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Dual language immersion : the educational practices that contribute to the success of English only kindergarten students in learning Spanish

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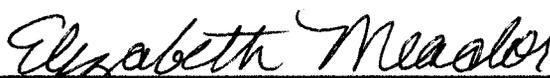
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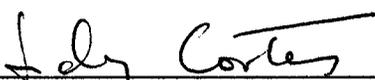
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Abstract

Dual Language Immersion: The educational practices that contribute to the success of English only kindergarten students in learning Spanish
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The focus of this study is to learn what the formal and informal educational practices are that contribute to the success of English-only (EO) kindergarten students participating in a two-way immersion (TWI) program in learning Spanish. In order to research this topic I conducted a case study of two EO kindergarten students. Over an eight-week period I worked with each student once a week in a small group lesson. Throughout each lesson, I observed which teacher scaffolds proved to be most effective in helping the students not only learn Spanish, but also be able to access the content of each lesson. In addition, I audio-taped each lesson so that I could later listen to each lesson and collect evidence of student learning in order to validate that the teacher scaffolds that I had used were indeed effective. Furthermore, I interviewed the parents of these two EO students in order to learn what techniques they use with their children at home to help them learn Spanish. I also spent a lot of time observing these students interact with other students during recess and exploration to see how their classmates helped them in learning Spanish.

Through these data I found that with the support of teacher scaffolds, student interactions and parental support, EO students have every opportunity to be successful in both learning Spanish as a second language, as well as fully accessing the kindergarten curriculum in a TWI program.

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Chapter One

Statement of Purpose

As populations continue to shift and cultures continue to intertwine, people are coming to the realization that in order to succeed, we need to begin thinking on a more global level. With the abundance of different cultures and languages that exist in the United States, we need to embrace these differences and learn from one another. We need to share our cultures, traditions, experiences and languages with one another so that we can grow and work together to create a more unified and diverse nation. The first step is to create a unified community of diverse learners. Where better to find such a community than at school? A school with a dual language immersion program is a perfect example of a community that strives to teach "understanding and respect for racial, cultural and linguistic diversity" (http://www.alianza.pvusd.net). It is a place that seeks to bring native speakers of two different languages together to learn from one another in a natural language, acquisition rich setting.

A dual language education or two-way immersion (TWI) program is the ideal solution. It involves putting children of different backgrounds, cultures and languages together in a safe, environment where they can all feel comfortable taking risks and learning together. I have had the fortunate opportunity to be a part of an incredible community of teachers and learners in a dual language immersion program for the past four years. The school that I work at, which will be referred to as Abrazos Elementary is a very special, unique place. Abrazos is a charter school that follows the 90:10 model. With this model, students in kindergarten spend 90% of their day learning in Spanish and

10% of their day learning in English. The percentage of instruction that students receive in English goes up each grade level as the percentage of instruction in Spanish goes down until the students reach fourth grade in which instruction is received 50% of the day in English and 50% of the day in Spanish. The language breakdown stays the same after fourth grade. Abrazos is currently a K-6 school. Next year we will be adding seventh grade and the following year we plan to add eighth grade. The goals set for all members of the Abrazos community include the following:

- development of bilingualism and biliteracy in both Spanish and English

- high academic achievement for all students in both languages

- appreciation of ethnic diversity, cultural pluralism and individual differences

- creating a sense of responsibility, confidence, pride and self-worth in each child

- strong parental support of the program and involvement in the school

- highly qualified bilingual teachers at every grade level

- strong sense of collaboration amongst grade level teams and the school as a whole

