, Baleghizadeh and Derakhshesh (2012) utilized task repetition to see whether students would reproduce their oral stories after making a mistake and seeing others react to the mistake. The sample consisted of four female participants attending English language classes in Tehran, Iran. The participants made many grammatical mistakes during their oral presentations, including those to do with verb usage, grammatical morphemes, modals, and prepositions. Many of these mistakes were believed to be caused by L1 interference. Since these participants were asked to revise the output transcription of their oral presentations, they had to consider their mistakes and repeat the task. This opportunity to revise their output led to a more positive outcome during the second presentations, following which a comparison of erroneous utterances between the first and second presentations was made. Thus, Baleghizadeh and Derakhshesh (2012) have supported the Output Hypothesis by providing evidence that more comprehensive output results in L2 acquisition.

To summarize: the three SLA hypotheses (the Interaction Hypothesis, the Input Hypothesis, and the Output Hypothesis) suggest that during L2 acquisition, an English language learner needs to receive comprehensible input – one that is only a little bit beyond the learner's language comprehension – followed by at least a small amount of output in the target language. Moreover, to efficiently acquire a language, a learner must be involved in negotiation of meaning that occurs during constant input and output. A learner will produce an utterance based on what he hears; if he doesn't understand the utterance, he will not be able to effectively respond. This negotiation for meaning occurs when both input and output are combined, which in turn occurs during an interaction.

Social Learning Theory

In addition to second language (L2) acquisition theories, the researcher will also utilize sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978) and social learning theory (Bandura, 1986) in this study. In this section, Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which describes learning a second language within the zone of proximal development with the help of teacher or peer scaffolding, will be explained. Next, the importance of learning within social interaction will be explained through Bandura's social learning theory, which mainly focuses on imitation as learning. Bandura claimed that children learn a second language through observing others in the classroom and then in turn imitating what they have observed.

Sociocultural Theory

Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory was used to examine English language development in the context of preschool classroom interactions in child-centered and teacher-structured activities. It is essential to incorporate a social development theory in the explanation of children's development as language plays a central role in children's mental development (Vygotsky, 1978). Language development is a part of cognitive development and occurs as a product of social interactions. Vygotskyan theory not only suggests that human development depends on interaction with people (Frawley & Lantof, 1985), but also depends on the tools that their culture provides to help shape their own view of the world (Vygotsky, 1978). These tools, called cultural artifacts (Lantolf, 2000), are inherited from our ancestors; therefore, Vygotsky believed that any approach to the study of higher mental functions must have a historical focus and be culturally analyzed (Lantolf, 2000). A cultural example of artifacts used in a preschool classroom includes "show-and-tell" modeling items (Cary, 2007, p. 108). These show-and-tell items are frequently used as an add-on items when telling stories or singing songs. For example,

a teacher starts pulling pumpkins out of a bag while singing a pumpkin song. This would help the second-language learner to understand the new vocabulary word. Artifacts are not necessarily old; they could be any items chosen by the teacher. Artifacts are crucial to children's learning because of their appeal of being hands-on and thus more engaging (Cary, 2007).

A cultural tool, or artifact, can be passed from one individual to another in three general ways. The first route is through imitation as learning. For instance, children will imitate everyday actions that surround them; they will imitate brushing teeth, pouring cereal into a bowl, or scolding a sibling. The second route is instruction as learning. In the preschool environment, children can follow a teacher's simple instructions when completing tasks. Finally, the third route is collaborative learning. (Tomasello, Kruger, & Ratner, 1993). Here children work together to complete a task. For example, in a preschool classroom, children usually work in pairs or groups to build a structure out of blocks.

Social interactions in preschool allow children to pass on these cultural artifacts. Thus, social interaction generates an opportunity to initiate and develop higher mental thinking and acquire complex skills (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Nassaji & Cumming, 2000; Nassaji & Swain, 2000). Sociocultural theorists view learning "as a fundamentally social act, embedded in a specific cultural environment" (De Guerrero & Villamil, 2000, p. 52). However, de Guerrero and Villamil stressed that not all social interactions result in development. Interactions only result in development when they operate within the learner's zone of proximal development and when the interlocutors provide scaffolded assistance.

Before concluding this section on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, it is important to discuss in greater depth three key terms: zone of proximal development (ZPD), scaffolded assistance, and internalization of knowledge.

Zone of proximal development (ZPD), is the first key term defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of the potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). ZPD is a setting in which a child is capable of executing a task or performing at a higher level because of the assistance of a teacher or more skilled peer. Without the assistance the child would not be able to perform at a higher level and thus would not progress in his/her development. When in the ZPD, children build their knowledge in their private speech or based on the interactions they have with their teachers and peers.

For example, in a preschool classroom a teacher introduces a new activity each week that is a little bit more complex than the previous activity. Each new activity should build on what the children already know. Therefore, it is a challenge for preschool teachers to make an assessment of what all children's current developmental level is at the beginning of the school year. The language developmental level might vary among children, as they come from varieties of backgrounds. Some children come from bilingual homes and some do not. Regardless, children should not be given an activity that is too challenging or complex for their current development level. After a few attempts they might give up on that activity; thus, learning will not occur. Examples of overly challenging activities include reading a book with a complex vocabulary, and asking

children to repeat rhymes with complex vocabulary when they cannot even pronounce certain words in English.

Scaffolded assistance. The second concept of scaffolded assistance is closely linked to ZPD. Scaffolding is used to describe an adult or more capable peer adjusting the complexity of a task to support a beginner achieve a higher level of performance. It is through scaffolding that adults bring cultural meanings to children. For example, modeling strategies are used when teachers tell stories as a strategy for new vocabulary (Cary, 2007). In a preschool classroom children read books together in pairs, a scaffolding technique called "pair reading" (Cary, 2077, p. 76). When taking turns reading, the more capable peer (the child who is more proficient in English) will slow down or explain a difficult word or phrase so that the second language learner can keep up with the material. The significance is in the child's social interactions and how scaffolding provides impetus to language acquisition.

The concept of ZPD in second language acquisition was further developed by Ohta (1995). In this context, Ohta's describes ZPD as "the difference between the L2 learner's developmental level as determined by the independent language use, and the higher level of potential development as determined by how language is used in collaboration with a more capable interlocutor" (p. 96). Ohta's application of ZPD to second language acquisition provides the opportunity for bilingual learners to engage in collaborative activity that results in language development within the learner's environment.

Nassaji and Cumming (2000) applied ZPD to second language teaching and learning in a case study involving a Persian child. The interpersonal communication

between the student and the teacher was complementary, dynamic, sustaining, and evolving, conditions that were all scaffolded by the teacher. Through student-teacher interactions, the teacher exhibited a continuous sensitivity to Ali's performance and she got to understand Ali's personal difficulties and capabilities as a student. The instructional tool of scaffolding will be utilized in this study as part of the sociocultural theory.

Internalization of knowledge. The third key term is the process of internalization of knowledge (which is the conjunction of thinking with culturally created meditational artifacts) is the rebuilding of a goal-directed activity on the inner, psychological level of socially mediated external forms (Lantolf, 2000). According to Lantolf (2000, p. 13), internalization is the course through which higher forms of "mentation" are developed. Internalization presupposes that consciousness exists outside of the human head and is actually fixed in social activity. Activity is initially organized and regulated (or mediated) by people around them, but ultimately, in normal development, we start "to organize and regulate our own mental and physical activity through the appropriation of the regulatory means employed by others" (Lantolf, 2000, p. 14).

Sociocultural theory argues that human psychological processes do not preexist inside the individual's head waiting to surface at just the right maturational point. When children are learning to solve certain problems, for example a puzzle, they are first under the meditational control of their parents. However, progressively, the control is passed from parents to children as they appropriate the language used by their parents as a way of mediating their own physical and mental activity (Lantolf, 2000). Learning continuously occurs in children's minds. Besides learning from their parents, children

also learn from their surroundings. As little children spend more of their time in preschools, the language input they are exposed to becomes increasingly important. Therefore, the linguistic environment that preschool teachers and other children provide will be one of the factors considered in this study.

Social Learning Theory

Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is closely related to Bandura's (1986) social learning theory, which emphasizes learning within the social environment by observing others and then, in turn, imitating that learned behavior. When observing others, a child develops a new understanding of possible behaviors that "can be conveyed effectively only by social cues" and through modeling (p. 20). Bandura strongly believes that modeling is an essential aspect of learning, particularly in situations where children acquire more complex skills, as in the case of language acquisition.

Adank, Hagoort, and Bekkering (2010) utilized Bandura's social learning theory to examine whether imitation of an unfamiliar behavior would improve understanding of the behavior. The behavior in this study was the ability to speak with an English accent. Some second language learners have difficulties distinguishing certain vowels – for example, those in *slip* and *sleep*. For Japanese L2 learners these vowels are not contrastive in their native language; therefore, it is very difficult to distinguish them in English. The researchers wanted to find out whether L2 learners could imitate an unfamiliar accent that would improve their spoken-language understanding. The results of this study indicated that indeed imitating a speaker's accent helped in reforming interaction by advancing spoken-language comprehension. Participants only improved in pronouncing sentences that they imitated. The authors demonstrated that imitative

behavior in humans during social interaction plays a crucial role in improving communicative level of L2 learners. ELLs must therefore be provided opportunities in the preschool classroom for imitation. Imitation can simply occur by interacting in play sessions with peers, as humans normally imitate each other during social interactions (Chen, Chartrand, Lee-Chai, & Bargh, 1998).

Bandura's social learning theory also describes human performance as a result of continuous "triadic reciprocality," where shared interaction of three determinants occurs (Bandura, 1986, p. 18). These determinants are behavior, personal factors, and environment. Behavior in L2 learners is the language production; personal factors include attitude toward a certain language; and an environment encompasses a variety of situations that encourages the child to use his second language. Human beliefs and feelings are developed and changed by social influences present in the learner's environment. Bandura further pointed out that behavior, as one of the three determinants, can be regulated by humans. Humans have a system of self-beliefs which allow them to take control of their feelings, thoughts, and actions. According to Bandura (1997), how humans think and feel will affect their behavior. One of the most influential beliefs, self-efficacy beliefs appears to be the most powerful in human agency. Self-efficacy beliefs help to determine why people's behaviors differ tremendously even though they have the same skills and knowledge. According to Bandura (1986), self-efficacy refers to one's beliefs in one's capabilities to learn and to be able to recognize what needs to be done to achieve certain types of performance. Thus, self-efficacy is a self-reflective thought that affects the learner's behavior. Mills, Pajares, and Herron (2007) applied Bandura's self-efficacy and other motivational self-beliefs on the achievement of students learning

French language. The sample of this study consisted of 303 college students enrolled in French courses. The majority of these students were native English speakers. The results indicated that indeed self-efficacy for students' self-regulation was a stronger determinant of second language achievement. Those students who viewed themselves as more capable of applying effective learning strategies to monitor their academic work effectively were more likely to experience academic success in learning French than those who did not perceive themselves as capable of monitoring their academic work. When examining gender differences, female students showed a greater interest (self-efficacy for self-regulation) in both French culture and values than did male students. However, both male and female students had similar academic achievements in the acquisition of French language.

Scope and Delimitation of Study

This research study focused on eight bilingual preschool children from different linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds. These children were observed during academic and non-academic preschool activities to determine the effects the activities have on L2 development. This study also determined the perceptions that eight parents and twelve preschool teachers have of these effects. All participants were associated with the Associated Students Inc. (ASI) childcare center of San Francisco State University (SFSU).

The eight children were systematically observed in peer-to-peer interactions and student-to-teacher interactions. Parents and teachers were both surveyed and interviewed. All data collection took place at the ASI childcare center. Observations of the children took place in three preschool classrooms where the student-teacher ratio was 1:8.

Children's and teachers' cultural characteristics, such as their ethnicity, socioeconomic status, gender, and age, varied in the three preschool classrooms. During the preschool observations, the researcher was conscious of cultural differences in order to avoid making judgments based on any misunderstanding of the cultural norms of students and teachers.

Limitation of Study

Because of the small sample size, the findings of this study cannot be generalized to other bilingual preschool children acquiring English as a second language. To address objectivity and validity of data, the researcher utilized concurrent triangulation strategy, which employs both qualitative and quantitative methods to validate data and confirm findings from five different sources: classroom observations, teacher interviews, teacher survey assessment, parent interviews, and parent survey assessment (Creswell, 2003).

Significance of Study

This research study described the effects that academic and non-academic preschool classroom activities have on L2 development. Because the early childhood years are very important in language and bilingual development, educators in early childhood development will benefit from this rich evaluation. As Stipek et al. (2006) point out, "never before has there been such widespread recognition of the potential value of early childhood education" (p. 462). Stipek et al. (2006) adds, "never before has there been so much pressure to make it more academic" (p. 463). The significance of this study lies in the urgency of providing evidence that even though the trend in education today is toward an academic pedagogical approach in preschool classrooms, such an approach may not benefit the growing number of ELLs in preschool programs.

The knowledge obtained from this analysis can be integrated into bilingual preschool children's lessons. Moreover, this study will not only contribute to Second Language Acquisition (SLA) literature, but will also bridge a gap between academic and non-academic preschool classroom activities and an understanding of their possibly different effects on L2 development.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this study, the following terms used are hereby defined:

Approaches to learning. Preschool children's participation, engagement, and motivation in a classroom setting (California Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008).

Bilingual child. A child who speaks two languages. A bilingual child is able to function in both languages based on his needs (Grosjean, 1982).

Child-centered approach. Believed to have been developed by Piaget, who stated that children form their academic knowledge through actual and real experiences in which children manipulate actual objects (Stipek & Byler, 1997).

Cognitive competence. Attainment accomplished when preschool children receive the opportunity to interact with a variety of objects (Howes & Stewart, 1987).

Circle time. A preschool classroom activity, equivalent to a typical elementary school exercise, in which a teacher is in front of a classroom and children are sitting down, sometimes in a circle or a half circle, and facing their teacher. The teacher leads a discussion and attempts to teach actual academic skills such as letter naming, numbers recognition, shapes, science, and seasons. Circle time is considered to be academic, teacher-structured preschool classroom activity that usually lasts for 15 to 20 minutes (Zaghlawan & Ostrovsky, 2010).

Didactic approach. Also referred to as "basic skills," "teacher-directed," instruction that involves careful preparation and performance of sequenced tasks. Didactic approach involves repetition, review, and practice of learned materials (Stipek & Byler, 1997).

Early childhood setting. Any classroom setting "in which preschool children receive education and care" (California Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008, p. 35).

English Language Learners. Children for whom English is not their first language. English language may be acquired by these children for the first time in preschool classrooms (California Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008).

Expressive language. Consists of formulating a speech act by using language; communicating. Also referred to as productive language or speech (California Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008).

Language pragmatics. A "system of social rules for using language in different communication contexts or situations" (p. 89). Some of these social rules include selecting and changing certain words depending on a listener, talking differently to a child than to an elderly person, taking turns when talking, and retaining physical distance during conversation. These rules differ from culture to culture (California Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008).

Preschool teacher. Qualified adult who is responsible for children's education and safety in a preschool program (California Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008).

Pretend play. Also called dramatic play; this is the most common type of play that preschool children engage in. In pretend play, children share a common theme and goals, as well as space and materials (Kostelnik et al., 1998).

Receptive language. The process of fully comprehending of what is being communicated, which includes both listening to and understanding of language (California Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008).

Social competence. Children's positive interaction with their peers and classmates (Howes & Matheson, 1992).

Social conventions. Rules and conventions for the use of language. Different world cultures have different rules for how and in which situations to use their language (California Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008).

Social learning theory. Emphasizes learning within the social environment (Bandura, 1986; Vygotsky, 1978).

Utterance. Expression of a speech sequence that is one or two words long and consists of one or more words that are separated from other utterances by a period of silence. Utterance is sometimes used interchangeably with sentence and phrase (California Preschool Learning Foundations, 2008).

Zone of proximal development. The space between a child's current level of development and her potential level of development; determined by problem solving with the help and support of a more capable peer or an adult (Vygotsky, 1978).

Chapter II

Review of Literature

This chapter is organized into three parts. The first part reviews existing research on preschool children's English as a second language development in the preschool classroom. The second part examines two major approaches to instruction in the preschool classroom setting: academic (which is also referred to as teacher-structured) and non-academic (which is also referred to as child-centered or play-based). At the center of child-centered instruction is children's play. The importance of play and its contribution to learning is discussed as well. The degree of engagement of children when partaking in academic and non-academic (with their peers) classroom settings is also discussed. The third part reviews research on teacher and parent perceptions/beliefs on which teaching practices are more appropriate for their children's cognitive development. There are two categories of studies of beliefs reviewed: a) The first category reviews research studies on teachers' beliefs/perceptions toward Developmentally Appropriate Practices (DAP) and Developmentally Inappropriate Practices (DIP) practices in the preschool classroom. b) The second category reviews research on parents' beliefs/perceptions toward academic and non-academic preschool classroom practices.

Second Language Acquisition during the Preschool Years

Children whose English is a second language usually begin preschool programs with various levels of English proficiency. Children with little knowledge of English usually undergo few phases of language acquisition before they achieve the much needed proficiency in the English language (Tabors, 1997). Many children of immigrants begin preschool with no or low proficiency of the English language and therefore the longer

they stay in preschool the better for their English language development. The following levels of English language acquisition discussed in the following section of this literature review mainly pertain to sequential bilingual children. Sequential and simultaneous bilingual children are two groups of bilingual children that are distinguished by the period of time they began acquiring a second language. Simultaneous language acquisition and sequential language acquisition are two main categories in second language acquisition. Simultaneous bilingual children are those who acquire two languages from birth in a parallel fashion. Sequential acquisition occurs when children begin acquiring their second language during or after the preschool age of three years old (Goldstein, 2004). Thus, simultaneous bilingual children's English language proficiency should be better than that of sequential bilingual children's. This is the reason why researchers are more interested in sequential bilingual children in preschool classrooms (Zepeda, 2008).

The first phase of English language acquisition for preschool children is when they are trying to use their first language to communicate with their playmates and teachers at school (Tabors, 1997). In this first stage children begin to be aware of the fact that they are not being understood and that this is a new language environment. During the second phase of language acquisition, children will start adapting to the new language environment by silently observing and processing the structures of the new language (Tabors, 1997). This shift from stage one to stage two will occur faster for some children than for others. This second phase of language acquisition could be mistaken for children's disinterest or they are shutting down because some spend long periods of time quietly observing their peers and teachers. However, this observational period is very

common for second language learners. Since during this observational period the preschool children are having trouble communicating verbally, they will find different ways to communicate non-verbally such as: facial expressions, utilizing gestures, and some kind of sounds like laughing or crying (Zepeda, 2008).

During the third stage, children are usually ready to "go public" (p. 105) with their new acquired language. They are by no means ready to fluently communicate with their teachers and peers; however, they begin to combine the nonverbal clues with some verbal ones. The verbal language, at this stage, consists of the usage of key phrases telegraphic speech to communicate (Tabors, 1997). Telegraphic speech is the use of content words without the use of functional words. For example when a child is saying "up" while pointing at the plane in the sky (Zepeda, 2008). During this stage of language acquisition, children's speech might mix their languages to express their ideas in order to communicate. Genishi, Stires, and Yung-Chan (2001) conducted a study where a single preschool classroom was observed. This was a mainstream classroom not a bilingual classroom even though the majority of children were English-Cantonese bilinguals. The classroom teacher incorporated learning new English vocabulary, among other areas, through every day experiences which were not out of context. The teacher was encouraging the bilingual children to express their feelings and thoughts and communicate orally with others. If the children could not express an idea in English she encouraged them to try in their home language. This combination technique was found to be very instrumental in children's acquisition of the English language. This combination technique is also called code-mixing or code-switching which is a usual occurrence in second language acquisition. According to Comeau, Genesee, and Lapaquette (2003),

practically all children who are growing up bilingually utilize language mixing. When a child uses both of his languages when conversing, this phenomenon of language mixing divides into subcategories called; *code-mixing*, and *code-switching*. According to Bhatia and Ritchie (1999, 2008), code-mixing (CM) occurs when there is mixing of two languages within a single sentence, also called *intra-sentential mixing*. Code-mixing is language mixing of a variety of components: morphemes, words, phrases, modifiers, clauses, and sentences. The authors explain that the complexity of code-mixing lies in a fact that the user is using two grammatical systems within a single sentence. Code-switching (CS), on the other hand, is when the switching between the two languages occurs from one sentence to the next which is also called *inter-sentential mixing*. A preschool child would have to have a better English language proficiency to be able to code-switch when compared to code-mixing.

Comeau, Genesee, and Lapaquette (2003) conducted a study in which language mixing of six preschool aged bilingual children was explored. The results of the study indicated that bilingual children were aware of their language mixing. This study confirmed that young children are not only able to pragmatically differentiate their two developing languages but are also able to monitor the rates of mixing in the input provided by the interlocutor and modify their own rates of mixing accordingly. These children were found to utilize code-mixing because their parents were code-mixing as well. As this study provided evidence that language mixing does not predetermine children's language proficiency but it can be a determinant of children's language input.

Going back to the fourth and last phase of second language acquisition, according to Tabors (1997) children again are not comparable with native-English language

speakers; however, they have achieved certain degree of control over their English language. Children are able to verbally express themselves using their own words. At this stage children understand the structure of the English language grammar and they are able to apply it more often; however, they still make many mistakes. A variety of mistakes could emerge during this stage, which could range from mispronouncing sounds and articulation, grammar mistakes, and pragmatic issues which involve selecting the wrong vocabulary (Tabors, 1997).

The progression through these stages can last from six months to two years (Zepeda, 2008). Therefore, it is important that children attend preschool programs for longer periods of time (Skibbe, Connor, Morrison, & Jewkes, 2011) so that they have enough time to reach to the fourth phase or beyond of English language acquisition. The better their English language the better they will do academically during elementary school years (Halle, Hair, Wandner, McNamara, & Chien, 2012; Reese, 2000). Peisner-Feinberg, Burchinal, Clifford, Culkin, Howes, Kagan, and Yazejian (2001) conducted a study to examine the long term effects of children's preschool experiences. The participants of this study included 733 children who were longitudinally observed from a preschool age of four to age eight. The study revealed evidence that long-term effects of child-care programs on children's language and cognitive skills exist and are apparent through early elementary years. It was also found that at-risk children from more diverse backgrounds have benefited more positively from a quality child-care program in terms of both cognitive and social development.

The speed of the movement through these four phases of development also depends on the quality of the environment in the preschool classroom. Part of this quality

includes the amount exposure to English language as well as the input of English language. Many experts have researched how teacher-child interactions will influence the English language development of preschool children. Piker and Rex (2008) conducted a study which examined the influence of preschool teachers' interactions with children who were learning English as a second language. The participants of this study consisted of four children and two preschool teachers. The children participants were age of three to five years old whose primary language was Spanish. The authors used an interactional ethnography approach mainly focusing on the social characteristics of teacher- child interactions of Head Start classrooms. The findings of the study confirmed that social interactions are crucial for children's language development. However, this study only focused on teacher-child interactions and not on child-child interactions. The results showed that preschool teachers did provide ways for second language learners to develop English language comprehension and receptive language; however, they did not provide opportunities to support oral language development. Receptive and expressive abilities should be working together for a successful language development. It was found that preschool teachers did not take advantage of all of the opportunities they had to support the English learners' language development. The researchers concluded that the teacher-child interactions mainly included brief responses to children's inquires, instead of longer scaffolded explanations which could have provided more exposure to the English language. Teachers' linguistic input provided in the classroom mainly consisted of instructing children to line up or clean up, reprimanding children, and giving children brief instructions. These teachers' brief responses prevented children from "developing their oral production of English into more complex forms" (p. 190). Even though the

amount of English language produced by the preschool children when interacting with their teachers was minimal, gains were still found in language development which might have been attributed to children's interactions amongst themselves.

Oral Language Development

Second language learners' oral proficiency in English is developed first before reading and writing skills are developed. This is the natural sequence of language skills when it comes to L1 and L2 acquisition. The beginning preschool age is around three years of age and when children in this age category are to acquire a second language they can only do so through exposure and conversations as they cannot read or write. However, the development of oral English language proficiency still involves a wide amount of skills such as: learning new vocabulary, having control of grammatical rules, and being aware of the semantics of English language (Saunders & O'Brien, 2006). It is undisputable that oral language skills are critical for future academic success. However, an apparent gap in oral second language acquisition of specific aspects such as grammatical forms, vocabulary and pragmatic forms exists. Saunders and O'Brien (2006, p. 15) concurred that "the empirical literature on oral language development in ELL is small."

According to Ballantyne, Sanderman, and McLaughlin (2008), oral language proficiency is divided into two types, productive (speaking) and receptive (listening). Both are considered to be important components of social skills. Besides oral proficiency being an important factor of social skills, it is also considered by some researchers to be a predictor of successful reading, writing skills, and literacy in general in later years (Reese, Garnier, Gallimore, & Goldenberg, 2000; Scarborough, 2005). Reese et al.

(2000) conducted a longitudinal study examining whether proficiency in oral language skills would have an effect on later literacy development particularly later reading skills. The participants included 121 Spanish-English bilingual children who were of Latino cultural backgrounds. These children were followed for eight years starting from an early kindergarten entry until the 7th grade. The results indicated that indeed oral proficiency in English early on was found to be a predictor of higher reading skills until the 7th grade. This study provided evidence of the importance of development of oral language skills early on in child's development.

Language Use and L2 Oral Development

Saunders and O'Brien (2006, p. 15) concurred that "the empirical literature on oral language development in ELL is small." There are a small number of studies dealing with improving second language learners' English language oral proficiency in the elementary school classroom. One of the methods that has been tested by researchers is to pair up ELL students with native English speakers to allow for natural acquisition of the language. The results of these studies indicated that native English speaker peers did not influence the development of ELL students' English language (Cathcart-Strong, 1986; Platt & Troudi, 1997). According to Jacob, Rottenberg, Patrick and Wheeler (1996), the reason was found to be the type of activity settings in the elementary school classroom which did not allow for constant interactions between students. The classroom activities were structured student pair activities in which students tended to shorten their verbal interactions in order to complete the written portion of the task. In teacher-structured didactic classroom activities, the peer-to-peer interactions are minimal due to the structure of the given tasks.

Children need to be provided with activities which will provide more opportunities for interaction and thus usage of their second language. The more opportunities children are given to use their second language the more proficient they will become in their second language. Chesterfield, Chesterfield, Hayes-Latimer, and Chavez (1983) investigated preschool classroom social interactions and its effects on language development. The participants included 11 Spanish-preferring children from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Most of these children had low to no proficiency of English language when first entering the preschool program. The results indicated that those children who used English language with their peers, and had increased their frequency of English usage, the ones whose English language proficiency had increased when compared to other children. In this study native English-speaking peers were found to be a contributing factor to the bilingual children's English language acquisition because most of the English language usage occurred in peer to peer interactions. Similar results were found in a study conducted by Saville-Troike (1984). The sample included 19 bilingual children ages seven through twelve who were all exposed to the English language for the first time. The results indicated significant correlations between English use and oral proficiency.

L2 Oral Development and Preschool Classroom Activities

This section will provide background information on oral language development through a variety of preschool classroom activities. The development of oral language includes both the development of speaking and listening skills in bilingual preschool children. Developing oral skills through the utilization of songs and rhymes, and book reading will be discussed next.

The first most common everyday preschool classroom activity discussed is singing songs and telling rhymes. As far as scholars can remember, music and songs have been utilized for the enhancement of learning in young toddlers and preschoolers (Ohman-Rodriguez, 2004). The utilization of songs in the preschool classroom provides opportunities for children to develop their listening and speaking abilities. In addition, songs will help children to learn language items such as vocabulary, adjectives, adverbs, sentence pattern, rhythm, pronunciation and speaking which is very important for second language learners (Saricoban & Metin, 2000; Woodall & Ziembroski, n. d.). Using songs to teach English as a second language provides a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom and children don't feel pressured to be understood when singing as the children usually sing altogether. Children's songs are easy to follow and are considered to be very memorable. According to Brown (2006), songs and nursery rhymes are an excellent source for English language learners to practice articulation and pronunciation of certain English sounds such as the 'R' sounds as presented in the "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" song. Besides the practice of sounds and pronunciation, other benefits of songs for second language learners include their repetitiveness (Woodall & Ziembroski, n. d.) which is very helpful in learning and remembering English language vocabulary. A good example is "Old MacDonald had a farm" (Brown, 2006). According to Woodall and Ziembroski (n. d.), a first introduction to the patterns of language occurs when children hear songs, rhymes, and chants which are usually repeated numerously throughout their childhood. When children become familiar with these patterns of language they are able to take part in oral language experiences. Music in general facilitates children's communication which is first oral (Ohman-Rodriguez, 2004). Even though there is no

empirical research examining the use of songs and music with second language learners, Paquette and Rieg (2008) assured of the benefits of utilizing music and songs to promote second language development especially due to the repetitiveness and pronunciation aspects which songs provide.

The second most common everyday preschool classroom activity that has proven to enhance children's language skills in general (Smith & Dickinson, 1994) and more specifically development of vocabulary which again includes both listening and speaking skills is the utilization of book reading. Senechal (1997) conducted a study to demonstrate what types of book reading in the preschool classroom had an effect on the children's expressive and receptive vocabulary acquisition. The sample consisted of three and four year old monolingual preschoolers who were predominantly Caucasian followed by a small number of Asian children. The parents of the preschoolers were of middle-class socioeconomic background. The researcher incorporated two types of book reading; the first one where the teacher actively engaged the children in the story by asking them questions throughout the reading and the second type was just reading a story out loud to children. The results indicated that children did indeed make improvements in vocabulary acquisition but not until after a third reading. The key in vocabulary acquisition was found to be a repeated exposure to novice words which was predominantly found to improve expressive vocabulary more than receptive vocabulary in preschool children. Children's oral comprehension skills are reinforced by the acquisition of new vocabulary and are also further even further strengthened by oral interactions with teachers and parents during story-book reading (Whitehurst, 2001).

A slightly different type of story book reading in the preschool classroom is called a shared storybook reading which is also believed to be very instrumental in children's language and cognitive development. According to Beauchat, Blamey, and Walpole (2009), shared meaning involves the child in selecting the story book to read so that she is more interested and engaged during reading time. In shared story book reading the child should be able to pause and engage in a conversation about the story. A productive storybook reading will effectively aim at the development of oral language, phonological skills, vocabulary, and comprehension (Beauchat, Blamey, & Walpole, 2009). Shared reading experiences have also been found by Whitehurst, Arnold, Epstein, Angell, Smith, and Fischel (1994) to improve preschool children's expressive language skills. Whitehurst et al. (1994) conducted a study to explore how the different number of children in a story reading group would have an effect on language development. The participants of this study included 73 three-year-old preschool children from low socioeconomic backgrounds. The fundamental belief about small group reading, also called dialogic reading, is that children will benefit from it if they get the opportunity to actively respond during the book reading. Whitehurst (1994) suggests that an adult should initiate a child's involvement by learning about the child's abilities and interests during book reading. These initiations will diminish for a child as children's to adult ratios increase. Thus, dialogic reading must occur in small groups. The usual reading sessions in preschool classrooms are large group reading where children sit still around the teacher and are quiet. The results of this study indicated that this small group type of classroom story reading did indeed improve children's language skills.

Collins (2010) conducted a study to examine whether a rich explanation (a detailed definition) would help ELL children to acquire new vocabulary during story book reading. The study included 80 four-to-five-years old preschool children who were native speakers of Portuguese, and English was their second language. A small group size of two to three children in a single group and along with a prolonged learning period was provided to these children. The study results indicated that the preschool children had successfully acquired a third of the new vocabulary words there were presented. New vocabulary was presented in everyday stories which were read to them in school. When every new vocabulary word was followed by a rich explanation of that word the acquisition of the new words was found to increase by 50%. Children were exposed to the new vocabulary words six times during the study. High exposure to and repetition of new vocabulary words was found to be a determinant of new vocabulary acquisition in ELL children. ELL children were found to acquire sophisticated vocabulary from storybook reading.

The type of preschool activity, whether it is story-book reading or singing songs, a child participates in has shown to have different effects on cognitive and language development. Children's oral development is enhanced by the children's language use. Certain preschool activities will allow children to converse and use their oral skills more than others. Children appear to interact and converse with other children more during a free-play time activities. Children's participation in teacher-structured activities, where the teacher talks and gives instructions to the whole group of children and not to one child at a time, might expose children to correct grammar usage and correct articulation of English language sounds; however, the chances of conversation are lesser. The

following section will review the advantages and disadvantages of teacher-structured and child-centered approaches on preschool children's learning. Because of the lack of research on second language learners in this area, the following studies will discuss the differences in these two approaches with both monolingual and bilingual children.

Preschool Curriculum

Teacher-structured and child-centered approaches to preschool curriculum are two different practices which stem from different theories on how children learn (Stipek & Byler, 1997). A debate over which one of these two approaches is more suitable and beneficial for preschool children has been going on for many years and continues to the present. Some experts argue that children at the preschool age ought to learn naturally through interactions with their environments (Elkind, 2001) and others criticize this approach by suggesting more academic based methods need to be implemented for preschool children to acquire academic skills (Whitehurst, 2001). The one point that both proponents of teacher-structures approach and proponents of child-centered approach agree on is that there is not enough empirical evidence validating either approach. "There is no solid research demonstrating that early academic training is superior to (or worse than) the more traditional, hands-on model of early education" (Whitehurst, 2001, p. 21; Elkind, 2001). Even though this field of early childhood education has not been scientifically based (Whitehurst, 2001), some emerging evidence, from empirical research, on these two approaches is discussed in the following section.

Child-Centered Approach

The child-centered approach is based on Piaget's theory where children themselves build their intellect by "confronting and solving problems while directly experiencing and manipulating concrete objects" (Stipek &Byler, 1997, p. 306). Based on

this view, adults should allow children to naturally develop. The child-centered approach is also called nonlinear intellectual teaching where teachers let children engage in interacting "with other people and the physical world" (Fromberg, 2002, p. 4) in order to construct meaning and knowledge. Children learn through directed experiences and their ability to imagine. In child-centered activities, children get a chance to work alone and to work with others (Fromberg, 2002).

Enhancing Children's Development through Play

At the center of the child-centered curriculum approach is child's play. As defined by professionals, play is innate human behavior which "is essentially pleasurable or enjoyable; although players may not be actively laughing" (Kostelnik, Stein, Whiren, & Sorerman, 1998, p. 168). Play is a spontaneous activity which is intrinsically driven and there are no extrinsic purposes or goals. It is basically an activity in which the process is what matters not the goal of the activity. Play activity ought to be selected by the child, it should be voluntary and thus teachers should not instruct the children what to play about. During a play activity, "the player is actively engaged in the process" (p. 168).

The importance of play in early childhood curriculum has been debated. According to Bodrova and Leong (2003), the time dedicated to play has been decreased or even completely eliminated from many preschools and elementary schools. As preschool children are being exposed to more and more academic oriented (teacher-structured) curriculum, they are being deprived of the benefits that play has to offer. According to Zigler and Bishop-Joseph (2006), going against play in classroom curriculum contradicts the existence of developmental theory. The two well-known

theorists Vygotsky and Piaget both "stressed the essential role of play for cognitive development" (p. 23).

Elkind (2001) emphasized that play should be a large part of a preschool curriculum and he argued against academic oriented curriculum by stressing that young children benefit the most from directly interacting with their environment. He believes that children have to be of certain age to be able to reason within formal instruction in mathematics and reading. Other researchers have concurred with Elkin and criticized the emphasis on academic instruction which is viewed as not supported by empirical evidence (Raver & Zigler, 2004) and that "premature schooling can replace valuable play time, potentially slowing or reducing the child's overall development" (Zigler, 1987, p. 257). Even though there is a lack of empirical evidence in this field of early childhood education; however, this field has 75 years of practice which shows that an essential part of children's development and growth is play (Zigler, 2003).

When it comes to scholastic achievements, research shows that every skill required for scholastic success is enriched by play (Singer, 2006; Isenberg & Queisenberry, 2002). "Play has a crucial role in the optimal growth, learning, and development of children from infancy through adolescence" (Isenberg & Queisenberry, 2002, p. 33). According to Kagan and Lowenstein (2004), it has been established that play enhances children's cognitive capability and has been recognized as a major medium for "concept development and problem solving" (p. 69). Play generates an opportunity for children to get into contact with multiple ways which will allow for the development of categorization, conceptual skills, and generalization (Kagan & Lowenstein, 2004). For example, during play, children categorize dinosaurs with big teeth that are scary and

dinosaurs that are nice. Overall, empirical research has shown that play provides benefits for cognitive, social, physical and emotional development (American Academy of Pediatrics, 2006; Elkind, 2007; Kagan & Lowenstein, 2004; Kostelnik, Stein, Whiren, & Sorerman, 1998). Among the many cognitive development benefits are language skills (Kagan & Lowenstein, 2004; Kostelnik, Stein, Whiren, & Sorerman, 1998). The benefits of play at the center of child-centered preschool curriculum will be discussed in the following review of empirical research studies.

Stipek, Feiler, Daniels, and Milburn (1995) compared child-centered preschools and kindergartens with more academically oriented didactic preschools and kindergartens. The child variables that were the focus of this study included "basic skills achievement, self -perceptions of academic ability, expectations for success, enjoyment of school and school-like activities, dependency and need for approval, preference for basic skills tasks and challenge, anxiety, and pride in accomplishments" (p. 210). The sample of this study consisted of 227 four to six year old children from 32 different classrooms. There was almost an even distribution of genders as well as the amount of children in each curriculum type group. Participants were not only diverse in socioeconomic status, where just a little more than a half were of middle-class background and the rest were of low-income status, but also in ethnic background status. Almost all of the Latino children were not proficient in English language so they had to be assessed in Spanish.

The results of this study indicated that children benefited more from child-centered curriculum programs. Preschool children in child-centered classrooms were more inclined to voluntarily select an academic oriented (basic skill) activity over a

different kind of activity when compared to preschool children in didactic, teacher-structured classroom. This finding implies that children in child-centered classrooms perceived learning about letters and numbers more appealing than children did in didactic classrooms. Additionally, children in child-centered classrooms scored higher on many of the motivation-related measures, they exhibited less dependency on adults' approval and permission, they selected more difficult math problem to solve, had more pride in their achievements, and lastly they showed less anxiety about school work when compared to children in didactic oriented classrooms. "Children in the didactic programs had more opportunities to fail, and these experiences fostered relatively negative cognitions about their competencies" (p. 220). There was no difference found between children from low-socioeconomic backgrounds and children from middle-class backgrounds.

