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The Role of the Press in Framing the Bilingual Education Debate: Ten Years after Sheltered Immersion in Massachusetts

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In 2002 Massachusetts voters passed a voter initiative that changed the way children who are not fluent in English are taught. The initiative overturned the state's requirement for "transitional bilingual education," through which children are gradually transitioned, usually over a three-year period, from instruction in their native language to instruction entirely in English. Transitional bilingual education was replaced with "sheltered English immersion," which places children with little or no English-language fluency in classes where almost all instruction is in English, with the expectation that they will move to regular English-only classrooms after one year.

We used frame analysis to examine news coverage of this issue in the Boston Globe for the decade following the election, aiming to assess the press's contribution to public understanding of the controversy over bilingual education and to shed light on the press's role in enforcing the dominant language ideology of the United States, which supports English monolingualism. The study examined fifty-seven news articles identified through the use of key words. We organized the articles into three periods and focused on (1) headlines, (2) main events and themes, (3) characters, (4) use of expert sources, and (5) the placement of stories. We found most articles bunched in the period immediately following the election. The press frame featured conflicts among politicians and struggles with implementation and emphasized local concerns through placement of the stories in the paper. Some stories reported lack of success for sheltered English immersion, but very few experts on language learning or bilingual education were brought into the press frame. The news stories provided the reader little information about language learning and no perspective on the potential importance or usefulness of bi- and multilingual education. As a major news source, the Boston Globe told the story in a manner that reinforced a language ideology supporting the hegemony of English.

In 2002, Massachusetts became the third state in the United States to end bilingual education through voter referendum. The voter referendum (which closely mirrored earlier votes in California and Arizona) mandated sheltered English immersion to replace a long-standing state mandate for transitional bilingual education, through which students not fluent in English are moved over a period of two to three years from instruction in their native language to English-only instruction in all subjects. The Massachusetts vote made clear that many voters, even in

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states considered to be politically liberal, now disapproved of bilingual education. As an innovator in bilingual education and research, Massachusetts was often described as “liberal” and “progressive.” But the Massachusetts voter referendum proved to be yet another sign of what San Miguel identifies as “significant organized resistance to the use of non-English languages in the schools and to the use of schools as instruments of minority empowerment.”¹

At the time of the 2002 vote in Massachusetts, some thirty-nine thousand children in the state were being taught in bilingual education classes. By the 2011–12 school year, over sixty-two thousand students in the state were participating in some form of program for students who are assessed as nonfluent in English.² Since the early 2000s, the U.S. government has used the term “English Language Learners” (ELLs) to refer to students so assessed, replacing the term “limited English proficient” (LEP).

During the years since sheltered immersion was implemented in Massachusetts, some children have learned enough English through this method to be mainstreamed into regular English-language classrooms after one year; but, overall, the story is not positive—for the learning of English by non-native speakers or for the broader issue of bilingualism in the United States. In a study based on matched student records for 2012 and 2013, the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education reported that 61 percent of K–12 ELLs in Massachusetts had made progress in learning English, but only 19 percent of ELLs tested as proficient in English.³

In this article we assess the manner in which the press has contributed to public understanding of the controversy over bilingual education in the United States. We are interested in how the press has framed the bilingual education issue in Massachusetts since the voter referendum of 2002. Our analysis focuses on what counts as news and how that news is presented to the public as part of the storytelling process. Although debate continues about how to define what is legitimate news and who are legitimate journalists, certain journalistic outlets, such as major newspapers, continue to be widely recognized as sources of trustworthy, current information about important events. Thus, we chose to examine stories in the *Boston Globe*, the major print news source in Massachusetts.

Like many hot political issues that gain attention in advance of an election, sheltered English immersion receded soon after the 2002 vote and its immediate aftermath as a topic of importance in election campaigning and neighborhood conversations (except in those places where controversy arose as part of the new law’s implementation). And though it seems to register no more than an occasional blip on the radar screen of the news, the topic has not receded for school systems, teachers, and families directly involved in education for ELLs. We were interested to find out more precisely how frequently the news reported on the topic, which would tell us whether a major news organization was placing bilingual education on the public agenda; what aspects of bilingual education were deemed newsworthy when the topic was covered; and how the topic was framed.

Following a brief overview of the 2002 voter referendum in Massachusetts, we present the analytical perspective of frame analysis, the procedures we used in the study, and findings from our examination of news articles in the *Boston Globe* from 2002 to 2012. We conclude with a discussion of the research in the context of journalistic practice and language ideology.

“Question 2” and the End of “Bilingual Education” in Massachusetts

Massachusetts is one of thirty-two states that provide a mechanism for citizens to vote on proposed laws and constitutional amendments, often in opposition to legislative actions and

standing law. On November 5, 2002, voters in Massachusetts passed a ballot question designed to end bilingual education and replace it with a one-year program of sheltered immersion for children in public schools. The vote (68 percent for and 32 percent against) nullified the prevailing law that mandated Transitional Bilingual Education, which had been in place since 1970. The voter initiative was spearheaded by Ron Unz, who, before he appeared in Massachusetts (and simultaneously in Colorado), had successfully led and financed voter initiatives to end bilingual education in California in 1998 (Proposition 227) and in Arizona in 2000 (Proposition 203). A profile of Unz in the *Los Angeles Times* provides a perspective on the man behind the initiatives.⁴ The son of a single mother who was a liberal political activist, Unz grew up in North Hollywood, California, where the family relied on welfare. He excelled in school, and reports place his IQ at genius level. He graduated from Harvard University, then studied physics at Stanford University, and in 1987 founded Wall Street Analytics, a mortgage-related software company. He left Wall Street at a young age with money and time to pursue his political interests, trying unsuccessfully with his own funds to be elected governor of California in 1994. He then turned his attention to dismantling bilingual education.

Once a measure is passed by the electorate, implementation requires the coordination of many different agents and agencies. Bali, who studied the implementation of California's anti-bilingual education Proposition 227, notes that local authorities, school personnel, and postreferendum voter attitudes all influence how voter initiatives are put in place.⁵ In Massachusetts, as in California, complexities in implementation have created different situations, including the issuing of federal compliance orders related to ELLs that take precedence over state practices. For example, in 2010 Boston signed a compliance agreement with the U.S. Department of Civil Rights to rectify failures to adequately teach ELLs.⁶ Because most citizens would know little about the complexities of local implementation of laws, the press's role in the aftermath of successful citizen initiatives continues to be important for citizen knowledge.

How the *Boston Globe* told the story of bilingual education leading up to the 2002 voter initiative provides a context for the current study. Johnson analyzed stories published in Boston's two newspapers with the largest circulation—the *Boston Globe* and the *Boston Herald*—and two newspapers in Colorado (where voters defeated a similar referendum in 2002) in the month before the election.⁷ Some of Johnson's findings involve how the *Globe* skirted the issues in the debate by focusing on a "he said, she said" narrative that was only occasionally broadened with more in-depth feature stories about what was at stake. Moreover, the *Globe* rarely brought experts on second language learning and bilingual education pedagogy into the news frame. When experts appear, they tend to be pollsters, test analysts, or psychologists. The news articles include numerous quotations and attributions of statements that accuse bilingual education of not teaching English or that create a dichotomy between bilingual education and the teaching of English. When these statements occur, they are never followed by commentary, corrective statements, or balancing statements from experts; nor are any points made in the background pieces about the value that might obtain from educating more children—monolingual English speakers and speakers of other languages alike—in two languages. These points relate directly to language ideology, which is "imposed and maintained by dominant bloc institutions," of which the press is one.⁸

Setting the Agenda and Constructing the Frames for News

Two concepts are central to understanding the practices that journalists and editors use to create the context for how the public thinks about events and people. The first is agenda setting,

through which newspapers determine the major topics of discussion by paying attention to particular events and issues. Scheufele and Tewksbury say “there is a strong correlation between the emphasis that mass media place on certain issues . . . and the importance attributed to these issues by mass audiences.”⁹ The second is framing, through which news organizations offer the public particular perspectives on those issues they have identified as important. Newspapers (and other media sources) wield enormous power in shaping public opinion about a broad range of public policy issues through their ability to set the agenda for public discourse and control the frame of the ensuing conversation about the issues that appear on the agenda. Newspaper stories also provide the material for many television news stories.