Abrazos has served as a TWI program since 1992-93. Since that time, Abrazos staff has continuously worked collaboratively to refine and improve the program. Research has shown that dual language immersion is the most effective bilingual program in helping students achieve bilingualism and biliteracy. However, many people are apprehensive to place their children in such a program for fear that they might not succeed, or that they might become frustrated or confused. One area that I have been concerned about as a kindergarten teacher in a TWI program is about how well English only (EO) students are able to access the kindergarten curriculum considering they spend 90% of their day learning in Spanish. Therefore, I decided to research what educational

practices help create successful experiences for EO students participating in TWI programs. I decided to do a case study of two EO kindergarten students in order to learn exactly what scaffolds or teaching techniques I was using that was helping those students not only access the curriculum but also feel comfortable and successful in learning Spanish. I carefully looked for clear evidence of student learning to assure myself, my colleagues, my students and their parents that all of these scaffolds are effective (see appendix B). In addition to looking at formal educational practices, I also focused on the different informal educational practices that are helpful for these students in learning Spanish. I interviewed the parents of these two EO students in order to learn what techniques they use with their children at home to help them learn Spanish. I also spent a lot of time observing these students interact with other students during recess and exploration to see how their classmates help them in learning Spanish.

I chose to research this topic in order to help parents of English speaking students better understand all of the different layers of support that their children receive in kindergarten in a TWI program that attribute to the success of their child in learning Spanish as a second language, as well as being able to fully access the kindergarten curriculum. I believe that this research, will not only help parents of EO students understand the techniques and strategies that teachers use to help their children be successful in a TWI program, but it will also clarify for them how their children are able to learn from their classmates. Furthermore, this research will help the parents understand how they themselves are providing or can provide a strong layer of support at home for their children that will lead to the success of their child in becoming fully bilingual and biliterate.

This information will also be helpful to students so that they can learn what positive things they are doing to help their classmates learn Spanish. It will also greatly benefit the two EO students involved in the study because it will help me and my kindergarten colleagues better individualize their instruction in order to meet all of their needs.

This research project will also be very informative and useful for parents of Spanish speaking students in a TWI program. It will provide those parents with information about the various teaching strategies that the teachers use when working with all children. Furthermore, it will provide parents with an opportunity to see and understand how the children (both English and Spanish speakers) are able to learn language naturally from one another.

In addition, this information will be very useful to kindergarten teachers in TWI programs. It will clarify which teacher scaffolds (see appendix B) prove to be most effective and helpful when working with EO students in a small group setting. The information that I collect through my research will help my kindergarten colleagues and I collaboratively plan and improve our lessons in order to make sure that we include all of the appropriate scaffolds necessary to assure the success of all of our students. Additionally, the data that I collect about informal educational practices will provide my colleagues and me with very useful information about what parents and students are doing to help EO students be successful in learning Spanish.

In order to share this information with parents, I will use the research and data that I collect, and the input that I receive from my kindergarten colleagues, to create a parent friendly brochure. In this brochure I will include information about second

language acquisition, teacher-directed and student-centered scaffolds, and ways in which parents can most effectively help their children learn a second language.

Background

There are many reasons that I chose to research this topic. First and most important, I am and always will be a strong advocate for bilingual education. Through all of the research that I have done and all of my different experiences working in a variety of different bilingual programs I strongly believe that TWI programs are by far the best and most effective approach to learning a second language. I began learning Spanish at the age of fourteen, taking my first class as a freshman in high school. My mother strongly encouraged that I continue taking Spanish classes for all four years of high school even though it was only required to take two years of a foreign language at my school. She felt that in order for me to really benefit from taking a foreign language it was extremely important to continue with it and really try to learn it well. So I decided to take Spanish for all four years of high school and I discovered that I had a passion and great interest in learning the language and the various cultures that use that language. I continued studying Spanish in college and studied overseas in Spain for one semester. This experience was incredible and really helped strengthen my fluency and grammar skills in Spanish. I then went on to get my teaching credential in elementary education with a bilingual/bicultural endorsement. I did my student teaching in southern Texas working with mostly all Spanish-speaking children. I also lived in Quito, Ecuador for two years and taught kindergarten at the American School of Quito. I am now working as a bilingual kindergarten teacher in a TWI program in a rural, coastal town on the