When it comes to academic achievements, children enrolled in the teacher-structured didactic classrooms, where basic skills were predominantly learned, had significantly better scores on the reading and letters achievement test but not on the numbers test. These children enrolled in didactic programs have also scored lower on all of the motivation measures. The only one achievement that children have indicated gains from being enrolled in teacher-structured programs was the knowledge of reading and letters. There were no gains found in any of the other measures including math (numbers). The authors have suggested that the use of didactic methods might be better for memorization tasks such as letter recognition; however, math skills require more than a simple memorization. Math skills require comprehension of one-to-one patterns.

Children had undeniably benefited from child-centered approaches on academic self-confidence and pride, enjoyment of school, and independence measures as well as on

math skills. All of these measures seem to be instrumental in encouraging children to learn. Since acquiring a second language also requires more than a mere memorization, child-centered approach would be the most suitable approach for acquiring English as a second language.

The next two studies were conducted to explore the consequences of developmentally appropriate and developmentally inappropriate classrooms in early education programs (Burts, Hart, Charlesworth, & Kirk, 1990; Burts, Hart, Charlesworth, Fleege, Mosley, & Thomasson, 1992). The two types of programs were developed by the researchers based on the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) guidelines. NAEYC recommends that developmentally inappropriate practices for kindergaten age children include: direct teaching of discrete skills, abstract paper-and-pencil activities, rote learning and learning in large groups. Developmentally appropriate practices are considered those that are age appropriate "knowledge of the typical development of children within age span" (p. 408) which might be unique to each individual. These two types of programs appear to be equivalent to child-centered (non-academic) and teacher-structured (academic). The sample of this study included 37 five-to-six year old children attending one of the kindergarten classrooms. Both classrooms were located in the same school. Children were from both lower and middle socioeconomic backgrounds. Ethnic background and linguistic background was not described in this study.

Results indicated that children in the developmentally inappropriate classroom showed more stress behaviors during academic activities such as workbook/worksheet activities than did children in academically appropriate classroom. These results concur

with Stipek et al. (1995) findings that children in didactic classrooms exhibit more anxiety and less pride in accomplishments than children in child-centered classrooms. This stress factor is very important to consider when selecting an appropriate curriculum for preschool children because as it might hinder early learning and development. English language learners are considered to be at-risk learners who come from low-socioeconomic backgrounds and are believed to have enough stress in their lives already (Burts et al., 1990). Therefore, it would be efficient to offer them a stress-free classroom environment. Based on this study the stress-free environment would be found in developmentally appropriate classroom rather than developmentally inappropriate classroom. Gender differences were also found in classroom stress behavior. Females showed less stress behaviors than males. Boys were found to be more vulnerable to developmentally inappropriate situations. Similar findings were also found in Burts et al. (1992) study where 204 kindergarten children exhibited more stress behavior in developmentally inappropriate classroom than in developmentally appropriate classroom. To include children's characteristics, this study also found that boys, and African American children were particularly more stressed in developmentally inappropriate classroom than girls and Caucasian children.

The researchers in the next two studies incorporated Vygotsky's theories in their measurement of play in early childhood curriculum. Many researchers link learning through play to Lev Vygotsky's theory of sociocultural learning and learning from the environment. Vygotsky emphasized that play is children's source of development and it is play which creates the zone of proximal development or opportunity to grow. By being engaged in play, the child is reaching beyond his level of development. It is very

important for child's development to be in an imaginary zone. Play creates new relationships between the situation in thought and reality. By playing the child learns to recognize his own actions and he also recognizes that everything has its meaning. A comparison can be drawn between the importance of play in development of a preschooler and the importance of education in the development of a pupil (Vygotsky, 2006).

Proponents (Badrova & Leong, 1996) of child-centered curriculum approaches had developed a preschool classroom curriculum that was based on Vygotsky's (1978) theories on cognitive development. This curriculum model is called Tools of the Mind (*Tools*) and had been tested (Badrova & Leong, 2007) and implemented many times. The *Tools* curriculum program promotes self-regulation and its basic principles include: "(1) children construct their own knowledge ; (2) development cannot be separated from its social context; (3) learning can lead to development; and (4) language plays a central role in mental development" (p. 301). Play is considered as a main source of self-regulation and; therefore, self-regulation is incorporated in this curriculum as well. In this *Tools* curriculum teachers regulate and plan children's play in order to guide children towards higher levels of development through their play activities. The *Tools* teachers do not merely "let children play" (p. 301). Peer interactions are also facilitated by teachers who in turn are to focus on scaffolding children's thoughts through language interactions.

Barnett, Jung, Yarosz, Thomas, Hornbeck, Stechuk, and Burns (2008) empirically tested the *Tools* curriculum against a control curriculum where the main emphasis was on teacher-controlled activities than on child-centered activities. The sample of this study consisted of 274 preschool children whose age ranged from three to four years old.

Almost all children were of Latino ethnic background and more than half of the children's primary home language was not English. The Tools curriculum was created to help teachers and children scaffold learning in the preschool classroom. This new curriculum approach focuses on certain academic skills and self-regulation of behavior with "play featured in a leading role in the curriculum" (p. 310). Results of this study indicated that the Tools classroom environments were better than the control classroom environments in many different aspects. Firstly, the Tools classrooms scored higher on classroom quality measures (ECERS-R, SELA etc). Secondly, children had performed better on the self-regulating their behaviors as tools techniques were found to be instrumental in this aspect. An example of self-regulating techniques of Tools curriculum during peer reading activity the child who is reading is given a picture of lips and the child who is listening is given a picture of ears so that they do not forget their given roles. Thirdly, the results indicated that on the language development measure there were only indicators of language development improvement. The improvements were not statistically significant.

It appears that the Tools curriculum is more teacher-directed as the experts perceived it to be. Even though it is true that that some teacher direction is very important in the classroom environment; however, in this curriculum there is teacher control present in all play scenarios. It seems like the play scenarios are not natural and spontaneous but are artificially created by the teachers which might not have had the same effect on children language development as a 'natural' play would have.

Singer, Singer, Plaskon, and Schweder (2003) have also developed a play-based preschool curriculum which involves training teachers and parents how teach numbers,

vocabulary, shapes, colors and manners through play and not through a more common didactic approach. The researchers have called this new curriculum *Learning Through Play*. This curriculum involves training material called "play training" for teachers, caregivers and parents which came in form of a manual for teachers and video for parents. The sample of this study consisted of 118 teachers, homecare providers and parents with their children. This research study had two phases. In phase one, a short term intervention was created to enhance children's readiness for formal schooling by enhancing pretend play skills. In this preliminary intervention, the researchers trained parents of low socioeconomic background to successfully implement pretend games with their children to see whether any improvements in their readiness for school occurred. This trained parent group was compared to an untrained parent group, and the results indicated that significant gains have occurred in overall scores for school readiness testing for those children whose parents were trained when compared to the untrained parents. There were also some increases found in subcomponents of the test specifically on the measures of vocabulary, general information, knowledge about nature and manners. Observations results have revealed that children were not incorporating the pretend play games at school apparently only at home. Additionally, observations revealed that if children did not initiate pretend play games at school, teachers did not either.

In the second phase of the research both parents and teachers were trained on incorporating the pretend play games. Three groups of children were created where in the first group only parents received the training in the second group only teachers received the training and in the third group parents and teachers received the training. There was

also a forth control group in which nor parents or teachers received training. Results indicated that teachers who played with children for shorter periods of time did not exhibit significant gains when compared with teachers who played with children for longer periods of time. There were gains in cooperation, persistence, and imagination during free play time which are all indicators of school readiness. The knowledge of numbers showed some gains for children whose parents and teachers were trained and also for children whose parents only were trained. For the most parts children exhibited the greatest gains in school readiness when both parents and teachers were trained which included gains in children's concentration and persistence on tasks and shows of positive reaction (interest/excitement, smiling, laughing).

The findings of this study indicated that play-based approach to learning is superior to an already in place teacher-structured approach. Children did not only do better on school readiness measures such as shapes, vocabulary and numbers but they also did better on pre-social skills such as sharing, taking turns and being positive not frustrated. The researchers did not indicate how many of these children were English language learners; however, this play-based approach appears to be suitable for English language learners development of English language.

Peer Effect

Children's language development is highly influenced not only by the input they receive but also by the amount of interactions they are part of. A large amount of attention has been paid to the effects teachers and parents have on children's language development (DeBaryshe & Gorecki, 2007) however, more attention needs to be paid to the effects peers have on language development. Researchers argue that the structure of a classroom which pertains to student characteristics has an effect on "the educational

attainment of an individual student" (p. 75). This influence of students in a classroom environment is referred to as a peer effect (Zimmer & Toma, 2000). Children in the preschool years are beginning to engage in prolonged multiple-turn conversations with their playmates. It has been found through observations that children in the preschool years will respond to most of their playmates communicative initiations (Schuele & Rice, 1995).

It has been established that children's language acquisition in the early years can be effectively stimulated by the exposure to the language of their peers (Schechter & Bye, 2007; Henry & Rickman, 2007). This was exemplified in a study conducted by Schechter and Bye (2007) where the receptive language growth of preschool children was measured based on the features of the preschool program. Two groups of low-income children were selected where one group of 35 children attended economically integrated preschools (private preschools) and the other group of 50 children attended low-income preschools. Thus, the researchers compared the receptive language growth of two groups of children from low-income families. Both groups of children had similar language scores when the study began. However, the low-income children attending the economically integrated preschool scored significantly higher on the language growth scale than the other group of children attending low-income preschool. Therefore, it was suggested that the peers with more advanced language skills may have had a positive effect on the low-income children's language development.

Other sample demographics consisted of somewhat equal numbers of male and female children. Around forty percent of the children attending the low-income preschools speak other than English language at home and only eight percent of the

children attending the economically integrated preschool speak other than English language at home. Even though, it is apparent that the more advanced peers in the economically integrated preschools have a positive effect on the language learning environment, this effect was not found significant for the children who spoke other language than English at home. It appears that the more advanced peers did not serve as models to the low-income children who speak other than English language at home. It might be because the conversations initiated by the more advanced speakers might have had a higher level of complexity and could not been easily grasped by the low-income bilingual children.

Schechter and Bye's (2007) research study parallels with Henry and Rickman (2007) study where peer effects on children's expressive language skills, cognitive, and pre-reading skills were examined. The sample consisted of 630 four-year-old children attending Head Start, publicly subsidized pre-kindergarten, or private preschool in Georgia. Composite measures of peer abilities were used in this study to estimate the effects of peers in preschool. The effect of peers on letter and word recognition was insignificant. Peers had no effects on the tests of story and print even though boys scored much worse on this measure than girls did. Moreover, African-American children scored lower than White children on the pre-reading skills at the beginning of the study but the scores were insignificant at the end of the study. When determining peer effects on the pre-reading scores, most of the children's scores were positive but not always significant. However, the peer effects were found to be the strongest for cognitive abilities and receptive vocabulary after controlling for child and family and other program characteristics. The researchers have also determined that the time spent on each activity,

classroom composition, or teachers' motivation seem not to be the elements which drive peer effect on children's development. The authors conclude that "a positive relationship exists between peer abilities and the development of cognitive, pre-reading, and expressive language skills for children in preschools and child care settings" (p. 111). The authors in this study did not specify the amount of bilingual participants; however, Head Start preschools provide child caring service to many English language learners. The results indicate that regardless of time spent on an activity or teachers' involvement the peer effect will always exist.

Mashburn, Justice, Downer, and Pianta (2009) examined relationships between peers' expressive language abilities and children's development of receptive and expressive language. The sample consisted of 1812 four-year olds pre-kindergarteners enrolled in 453 classrooms in 11 states. These schools that were selected for this study provided large-scale public programs. This sample included variety of ethnicities with White children being the largest followed by African American and Latino/Latino children. The classrooms had a teachers-child ratio of about one adult to eight children and each preschool classroom had about eighteen children on average. Children in this study spent a large amount of time in child to child interactions. The researchers adjusted for a variety of program related and demographic factors along with language skills at the beginning of pre-k and they come to a conclusion that expressive language abilities are contributing to children's receptive and expressive language achievement during the pre-k years. However, this relationship between peer expressive language skills and children's initial receptive language abilities was inverse, suggesting that children with more advanced language skills might benefit from sharing a classroom with other

children who have more advanced language skills. Therefore, the children who benefited the most from learning from peer interactions were the children who entered pre-k with higher receptive language skills.

The other factor identified when analyzing the positive association between peers' expressive language abilities and children's receptive language development was better classroom management. The combination of better classroom management and children's own language capacity to gain from peer interactions made classroom interactions more productive. Thus, teachers' skills to manage the classroom have an important contribution toward children's fruitful interactions. The limitation of this study is that the children whose primary language was not English were excluded from this study because they did not have a valid score on the English language version of the expressive language assessment during the time of study. Results of this study indicated that indeed higher peer expressive language abilities were positively correlated with children's development of both receptive and expressive language for children whose English language is the primary language.

In another peer-effect study conducted by Connor, Morrison, and Slominski (2006), association of amount and type of language and literacy activities regarding preschool children's vocabulary and emergent reading skill growth were examined. This was a longitudinal study where observations of preschool classrooms lasted for three months during a full day and half day preschool programs. These informal observations were frequently videotaped. The sample consisted of 156 preschool children from 34 different preschool classrooms taught by 25 different teachers who were all qualified to be preschool teachers and met the state and district certification requirements. The

sample predominantly consisted of White preschoolers and only small portion of the preschoolers were African American, Latino, Middle Eastern, and Asian. It is important to point out that the sample included a very small portion of bilingual learners. Only about seven percent of the preschoolers spoke other than English language at home. The maximum amount of children in each classroom was 16. The researchers divided the preschool classroom activities into code-focused activities which included alphabet and letter-word recognition and meaning-focused activities which included book reading and play. The researchers also created three dimensions under which the observations were analyzed: TM – teacher managed, TCM – teacher-child managed, and CM – child managed. In general, this study examined how teachers and children engaged in these specific preschool activities and the association of these activities to the children's vocabulary, alphabet, and letter-word recognition growth.

First, the researchers specifically examined the nature of preschool language and literacy activities compared to other activities such as art, music, and math. The researchers found out that every preschool spent a different amount of time on language and literacy activities, even though the preschools were in the same school district. In some preschool classrooms, there was no time spent on language and emergent literacy and in other classrooms there was a substantial variability in the amount and types of language and emergent literacy activities.

Second, the researchers investigated how different amounts of time spent in each language and literacy activities related to the children's vocabulary and emergent literacy growth. The results indicated that only teacher-and teacher-child activities were correlated with alphabet and letter-word growth. However, child-managed activities,

which included play, were positively associated with the children's vocabulary growth. Child-managed instructions which include regular peer to peer interactions such as children playing together and engaging in dramatic play, children looking at book and reading together are instrumental in children's language growth. In general, children who spent more hours in preschool a week showed stronger alphabet and letter-word growth when compared to children who spent fewer hours a week in preschool. Furthermore, the students who knew fewer letters and had weak vocabulary scores at the beginning of the study benefited more from peer to peer activities than those children who started the school year with stronger skills. This result does not parallel with the previous study's results (Mashburn, Justice, Downer, & Pianta, 2009) which indicated that only the children who entered pre-k with higher receptive language skills benefited the most from learning from peer interactions. Whereas, the results of this study indicated that children with weaker vocabulary and the knowledge of fewer letters benefited the most from the peer interactions. These two studies have very different results when it comes to peer influence on English language development during preschool years. However, special attention needs to be paid, when interpreting the results, to the lack of children in both studies whose English is a second language.

<div align="center">**Teacher-Structured Approach**</div>

The teacher-structured approach is based on a learning theory in "which cognitive competencies are assumed to be transmitted according to the principles of repetition and reinforcement" (Stipek & Byler, 1997, p. 306). Children got to employ repetition in learning and be involved with the teacher in a question and answer tasks. Teacher-structured approach is also called linear academic teaching (Fromberg, 2002). Educators who employ this approach "typically transmit to children an adult conception of

knowledge in uniform, narrow, and additive ways" (p. 4). This approach encompasses the use of memorization of facts, standardized testing, and discrete skills. Children are usually asked to memorize answers and to learn skills which cannot be currently applied. In this curriculum, teachers usually use didactic approach.

Teachers' skills which provide support to children within the classroom environment have found to have a positive effect on the preschooler's language growth. Howes, Burchinal, Pianta, Bryant, Early, Clifford, and Barbarin (2008) examined children's growth in academic activities specifically designed to prepare preschoolers for kindergarten. The researchers hypothesized that effective teaching and teacher-child interactions will predict advanced pre-academic skills in preschoolers. The sample of this study consisted of 3000 4-year-old pre-kindergarteners who were randomly selected from 701 different state-funded pre-Kindergarten classrooms. The teachers in these schools were mostly of White ethnic background and had on average nine years of teaching experience.

It was found that children showed more improvement in pre-academic domains such as language growth when they were exposed to high quality instruction such as: reading to children, exposure to rhyming, and other oral language activities. Language gains were also attributed to closer teacher-child relationships. Instructional and social activities can be appropriately stimulating for the purpose of increasing school-related achievement skills and social behavioral skills. It was determined that the quality of classroom experiences rather than structural program features predicted an increase in children's academic skills and social behaviors which ultimately prepared the preschoolers for kindergarten.

Since children whose first language is not English are considered to be at risk for low academic achievement, along with children who come from poverty households, this following study examined the effects of emergent literacy intervention on preschool children whose home language is Spanish. Farver, Lonigan, and Eppe (2009) conducted a study where the impact of transitional/bilingual mode of instruction and an English-only instruction program was tested on the development of Spanish-speaking children's literacy skills. More specifically, the researchers were to explore the effects of this Literacy Express Preschool Curriculum intervention on Spanish-speaking ELL preschool children's early literacy skills in Spanish and English and whether the impact differs based on the language of instruction. This Literacy Express Preschool Curriculum focuses on oral language skills, socio-emotional development, emergent literacy, science and math. In each of the areas, there are separate teacher-directed activities conducted in small groups. The main focus of the activities is in development of oral language, phonological awareness, and print knowledge. It was the researchers' goal to facilitate teacher-child interactions which would ultimately develop into conversations. Research conducted prior to this study had indicated that focusing on these types of activities will speed up the development of emergent literacy skills in preschool children. According to the authors this study was the first one conducted with Spanish-speaking ELL children.

The sample for this study consisted of 94 Spanish-speaking ELL children enrolled in 10 different Head Start preschool classrooms. Even though all of the children came from Spanish-speaking homes they were all born in the United States, thus, all were exposed to English language input from television or older siblings. The results indicated that both approaches in English only and in transitional Spanish-to-English instruction

showed significant effects in the improvement of preschool children's phonological awareness, oral language skills, and print knowledge. These researchers suggested that even current high quality preschools do not provide this kind of "educational experience" for children as this intervention program did based on their findings (p. 713). These results concur with what other researchers have found with previous interventions in children whose first language is English. Thus, these early emergent literacy interventions are empirically found to be helpful for all preschool children whether they are monolingual or bilingual. However, these emergent literacy programs require constant and high levels of teacher-child interactions. The teachers must first observe each child's individual strengths and weaknesses in order to provide appropriate scaffolding instructions. Constructive individual follow-up conversations are eminent in these types of emergent literacy models which seem to be extremely time-consuming on the teachers' end. Other research have found that teachers tend to provide scaffolding opportunities to those children who initiate the interactions more than those children who do not and therefore those children benefit from teacher-child interactions more than those who do not initiate interactions with the children (Chien, Howes, Pianta, Burchinal, Ritchie, Bryant, Clifford, Early, & Barbarin, 2010).

Many experts have specifically focused on the input that preschool teachers provide during teacher-child interactions. There has been a relationship found between particular characteristics of teacher's language input and preschool children language growth (Justice, Mashburn, Pence, & Wiggins, 2008; Connor, Morrison, & Slominski, 2006). The latter study is discussed under peer effects section in this chapter.

Justice, Mashburn, Pence, and Wiggins (2008) conducted a study to investigate what impact Language-Focused Curriculum (LFC) had on preschool children's language development. This curriculum follows social-interactionist principles, in which where enrichment of teacher-child verbal communications is the crucial element. The Language-Focused Curriculum was designed to help preschool children with weak language skills such as; children who learn English as a second language and children of poverty. The LFC provides a curriculum in which child-centered and teacher-centered activities rotate in order to meet a specified target. For daily lessons a comprehensive set of language targets is designed to focus on language form and content. In this area of form and content the goal was to teach a new variety of syntactic structures.

This was a large-scale study which consisted of 14 preschool teachers and 196 four-year-old preschool children enrolled in state-funded preschool programs located in a single state. All children came from low-income families and were predominantly of White ethnic background followed by low numbers of African American and Latino children. Almost all children's (97%) home language was English. Children were observed in fall and in spring and the results indicated that socioeconomic status and attendance played a significant role in children's language improvement. The impact of this language curriculum (LFC) was accelerated for those children whose attendance was regular; thus, were more exposed to language input. Teachers' input and teacher-child interactions were considered to be critical components in the children's language growth. For this language curriculum to be effectively implemented, preschool teachers would need more classroom support such as expert modeling to instill high quality language instructions.

Fuligni, Howes, Huang, Hong, and Lara-Cinisomo (2012) conducted a study examining preschool classroom activities settings and children's experiences of daily classroom routines. The researcher examined the preschool children under two different settings which included different classroom activities. The first setting called High Free-Choice pattern included free-choice, child-directed classroom activities where children would engage the majority of their time in these activities. The second setting called Structured-Balanced pattern incorporates a combination of child-directed free-choice activities and teacher-directed activities including both large and small group settings. The researchers had three goals. The first goal was to find out how preschool programs can be characterized on the basis of the patters of time spent in various activities. The second goal was to examine whether settings incorporating different patterns of activity differ in terms of process quality and structure. The third goal was to examine whether children involved in different activities will exhibit different outcomes.

The researchers included a representative sample in this study by sampling 53 public preschool classrooms, 47 private preschool classrooms, as well as 25 family child care programs. There were total of 206 preschool children included in this study who predominantly came from low-income households. Whether these children were monolingual or bilingual was not discussed by the researchers. The results indicated that the two different patterns of classroom activities were found to offer varied opportunities for children's learning and their development of language skills. It was suggested that these classroom routines projected the preschooler's opportunities to engage in a variety of academic subjects which also offered various types of teaching interactions with their teachers. The findings of this study indicated that there is a significant difference in the

children's experiences when in structured-balanced classrooms and when in High-Free-Choice routine profile classroom setting. These differences indicate that children encounter more teacher-child scaffolded interactions in the Structured-balanced classrooms as well as engage more in literacy, language, math, and art activities. On the other hand, when in the High-Free-Choice classrooms, children encountered opportunities for imaginary play and gross motor activity. In general, these findings provide evidence that structured-balanced preschool activities offer superior opportunities for engagement in teacher-child interactions and academic activities which ultimately promote language skills. It is possible that in classrooms exhibiting higher instructional quality, daily routines may interact with measures of classroom quality to affect children's experiences (p. 208).

Experts in early childhood instruction have maintained that teacher structured instruction will have a positive effect on children's language development (Justice, Chow, Capellini, Flanigan, & Colton, 2003; DeBaryshe & Gorecki, 2007). The following studies will discuss the effects of teacher instruction on children's early language development.

A study conducted by Justice, Chow, Capellini, Flanigan, and Colton (2003) specifically included preschool children who were experiencing multiple-risk factors including low socioeconomic level and poverty. These children are believed to be the most vulnerable to later literacy difficulties and therefore the researchers aimed to find out whether a new structured approach to intervention would be more efficient in influencing widespread literacy gains among this cohort. The researchers wanted to test different approaches to determine which approach to emergent literacy will be the most

effective. It was hypothesized that, when compared to less structured approach; this structured approach to intervention would lead to faster and more prevalent benefits in emergent literacy.

The sample for this study consisted of children from a single "at-risk" preschool center in Virginia. There were a total of eighteen children with the majority of boys attending eight different preschool classrooms in the center. These children were three to five years of age and predominantly of African American ethnic background. All children were native English speakers and English was the only language spoken at home. All children's parents demonstrated a low-income status. The majority of participants displayed major oral language development difficulties at the beginning of the research study. The main purpose of this study was to find out the efficiency of an experimental approach to emergent literacy intervention where preschool children partook in structured classroom activities specifically designed to foster their literacy skills in both phonological awareness and written language. Results indicated that children significantly gained in emergent literacy knowledge during the 12-week intervention program. When compared to the comparison program (less structured program), growth in literacy was found to be significantly greater. An examination of individual differences and intervention outcome showed oral language skills and literacy orientation to predict emergent literacy performance at the end of the program. The main contribution of the present finding stressed that level of oral proficiency has an influence on the outcome of this emergent literacy intervention. "Children's oral language proficiency played a significant role in explaining the variance in emergent literacy skills at the end of the intervention period" (p. 329).

The authors suggested that a link exists between low proficiency of L1 during the preschool years and low reading outcomes in the elementary years. Low oral language proficiency in the preschool years will also cause deficiencies in other literacy activities. Children's interest and engagement in early literacy activities will contribute to successful literacy outcomes in early preschool years. Overall, this research study established that this experimental emergent literacy intervention program is effective and efficient for preschoolers who are experiencing multiple risk factors.

DeBaryshe and Gorecki (2007) evaluated a pilot version of Learning Connections (LC) which is a new and improved literacy and mathematics preschool curriculum for 3 to 5 year old children. The researchers' main focus was on the improvement of language and literacy outcomes. The researchers hypothesized that the preschool children who were part of the LC curriculum would show better outcome on the measures of literacy development than those preschool children who were part of a current Head Start curriculum. The literacy domains that were measured included: oral language, phonemic awareness, alphabet knowledge and print conventions, and emergent writing. The sample consisted of 126 Head Start preschool children who were between the ages of three and five years old. The sample also included the children's parents and preschool teachers. The children were predominantly of Asian and Native Hawaiian ethnic background, followed by low numbers of White, Latino, and African American backgrounds. Less than ten present of the children were learning English as a second language. The teachers participated in the implementation of the new LC curriculum and the parents' participation consisted of completing additional activities with their children at home.

The results indicated that children in the LC literacy curriculum exhibited the largest improvement in phonemic awareness and emergent writing skills. Children also exhibited improvement in emergent reading but to a lesser degree. The researchers believed that usually preschool teachers are less familiar with these two areas of curriculum (phonemic awareness and emergent writing skills) and this is the reason the LC group of children has shown such great improvements. Teachers who were a part of the current Head Start curriculum did not provide any activities that for reinforcing phonemic awareness except the use of finger-plays, rhyming books, and songs. There were no differences found between the two groups of children on expressive vocabulary measure. The researchers believe that no difference was found because the teachers have already implemented activities which strengthen the children's vocabulary. These activities include read-aloud sessions which were similar to that of LC curriculum.

Another type of preschool curriculum, universal preschool, has received a substantial amount of attention in recent years. Gormley, Gayer, Philips, and Dawson (2005) examined the effects of universal pre-K preschool in Oklahoma on children from different ethnic and racial backgrounds. The participants consisted of 1, 567 pre-K and 1, 461 kindergarten children who were of White, Black, Latino, Native American, and Asian ethnicities. It appears that the difference between the Universal preschool program and a regular preschool program is in teacher education and some additional services that are provided by the preschool which include: speech therapy, tutoring, health screening, meals, and child parent involvement program (Cardiff & Stringham, 2006). The largest aspect of this program is attributed to the teachers' education as all teachers ought to be fully credentiated. The proponents stress that teacher education has the most crucial

impact on preschool children's education followed by parent involvement. When it comes to classroom curriculum, since this is a government-funded preschool program, teachers teach from the given standard preschool curriculum (Cardiff & Stringham, 2006) which is currently leaning towards academic oriented activities as mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act. The results indicated that all of the measures, the Letter-Word Identification score, the spelling score, and the Applied Problems score have shown significant improvements in all children and thus this preschool curriculum program appears to be successful in academically preparing children for kindergarten. What the authors have not indicated is how many of these children were English language learners (ELL). A strong emphasis was placed on the children's ethnic backgrounds; however, a diverse ethnic background does not automatically imply that the children have a different home language (Census Bureau, 2010). This academic based curriculum has shown to contribute to children prereading, prewriting, and prenumeracy skills; however oral language was not measured in this study.

Mixed Approach

Reviewing the studies on teacher-directed and child-centered approaches leaves us with conclusions about what each approach has to offer. Studies indicated that benefits of child-centered approach (Stipek et al., 1995; Burts et al., 1990; Burts et al; 1992; Singer et al., 2003) outweigh the benefits of the highly structured teacher-directed approach (Howes et al., 2008; Farver et al., 2009; Fulgini et al., 2012; Justice et al., 2003), even though the No Child Left Behind policy mandates the implementation of the teacher-directed approach. Highly academic instruction which is usually focused on right answers was found to be correlated with children's lower expectations for success, more dependency on adults, less pride in scholastic achievement, more anxiety, and

discouragement of challenging tasks (Burts et al., 1990, Burts et al., 1992, Stipek et al., 1995). Stipek et al. (1995) has also found that preschool children enrolled in didactic programs had more negative outcomes in motivation. Although this study found larger gains on reading achievement tests, the math test scores were not higher when compared with children in child-centered programs.

It has been suggested that teachers in teacher-structured approach programs should not be resistant to child-centered activities and vice versa (Stipek et al., 2006) as the search for the appropriate preschool approach is ongoing. Even though experts believed that didactic approach is not a suitable approach for preschool children, they also opened their minds to testing a mixed approach in which child-centered and teacher-structured activities are mixed into one curriculum.

A mixed type of preschool classroom curriculum was incorporated in a study right along with a child-centered (traditional Nursery School preschool curriculum) and didactic (Direct Instruction preschool curriculum) approaches (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997). This mixed approach, The High/Scope Preschool Curriculum, is believed to have a combined child- and teacher- centered methods to show the advantages of a combined pedagogical approach (Kagan & Lowenstein, 2004). The High/Scope curriculum model was first developed by Weikart and his colleagues in 1979 and later revised in 1995. This curriculum is still leaning more toward the child-based model rather than teacher-directed model even though it is considered to be mixed. This "open-framework approach" is "based on Piaget's constructivist theory of child development, adults engaged children as active learners and arranged their classrooms in discrete, well-equipped interest areas" (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997, p. 120). Based on this model children themselves choose,

plan, and conduct their own activities. Teachers in this curriculum are only the facilitators of children's social, intellectual and physical experiences.

The Direct Instruction didactic approach, on the other hand, offers academic oriented learning which focuses particularly on the material which is "assessed by intelligence and achievement tests" (Schweinhart & Weikart, 1997, p. 119). This preschool curriculum encompasses specifically planned question-and-answer instructions in mathematics, reading, and language. The only materials available for children are workbooks because they are "considered the only materials that stimulated the requisite learning" (p. 119). On the other side of the spectrum is the child-centered Nursery School curriculum model which had been the traditional model for early childhood education where children have the freedom to choose the activity to engage in and can freely move from one activity to the next. Teachers are giving more behavioral instructions, such as learning good manners rather than academic instructions.

Schweinhart and Weikart (1997) incorporated these three distinct models in their study to find out which one had the most efficient long terms effects on learning and behavior. The sample of the study consisted of 68 three-to-four year old children who were from low socioeconomic backgrounds. All preschool children were randomly assigned into the three curriculum groups and were examined until young adulthood. The results indicated that both High/Scope and Nursery School children exhibited more benefits over the Direct Instruction children in fewer instances in emotional impairment and disturbance when in school. It appears children who received the Direct Instruction curriculum did not get enough behavioral and social guidance. Children in High/Scope curriculum had also planned for longer schooling in life when compared with the children

in Direct Instruction curriculum. When it comes to behavioral issues children also benefited more from the High/Scope program in less self-reported misconduct in schooling by the age of 15 and fewer arrests. Other advantages of child-directed curriculum approaches were exhibited by children who were part of the Nursery School program with fewer suspensions from work in young adulthood and fewer arrests when compared with the Direct Instruction group of children.

Marcon (2002) conducted a longitudinal study to explore whether a preschool model would have an effect on later scholastic gains. Children attended three types of preschool curriculum in this study: child-centered, academically directed, and a combination of both. The author's concern was not what influence these different approaches had on preschool children at the end of a school year but the influence these approaches would have in the long term. Acquiring knowledge is like building blocks and long term effects are important to consider in education. Marcon predicted that a teacher-structured, didactic approach would provide only short term academic gains as suggested by Elkind (1986) and Zigler (1987), whereas, a child-centered approach would offer more long term benefits. The sample of this study consisted of 160 children who began their participation when they were four years of age. This was a longitudinal study where the children's scholastic achievement was analyzed until they entered fourth grade in elementary school. Children were studied every year unless they were retained. The researcher studied the children's report cards for grades, special education placements, and retention rates. There was almost an equal number of male and female participants and around two thirds of the participants were of low socioeconomic background. The majority of the children were of African American ethnic background.

The results indicated differences in gender with girls outdoing boys academically throughout the study regardless of preschool approach. The smallest gap between boys and girls was found when in transition for those children who had attended the child-directed and combination curricula. Children who were part of the academic preschool approach were retained less in elementary school when compared with the child-directed and combination approaches. When it comes to special education, there were no significant differences found in academic performance of the children who participated in the different preschool curricula. Major finding of this study indicated that by the end of fourth grade children who attended the child-directed preschools have academically outperformed children who had attended the academically oriented preschools. Children who have attended child-directed preschool programs had significantly higher grades than children who had attended the academic preschool programs. Overall GPA was computed for arithmetic, reading, language, spelling, handwriting, social studies, science, art, music, health/PE, and citizenship. All grades had declined for children from academically directed preschools except one subject which was handwriting. "Children's later school success appears to have been enhanced by more active, child-initiated early learning experiences" (p.1). The researchers believe that excessive academic preschool curriculum which offers more formal learning was too early for most of the children who participated in this study. Their academic progress slowed down by overly formal academic experiences in preschool "which might have offset by long-term stifling of children's motivation" (Elkind; Zigler as cited in Marcon, 2002, p. 20). Child-directed approach fosters independence and self-initiative in children which is very important for later scholastic success. As shown by the results of this study, boys who were involved in

self-initiated learning in child-centered preschool program earlier in their lives where more prepared to tackle academic demands later on in elementary school. Thus, overly teacher-directed curriculum dictates children how to do things, what to do and when to do things which restricts children's development of being initiative. According to Kamii (as cited in Marcon, 2002, p. 20) "such an approach produces passive students who wait to be told what to think next." The author concluded that critical thinking skills are not being fostered in didactic teacher-directed approaches.

Multiple approaches have been proposed which incorporate both teacher-structured and child-centered elements. However, the literature provides evidence that the challenge is not which approach is better to use in general, the challenge is "knowing which strategy to use for which children, for how long, and under what conditions" (Kagan & Lowenstein, 2004, p. 72). When it comes to bilingual speaking children whose English is a second language, the more appropriate approach is the child-centered play based approach. Children who are not exposed to English language at home are more predisposed to learn the oral communication skills and pragmatics of the English language from their peers while interacting in play. That would be the pedagogical preference.

<div align="center">**Classroom Engagement**</div>

Recently, researchers' interest of discussion has been to learn about preschool children's engagement in classrooms activities and how their engagement affects development and learning. A positive and active engagement with peers, teachers, and tasks is believed to increases children's opportunities to develop and learn in the preschool classroom (Booren et al. in press; Vitiello, Booren, Downer, & Williford,

2012). The more children are engaged in certain activities the more they will learn during that activity. Similarly, Hamre and Pianta (2001) consider children's engagement with peers and tasks as a large part of their learning process which drives learning in the preschool classroom.

Engagement in Classroom Activity Settings

Researchers have been focusing on examining to what degree children engage during different types of preschool classroom activities. The types of classroom activities that have been most frequently researched are: free choice and teacher structured, along with some analyses of transitions time (time spent in between activities). Some experts have determined how much time children spend in various activities throughout the day. According to Chien, Howes, Pianta, Burchinal, Ritchie, Bryant, Clifford, Early, and Barbarin (2010), children spent the largest amount of time in free-choice (which occupied around 45 minutes of a half a day) and whole-group activities and least amount of time in individual time. However, Pianta, Howes, Burchinal, Bryant, Clifford, Early, and Barbarin (2005) have concluded that preschool children spend most of their time in teacher-structured, large group preschool classroom activities.

The differences in children's engagement during preschool activities will be discussed in the following section. Vitiello et al. (2012) conducted a study which examined "the sources and variations" (p. 212) of preschool children's engagement with their peers, teachers and tasks. Engagement was divided into positive (which constitute affectionate and confident) and negative (which constitute dysregulated, conflictual, and tense) interactions with their peers, teachers, or tasks. Researchers have also focused on how this variability is related to activities in preschool classroom and to child's gender and age. Preschool classroom activities were divided into outdoor time, teacher structured

time, and transitions (in between activities) time. The sample of the study consisted of 283 preschool children with varied socioeconomic backgrounds. There was an equal distribution of gender in this sample; however, there was an unequal distribution of ethnicity and linguistic background. The majority of the preschool children were Latino and a smaller amount of children were Caucasian. Only a third of the children were not native-English speakers.

Results indicated that children were more positively engaged with their peers and tasks when they were given more independence. Engagement was found to be higher when children were involved peers and task in outdoor and free choice activities. It is not unusual that children would engage more with their peers during free choice time than during teacher-structured time as free choice time provides children more opportunities to socially interact. However, it is important to mention that children were more engaged in their tasks during outdoor and free choice time activities than they were during teacher-structured activities, even though the specific tasks is usually provided by a teacher. According to Booren et al. in press (as cited in Vitiello et al., 2012), motivation is a crucial factor to consider when analyzing preschool children's activity settings' engagement. There is a possibility that child-directed activities allow children to engage with tasks that the children find the most motivating. Overall, "the current findings suggest, at a minimum, that active, enthusiastic engagement is more likely to occur in child-centered settings" (p. 217). It is important to note that children in this study spent more time in teacher-structured activities than in child-centered and activities.