Frame Analysis

Using the analytical perspective of frame analysis helps provide insight into how news stories shape important policy issues such as bilingual education and English-language immersion. A frame as applied to discourse is a boundary or border that brings some elements into view and keeps others out. Frames focus attention by “making a piece of information more noticeable, meaningful, or memorable.”¹⁰ Scholarship that draws on the frame perspective takes varied directions. In sociolinguistics, Deborah Tannen has been a leader in demonstrating how framing works in everyday discourse. A frame, she says, is a “structure of expectation” that serves as the guide to “what is going on in the interaction.”¹¹ For example, simply using the term “bilingual education” in conversation will call forth certain meanings in one context, such as the United States, that may be dramatically different in another context, such as the European Union.

In news analysis, Scheufele and Tewksbury write, framing is “based on the assumption that how an issue is characterized in news reports can have an influence on how it is understood by audiences.”¹² “Media framing,” according to Tucker, “is both a process and effect in which a common stock of key words, phrases, images, sources, and themes highlight and promote specific facts, interpretations and judgments, making them more salient. . . . A dominant frame usually is fixed within the discourse to become the preferred reading.”¹³ These dominant frames surpass more straightforward issues of bias or whether the news source is more or less independent of other institutions. To understand what a journalist is doing to create a frame, Jamieson and Waldman use the terms *lens* and *frame* to characterize a two-part process through which events and ideas are shaped by reporters:

To describe reporters’ views of the world they are asked to explain, we use the metaphor of *lenses*, the shifting perspectives that color what reporters see of the world at a given moment. To describe the news coverage that results from those views, we use the metaphor of *frames*, the structures underlying the depictions that the public reads, hears, and watches.¹⁴

In the domain of bilingual education, a lens could be focused on the views of political candidates; once the lens is focused, news coverage might include, for example, selected statements made by the candidates and their staff members, selected statements made by experts about the candidates’ viewpoints, or analysis of how candidates’ views relate to opinion polls. The frame might be further developed by the selection and use of terms that provide a positive, negative, or neutral position on bilingual education, or that create a narrative of fear or conflict on the issue.

In the analysis that follows, the framing of news about the ten-year aftermath of the vote in Massachusetts to end bilingual education is explored from five perspectives: (1) the headlines for stories, (2) the events of importance as they provide the core for the narrative being told, (3) the characters involved in the narrative contained in the stories, (4) the way in which reporters use expert sources, and (5) the placement of the stories within the paper.

Materials and Methods

Sample of News Articles

Our analysis focuses on articles published in the *Boston Globe* from November 6, 2002 (the day after the referendum vote) through December 31, 2012. We selected the *Boston Globe* because it is the highest circulation newspaper in the state, in print and digital subscriptions, and it is a source for regional television and cable news stories.¹⁵ We searched for articles using the ProQuest Central database and the key words “bilingual,” “bilingual education,” “English Language Learners,” “ELL,” “sheltered immersion,” “two-way language immersion,” and “two-way English immersion.” All news and feature articles were selected for analysis. Editorials and opinion pieces were excluded. Also excluded were articles that provided no indication in the headline that the article would deal with bilingual education, sheltered immersion, or two-way language immersion; the rationale for this decision was that headlines provide the guide for what the story covers and tend to be what draw readers to an article. We made an exception, however, for articles that appeared in 2002 and 2003, when the referendum vote was still on people’s minds and schools were grappling with how to implement the changes required by the new law. For that period, we included articles whose headlines could reasonably be interpreted as related to bilingual education because of the context in which the headline would be understood. For example, the headline “Schools Prepare New Lesson Plans” does not include any reference to bilingual education. In the aftermath of the vote to eliminate bilingual education, however, the headline would most likely be understood as a reference to bilingual education. The search yielded fifty-seven articles. The titles and dates for each article are listed in Table 1. For convenience in referencing, the number assigned to each article is used in the analysis below. The frequencies with which articles appeared each year in the sample are presented in Figure 1.

Table 1. News Articles on Bilingual Education in the *Boston Globe*: November 6, 2002–December 31, 2012

No.	Date	Headline
1	November 6, 2002	Vote Is Strong for English Immersion
2	November 6, 2002	Chelsea: In This Precinct, Question 2 Was on Their Minds
3	November 6, 2002	Bilingual Education, Health Care Weighed
4	November 6, 2002	English Immersion Plan Wins Over Bilingual Ed
5	November 8, 2002	Courts Could Trump Voters in Some Cities, Orders May Keep Bilingual Classes
6	November 10, 2002	English-Immersion Mandate Sinks In Vote Disappoints School Officials
7	November 10, 2002	Dissecting Bilingual Education’s Poll Defeat Movement Lacked Money, Message Lou DiNatale, political analyst at UMass Boston*
8	November 10,	Many Parents to Miss Bilingual Program

	2002	
9	November 17, 2002	Immersion Vote Reflects Support by Immigrants
10	November 17, 2002	Educators Decry Shift from Bilingual Education
11	November 19, 2002	Amherst Bilingual Backers Still Battling
12	November 24, 2002	Bilingual Promise as English Immersion Looms, Aides Train for a Vital New Role Maria de Lourdes B. Serpa, professor at Lesley University*
13	December 8, 2002	Changes Prepared for Town's Bilingual Education Program's Revamping May Cost \$200,000
14	December 9, 2002	Vote Set on Immersion Waiver Many in Amherst Want Bilingual Ed
15	December 12, 2002	Chasing Math's Magic Number: 220 Bilingual Students Face MCAS Deadline Anne Wheelock, Boston-based education researcher*
16	January 23, 2003	Schools Seek to Phase in English Immersion Called Too Costly for Fall Some Urge Phase-In of English Immersion
17	March 9, 2003	Flexibility Sought on Bilingual Education Jorge Capetillo, professor of sociology at the UMass Boston and research associate at the Gaston Institute*
18	April 13, 2003	Schools Up to Speed on Bilingual Education Law
19	April 27, 2003	Second Bilingual Battle Gears Up Legislative Move Afoot to Alter Immersion Law
20	May 2, 2003	Governor Vows to Veto Immersion Changes
21	May 15, 2003	Teachers Told to Talk the Talk Some Fear Loss of Jobs If They Fail Oral English Test
22	May 15, 2003	Language Program May Get Reprieve Town Would Keep Bilingual Model
23	May 25, 2003	Schools Prepare New Lesson Plans English Mandate to Begin in 2004
24	June 1, 2003	With Language Change Looming, Time to Study the Fine Print
25	June 8, 2003	Bilingual Law a Challenge to Schools
26	June 12, 2003	Tamayo Targets Bilingual Changes Legislators Defy Voters, Says Backer of Language Plan
27	June 22, 2003	Two-Way Language Plea Advocates Asking to Spare Programs
28	July 1, 2003	Bilingual Ed Program Vetoed
29	July 15, 2003	Legislature Loosens Law on English Immersion Allows Some Exceptions Despite Voter Referendum
30	July 16, 2003	Romney Hits Softening of Bilingual Law Says Override By Legislators Was 'Arrogance'