The second equally important finding in this study was that children's engagement with their teachers was much higher during teacher-directed activities than

during free-choice outdoor activities. These results imply that "individual children have relatively low levels of positive engagement with teachers during activities that offer more child choice" (p. 217). Transitions in between activities are believed to be the slightly more challenging periods of the preschool children's day when they do not engage with teachers or tasks. Some examples of transitions include: clean-up time, washing hand, and preparing to go outside. Preschool teachers often try to engage children into meaningful activities while they wait for the next scheduled activity. In this study children exhibited higher levels of engagement with peers and lower task engagement during meal time. Even though bilingualism wasn't one of the child's factors the authors focused on, the non-native English speakers exhibited much lower engagement scores with classroom task than children who were native English speakers. The researchers suggest that language-minority children appear to confront a major obstacle to full engagement when it comes to preschool classroom activities.

Chien, Howes, Pianta, Burchinal, Ritchie, Bryant, Clifford, Early, and Barbarin (2010) conducted a study where they used classroom engagement profiles to predict children's gains in the areas of literacy, language, and math. Preschool children's engagement was also examined based on their sociodemographic profiles. The researchers used four different profiles of classroom engagement: free play, group instruction, individual instruction and scaffolded learning. The sample of this study included 2, 751 preschool children enrolled in public prekindergarten programs. The majority of the children were from low socioeconomic background and from a large variety of ethnic backgrounds. The average for teacher-child ratio was one to nine children. The results indicated that when children were involved in free play activities

they exhibited smaller gains in language/literacy and mathematics when compared with children in other profiles. Children involved in individual instruction exhibited the greatest gains when compared with other children on letter recognition and mathematics. When comparing poor and nonpoor children, poor children outperformed nonpoor children in individual instruction activities and under other conditions nonpoor children outperformed poor children. When it comes to activity settings, children spent the largest amount of time in free-choice (which occupied around 45 minutes of a half a day) and whole-group activities and least amount of time in individual time. In terms of teacher-child interactions, children spent the largest amount of time in didactic interactions and much less time in scaffolding.

More specifically, the results indicated that children who were engaged in free play activities profited from mathematics, literacy, and language activities the least. More precisely, children in free play profile scored less in teacher report of literacy and language skills, counting numbers, and WJ letter-word identification. Additionally, free play profile children exhibited less gains in writing their names than the group and individual instruction profiles as well as less gains in counting numbers than group instruction profile and the scaffolded learning profile. Lastly, the free play profile indicated lower scores on WJ applied problems than the individual instruction profile. Instructional and scaffolding models, in general, were more advantageous models for early childhood education than free choice models. Thus, these results provide evidence that children involved in free play activities exhibit the least amounts of gains in their pre-academic outcomes. Nevertheless, this study sample was at higher demographic risk than the national average where more than half of the children's families lived under the

poverty line. Authors also reminded that some research has already shown that instructional support was mainly beneficial for at-risk children and not as beneficial for not at risk children.

Some of the limitations of this study are important to mention. The first one being that higher order skills that could be developed by participating in free-choice activities (such as comprehension, problem solving, and making plans) were not fully assessed by the researchers. Therefore, "the gains made by children in the free play profile may not have been captured" (p. 1547). The second one being that peer interactions were as well not focused on in this measure. Even though, free play profile was found to make the smallest gains overall across mathematics and literacy-language activities, more thorough examination of the results revealed that the individual score for oral language (OWLS) was the highest across all profiles. This result might not have been important to point out by the researchers; however, it is very relevant for the current study since oral language will be considered when measuring linguistic engagement between free-choice and teacher-structured activities.

Classroom Engagement with Teachers

A study conducted by Shin, Mina Kim, Krzysik, Bost, McBride, Santos, Peceguina, and Coppola (2011) was developed to assess the definition of social competence (SC) for preschool children as well as appropriate measurements of SC. Based on peer and teacher ratings, the researchers also examined the extent to "which peer social competence predicted changes in positive adjustments from first year to second year of preschool" (p. 73). Social competence is believed to have an influence on learning and academic outcome. The sample for this study included children from two

different studies totaling in 961 participants. There was an equal distribution of gender and all children were attending Head Start preschool program of low socioeconomic backgrounds. Almost all of the children were of African-American ethnic background. Research observations were conducted in day-care centers where children were observed within different settings which included: (free play, playground, group activities, meals, and transitions time). The organization of activities across classrooms was similar in reading, science, and dramatic play. Findings suggested that social competence scores significantly increased from first year of preschool attendance to second year indicating children having better social skills during their second year of preschool when compared with their first year of preschool. Further results indicated that older children's engagement was higher and more positive during teacher-structured activities. The reason is because children's verbal skills are believed to be growing and with their increasing verbal abilities is also growing their ability to engage with information exhibited by their preschool teacher. Children were found to have a lower engagement with teachers during the free choice activities which was also attributed to the older children's increasing social competence. Increases in social competence enabled the preschool children to engage more appropriately and fully with their peers. These findings indicated that older preschoolers were able to engage more fully with teachers and peers because of their increase in social competence which was in turn affected by the number of years attending preschool. Consecutive preschool years contribute towards growing social competence which in turn allows children to engage more positively and grow develop not only "in social as well as academic domains" (Shin et al., 2011, p. 100).

Powell, Burchinal, File, and Kontos (2008) conducted a study where the main purpose was to examine specific group settings and teacher behaviors that contributed towards preschool children active engagement in preschool classrooms. Another, so called eco behavioral analysis, which identified classroom factors related to children's engagement in learning activities. Children's behaviors were assessed through classroom observations. The sample of this study consisted of 138 preschool children from 12 different preschools. Over half of the children were of African American ethnic background followed by a small number of Latino, Asian, and Caucasian children. The majority of children came from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Only three percent of the students were non-native English language learners. Other participants of the study included 12 preschool teachers. All of the teachers had a bachelor's degree and only one was male and the rest were female. In terms of ethnic background, only one teacher was African American and the remaining were Caucasian.

The results indicated that children were more actively engaged with their peers in peers groups when compared whole group settings during academic activities. Furthermore, children were observed to be more actively engaged in peer group settings than in child-teacher settings or in whole, large, or small groups. When observing children under play activities, children were found to be more actively engaged in individual play rather than in a child-teacher setting or in a whole group setting. The teachers did not have an effect on children's active engagement during play activities. However, during academic activities teachers' behaviors had two opposing effects on children's active engagement. Teacher behaviors such as acknowledgement, praise, and monitoring, were found to have an effect on active engagement, whereas, teachers'

providing directions was found to have the least effect on children's active engagement. When incorporating children's characteristics such as age and gender, it was found that older children and boys were least likely to be actively engaged during play activities than younger children and girls. The authors concluded that whole-group settings provide rather passive integration models in learning activities. A small number of preschool children participating in whole group settings were found to be "listening and/or watching (attentive) than talking and/or acting (actively engaged)" (p. 119). Preschool children demonstrated more active engagement in all other settings besides the whole group setting. Although, none of the settings exceeded the peer group setting as a configuration for children to be the most likely engaged during academic activities. Interestingly enough, when teachers stayed away from children's activities children appeared to be more actively engaged. It was also found that the teacher's most common input was providing instructions and directions in any settings where teachers were involved.

Similar findings were found in study conducted by Pianta, Howes, Burchinal, Bryant, Clifford, Early, and Barbarin (2005), where teacher-child interactions were determined to be happening most frequently during whole-group activities which are considered to be teacher-structured. These findings indicate that more active teacher-child engagement is related to teacher-structured activities. A similar to above mentioned sample in terms of socioeconomic background was used in this study. Four-year-old preschool children came from 238 different preschool classrooms. Further findings indicated that whole group settings were occurring most frequently and that children

spent a majority of their time in academic activities rather than in play time activities. Most of teacher- child interactions entailed demonstrations and verbal instructions.

Positive Classroom Engagement with Tasks

Children's engagement in classroom tasks or activities is believed to be a crucial factor in predicting children's early outcomes (Vitiello et al., 2012). The next two studies exemplify that being positively engaged in classroom activities, which is usually shown by dynamic engagement, persistence, motivation, and independence, will have an effect on children's academic achievement.

Fantuzzo, Perry, and McDermott (2004) examined how preschool classroom behaviors influenced learning. The preschool learning behavior constructs (PLBS) were used in this study which included Attention/Persistence and Attitude Toward Learning scales and Competence/Motivation scale. The participants of this study were 642 preschool children enrolled in Head Start programs in Philadelphia. The majority of the children were African American and they all came from low socioeconomic backgrounds. How many of these children were bilingual was not specified in this study. The results indicated that in order to pay attention and focus during tasks, children must be able to control and change their emotions. There was also a strong association found between positive peer play and remaining focused and engaged in learning tasks. On the contrary, it was also found that the more disruptive peer play relations was highly correlated to the children's inability to sustain themselves engaged in classroom activities. All of these learning behavior dimensions were positively associated with growing vocabulary skills. These results imply that learning behaviors and cognitive skills develop concurrently in preschool. In addition, children who scored high on the

Competence/Motivation measure were also found to be more independent learners who would seek out classroom learning opportunities for engagement. Children who scored low on this Competence/Motivation measure appeared to be more disconnected from their classmates during free play time. Competence/Motivation measure was correlated with students' independence, being initiative, and being able to connect with peers and eventually to learning.

The findings of Fantuzzo et al. (2004) parallel with the findings of the next study conducted by McClelland, Morrison, and Holmes (2000). McClelland et al. examined the predispositions of what they called work-related skills over a three year period on academic achievement. Children's poor work-related skills were examined and the effects on academic achievement was determined. The researchers utilized a previously developed behavior rating scale (Cooper & Farran, 1988, 1991) that separates two types of learning related social skills into interpersonal skills and work-related skills. The first type, interpersonal skills, incorporates behaviors like positive interactions with peers, playing cooperatively, and sharing and respecting playmates. While, the second type, work-related skills, include behaviors such as staying on task, listening and following directions, taking turns, and organizing work materials. Overall, work-related skills represent the areas of self-regulation, independence, responsibility, and cooperation. These two types of behaviors were found to be comparatively independent of each other.

The importance of work-related behaviors and their effect on academic outcome was found to be linked. Results indicated that at the beginning of the study and at the end of the study, work-related skills positively affected mathematics, reading, vocabulary, and alphabet skills, outside the influence of sociocultural variables, ethnicity, parental

educational level, child's IQ, and school entrance age. However, work-related skills did not determine child's receptive vocabulary or general information skills at the end of the study. The researchers attributed this to the fact that vocabulary and general informational skills are not the specific focus in early childhood classrooms because instructional time is usually spent on math and reading skills. These work-related skills predetermined all academic outcomes not only at the beginning of school entry but also they predetermined achievements made in reading and math skills within three year period. Children who exhibited poor work-related skills performed worse on all. Further analysis found that work-related skills facilitated the association between a child's language problems and academic outcomes.

Engagement & Activity Settings

The following study examined children's variability in engagement of classroom activities. Kontos and Keyes (1999) conducted a study to determine the participation in what types of preschool classroom activities will lead to preschool children's engagement in more complex interactions. Children's complex engagement in classroom activities might yield in more competent behavior and thus learning. The words interaction and engagement are used interchangeably. The researchers utilized ecobehavioral analysis in this study which is according to Greenwood and Carta (as cited in Kontos & Keyes, 1999) "an approach to understanding environments that involves describing the ecology (contextual features as well as the persons within it) and examines the interactions that occur between the ecology and children's behaviors" (p. 36). Jointly, teacher interactions, activities, and social structure represent a crucial element of the classroom ecology. The sample for this study consisted of 60 children who were attending three different child care programs. There was an even distribution of gender and only six of these children

were non-native English speakers. All children were from middle to upper socioeconomic backgrounds. These programs were affiliated with a large university and therefore teacher-child ration was lower (1:4) when compared to other child care programs. The participating classrooms emphasized on free-play and small group activities.

The results revealed possibilities other than children's characteristics that affected children's engagement in complex interactions with peers and objects. It was found that complex interactions with peers and objects were not predicted by complex teacher interactions. The presence of teachers did not predict complex peer interactions; rather, teacher interactions based on activity weakened complex interactions with objects. Teacher interactions exhibited no effects on children's complex engagement with peers and objects. These results do not imply that teacher's interactions in preschool classroom are unimportant, however, when comparing peer versus adult influences on complex peer engagement more complex interaction was more likely to occur when the teachers were not around the interaction. This ecobehavioral study provides some basis for children's behaviors based on relative structures of the classroom. "This type of data provides a practical approach to understanding how early childhood classroom environments promote learning and development" (p. 47). These results go against stressing that teacher interactions are the key instrument for preschool children's learning. The social environment was found to be a crucial part of preschool classroom's learning atmosphere and not predominantly for social development. The results of this study have also provided evidence that the types of activities preschool children engage in the classroom influence the stimulation of complex interactions with objects. Dramatic play has proven to be a very beneficial classroom activity. Further results for complex interaction with

objects have also revealed that under some circumstances teacher interactions and their presence was not only positively but also negatively related to children's behavior. Negative relationships occurred when teacher's involvement in play would help less capable children who could benefit from scaffolding. This negative relationship was found for "end products" activities such as art projects. There is an apparent difference in children's complex engagement in the classroom based on teacher interactions and teachers' presence. Thus, where teachers position "themselves in a classroom during free play may be as important as what they do or say in that location" (p. 48). Children's complex interactions are believed to transform into more competent behavior. This study provides clear evidence in that interacting and playing with peers can yield complex interactions, thus, learning. Therefore, bilingual preschool children can also benefit from peer interactions because they can evolve into more complex conversations. And it is through conversations that bilingual children learn the pragmatics of language.

Kontos, Burchinal, Howes, Wisseh, and Galinsky (2002) conducted a similar study to previously discussed Kontos and Keyes (1999) where the purpose was to determine which preschool children's characteristics, language, gender, age, and classroom characteristics such as activities and teacher involvement are associated with complex engagement with peers and objects in preschool classrooms. More specifically, the prime focus of this study was to recognize particular aspects of classroom settings that appear to stimulate preschool children's development. The sample of this study included 225 four-year-old children attending 46 different child care centers in Hawaii. The majority of the children were of bi-racial ethnicity followed by lower numbers of Caucasian and Asian/Pacific Islander children. A large number (92%) of the children

were English native speakers. The results indicated that teacher involvement and activity settings were found to be predictors of children's involvement in complex interactions with objects and peers. Child's home language was found to be a predictor of complex interactions with objects only and not with peers. Only native English speaking children were found to engage in complex interactions with objects in creative activities, which indicated inconsistencies in the developmental level of native and non-native English speaking preschool children. Since creative activities were found to be the most cognitive challenging activities, this finding is an indication that non-native English speakers are less cognitively developed when compared with native English speakers. There were also some differences found between genders. Girls, native English speakers, were found to be more likely involved in complex interactions with peers during creative activities. As in previous study (Kontos & Keyes, 1999), teacher involvement was also found to be a predictor of children's complex interactions. Teachers not being involved predicted more complex engagement during creative activities. Social competence rather than teacher involvement predicted children's complex interactions.

For activity settings, the results indicated that participation in cognitive directed activities, such as creative activities, placed more demand on the children. The participation in these cognitive directed activities resulted in more complex engagement when compared with manipulative, gross motor, or language arts activities. This set of findings was consistent with Kontos and Keyes (1999) study. Researchers were expecting language arts to serve more as a creative activity than as a manipulative or motor activity, however, the results have shown otherwise. For this study, language arts involved a great deal of listening to tapes, music, books as well as dancing and singing which showed to

be less cognitively demanding when compared with other literacy activities. What the language arts activity did not include was children being involved in expressive language. Listening to books and tapes seems to be a passive way of learning and especially if it is not followed by discussion of what have been listened to, which would give children more of a challenge to practice verbal language skills. Language arts activity could be very beneficial for bilingual children, who could learn a great deal from poems, songs, and rhymes in English language. Besides learning the English vocabulary, the bilingual learner could also acquire some cultural norms and believes from this activity.

To conclude this section, it is important to mention that types of activities offered to preschool children will influence their engagement with tasks, teachers, and peers. A small amount of the reviewed studies incorporated measuring of the engagement level of bilingual children whose English is a second language. There is an apparent gap in research when it comes children's engagement in classroom activities and its promotion of English language development. The following section of this literature review will cover first the preschool teachers' and second the parents' of preschool children perceptions toward the utilization of child-centered or teacher-structured approaches in the preschool classrooms.

Teacher Perceptions

Preschool teachers' beliefs or perceptions about the appropriate curriculum approach will be discussed in this section. Most of mainstream preschools in the United States are monolingual (as for example Head Start preschools) even though they provide child-care services to many low-income bilingual children who are acquiring English as a second language. Therefore, the focus of this section is to examine the beliefs and

perceptions of preschool teachers who work in mainstream preschools centers and not specifically in bilingual preschools. The word *beliefs* is used interchangeably with the word *perceptions* in many studies discussed in this section. According to Pajares (1992), when compared with the actual knowledge, beliefs are opinions that have been affected by early life experiences. Teacher beliefs, or perceptions, are of importance to researchers because empirical evidence shows that beliefs truly influence how teachers approach their teaching practice in the classroom. Teachers appear to act on their beliefs and plan their daily classroom activities based on what they believe is appropriate for their young students (Pajares, 1992). To guide preschool teachers' beliefs and practices, the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) has developed a framework for age appropriate classroom activities for preschool children. This framework is called Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP), which is a list of guidelines available for preschool teachers to help them make decisions about the appropriate approach to teach young children. The Developmentally Appropriate Practice of teaching offers a list of twelve practices which ranges from the overall development of a child to individual needs of all children in a group. What is important to mention is that children's play is highly regarded in the DAP guidelines and is considered as an important prospect for learning. Of the twelve recommended practices, number ten states "Play is an important vehicle for developing self-regulation and promoting language, cognition, and social competence" (NAEYC, 2012). This is the only mention about language development that mainstream preschool teachers have available from the list of twelve guidelines. What is also important to mention is that the Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) guidelines are equivalent to non-academic curriculum approach and the academic

curriculum approach in preschool classrooms is considered Developmentally

Inappropriate Practice (DIP; NAEYC, 2012). Developmentally inappropriate preschool

classroom practices are contrasting to developmentally appropriate practices. According

to McMullen et al. (2006), these inappropriate practices do not allow children to freely

explore the world around them and take the initiative to choose an activity. Contrasting

practices focus on whole group, didactic, teacher-structured practices in the preschool

classrooms which includes the learning of word recognition, numbers, and the alphabet.

Heisner and Lederberg (2011) conducted a study to find out whether training in

Child Development Associate (CDA) based on DAP would affect the beliefs and

practices of preschool teachers who did not hold a Bachelor's degree in early childhood

education. The sample of this study consisted of 76 preschool teachers who were

currently working as childcare providers either for Head Start or other community based

childcare centers and were enrolled in CDA training. There was also a comparison group

which included 50 preschool teachers again working for either Head Start or other

community based childcare center and was not enrolled in CDA training. Both group of

preschool teachers were given the early childhood survey of beliefs and practices

(ECSBP) which focuses the teachers' perceptions of early childhood beliefs and self-

reported practices on a scale which ranged from teacher-directed approach to teaching

(which was corresponding to contrasting beliefs and practices) to child-centered approach

(which is corresponding to developmentally appropriate practices). The results indicated

that CDA training did impact the preschool teachers' beliefs and self-reported practices.

The CDA training has increased the teacher's beliefs and self-reported practices towards

the appropriateness of preschool practices by decreasing their contrasting beliefs and self-

reported practices. The authors believe this finding is important because the appropriate beliefs will eventually affect the teachers' classroom practices. This study provided evidence that CDA credential training was very instrumental in educating teachers about what practices are more developmentally appropriate for this young age group.

Vartuli (1999) has also conducted research to explore teacher beliefs and classroom practices when it comes to appropriate classroom activities. Teachers were examined on a continuum of a grade level starting from Head Start teachers all the way through third grade. The sample of the study consisted of 137 educators of whom 18 were Head Start preschool teachers. Most of the teachers in this sample had master's degrees and their experience in teaching ranged from one to 32 years. Results indicated that overall teachers' beliefs were somewhat associated with teachers' classroom practices. However, teachers' beliefs were significantly more appropriate than teachers' practices at all grade levels. There was also an indirect relationship found between teachers' beliefs and practices and their grade level. Head Start preschool and kindergarten teachers appeared to have more developmentally appropriate beliefs and practices than the higher grade teachers. Teachers who had a certification in early childhood education and don't have as much teaching experience were more prone to hold developmentally appropriate beliefs. The instruments used in this study were following NAEYC guidelines for appropriate classroom practice. Head Start and kindergarten teachers have shown more similarities in their beliefs and practices; however, when compared with first, second, and third grade teachers, there was not congruence found between teachers' beliefs and practices. First, second, and third grade teachers mainly focus on the pressures of district mandates whose main focus is on test scores. The authors suggest that teaching becomes

more effective if there is congruence between teachers' beliefs and their practices. In addition, this variety of teachers' classroom practices might take a tall on the students who when moving from grade level to grade level have to adjust to either child-centered or teacher-structured classroom. The authors also do not suggest that the same type of interactions, instructions, and classroom activities should be implemented in all grade levels.

In the next study a scaffolding instructional technique was investigated in terms of alignment with developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) or developmentally inappropriate practices (DIP) in early childhood education. Lee, Baik, and Charlesworth (2006) conducted a study to examine the effect of Korean teachers' DAP and DIP beliefs had on their implementation and use of scaffolding techniques in their classrooms. The sample consisted of 242 Korean kindergarten teachers most of whom had bachelor's degrees. Scaffolding was incorporated in this study in the context of Vygotsky's learning within the zone of proximal development (ZPD). It is assumed that this theory will help the preschool teacher to establish the suitable level of teacher-provided direction in accordance with developmentally appropriate practice. The researchers compared the scaffolding skills of DAP teachers and DIP teachers beliefs before a in-service training intervention and after training intervention. The results indicated that before the in-training intervention there were no significant differences between the DAP and DIP teachers' beliefs on scaffolding. However, after the in-service training the DAP teachers made significantly larger improvements on scaffolding when compared with DIP teachers. This study provides evidence that the DAP educational framework and teachers with DAP beliefs appeared to be able to adapt a new instructional strategy-scaffolding

because it aligned with their already existing belief system. However, the scaffolding approach did not seem to align with the belief system of DIP teachers. Scaffolding is a very individualized approach to teaching. Every child is at different level of language development in the preschool level and the scaffolding technique will be very instrumental in the child's progression in all areas of language development. This study provided evidence that scaffolding technique is more appropriate to use in non-academic classroom activities (developmentally appropriate practices) than in academic classroom activities (developmentally inappropriate practices).

In another research, it was found that self-reported teacher beliefs are aligned with the DAP beliefs. Abbott-Shim, Lambert, and McCarty (2000) conducted a study to examine teachers' and aids' beliefs about the preschool classroom structural characteristics which are associated with Head Start classroom quality. The researchers utilized the following instruments: Teacher Beliefs Scale, Instructional Activities Scale, and Family Involvement Survey. The sample was drawn from 175 Head Start classrooms. When it comes to educational level, around 70% of the teachers and aids had some kind of technical school or some college education and the remaining 30% had a High School Diploma or GED. The results indicated that educational level of Head Start teachers affected Inappropriate Practice Beliefs which in turn translated into Inappropriate Instructional Activities, which at the end affected Classroom Quality. It was found that the teachers with low educational achievement implemented a relatively practical curriculum model which includes classroom activities that are not based on any kind of theory or belief system. Their belief system is based on Head Start teacher training which usually does not focus on theories or beliefs but consists of techniques and activities

employed in preschool classrooms. This research provides evidence that teacher education is the most effective way to enhance classroom quality through the implementation of appropriate instructional activities.

Teacher beliefs and perceptions on academic or non-academic preschool practices differ not only by educational level but also they differ across cultures. Mainstream preschool centers such as Head Start serve a large numbers of at-risk children (Schulman & Barnett, 2005) who usually come from low-socioeconomic backgrounds and are also non-native English speakers. It is not only the children who come from a large diversity of ethnic backgrounds, but also the preschool teachers' ethnic backgrounds are very diverse. The next section will include a discussion about the differences in beliefs and perceptions of preschool teachers who come from different ethnic backgrounds.

McMullen, Elicker, Wang, Erdiller, Lee, Lin, and Sun (2005) conducted a study to examine cross-cultural preschool teachers' beliefs on developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) in preschool settings. It is assumed that the developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) which were developed by the National Association for the Education of Young Children's (NAEYC) are not only recognized in the U. S. but are also widely incorporated into early childhood curriculum by other cultures. The sample of this study consisted of 1 666 preschool teachers from U. S., China, Taiwan, Korea, and Turkey. The age of preschool children in all of these cultures ranged from three to five years old. Results indicated similarities across cultures related to teacher beliefs incorporating into curriculum such practices as play/choice activities, social and emotional development and hands-on activities. Further results also indicated that some cultural differences exist in beliefs of developmentally appropriate practices. Only 70 % of Chinese and Turkish

preschool teachers believed children learn through interaction with other children, whereas, almost 99% of Taiwanese and Korean teachers believed children will learn through interacting with their peers. The largest number of teachers who believed interactions with peers was extremely important for cognitive development came from U. S. preschool teachers.

In addition to examining the beliefs of preschool teachers, the authors also explored whether the teachers' beliefs corresponded with their classroom practices. The findings indicated that indeed teachers' beliefs did correspond with their practices in preschool classrooms. The largest difference that was found in this study was that of Chinese teachers' believes. Chinese teachers' believes were significantly different from those of other teachers. Chinese teachers' ratings of DAP philosophy and incorporation of DAP practices in their classroom was the lowest in comparison with other cultures. Chinese preschool teachers strongly believe in teacher-structured, didactic practices in their classrooms. The one aspect of the DAP practices that the Chinese preschool teachers agreed with the least is "it is important for class activities to be responsive to individual differences in interest" (p. 460).

However, the following study indicated opposing results for Korean-American preschool teachers. In Farver, Kim, and Lee (1995) study Korean-American and Anglo-American preschool practices were compared. The classroom practices were believed to be affected by their perceptions which differed reflecting cultural differences between the Korean and American cultures. Even though the Korean-American preschool teachers were born in the United States and completed college in United States, their focus on academic curriculum is believed to be reflective of their traditional Korean values learned

from their Korean parents. The daily activities of the Korean-American preschool teachers consisted of highly structured academically focused activities which did not provide many opportunities for peer and social interaction. The preschool classrooms which were run by Korean-American teachers had very minimal level of pretend play activities and props which was also attributed to the cultural differences. In the Korean culture individuality and self-expression are not the values to focus on; however, it is individuality and self-expression that is needed for successful interaction in pretend play. Instead, the Korean values stem in in harmony and group cooperation. It is also important to point out that these teachers were providing English and Korean language instruction and all appeared to believe that academic instruction is the best approach for language learning. The language learning activities included English-language flash cards and letters workbooks exercises. The teachers also indicated that the children's parents are very concerned about their children's academic performance and are strong believers in academic teaching. This study indicated that cultural upbringing has larger effect on teachers' beliefs about academic and non-academic preschool classroom practices than their higher educational attainment.

Cross-cultural Differences

In a study conducted by Wang, Elicker, McMullen, and Mao (2008), preschool teachers' curriculum beliefs and self-reported practices were also examined. The researchers also wanted to see whether cross-cultural differences in teachers' beliefs toward child-initiated learning activities and teacher-directed activities exist. Some examples of child-initiated activities included: active exploration, interactions with peers, social skills with peers, selecting own activities, learning to read, and allowing own

project. Whereas, some examples of the teacher-directed/basic school skills activities included: evaluation with worksheets, workbooks, whole group same activity, reading/pre-reading, forming letters on the line, working silently and alone on seats, teaching separate subjects, flashcards in groups, and standardized group testing. There was a comparison of American preschool teachers and Chinese preschool teachers beliefs presented. The sample of this study consisted of 146 American preschool teachers and 296 Chinese preschool teachers. The American preschool teachers served children age three to five whereas the Chinese teachers served children ages three to six years old. The American teachers came from a variety of preschool programs in the state of Indiana. All teachers participating in this study had at least one year of experience in teaching in the preschool classrooms. Results indicated that American preschool teachers are more likely to support child-initiated pedagogical practices than teacher-structured practices. Chinese teachers, on the other hand, differed in their beliefs as they were more likely to support teacher-structured practices than the less formal child-initiated practices in their preschool classrooms. There was also a consensus of both American and Chinese teachers to approve a combined method which includes both child-initiated and teacher-structured practices and they were all against highly-structured teacher-directed method. Examples of some of the integrated/social-cultural curriculum activities, which both American and Chinese teachers agreed upon, included: input from parents, planned outdoor activities, multicultural/nonsexist, dramatic play, talk with adults, health/safety activities, math integrated in other areas, dictate stories to teacher, stories read to children, individual differences in development and in interest. It is a common practice that in the case there is no agreement reached on which method (academic or non-

academic) is the most suitable for preschool children, educators come up with a compromise which is a mixed method of the two. However, combining the two curriculum methods might become a bit confusing for preschool children. The next study will measure the benefits of all three curriculum approaches.

Marcon (1999) examined teachers' beliefs and their actual practices of three different curriculum models and their effects on children's development. The researcher identified three different curriculum models; Model AD corresponding with academic type of curriculum activities, Model CI corresponding with child-initiated types of activities, and Model M incorporating a mixture of both academic and non-academic types of curriculum activities. The sample of the study consisted of 193 Head Start and pre-kindergarten teachers of four year old children. All preschool teachers were given a "Pre-K Survey of Beliefs and Practices" which was developed by Minuchin and Shapiro (1983). The children participants consisted of 721 four-year-old preschool children. The results of the study indicated that these three curriculum models have different effects on preschool children's development. The main finding indicated that in the curriculum models where teacher beliefs were set strong on only one approach, whether it is academic or non-academic, the children did better on standardized measures of development. Children who were part of the mixed curriculum model where teacher beliefs encompassed theoretically diverse approaches did not perform as well. The mixed, combination approach was found to be highly ineffective. The authors also indicated that the academic model was not found to hurt children's development at this early age. However, the children who were part of this academic model did poorly on receptive and expressive language skills and interpersonal relationship skills. Children in

Model AD which is the academic approach did not exhibit a mastery of basic skills. On the contrary, children in Model CI (child-initiated) exhibited a greater mastery of basic skills when compared with children in Model AD. This beneficial effect was the most apparent for preschool children who were of African American ethnic background. It was also found that when it comes to non-academic instruction and academic instruction, teacher expectations are different. It was found that teacher expectations were higher in the non-academic instruction model than in the academic instruction model. Previous research conducted by Entwisle (1995) also provides support for Macron's claims that low teacher expectations result in students' low performance and vice versa.

Another study which included African-American preschool beliefs is discussed next. Hindman and Wasik (2008) conducted a study to measure Head Start teachers' beliefs about early language and literacy instruction. The participants of this study consisted of 28 African-American Head Start lead teachers who were predominantly female. The Preschool Teacher Literacy Beliefs questionnaire was utilized in this study which consisted of 30 items. Nine of the 30 items measured the 'oral language and vocabulary' domain which is relevant to this study. Three of the nine items included interactions with peers: children should talk during mealtime, children should talk to each other during the day, and children learn a language by talking about their ideas and expressing their feelings. The results indicated that 'oral literacy and vocabulary' domain exhibited the greatest consensus among preschool classroom teachers. The average answer for this domain was between agree and strongly agree on the scale. Further, it was found that teachers' beliefs about oral language and vocabulary varied based on teaching experience. The more experienced teachers agreed more strongly with these items on the

questionnaire about oral language development. Even though the researchers did not categorize their questionnaire items into academic and non-academic instruction, the three items that measured the oral development and vocabulary seem to lean toward the non-academic category. All three items include the words 'children should talk' and the most amount of talking occurs when children talk to each other during a free-play time.

Stipek and Byler (1997) explored preschool, kindergarten, and first grade teachers' beliefs about the benefits of classroom practices and how children learn. In addition to exploring teachers' beliefs, the researchers explored the children's parents' beliefs in this study as well. The researchers employed two types of practices: child-centered and basic-skills. Child-centered practices were described to be more unstructured activities completed with peers or alone, whereas, basic-skills practices were structured and teacher-initiated. The sample of the study consisted of 60 teachers of which there were 18 preschool teachers, 26 kindergarten, and 16 first grade teachers. The years of teaching practiced ranged from 1 to 45 years and the range of educational level ranged from High school diploma to master's degree. The majority of the teachers were Caucasian followed by African-American, Latino, and Asian. Around half of the 60 classrooms studied were in private schools and the other half were in public schools. Three of the preschools were in Head Start program predominantly serving low-income families.

The child-centered preschool practices were found to be related to social skills, independence, self-concept and basic skills preschool practices were found to be more related to basic skills, knowledge and facts. Teachers in this study were divided into two groups; those teachers who were basic skills oriented and those teachers who were child-

centered oriented. Teachers believed that these two methods are not compatible and some believed children learned best by the academic method and some believed children learned the best by the child-centered method. Child-centered teacher beliefs were linked with an observed positive social climate and not linked with a focus on basic skills. The more teachers validated formal basic-skills activities, the less they validated child-centered activities. When it came to beliefs on retention, teachers with different beliefs on the importance of child-centered and basic-skill activities did not differ on views on retention. Those preschool teachers who believed in teacher-structured instruction believed to retain children if they have not grasped the academic curriculum. Two third of teachers reported that the programs they were teaching in were "about right" (p. 316). Those teachers who were not satisfied with their current programs would prefer less emphasis on academic and structured activities.

The results indicated that the parents are usually satisfied with their children's programs; however, teachers have also reported that some pressure that comes from parents is for implementation of more academic oriented activities (basic skills) for their children. Parents were also one of the major reasons why teachers adopted more academically oriented activities in their classrooms, including more structure and less playing as well as quieter classrooms. Some other changes that were requested by parents included: more reading, weekly spelling tests, homework and more time to complete homework, academic tutoring and more challenging tasks for the smart children. In comparison, very small amount of parents have requested child-centered activities such play, different activities including hands-on activities for reading skills and math. Besides parents' influencing teachers to adopt more academic practices in their classrooms,

teachers also felt pressure from administrators "unrealistic expectations" (p. 317) to adopt state academic curriculum. Interestingly, teachers of children from poverty backgrounds believed academic knowledge is the most crucial for their development when compared to their beliefs regarding children from middle income families. In general, these results indicated that some teachers' beliefs are somewhat inconsistent with educational policies.

To conclude this teacher beliefs and perceptions section, it is apparent that teachers' beliefs vary based on their educational level, years of experience, and cultural background. The review of the studies also indicated that a large amount of teachers are in adherence with developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) guidelines. Teachers and teacher aids with college education agreed with the DAP guidelines and teachers with lower educational levels such as High School and GED agreed with developmentally inappropriate practices (DIP). When it comes to cultural background, American preschool teachers agreed the most with (DAP) guidelines and, more specifically, that children learn through interacting with other kids. Taiwanese and Korean teachers' beliefs also were in accordance with (DAP), however, Chinese and Turkish teachers were the least in accordance with the (DAP) guidelines. When not referring to DAP and DIP guidelines but beliefs toward play-based and academic instruction, Anglo-American preschool classroom teachers exhibited positive beliefs toward play-based instruction and Chinese and Korean-American preschool classroom teachers exhibited positive attitudes toward academic instruction being beneficial in children's cognitive development.

Parent Perceptions

Parents' perceptions and beliefs are as important to know as teacher perceptions and beliefs regarding which pedagogical approach is most suitable for preschool

children's English language development. Based on which preschool classroom activities (academic or non-academic, play-based) parents perceive as suitable for their children's cognitive development, they will place their children in a preschool which employs those practices. Many studies discussed in this literature review section do not separately discuss second language development but include this category into cognitive development. Proponents of play-based curriculum in preschool classrooms (Bodrova & Leong, 2003; Vail 2003) claim that all parents these days want their children to work with worksheets as soon as possible. Parents want proof that their children are learning in preschool which might probably result from the pressures of standardized testing that are awaiting them in elementary schools. However, the issue of parental perceptions and beliefs are not as one-sided as mentioned above. Parents' perceptions of academic and play-based preschool classroom instruction vary widely based on parents' educational level, socioeconomic status, gender, and cultural background. The variety of parents' beliefs and perceptions are reviewed in the next section.

Rescorla (1991) conducted research to examine both teachers' and parents' attitudes toward early academics in preschool. It was also the goal of the researcher to find out whether parents would purposefully select a preschool program for their children that was consistent with their attitudes. The researchers recruited 270 mothers of four-to-five year old preschool children and 23 teachers and directors from 11 different preschool programs. The preschool from which participants were selected included a wide variety of programs stemming from play-based only to fully academic programs. The participants were given survey measuring attitudes toward academic and non-academic instruction in preschool classrooms. The results indicated that mothers perceived that

social experiences are important for their children and that non-academic experiences such as learning good manners and learning to clean after themselves were also very important for their children. In general, mothers put stronger emphasis on social development than on academic development and the least emphasis on art/music and athletic activities on preschool curriculum. When examining the differences between parents and teachers' attitudes toward early academics, both parents and teachers from high-academic and low-academic preschools believed social experiences are very important for preschoolers and children should be kept to high standards when it comes to behavior such as good manners and cleaning up after themselves. There were also differences found in parents' beliefs based on the type of preschool attendance. Those parents whose children attended more academically oriented preschool programs did believe that academic curriculum is very important for their children. This group of parents also believed that besides academic activities also athletic and art activities are important for their children. Whereas, parents in play-based, non-academic preschools believed early skill experiences are not important for their children. When parent-teacher comparison was conducted, the researchers found that parents, in general, had higher academic expectations from their children than their teachers had. It was found that parents whose children attended play-based, non-academic preschools had significantly higher expectations in early skill (academic and non-academic) experiences than did their children's teachers. It was also pointed out that parents who believe academic curriculum is important for their children place their children in academically oriented preschools and parents who believe non-academic curriculum is important for their children place their children in non-academic preschools. In conclusion, parents in both non-academic

and academic preschool programs seemed to have higher expectations from their children's learning of early skills than the teachers did.

Stipek, Milburn, Clements, and Daniels (1992) conducted a study to explore parents' beliefs about the appropriateness of basic skills teaching to their preschool and kindergarten children. There was also a relationship measured between parents' educational level and parents' beliefs on what type of teaching method should their children's teachers use at school and what the parents themselves use at home. A questionnaire developed by the researchers was completed by 551 parents of preschoolers and kindergarteners who were ages four to five years old. The sample was said to be diverse in ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and primary language. The results indicated that parents differed extensively in their views toward child-centered and didactic teaching approaches. Parents who believed in introducing basic skills instruction early on to their children also tended to agree with teacher-controlled instructions which included repetition and testing their children. Parents who believed in teacher-controlled instruction disagreed with child-centered approaches which usually included: not asking children to sit at desks, removing grading from the curriculum, and helping only those children with reading who ask for it. These beliefs also predicted the types of activities parents did with their children at home. Those parents who valued teacher-controlled didactic pedagogical approaches also used flashcards and workbooks at home. On the other hand, those parents who valued child-centered approaches would engage their children in more informal activities at home such as; teaching about numbers in the context of everyday activities, listening to the child tell stories, and talking about things happened at school. When Stipek et al., examined the effects of educational levels on the

beliefs of child-centered and teacher-controlled, didactic approaches, they found that the poorly educated parents valued the didactic curriculum approach for their young children with the focus on basic skills acquisition. On the other hand, the well-educated parents were more in favor of child-centered approaches and more critical of teacher-controlled, didactic approaches for their children. Even though during the time of this study there was not enough research that would provide evidence on which one of these two approaches is more effective toward children's cognitive development, Stipek et al. warned that the beliefs and behaviors of the poorer parents who mainly emphasized on teacher-controlled, didactic learning approach would result in harming the children's cognitive development.

Mendez and Fogle (2002) conducted a study to examine parental beliefs about the relations of children's play, behavior problems and language competence. The sample of this study consisted of parents and teachers of 113 preschool children attending a Head Start preschool program. Most of the participating parents were from low-socioeconomic backgrounds and of African American ethnic background. Eight of the Head Start teachers were also of African American background. A relationship of play and language development was examined. Children were tested on expressive and receptive language competence. Results indicated a direct positive relationship between parents' rating of positive peer play interactions and children's receptive language outcomes. These results indicated that positive engagement with peers is related with the acquisition of receptive language skills. On the other hand, parents ratings of disruptive peer play was negatively correlated with both receptive and expressive language proficiency, indicating interconnectedness between weakened play skills and discrepancies in children's

language use and language understanding. Thus, those parents who agreed their children being involved in disruptive play disagreed that their language skills gained proficiency. The authors found that children who are not capable of communicating with their peers because they lack the language skills to approach peers and express their play ideas usually are very likely to disengage from activities and miss opportunities "to practice and refine their communication with peers" (p. 380).

Pirpir, Er, and Kocak (2009) conducted a study to find out whether academic oriented activities were more important for children's cognitive development than play. The participants of this study consisted of 171 mothers and 148 fathers whose children were attending early childhood education programs. First, the researchers looked at the differences in mothers' and fathers' attitudes toward play. Mothers showed stronger support for play in this study than fathers did. Mothers believed that play improves language development through social skills, they themselves enjoy playing with their children and therefore they support their children playing with peers and express their emotions through play. When it comes to attitudes toward academic instruction, both mothers and fathers scored lower on the academic focus when compared with the play focus; however, mothers again scored higher than fathers on academic activities. Overall, results indicated that mothers are more positive about their children attaining academic skills by playing such as; counting, letter knowledge, and problem solving.

Second, the participants' attitudes toward play were tested based on their highest education attained. Mothers and fathers were divided into three groups; those with primary school education, high school education, and university education. When fathers' attitudes were analyzed, the results indicated that the fathers who only finished primary

school had the most negative attitudes toward play helping their children with cognitive development when compared with fathers who have attained high school and university degrees. Thus, the higher the fathers' educational attainment to more positive attitudes they have toward play. However, the fathers with only primary school education have not only shown low support for play but they have also shown low support for academic focus when compared with the other two groups of fathers. There was no difference found in the attitudes of fathers with high school education and with university education. Fathers with high school and university degrees showed more positive attitudes toward academic focused activities in early education than the fathers who have only a primary school education. Therefore, these results seem a bit inconclusive. When it comes to mothers' attitudes toward play, the results indicated that mothers with a university education exhibited the highest scores toward play and they believe that; playing in preschool helps my child be ready for kindergarten and play helps my child to express his/her feelings. On the other hand, mothers with a primary school education exhibited negative attitudes toward play and believe play is only something that keeps their children busy. When it comes to academic focus, mothers just like fathers with only primary school education scored the lowest on the importance of academic activities in a preschool classroom and the mothers with university level education scored the highest on the academic focus. These results are again a bit inconclusive as we do not know what is more important to parents play based activities or academically focused activities, we only know the parents' support toward these activities alone.

Haight, Parke, and Black (1997) conducted research to explore mothers' and fathers' beliefs about pretend play. A sociocultural theory was applied to examine the

variation in parents' involvement in their childrens' play. The sample of the study

included 58 parents of three-year old preschool children. All parents were of European-

American cultural backgrounds and of middle-class sociocultural background. The results

indicated that both mothers and fathers believed pretend play to be important activity for

their children's cognitive development. Parents believed their children enjoy the

participation in pretend play and that pretend play expands their children's creativity. The

parents in this study not only revealed positive beliefs towards pretend play but they also

supported their children's participation and engagement in pretending. There were

similarities found between parents' beliefs and behaviors. The parents were aware of the

developmental significance when it comes to children's pretend play. Their beliefs about

the importance of play in their children's development were very similar to early

childhood educators. The only differences in this study were found in gender. Mothers

more than fathers believed pretend play is beneficial for their children's cognitive

development. The researchers asked the parents to rate the importance of book reading in

comparison to pretend play. The results of this comparison indicated that book reading

was believed to be more beneficial to children's cognitive development than pretend

play. Parents have indicated that book reading will help children in their future academic

success and pretend play will help them develop social relations. Surprisingly, when it

came to beliefs about language development, most mothers and fathers believed pretend

play does not contribute to their children's language development. Parents believed book

reading activity will contribute to language development more than pretend play. Thus,

when it comes to encouragement in participation of these two activities both mothers and

fathers, however fathers more, encouraged children to participate in book reading more

than in pretend play. Even though parents showed understanding of the importance of play in early childhood development, they did not believe it would contribute to language development as book reading would. This finding was contrary to what other researchers have found about pretend play being beneficial for language development.

Fogle and Mendez (2006) developed their own survey instrument, The Parent Beliefs Scale (PPBS), for the purpose of measuring parent beliefs about play. The sample of this study consisted of 259 African American mothers of children who were enrolled in two different Head Start centers. Around 40% of the participants had completed High School and were employed at low-status jobs. The majority of these participating mothers were single. This scale was specifically developed for Head Start parents and included items such as the developmental importance of play, enjoyment of play, and partaking in play. The items on the survey were divided into two parts; Play Support and Academic Focus. Agreeing with Play Support items would indicate positive attitudes toward play and agreeing with Academic Focus items would indicate negative attitudes toward play. Agreeing with the Academic Focus part also indicates support for academic skills in the preschool classrooms such as learning numbers and letters. Only one out of 25 items on the survey measured beliefs toward language skills. The question stated: "Play can improve my child's language and communication abilities" (p. 510).   The results indicated that there was a small, significant, and indirect correlation found between Play Support and Academic Focus items. This indicates that those mothers who believe that play is important in their children's social, cognitive and language development do not believe academic activities tend to promote their children's development in the same manner. Nevertheless, there were some parents who indicated support for play, but

believe it might not be the right way for development of academic skills. When researchers looked at the relationship between play beliefs and parental educational level they found out that the higher the parental education the more positive beliefs parents indicated and the least educated parents showed positive beliefs toward Academic Focus items. These results concur with the previously discussed study with Stipek et al. (1992). In general, these low income African American participants of this study exhibited positive beliefs toward play as being an important part of their children's development. The researchers believe that this might also be because the mothers had received a child-centered educational approach workshop as part of the participation of this study.

Cross-cultural Differences

A study conducted by Cryer, Tietze, and Wessels (2002) compared preschool parents' perceptions of quality ECE services. First, the researchers mainly focused on finding differences between US parents and German parents' perceptions. Second, the researchers examined the differences between the parents' preschool quality ratings and external observers' quality ratings. The sample consisted of uneven distribution of parents across the two countries. There were a large amount 2407 of US parents and a small amount 392 of German parents. The majority of US parents were mothers of European descent and of middle to upper class backgrounds. As for German parents, the sample consisted of mostly mothers of higher income backgrounds. The report did not indicate language spoken at home or how many of these children were bilinguals. Findings indicated that parents assigned high importance to the aspects required of quality in the early education centers and when comparing parents with trained observers, parents tend to assign higher discriminating scores to their children's classrooms than the

trained observers. Further findings indicated that there were no differences found between the US parents and German parents' quality perceptions of preschool programs. Results indicated that parents' high importance rating did not significantly deviate from those ratings of other professionals in early education programs. Therefore, parents' and professionals' perceptions, of what is crucial for young children in ECE programs, appears to be similar. Even though, the two cultures and their early childhood systems are different, there seems to be a shared "academic culture" among parents from both US and Germany. Thus, there were more similarities found in this study than differences between the two groups of parents.

Parents in both countries had a tendency to give high quality scores to their children's early education programs. Even though this tendency was not as strong for German parents but it was very strong for US parents. Moreover, parents' educational level played an important role in their perceptions. Those parents who had higher educational level perceived their children's preschool programs as being of a lower quality than did parents with lower educational level. The preschool classroom importance and quality (ECERSPQ) measure includes 37 items ranging from classroom furnishings and arrangement to a variety of classroom activities. When analyzing the individual scores of the ECERSPQ scale, academic preschool activities indeed scored higher on the importance and quality scales than the free play activities for US parents. However, the language use measure scored the lowest of the academic qualities on both the importance and quality measure, even though research indicates that oral language performance is a crucial indicator of future academic outcomes. Free play preschool activity scored much lower on an importance scale when compared to academic activities

but when it came to quality ratings free play scored little bit higher on quality rating than on importance ratings.

Yamamoto and Li (2012) explored preschool parents' beliefs about what constitutes high-quality preschool. The parents' beliefs of two different cultures were compared: the Chinese immigrant culture and European American culture. The middle-class European American culture was selected as an example of a mainstream American norm for the purpose of comparison. The sample of this longitudinal study consisted of 225 parents of four-year-old preschool children. A comparison between low-socioeconomic status parents' beliefs and middle-class parents' beliefs was also made. When compared the two set of parents, middle-class European American parents placed more importance on independence and they regarded those preschools high-quality which cultivate their children's independence and offer self-directed learning. On the contrary, Chinese immigrant parents never mentioned the elements which were found to be important by Middle-class European American parents. Chinese immigrant parents placed more importance on teacher qualities, teacher experience, and teacher's role of teaching good manners. These views of preschool education were found in all Chinese immigrant parents those who just arrived and those who have been living in the United States for a long time. It appears that these views that Chinese immigrant parents hold are embedded in their culture and they do not change over time. It was also interesting to find out that middle-class Chinese immigrant parents stressed the importance of teacher-parents communication about the daily classroom activities that their children partake in. On the other hand, Middle-class European American parents expected their children's preschools to pay attention to their needs and listen to the parents' advice.

The authors stress that Chinese immigrant parents regardless of their socioeconomic status are usually not familiar with the US preschool philosophies such as Montessori, Waldorf, and Reggio Emilia, and this is where Middle-class European American parents have an advantage when choosing preschool for their children. The Chinese immigrant parents are usually not aware of the differences in philosophy and pedagogy across different preschools in the United States and they believe the preschool quality is mainly influenced by teachers and not the preschool's philosophy. When it comes to play time in the preschool classroom, Middle-class European American parents placed more importance on play than did Chinese immigrant parents. These results concur with Parmer's et al., 2004 research findings which are discussed next. Even though there were larger cultural differences found than socioeconomic differences in this study, there were also some socioeconomic differences found within the Chinese immigrant population. When it comes to learning outcomes, low-socioeconomic status Chinese parents placed more importance on learning outcomes than did Chinese immigrant parents from middle-class socioeconomic background. Chinese parents from low-socioeconomic status rely more on their preschool teachers to educate their children than Chinese parents from middle-class backgrounds. Low-socioeconomic group parents were also interested in preschools which offered Chinese language. The reasons for that might be that they want their children to be exposed to their native Chinese language or that they themselves feel more comfortable speaking with their children's teachers in their native language as they might have a limited proficiency in English. Both Chinese and European American middle-class parents more than parents from low-socioeconomic backgrounds stated that they are aware of the purpose of preschool classroom activities in children's development

and their availability in their children's preschool classrooms. There were more differences found between low-socioeconomic and middle-class parents across cultures in the importance of activities and peer relations. Low-socioeconomic Chinese immigrant parents placed less importance on types of classroom activities and their children's peer relations than did middle class Chinese and European American parents.

Parmar, Harkness, and Super (2004) conducted a study where Euro-American and Asian parents' beliefs of preschool children were examined. The focus of the study was on parents' beliefs toward "the nature and purpose of play" (p. 98). However, in addition, parents were also surveyed on their children's partaking in daily activities. The sample of this study consisted of Euro-American and Asian parents of preschool children ages three to six years old. The Asian parents group included parents from a variety of Asian countries such as: China, Korea, Pakistan, Nepal, and India. These parents were all immigrants living in the US for at least 10 years. All mothers and fathers in this sample had a high level of education. The research results provide evidence of two contrasting patterns of parents' beliefs and practices within Asian and Euro-American cultures in early education. Play was believed to be, by the Euro-American parents, a crucial factor in the growth and development of preschool children. In fact, Euro-American parents believed play to be very instrumental in their children's cognitive, social, emotional, and physical development. On the contrary, the Asian parents did not believe play is as valuable as the Euro-American parents did. Asian parents believed play will not prepare their children for school and that in turn focus on early academics in preschool will prepare their children for the school years. There was also a difference found in Asian and Euro-American compliance beliefs about their preschool children. Asian parents did

not believe obedience is crucial for their children's development. Whereas, Euro-American parents beliefs on this measure was the opposite indicating obedience as being a crucial component in preschool classroom curriculum. The difference in parental beliefs toward play within the two cultures was also demonstrated in their practices at home. Since the Euro-American parents believed in the importance of play in their children's academic and social development, they made more resources available to their children in terms of toys. On the contrary, Asian parents did not provide as many toys for their children's cognitive development but instead they themselves act as teachers at home and facilitate academic learning opportunities for their children.

Chao (1996) conducted a cross-cultural comparison study examining parents' beliefs about the value of academics in early education. The sample consisted of 48 Chinese immigrant mothers who came to US from Taiwan and 50 European American mothers of preschool children. Even though mothers from both cultures had achieved high educational status, the educational attainment of European American mothers was significantly higher. The results of this study provided many insights into the Chinese parental beliefs about their children's education. There were found definite differences in parental beliefs in Chinese and European American mothers. The results indicated that Chinese mothers believe that their emphasis on early academics is cultural and that all Chinese parents place high value on academic education. In Chinese culture high academic achievement is valued more than high monetary achievement. "Chinese parents often endorse the belief that one cannot succeed unless one has an education" (p. 413). Chinese immigrant mothers also explained that their children need to be more pressured and work harder in academics so that they can compete with Caucasians in the future.

They have expressed a belief that they need educating their children at an earliest age possible. Their most valued activity to educate their children is through reading activities and going to the library. Other behavior which is believed to be fostered early in children's life is obedience. Chinese parents believe that children need to be "obedient to be 'teachable'" (p. 414). Comparing academic abilities to other children is also very common in the Chinese culture. Parents hold a belief that by comparing children's abilities their own children can understand that their achievements can be as high as their talented peers' achievements. European American parents have expressed very different beliefs from Chinese parents regarding most of the aspects discussed. Where Chinese parents stress the importance of academically oriented activities as early as possible for their children, European American parents expressed the belief that "academic success is not good for children and should not be the goal of education" (p. 415). Instead of focusing on academic activities they stressed the importance of social development and self-motivation which they believe cannot be achieved through engagement in academic activities. European American mothers also very frequently used the word "burn-out" to express a concern that academically oriented activities are not developmentally appropriate for their children and they might cause burn-out. European American mothers have also shown a concern and a disagreement about their schools' focus on academics. They want their schools to implement the idea that learning is an enjoyable, interesting, exciting and fun activity where children get to be creative. European American mothers believed that learning should be incorporated into everyday activities and not into academically set activities. Other beliefs of European American mothers that emerged from this study included: fostering differences in children's abilities and independent

thinking, providing plenty of educational materials such as games, toys, music and theatre. European American mothers also showed more of negative beliefs about the current educational system in the US which does not promote creativity and imagination in young children and gives children too much of academically oriented homework. On the other hand, Chinese immigrant parents indicated disagreement with European American parents when it comes to homework. Chinese immigrant parents indicated the homework given to their children at school is not enough and that they give their children additional homework at home. These research studies concur with Qin (2006) who has indicated that most Chinese immigrant parents living in United States have high academic expectations from their children. These intense academic expectations were found to be more pronounced in Chinese and other East Asian cultures than in other cultures living in the United States. Another one of these Asian group of parents who was found to have similar parental beliefs in the next two studies as the Chinese parents' toward academically oriented instruction in preschool setting is Korean-American parents. Farver, Kim, and Lee (1995) analyzed differences between Korean-American and Anglo-American preschool parents. It is believed that many the classroom practices were believed to be affected by the parents' perceptions which differed reflecting cultural differences between the Korean and American cultures. Korean-American and Anglo-American parents have similar educational goals for their children; however, their beliefs differ in terms of how to achieve these goals. Anglo-American mothers' believed in play-oriented curriculum for their preschoolers, whereas, Korean-American mothers believed in more academic oriented preschool classroom activities for their preschoolers. Korean-American mothers believed "play to be a way to escape boredom or to amuse children"

(p. 1097). Korean-American parents were found to have high academic expectations of their children when compared with Anglo-American parents. Another, very similar study was conducted few years later and the intercultural beliefs toward the utilization of play-based and academically oriented instructional approaches have not changed. Farver, Kim, and Lee-Shin (2000) conducted a study to examine Korean American and European American play behaviors in preschools to determine intercultural variations in children's skills. The results indicated that individual factors related to pretend play varied by culture. Korean American children did not engage in social pretend play to the same degree as did European American children. The reason for this is that Korean American parents had more negative attitudes toward play and creativity than European American parents, thus, not encouraging their children to engage in pretend play activities.

Zevenbergen, Haman, and Olszanska (2012) conducted a study to examine the beliefs that Polish and European American mothers hold about their children's use of narratives. The sample consisted of 43 Polish and 42 European American mothers from middle-class socioeconomic backgrounds. There were significant differences found between the beliefs of Polish and middle-class American mothers. American mothers believed that using narratives and storytelling help with the child's assessment of memory, whereas, Polish mothers believed storytelling helps their children with learning about their culture by connecting present events with past events and provide emotional support for their children.

The above reviewed studies did not indicate whether parents had different beliefs towards individual aspects of cognitive development. Parents appear to judge cognitive development as a whole including language skills, reading, and math. Thus, parents'

perceptions are considered as overall perceptions toward children's cognitive development which includes language and second language development. First, parents' perceptions toward academic and non-academic (play-based) classroom activities varied based on socioeconomic status. As reviewed in the studies, parents with lower socioeconomic status perceived academic preschool classroom activities as more beneficial toward their children's cognitive development than non-academic (play-based) activities. And parents with higher socioeconomic background perceived non-academic (play-based) activities as crucial toward their children's cognitive development. Second, parents' perceptions also varied based on their educational backgrounds. Parents with only elementary school education perceived academic activities as most beneficial and parents with high school and college education perceived play-based activities as more crucial toward their children's development. Third, parents' perceptions also differed based on gender. Mothers perceived play-based preschool classroom activities as more instrumental for their children's cognitive development than fathers did. Fourth, parents' attitudes varied across different cultural backgrounds. African American mothers, Chinese immigrant parents, Asian parents who included parents from Korea, Pakistan, Nepal, and India, all perceived academic preschool classroom activities to be more influential toward their children's cognitive development. Whereas, middle-class European American and German parents perceived non-academic approach with a high emphasis on play to instruction as more important for their children's cognitive development.

Chapter Summary

This literature review chapter provided background information on the English language development of bilingual children in the preschool classroom. This first section on L2 development discussed the development of oral proficiency of English language which described the development of both speaking (verbal) and listening (nonverbal) skills. The second section included a discussion of preschool classroom curriculum. The review of research has also revealed that experts have been debating on which of the two approaches, child-centered/free play (non-academic) or teacher-structured (academic), is more suitable for children's cognitive development and language learning. Empirical evidence (Stipek et al., 1995; Burts et al., 1990, 1992; Singer et al., 2003) suggests that this young age group of preschoolers benefit more from child-centered instruction than from teacher-structured preschool instruction; even though, teacher-structured instruction has been found to be beneficial for some attainment of academic skills (Howes et al., 2008; Farver et al., 2009) . When reviewing the research studies on children engagement during preschool classroom activities, the results revealed that children, overall, were more positively engaged with their peers and with their tasks which were more unstructured and provided more independence to them. Children were found to be more engaged during free-play and free-choice time activities with their peers than during teacher-structured academic activities. The third and final section of the literature review revealed differences in teachers' perceptions and parents' perceptions toward the two preschool curriculum approaches. The differences in teachers' perceptions are based primarily on the educational level, years of teaching experience, and cultural background. The differences in parents' perceptions also varied based on parents' educational level, socioeconomic background, and cultural background.

Chapter III

Methodology

This chapter covers the methodology and research design utilized in this study. The chapter is organized into seven sections. The first section of the chapter includes the research design which is further divided into four categories: qualitative data collection, quantitative data collection, validity, and reliability. The second section covers operational definitions of this study and two conceptual models. The third section provides a detailed description of the research setting and the sample which was recruited for this study. The fourth section describes the instrument development and the expert review used for validation of the instrument. The fifth section provides a detailed description of data collection which is followed by the sixth section describing how the data were analyzed. The final seventh section of this chapter will conclude with ethical considerations.

Restatement of Purpose

The main purpose of this study was to explore eight preschool bilingual children's English language development in academic (teacher-structured) and non-academic (free play) preschool activities. The children's engagement level and the quality and quantity of their language use were measured and determined L2 development. According to Saunders and O'Brien (2006) and Jones and Cooper (2006), opportunities given to preschool children in language usage contribute to language development. Furthermore, this study examined the perceptions of preschool teachers and parents of bilingual children of the effects that academic and non-academic activities have on children's English language development.

Restatement of Research Questions

Through observations of bilingual preschool children and dialogue with preschool teachers and preschool bilingual children's parents, this research study examined the following questions:

1. What is the effect of free play activities on L2 development of bilingual preschool children?

   A. What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

   B. What is the quality and quantity of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

2. What is the effect of teacher-structured time activities on L2 development of bilingual preschool children?

   A. What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while interacting with teachers?

   B. What is the quality and quantity of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with teachers?

3. What are the preschool teachers' perceptions of the effect of free-play vs. teacher-structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

4. What are the preschool parents' perceptions of the effect of free play vs. teacher-structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

The research study was conducted within six-week time period and the researcher collected the data in the following order. Observations of the subjects begun on week one and lasted for four weeks. The distribution of the survey instrument also started on week one but ended on week three. The preschool head teachers' and parents' one-on-one interviews were conducted during weeks five and six. Teacher group interview was conducted during week five. See Appendix C.2 for Research Design Matrix Plan.

Research Design

This study utilized a mixed methods design, which included both qualitative and quantitative approaches, to investigate the English language development of preschool bilingual children. A mixed methods design allowed the researcher to combine on the strengths of both qualitative and quantitative data (Creswell, 2008). Quantitative data allowed the researcher to assess the frequencies of occurrences and the qualitative data allowed the researcher to explore participant perspectives by asking open-ended interview questions that "provided actual words of people in the study, offered many different perspectives on the study topic and provided a complex picture of the situation" (p. 552). The strengths of both methods are unique and are not interchangeable.

The data collection period lasted six weeks. It begun with observations of each of the eight children in seven academic and nine non-academic preschool classroom activities. These observations lasted four weeks. Distribution of the teacher/parent survey also occurred at the beginning of the data collection period. Finally, at the end of the six weeks, teacher and parent interviews took place. Conducting interviews at the end of the data collection period enabled the researcher to discuss the survey results with interviewees.

Qualitative Data Collection

The qualitative portion of this study utilized two data collection processes; observations and interviews. Ballantyne, Sanderman, and McLaughlin (2008) suggested that to obtain an accurate language sample, children should be observed or recorded during every-day common activities rather than through formal testing methods.

For this qualitative portion of observations, the researcher wrote verbatim notes on the children's engagement and language use during academic and non-academic activities. The first method, observations, was the process of gathering data firsthand by observing the participants at the preschool research site (Creswell, 2008). One of the advantages of utilizing observations for this study was that the researcher was able to observe the "actual behavior" (p. 222) of the participants whether the behavior was verbal or nonverbal. This observations method (see Appendix A.1) was used to observe eight bilingual children while they participated in academic and non-academic preschool activities. The sequence of these preschool activities was randomly selected. Each preschool activity lasted approximately 20 to 30 minutes and the researcher further divided this 20/30-minute activity into a first half and second half of activity.

The second data collection method, interviews, involved both the preschool teachers and the parents of the bilingual children. Ballantyne, Sanderman, and McLaughlin (2008) suggested that assessment of Dual Language Learners should include a mixture of techniques, including parent and teacher interviews. Qualitative interviews entailed a researcher asking participants open-ended questions (see Appendix E). Open-ended questions allowed participants to easily express "their experiences unconstrained by any perspectives of the researcher or past research findings" (Creswell, 2008, p. 225).

Two types of interviews were used in this study: one-on-one interviews and a group interview. The first type, one-on-one interviews, was conducted with two head teachers and one preschool coordinator of the three preschool classrooms and five parents of the participating bilingual children. While one-on-one interviews are the "most time-consuming and costly approach to conduct individual interviews" (Creswell, 2008, p. 226), they allowed the head teachers and the parents of bilingual children to be more open and candid about the effects of preschool classroom activities on their bilingual students. In addition, interviewing one head teacher at a time permitted each to provide detailed information about the effects of academic and non-academic preschool classroom activities on L2 development. Both teachers' and parents' one-on-one interviews were recorded.

The second type of interview, group interview, was conducted with five preschool teacher aides. During this group interview, the researcher asked the participants open-ended questions and "collected shared understanding" of preschool teacher aides (Creswell, 2008, p. 226). The researcher recorded the participants' answers and then transcribed the data for analysis (Creswell, 2008) (see Appendix F).

Quantitative Data Collection

Observational data were analyzed through both qualitative and quantitative analysis. The quantitative portion of the study included observations and cross-sectional survey design methods.

The quantitative observational data were divided into three categories: engagement level, quantity of language use, and quality of language use. Each of these

three was characterized by the use of scales, where the researcher circled a number for each of the sections while observing (see Appendix A.1).

Cross-sectional survey design, the second quantitative method used in this study, was utilized to describe "attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population" (Creswell, 2008, p. 388). In this study, cross-sectional design described and compared two groups of respondents: preschool teachers, and parents of bilingual preschool children. The survey was administered to a sample of both preschool teachers and parents of the bilingual preschool children to describe their perceptions (Creswell, 2008) of the effects certain preschool activities have on English language development. The resulting quantitative numerical data were statistically analyzed to describe responses to research questions three and four. Research question three measured preschool teachers' perceptions of the effects that academic and non-academic preschool classroom activities had on preschool children's English language development. Research question four measured the bilingual parent's perceptions of English language development.

Validity

The criteria for evaluating the quality of research design were construct validity and reliability (Yin, 2009). Construct validity can be attained by using multiple sources of evidence in the collection of data. In the present study, construct validity was addressed by utilizing triangulation. According to Creswell (2003), the concurrent triangulation strategy is a method where the researcher employs both qualitative and quantitative methods for reasons of validating data and uses findings from at least three different sources of a single study. This triangulation strategy utilizes both qualitative and quantitative methods separately in order to neutralize the weaknesses of one method with

the strengths of the other. The concurrent collection of qualitative and quantitative data was conducted within a single period of time during the research study (see Figure 1). To further ensure the validity of the data obtained through the one-on-one and group interviews, the researcher utilized *member checking* method. As a part of this method, the researcher summarized the data gathered and then questioned the participants involved. This sharing of the findings allowed the parents and teachers participants to comment on and call attention to any inaccuracies of the findings. Member checking was done at the end of each interview.

Reliability

Along with validity, reliability is a measure of consistency that helps establish the quality of a given research study process. The goal in establishing reliability is for a subsequent investigator, replicating the present study by following the same procedures, to obtain the same or similar results as the present researcher. In other words, reliability eliminates or reduces biases and errors in a research study (Yin, 2009). To achieve this goal, Yin (2009) suggested using a *case study protocol* (see Appendix B) and developing a case study database. An expert review was utilized for both the case study protocol and the survey instrument for validity. Scores of both instruments should be consistent and almost the same when "researchers administer the instrument multiple times at different times" to the participants (Creswell, 2009, p. 169). Consistency of survey instrument scores should also occur. When a respondent answered one question a certain way he should have responded to a similar question in the same way.

Figure 1. Triangulation Model
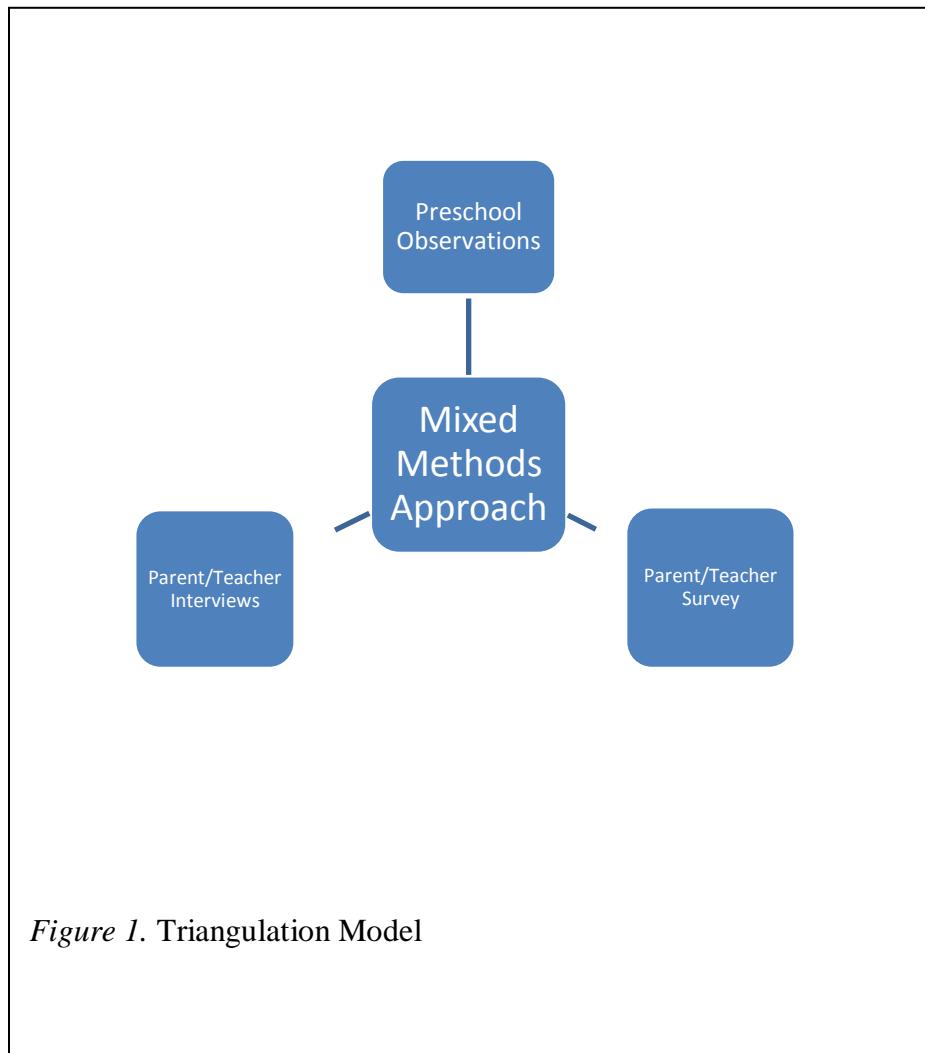
Conceptual Model

The independent variable for all four research questions was preschool classroom activity. This dichotomous variable has two subcategories: academic (teacher-structured) and non-academic (free play) preschool classroom activities.

Seven academic and nine non-academic preschool classroom activities (under which children were observed) were used to measure research question one and research question two. The dependent variable for research questions one and two was English language development, as determined by the children's level of engagement in these activities and their language use including progress in academic and non-academic preschool classroom activities (see Figure 2).

Independent Variable   Dependent Variable
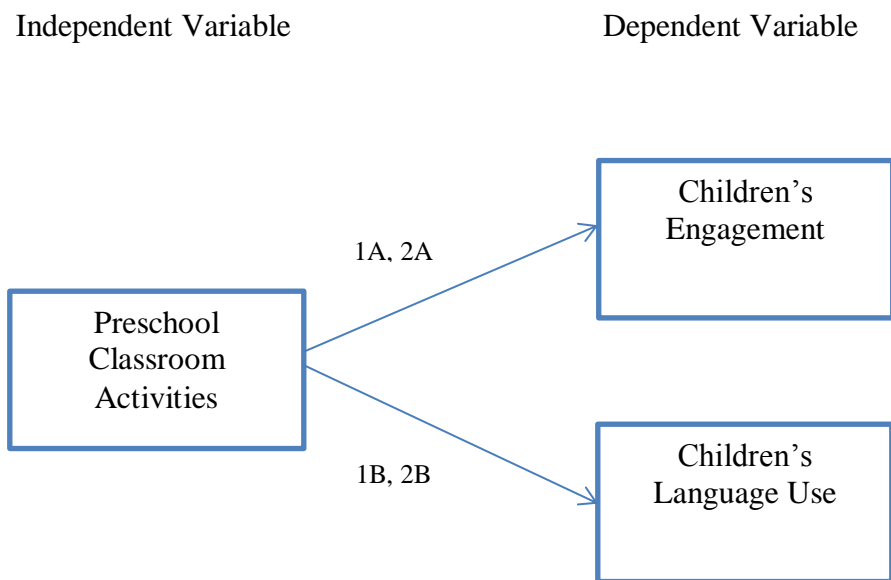
Figure 2. Conceptual Model A.

The dependent variable for research question three was the perceptions of preschool teachers of the effects that academic and non-academic activities had on their bilingual students' English language development. Teacher perceptions were measured on an ordinal scale. The dependent variable for research question four were the parents' perceptions of the effects that academic and non-academic activities had on their bilingual children's English language development (see Figure 3).

Independent Variable   Dependent Variable
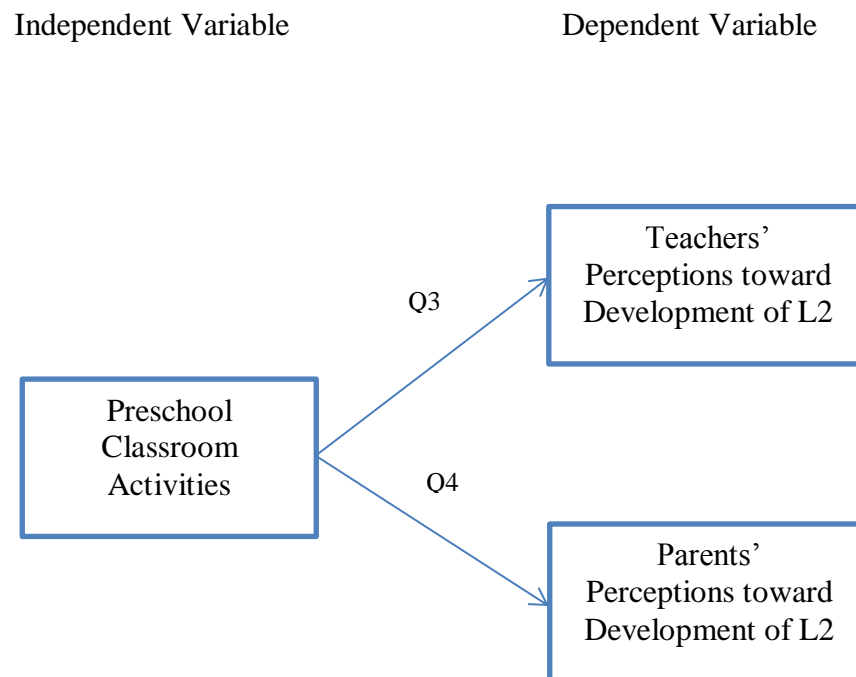
Figure 3. Conceptual Model B.

Operational Definitions

This following section will provide the operational definitions of the above mentioned variables. Operational definitions provide the foundation for the study. The operational definitions included are defined in the following order: engagement level, language use, parents' and teachers' perceptions, and classroom activities.

Engagement Level

This study measured child engagement during the first and second halves of various academic and non-academic preschool activities, and defined three different levels of engagement ranging from the lowest degree to the highest:

Not Engaged. Not responding; engaging in inappropriate verbal interaction (talking to a neighbor); engaging in talk not related to activity; not watching the activity; leaving the activity; staring off (daydreaming); exhibiting facial expression that indicates boredom.

Somewhat Engaged. Asking for a statement to be repeated; verbally interacting with interruptions; engaging in some activity-related talk; making some eye contact; not leaving the activity; exhibiting facial expression that indicates interest.

Fully Engaged. Asking a question; verbally interacting; responding appropriately; engaging in prolonged activity-related talk; actively following (through eye contact) the peer or teacher; moving closer to the activity; raising of hand; exhibiting facial expression that indicates enthusiasm.

There is a subjective quality to this engagement scale. Verbatim field notes were obtained in addition to engagement measure. These field notes have check-and-balance-system and were used against the scale. In addition to these tallies related to the levels of

engagement, the periodic field notes included comments about the behaviors that didn't really fit into these boxes (scale). These field notes helped to determine behaviors that are culturally based so that student cultural differences were not overlooked. For example; eye contact does not necessary mean in some cultures that the students are not engaged.