31	July 20, 2003	Reinstating Two-Way Bilingual Ed Is Hailed Popular Elective Has a Waiting List
32	July 24, 2003	Bilingual Program Survives, and Parents Rejoice
33	July 25, 2003	Lawrence Teachers Fight Fluency Rule
34	August 23, 2003	Bilingual Teachers Press for Reinstatement James Lantolf, professor of applied linguistics at Penn State University*
35	August 27, 2003	School Begins, Immersed in English Bilingual Education Ends under Terms of 2002 Vote
36	September 3, 2003	Caution Voiced on Immersion Rule Education Chief Sees Immersion Struggles
37	September 14, 2003	Teachers Rehired after Change in Immersion Law
38	October 12, 2003	Family Confronts English-Only Law Classrooms No Longer Bilingual Eileen de los Reyes, senior program director for research and development at the Office of Language Learning and Support Services, Boston School Department*
39	October 12, 2003	For Their Take on Bilingual Ed, You Need a VCR
40	October 14, 2003	Immersion Waivers Granted Unevenly
41	November 6, 2003	Language Barriers Persist Immersion Boosters Tout Progress, but Opponents Skeptical
42	December 14, 2003	Language Challenges Children, and Parents Carola Suarez-Orozco, codirector of the Harvard Immigration Projects*
43	December 26, 2003	English Immersion Is Slow Going State's Time Frame for Immigrant Children to Master English Is Tough to Meet Donaldo Macedo, director of the Applied Linguistics Graduate Program at UMass Boston*
44	January 22, 2004	Lawrence May Rehire 8 Teachers Struggling to Pass English Exam
45	February 19, 2004	Schools Get Head Start in English Immersion 2-year-old Program Geared toward Recent Immigrants
46	March 21, 2004	English Immersion Hits Home Spanish Speakers Fear Erosion of Culture
47	March 28, 2004	Times Two in This Fifth-Grade Math Class in Roxbury, English Plus Spanish [<i>sic</i>] Equals an Invaluable Education
48	October 2, 2005	Portuguese, Vietnamese, Serbo-Croatian, Chinese, Haitian (Creole), Spanish, Somali, Russian . . . Spoken Here Students Teachers Struggle to Meet English Fluency Goals
49	January 19, 2006	A Language to Learn; Newcomers, Schools Share Challenges of Life after Bilingual Ed Christine Rossell, political science professor at Boston University*

50	May 21, 2006	Bilingual Law Fails First Test Maria de Lourdes, Lesley University education professor and bilingual education supporter* Christine Rossell, Boston University professor who helped write MA law and co-chaired campaign to pass it*
51	July 22, 2007	Immigrant Parents Struggle to Keep Their Children Bilingual Ruben G. Rumbaut, sociologist at UCal Irvine, studied adults to see how long their language survived; presented finding to U.S. House Judiciary subcommittee on immigration*
52	February 21, 2008	School's Video Depicts New Path to Dual Literacy Elizabeth Howard, former senior research associate, Center for Applied Linguistics at Georgetown University*
53	March 18, 2008	Bilingual Teachers Wanted Lucia Mayerson-David, UMass Boston professor*
54	October 23, 2008	Sharing Languages, Students Gain an Edge English, Spanish Speakers Learn from One Another at Brockton School Chieh Li, associate professor of educational psychology at Northeastern University*
55	January 25, 2009	MCAS, Fluency Pressures Build Lawrence Students Make Notable Gains in Test Scores
56	May 13, 2009	Budget Woes May Dim a Bilingual Beacon Miren Uriarte, research associate at Mauricio Gaston Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy at UMass Boston*
57	October 5, 2011	Bilingual Backers Appeal to Legislators

*Expert source cited in the article.

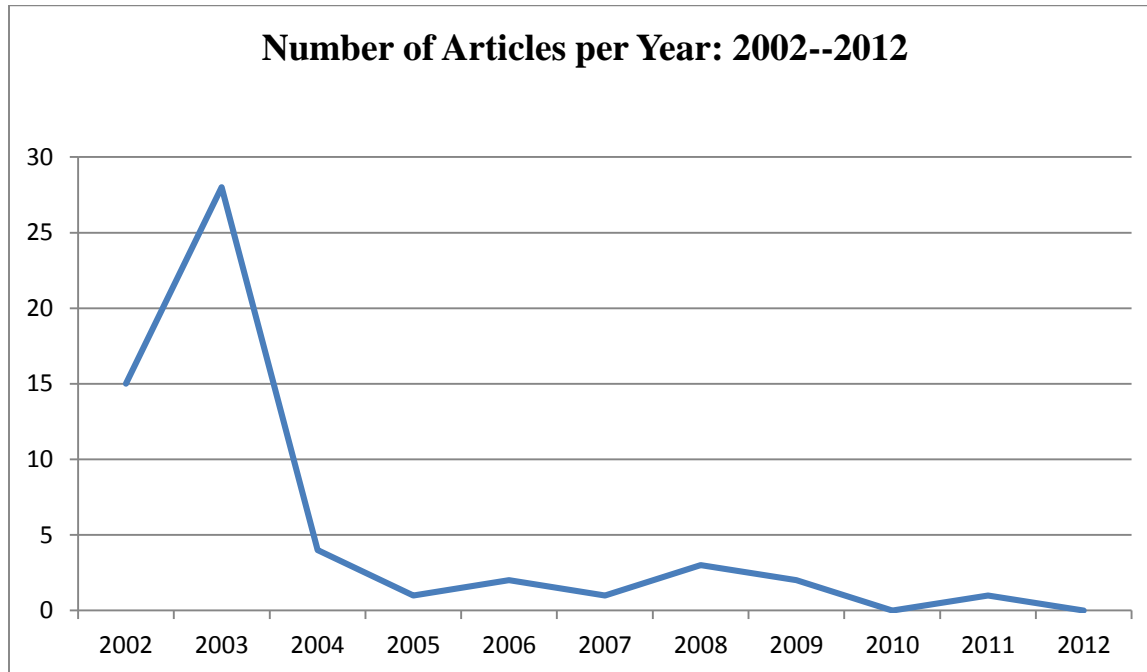


Figure 1. Articles per year 2002–12

Article Clusters

The fifty-seven articles clustered into three groups identified as Periods 1 through 3. Period 1 includes articles from November and December 2002, immediately following the voter referendum, which focus on the referendum’s implications for schools, teachers, and students (n = 15). Period 2 includes articles from 2003, which focus on legislative and political matters related to possible changes in the law and its implementation (n = 28). Period 3 includes a small number of articles on various topics from the remaining 2004–12 period (n=14). Table 2 shows the distribution of the articles into these periods and the placement of the articles within the newspaper.