Language Use

This study defined language use in terms of the quantity and quality of English language produced by bilingual children during a given preschool activity. To indicate the quantity of language produced, a three-point scale was used:

1/Minimal. One comment or less produced during a given preschool activity.

2/Moderate. Two to three comments produced during an activity.

3/Largest. Four or more comments produced during a given preschool activity. Descriptive statistics including frequency distribution were used to analyze the quantity of English language produced.

The quality of language produced by bilingual children was measured in two parts: speaking and listening. Both have dichotomous values and were assessed by indicating "yes" or "no."

Speaking. Scoring "yes" indicated that the language produced by bilingual children was comprehensible and "no" indicated that the language produced by bilingual children was not comprehensible.

Listening. Scoring "yes" indicated listening behaviors. These behaviors were: head nodding, facial expression indicating interest, and answering/commenting on what has been said. Scoring "no" indicated a child is exhibiting behaviors that were indicative of not being involved in listening. These behaviors were: looking

the other way, facial expression indicating disinterest, and not answering/commenting on what has been said.

Parents' and Teachers' Perceptions

Parents' and teachers' perceptions were defined as beliefs toward certain phenomena. The phenomenon in this study was English language development, and the perceptions were measured in relation to certain classroom activities. The perceptions were rated on a three-point scale ranging from 0 to 2: 0 indicated no contribution; 1 indicated some contribution; and 2 indicated great contribution toward English language development.

Classroom Activities

Preschool classroom activities were defined as either academically or non-academically oriented classroom activities. Academically based activities were those where the emphasis was on direct teacher instruction and rote memorization of scholastic facts. The academic activities included in this study were: alphabet recognition, art center time, circle time, library center time, book reading, rhyming, and storyteller time. Non-academically based preschool classroom activities were defined as play-based activities where children learn through individual exploring and socializing with their peers. The non-academic activities included in this study were: dramatic pretend play, free play, climbing monkey bars and play structures, singing songs, peer book reading, socio-dramatic play, sand box, social meal time, and dance party.

Research Setting

The setting for the study was the San Francisco State University's Associated Students Inc. (ASI) daycare center. This daycare center is a private non-profit

organization located on the SFSU campus and provides childcare services to around 100 families in a given school year. It was endorsed by the CSU Board of Trustees in January 1971 and has been accredited by the Academy of the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). It is esteemed for its high quality childcare, which it provides to all enrolled families without discrimination based on physical disability, sexual orientation, ethnicity, race, and religion. It adopts a curriculum that refrains from religious instruction, thus, celebration of holidays is not practiced at this school.

The admittance of the children to this center is dependent on the parents' status as it is open only to SFSU students, staff, and faculty. Thus, the children attending ASI daycare center are from diverse socioeconomic and linguistic backgrounds; they are monolingual, bilingual, or trilingual. Tuition is waived for children of low-income SFSU students; however, this discount does not apply to SFSU staff and faculty. In addition, the preschool program offers low-income parents two grants, one state and one federal: the State Preschool Program and the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) grants. The latter is provided via a larger grant program administered by the U.S. Department of Higher Education and it is designed to provide financial assistance for low-income undergraduate parents attempting to earn a college degree. Grantees also receive part-time (Monday through Friday, 7:30AM to 12:30PM) childcare under this subsidy program. Finally, many of the low-income parents also receive tuition assistance toward earning their undergraduate degrees, thus providing further opportunity to send their children to the ASI daycare center.

The daycare center is divided into two sections: infant-toddler and preschool. Each section has its own coordinators; thus, each is managed separately. There are two infant classrooms, two toddler classrooms, and two transitional classrooms in the infant-toddler section, and three classrooms in the preschool section.

The preschool serves children age three to five. The teacher-child ratio is 1:8. Every classroom has a full-time head teacher with a bachelor's or master's degree in childhood development or psychology. Preschool head teachers also frequently work as lecturers in childhood development at SFSU. There are three to four part-time teacher aides in every classroom who are also SFSU students in childhood development psychology. Part-time teacher aides must be students at SFSU, and once they graduate they can no longer work there unless they are promoted to a full-time head teacher position.

The ASI daycare center works closely with the psychology and childhood development departments at SFSU. Research is conducted (upon parental consent) in this center on a daily basis by students or faculty. The research for this present study was conducted in all three preschool classrooms.

Sample

A purposeful homogeneous sampling research method was used to select the sample for this study, which consisted of eight bilingual preschool children, twelve preschool teachers, and eight parents. Purposeful sampling means that bilingual preschool children and their parents and teachers were intentionally selected to learn about L2 development in academic and non-academic preschool activities (Creswell, 2008). Homogeneous sampling, generally, is when the researcher purposefully samples a

subgroup of respondents "that have defining characteristics" (p. 216). The specific characteristics that the present study's sample of children possess were the fact that they were young bilinguals between the ages of three and five years old, and that English was their second language. Their gender, linguistic and ethnic background, and socioeconomic status varied.

In addition to observations of these children, the children's parents and the ASI preschool teachers were surveyed and interviewed. There are three preschool classrooms at the ASI daycare center, with five teachers in each classroom; all teachers were asked to participate in this study. Each classroom had a head teacher who was in charge of the activities and schedule. However, he/she was not in charge of all children in his/her classroom; the 16 children in each of the three preschool classrooms were divided into groups of 3 or 4, and each group had an assigned primary teacher who was not necessarily the head teacher. The ASI daycare center also utilized an art teacher, a storyteller, and playground teachers who usually worked with children from all three preschool classrooms on a regular basis. All of these teachers were asked to participate in this study and all teachers' perceptions were equally important regardless of their rank at the ASI center.

Instrument Development

A survey instrument was developed for the purpose of measuring the teachers' and parents' perceptions of the effect that free play and teacher-structured activities have on the English language development of bilingual preschool children. There were ten preschool classroom activities on this survey for the parents and teachers to evaluate, of which six were academic and four were non-academic. The six academic activities listed

on the survey were: alphabet recognition, art center time, circle time, library center time, reading books time, and storyteller time. The four non-academic activities listed on the survey were: dramatic pretend play, climbing monkey bars and play structures, singing songs and rhyming, and socio-dramatic play (see Appendix B). These activities were selected because of their common daily use in preschool classrooms.

There were two versions of the survey, one for teachers and the other for parents. These two versions only differed in the type of demographic characteristic questions asked at the end of the survey. The demographic characteristic questions for the teachers addressed the following: teacher educational level, major area of specialization, number of years taught in early childhood education, number of years teaching at a current preschool, number of years taught ELLs, ethnic background, gender, and age. The demographic characteristic questions on the parent version of the survey addressed: educational level, primary language spoken at home, mother's native language, father's native language, number of months child has been acquiring English as a second language, ethnic background, gender, and age. For both teachers and parents, all of the demographic questions but two ("educational level" and "gender") were open-ended questions where respondents were free to write in any answer desired. The researcher coded the responses and created categories.

Teachers and parents were asked to circle on a scale of 0 to 2 which of the preschool classroom activities they believed to be helpful toward L2 (English language) development. The 3-point scale ranged from 0/no help; to 1/some help; to 2/great help. In addition to rating each activity, respondents were also asked to check each activity in a separate column if the activity was seen in any of the three preschool classrooms at the

ASI school (see Appendix B). The survey instrument was taken for an expert review of University of San Francisco School of Education professor for validation. After the validation of this instrument, an electronic copy of the instrument was created for web-based host site Qualtrics.com.

Instruments developed by other researchers (Cryer et al., 2002; Fogle & Mendez, 2006; Mendez & Fogle, 2002; Pirpir et al., 2009; Rescorla, 1991; Stipek et al. 1992) measuring parents' perceptions/attitudes/beliefs toward academic and play-based activities did not include second language acquisition items. This was the reason a new measure was developed to measure parents' attitudes towards academic and play-based activities have on English as second language development. Similarly, when it comes to instruments developed by researchers measuring mainly the adherence toward developmentally appropriate practices (DAP) or to developmentally inappropriate practices (DIP) of preschool teachers, the major instruments *Teacher Belief Scale (TBS)* (Charlesworth, Hart, Burts, & Hernandez, 1991) and *Preschool Teacher Literacy Beliefs Questionnaire (TBQ)* (Hindman & Wasik, 2008; Seefeldt, 2004) have also fallen short of measuring perceptions/attitudes/beliefs toward academic the effects of play-based activities and academic activities have on English as a second language acquisition items.

Expert Review

An expert review was sought from an expert School of Education professor at the University of San Francisco (see Appendix D). The expert review consisted of informal advice about the content and structure of the instrument. The expert professor teaches Survey Research at the doctoral level at the University of San Francisco and has collaborated on numerous survey-based studies. The informal review and validation of

the survey instrument and operational variables that quantify the engagement level of bilingual children and their language use during preschool classroom activities occurred in July, 2012.

<div align="center">**Process of Data Collection**</div>

Preschool Classroom Observations

From November 26th to December 21st, 2012, the researcher conducted observations that took place Monday through Friday between the hours of 9:30AM and 5:30PM. The observation period lasted four weeks. Eight bilingual preschool children were observed during two different types of activities: academic and non-academic. The researcher observed all academic and non-academic activities at the preschool center. The non-academic preschool activities: dramatic/pretend play, socio-dramatic play, free play, peer reading books time, social meal time, sand box, dance party, singing songs, climbing monkey bars and play structures. Academic activities during which bilingual children were observed were: circle time, rhyming, library center time, storytelling, art center time, numbers, and alphabet recognition. Thus, each child was observed as participating in the natural setting of the preschool classroom. Since there were eight children observed during sixteen different preschool activities, there were 285 observations totaling 143 hours of observation preschool classroom time in this study (see Appendix C.1 for a chart of a typical observation week). These observations took place in three pre-school classrooms at the ASI daycare center at San Francisco State University.

Surveys

A web-based survey, hosted at Qualtrics.com, was distributed electronically to 15 parents and 26 preschool teachers at the beginning of the six-week data collection period.

Participants were able to access the survey 24 hours a day, seven days a week, at their convenience. There were two versions of the survey, differentiated only by unique demographic characteristic questions for teacher respondents and parent respondents (see Appendix B). Once the researcher received approval from the preschool director to conduct the data collection at the ASI school, letters were distributed to preschool parents of bilingual children asking to participate in this study. At that point, an email with the survey link was sent out to eight of those parents who have agreed to participate and to twelve preschool teachers. To encourage a high response rate, a reminder email was sent out after a week has passed.

Teacher Interviews

The researcher conducted two types of teacher interviews: one-on-one and group. One-on-one interviews were conducted with the two head preschool teachers and one preschool coordinator who had a ten-year experience teaching bilingual preschool children. One group interview was conducted with five preschool teacher-aides. Interviews were conducted at the end of the six-week data collection period so that the survey results could be discussed with the interviewees.

The one-on-one interviews lasted for 20 to30 minutes each and were held in the conference room of ASI daycare center. They were conducted Monday through Friday during each teacher's regular teaching schedule. Since teachers were interviewed separately, separate appointments were made for the interviews upon IRB approval. All teacher interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed immediately following each interview. The interview questions were follow-up questions to the survey results to give the teachers a chance to add any additional information from which other themes

emerged. The first question was developed to serve as "an icebreaker to relax the interviewees and motivate them to talk" (Creswell, 2008, p. 233). The interview guiding questions are:

1. Please describe your role in your students' second language development.

2. Which classroom activities do you believe have the greatest effect on the children's English language development?

3. Do children appear to use their English language more during any of these classroom activities?

4. During which classroom activities is the children's English language performance of higher quality?

The group interview took place with five preschool classroom teacher aides. The same guiding interview questions were used for this group interview; however, the teachers were also able to have an open discussion about the effects that the two types of preschool classroom activities have on children's English language development. It was the researcher's hope that during the group interview the more reserved teacher aides would be more prone to open up and discuss their attitudes about the effects these two types of preschool classroom activities have on children's English language development. The more reserved teacher aides would be more likely to speak about an issue once they hear someone else talk about it.

Parent Interviews

One-on-one group interviews were conducted with five parents of the bilingual preschool children toward the end of the six-week data collection period. The one-on-one interviews lasted for 20 to30 minutes each and were held in the conference room of ASI

daycare center. The interview questions were again follow-up questions to the survey results. The four guiding interview questions that were used during the teacher interviews were also used for the one-on-one parent interviews.

Data Analysis

Research Questions One and Two/Observations

The researcher examined four research questions in this study. The first two research questions measured the effects of free-play activities and teacher-structured activities on L2 development. Both research question one and research question two have two sub questions: sub question A and sub question B. Sub question A examined the level of engagement of bilingual children when interacting with peers for research question one and when interacting with teachers for research question two. Sub question B examined the quality and quantity of L2 production when interacting with peers for research question one and when interacting with teachers for research question two. By examining responses to sub questions A and B, the researcher was able to determine and answer research questions one and two. The engagement level and quality and quantity of L2 determined the development of L2.

Qualitative and quantitative observation data were used to examine research question one and research question two. Observation data were divided into two parts; engagement level and language use. These two parts were quantified with a number scale. When the engagement level scores and language use scores were added, the highest possible score was 7 to 8, a moderate score was 5 to 6, and the lowest score was 3 to 4.

Descriptive statistics that include frequencies/percentages, means, and standard deviations were computed to analyze the scores. Those activities that have mean numbers

between 2 and 3 were considered to produce the highest possible levels of children's engagement and language use, and thus the most useful toward their English language development (L2). On the other end of the spectrum, activities that have mean numbers in the lowest range, between 1 and 2, were considered to produce the lowest possible levels of children's engagement and language use, and the least useful toward their English language development (L2). These results allowed inferences regarding which activities, free-play or academic, were the most appropriate activities to use (Kagan & Lowenstein, 2004) in preschool classrooms for English language (L2) development.

Standardization of scores – z-scores

Children's observed scores were also analyzed by normative scales. Raw scores were converted into z-scores using the group mean and standard deviation. When the z-score was negative, the raw score was below the mean; when the z-score was positive, the raw score was above the mean. Composite scores of academic and non-academic activities were then computed and compared. The negative z-scores indicated low levels of child's engagement and language use during an activity and positive z-scores indicated high levels of child's engagement and language use.

During observations, the researcher was taking additional verbatim notes regarding children's engagement and language produced during academic and non-academic preschool activities. These field notes were qualitatively analyzed and used as additional information supporting the results of research question one and research question two. The researcher utilized the "bottom-up" approach to analyze the qualitative data (Creswell, 2008, p. 244). This inductive process allowed the researcher to generate themes from the detailed verbatim data; these themes were further divided into groups

through a coding process. The coding process allowed the researcher to narrow down the data into a few themes, and also to select only the data that provided specific evidence for those themes (Creswell, 2008). The specific themes the researcher was looking for were in accord with what research questions one and two were examining: quality, quantity of language use, and engagement patterns that included verbal and non-verbal behaviors.

Parent/Teacher Survey/Interviews

The quantitative data collected through the survey instrument were used to answer research questions three and four. Responses regarding the effects of academic and non-academic activities on L2 development were tallied separately for teachers and for parents, and these data were analyzed by using descriptive statistics. Frequency and percentage were ascertained, and means and standard deviations were computed and analyzed. A higher mean on the scale indicated the activity was perceived to have positive effects on L2 development, and a lower mean indicated the activity was perceived to have little to no effect on L2 development. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software (George & Mallery, 2011) was used to analyze the collected survey data.

The data collected through the interviews were transcribed and coded into categories and then themes. The researcher used the same " bottom-up" approach to analyze the qualitative interview responses (Creswell, 2008, p. 244). The coding process allowed for narrowing down the codes into only few themes and only use the data that provided evidence for the themes (Creswell, 2008). As mentioned previously, the specific themes were in accordance with what research questions one and two are examining: children's langauge use, and engagement patterns which includes verbal and non-verbal

behaviors. In this qualitative analysis, it was important to report the meaning of the themes using verbatim responses of the participants.

Ethical Considerations

The option of participation in this study was given to the children's parents, who were asked to sign a consent form before observations of their children begun. Participants were identified by pseudonyms that were assigned once the researcher confirmed the children's genders. The information obtained in this study will not be shared with any other researchers; it will be kept confidential. The study results will be made available to the parents. Data collected from teachers' interviews and surveys will also be anonymized and kept confidential.

The researcher followed the University of San Francisco's Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements for the Protection of Human Subjects and obtained and received IRB approval on November 6th, 2012 for the eight preschool children, eight parents, and twelve teachers who were the participants of this study (See Appendix H).

Chapter IV

Findings

This chapter will present findings from observations of bilingual children during different preschool classroom activities. It will also present preschool teacher and parent perceptions of how these activities affect the children's English language development. The purpose of this study was to determine whether academic activities (teacher–structured) or non–academic activities (free play) are more beneficial for bilingual children's English language development. The study focused on four research questions.

1. What is the effect of free play activities on bilingual preschool children's second language (L2) development?

   A. What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

   B. What is the quality and quantity of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

2. What is the effect of teacher–structured activities on L2 development of bilingual preschool children?

   A. What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while interacting with teachers?

   B. What is the quality and quantity of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with teachers?

3. What are the preschool teachers' perceptions of the effect of free play vs. teacher–structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

4. What are the preschool parents' perceptions of the effect of free play vs. teacher–structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

The analysis of results is divided into two sections. The first section contains the results of research questions one and two; the second section contains the results of research questions three and four. Both sections begin with a description of sample demographics. The first section analyzes data collected through preschool classroom observations. The observations, which took place in three different preschool classrooms and the Associated Students Incorporated (ASI) childcare center playground, consisted of the researcher determining the level of engagement and language use during certain activities. The level of engagement was measured on a three–point scale of: 1–not engaged, 2–somewhat engaged, and 3–fully engaged. See Appendix A.2 for the Operational Definitions Form. Language use was divided into two parts: quantity of language use and quality of language use. The quantity measure was assessed on a three–point scale of: 1–minimal, 2–moderate, and 3–largest. The quality measure was further divided into two parts: speaking and listening. Both speaking and listening measures were measured dichotomously as 1–yes and 0–no. In addition to collecting quantitative data during the observations, the researcher also made qualitative field notes.

The second section analyzes data collected through a survey instrument and through interviews. Both data sources were used to answer research questions three and four, which measured teacher and parent perceptions of the effects that academic and non–academic preschool classroom activities have on children's English language development. The survey instrument included ten preselected preschool classroom

activities for the respondents to rate on a three–point scale of: 0–not helpful, 1–somewhat helpful, and 2–greatly helpful toward English language development. See Appendix B for a copy of the Survey Instrument. The interview consisted of four questions that further inquired about the effect that academic and non–academic preschool activities have on children's English language development. A brief overview of the research methodology, children's profiles, and the background information on the observations and activities will be discussed first before presenting the findings.

Brief Overview of Methodology

The data collection period lasted six weeks and consisted of three techniques: observations of eight bilingual children in three different preschool classrooms; surveys of preschool teachers and parents; and interviews with preschool teachers and parents. A total of 285 observations took place during the data collection period. These observations were used to measure research questions one and two.

Surveys were distributed in two phases to all teachers at the ASI preschool center and to all parents of bilingual children at ASI. Interviews were arranged with the same teachers and parents who participated in the survey. Twelve teachers took the survey and eight of the twelve participated in the interview sessions. Eight parents participated in the survey and five participated in the interview sessions. The data obtained through the survey instrument and interview sessions were used to measure research questions three and four.

Overview of Students

Of the eight bilingual children who participated in this research study, five were males and three were females. Their ages ranged from three to five years old. Most

attended the preschool classroom's first year (N=5); the rest attended the preschool program's second year (N=3). Besides speaking the English language, these children also spoke Japanese (N=1), Portuguese (N=2), and Spanish (N=5). Five of the bilingual children were simultaneous and three were sequential bilinguals. What follows is a brief description of each child.

Individual Student Profiles

Isabel is five years old and in her first year of preschool. Isabel is a sequential bilingual, as her native language is Spanish; she is exposed to English only at the preschool and has been learning it for one year. Both of her parents speak only Spanish at home. Her mother identified their family's ethnic background as Latino. Isabel attended preschool classroom number 8. Isabel has a special ability of translating from Spanish to English and vice versa.

Robert is five years of age and in his first year of preschool. Robert is a simultaneous bilingual and has been acquiring both Spanish and English since birth. Robert father's native language is Spanish; his mother's is English. Both languages are spoken at home, where the parents have adopted the one–language–one–parent rule. Robert's mother identified his ethnic background as being mixed Caucasian and Mexican.

Lisa is three–and–a–half years old and in her first year at preschool. Lisa is a simultaneous bilingual. Her mother's native language is English and her father's his Spanish. She has been acquiring English since birth. Her mother identified her ethnic background as white. Lisa likes music and dancing as both of her parents are musicians.

Toshitaro is five years old and in his first year of preschool. He is a sequential bilingual and has been acquiring Japanese since birth and English for only the past four months.

Toshitaro is exposed to English solely at school; Japanese, his parents' native language, is spoken at home. Toshitaro likes to watch American sports such as baseball and basketball with his father. He knows all of the rules of the games.

Loren is three years old and in her first year at preschool. Loren is a simultaneous bilingual and has been acquiring both English and Portuguese since birth. Loren mother's native language is Portuguese and her father's is English. Both languages are spoken at home. Her ethnic background was identified as white and Latin.

Greg is four years old and in his first year attending preschool. Greg is a sequential bilingual and has been acquiring Portuguese since birth and English for over a year. The primary language spoken at home is Portuguese, which is also his mother's and father's native language. Greg is of Brazilian ethnic background. Greg has a silly disposition; he loves to giggle and make his friends laugh.

Bryan is three–and–a–half years old and in his first year in preschool. Bryan is a simultaneous bilingual and has been acquiring both Spanish and English since birth. Both his mother's and father's native language is Spanish, but they speak both Spanish and English at home. Bryan is very social and he is very interested in cars.

Chad is five–and–a–half years old and in his second year in preschool. Chad is a simultaneous bilingual and has been acquiring English and Indonesian since birth. Chad likes to spend time with his friends.

Observations

The observations took place in all three ASI classrooms and outside in the schoolyard, which is designated for many preschool activities. An almost equal distribution of observations took place in the morning (N=126) and in the afternoon

(N=136). The distribution of children recruited from each of the three classrooms, on the other hand, was unequal: four of the participating bilingual children were from preschool classroom number seven, also called "blue room"; three children were from classroom number eight, also called "red room"; and one child was from classroom number nine, also called "green room."

On any given day, each preschool classroom had a head teacher and at least two teacher aides; the student–teacher ratio could not exceed eight to one. The head teacher designated the activities and would oversee the activities taking place inside the classrooms or outside in the backyard. Children in each classroom would often be divided into two groups; if one group of children went outside, one of the teachers would go with them and one would stay inside with the second group. The head teachers and teacher aides took turns taking children outside; however, the majority of time the teacher aides went outside and the head teachers stayed in the classroom.

During the observations (N=262), teacher aides were present 56% (N=146) of the time, head teachers were present 24% (N=63) of the time, and both head teacher and teacher aides were present 20% (N=53) of the time. While teachers were always present during classroom activities, they did not always participate or intervene in the children's activities. Many times teachers merely watched over the children while they were playing. During certain activities, like "circle time," both the head teacher and the teacher aides would be present.

Participating children attended the ASI preschool either part time (N=3) or full time (N=5), depending on their parents' class schedule at SFSU. Their attendance options were: Tuesday/Thursday only (N=1); Monday/Wednesday/Friday afternoons (N=1);

Monday/Wednesday/Friday mornings (N=1); and Monday through Friday mornings and afternoons (N=5). The preschool director developed an observational schedule for this study; the children were observed a different number of times, depending on their schedule. The highest number of observations (N=54) occurred with a full–time–attending bilingual child (Bryan) and the lowest number of observations (N=16) occurred with a part–time–attending child (Lisa). See Table 1.

Table 1. *Frequency of Preschool Observations*

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Participants		
Chad	44	15
Robert	31	11
Lisa	21	7
Loren	31	11
Bryan	60	21
Greg	31	11
Isabel	29	10
Toshitaro	38	13
	N= 285	*99
Time		
AM	134	47
PM	151	53
	N=285	100
Place		
Classroom 7	95	33
Classroom 8	58	20
Classroom 9	18	6
Outdoor	114	40
	N=285	*99
Teacher on Duty		
Head Teacher	69	24
Teacher Aid	156	55
Both Teachers	55	19
Olive/Storyteller	5	2
	N=285	100

Some percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Classroom Activities

The researcher identified three categories of classroom activities at the ASI preschool center: academic activities that were completely teacher–structured; non–academic activities that were free–play and not teacher–structured; and mixed activities where children's play was controlled by the teachers. The distribution of these activities within the five–week observation period varied. Non–academic activities were most frequently observed (63%, N=164) during the observation time, followed by academic activities (23%, N=61) and mixed activities (14%, N=37).

Academic activities were usually large group activities where the teacher was in charge. Children were asked to sit quietly and not talk or interrupt during these activities, which included alphabet learning, color and shapes identification, and learning numbers. Reading out loud to children was also categorized as academic, because as with the other activities children were not allowed to participate and had to take turns if they wanted to speak. For the majority of the academic activities, the children could not take equal turns to talk because there was not enough time.

Non–academic activities such as free–play were spontaneous and not pre–planned. Children were free to choose any play area or play activity and typically they would start by negotiating the kind of game they would engage in. Teachers in all three preschool classrooms would rarely tell children what to do during the free–play time and they would not get involved during the children's games; instead, they would merely oversee the children for safety reasons.

Two new non–academic activities that appeared to be developed/adapted by this preschool were a social mealtime and a dance party time. Mealtimes were formatted in a

way to encourage the children to converse. Children seemed to be familiar with the format, which was consistent throughout all three preschool classrooms, so they did not have to be encouraged to converse at each mealtime; however, children were reminded throughout the day that they could discuss certain issues during mealtime. Dance party, on the other hand, was not consistent throughout the three preschool classrooms but was conducted only in room seven. However, children from all three classrooms were invited to attend the dance party activity if they wished to do so. The dance party activity would be announced at least thirty minutes beforehand in the other two classrooms. This activity was almost always scheduled for the late afternoons.

Only in mixed activities would teachers participate in children's games; these activities were so called because when teachers participated in them they usually took them over. Mixed activities also included a child playing with a teacher one–on–one. Two of the children participants in this study preferred playing with a teacher rather than with another child. Not all children are social or like to play with other children. For the frequency of the three different types of activities, see Table 2.

Table 2. *Frequency of Classroom Activities*

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Activity Type		
Academic	66	23
Non–academic	180	63
Mixed	39	14
	N=285	100
Name of Activity		
/Non–academic/		
Free play	71	25
Pretend play	41	14
Monkey bars	14	5
Peer–book reading	3	1
Dance party	14	5
Mealtime	21	7
Dramatic play	4	1
Sand box	8	3
Singing	14	5
/Academic/		
Circle time	18	6
Book reading	19	7
Olive/storytelling	9	3
Art Activity	6	2
Alphabet	8	3
Numbers	2	1
Rhyming	4	1
/Mixed–Activity/		
Playing game/teacher	29	10
	N=285	99

Some Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Section One: Analysis of Research Question One and Two

Overall Student Engagement Level

Overall student engagement is analyzed for both research questions one and two. What is following this section is a detailed analysis of subquestions. During the preschool classroom observations, children's engagement level was determined during the first half of the given activity and during the second half. The engagement level ranged from "not engaged" to "somewhat engaged" to "fully engaged." On average, more than half the children were fully engaged during both the first and second half of observations. A quarter of the children were somewhat engaged and less than a quarter were not engaged. Children were more engaged during the first half of the activity (m=2.4, SD=.775) than they were during the second half of the activity (m=2.28, SD=.781) with a similar variance across subjects. In general, children were fully engaged during the preschool activities more frequently than not engaged or only somewhat engaged. See Table 3.

Table 3. *Engagement Level (N=285)*

Not Engaged		Somewhat Engaged		Fully Engaged			
f	%	f	%	f	%	Mean	SD
First Half of Activity							
51	17.9	69	24.2	165	57.9	2.4	.775
Second Half of Activity							
58	20.4	90	31.6	137	48.1	2.28	.781

Mean of 1=Not Engaged, 2=Somewhat Engaged, 3=Fully Engaged

Overall Student Language Use—Quantity

The quantity of language use was measured on a three–point scale of minimal (one comment or less), moderate (two to three comments), and largest (four or more comments) amount of English language produced during a given preschool classroom activity. The resulting distribution indicated that the majority of observations during both first half and second half across all classroom activities showed a large quantity of language use with half the children producing four or more comments; followed by an equal number of moderate quantity, with almost a quarter of children producing two to three comments; and minimal quantity, with almost a quarter of children producing one comment or less. On average, children spoke slightly more during the first half of activities (m=2.33, SD=.821) than during the second half (m=2.25, SD=.832). Overall, children produced four or more comments during a given preschool activity more frequently than one to three comments or no comments at all. See Table 4.

Table 4. *Language Use—Quantity (N=285)*

	Minimal		Moderate		Largest		
	f	%	f	%	f	%	Mean	SD
First Half of Activity								
	64	22.5	62	21.8	159	55.8	2.33	.821
Second Half of Activity								
	72	25.3	71	24.9	142	49.8	2.25	.832

Mean of 1=Minimal, 2=Moderate, 3=Largest

Overall Student Language Use Quality—Speaking/Listening

Language use was divided into two categories: "verbal" and "listening." Both categories were measured on a "yes" and "no" scale. For the verbal measure, a "yes" score indicated that children spoke and were understood during activities; "no" indicated that they did not speak or were not understood during activities. For the listening measure, "yes" indicated that a child exhibited listening behaviors such as: head nodding, facial expression indicating interest, and answering/commenting on what had been said. Non–listening behaviors were indicated by "no" and these included: looking the other way, facial expression indicating lack of interest, and not answering/commenting on what had been said.

The majority of children—over three quarters—scored "yes" on both verbal and listening measures during both first and second half of the activities observed. On average, children spoke more and their language was understood equally during the first half of activities (m=.79, SD=.406) and the second half (m=.79, SD=.406). However, children were listening slightly more during the first half of activities (m=.91, SD=.283) than during the second half of activities (m=.88, SD=.325) with a larger variance during the second half of activities. Overall, children produced more comprehensible language and were understood more frequently than not during preschool activities. Children also exhibited listening behavior more frequently than not. See Tables 5 and 6.

Table 5. *Quality of Language Use—Speaking (N=285)*

	No		Yes		Mean	SD
	f	%	f	%		
First Half of Activity						
	59	20.7	226	79.3	.79	.406
Second Half of Activity						
	59	20.7	226	79.3	.79	.406

Mean of 0=No, 1=Yes

Table 6. *Quality of Language Use—Listening (N=285)*

	No		Yes		Mean	SD
	f	%	f	%		
First Half of Activity						
	25	8.8	260	91.2	.91	.283
Second Half of Activity						
	34	11.9	251	88.1	.88	.325

Mean of 0=No, 1=Yes

The data results which include subquestions are presented in the following order: first, findings of bilingual children's engagement with peers (research question one) and engagement with teachers (research question two) are analyzed and compared; then language use (which includes quality and quantity of language) when interacting with peers (research question one) and finally interacting with teachers (research question two) is analyzed and compared.

Research Question One

What is the effect of free–play activities on second language (L2) development of bilingual preschool children?

C. What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

Subquestion 1A—Engagement Level with Peers

The non–academic (not teacher–structured) activities in which students showed the most engagement were pretend play (84%, N=35), singing and monkey bars (79%, N=11), and free play (73%, N=52). However, children were not as fully engaged in the second half of these activities as they were in the first half. In free play, engagement level decreased by 10% during the second half of activity (62%, n=44), in pretend play (68.3%, n=28) by 17%, and in monkey bars (71.4%, n=10) by 7%. More drastic decreases in engagement level occurred in dance party activity (36%) and peer book reading activity (33%, n=1). During pretend play, bilingual children were completely engaged and carried on long conversations. For example, in one instance Loren was playing with a close friend and said to her: "I want to play grandma" and "I have a dog and he needs dog food." As they were getting dog toys from the basket, she continued: "Come on doggy,"

"Get the collar!," "You can carry mine," "I hold this myself," "Is your doggy hungry?,"
and "Huf, I have to go pee."

The non–academic activities that showed an increase in engagement level during
the second half of activity were sand box (75%, n=6) and mealtime (57%, n=12). The
non–academic activities that did not show any difference in engagement level between
the first and second half of activities were singing (78.6%, n=11) and dramatic play
(75%, n=3). See Tables 7 and 8.

Research Question Two

What is the effect of teacher–structured activities on L2 development of bilingual
preschool children?

   C.   What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while
        interacting with teachers?

Subquestion 2A—Engagement Level with Teachers

For academic (teacher–structured) activities, the bilingual preschool children
scored higher in the "not engaged" and "somewhat engaged" categories than in the "fully
engaged" category. The scores indicate that bilingual children were the least linguistically
engaged during book reading (58%, N=11), storytelling (56%, N=5), and art time (50%,
N=3). Book reading time and storytelling activities required sitting still and quietly
listening for a twenty to thirty minute period of time. These academic activities were also
conducted in a large group of at least sixteen children. Conversely, non–academic
activities were for the most part conducted in small groups ranging from two to five
children.

In one example, Bryan was only somewhat engaged (in an academic activity)
while Olive was telling the "Per and Dala Horse" story. Olive started by saying, "Today

is a long story. We are going to Norvey to see the trolls. Trolls are afraid of X. Show me X with your fingers!" Bryan made an "X" with his fingers. However, once Olive continued with the story, Bryan started looking around and tried to interact with the kids around him.

Bilingual children's engagement level changed dramatically from non–academic to academic activities. Children were much less engaged during academic activities (such as book reading and Olive storytelling), showing boredom and lack of interest, and sometimes even leaving the academic activity altogether.

The data indicated that during academic activities children's engagement declined from the first half to the second half by 15%. A similar decline in engagement was also noted during non–academic activities, but the extent was not as great (10%). Singing was the only activity that did not exhibit decline in engagement if children were engaged. Field notes indicated that students exhibited a great deal of happiness during the singing activities. Children usually smiled during the singing activities, a behavior that was not detected to as great an extent during other classroom activities. Toshitaro, who scored low on engagement during other non–academic activities, scored very high on the singing activity, while Bryan, who scored high on engagement during other non–academic activities, scored low on the singing activity. See Tables 7, 8 and 9.

Table 7. *Crosstabulation of Engagement Level by Classroom Activity (first half of activity)*

Preschool Classroom Activities	Not Engaged		Somewhat Engaged		Fully Engaged	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
/Non–academic/						
Free Play	5	7	14	20	52	73
Pretend Play	4	10	2	5	35	85
Monkey Bars	0	0	3	21	11	79
Peer Book Reading	0	0	1	33	2	67
Dance Party	1	7	3	21	10	71
Social Mealtime	3	14	7	33	11	52
Dramatic Play	0	0	1	25	3	75
Sand Box	2	25	1	13	5	63
Singing	2	14	1	7	11	79
/Academic/						
Circle Time	6	33	9	50	3	17
Book Reading	11	58	5	26	3	16
Olive/Storytelling	5	56	2	22	2	22
Art Activities	3	50	2	33	1	17
Alphabet	2	25	3	38	3	38
Numbers	0	0	1	50	1	50
Rhyming	1	25	3	75	0	0
/Mixed/						
Play game with Teacher	6	21	11	38	12	41

*Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Table 8. *Crosstabulation of Engagement Level by Classroom Activity (second half of activity)*

Preschool Classroom Activities	Not Engaged		Somewhat Engaged		Fully Engaged	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
/Non–academic/						
Free Play	5	7	22	31	44	62
Pretend Play	3	7	10	24	28	68
Monkey Bars	0	0	4	29	10	71
Peer Book Reading	0	0	2	67	1	33
Dance Party	7	50	2	14	5	36
Social Mealtime	2	10	7	33	12	57
Dramatic Play	0	0	1	25	3	75
Sand Box	2	25	0	0	6	75
Singing	2	14	1	7	11	79
/Academic/						
Circle Time	9	50	9	50	0	0
Book Reading	11	58	5	26	3	16
Olive/Storytelling	4	44	5	56	0	0
Art Activities	2	33	2	33	2	33
Alphabet	2	25	4	50	2	25
Numbers	1	50	0	0	1	50
Rhyming	3	75	1	25	0	0
/Mixed/						
Play game with Teacher	5	17	15	52	9	31

*Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Table 9. *Crosstabulation of Engagement Level by Classroom Activity (first and second half combined)*

Preschool Classroom Activities	Not Engaged		Somewhat Engaged		Fully Engaged	
	f	%	f	%	f	%
/Non–academic/						
Free Play	5	7	18	26	48	68
Pretend Play	4	9	6	15	32	77
Monkey Bars	0	0	4	25	11	75
Peer Book Reading	0	0	2	50	2	50
Dance Party	4	29	3	18	8	54
Social Mealtime	3	12	7	33	12	55
Dramatic Play	0	0	1	25	3	75
Sand Box	2	25	1	7	6	69
Singing	1	7	1	4	6	40
/Academic/						
Circle Time	8	42	9	50	2	9
Book Reading	11	58	5	26	3	16
Olive/Storytelling	5	50	4	39	1	11
Art Activities	3	42	2	33	2	25
Alphabet	2	25	4	44	3	32
Numbers	1	25	1	25	1	25
Rhyming	2	50	2	50	0	0
/Mixed/						
Play game with Teacher	6	19	19	45	11	36

Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Subquestion 1B—Language Use with Peers

What is the quantity and quality of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

Language Use—Quantity

Crosstabulations were used to describe the quantity and quality of English language use during non–academic, academic and mixed preschool classroom activities. The three activities that showed the highest language quantity during peer interaction were pretend play (85.4%, n=35), singing (78.6%, n=11), and dramatic play (75%, n=3). Bilingual children were talking more when engaged in pretend play activity compared to other activities. In one example, while Loren was playing house with her friend, she said, "Ok, I will put my pajamas on," "I need to go to the bathroom before I put my pajamas on," and "Ok, now I am going to Target." Loren and her friend set up their chair, pretending it was a car and they were driving to Target. When a boy wanted to join the game and drive the car instead of Loren, she told him, "Hey! I am a big girl too!" Two additional activities that showed a high quantity of English language use were monkey bars (71.4%, n=10) and dance party (71.4%, n=10). Children spoke dramatically more when they were given the chance to interact with their peers. They produced more words and sentences during pretend play, monkey bars, and singing activities.

However, this trend changed during the second half of activities. The quantity of language produced during pretend play decreased by almost 20% during the second half of the activity (68.3%, n=28); during dance party (35.7%, n=5), by 36%. The amount of language produced during singing (78.6%, n=11) and dramatic play (75%, n=3) activities remained unchanged during the second half of the activities. Interestingly, the only

activity where the amount of language produced increased during the second half of the activity was the mealtime activity. Children spoke 19% more during the second half (66.7%, n=14) of the mealtime activity than during the first half (47.6%, n=10). See Tables 10 & 11.

Language Use—Quality–Speaking

Peer interaction among the bilingual children during non–academic activities produced a high quality of spoken language. The activities that scored "yes" for speaking quality included monkey bars (92.9%, n=13), free play (90.1%, n=64), dance party (100%, n=14), pretend play (87.8%, n=36), and mealtime (81%, n=17). In one example, while on monkey bars, Bryan pretended he was in a truck. He said, "This is my truck." However, Bryan never liked playing alone; he always sought company. He said to his friend, "No, you are not the truck driver!, I am the truck driver." They continued negotiating the play. Bryan said, "You are not getting into my truck!" The quality of Bryan's language was superior as he tried to make his point. Bilingual children almost always responded to their peers if a question was asked, which was not the case when they interacted with teachers in teacher–structured activities.

Two additional activities that scored high on speaking language quality but had low numbers of observations were peer book reading (100%, n=3) and dramatic play (100%, n=4). The difference in the quality of verbal language production did not change dramatically from the first half of activities to the second half.

Two activities that did show substantial difference in verbal language production between the first half and second half were dance party and mealtime. During the dance party activity, children produced lower quality language or no language at all during the

second half of activity (50%, n=7). Children were dancing and singing for about twenty to thirty minutes, which appeared to be very tiring toward the second half of the activity. On the other hand, for the mealtime activity, the quality of children's language produced increased from the first half (81%, n=17) to the second half (85.7%, n=18). It appeared that once children ate, they were filled with more energy to interact with peers. See Tables 12 and 13.

Language Use—Quality–Listening

For the majority of non–academic activities, bilingual children scored high on the listening measure. Pretend play activity had the highest percentage of "yes" scores (95%, n=39), followed closely by mealtime activity (95%, n=20). Activities with slightly lower numbers of occurrence but high listening numbers were monkey bars (93%, n= 13) and dance party (100%, n=14). The non–academic activity with the highest number of occurrence was free play (87%, n=62) and the activity with the lowest number of occurrence was peer–book reading (100%, n=3). In terms of changes in listening quality from first half of activity to the second half, only dance party exhibited drastic changes. These changes were similar to those that occurred in speaking quality during the dance activity. Children listened 50% less during the second half of the dance party activity (50%, n=7). See Tables 12 and 13.

Subquestion 2B—Language Use with Teachers

What is the quality and quantity of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with teachers?

Crosstabulations were used to describe the quantity and quality of English language use during academic (teacher–structured) preschool classroom activities.

Language Use—Quantity/Speaking

Data indicated that children did not speak as much during academic activities as they did during non–academic activities. In particular, the academic activities that generated the greatest percentage of children scoring a "low" level of language production were book reading (79%, n=15) and storyteller time (77.8%, n=7). Children were not provided with as many opportunities for interaction during the teacher–structured activities. Thus, they did not use their second language, English, to as great an extent as they did during the non–academic activities. This low language production level remained the same during the first and second half of the activities. The activity that produced the greatest percentage of children scoring a "medium" amount of language production was circle time (33%, n=6). See Tables 10 and 11.

Language Use—Quality/Speaking

The quality of spoken language produced was not as high during academic (teacher–structured) activities as it was during non–academic activities. This measure identified whether children produced any language and also whether they were understood, which was identified by a "yes" score. Children scored "no" if they did not produce utterances in the English language or their language was not comprehensible. The academic activity with the highest percentage of "yes" scores was circle time (61%, n=11). Only 37% (n=7) of children produced better quality language during book reading time activity and 22% (n=2) during storytelling time activity. The highest quality of language produced, but with low number of occurrence, occurred in counting numbers activity (100%, n=2), alphabet activity (87.5%, n=7), and rhyming activity (75%, n=3). Interestingly, the quality of verbal language production increased during the second half

Table 10. *Crosstabulation of Language Quantity (first half of activity)*

Preschool Classroom Activities	Minimal Quantity		Moderate Quantity		Largest Quantity		Sum	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
/Non–academic/ Free Play	7	10	15	21	49	69	71	100
Pretend Play	4	10	2	5	35	85	41	100
Monkey Bars	0	0	4	29	10	71	14	100
Peer Book Reading	0	0	1	33	2	67	3	100
Dance Party	1	7	3	21	10	71	14	99
Social Mealtime	4	19	7	33	10	48	21	100
Dramatic Play	0	0	1	25	3	75	4	100
Sand Box	2	25	1	13	5	63	8	101
Singing	2	14	1	7	11	79	14	100
/Academic/ Circle Time	9	50	6	33	3	17	18	100
Book Reading	15	79	2	11	2	11	19	101
Olive/Storytelling	7	78	2	22	0	0	9	100
Art Activities	3	50	2	33	1	17	6	100
Alphabet	2	25	3	38	3	38	8	101
Numbers	1	50	0	0	1	50	2	100
Rhyming	1	25	2	50	1	25	4	100
/Mixed/ Play game with Teacher	6	21	10	35	13	45	29	101

*Some Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Table 11. *Crosstabulation of Language Quantity (second half of activity)*

Preschool Classroom Activities	Minimal Quantity		Moderate Quantity		Largest Quantity		Sum	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
/Non–academic/								
Free Play	7	10	15	21	49	69	71	100
Pretend Play	3	7	10	24	28	68	41	99
Monkey Bars	1	7	3	21	10	71	14	99
Peer Book Reading	0	0	2	67	1	33	3	100
Dance Party	7	50	2	14	5	36	14	100
Social Mealtime	4	19	3	14	14	67	21	100
Dramatic Play	0	0	1	25	3	75	4	100
Sand Box	2	25	1	13	5	63	8	101
Singing	2	14	1	7	11	79	14	100
/Academic/								
Circle Time	11	61	7	39	0	0	18	100
Book Reading	14	74	3	16	2	11	19	101
Olive/Storytelling	7	78	2	22	0	0	9	100
Art Activities	2	33	2	33	2	33	6	99
Alphabet	2	25	4	50	2	25	8	100
Numbers	1	50	0	0	1	50	2	100
Rhyming	4	100	0	0	0	0	4	100
/Mixed/								
Play game with Teacher	5	17	15	52	9	31	29	100

Some Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

of activities in book reading (42%, n=8), storytelling (33%, n=3) and art (67%, n=4). The increase was similar across all three academic activities by an average of 10%. Conversely, there was a decrease of language quality during the second half of activities in circle time (50%, n=9) and rhyming (50%, n=2). The two academic activities that did not show any differences in the quality of speaking language production during the second half of activities were alphabet (87.5%, n=7) and counting numbers (100%, n=2). In one example, the teacher was conducting a number game activity that was a teacher–structured activity. The teacher asked the children to repeat and count to four with her, saying, "I want to hear you count!" Loren started looking in the mirror, showing signs of boredom. Then she turned to a neighbor and said, "Do you want to see something?" The teacher stopped Loren and told her to leave the activity if she could not follow. Loren did not leave the activity because one of her good friends was still participating; however, she was completely disengaged and kept looking at herself and talking to herself in the mirror behind her. One would think that Loren did not know her numbers; otherwise, she would have participated. But during a pretend play activity few days later, while pretending with a friend to be a scientist counting bugs, Loren counted to thirty. See Tables 12 and 13.

Language Use—Quality–Listening

The quality of listening was better than the quality of speaking during the academic activities. This measure identified listening behavior as follows: head nodding, facial expression indicating interest, answering/commenting on what has been said. Behaviors indicating not listening were: looking the other way, facial expression indicating lack of interest, not answering/commenting on what has been said. Three of

the academic activities had a score of 100% in quality of listening: circle time (100%, n=16), counting numbers (100%, n=2), and rhyming (100%, n=4). For example, Robert, during an academic activity that involved learning body parts, sat looking at a teacher with a smile on his face. Robert's behavior was identified as listening even though he did not make any comments during the activity.

Two of these academic activities had a drastic decrease in the quality of listening during the second half of the activity: circle time (89%, n=16) by about 10%, and rhyming activity (50%, n=2) by 50%. Conversely, storytelling time exhibited an increase in the quality of listening from the first half (55.6%, n=5) of activity to the second half (77.8%, n=7). The academic activities that did not show either increase or decrease in the quality of listening from the first half to the second half of activity were art (83.3%, n=5), book reading (79%, n=15), and counting numbers (100%, n=2). See Tables 12 and 13.

Table 12. *Crosstabulation of Language Quality (first half of activity)*

Preschool Classroom Activities	Speaking				Listening			
	No		Yes		No		Yes	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
/Non–academic/ Free Play	7	10	64	90	9	13	62	87
Pretend Play	5	12	36	88	2	5	39	95
Monkey Bars	1	7	13	93	1	7	13	93
Peer Book Reading	0	0	3	100	0	0	3	100
Dance Party	0	0	14	100	0	0	14	100
Social Mealtime	4	19	17	81	1	5	20	95
Dramatic Play	0	0	4	100	0	0	4	100
Sand Box	2	25	6	75	0	0	8	100
Singing	2	14	12	86	0	0	14	100
/Academic/ Circle Time	7	39	11	61	0	0	18	100
Book Reading	12	63	7	37	4	21	15	79
Olive/Storytelling	7	78	2	22	4	44	5	56
Art Activities	3	50	3	50	1	17	5	83
Alphabet	1	13	7	88	2	25	6	75
Numbers	0	0	2	100	0	0	2	100
Rhyming	1	25	3	75	0	0	4	100
/Mixed/ Play game with Teacher	7	24	22	76	1	3	28	97

Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Table 13. *Crosstabulation of Language Quality (second half of activity)*

Preschool Classroom Activities	Speaking				Listening			
	No		Yes		No		Yes	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
/Non–academic/ Free Play	6	9	65	92	7	10	64	90
Pretend Play	4	10	37	91	1	3	40	98
Monkey Bars	1	7	13	93	1	7	13	93
Peer Book Reading	0	0	3	100	0	0	3	100
Dance Party	7	50	7	50	7	50	7	50
Social Mealtime	3	14	18	86	1	5	20	95
Dramatic Play	0	0	4	100	0	0	4	100
Sand Box	2	25	6	75	0	0	8	100
Singing	2	14.3	12	86	2	14	12	86
/Academic/ Circle Time	9	50	9	50	2	11	16	89
Book Reading	11	58	8	42	4	21	15	79
Olive/Storytelling	6	67	3	33	2	22	7	78
Art Activities	2	33	4	67	1	17	5	83
Alphabet	1	13	7	88	2	25	6	75
Numbers	0	0	2	100	0	0	2	100
Rhyming	2	50	2	50	2	50	2	50
/Mixed/ Play game with Teacher	3	10	26	90	2	7	27	93

*Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

In addition to using frequency and percentages, the researcher also used means and standardized z–scores to analyze the observational data. In this section, the researcher analyzed the data collected to answer research questions one and two by means and standardized z–scores. First, preschoolers' individual z–scores are discussed; then aggregate z–scores are presented for all activities, academic and non–academic.

Preschoolers Means and Standardized z–scores

The preschoolers' scores were computed separately for first and second halves of engagement level measure, language quantity measure, and language quality measure, which includes both speaking and listening. Scores were first analyzed in terms of means and standard deviations, and then standardized into z–scores. Finally, children were divided into three groups of similar scores, where the first group includes children with the highest scores of engagement level, the second group includes children with middle scores of engagement, and the last group includes children with the lowest scores of engagement during preschool classroom activities.

The first group, which includes two bilingual children, Isabel and Chad, has a mean engagement score very close to 3, which translates to "fully engaged." The standardized z–score for both children is one standard deviation above the mean. The second group of four children, which includes Robert, Loren, Bryan, and Greg, has a mean engagement score in the low–to–middle 2s. Robert's standardized z–score is 40% of a standard deviation above the mean; Bryan's is 30%; Loren's is 0%; and Greg's is 0% of a standard deviation below the mean. The third group of bilingual children, which was found to be the least engaged during preschool classroom activities, includes Lisa and Toshitaro. Lisa's mean scores were in high 1s and her standardized z–scores were over one–and–a–half standard deviations below the mean. Toshitaro's average engagement

score was 2, which translates into "somewhat engaged"; his standardized z–score was almost one standard deviation below the mean. See Table 14.

Table 14. *Aggregate Scores for First and Second Half of Activities by Preschooler*

Preschooler	Engagement Level			
	first half		*second half*	
	Mean	z–score	Mean	z–score
Chad	2.75	1.0	2.61	1.26
Robert	2.52	.40	2.32	.23
Lisa	1.71	−1.80	1.81	−1.56
Loren	2.39	.04	2.23	−.10
Bryan	2.38	.036	2.25	−.01
Greg	2.35	−.041	2.16	−.32
Isabel	2.83	1.25	2.66	1.40
Toshitaro	2.03	−.94	2.00	−.89

Mean of 1=not engaged, 2=somewhat engaged, 3=fully engaged

Quantity of Language Use by Preschooler

The preschoolers' scores for language quantity were measured on a three–point scale of: 1=minimal, 2=moderate, and 3=largest. Based on these scores, children were again divided into three groups. The first, which includes Isabel and Chad, scored the highest: their mean scores were in the upper 2s on the three–point language quantity scale. Isabel's standardized z–score was one standard deviation above the mean and Chad's was 80% of a standard deviation above the mean. The second group of four children, which includes Robert, Bryan, Loren, and Greg, had mean scores ranging from the low–to–middle 2s on the three–point language quantity scale. Robert had the highest standardized z–score of the four, at 60% of a standard deviation above the mean. Loren and Bryan had z–scores of 0% of a standard deviation above the mean and Greg had a z–score 0% of a standard deviation below the mean. The third group, which includes Lisa and Toshitaro, scored the lowest on the language quantity three–point scale. Lisa's was the lowest, in the middle 1s, and her z–score was almost two standard deviations below the mean. Toshitaro scored a little bit better, with a mean in upper 1s, almost in the 2s, and with a standardized z–score of 90% of a standard deviation below the mean. See Table 15.

Quality of Speaking and Listening by Preschooler

The quality of language use was measured based on the preschoolers' speaking and listening during the classroom activities. The speaking and listening measures were measured separately on a two–point scale, with 0=no and 1=yes. Preschoolers were again divided into three groups based on similar (quality of speaking and listening) scoring. The first group of two preschoolers, Isabel and Chad, scored the highest on the speaking and listening quality measures. Isabel's scores were higher than Chad's for the speaking

measure, with z–scores 90% of a standard deviation above the mean for Isabel and 60% of a standard deviation above the mean for Chad. However, both preschoolers had the exact same listening score, with their z–scores 90% of a standard deviation above the mean. Both Chad and Isabel spoke very clearly, in full sentences. For example, Chad once said to his friend during a play negotiation: "If you don't play, you will never be my friend."

A second group of four children scored in the middle of the two–point scale. Robert had the highest scores of the four children in this group; for the speaking measure his z–score was 70% of a standard deviation above the mean, and for the listening measure it was 60% of a standard deviation above the mean. Robert also spoke in full sentences, and had no problem being understood. In one instance, during free–play time, he asked his friend: "Did you forget something?" Later, he exclaimed: "I am next!" Robert's scores were followed by Loren's, whose z–score was 35% of a standard deviation above the mean for the speaking measure and 0% of a standard deviation above the mean for the listening measure. Loren was very talkative during dramatic play and pretend play. Once, while playing house with her friends, she uttered sentences like: "OK, I will put my pajamas on," "I will need to go to the bathroom before I put my pajamas on," and "OK, now I am going to Target." She could lead a prolonged conversation.

Bryan's z–score for the speaking measure was similar to Loren's at 30% of a standard deviation above the mean; however, he scored lower on the listening measure, with a z–score of 0% of a standard deviation below the mean. Bryan was a very talkative child and frequently sought social interaction. Once, during free play, he tried to make his

friend Hawi play with him, saying things like: "Hawi look at," "Come over here let's play with the blocks," "Look at these cars," "These are helicopter cars," and "Oh, and this one is a dump truck." Bryan never gave up on talking his friends into playing with him. He was very persuasive and used his language extensively. Finally, out of the four children in this second group, Greg scored the lowest in both measures. His z–scores were 10% of a standard deviation above the mean for the speaking measure and 20% of a standard deviation below the mean for the listening measure. Greg was a follower in his group of friends. He would repeat phrases that he heard from other children. For instance, he once repeated a friend's utterance: "I am going to win."

The two children who scored the lowest of all eight children in this study make up the third group. Toshitaro's z–scores were a little above one standard deviation below the mean for the speaking measure and 0% of a standard deviation below the mean for the listening measure. Toshitaro responded to his teachers more than to his friends. He could not yet form full or long sentences in English. However, he was not shy to repeat the words of others when playing. For example, when two children would play–wrestle outside, with the rest of the class looking on and cheering, Toshitaro was always one cheering with the teachers. He would repeat their exhortations: "Go, go, Leo! Go, go, Leo!" He also learned whole phrases that helped him in the classroom. For example, he would occasionally tell his teacher: "I want some water."

Lisa scored lower than Toshitaro on both measures, with z–scores of more than one–and–a–half standard deviations below the mean for the speaking measure and two standard deviations below the mean for the listening measure. Out of all bilingual children observed, Lisa interacted the least with her peers. She preferred playing on her own, often

talking to her pretend friend. Once, during circle time, Lisa's teacher asked her to join in

repeating the phrase, "Doggy, doggy, had a bone"; but when the teacher stopped, Lisa

said, "I want my mommy." See Table 15.

Table 15. *Aggregate Scores for First Half of activities by Preschooler*

	Language Use					
	Quantity		Quality			
Preschooler						
			Speaking		Listening	
	M	z-score	M	z-score	M	z-score
Chad	2.61	.88	.89	.637	1.0	.932
Robert	2.52	.60	.90	.737	.97	.630
Lisa	1.67	-1.8	.48	-1.78	.67	-2.187
Loren	2.32	.04	.84	.356	.90	.026
Bryan	2.32	.02	.83	.324	.90	-.003
Greg	2.32	-.04	.81	.165	.87	-.275
Isabel	2.72	1.2	.93	.901	1.0	.932
Toshitaro	1.97	-.96	.55	-1.335	.89	-.053

Mean of *Quantity* 1=minimal, 2=moderate, 3=largest; *Verbal & Speaking* 0=No, 1=Yes

In conclusion, children were grouped into three groups very similarly across all three measures: engagement level, language quantity, and language quality. The first group included the children who had the highest scores in engagement level, language quantity, and language quality. The second group of children included those who scored in a middle range, the third group of children included the children with the lowest scores. Robert was the only preschooler whose scores increased from the engagement measure to language quantity and language quality. All other children's scores were consistent across engagement level and language quantity and quality measures. In other words, if children scored high on engagement level, they also scored high on language quantity and language quality; if they scored low on the engagement level, they also scored low on the language quantity and language quality measures.

Standardized *z*–scores for Research Questions One and Two

The data collected through observations were also analyzed by converting the mean and standard deviation into a standard score, called the z–score. Standard z–scores were calculated for each activity separately, based on the engagement level, quantity, and quality of English language use. In the following analysis of z–scores, preschool classroom activities are organized into three groups according to engagement level, quantity, and quality, and are ranked from highest to lowest scores.

Engagement level

Standardized z–scores were organized into three groups of non–academic and academic preschool classroom activities. The first group of non–academic activities, which included pretend play, monkey bars, and dramatic play, had z–scores of one standard deviation above the mean. The second group of non–academic activities, which included free play, peer book reading, dance party, and singing, had z–scores of around 80 % or close to 80% of a standard deviation above the mean. The third group, which included sand box and social mealtime, had z–scores around 20% of a standard deviation above the mean. For example, during a pretend play activity, Greg was playing and verbally interacting with Bryan, asking him questions and responding appropriately. He told Bryan things like: "I am looking at treasures," "I can't see it," "Where is it?," "Hey Bryan! Who put that over here?," and "My string is going down." When he was not successful in getting the treasure out, he exclaimed: "Jesus Christ!" and "Hey Bryan! What is this?" In this instance, Greg and Bryan had a prolonged activity–related talk— one of the indicators of full engagement. Overall, out of all non–academic activities, monkey bars was the activity during which bilingual children were the most engaged. In

one example, Bryan pretended that the monkey bars apparatus was his truck and negotiated play with a friend: "This is my truck," "No, you are not the truck driver!," "I am the truck driver!," and "You are not getting into my truck!"

With respect to academic activities, the first group had z–scores around one–and–a–half standard deviations below the mean; these activities included book reading, storytelling, and art activities. The second group, consisting of circle time and rhyming activities, had z–scores of one standard deviation below the mean; the third group, consisting of alphabet and counting numbers activities, had z–scores of around 40% of a standard deviation away (in both directions, above and below) from the mean. However, while the alphabet activity was around 40% of a standard deviation below the mean, the counting numbers activity was around 40% of a standard deviation above the mean. Out of all academic activities, the book reading activity showed the lowest engagement. For example, during one such book reading activity, Bryan exhibited behaviors such as not responding to his teacher's questions, looking away, and talking to his neighbor—all indicators of a child not being engaged in an activity. These behaviors mostly occurred during teacher–structured (academic) activities rather than during free play (non–academic activities). See Table 16.

Table 16. *Aggregate Scores for Engagement Level by Activity*

| Activities | Engagement Level | | | |
| | first half | | second half | |
	Mean	z–score	Mean	z–score
/Non–academic/				
Free Play	2.66	.83	2.55	.85
Pretend Play	2.76	1.0	2.61	.97
Monkey Bars	2.79	1.12	2.71	1.19
Peer Book Reading	2.67	.85	2.33	.39
Dance Party	2.64	.79	1.86	−.60
Social Mealtime	2.38	.19	2.48	.69
Dramatic Play	2.75	1.04	2.75	1.2
Sand Box	2.38	.18	2.50	.74
Singing	2.64	.79	2.64	1.04
/Academic/				
Circle Time	1.83	−1.04	1.50	−1.35
Book Reading	1.58	−1.62	1.58	−1.18
Olive Storytelling	1.67	−1.42	1.56	−1.23
Art Activities	1.67	−1.42	2.00	−.30
Alphabet	2.13	−.38	2.00	−.30
Numbers	2.50	.47	2.00	−.30
Rhyming	1.75	−1.2	1.25	−1.88
/Mixed/				
Play Game with Teacher	2.21	−.19	2.14	−.01

Mean of 1=not engaged, 2=somewhat engaged, 3=fully engaged

Quantity of Language Use

Standardized z–scores for the quantity of language use measure were also grouped into three groups of academic and non–academic activities. The first group of three non–academic activities, which had a z–score of one standard deviation above the mean, included pretend play, monkey bars, and dramatic play activities. The second group of non–academic activities, which included peer book reading, dance party, singing, and free play, had z–scores of 70% and 80% of a standard deviation above the mean. The third group, which included sand box activity and social mealtime activity, had z–scores of 30% and 10% of a standard deviation above the mean.

Out of all non–academic activities, children spoke the most during the pretend play activity. For example, during one such pretend play activity, Loren produced a quantity of language that falls within the largest category of quantity of language use: four or more comments produced during an activity. In this instance, she was pretending with a friend to have or to be dogs. "I am a doggy, I am the strongest," Loren said. Loren continued by making growling noises, and then said, "I want to go to the park." Then she switched roles with her friend—her friend becoming a dog and Loren the dog owner throwing the dog a bone—and said: "Doggy, go faster, faster, faster, really fast!" and "Go bathroom, bathroom, bathroom."

The non–academic activity during which bilingual children spoke the least was social meal time activity. Children would speak, but they had to eat their food at the same time. For example, during such one instance Isabel said to her friend, "Look at your other hand!" and "There is food on your hand." An analysis of the academic activities reveals that in the first group of two academic activities, storytelling had a z–score almost two

standard deviations below the mean and reading was close to two standard deviations below the mean. The second group of two academic activities, circle time and art time, had z–scores of one standard deviation below the mean. In the third group, counting numbers, rhyming, and alphabet had z–scores of 40%, 40%, and 20% of a standard deviation below the mean, respectively. Overall, storytelling was the teacher–structured (academic) activity during which the children spoke the least, as Olive the storyteller did not verbally engage the children during her storytelling. For example, one time when she was telling the "Giant master man story," her only interaction with the children was to get them to show her their muscles: "Show me your muscles."

One activity was observed to be a mixed activity, including both teacher–structured and play components. This activity was called "play game with teacher" and had a z–score of 0% of a standard deviation above the mean, which means that the score was very close to the mean. See Table 17.

Table 17. *Aggregate Scores Language Use/Quantity*

Activities	Quantity				
	first half			*second half*	
	Mean	*z*-score		Mean	*z*-score
/Non-academic/					
Free Play	2.59	.74		2.59	.92
Pretend Play	2.76	1.07		2.61	.95
Monkey Bars	2.71	.98		2.64	1.01
Peer Book Reading	2.67	.89		2.33	.45
Dance Party	2.64	.84		1.86	-.40
Social Mealtime	2.29	.13		2.48	.71
Dramatic Play	2.75	1.06		2.75	1.20
Sand Box	2.38	.31		2.38	.52
Singing	2.64	.84		2.64	1.01
/Academic/					
Circle Time	1.67	-1.08		1.39	-1.25
Book Reading	1.32	-1.78		1.37	-1.29
Storytelling	1.22	-1.96		1.22	-1.55
Art Activities	1.67	-1.08		2.00	-.14
Alphabet	2.13	-.17		2.00	-.14
Numbers	2.00	-.42		2.00	-.14
Rhyming	2.00	-.42		1.00	-1.95
/Mixed/					
Play Game with Teacher	2.24	.05		2.14	.10

Mean of *Quantity* 1=minimal, 2=moderate, 3=largest

Quality of Language Use

The quality of language use is divided into two categories: speaking and listening. The speaking measure will be analyzed first and the listening measure will be analyzed second.

Language Use—Speaking

The standardized scores of speaking quality were also grouped into three categories for non–academic and academic activities. The first group of three non–academic preschool classroom activities had z–scores close to one standard deviation above the mean. These activities included peer book reading, dance party and dramatic play. The second group of non–academic activities, including free play and monkey bars, had z–scores 50% and 60% of a standard deviation above the mean, respectively. The third group of non–academic activities, which included pretend play, singing, and sand box, had z–scores of 40%, 30%, and 10% of a standard deviation above the mean, respectively. Overall, bilingual children spoke more frequently than they did not speak, and when they spoke they were understood most frequently during peer book reading, dance party and dramatic play. For example, during a peer book reading activity, Loren asked a friend, "Could I have those books?" After a minute of reading, her friend said, "boring," and started looking at other books, to which Loren replied, "I cleaned up the books," "I am bored too." Since this was a peer reading activity, the children were free to converse even if they did not like the books. This is the type of opportunity that bilingual children need to be provided with. The more opportunities children are given to use their second language, the more proficient they will become in their second language.

When it comes to academic activities, the first group of three activities, including storytelling, book reading, and art time, had z–scores of two–and–a–half, over one–and–a–half, and a little under one–and–a–half standard deviations below the mean, respectively. The second group of two academic activities, including circle time and rhyming, had z–scores 70% and 10% of a standard deviation below the mean, respectively. The third group, including counting numbers and alphabet, had positive z–scores indicating one standard deviation above the mean and 40% of a standard deviation above the mean, respectively. The quality of speaking measure identified whether children spoke or not and whether they were understood or not during a given activity. The academic activity during which bilingual children did not speak more often than they did speak was the storytelling activity—just as was the case for the quantity measure. See Table 18.

Language Use—Listening

For the listening measure, three groups of standardized z–scores were also created for non–academic and academic preschool classroom activities. The first group of five non–academic activities had an identical z–score of 60% of a standard deviation above the mean; these activities were peer book reading, dance party, dramatic play, sand box, and singing. The second group of two non–academic activities had standardized z–scores close to 30% of a standard deviation above the mean; these were pretend play and social mealtime. The third category of two non–academic activities, which included free play and monkey bars, had z–scores of 30% of a standard deviation below the mean and 0%, respectively. Three groups were created again when analyzing the academic activities; however, these groups were more uneven with respect to the number of activities

included in each group. The first group included only one academic activity, storytelling, which had a large z–score of three standard deviations below the mean. In the second group of three academic activities, book reading and alphabet had z–scores of one standard deviation below the mean, while art time had a z–score 60% of a standard deviation below the mean. The third group of three academic activities did not have a z–score below the mean (as was the case in the previous two groups of academic activities) but had z–scores 60% of a standard deviation above the mean; these activities were circle time, counting numbers, and rhyming activities. The storytelling activity again had the lowest score of all teacher–structured (academic) activities for the listening measure. Bilingual children showed behaviors during this activity that did not indicate they were listening, such as: looking the other way, facial expression indicating lack of interest, and not answering/commenting on what had been said. For example, when Olive the storyteller was telling the "Giant master man story," Chad started getting bored and looking around at his friends. See Table 18.

Table 18. *Aggregate Scores for First Half and Second Half of Activities*

Activities	Quality							
	first half				*second half*			
	Speaking		*Listening*		*Speaking*		*Listening*	
	M	*z*-score	M	*z*-score	M	*z*-score	M	*z*-score
/Non-academic/								
Free Play	.90	.54	.87	-.35	.92	.69	.90	.27
Pretend Play	.88	.43	.95	.27	.90	.63	.98	.74
Monkey Bars	.93	.65	.93	.08	.93	.75	.93	.44
Peer Book Reading	1.0	.96	1.0	.66	1.0	1.07	1.0	.90
Dance Party	1.0	.96	1.0	.66	.50	-1.15	.50	-2.27
Social Mealtime	.81	.14	.95	.28	.86	.43	.95	.59
Dramatic Play	1.0	.96	1.0	.66	1.0	1.07	1.0	.90
Sand Box	.75	-.11	1.0	.66	.75	-.04	1.0	.90
Singing	.86	.34	1.0	.66	.86	.43	.86	-.00
/Academic/								
Circle Time	.61	-.72	1.0	.66	.50	-1.15	.89	.19
Book Reading	.37	-1.77	.79	-1.03	.42	-1.50	.79	-.43
Storytelling	.22	-2.41	.56	-2.93	.33	-1.89	.78	-.50
Art time	.50	-1.20	.83	-.68	.67	-.41	.83	-.15
Alphabet	.88	.42	.75	-1.35	.88	.51	.75	-.68
Numbers	1.0	.96	1.0	.66	1.0	1.07	1.0	.90
Rhyming	.75	-.11	1.0	.66	.50	-1.15	.50	-2.27
/Mixed/								
Play Game	.76	-.08	.97	.38	.90	.61	.93	.46

Verbal & Speaking 0=No, 1=Yes

Comparison of Academic, Non-academic and Mixed Activities

Cross tabulation was computed for seven academic, nine non-academic and one mixed activities. The results indicated that overall children were much more fully engaged during non-academic activities than during academic activities and during mixed activities. Interestingly, bilingual children were more frequently fully engaged during the mixed activity than they were during the academic activities. See Table 19.

Table 19. *Cross tabulation of Bilingual Children's Engagement by Activity Type*

Engagement Level	Activity Type					
	Academic		*Non-academic*		*Mixed*	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
/First half/						
Not Engaged	8	42	16	9	7	18
Somewhat Engaged	23	35	31	17	15	39
Fully Engaged	15	23	133	74	17	44
/Second half/						
Not Engaged	32	49	21	12	5	13
Somewhat Engaged	26	39	47	26	17	44
Fully Engaged	8	12	112	62	17	44

Cross tabulation was computed for bilingual children's quality of language use and differences based on activity type are noted below. Similar to the engagement measure, the majority of bilingual children spoke more during the non-academic activities. However, three quarters of children spoke during mixed activities and only half of the children spoke during academic activities. This finding indicates that children used their language more during mixed preschool classroom activities when compared with academic activities. As for the listening measure, children were listening more during the mixed classroom activities than during non-academic and academic activities. See Table 20.

Table 20. *Cross tabulation of Bilingual Children's Quality of Language Use by Activity Type*

L2 Quality	Activity Type					
	Academic		*Non-academic*		*Mixed*	
	f	*%*	*f*	*%*	*f*	*%*
Verbal						
/First half/						
No	31	47	18	10	10	26
Yes	35	53	162	90	29	74
/Second half/						
No	31	47	24	13	4	10
Yes	35	53	156	87	35	90
Listening						
/First half/						
No	10	15	13	7	2	5
Yes	56	85	167	93	37	95
/Second half/						
No	14	21	19	11	1	3
Yes	52	79	161	89	38	97

Cross tabulation was computed for the amount of language produced during the three types of activities. Bilingual children used their second language, English, more during non-academic activities than during mixed and academic activities. However, children spoke more during mixed classroom activities than during academic activities, indicating that mixed classroom activities gave more opportunities for bilingual children to use their second language than academic activities. See Table 21.

Table 21. *Cross tabulation of Bilingual Children's Quantity of Language Use by Activity Type*

Quantity Level	Activity Type					
	Academic		Non-academic		Mixed	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
/First half/						
Minimal	38	58	18	10	8	21
Moderate	16	24	33	18	13	33
Largest	12	18	129	72	18	46
/Second half/						
Minimal	40	61	25	14	7	18
Moderate	19	29	38	21	14	36
Largest	7	11	117	65	18	46

Overall Index Score

An index score was created by adding engagement level (consisting of three levels: 1=not engaged, 2=somewhat engaged, 3=fully engaged) with language use, which includes quantity (1=minimal, 2=moderate, 3=largest) and quality of speaking (0=no, 1=yes) and quality of listening (0=no, 1=yes). The highest possible score that a child could have achieved was eight and the lowest was two. The higher the index score, the more the children were engaged in the activity and the more the children were speaking and listening.

The activities with the highest index scores were the non–academic activities, including dramatic play, monkey bars, pretend play, peer book reading, singing, and free play. The academic activities had index scores much lower than did the non–academic activities. The most common academic activities—circle time, book reading and storytelling—had low scores ranging from three to five. The most common non–academic activities—pretend play, monkey bars, and free play—had high index scores ranging from seven to seven and a half, indicating full engagement, large amount of language production, and language comprehension. See Figure 4.
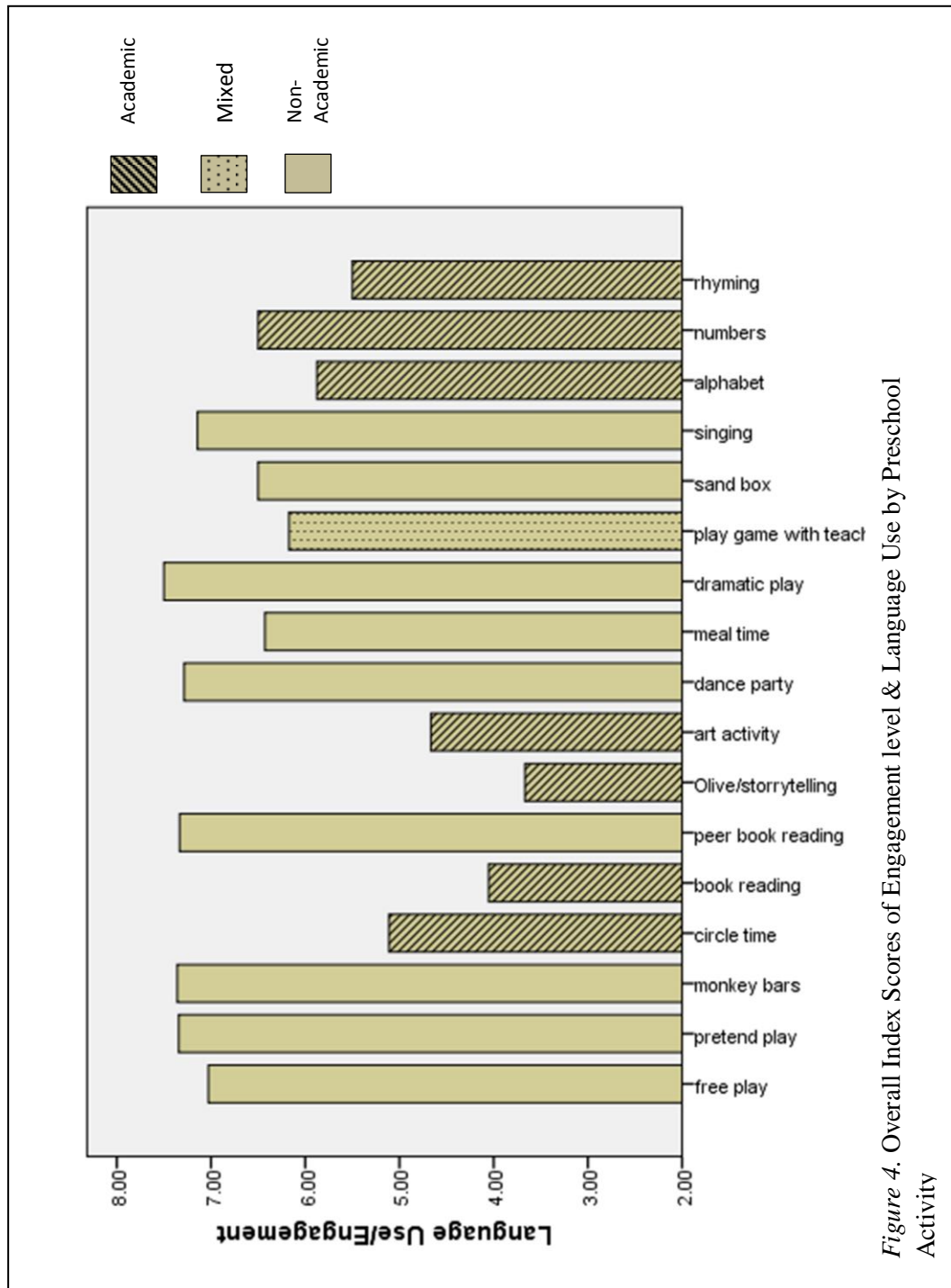
Figure 4. Overall Index Scores of Engagement level & Language Use by Preschool Activity

Section Two: Analysis of Research Questions Three and Four

This second section addresses research questions three and four which measured the teacher and parent perceptions of the effects academic and non–academic preschool classroom activities have on children's English language development. The data were collected through a survey instrument and through interviews. Twelve teachers responded to the survey and five out of the twelve participated in the interview sessions. Whereas, eight parents responded to the survey and five out of the eight participated in the interview sessions. Data collected through both surveys and interviews will analyze research questions three and four,

3. What are the preschool teachers' perceptions of the effect of free–play vs. teacher–structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

4. What are the preschool parents' perceptions of the effect of free–play vs. teacher–structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

The survey instrument included ten preselected preschool classroom activities for the respondents to rate on a three–point scale of 0=not helpful, 1=somewhat helpful, and 2=greatly helpful toward English language development. See Appendix be for the survey instrument. The interview consisted of four questions that further asked about the effect academic and non–academic preschool activities have on children's English language development. See Appendix E for Interview Protocol. This section begins with a presentation of parent and teacher sample demographics and concludes with a description of the findings for research questions three and four.