Table 2. Position of News Stories in Three Periods

Section and position	2002 (n = 15)	2003 (n = 28)	2004–2012 (n = 14)	TOTAL (n = 57)
Front page	2 (13%)	7 (25%)	4 (29%)	13 (23%)
Front section/ not front page	1 (7%)	0	0	1 (2%)
Metro front page	2 (13%)	4 (14%)	1 (7%)	7 (12%)
Metro/ not front page	4 (27%)	6 (21%)	1 (7%)	11 (19%)
Regional	6 (40%)	11 (39%)	8 (57%)	25 (44%)

Period 1: 2002

Headlines

The headlines for the fifteen articles immediately following the November election include some that simply report the vote's outcome; others suggest that the war is not yet over and there is anguish over what happened at the polls. We learn that the courts could "trump" the will of the voters (BG5), and that one town is "still battling" (BG11) and will seek a waiver (BG14). The headlines also frame a certain amount of let-down and hand-wringing, stating that the "vote disappoints school officials" (BG6), "educators decry" the ballot outcome (BG10), "English immersion looms" (BG12), and students will have to "face MCAS [Massachusetts Comprehensive Assessment System tests] deadline" (BG15).

Events and Narrative

The narrative in the postelection news stories focuses on the polarization of the bilingual education issue and the struggle by those who lost to understand how this could have happened and how it will be possible to move forward. The language creates an image that the story has now turned to either gloating or sober recognition of what had happened: the winners "basked in their triumph . . . eating fajitas and antipasti off a buffet table that sported two sombreros" while "the subdued crowd of about 20 [of the losers] ate beef and chicken skewers" (BG4).

The stories right after the election use aggressive terms to characterize the vote: voters chose to "dump" bilingual education (BG1) in a "polarizing clash" (BG1, BG4); the opponents "crushed" the bilingual education position (BG7), and those beaten "pounced" on (BG6) and "blasted" the immersion initiative (BG6). Individuals on the winning and losing sides make statements about the issue, and the support for immersion by the governor-elect (Mitt Romney) is mentioned.

More than half of the articles focus the lens on local communities as they struggle to implement the change. Eleven towns are named either as examples or through extensive profiles. Of the fifteen articles, six appear in regional sections of the newspaper (distributed to specific areas in the greater Boston market) and two appear in the Metro section (the second section of the paper). The articles in the Metro section focus on Amherst, a liberal town in the western part of the state that is seeking an exemption from the new immersion mandate.

Future political maneuvers loom as a story-in-the-making. Readers learn that Amherst has scheduled a vote to seek an exemption from the legislature and that most (92 percent) Latinos opposed the immersion initiative (BG1, BG7). Also, a political analyst projects that the anti-immersion camp may have better prospects and be better organized to sway what will likely be a legislative attempt to amend the voter initiative (BG7).

The examples provided in the stories place bilingual education in a Hispanic frame featuring Spanish and occasionally Portuguese speakers that is also evident in pre-election coverage.¹⁶ Only one article (BG9) opens the lens to children who speak Asian languages.

Various articles recap the referendum question, explaining what was replaced by what. "Two-way" bilingual programs that jointly teach native English speakers and native speakers of another language (often Spanish) in a bilingual environment enter the lens in four stories: two stories (BG1, BG4) frame the approach as "popular" but say that most of these programs will be eliminated; one (BG13) states, more specifically, that the programs will continue in the upper grades but not in the lower grades; and one (BG8) simply notes that two children mentioned in the article are in these programs. This topic becomes more central as a story line in Period 2.

Characters

The main characters in the postelection frame are the organizers of the ballot initiative, the opponents, school personnel, parents and students who are affected, and elected government officials. Specific people are mentioned eighty-one times in this group of news stories, with some mentioned more than once. Many are quoted directly, some are summarized, and some are referred to but not quoted. Ron Unz, the initiative organizer, has the most mentions at nine. His lead organizers in Massachusetts, Lincoln Tamayo and Rosalie Porter, are quoted or paraphrased three times, and a spokesperson for Unz's campaign is also quoted. The Committee for Fairness to Children, which led the fight to save bilingual education, had only three mentions.

Beyond the organizers, the largest categories for characters in the postelection news frame are elected politicians (twelve), citizens (eleven), school superintendents or seconds in command (seven), and directors or coordinators of school bilingual programs (five). The narrative clearly is peopled by those who have the task before them of either revising the vote through legislation or dealing with implementation of English immersion.

Expert Sources

For this analysis, an *expert source* in a news story is a person identified by name who is one or more of the following: (1) a researcher or writer on the subject matter covered in a news article, (2) a professor or Ph.D., (3) a person associated with a research organization, center, or institute. Of the eighty-one people named in the fifteen articles in Period 1, only three (4 percent) are identified in ways that suggest they are experts. One is identified as a political analyst, one as a professor, and one as an education researcher. But all are minor characters, and none is clearly an expert on second language learning or pedagogy related to multilingualism. Lou DiNatale (BG7), a political analyst, says little except to expect political action on the issue; Maria de Lourdes Serpa (BG12) is identified as a professor who was once a paraprofessional, but her specialty is not given; Anne Wheelock (BG15), who specializes in testing, provides a comment about the MCAS tests.

Period 2: 2003

Headlines

The headlines for the twenty-eight articles in 2002 focus the lens on implementation of the new law and establish several frames. The first frame puts the focus on struggle and challenge and is conveyed in the following headlines:

- “Schools Seek to Phase in English Immersion / Called Too Costly . . .” (BG16)
- “Teachers . . . Fear Loss of Jobs” (BG21)
- “Bilingual Law a Challenge to Schools” (BG25)
- “Family Confronts English-Only Law” (BG38)
- “Language Challenges Children, and Parents” (BG42)
- “State’s Time Frame for Immigrant Children to Master English Is Tough to Meet” (BG43)

The struggle and challenge frame brings in schools, teachers, and children and families.

A second frame continues the theme of conflict by putting the focus on opposition by those directly affected by the law and by legislators who plan to amend the new laws in defiance of the

governor. The second frame is conveyed in the following headlines, which prime the reader to think about confrontations ahead:

- “Lawrence Teachers Fight Fluency Rule” (*BG33*)
- “Immersion Boosters Tout Progress, but Opponents Skeptical” (*BG41*)
- “Second Bilingual Battle Gears Up” (*BG19*)
- “Governor Vows to Veto Immersion Changes” (*BG20*)
- “Tamayo Targets Bilingual Changes / Legislators Defy Voters . . .” (*BG26*)

Two-way bilingual education, though not a frame-setter in headlines for this set of articles, is captured in two headlines:

- “Two-Way Language Plea / Advocates Asking to Spare Programs” (*BG27*)
- “Reinstating Two-Way Bilingual Ed Is Hailed / Popular Elective Has a Waiting List” (*BG31*)

Events and Narrative

The narrative in the 2003 news articles evolved from issues and problems raised by the new methods of teaching to the conflict between the legislature and the governor over two-way bilingual programs in the lower grades and then to the story of the beginning of the new school year, which found some teachers struggling with the new requirements and some families trying to adapt to the change.

The first article about issues and problems related to getting ready for the new method of teaching (*BG16*) includes statements from three school superintendents (speaking on behalf of a group of nineteen superintendents) and two legislators about the need for more flexibility and a longer phase-in time. Representing the other side are statements from the governor’s spokesman and Ron Unz, who calls the move for modifications “completely fraudulent.” This narrative is continued in *BG17*. Confusion is also part of the story of issues and problems, as schools try to prepare teachers, students, and parents. One article (*BG24*) focuses on the “mass confusion” in getting parents to understand how they can apply for waivers to have their children taught through bilingual education methods. Two articles (*BG40*, *BG41*) deal with the unevenness across school districts in how waivers are granted and how information is made available to parents about waivers.

These articles introduce the narrative about the conflict between the legislature and the governor. Readers learn that the nineteen school superintendents mentioned earlier have written to Lieutenant Governor Kerry Healey asking that immersion be phased in over three years (*BG16*). They also learn that though two-way immersion programs have been successful, the new law allows them to be continued “only for children who are older or who can demonstrate English skills” (*BG17*). The conflict between the legislature and governor unfolds step-by-step in the following months.

- April 27: legislative amendments reported (*BG19*)
- May 2: Governor Romney threatens to veto changes (*BG20*)
- June 8: debate continues and governor renews threat of veto (*BG25*, *BG26*)

July 15: both Senate and House vote to override (reporter says they “voted . . . to water down”) Governor Romney’s vetoes of changes, including allowing “two-way immersion” for younger students (BG29)

July 16: Governor Romney “chastised the Legislature,” calling their actions “unfathomable arrogance” (BG30)

July 20 (BG31) and July 24 (BG32): changes allowing “two-way immersion programs” for younger students are “hailed” and “parents rejoice”

Through articles about the legislative amendment process and the aftermath of that battle, readers learn more about two-way programs (sometimes referred to by *Globe* reporters as “so-called two-way” [e.g., BG31]) that have been offered in twelve school systems. In 2003, twelve of the twenty-eight articles (43 percent) either mention or focus on this method of teaching. This group includes many statements affirming the importance of bilingualism for all students, regardless of their native language. A superintendent from one of the larger systems, for example, says, “Many [students] are fluent in both languages by fifth grade. Moreover, participants whose native language is Spanish score at least as well on MCAS reading tests in the third grade as children statewide whose native language is English” (BG31).

While all of this is going on, another narrative unfolds—this one about testing teachers whose first language is not English to determine their oral proficiency in English. The story begins in an article on May 15, 2003 in one of the regional sections of the newspaper (BG21). Some teachers fear “loss of jobs” and feel they are “being picked on,” creating—in the words of one teacher—“anxiety at high voltage.” Another story appears in a different regional section on May 25. It refers to teacher testing as a “hurdle” and reports that training sessions are being offered (BG23). A July 25 article frames the sides of this issue in even stronger terms (BG33). Seventeen teachers in one school district who failed the test hired a lawyer to fight their firing. Further, “Dozens of foreign-born teachers . . . are scrambling to clear the testing hurdle or change the rules.” An Education Department official defends the rules, while several teachers and school officials are quoted in opposition. On August 23 readers learn that the teachers’ lawyer has filed for an injunction based on the argument that the test is flawed (BG34); whether these teachers prevailed was not reported in any articles in our search. One more story about the teacher tests appears on September 14, reporting the reinstatement in another school district of three of five teachers who were let go (BG37).

As the new school year approaches, the lens moves to the struggles school districts, teachers, and students are encountering in implementing sheltered English immersion. A story on August 27 recaps the change and names several children for whom a fourth grade teacher states that the change will be “a struggle” (BG35). The words “struggle” and “challenge” appear often. The commissioner of education, for example, “predicted that many students will struggle in all-English courses”; the Boston school superintendent “called immersion the biggest challenge for the state’s largest school system” (BG36). In a long focus piece that examines the effect of immersion on a family from Mexico (BG38), the Martinezes, readers learn that the mother struggles to help her children with their homework while she too is learning English in a parents’ program. Parents, readers are told, worry especially about older children who are learning English in the context of difficult school subjects. Some stories report teachers’ concerns about implementing the new law (BG35; BG36; BG40; BG43). Some of these stories also include more hopeful comments, even though the focus is on challenges. For example, in an article in December (BG41) teachers and superintendents note the progress students have made since the

beginning of the year—all in the context of “the challenges they face.” Within this frame of challenges and struggles, the story comes from those directly involved: *BG36* and *BG40* include comments from superintendents; *BG38*, *BG39*, *BG42*, and *BG43* include comments from teachers and profiles of families and students.

Characters

The 2003 articles feature a broad range of characters. In total, specific people are mentioned 174 times; many are quoted or paraphrased through the convention of “X said, . . .”; others are simply mentioned.

The most important characters, measured by the number of mentions and quotations, are educators. Teachers are mentioned twenty-eight times, school superintendents or principals twenty-one times, and program directors or coordinators of bilingual education programs twelve times. Parents are quoted or referred to sixteen times, and students appear seventeen times (mostly in statements made by others, such as teachers or parents). Politicians appear seventeen times, mainly in stories about the conflict between the legislature and governor, though they appear in a few articles commenting more generally about the issues involved. Governor Romney appears in eight stories and is quoted twice. Members of his administration are quoted or referred to eleven times.

The organizers of the voter referendum and the group opposing it have less of a voice in 2003. Unz appears in twelve stories but is quoted in only two; his name usually appears to identify him as the leader of the voter initiative. Rosalie Porter appears in four stories and is quoted each time. Lincoln Tamayo is featured in one story and quoted in two others. Oddly, none of the organizers who opposed the change to sheltered immersion appears in the 2003 articles.

Expert Sources

As in Period 1, experts are scarce. Only five experts (less than 3 percent of the named people) appear in the twenty-eight stories about English immersion and bilingual education in 2003. Those who do know about language learning are not brought into the news frame in any way that demonstrates their expertise. They are identified simply as credentialed sources. One is a sociology professor at the University of Massachusetts Boston who worked on a poll of Latino voters (*BG17*), and one is an expert on immigration at Harvard University (*BG42*). The other three have expertise in some area of applied linguistics. One is mentioned because he will be called as an expert on behalf of the teachers who are seeking reinstatement and challenging the test of English proficiency (*BG34*). The other two are quoted very briefly: one, who is the director for research at the Office of Language Learning and Support Services at the Boston School Department, is quoted only to say that “eight hours of the child’s day are not known to the parents” (*BG38*); the other directs the Applied Linguistics Graduate Program at the University of Massachusetts Boston and is quoted on the need for “mainstream teachers . . . to become aware that . . . they are also responsible for the education of these children” (*BG43*).

Period 3: 2004–2012

Headlines

Although Period 3 covers more time than the other two periods, it has the fewest number of articles in which the headlines spotlight bilingual education (fourteen). (One article, discussed later, about bilingual education whose headline does not signal its content appears about halfway through this period.) The lens is focused again on implementation of the new law, and the frame

of struggle and challenge continues throughout this period, with half of the articles (seven) having words or phrases in the headline that suggest challenges or struggles:

- “Lawrence May Rehire 8 Teachers Struggling to Pass English Exam” (BG44)
- “English Immersion Hits Home / Spanish Speakers Fear Erosion of Culture” (BG46)
- “Students Teachers Struggle to Meet English Fluency Goals” (BG48)
- “Newcomers, Schools Share Challenges of Life after Bilingual Education” (BG49)
- “Bilingual Law Fails First Test” (BG50)
- “Immigrant Parents Struggle to Keep Their Children Bilingual” (BG51)
- “MCAS, Fluency Pressures Build” (BG55)

Another headline implies a challenge created by the new law, stating “bilingual teachers wanted” (BG53).