Sample Demographics – Parents

Eight parents of bilingual children responded to the survey. All the parents who filled out the survey were mothers with a college education. Half of the parents identified themselves as of Caucasian ethnic background and almost a quarter identified themselves as Mexican or Latino. The primary languages spoken at home were English, Spanish, Portuguese, and Japanese; the native languages of mothers and fathers similarly varied among families. Parents indicated that their children had been acquiring the English language over a range of 2 months to 4 years. Therefore, this group of bilingual preschool children includes both simultaneous and sequential types of bilinguals. Two of the parents indicated that their children acquire the English language only at this preschool. See Tables 22 and 23.

Table 22. *Parent Demographics*

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Educational Level		
High School Diploma/GED	1	12
Associate's Degree	2	25
Bachelor's Degree	4	50
Master's Degree	1	13
	N=8	100
Primary Language Spoken at Home		
English	4	50
Spanish	1	13
Portuguese	1	13
Japanese	1	12
English & Spanish	1	12
	N=8	100
Secondary Language Spoken at Home		
English	1	12
Spanish	3	38
Portuguese	1	12
English & Spanish	1	13
No other language	2	25
	N=8	100
Mother's Native Language		
English	3	38
Spanish	2	25
Portuguese	2	25
Japanese	1	12
	N=8	100

Table 23. *Parent Demographics Continued*

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Father's Native Language		
English	1	12
Spanish	5	63
Portuguese	1	12
Japanese	1	12
	N=8	99
Years/Months Bilingual Child Learning English Language		
2 months	1	12
1 year	1	12
2 years	1	12
3 years	3	38
4 years	2	25
	N=8	99
Parent Ethnic Background		
Caucasian	4	50
Mexican/Latino	2	25
Brazilian	1	12
Japanese	1	12
	N=8	99
Parent Gender		
Male	0	0
Female	8	100
	N=8	100

*Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Sample Demographics – Teachers

   Twelve teachers filled out the survey: two males and ten females. This group of teachers included a mix of both head teachers and teacher aides. Their teaching experience varied widely, as the number of years they had been teaching children whose second language is English ranged from one to ten. With respect to ethnic background, half of the teachers who participated were Caucasian, and the other half included a variety of ethnicities: Latino, Filipino, Chinese, and Vietnamese. More than half had already obtained their college degree. Most teachers' area of specialization was in child and adolescent development. See Tables 24 and 25.

Table 24. *Teacher Demographics*

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Educational Level		
High School Diploma/GED	4	33
Associate's Degree	1	8
Bachelor's Degree	6	50
Master's Degree	1	8
	N=12	99
Major Area of Specialization		
Early Childhood Development	1	8
Health Education	1	8
CAD	9	75
School Age Children	1	8
	N=12	99
Number of Years Taught in Early Childhood Education		
1 year	1	8
2 years	1	8
3 years	4	33
4 years	1	8
6 years	1	8
8 years	2	17
10 years	2	17
	N=12	99
Number of Years Taught in Current School		
2 months	1	8
1 year	1	8
2 years	1	8
3 years	2	17
4 years	3	25
5 years	1	8
6 years	2	17
10 years	1	8
	N=12	99

Percentages do not add to 100% because of rounding.

Table 25. *Teacher Demographics Continued*

Variable	Frequency	Percent
Number of Years Taught Bilingual Children		
Less than 1 year	2	17
1 year	1	8
2 years	2	17
3 years	2	17
4 years	1	8
6 years	1	8
8 years	1	8
10 years	2	17
	N=12	100
Teacher Ethnic Background		
Caucasian	6	50
Mexican/Latino	1	8
Filipino	2	17
Chinese	1	8
Vietnamese	2	17
	N=12	100
Teacher Gender		
Male	2	17
Female	10	83
	N=12	100

Teacher Perceptions – Research Question Three

Teachers were asked to rank ten preschool activities on a survey in terms of how helpful these activities are toward English as a second language development in preschool bilingual children. Their perceptions of these ten preschool classroom activities were measured on a three–point scale of 0=no help, 1=some help, and 2=great help.

Statistics such as frequencies, percentages and means, and standard deviations were derived to describe the survey data. The results indicated that teachers in general viewed the preschool classroom activities as being of some help or great help toward bilingual children's English language development. None of the teachers marked "0" for any of the ten activities listed on the survey. The survey did not indicate which activities were academic and which were non–academic.

In the analysis of the findings, preschool activities were categorized into four groups depending on the teacher perception mean scores. The first group of preschool classroom activities included those perceived to be the most helpful toward the bilingual children's English language development. All three of these activities are non–academic and had the highest score possible: 2, or "great help." These were: pretend play, socio–dramatic–play, and singing songs. A second group of two activities was also perceived as being helpful toward English language development; however, the scores were not as high as the first group's. Both of these activities were academic: story–teller time and reading books time. A third group of two activities had mean scores lower than those of the first two groups. Both of these activities were academic: library center time and alphabet recognition activity. A fourth group of two activities included the lowest scores of all ten activities: monkey bars, a non–academic activity, and art center time, an academic activity. In general teachers perceived the non-academic activities such as pretend play, singing, and dramatic play as being the most beneficial towards bilingual children's second language development. The survey instrument did not identify which activities were academic and which were non-academic. See Table 26.

Table 26. *Preschool Activities Survey – Teacher Perceptions (N=12)*

	No Help		Some Help		Great Help			
	f	%	f	%	f	%	Mean	SD
1. *Dramatic/Pretend Play*								
	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	100.0	2.00	.000
2. *Storyteller Time*								
	0	0.0	1	8.3	11	91.7	1.92	.289
3. *Reading Books Time*								
	0	0.0	2	16.7	10	83.3	1.83	.389
4. *Climbing Monkey Bars and Play Structures*								
	0	0.0	10	83.3	2	16.7	1.17	.389
5. *Circle Time*								
	0	0.0	1	8.3	11	91.7	1.92	.289
6. *Singing Songs & Rhyming*								
	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	100.0	2.00	.000
7. *Library Center Time*								
	0	0.0	3	25.0	9	75.0	1.75	.452
8. *Art Center Time*								
	0	0.0	7	58.3	5	41.7	1.42	.515
9. *Socio–Dramatic Play*								
	0	0.0	0	0.0	12	100.0	2.00	.000
10. *Alphabet Recognition*								
	0	0.0	3	25.0	9	75.0	1.75	.452

Mean of 0=No help, 1=Some help, 2=Great help

Parent Perceptions – Research Question Four

Parents of bilingual children were also asked to rank ten preschool activities on a survey in terms of how helpful these activities are toward English as a second language development in their preschool bilingual children. Just like teacher perceptions, parent perceptions of ten preschool classroom activities were measured on a three–point scale of

0=no help, 1=some help, and 2=great help. Statistics such as frequencies, percentages and means, and standard deviations were derived to describe the survey data. The results indicated that teacher and parent perceptions greatly differed in terms of which activities were perceived to be more helpful toward bilingual children's English language development.

Preschool activities were categorized into three groups depending on the mean of the parent perception scores. The first group of four preschool activities included the activities that were perceived by parents to be the most helpful toward their children's English language development. Two of these activities were academic (circle time and reading books time) and two were non–academic (singing songs and pretend play time). However, the non–academic activity—singing songs—was perceived by parents to be the most helpful towards their children's English language development. One hundred percent of parents ranked singing songs in the 2, or "great help," category.

A second group of four activities was still perceived as being somewhat to very helpful toward English language development, but the mean scores were not as high for these activities when compared with the activities in group one. Three of these activities were academic (library center time, alphabet recognition time, and storyteller time) and one was non–academic (socio–dramatic play). A third category of two activities had the lowest perception scores of the ten activities. Just as teachers, parents perceived the non–academic monkey bars activity to be the least helpful toward children's English language development. Parents ranked this activity even lower than teachers did, in terms of helpfulness. One–third of parents perceived the monkey bars activity to be not helpful at

all. The activity that was perceived to be the second least helpful toward English

language development was the academic activity called art time. See Table 27.

Table 27. *Preschool Activities Survey – Parent Perceptions (N=8)*

No Help		Some Help		Great Help			
f	%	f	%	f	%	Mean	SD
11. Dramatic/Pretend Play							
0	0.0	1	12.5	7	87.5	1.88	.354
12. Storyteller Time							
1	12.5	0	0.0	7	87.5	1.75	.707
13. Reading Books Time							
0	0.0	1	12.5	7	87.5	1.88	.354
14. Climbing Monkey Bars and Play Structures							
3	37.5	3	37.5	2	25.0	.88	.835
15. Circle Time							
0	0.0	1	12.5	7	87.5	1.88	.354
16. Singing Songs & Rhyming							
0	0.0	0	0.0	8	100.0	2.00	.000
17. Library Center Time							
0	0.0	1	16.7	5	83.3	1.83	.408
18. Art Center Time							
0	0.0	4	57.1	3	37.5	1.43	.535
19. Socio–Dramatic Play							
0	0.0	1	16.7	5	83.3	1.83	.408
20. Alphabet Recognition							
0	0.0	1	14.3	6	85.7	1.86	.378

Mean of 0=No help, 1=Some help, 2=Great help

Interview Data for Research Questions Three and Four

Interviews with teachers and parents were also used to analyze research questions

three and four. The interviewees were asked which activities seemed to have the greatest

effects on bilingual children's English language development, and during which activities children seemed to produce higher quality and quantity of English language. The results of the interviews clarified the teachers' and parents' perceptions of preschool classroom activities. More teachers perceived non-academic activities as being beneficial toward bilingual children's second language development than parents did. Two out of the five parents perceived academic activities as being beneficial toward second language development.

To answer research question three, teacher perceptions were investigated. Eight out of the twelve teachers who filled out the survey participated in the interview portion of this study. The results of the teacher interviews indicated that the majority of teachers believed free play activities were more beneficial toward children's English language development. The more highly–educated teachers—the two head teachers and one preschool coordinator—felt very strongly that free–play activities are more beneficial. Stefan, a head teacher from room nine, indicated that pretend play and dramatic play are most beneficial because children interact more, and because they learn the English language from hearing each other's use of language: "they eventually pick up the phrases." He said that he doesn't believe the kids pick up all of the English phrases during teacher–structured activities. He believes that during free–play activities students speak more because they "feel safer to say something even though it is wrong" and "there is less pressure to get it right."

Jennifer, a head teacher for ten years and just recently promoted to preschool coordinator, agreed that free–play activities are more beneficial towards bilingual children's English language development. She said, "non–academic activities would be

definitely more effective for expressive language development." She believes there is an increase in language quantity because "children have the most invitation to participate in free–play activities. They are more engaged in free–play peer small group activities because they get to negotiate play and negotiate for toys." Jennifer also commented that the quality of English language produced is higher during the free–play activities because "it loosens them up when they play with peers and they have more to talk about with peers." When it comes to the teacher–structured academic activities, Jennifer stated: "Only those children participate in academic activities such as the circle time who feel comfortable participating and those children are usually not English language learners." Jennifer also stated that her view of non–academic free–play activities being the most beneficial towards bilingual children's English language development has been confirmed since her promotion to coordinator, as she gets to observe in all three classrooms and does not have to get involved. Kelly, the third head teacher interviewed, also believed that free–play activities, such as pretend play, are more important for bilingual children's English language development. She stated that the children's English language quality is higher during free–play because "there is more opportunity to interact."

Five teacher aides participated in a group interview. The results of the teacher aide interview varied slightly. Aria, a teacher aide from room nine, indicated that Toshitaro does not participate with his peers just yet; however, during circle time, "he has a big personality and opens up." Aria indicated that Toshitaro was not participating in circle time when he began the preschool program four months ago, but over time he has started to participate. Aria believe that participation in pretend play is very important;

however, she has not witnessed Toshitaro participating in pretend play. Abigail, another teacher aide from room nine, indicated that what Toshitaro says during circle time are phrases he has learned from listening to his peers during free play time. They both agree that Toshitaro participates the most during large group academic activities such as reading books time and circle time.

On the other hand, Mona, the teacher aide from room eight, indicated that Greg strives in small group activities and not in large group activities as Toshitaro does. In small group activities Greg is easily prompted to communicate with his peers. In large group activities Greg gets overwhelmed with so much new language. He interacts better with his peers than with his teachers. He interacts the best with another English language learner, Itzel. They have a special bond that stems from them both being bilingual.

Michelle, an art teacher aide, believes a balanced approach works better for children. She says, "Group time is only good if everyone participates and no one is singled out." She believes peer interaction is very important for language development, but that book reading is as well. She says that some children need more one–on–one teacher interaction than others.

Steve stated that each child prefers different activities. He works with many three–year–olds and sometimes younger children, and he believes that the younger children need more one–on–one interaction. He said that the younger children who are transitioning to preschool feel overwhelmed during large group academic activities. This younger group of children does better when Olive the storyteller sings songs for them.

To measure research question four, parents' perceptions were investigated. Five out of the eight parents who filled out the survey participated in the interview portion of this study. The results of the parent interviews also indicated that the majority of parents perceived free–play activities to be more beneficial toward children's English language development. Isabel's mom indicated that "by playing with their peers they get a lot of vocabulary." She continued, "I believe the language makes more meaning when playing with other kids." She believed that academic activities are suitable for this age. Lisa's mom also agreed that free–play activities are more beneficial toward English language development, stating, "I am sure there is more language going on with teachers not being there." "The language she gets from peers is more useful than the language she gets from teachers." Lisa's mom has also indicated that music activities play a big role in her child's English language development.

One parent, Bryan's mom, was the only respondent out of the five who perceived teacher–structured academic activities as more beneficial for bilingual children's English language development. Bryan's mom believes her child learns more English from interacting with his teachers than from interacting with his peers. On why this might be so, she stated, "maybe it is cultural." She went on to say that her son, "mainly learns from teachers, he mimics what the teacher says." She also believes that "Olive (the storyteller) is a big influence, he gets to memorize the story and then repeats them." Another parent, Chad's mom, perceived a mixture of both academic and free–play activities being important for bilingual children's English language development. She stated, "I like how teachers help Chad to express himself." "Storytelling activity, being read to, is also very important not only for vocabulary but also how ideas connect together." She believes that

"language from other children is limited. Teacher input is necessary because they would go deeper with teachers." However, she also believes social interaction is important for her son.

Summary

This chapter presented the research findings from observations, surveys, and interviews, and presented them in two sections. The first section analyzed the data collected through 285 observations of eight bilingual preschool children ages three to five, which measured research questions one and two. The second section of this chapter analyzed the data collected through surveys and interviews, which measured research questions three and four. Both teachers and parents were surveyed and interviewed about their beliefs on which activities academic (teacher–structured) or non–academic (free–play) are more effective toward bilingual children's English language development.

The first section consisted of measuring the bilingual children's engagement levels and language quantity and quality during certain preschool classroom activities. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were utilized to analyze which preschool classroom activities have a greater effect on children's English language development. Standard z–scores were also calculated for each activity separately, based on the engagement level, quantity, and quality (speaking and listening) of English language use. The results indicated that bilingual children had a higher level of engagement during the non–academic free–play activities than in academic teacher–structured activities. These non–academic activities are specifically pretend play, monkey bars, and dramatic play. The results also indicated that bilingual children were not only engaged more during the non–academic free–play activities but they were also producing higher quantity and higher quality of the English language during the non–academic free–

play activities. When analyzing students individually, data indicated that six out of the eight students benefited more from the non–academic free–play activities and two benefited more from teacher–structured activities.

The second part of this chapter presented the findings for research questions three and four. The data for this analysis were collected through survey and through interviews. Research question three measured the preschool teachers' perceptions of academic and non–academic free–play activities and their effects on bilingual children's English language development. Both survey data and interview responses indicated that non–academic free–play activities (specifically pretend play, singing songs, and socio–dramatic play) have a greater effect on children's English language development. Research question four measured the parents' perceptions of academic and non–academic free-play activities and their effects on children's English language development. The survey results indicated that parents overall did not score all activities as highly as the teachers did. Parents perceived singing songs a non–academic activity as being the most beneficial towards bilingual children's English language development. Three activities scored second–to–highest based on parents' perceptions: pretend play, circle time, and reading books time. Two of these three are academic activities (teacher–structured). Parent interview responses indicated that three parents perceived free–play activities as the most beneficial toward their children's English language development; one parent believed there is a need for both academic and non–academic activities; and one parent perceived academic activities to be more beneficial toward her child's English language development. Therefore, the majority of parents' perceptions were that free–play activities are more beneficial towards bilingual children's English language development.

Chapter V

Discussion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to investigate which preschool classroom activities have a greater effect on bilingual children's English language development: academic (teacher–structured) or non–academic (free play). This chapter begins by summarizing and discussing the research results from Chapter IV in two sections: the first section covers the findings of research question one and research question two; the second discusses the findings of research question three and four. Next, this chapter will discuss social learning theory and its implications. Then it will present the researcher's recommendations: recommendations for preschool classroom educators, for policy makers, and for future research. Finally, it will conclude with the researcher's reflections.

Section One—Research Question One and Two

This first section will discuss the following research questions based on the findings from researcher observations and field notes.

1. What is the effect of free-play activities on second language (L2) development of bilingual preschool children?

   A. What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

   B. What is the quality and quantity of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with peers?

2. What is the effect of teacher-structured time activities on L2 development of bilingual preschool children?

A.What is the level of engagement of bilingual preschool children while interacting with teachers?

B.What is the quality and quantity of L2 produced by bilingual preschool children while interacting with teachers?

Free Play (Non–Academic) Activities

This section discusses the findings generated to answer research question one. The findings indicated that, in general, children were more linguistically engaged and their language use was heavier during non–academic activities than academic activities. The specific activities where bilingual children were most engaged and spoke most were pretend play, monkey bars, and dramatic play, closely followed by peer book reading, dance party, and singing. All of these activities are considered free play, non–academic activities. Higher engagement level during free play may be due to the fact that children could select what they wanted to play and who to play it with.

Free play activity would generally start with the children negotiating the choice of activity, though negotiation could re–emerge later during the activity itself. This negotiation period was characterized by substantial verbal interaction. For example, here is Robert negotiating and conversing with a friend during a pretend play activity:

"Saneka, you want to play with us? Here! I made a bed for you here."

"I see Santa Claus! He is giving me a present. I see him. Hide, he is coming. He is in the fire. Saneka, let's build a slate! Saneka, I am gonna bring more toys to you. I can't hear you, Saneka. Merry Christmas to all of you!"

"Saneka, I want to be Rudolf now. I need more candy! Saneka

filling up socks with pretend candy! No candy for you, you are

bad!"

This type of back–and–forth conversation was missing in the academic activities, where the teacher was the one who set the rules.

Some children, in the free play activities, appeared to be leaders of the groups and some were followers. The leaders were in charge of the play and would speak more or engage more frequently in conversations with the other players. Of the eight bilingual children, Chad, Isabel, and Loren had leadership qualities. For example, in one instance, while playing outside, Isabel exclaimed, "Obstacles! Let's make them harder and higher." In another, she called to her friends: "Look what I made!" and "I built it." At the beginning of a rain shower: "It's raining, we can take our obstacles inside." And on seeing one of her friends on the playground slide in the rain: "Sam, you can't sit on the slide!"

On the other hand, Bryan, Greg, and Loren would engage in conversations if they were playing with certain children who appeared to be their close friends. On one occasion, for instance, Bryan had a heated conversation while playing with his close friend Hawi: "I am so mad at you, Hawi!" "It hurt, I am not your friend, Hawi." "I am not talking to you!" Greg would also talk less frequently when around some of the leader children, but he did talk more when engaging in free play with his close friends. Once, he initiated play with Bryan by saying: "Hey, Bryan! Let's hide here." "Bryan, what are you talking about? See! I told you!"

While the preschool teachers and parents did not perceive monkey bars as an activity during which children would interact and converse frequently, in fact the contrary was true. Isabel, for example, while on the monkey bars asked a friend: "Can you hold my feet?" "Barrel! Can I touch your face?" In another instance, Chad exhibited his leadership skills on monkey bars, saying things like, "Four are already on, get down!" "Actually, I gonna do one trick." "I think we have four people on here!" "The monkey bars are cold!" On a different day, Chad exclaimed: "If you don't move, I will kick you!" and "I was two when I did that, I am five now."

During free play activities, especially when teachers were not around, the children not only conversed more but also used inappropriate words more frequently than they would during the teacher–structured activities. Some examples of this inappropriate language included: "butt," "what a," and "buggers." In one instance, Chad was hiding behind the play structure with his friends when he said: "I will show you my underwear off," which made all of his friends laugh. He then turned to a friend and said: "Are you nibbles?" "I am gonna kick you right in the butt!" Such talk shows that the children are freely experimenting with their language and the novice English language learners are exposed to vocabulary that they would never hear from their teachers.

Teacher–Structured (Academic) Activities

This section discusses the findings generated to answer research question two. Research question two measured the effects of teacher–structured (academic) activities on bilingual preschool children's second language (L2) development. Two subquestions measured bilingual children's engagement level and the quality and quantity of L2 produced when interacting with their teachers.

During the teacher–structured activities, which were generally large group activities, children could interact with each other only when it was their turn to speak or when the teacher allowed it. Not all children got a turn to talk, and usually only two to three children who raised their hands were called on. Spontaneous interactions did not occur. Since children had few opportunities to speak during these teacher–structured activities, the quantity of language production was low, especially when compared with the quantity of language produced during free play activities.

For example, one time when the teacher was reading aloud the "Abiyoyo" story, the children got very excited at the mention of magic and magic crystals. A few minutes into the activity, the children were allowed to participate by raising their hands. The only bilingual child who raised her hand was Loren, but she did not get called on. Greg had a bored facial expression; he made sighing noises and looked at his neighbor, not the teacher. During the first half of the activity Bryan looked at the teacher and listened quietly, not talking at all; during the second half he started looking around, showing lack of interest in the story. Robert, who was not talking at all, suddenly shouted, "Abracadabra," and asked, "Can I be the wizard?" Because he did not raise his hand to talk, the teacher ignored him. Isabel, who was generally very engaged and talkative during free play activities, was not engaged during the Abiyoyo story at all; she neither spoke nor seemed to listen, but only looked at the kids next to her and watched what they were doing. She was more interested in her peers than in her teacher. Children were constantly reminded not to talk or whisper during the storytelling time.

So the children who never raised their hands—like Bryan, Isabel, and Greg during the Abiyoyo story—never got to speak during teacher–directed activities. Gina, the

preschool coordinator, indicated that the children who participate in teacher–structured activities are usually not the English language learner children. To reinforce this point, one of the bilingual children, Chad, who was the leader of the group during free play (non–academic activity) and was generally very engaged and talkative during the free play activities, would show lack of interest in teacher–structured activities. For example, during a group time activity in which the teacher was directing a board game, Chad listened quietly at first, seemingly following the rules of the game, but then got bored quickly and left the activity altogether. Indeed, boredom and distraction were commonly observed during the teacher–structured activities. In another instance, while the teacher read aloud the book *Jake and the Gardener* to the children, Lisa, who had started out quietly listening and looking at the book's pictures, quickly got distracted and started pointing her toes and practicing ballet moves in the mirror behind her. The teacher reminded her to pay attention, but subsequently ignored her and let her leave the activity. Lisa was one of the bilingual children who preferred interacting with teachers to interacting with her peers, but even though this was a teacher–directed activity she still did not engage. The strict nature of teacher–directed activities, and the fact that children do not get a chance to interact freely, are generally not conducive to their oral English language development.

Yet there can be some cases where children benefit more from teacher–structured academic activities and/or one–on–one interactions with teachers than from free play activities. Two bilingual children in this study, Lisa and Toshitaro, fit the above description. Both children engaged frequently in one–on–one interactions with their teachers. For example, in one instance, while playing on the monkey bars, Lisa called to

her teacher to join her: "Kaile, hallo!" She did not want to engage with her peers who were playing just beside her, but rather continued conversing with her teacher: "This can be my toy." Lisa differed from Toshitaro, however, in that Lisa was not generally engaged during teacher–structured academic activities, while Toshitaro was.

Lisa and Toshitaro's reluctance to engage with their peers, and to engage only with their teachers, can be attributed partially to shyness. According to Lisa's teacher aide, "she [Lisa] gets overpowered by her peers and prefers to play alone." Length of preschool attendance is another factor. Lisa's head teacher, Stefan, indicated that Lisa is younger than the other children in the class, and that she is new to the center. Indeed, for both Lisa and Toshitaro this is the first year of preschool—they have been in this program for only four months. Lisa has not had time to develop relationships with her peers, and Stefan suggested this affects her English language use.

Stefan also indicated that the total hours spent at preschool significantly affects the children's English language development. Lisa only attends preschool part time, in the afternoons. The afternoon children wake up from their naps around 3:30pm, at which point some are already getting picked up; the rest eat a snack until approximately 4pm. Since the preschool center closes at 5:30pm, these children only have an hour and a half remaining for classroom activities; of this time, one half hour is devoted to teacher– structured activity and one hour to free play. In comparison, the morning children get at least three and a half hours of free play. This single hour of free play is not enough for children to form relationships and interact with each other. Lisa, certainly, has not been given enough opportunities to form relationships with her peers. Indeed, Stefan tells parents of bilingual children that the children need at least 20 hours per week of

preschool attendance to develop their English language skills. According to Stefan, "children need the consistency of using it."

Toshitaro's reluctance to engage in linguistic interaction with his peers was explained by his teachers as shyness related to his limited knowledge of English. An example of the most Toshitaro would speak with his peers was when, one time, he asked his friend Kaya to come back and play with him when they were jumping in puddles together: "Come on Kaya, come back!" Conversely, Toshitaro always answered the questions teachers asked him during academic activities. For example, one time during circle activity, the teacher put a rock in his hand and asked, "What does it feel like?" Toshitaro immediately answered, "Hard rock." Toshitaro's father indicated in his interview that Toshitaro's following his teachers' instructions very diligently and interacting in academic activities might be due to cultural factors, since in their Japanese culture children are taught to be academically involved. His father further indicated that Toshitaro's two older siblings are very academically involved in their school and in their afterschool program. On the other hand, Toshitaro's head teacher, Kelly, stated in her interview that Toshitaro is more responsive with teachers than with his peers because children typically build their trust first with teachers and then with their peers, and that Toshitaro is still at the stage when he has only built his trust with his teachers, not his friends.

English language learners engage in free play, or non–academic, activities more than in teacher–structured, or academic, activities just as their monolingual counterparts. This researcher was surprised to find out how quickly children started getting bored and distracted after teacher–structured, or academic, activities started. Children like Lisa do

not even last through the first five minutes of the academic activities. Even if children do sit still through the academic activity, their facial expressions indicate boredom and lack of interest.

There are other distracting elements of academic activities that undermine their effectiveness. One is required silence, which occurs when one child starts crying or arguing with another child. At that point, the entire activity stops and all of the children have to wait for the crying child to settle down or the argument to end. Also, during academic activities children are not allowed to speak out freely; they must raise their hands. The disadvantage of this system is that shy children never raise their hands and thus cannot verbally engage in the activity.

The older children in the classroom might be more ready for some academic activities when compared to the younger children. Preschools usually cater to children who are three to five years of age, but the teacher–structured, or academic, activities are "one size fits all." This needs to change, as this researcher has noticed that teachers have a hard time selecting teacher–structured activities for such a large group of children. For example, this researcher noticed that in one classroom a teacher created a morning activity where the children had to sign in their names just as their parents would. However, once the teacher realized that the majority of children were in the younger category and that they could not sign in their names, the teacher cancelled the morning activity altogether, not considering the few children who would be in kindergarten in a few months and who might have benefited from this activity.

To conclude the analysis of research question one and two, this study emphasizes that the majority of bilingual children observed showed drastically more engagement and

English language use during free play, or non–academic, activities than during teacher–structured, or academic, activities. Therefore, this study concludes that non–academic activities are more beneficial towards bilingual children's L2 development.

As Bodrova and Leong (2003) point out, preschools and elementary schools are trending toward decreasing or completely eliminating play in their curricula. Preschool children are thus being deprived of the benefits that free play has to offer. While the importance of play in early childhood curricula has been debated, this study suggests that free play activities are more important to children's language development than teacher–structured activities and therefore should be an integral part of preschool curricula. These findings corroborate those of Elkind (2001), who argues for a greater role for play in a preschool curriculum, stressing that young children benefit most from directly interacting with their environment. Elkind does not refer specifically to bilingual children, but this study has shown that bilingual children in particular will benefit from engagement in free play activities because they foster English language development.

Zigler and Bishop–Joseph (2006) further claim that going against play in preschool curricula contradicts both Piaget's and Vygotsky's developmental theories. The next section of this chapter goes on to discuss Vygotsky's social learning theory and its application as a lens to interpret this study's findings.

Social Learning Theory in Preschool Activities

ZPD Sociocultural Theory

Zone of proximal development (ZPD) is defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of the potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). In other

words, ZPD is a setting in which a child is capable of executing a task or performing at a higher level because of the assistance of a teacher or more skilled peer. Without such assistance, the child would not be able to perform at a higher level and thus would not progress in his/her development. When in the ZPD, children build their knowledge in their private speech or based on the interactions they have with their teachers and peers.

For this study, ZPD in second language acquisition provides the opportunity to be linguistically engaged in an academic or non–academic preschool classroom activity that will result in English language development. Within an academic activity, with the teacher's help, the child would progress in language learning; within a non–academic activity the child would progress in language learning with the help of more capable peers.

Six out of the eight bilingual children in this study were heavily engaged in social interactions with their peers—both native English speakers and other non–native English speakers—primarily during free play, or non–academic, preschool classroom activities. Their learning within the zone of proximal development occurred when they interacted and conversed with their closest friends. For example, Bryan's closest friend is Hawi and Isabel's closest friends are Greg and Cathrin. If Hawi, Greg, and Cathrin did not come to school on a certain day, Bryan and Isabel would not play and converse to the same extent with other children. Closest friends were chosen freely, and interactions between closest friends would last longer than and conflicts/arguments would not arise as frequently as they would with other children.

As Mona, one of the teacher aides, said during her interview, "Greg is comfortable interacting with other ELL peers like Isabel—it makes him validated." Mona

explained that Greg is aware that Isabel also speaks another language other than English, and this is why he feels comfortable interacting with her; he relates to her that way. Even though both are acquiring English as a second language, Isabel is more social and less shy than Greg, and speaks more English. As Greg interacts with Isabel, he learns more English from her. Therefore, when Greg is socializing with Isabel during free play, they create a ZPD where Greg communicates at a higher level because of the assistance of his more advanced English–speaking partner, Isabel. Without Isabel's assistance, Greg would not be able to perform at a higher level and thus progress in his English language development would not occur (Vygotsky, 1978). A similar situation occurred with the other bilingual children: Bryan, Loren, and Robert.

The two remaining children in the bilingual group benefited from teacher interactions and not from peer interactions: indeed, they would shy away from their peers. Their learning within the zone of proximal development would occur when they interacted with their teachers. During these interactions they would hear new vocabulary words used in a correct manner. They would also hear the correct pronunciation of the words.

As described earlier in this study, the concept of scaffolded assistance is closely linked to ZPD. Scaffolding is used to describe an adult or more capable peer adjusting the complexity of a task to help a beginner achieve a higher level of performance. The one–on–one teacher communication between Toshitaro and his teachers and Lisa and her teachers was evolving and well–sustained, allowing the teacher to use tools to scaffold the complexities of the English language. Some of these tools were the use of songs and pictures to communicate or to convey a message. For Toshitaro, as his head teacher Kelly

indicated in the one–on–one interview, trust had to be established with the teachers before learning could occur within his learner's environment. Second language acquisition began once Toshitaro was engaged in a teacher–structured activity within his trusting environment.

As a comparison to Vygotsky's ZPD, Bandura's (1986, p. 18) social learning theory examines human behavior as a result of "triadic reciprocality," where shared interaction among three determinants (behavior, personal factors, and environment) occurs. Bandura's (1986) theory also emphasizes that learning within the social environment occurs through observing others and then imitating the observed behavior. Bandura claimed that when observing others, a child develops a new understanding of possible behaviors that "can be conveyed effectively only by social cues" and through modeling (p. 20). The preschool children who had been acquiring English just for a few months, like Toshitaro, mainly learned through observing their peers, modeling and then imitating the observed behavior. According to Toshitaro's father, "He [Toshitaro] easily picks up vocabulary in school like 'you are it.'" Toshitaro must have picked up "you are it" while observing other kids play the tag game. Toshitaro was a very active observer and was always aware of what others were doing; he obviously recognized the preschool classroom as a new, linguistically and culturally unknown environment. Through attention to modeling, Toshitaro was able to acquire a basic vocabulary that would help him understand and communicate with his teachers and peers. This study supports Bandura's contention that modeling is an essential aspect of learning when it comes to complex skills, such as language acquisition, for children who are beginners or in a very early stage of language acquisition. Greg was also observing his peers quite a bit, but not

as much as Toshitaro was. Greg was not as aware of his environment as Toshitaro was; however, when his group of friends were negotiating what they should play during free play time, he would not always participate in the negotiation by sharing his ideas, but would actively observe others negotiating. The less familiar the children are with the language, the more they observe. This study saw that the more familiar the children became with the English language, the more active observing would diminish.

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Section Two—Research Questions Three and Four

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This second section will discuss through surveys and through interviews with preschool teachers and preschool parents the following research questions questions:

3. What are the preschool teachers' perceptions of the effect of free-play vs. teacher-structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

4. What are the preschool parents' perceptions of the effect of free-play vs. teacher-structured activities on the English language development of bilingual preschool children?

Teacher Perceptions

Asked to evaluate the preschool activities in their classrooms, the teachers in this study perceived three non–academic activities—pretend play, singing songs, and socio–dramatic play—as being the most helpful toward the bilingual children's English language development. In an interview, Stefan, one of the head teachers, said that during dramatic and pretend play the children "hear each other's language and they will eventually pick up the phrases." Kelly, another head teacher, perceived singing songs as the most effective way for bilingual children to learn English. For example, she indicated that using songs helps her to communicate with Toshitaro. "Hands, Shoulders" is a

favorite of his, because it involves him pointing at specific parts of his body while singing, allowing him to pick up English vocabulary.

Teachers perceived activities that were structured and run by them, such as storyteller time, circle time, and reading books time, to be slightly less helpful toward the bilingual children's English language development. As Stefan said during an interview on this subject, "they [the children] don't pick up all of it."

All of the head teachers perceived that the bilingual preschool children produced higher quality and higher quantity of language during the free play, or non–academic, activities, and each offered a different explanation. Stefan felt that "there is less pressure to get it right" with peers. Kelly suggested that during free play activities "there are more opportunities to interact." Jennifer, the preschool coordinator, indicated that during free play "they [the children] have more opportunity to practice the English language," and "when they play with peers they have more to talk about." Both of the head teachers had undergraduate college degrees and Jennifer, the preschool coordinator, had a Master's degree. All seem to agree that children need activities that provide more opportunities for interaction, and thus promote use of their second language. Jennifer said, "During free play they have more opportunity to practice the English language." The more opportunities children are given to use their second language, the more proficient they will become in that language.

Out of all the activities, monkey bars was perceived by the teachers as the least helpful toward English language development—even though children were as linguistically engaged on the monkey bars as during any other free play, or non–academic, activity. Children interacted despite the fact that they were busy climbing

around. Interestingly, monkey bars was also the activity that the parents perceived as least helpful of all preschool activities.

The interview results indicated that there was also a variety of perceptions among the teacher aides. Three of the teacher aides were not aware of the effects that academic and nonacademic activities have on bilingual children's second language development. Aria did not even know which children in her classroom were bilingual. Michelle, Aria, and Steve talked about how one–on–one teacher interaction is needed for some children and not for others. When this researcher mentioned social interaction, they automatically connected it with teacher–child interaction and not peer–to–peer interactions. Clearly they were not aware of the importance of learning through peer–to–peer social interactions in preschool classrooms. Steve indicated what children do during activities but he did not know how these activities benefit them.

On the other hand, Mona and Abigail were more aware of the concept of learning through social interactions. This might be due to the fact that Mona was bilingual herself, with Spanish being her second language. She stated that in some instances she also learns her second language better through interactions. During the group interview, she compared the children's second language acquisition to her own: "Passion helps me to communicate in Spanish, speaking out of your impulse helps and it (language) is very accurate." She was pointing out that children are more passionate when interacting with their peers than with their teachers. Mona was a very hands–on teacher aide; she understood bilingual education and second language acquisition more than the other teacher aides. She was also conducting some activities in Spanish, such as learning colors and singing songs in the classroom.

When I asked about the social meal time during the teacher aide group interview, Mona provided an insightful explanation. She said that the culture of this preschool encourages respect for the culture of the families. She said that the social meal time is a reflection of the different cultures in this school. The school wants to teach children to communicate freely with other children as well as with adults, and the meal time is the only time when the entire classroom sits down together. Children are free to talk over each other while they are eating their food; nobody quiets them down. Teacher Aria did not seem to understand the point of the social meal time, saying, "During lunch time we give them Olive stories to listen to." However, if children are listening to a story they cannot be talking to each other. This shows that the social interaction component is not supported.

Michelle, an art teacher aide, believed an academic activity is only beneficial if the children participate in it. She believed a balanced approach is better for preschool children, as she believed peer interactions (non–academic activities) to be as important as book reading (an academic activity).