The theme of the advantages of two-way bilingual education that was introduced in Period 2 becomes a clear frame in Period 3. Headlines stress the value of two-way immersion, calling it “an invaluable education” (BG47), stating that “students gain an edge” and “learn from one another” (BG54), and raising concerns that “budget woes may dim a bilingual beacon” (BG56). Another headline reveals that a suburban school has “a new path to dual literacy” (BG52), implying that dual literacy is desirable.

Only one headline in Period 3 suggests something positive about the new law, saying that one school already has a program for recent immigrants, which gives it a “head start in English immersion” (BG45). And only one headline contains any reference to the continuing political debates about bilingual education: “Bilingual Backers Appeal to Legislators” (BG57).

The issue of bilingual education continues to be identified in the headlines as primarily an English-Spanish issue, with three headlines framing Spanish speakers (BG46, BG47, BG54). Only one headline suggests that bilingual education affects speakers of many languages, listing Portuguese, Vietnamese, Serbo-Croatian, Chinese, Haitian (Creole), Somali, and Russian, in addition to Spanish (BG48).

Events and Narrative

The narrative in Period 3 does not appear to be driven by any particular event or events or any particular character or characters. Instead, the articles focus on challenges or struggles that have arisen as a consequence of the English immersion law, with the lens primarily on programs at individual schools (eight of the fourteen articles in this period appear in regional sections of the paper).

The most striking aspect of the narrative is the increasingly positive framing of bilingualism in contrast to the apparent failure of English immersion. Two of the four articles in 2004 focus on bilingualism. The first (BG46), which appears on the front page, details how English immersion programs are creating fears among immigrant parents that they will no longer be able to help their children with their homework or even communicate with them. One mother says, “I would give anything for none of [my children] to lose their Spanish. I want them to know both languages—equally.” The second article (BG47) looks at a two-way immersion program in a Boston school and states that two-way immersion programs have been allowed to continue because the students who are in them do well academically. After describing the children’s excitement in Javier Castillo’s fifth grade math classes, the author concludes that an upward trending graph described by a student in the class “might also graph the advantages of being

bilingual, which might not be so obvious in fifth grade but will become clearer as Mary Jean and her classmates reach adulthood in an increasingly multilingual city—and the world.”

Only one article appears in 2005, and it focuses on the challenge of teaching ELLs who have many different native languages (BG48). For example, students in the Revere school system speak thirty-eight different languages. The story reports that a state survey shows that most ELLs needed more than a year, and sometimes more than two years, of immersion before they were ready to join mainstream classes. Further, budget cuts have prevented schools from hiring enough qualified teachers to meet the requirements of the new law. Although the article includes some positive comments about the benefits of English immersion—one teacher says, “Now that they [ELLs] are getting English more in school, I see them socializing more with classmates”—it ends with a question about whether students are learning English any faster in the new system.

Two articles appear in 2006. The first (BG49) looks at challenges schools are facing as they implement English immersion (growth in the number of ELLs, increase in number of languages spoken by ELLs, need for new materials and staff) and presents some statistics that suggest that the test scores of ELLs are improving. This is the last article the paper published about bilingual education that supports English immersion. The second article (BG50) in 2006 reveals that state test results show “most non-native English speakers are not fluent enough to function in a regular classroom.” The remaining articles in Period 3 (from 2007 through 2012) focus on immigrants’ loss of language and culture because of English immersion (BG51), the success of two-way immersion programs (BG52, BG54, BG56), the difficulty of finding bilingual teachers (BG53), and the introduction of a bill to the legislature to reintroduce bilingual education (BG57). The only article that reports some gains in MCAS scores by ELLs in English immersion (BG55) also details the two-way immersion program at a charter school in the city of Lawrence where the ELLs achieved even higher MCAS scores.

Characters

One hundred ten people are named in the articles in Period 3. Three people are named twice: Ron Unz, Christine Rossell, who helped write the Massachusetts law and co-chaired Unz’s campaign, and Susan McGilvray-Rivet, the director of English-language programs for the city of Framingham, near Boston. Although Unz is quoted once and paraphrased once, he is pretty much out of the narrative at this point, as are the other leaders of Question 2. Rossell is quoted as an expert in two stories, but her overall role is minor. McGilvray-Rivet is mentioned twice, but only because she directs the two-way immersion programs, which are described in these articles.

The articles in this period feature stories about individual families, schools, classrooms, students, and parents. The central characters are students (twenty), school superintendents and principals (sixteen), parents (fourteen), teachers (thirteen), and bilingual education program directors and coordinators (ten). Although politicians are named nine times, the political aspects of bilingual education are relatively unimportant during this period and rarely receive any mention in the articles. The supporters of English immersion (Unz, Porter, and Rossell) are very minor characters, and the original organizers of the opposition to English immersion do not appear at all. Supporters of bilingual education and opponents of English immersion, however, appear throughout the narrative: immigrant parents who want their children to retain their native language, teachers who tout the virtues of two-way immersion, educational administrators who say they need greater flexibility in designing programs to meet the needs of all ELLs, and English-speaking parents and students who recite the virtues of being bilingual.

Expert Sources

Of the fourteen experts who are referred to or quoted in the articles we examined, seven appear in Period 3, one of whom is included in two articles during this period and one of whom was also quoted in Period 1. One article (BG50) uses two experts—the only article in the entire ten-year span of the study to do so. As in Periods 1 and 2, most of the experts are not identified as having expertise in bilingual education. For example, Rossell is identified in a January 2006 article (BG49) as “a political science professor at Boston University [who] helped lead the Question 2 ballot campaign” and in a May 2006 article (BG50) on the failure of English immersion as “a Boston University professor who helped write the Massachusetts law and co-chaired the campaign to pass it.” Backtracking, Rossell is quoted in the first article saying bilingual education was unfairly portrayed during the campaign—“Bilingual education was not the disaster that everyone painted it to be”—though she still believes that English immersion is the correct pedagogical approach to teaching ELLs. In the second article she restates her position that English immersion is the appropriate method for teaching ELLs, saying “they should be in a mainstream classroom long before they are fluent in English.” Her academic credentials, however, do not qualify her to make that pronouncement. Other experts during this period are identified as a “Lesley University education professor and bilingual education supporter” (BG50) who states that “empirically, kids are definitely worse off now” but provides no empirical evidence, “a UMass-Boston professor” (no academic specialization given) who is helping to recruit bilingual teachers in Puerto Rico (BG53), “an associate professor of educational psychology at Northeastern University” who comments that “having two languages opens the doors to cognitive, social, and economic impacts over the long term” (BG54), and “a research associate at the Mauricio Gaston Institute for Latino Community Development and Public Policy at the University of Massachusetts at Boston” who, when asked to comment on the possibility that East Boston, which is heavily Latino, will lose its two-way immersion program, says, “Denying the masses is not good policy” (BG56).

Two experts, however, are identified as having a background in bilingual education. “Elizabeth Howard, a former senior research associate for the Center for Applied Linguistics at Georgetown University,” a well-known and well-respected center for linguistic research, is asked about an 80/20 model of two-way immersion that is used at a middle school in Framingham (BG52). Although she is said to have conducted a seven-year study of the program that she included in a book profiling eleven schools in the United States with such programs, she is reported as having commented only that the model is more commonly found in California and Texas. The article itself is complimentary about the program, but Howard, the only expert on bilingual education in the story, does not comment on the program, report her findings, or elaborate on the reasons for its success. In the only article on bilingual education that appears in 2007 (BG51), “Reuben G. Rumbaut, a sociologist at the University of California-Irvine,” is identified as having studied “5700 adults in their 20s and 30s in Southern California from different generations to see how long their language survived.” His findings show that “even the children of immigrants prefer to speak English by the time they are adults.” The article states that he recently presented his findings to the U.S. House Judiciary subcommittee on immigration, and he is quoted and paraphrased extensively saying, “English wins, and it does so in short order.”

Placement of News Stories

Throughout the nine-year period, more articles appeared in regional sections (see Table 2) than in the front or second sections of the newspaper. This placement means that readers generally see

the issues involved in sheltered English immersion through a narrow lens of localization, which skews the agenda for the issues. The message seems to be that there is not much to think about for the state as a whole or that is worthy of first-section coverage as “big” news or second-section coverage as important news for the region.

As the story moves from the vote to end bilingual education to implementation issues for the new immersion, the skew toward regional stories increases. By Period 3, 57 percent of the stories are in regional sections of the *Boston Globe*.

An examination of what is placed on the front page of the newspaper about this issue reveals how framing works. In Period 1, just two stories appeared on the front page, and these were about the election results and what various people thought about what had happened. In Period 2, seven stories ran on the front page: two about the battles between the legislature and the governor over the two-way programs for younger children, two about the beginning of the school year in 2003 and issues with implementing the new law, one about the unevenness in handling waivers across the state, and two family profiles. In Period 3, four articles appeared on the front page, giving them prime exposure to readers. Of interest here is that the headlines of these articles all paint a negative picture of English immersion.

“English Immersion Hits Home / Spanish Speakers Fear Erosion of Culture” (BG46)

“Bilingual Law Fails First Test” (BG50)

“Immigrant Parents Struggle to Keep Their Children Bilingual” (BG51)

“Bilingual Teachers Wanted” (BG53)

During the nine-year period ending in 2012, not a single front page headline in the *Boston Globe* referred to any positive aspects of the new English immersion law.

Discussion

Our findings suggest that, with the exception of the immediate aftermath of the 2002 ballot referendum, the *Boston Globe* failed to put bilingual education on the agenda as newsworthy. Although fifteen articles appeared between November 15 and December 31, 2002, only twenty-eight articles appeared in 2003, and a mere fourteen articles appear in the entire nine-year period from 2004 to 2012. Readers of the *Boston Globe* would not be likely to list bilingual education as an important issue in Massachusetts, though immigration was on the state and national agendas throughout those years. When bilingual education was covered, the narrative lens and frame revealed local stories of conflict over implementation of the new law, which were later followed by a smattering of stories on the failure of the new law and the virtues of bilingualism.

In the months immediately after the referendum, the press focused on the continuing struggle between the two sides, narrowing the lens to attempts by local communities to keep their bilingual education programs. The local focus continues through 2003, with the lens expanded to include the problems faced by local communities in implementing English immersion, such as the difficulty of finding qualified teachers. Although the topic was rarely covered from 2004 to 2012, the lens was refocused for brief moments on the advantages for all students of two-way bilingual education. That topic received virtually no coverage during the debate over the referendum. Throughout the period of this study, the press framed the narrative using conflict-oriented terms, whether the lens was on the struggle to keep bilingual programs, the failure of English immersion, or the benefits of two-way bilingual education. The complexities of

education generally and bilingual education in particular were lost in the “us versus them” narrative that is characteristic of national and metropolitan daily newspapers.¹⁷

The absence of experts in the narrative frame is an especially striking aspect of the news coverage. Boston lays claim to having more institutions of higher education per capita than any other town or city in the United States. Yet the *Boston Globe* articles rarely include the voices and ideas of researchers and specialists in bilingual education and language development. When such experts are mentioned, what the journalists selected for inclusion adds little of substantive value. As Sclafani notes in her analysis of news coverage of Ebonics, it is important to look not only at what voices are included but also at how these voices enter the frame.¹⁸ The absence of appropriate experts in the news stories likely results from several demand characteristics of journalism: short deadlines for stories, a preference for simple “sound bites” rather than complex explanations, and “either/or” scenarios that create conflict narratives. Academic experts are difficult to reach in time to make a deadline, and journalists rarely have the time to read and digest scholarly articles. Journalists also tend to rely on certain sources once that source is in their contact list. Certainly journalists cannot be expected to be experts on the subjects of their stories. Yet, certain reporters often have “beats” or are assigned as the main writer for developing stories. In such cases, is it reasonable to expect close familiarity with the topic so that what is written is informed by what Patterson calls “knowledge-based journalism.”¹⁹ In the area of bilingual education, journalism so informed would better lay out the issues that are barely hinted at in the terms used to describe what is happening and would call on true experts in the subjects underlying the policy question.

Our analysis of how the *Boston Globe* covered the aftermath of the Massachusetts voter referendum that established sheltered English immersion reflects on the intractability of prevailing language ideology in the United States that favors English monolingualism and the growing tensions over immigration embedded in recent political discourse.

Although “bilingual education” has always been a misnomer for the pedagogy in the United States that supports at least some native language instruction for ELLs, there was at least some recognition that value might be added for children not fluent in English through learning more than the national language. Rather than moving to recognize the importance of multilingualism in a world of growing global connections, pedagogical policies such as “sheltered English immersion” and similar approaches in California and Arizona move away from any recognition that the many languages immigrants are bringing to the United States are of value in preserving cultural resources and advancing education and commerce. In their analysis of the current policies for teaching ELLs in Arizona, Gándara and Orfield summarize the broader context: “Federal and regional policies have been increasingly driven by linguistic hegemony, firmly rooted in an ideology that allowing any language other than English within the public sphere threatens the American nationhood.”²⁰ The voter initiative in Massachusetts and the press coverage of it provide a powerful example of this linguistic hegemony through the semiotic process of erasure “in which ideology, in simplifying the sociolinguistic field, renders some persons or activities (or sociolinguistic phenomena) invisible.”²¹ News articles following the referendum passage initially emphasized conflict and confusion but soon after simply moved into the far margins of news-worthiness. A typical news consumer could easily understand that the only problem is the failure of the state and localities to properly train teachers to implement the mandated approach to teaching in English only (*BG43, BG50, BG55*). An article on the *Globe*’s front page for September 17, 2011 carried the headline, “US Finds Statewide Problems in Schools.”²² Although we did not include this article in the study because the “problems”

identified in the headline are not linked to sheltered immersion or bilingual education, the content speaks to how the press framed the issue. The problem, the reader learns, is that “at least 45,000 teachers in 275 school districts . . . lack adequate training” to teach ELLs in sheltered immersion classrooms. Blame is placed on the state, on school districts, and on teachers for failing to do what most linguists would agree is impossible: build sufficient fluency in one year to enable a non-native speaker of English to function in a mainstream English classroom and perform on statewide tests—all administered in English. Beneath these stories are the facts that the drop-out rate for high school students who are not native speakers of English has risen since Question 2 was implemented, and the overall graduation rate in Massachusetts for ELLs is a startling 56 percent.²³ The realities of learning a second (or third) language are ignored, as are the benefits of developing native language competency for the individual and for society; this is an example of the semiotic process of erasure. The only press nod to the value of true bilingualism occurs when two-way instruction enters the frame in two articles in March 2004 (*BG46, BG47*). As public sentiment about immigration reform in the United States continues to boil up as a divisive political agenda, it is not surprising that commitment to full bi- and multilingualism in the United States has no role in the political or educational agenda or that the mainstream press skirts the use of legitimate expert analysis of both language learning and the broader world context of multilingualism.