On the topic of quality and quantity of language produced, Michelle indicated that there is an increase in language use when children interact with teachers rather than their peers because the children try harder at talking to please their teachers. Michelle works with children one–on–one only, so she might have not have too much experience with peer–to–peer social interaction. Her art studio is separate from the three preschool classrooms and she only takes one child at a time to a studio. Throughout the entire observational period she did not take any of the eight bilingual children to the art studio. Her explanation was that she only takes those children who are interested. The only time

one of the bilingual children showed interested in doing art with her was when she was subbing in the yard and it started raining. Toshitaro did not want to go inside, and he asked her to stay outside hiding under a play structure. Michelle started pretend painting the play structure with Toshitaro.

However, all teacher aides and head teachers believed the singing songs activity to be very effective when acquiring a second language. According to Aria, "Language is easier to remember through songs." Steve stated, "Repeat songs works with my kids." Mona maintained that, "Through songs they learn the language." So singing songs, a non–academic activity, was not only found by this study to be effective toward bilingual children's second language development, but was also so perceived by both teachers and parents.

Implications of Parent Perceptions

Parents' perceptions greatly differed from teachers' perceptions. Overall, parents rated all activities on the survey as being less helpful toward second language development than the teachers did. Parents thought the non–academic singing songs activity was the most helpful for their children's English language development, followed by circle time and reading books time with pretend play. Interestingly, while parents indicated during the interviews that they have a preference for non–academic activities, they still ranked the latter two activities, which are academic, as helpful.

In interviews, the majority of parents were very strongly opposed to academic activities. They believed it is too soon to have academic activities in preschool and their children will not benefit from them. Isabel's mother stated "No academic activities for this age. For this age, they like to play. The language makes more meaning when playing

with other kids. " Toshitaro's father indicated that "he [Toshitaro] easily picks up vocabulary through play." Lisa's mother indicated that she selects schools for her children based on the school's curriculum, and she prefers play–based preschools. She indicated that "The language she [Lisa] gets from peers is more useful than the language from teachers." Ironically, this is a parent whose child benefits from one–on–one activities with teachers because she does not socialize with older children. This study noted other inconsistencies between parent perceptions of the classroom activities that are helpful toward their children's English language development and their children's actual behavior in the classroom, and two of these observations will be discussed next.

First, Bryan's mother, the only parent who perceived teacher–structured activities as more beneficial toward her son's English language development, said, "Teachers can understand him more than his peers. They will figure out what he is trying to say, they will help him to express himself more clearly. Whereas, with peers they start fighting if they don't understand each other." Her perceptions were very inconsistent with her son's behavior in the classroom: Bryan was one of the more talkative bilingual children observed, and field notes indicated that he in fact did not have trouble expressing himself to his peers, especially when he did not like something. One time, when playing outside during free play, his friend called him to slide down on the slide. Bryan responded, "I don't want to slide down, I get my shorts all dirty." In another instance, Bryan reacted to his friend's accusation that he touched his train, saying, "Nobody bumpted your train!"

Bryan's mother also indicated that she believes reading chapter books is very important for his English language development. However, in the classroom, Bryan usually shied away from teacher–structured book reading activities. In one instance,

while the teacher read "The Seven Chinese Brothers" during book time activity, Bryan did not pay attention at all; he talked to his friend and then left the activity altogether. In another, as the teacher's aide read a story to the children in English and in Spanish, Bryan said aloud "The end," even though it was not the end of the story. The teacher reprimanded him by saying "Sshh." Bryan left this particular teacher–structured activity as well, even though he probably understood the Spanish version of the story; Spanish is his mother's native language. Field notes indicated that Bryan enjoys book reading when he can be more linguistically engaged, such as when the children "talk about" what is going on in the pictures of the book. For example, one time Bryan left the teacher–structured book reading activity, grabbed an animal encyclopedia, and asked his friend Hawi to read with him. While flipping through the pictures he conversed with Hawi, saying things like: "This is Chita," "I like Chita," "Hawi, I don't like these bugs," "Look at these round things!" and "I like animals." He pointed at a picture of a tarantula and said, "It's going to scare us!"

Teacher–directed reading was not interactive, since it was a large group activity. There were too many children to have everybody have a turn at talking, and sometimes only a couple of children were able to do "talk about" during the reading, or nobody at all. If book reading were a small group activity instead, more children would get a chance to engage in the story by speaking about it. This preferred type of book reading is called shared reading. Shared reading involves the child by having her select the story to read, so that she is more interested and engaged during reading time. In shared storybook reading, the child should be able to pause the story and engage in a conversation about it (Beauchat, Blamey, & Walpole, 2009). A productive storybook reading will effectively

aim at the development of oral language, phonological skills, vocabulary, and comprehension (Beauchat, Blamey, & Walpole, 2009). Shared reading experiences have also been found by Whitehurst, Arnold, Epstein, Angell, Smith, and Fischel (1994) to improve preschool children's expressive language skills.

This study noted a second inconsistency between what Chad's mother believed about her son's behavior and second language acquisition and what was really happening in the classroom. Chad's mother was another parent who believed her child benefits equally from teacher–structured activities and free play activities. In the interview, she said, "I like how teachers help Chad to express himself and negotiate." Chad was one of the most outspoken bilingual children in this study, but the field notes do not show very much conversation between Chad and his teachers. In fact, teachers did not help Chad express himself by talking to him directly but they planned socializing time during which he gained all of his negotiating abilities from interacting with his friends. He was very social, always gathering friends to play different games with him, and he did not have trouble expressing his ideas and negotiating play. For example, while gathering his friends to play a game he said, "If you don't play you will never be my friend!" In another instance—one of many—he gave instructions to a friend: "Pretend I am dad and you are sister," and "You are not feeling good pretend." He went on: "You has to stay here," "You sleep over here," "You have to sleep here because you are not old enough," "How old are you?" "You three?" "You have to sleep with me!" and so on. Chad was the leader of the group and was capable of having very long conversations with his friends. He definitely did not need the teacher's help to express himself and negotiate, as his mother indicated.

Both parents and teachers rated singing songs as having the greatest effect on bilingual children's English language development. For example, Kelly, one of the head teachers, stated that she uses this method in particular with Toshitaro and other bilingual children. As well, Lisa's mother states that "Music plays a huge role in language development" and "I see differences in Lisa's language development with the help of singing songs." Kelly's and Lisa's mother's perceptions of this activity were consistent with this study's findings that singing produced high engagement and language use in bilingual children. Bilingual children acquire their second language by being immersed in a social activity where children come together to sing. This supports both Bandura's (1986) and Vygotsky's (1978) social learning theory. According to Ohman–Rodriguez (2004), using songs to teach English as a second language provides a relaxed atmosphere in the classroom: children do not feel pressured to be understood when singing, as everyone is usually singing altogether. Moreover, children's songs are easy to follow and are considered to be very memorable. Brown (2006) also indicated that songs are an excellent tool for English language learners to practice their articulation and pronunciation of certain English sounds. Music in general facilitates children's first attempts at oral communication (Ohman–Rodriguez, 2004). While according to Paquette and Rieg (2008) there is not enough empirical data on the effects of songs on English language development, this study will help close the gap in this area of research, since the singing activity produced high engagement and high language use in bilingual children.

Recommendations

The researcher proposed a number of recommendations for preschool educators, for policy makers, and for future researcher. All of these recommendations are based on the findings of this study and are discussed next.

Recommendations for educators. The researcher makes ten recommendations for preschool educators based on the study's findings.

1.   Free play (non–academic activities) should be implemented in preschool classrooms because these activities are an affordance for making language available which helps with building academic skills and cultural capital. This study proves that free-play activities are an affordance for language learning because bilingual children have shown dramatically greater engagement in non–academic activities than in academic activities. Engagement is important for prompting children to interact within their environment. This recommendation is consistent with Vygotsky's claims that children learn and develop their higher mental thinking from socially interacting with others, and this is why children should get "maximum opportunity" to engage in activities that provide high engagement and interaction (Cole & Scribner, 1978, p.12). Children need to be provided with activities that will provide more opportunities for interaction that will ultimately lead to their second language (English) usage. The more opportunities children are given to use their second language, the more proficient they will become in their second language.

Bilingual children were using their second language more during the free play (nonacademic activities) such as monkey bars, pretend play, social meal time, or free play. The fact that children were interacting with others and engaging in conversations

during these non–academic activities is contributing toward their second language development, which coincides with Vygotsky's process of internalization. According to Vygotsky, children transform their external experiences internally through their language; this is how such experiences contribute to the development of children's second language. Children internalize their newly attained knowledge (English language) by talking to others, which helps them to master their second language.

Academic activities such as storytelling, book reading, and circle time did not provide children the opportunities to interact with others; therefore, children did not use their second language. Most academic activities were not developmentally appropriate for bilingual preschool children because there was no room for social interaction; thus, academic activities did not promote second language development.

Since some children observed—Lisa and Toshitaro—did not benefit as much from free play, non–academic preschool classroom activities as their peers, this study recommends a mixture of preschool classroom activities for some bilingual children. If the teachers did not speak with Toshitaro and Lisa, the two children would have not conversed during their time at school. Even though these children comprised only a small portion of the sample, it is recommended that teachers must recognize individual children's levels of development and allocate their time accordingly.

2.   Free play activities were found to be dramatically beneficial for language learning and cultural capital. This is not only important for preschools but also beyond preschool. Free play is an affordance for language learning and cultural adaptation for children in all age levels. Therefore, the second recommendation is that schools in

general should incorporate more unstructured socializing time in their curriculum for language learning and cultural capital building.

3.   Educators should use a different terminology for unstructured socializing time in the literature. Calling these activities free play and non-academic makes the activity appear nonessential to scholastic development. Unstructured socializing activities are detrimental to scholastic development and calling them non-academic takes away from the importance of these activities.

4.   Teacher aides should get additional training on how to handle situations pertaining to English language learners. Mentoring by head teacher is very important and their sharing of experiences working with English language learners would help teacher aides to communicate in the classroom. This study observed that teacher aides would often run the teacher–structured activities, and they did not always carry out their work professionally. Toshitaro, one of the children who benefited from teacher–structured activities, was ignored by the teacher aide a few times during these activities. Once, during a circle time activity, she asked the children: "What was the weather like outside today?" Toshitaro kept raising his hand, and when the teacher aide finally called on him, the statement he uttered was not understood. The teacher aide turned away from Toshitaro and ignored him. When another child raised his hand, she said, "It is my turn to talk." This oversight might have resulted in Toshitaro not learning a vocabulary word or not learning the right pronunciation of the word, inhibiting his second (English) language development. The teacher aides have less experience teaching young children than the

head teachers, and therefore might not know how to properly handle certain situations when dealing with bilingual children. Bilingual children are at different levels of English language development—so different that a professional, never mind a practicum teacher's aide, would be challenged in figuring out what would work the best for each bilingual child.

5.   Preschool classroom educators need to set shorter times for some of the non–academic activities. The dance party activity in particular seemed to be too long and children would leave the activity after fifteen minutes or so. This accounts for the decrease in engagement level and language use during the second half of the activity. The dance party activity was also always scheduled at the end of the school day, around 4:30pm or 4:45pm, when children were already tired.

6.   Preschool classroom educators should always support peer–to–peer interactions by not interrupting them and by not prioritizing classroom chores. Classroom chores seemed to overtake the flow of the classroom activities and children's engagement. There were many instances when children were engaged in a pretend play activity that was abruptly interrupted by the teacher's instructions to clean up or do other chores around the classroom; the children would not resume their interaction after the chore was completed. If children are aimlessly wandering around a classroom, a chore might be a good idea, but not when they are fully engaged in a conversation. As not all children are able to engage themselves in prolonged conversations with their peers, and some children require more time and more effort to do so than other children, interrupting

the flow of the interaction can take away from the bilingual children's English language development.

7.   Preschool classroom educators should utilize new non–academic activities in preschool classroom curricula. Two new non–academic activities that were observed in this preschool, but are not mentioned in the literature, were social meal time and dance party. Social meal time is a time of the day during which children are encouraged to verbally express themselves. While in most preschools children quietly sit and eat their meals, in this preschool meal time is a conversational activity during which every child has something to share. Children and teachers sit together, with the children encouraged to tell their neighbors or the entire group what they did over the weekend and what they would do in the near future. Teachers do not lead the conversations. Once, Chad asked everybody at the table, "Who wants to come to my house?" Many children responded that they wanted to come to his house, so he continued: "Nobody is allowed to go on my train track model!" and "I am not gonna watch the actonout show." This study found that the quantity of language produced during the social meal time activity is higher than the quantity of language produced during teacher–structured, or academic, activities.

Often during social meal time the children talk about the food their mothers packed them. Once, Bryan told his friend things like: "Come on, snack time" and "I want two pancakes!" and "You are not sitting next to Luka" and "Everybody gets two apples and two pancakes" and "I don't like apples, ok!" and "I only gonna have pancakes, ok?" Another time, Chad was conversing with Robert: "Don't do that Robert" and "Don't

show your mouth at me!" In yet another instance, Isabel spoke out: "Sam, you filled up the cup above the line" and "Can I put yogurt on my cereal or cereal on my yogurt?"

This researcher highly recommends that meal time not be an activity involving children merely sitting down and eating quietly, but an active, socializing activity.

The second new activity, the dance party, is also quite effective. Besides promoting the children's physical movement, it gets children to sing modern songs. In this new age of technology, it is only a matter of time before small children get hold of their older siblings' iPods and start listening. During this activity, the teacher selects modern songs that are easy to sing along to, and this researcher was surprised at how many preschoolers sing along. Repeating the song lyrics provides bilingual children the chance to practice the English language pronunciation of words, benefitting their English language development. This researcher has also observed that new children to this activity do not sing along at first, but with practice, eventually join. Among the bilingual children, the most active participants in this activity were Isabel, Loren, and Chad. In one instance, Isabel repeated over and over as she sang: "I love you like a love song baby."

8. Both parents and teachers should be educated about the benefits of free play, non–academic activities on second language development and cultural adjustment. It was apparent that some parents were not aware of how free play (non–academic) activities benefit second language development. Parents of bilingual children can be educated through videos and brochures about free play in preschool classrooms. Preschools should videotape free play activities (such as pretend play, monkey bars, peer book reading, social meal time, and singing) in which bilingual children are socially

interacting and using their second language. Many of the parents in this study were unaware of what their children were doing in their preschool classrooms and how they were acquiring their second language, English. Educational brochures should include pictures of children interacting in different free play activities, along with with research findings about how social interaction promotes language use and ultimately second language development. Parents should get educated as early as possible so they can be instrumental in their children's second language development and help their children get ready for kindergarten.

On the same note, the researcher also recommends that teacher aides be educated about the benefits of free play activities for bilingual children's second language development. There is a great deal of planning that goes into setting up the preschool environment for the unstructured socializing activities. The teacher aides should be educated on the intentional planning that goes into socializing time. Many of the teacher aides in the classroom did not have an educational background in working with bilingual children. A video and a brochure, which they can take home to study, is recommended. The video should include children interacting during these free play activities such as: pretend play, monkey bars, peer book reading, social meal time, and singing. The brochure should have pictures of children interacting during all of these free play activities along with research findings.

These educational tools should also include some techniques for teacher aides that will help them to promote free play and interaction in their classrooms. Teacher aides should be able to initiate interactions between children in case some children are too shy to approach their peers. The teacher interviews in this study suggested that some teacher

aides never even thought about how these different activities affect bilingual children's second language development. These educational tools will make the teacher aides more informed and better educators. However, these brochures will not only be beneficial for teacher aides, but they will serve as an additional tool for the more educated and experienced preschool teachers. Even though the two head teachers and one preschool coordinator already perceived free play (non–academic activities) as being more beneficial toward children's second language development, they did not think the monkey bars free play activity was beneficial toward second language development. Monkey bars was one of the free play activities during which children were most engaged and talkative. Therefore, listing the actual free play activities in the brochure is very important for not only parents and inexperienced teacher aides but also for experienced head teachers. Filming instances of children interacting in these activities (especially on the monkey bars) is recommended so that educators can be informed that even the monkey bars activity (which was not perceived by educators as being beneficial) was found in this study to be beneficial toward second language development.

9.   Teachers should be educated about the effects of mixed academic activities. Mixed academic activities gave more opportunities than did academic activities for bilingual children to use their second language. The teacher aides did not know what mixed activities were and how they affected second language development. Bilingual children did not use their language as much during mixed activities as they did during free play activities, but they used their language more during mixed activities than during academic activities.

10.   Preschool educators should create play areas in the preschool classrooms that would encourage and support pretend play and dramatic play activities. As seen in this study, there is so much planning that goes into setting up the preschool classroom environment for free play and socializing time. The children are not merely left to play. The teachers are to be credited for organizing and creating the space for free play with the use of a variety of contextual props. Vygotsky (1978) called such props tools, which were believed by Vygotsky to be essential for language development. These tools are crucial to children's learning because of their appeal of being hands–on and thus more engaging (Cary, 2007). Lyla, for example, was inspired and prompted to engage in pretend play when she walked by the kitchen and living room areas in the classroom. The kitchen props or tools obviously reminded her of her own home and she started pretending she was a mom or a grandma who was getting her dog ready to go to Target. Other props or tools that were very helpful were an overhead light and magnifying glasses used to look at dry bugs. Children used these props or tools to pretend they were scientists.

The props or tools were proven to support pretend play in preschool room 7, where dog supplies (such as a dog leash, pretend bone, water bowl, and stuffed dogs toys) were available to play with. Lyla had a prolonged conversation with her playmate while pretending to be a dog owner and then a dog because these props were available to them to play with. If these props were not available, she might have not engaged in pretend play activity with her friend and thus might had not used her English language. The use of second language (English) will lead to the development of the language.

Separate playing areas were also very useful for small group, free play activities. If the classroom were not divided into multiple areas, small groups of children would not have had their own space to play in. Instead, children would spend time creating their separate space or they would end up not playing at all. For example, when Brandon and Hawi were peer book reading, they demanded their own space and did not want to be interrupted by other kids. But the other issues that arose with the peer book reading activity also reflected the setup of the classroom. The peer book reading activity was found to be very effective toward bilingual children's second language development; however, it did not occur very often because in all three preschool classrooms the bookshelves were away from the play areas and were not easily accessible to the children. If the books were more accessible to children, they would engage more in this activity.

Teachers should be educated and provided with some tools (props) and encourage children to use them and engage in pretend play activities. Pictures of different classroom setups and different props should be included in the educational brochures and videos. Examples of pretend play props or tools used in a classroom setup of different areas will help novice teachers to arrange their own classrooms in an appropriate way.

11.   Preschool educators should incorporate singing songs activities throughout the day and not only at scheduled times. Head teacher Kelly used the non–academic singing activity with Toshitaro to communicate and it proved to be very effective toward his second language development. Singing songs activity was the only non–academic activity during which bilingual children's engagement and language use did not diminish

at all. Children did not lose interest after a period of time in this activity. The success of the non–academic singing activity can be attributed in part to Bandura's social learning theory which describes human performance as a result of "triadic reciprocality," where shared interaction among three determinants (behavior, personal factors/attitude, and environment) occurs (Bandura, 1986, p. 18). This dynamic interaction among three determinants occurs within a proper environment such as non–academic singing activity, child's behavior such as second language use, and teacher's positive attitudes toward second language acquisition. These determinants work together to promote second language (English) development in bilingual children.

12.   Preschool educators should make book reading more interactive. Children were prone to interact during the book reading activity but they generally could not. Teachers should transform the book reading activity into a more socially interactive activity of a few small groups, so that all children can get a chance to discuss the story and interact with each other. This type of transformation occurred during the meal time activity, so teachers should try to make other activities more interactive as well. Children working in pairs (Cary, 2007) or small groups while reading books have more opportunities for social interaction and ultimately for working within the zone of proximal development ZPD. When working within the zone of proximal development, bilingual children learn from their more capable peers and thus are able to perform at a higher level because of the assistance of a more skilled peer.

Recommendations for policy makers. This researcher makes three recommendations for policy makers based on its findings.

      1.   School administrators should not pressure preschools to adopt academically oriented activities. Academic (teacher-structures) activities take away the time from free play activities which were found to be more beneficial toward bilingual children's second language [English] development.

      2.   Policy makers should make it mandatory for bilingual children to attend two whole years of preschool, as more time spent in preschool has been found to be beneficial for young learners' English language development. Evidence from observations indicates that bilingual children do better in their English language development when attending preschool. Moreover, as Stefan, one of the head teachers, mentioned during his interview, the amount of time that children actually spend in preschool also makes a difference; he recommends "at least twenty hours per week" for English language learners. He further suggested that "they need the consistency of using it [English]"; when there is this consistency, "they will eventually get it." In other words, the more time bilingual children spend in preschool, the more chances they will have to engage in conversations using their English language, eventually leading to increased English language development. More time in preschool translates into completing two full years of preschool rather than just one year or only a half a year. Indeed, if one year of preschool enabled Isabel to interact successfully with her peers, imagine what two years of preschool would do to her English language development. Two years of preschool might bring bilingual children's English language to the level of their monolingual peers (Loeb, Bridges, Bassok, Fuller, & Rumberger, 2007).

3.   Legislators should create two levels of preschool. Three–to–five–year old children are typically mixed in one preschool classroom, and because a three–year old and a five–year old are at completely different ends of the developmental spectrum, they cannot sustain a prolonged and meaningful interaction, which according to Vygotsky (1978) and Bandura (1986) is so critical for language development. For example, Lisa, at three years old the youngest in her classroom, did not interact with other children because they were all much older than her. One teacher commented that Lisa shies away from interacting with other children because "she gets overpowered by them." Instead, Lisa talks to an imaginary friend from time to time. In most instances her utterances could not be understood, but once when she was playing by herself during free play time she said, "I have spoken," before continuing to dance around. Lisa's imaginary friend could have been replaced by a real friend if there were younger, three–year–old children in her classroom. More generally, preschool children might benefit if separated into two age groups with two different levels of preschool education.

Moreover, activities can be allocated more efficiently when the two age groups are separated. For example, the length of the circle time activity could be shorter in the level one preschool classroom and longer in the level two preschool classrooms. Having free play classroom activities in two different levels would also ensure that there are enough children of similar ages to interact.

Therefore, this researcher recommends for legislators that there be two preschool levels: preschool level one for three–to–four–year–old children, and preschool level two for four–to–five–year–old children.

Recommendations for future research. This study presents four recommendations for future research.

1.   It is recommended to conduct further research with a larger sample group to determine which preschool classroom activities are more beneficial toward second language acquisition, as research in this area is lacking. The findings of this present study have contributed to understanding of this issue, but more studies need to be conducted since research studies in second language acquisition do not normally focus on the youngest group of learners, preschoolers. Saunders and O'Brien (2006) have indicated a lack of empirical research regarding second language development for preschools children as opposed to older children. This study is only one of few studies in this area, and since the ELL population is only increasing (Shonkoff & Philips, 2000), there is an urgent need for more empirical research that would provide support of bilingual children's second language development.

2.   It is recommended to measure whether free play time would be more effective for preschool children when all ages (three, four, and five years old) are mixed together in one preschool classroom or when they are separated into different classrooms by age. There might be more interaction during free play when the children are all of similar age, which would allow an increase in peer–to–peer social interaction and therefore enable bilingual children to work within the learner's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978). This increase in social interaction will contribute to second language development.

3.   It is recommended to investigate how a teacher and parent intervention program might benefit bilingual children's second language acquisition. The intervention program would include teacher and parent education on how free play activities benefit bilingual children. Bilingual children's second language should be evaluated before and after the intervention to see whether children have made progress in their second language acquisition.

4.   It is recommended to measure the effectiveness of teachers' strategies and attitudes in children's English language development. If less experienced teachers ignore a child because they cannot understand her, what is the child taking from this experience? She would likely feel that she is not like the other kids. The degree to which bilingual children are affected by inexperienced teachers is an important topic to research in the future. Bilingual children should not feel bad about themselves from an early age.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study found that free play (non–academic) preschool classroom activities were dramatically more effective toward bilingual children's second language (English) development than academic (teacher–structured activities). Therefore, non–academic activities should be a large part of the preschool classroom curriculum. Bilingual preschool children showed more engaging behaviors during non–academic activities than during academic activities. In addition to engagement, bilingual children use their second language dramatically more during non–academic activities than during academic activities. High engagement and high language use lead to second language development. Non–academic activities that were shown to have a great effect on second language development were: pretend play, monkey bars, social meal time, and singing.

Academic activities during which bilingual children engaged the least and used their second language the least were: storytelling, book reading, circle time, and art activities.

Free play time is the source of bilingual children's English language input, interaction, and output. Therefore, free play time should not be diminished or replaced with teacher–structured, or academic, time in preschool classrooms. With regard to mixing activities so that both non–academic and academic activities are present in the preschool curricula, more development in this area needs to be considered. The youngest three–year–old children get bored very quickly during academic activities, whereas the older five– and five–and–a–half year old children do not get bored as quickly. Having two different preschool levels—for example, level one for three–year–olds and level two for five–year–olds—could help preschool educators allocate classroom activities more effectively, resulting in better quality time spent at preschool.

On the topic of teacher perceptions of non–academic and academic activities and their effect on second language development, the more educated teachers (the head teachers) perceived the non–academic activities as more helpful toward second language development and some of the less educated (the teacher aides) were unsure of the concept that peer interaction could contribute toward the children's second language development. Therefore, educating teacher aides about the benefits of non–academic activities and peer–to–peer interactions is recommended. The recommended educational mediums (brochure and video) should also include how can a classroom be arranged to support non–academic activities such as pretend play, peer book reading, and singing. In addition to setting up the classroom to support peer interaction, a variety of classroom

props should be implemented in the classroom that will encourage children to engage in a pretend play activity.

With regard to parent perceptions towards the effects of preschool classroom activities, the non–academic singing songs activity was perceived as the most helpful toward children's second language development, followed by pretend play, and then two academic activities: reading books and circle time. Interview findings indicated that some parents were not informed about which activities their children are engaged in and what effects these activities have on their children's second language development. Therefore, parent education is also recommended through brochure and a video.

Through the efforts of teachers and parents, bilingual children can be provided with opportunities to interact in a socially supported environment that will promote their second language acquisition.

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Appendix A.1
Observation Sheet

Student Name: Classroom: 7 8 9 Head Teacher Name: Teacher Aid Name:	Date: Time: Academic Activity Non-Academic Activity Name of Activity

First Half of Activity
Engagement Level
 	
   1   2   3
	Second Half of Activity
	Engagement Level
	
	   1 2 3

Language Use
 	
Quantity: **Quality:**
 	
1   2   3   Verbal   1
                      (Yes)
                                         0
                      (No)
 	
                      Listening   1
                      (Yes)
                                         0
                      (No)
	Language Use
	
	Quantity: **Quality:**
	
	1 2 3 Verbal 1
	                      (Yes)
	                                         0
	                      (No)
	
	                      Listening 1
	                      (Yes)
	                                         0
	                      (No)

Appendix A.2
Operational Definitions

Engagement Level		Fully Engaged. Asking a question; verbally interacting; responding appropriately; prolonged activity-related talk; actively following (eye contact) the peer or teacher; moving closer to the activity; raising hand; facial expression indicating enthusiasm.
		Somewhat Engaged. Asking to repeat; verbally interacting with interruptions; some activity-related talk; some eye contact; not leaving the activity; facial expression indicating interest.
		Not engaged. Not responding; inappropriate verbal interaction (talking to neighbor); activity non-related talk; not watching the activity; leaving the activity; starring off (daydreaming); facial expression indicating boredom.
Language Use	Quantity	Minimal is defined as one comment or less produced during a given preschool activity. Moderate is defined as two to three comments produced during an activity. Largest is defined as four or more comments produced during a given preschool activity.
	Quality	Verbal. Scoring 'yes' indicates child says something comprehensive. Scoring 'no' indicates a child was not understood.
		Listening. Scoring 'yes' indicates listening behavior. These behaviors are as follows: head nodding, facial expression indicating interest, answering/commenting on what has been said. Scoring 'no' indicates a child is not listening. These behaviors are as follows: looking the other way, facial expression indicating disinterest, not answering/commenting on what has been said.

Appendix B
Survey Instrument

Circle the activity you have seen at school or your child has talked to you about. Rate the activity indicating how helpful you believe it is towards L2 development.	Check if seen ✓	Helps with my child's English language development. No Some Great
1.Dramatic/Pretend play		0 1 2
2.Story-teller time		0 1 2
3.Reading books time		0 1 2
4.Climbing monkey bars and play structures		0 1 2
5.Circle time		0 1 2
6.Singing songs & rhyming		0 1 2
7.Library center time		0 1 2
8.Art center time		0 1 2
9.Socio-Dramatic play		0 1 2
10.Alphabet recognition		0 1 2

Teacher demographic characteristics will be used for statistical purposes only:

11. Teacher Educational Level:

___High School Diploma/GED

___Child Development Associate (CDA)

___Associate's Degree

___Bachelor's Degree

___Master's Degree

___Masters' and higher

12. What was your major area of specialization?

_____

13. How many years in total have you taught in early childhood education?

_____years

14. How many years have you taught in your current school?

_____ years

15. How many years have you taught children whose native language is not English?

_____years

16. What is your ethnic background?

_____

17. What is your gender?

Male   Female

18. What is your age?

_____

Thank you for participating in this study!

Parent demographic characteristics will be used for statistical purposes only:

11. Parent Educational Level

___High School Diploma/GED

___Associate's Degree

___Bachelor's Degree

___Master's Degree

___Masters' and higher

12. What is the primary language spoken at home?

_____

13. What other languages are spoken at home?

_____

14. What is the mother's native language?

_____

15. What is the father's native language?

_____

16. How many months have your child be learning English as a second language?

_____ months

17. What is your ethnic background?

_____

18. What is your gender?

Male   Female

19. What is your age?

_____

Thank you for participating in this study!

Appendix C.1
Observation Schedule

	9AM	10AM	11AM	12:30PM	1-3PM	3PM	4PM	5PM
Monday Activity 1 Activity 2	Jose	Julia	Joan	Martin	Lunch Break	Jose	Amy	Julia
Tuesday Activity 1 Activity 2	--------	--------	-----------	-----------	Lunch Break	Amy	Peter	Jose
Wednesday Activity 1 Activity 2	Frank	Martin	Jose	Amy	Lunch Break	Joey	Julia	Martin
Thursday Activity 1 Activity 2	--------	--------	-----------	-----------	Lunch Break	Peter	Jose	Joan
Friday Activity 1 Activity 2	Amy	Joan	Jose	Peter	Lunch Break	Martin	Frank	Joey

Appendix C.2
Research Design Matrix Plan

Week	Observations	Teacher One-on –one Interviews	Teacher Group Interview	Parent One-on-one Interview	Qualtrics.com
1	✓				✓
2	✓				✓
3	✓				
4	✓				
5				✓	
6		✓	✓	✓	

Appendix D

Expert Review

Dr. Benjamin Baab

A professor in School of Education at University of San Francisco. Dr. Baab teaches and advises master's and doctoral students in areas of research methods, statistics, and educational technology. Dr. Baab's expertise and interests is in developments of open-source, free software in schools.

Appendix E

Interview Protocol

Project Title:

Time of Interview:
Date:
Place:
Interviewer:
Interviewee:
Position of Interviewee:
Tape (recording) number:

Questions:

1. Please describe your role in your children's English language development.

2. Which classroom activities do you believe have the greatest effect on the children's English language development?

3. Do children appear to use their English language more during any of these classroom activities?

4. During which classroom activities is the children's English language performance of higher quality?

Appendix F

Consent Letter to the Preschool Coordinator

Jennifer Smith
Preschool Program Coordinator
Associated Students Inc.,
San Francisco State University
1650 Holloway Avenue
CCSU M-106
San Francisco, CA 94132

Dear ASI Preschool Coordinator,

My name is Ivana Markova and I am a graduate student pursuing a doctorate degree in International and Multicultural Education at University of San Francisco. The purpose of my graduate research is examine certain free-play and teacher-structured preschool activities and their effects on bilingual children's English language development. It is of the researcher's interest to also examine the teachers' and parents' perceptions about this given issue. The results of my research will help to determine which preschool classroom activities are beneficial toward English language development of bilingual or trilingual children.

I am asking for a permission to conduct my research study at ASI preschool center. I am asking to conduct my research at ASI center because some of the children who attend the center learn English as their second language. If you grand me the permission, the recruitment procedures of this research study will be the following:

1   the researcher will recruit 7 bilingual children and their parents by distributing consent letters to parents' mailboxes which are located in each preschool classroom.
2   the researcher will recruit 15 preschool teachers by distributing consent letters to teachers' mailboxes which are located at the front desk.

If the researcher is granted consent from the parents and teachers, the data collection procedures will be the following:

1   the researcher will collect the data through classroom observations of bilingual children. Children will be observed during various preschool classroom activities which includes both free-play and teacher-structured activities. The observation period will last six weeks.

2   the researcher will email parents and teachers a link to a survey. Parents and teachers will have three weeks to complete the survey.

3   the researcher will set up one parent group interviews and two teachers' interviews. There will be one-on-one head teacher interviews with three of the head teachers at ASI center and one group teachers' interview.

Risks and/or Discomforts

1   It is possible that some of the questions on the classroom activities survey may make the participants feel uncomfortable, but they are free to decline to answer any questions they do not wish to answer or to stop participation at any time.
2   Participation in research may mean a loss of confidentiality. Study records will be kept as confidential as is possible. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study. Study information will be coded and kept in locked files at all times. Only study personnel will have access to the files.
3.   Because the time required for the participation may be up to 60 minutes, the teachers and parents may become tired or bored. Benefits: There will be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study. The anticipated benefit of this study is a better understanding of the effects of the preschool classroom activities on children English language development. Costs/Financial Considerations: There will be no financial costs to participants as a result of taking part in this study. Participants should understand that their participation is voluntary and that choosing not to participate in this research study will not affect their relations with San Francisco State University or the Early Childhood Education Center.

If you have any questions about this study, I will be happy to talk to you. I can be reached at ivanam@sfsu.edu. If you have further questions about the study, you may contact the IRBPHS at the University of San Francisco, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS, Counseling Psychology Department, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1071. Once this study is completed, you will receive a summary of the results.

If you grand me the permission to conduct my research study at ASI daycare center, signing and returning of this form will indicate your consent to the above conditions.
_____
ASI Preschool Coordinator, Signature

Sincerely,
Ivana Markova
Graduate Student
University of San Francisco

Appendix G

Consent Letter for Participants

Implied Consent to Participate in Research

Dear ASI Parent:

My name is Ivana Markova and I am a graduate student pursuing a doctorate degree in International and Multicultural Education at University of San Francisco. The purpose of my graduate research is examine certain free-play and teacher-structured preschool activities and their effects on bilingual children's English language development. It is of the researcher's interest to also examine the parents' and preschool teachers' perceptions (opinions) about this given issue. The results of my research will help to determine which preschool classroom activities are more beneficial toward English language development of bilingual children.

You and your child are being asked to participate in this research study because you are raising your child to be a bilingual or trilingual speaker. Procedures if you agree to be a participant in this study, the following will happen:
1   The researcher will conduct classroom observations of bilingual children at the
ASI center.
2   You will complete a survey about preschool classroom activities and their effects
on your child's English language development and some demographic
characteristic questions at the end.
3   You will participate in one parent group interview which will be arranged at your convenience. In this interview, the researcher will discuss the preschool classroom activities and their effects on your child's English language development in more detail. This interview will take place in the conference room at ASI daycare center, San Francisco State University.

Risks and/or Discomforts

1   It is possible that some of the questions on the classroom activities survey may make you feel uncomfortable, but you are free to decline to answer any questions you do not wish to answer or to stop participation at any time.
2   Participation in research may mean a loss of confidentiality. Study records will be kept as confidential as is possible. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications resulting from the study. Study information will be coded and kept in locked files at all times. Only study personnel will have access to the files.
3.   Because the time required for your participation may be up to 45 minutes, you may become tired or bored. Benefits: There will be no direct benefit to you from participating in this study. The anticipated benefit of this study is a better understanding

of the effect of the preschool classroom activities on children English language development. Costs/FinancialConsiderations: There will be no financial costs to you as a result of taking part in this study.

You should understand that your participation is voluntary and that choosing not to participate in this research study will not affect your relations with San Francisco State University or the Early Childhood Education Center. If you do participate, signing and returning of this form will indicate your consent to the above conditions.

If you choose to participate in this research study, please return this form to <u>Gena Wilson by Friday, November, 2012.</u>

If you have any questions about this study, I will be happy to talk to you. I can be reached at ivanam@sfsu.edu. If you have further questions about the study, you may contact the IRBPHS at the University of San Francisco, which is concerned with protection of volunteers in research projects. You may reach the IRBPHS office by calling (415) 422-6091 and leaving a voicemail message, by e-mailing IRBPHS@usfca.edu, or by writing to the IRBPHS, Counseling Psychology Department, University of San Francisco, 2130 Fulton Street, San Francisco, CA 94117-1071. Once this study is completed, you will receive a summary of the results.

Thank you for your attention. If you agree to participate, please sign this form.

_____   _____

Parent Participant Signature   Parent Email

Sincerely,

Ivana Markova
Graduate Student
University of San Francisco

Appendix H

IRB Approval Letter

November 6, 2012
>
>Dear Ivana Markova:
>
>The Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects (IRBPHS)
>at the University of San Francisco (USF) has reviewed your request for human
>subjects approval regarding your study. Your study has been deemed to be exempt
>from IRB review based on the following conditions:
>
>Unless otherwise required by department or agency heads, research activities
>in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following
>categories are exempt from this policy:
>
>1) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude,
>achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior,
>unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be
>identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects, and (ii) any
>disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place
>the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects'
>financial standing, employability, or reputation.
>
>This application does not require IRB review.
>
>On behalf of the IRBPHS committee, I wish you much success in your research.
>
>Sincerely,
>
>Terence Patterson, EdD, ABPP
>Chair, Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
>---
>IRBPHS – University of San Francisco
>Counseling Psychology Department
>Education Building – Room 017
>2130 Fulton Street
>San Francisco, CA 94117-1080
>(415) 422-6091 (Message)
>(415) 422-5528 (Fax)
>irbphs@usfca.edu
>---
>http://www.usfca.edu/soe/students/irbphs/