The federal mandate for including at least some native language instruction for children learning English ended quietly in 2001 during the administration of George W. Bush while the country was caught up in competency testing and the No Child Left Behind Act was passed with bipartisan support.²⁴ The U.S. Department of Education’s commitments are to ELLs’ learning sufficient English to pass exams, with no priority given to teaching children—whatever their native language—bilingual fluency and literacy.²⁵ The perception that English binds the nation is sufficiently strong that while most people support the use of tax dollars to teach English to immigrant children and adults,²⁶ they either oppose or have no awareness of pedagogies that foster bilingualism and multilingualism for all students regardless of native language.

The quest for erasure of languages other than English in the United States school curriculum continues to be blind to the realities of language in the twenty-first century. That multilingualism is a valuable personal and work asset is indisputable. No evidence suggests that children with limited English-language abilities shun learning English or fail to become fluent in English.²⁷ The Pew Hispanic Center, for example, surveyed Latino/a adults (ages eighteen years and older) and found that 87 percent “believe Hispanic immigrants need to learn English to succeed in the U.S.” even though they believe that speaking Spanish is important as well.²⁸ The survey also found that 93 percent of second-generation adults say they are English-dominant or bilingual, with Spanish receding to a secondary role. The data on second-generation Latinos/as point to the success of an increasingly rigid language ideology that cements English proficiency while erasing multilingual language resources.

Certainly the *Boston Globe* as an example of the mainstream press has been complicit in supporting the hegemony of English. It will be important to observe how this newspaper and others track current initiatives to rectify the failures of Proposition 2 and its implementation. Bills in the current session (and earlier sessions) of the Massachusetts Senate (S262-2015) and House of Representatives (H498-2015) propose to remedy the problems of sheltered English immersion with “research-based language education programs that provide effective English language and/or dual language proficiency.” One of the main rationales for the proposed action engages a broad global context in its statement that, “for Massachusetts to remain a national and

global leader in educational achievement, it must recognize, value, and invest in programs that help students acquire 21st century skills, including multilingualism both through English language acquisition and dual language learning.” The editorial board of the *Boston Globe* heralded the legislative proposal in their editorial of July 13, 2015, titled “Bring Back Bilingual Education for Boston Schools.”²⁹ Although the editorial narrowly focuses on the Boston schools, the rationale for that appears to be linked to the appointment of a new superintendent. Noteworthy is mention of research in the Houston school district that “found that native Spanish-speaking students enrolled in the Houston school district have more success learning English when they’re enrolled in a two-way dual-language program.” Yet the writers fail to state that such findings are long-standing in many research studies. The path of both the legislation and press coverage of the issues involved will tell us about the priority placed on dual language learning and multilingualism as well as the story that the press chooses to tell about language here in Massachusetts and the world.

In the context of the three states where Ron Unz’s initiatives now shape pedagogy and the growing hiatus between U.S. language education and language policies elsewhere in the world, it may be time for academics with expertise in language learning to launch an information campaign to break through the myths that learning a new language is easy for a child and that English is enough for functioning in the world. The first myth punishes children who already are at a disadvantage educationally, and the second myth, by perpetuating the idea that language is devoid of interpersonal and cultural meanings, punishes all of us.

Notes

¹ Guadalupe San Miguel Jr., *Contested Policy: The Rise and Fall of Federal Bilingual Education in the United States, 1960–2001* (Denton: University of North Texas Press, 2004), 108.

² National Center for Education Statistics, *Digest of Education Statistics*, 2013, https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d14/tables/dt14_204.20.asp.

³ Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, *2013 Annual Measurable Achievement Objectives (AMAOs) for English Language Learners*, http://profiles.doe.mass.edu/amao/amao_report.aspx?linkid=36&fycode=2013&orgtypecode=0&orgcode=00000000

⁴ Amy Wallace, “Unlikely Path Led to Wilson Foe’s Far-right Challenge,” *LA Times*, May 8, 1994, http://articles.latimes.com/1994-05-08/news/mn-55185_1_ron-unz.

⁵ Valentina A. Bali, “Implementing Popular Initiatives: What Matters for Compliance?” *Journal of Politics*, 65, no. 4 (2003): 1130–46.

⁶ Mary Ann Zehr, “Boston Settles with Federal Officials in ELL Probe,” *Education Week*, 30, no. 7 (2010), <http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2010/10/01/07boston.h30.html>.

⁷ Fern L. Johnson, “Language Ideology and Public (mis)Understanding of Bilingual Education: A Frame Analysis of the Twin Cases of Colorado and Massachusetts in 2002” (paper presented at the International Society for Language Studies Conference, Honolulu, Hawai’i, April 2007). For background on the Colorado voter initiative, see Kathy Escamilla, Sheila Shannon, Silvana Carlos, and Jorge Garcia, “Breaking the Code: Colorado’s Defeat of the Anti-Bilingual Education Initiative,” *Bilingual Research Journal*, 27, no. 3 (2003): 35.

⁸ Rosina Lippi-Green, *English with an Accent*, 2nd ed. (New York: Routledge, 2012), 67.

⁹ Dietram A. Scheufele and David Tewksbury, “Framing, Agenda Setting, and Priming: The Evolution of Three Media Effects Models,” *Journal of Communication* 57 (2007): 11.

¹⁰ Robert M. Entman, “Toward Clarification of a Fractured Paradigm,” *Journal of Communication*, 43, no. 4 (1993): 53.

¹¹ Deborah Tannen, *Framing in Discourse* (New York: Oxford, 1993), 15, 59.

¹² Scheufele and Tewksbury, “Framing,” 11.

- ¹³ Lauren Tucker, “The Framing of Calvin Klein: A Frame Analysis of Media Discourse about the August 1995 Calvin Klein Jeans Advertising Campaign,” *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 139, no. 15 (1998): 143–44.
- ¹⁴ Kathleen Jamieson and Paul Waldman, *The Press Effect* (New York: Oxford, 2004), xii.
- ¹⁵ As of May 1, 2013, the daily paid circulation of the *Boston Globe* (print and digital) was 245,572 and, unlike the national trend, circulation was increasing. Its nearest competitor, the *Boston Herald*, had a daily paid circulation of only 95,929; further, its circulation was declining. See Callum Borchers, “Globe Circulation Continues to Climb,” *Boston Globe*, May 1, 2013, <http://www.bostonglobe.com/business/2013/04/30/globe-circulation-rises-wave-digital-subscriptions/5Nuz9OJpA7Zsmw91CPh1vK/story.html>.
- ¹⁶ Johnson, “Language Ideology.”
- ¹⁷ Richard Campbell, Christopher R. Martin, and Battina Fabos, *Media & Culture: An Introduction to Mass Communication*, 8th ed. (Boston, MA: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2012).
- ¹⁸ Jennifer Sclafani, “The Intertextual Origins of Public Opinion: Constructing Ebonics in the *New York Times*,” *Discourse & Society*, 19, no. 4 (2008): 507–27.
- ¹⁹ Thomas E. Patterson, *Informing the News: The Need for Knowledge-based Journalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 2013).
- ²⁰ Patricia Gándara and Gary Orfield, “Why Arizona Matters: The Historical, Legal, and Political Contexts of Arizona’s Instructional Policies and U.S. Linguistic Hegemony,” *Language Policy* 11 (2012): 9.
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