central coast of California. All of these experiences helped me to become a fluent Spanish speaker with a strong passion for the language and cultures that use that language. Through my personal experiences I have learned that it is possible to learn a second language beginning in junior high or high school but that it would have been a lot easier had I begun studying that language at an earlier age. It has taken me a long time and a lot of different experiences to be able to communicate fluently in Spanish. Although I feel very comfortable communicating in Spanish I do not feel in anyway like a native speaker of the language. My pronunciation is far from perfect and when I speak I feel that it is obvious that I am not a native-speaker of Spanish. Had I begun learning Spanish at a younger age I would most likely speak with a more native-like accent and I would have much better pronunciation.

Through TWI children are provided the opportunity to acquire a second language naturally. They learn the second language in an environment in which the focus is on understanding for meaning, not on grammar and sentence structure. This is the difference between acquiring language (such as TWI programs) versus learning language (such as foreign language programs in junior high and high schools). According to Krashen, when the brain receives intelligible messages in a second language, it has no choice but to acquire that language, just as the visual system has no choice but to see and the pancreas has no choice but to operate as pancreases do. He explains that,

> we acquire grammatical structures in their natural order, provided that we get sufficient amounts of high-quality input. As our language organ processes this "essential environmental ingredient,"…it generalizes rules from verbal stimuli, not empirically, but "according to the innate principles' of universal grammar (Krashen, as found in Crawford, 1995, p.124).

Choosing to learn Spanish as a second language was one of the best decisions that I ever made. It has provided me with so many wonderful opportunities. I have the advantage of being able to communicate with many people of different cultures and backgrounds. It has opened up many great job opportunities for me and has been a great asset when traveling overseas. I only wish that I had had the opportunity to begin learning Spanish at a younger age in a more natural setting; such as a TWI program.

Throughout the four years that I have been teaching kindergarten in a 90:10 TWI program I have noticed that many parents are attracted to our school for all of the reasons I listed above; however, many have apprehensions about placing their children in our program for fear of the unknown. Many parents of EO students do not understand how their children will be able to progress academically in all subject areas in a 90:10 TWI program. They often do not understand how it is possible that their children will be able to understand what is being taught when the teacher is teaching most of the day in Spanish since their children do not yet speak Spanish when they enter the program. Therefore, after spending a great deal of time trying to explain to parents how the kindergarten teachers are able to teach their children the kindergarten curriculum successfully in Spanish, I decided to take a closer look at exactly what we are actually doing that enables EO students to be successful in our program. I also chose to research this topic in order to be able to prove to myself and my colleagues that the techniques that we use are in fact effective. I believe that the data that I collected will be a very useful tool for the kindergarten team to use when planning curriculum. I also feel that this data will help ease the fears of parents of EO students interested in our program.

Definition of Terms

ZPD: Zone of proximal development is a temporary support or assistance provided by someone more capable, that allows a learner to perform or complete a task or process that he or she would not be able to do alone.

Scaffolding: A teaching strategy that provides individualized support based on the learner's ZPD.

TWI/DLE: Two-way immersion or dual language education refers to an integrated model in which speakers of two languages are placed together in a bilingual classroom to learn each others' language and work academically in both languages.

EO: Students that only speak English.

SLL: Second language learner

L1: This refers to a person's first language or native language.

L2: This refers to the second language that a person speaks or is learning.

90:10: This is a description of a certain kind of two-way immersion program. The 90:10 model focuses on teaching in the target language for 90% of the day and teaching in English for 10% of the day. This happens during the first year of the program while the students are in kindergarten. As the students go up in grade levels, the amount of time they are taught in English increases as the target language instruction decreases. By the time the students reach (4th – 6th grades) the students received instruction in both languages for an equal amount of time throughout the day. By this time, they are taught all subjects in both languages.

ELL: English language learner

FEP: Fluent English proficient

Limitations

This research project is intended to serve parents, students and teachers. Those that will most likely benefit most from this study include parents of EO students that have already enrolled their children in a TWI program or are thinking about enrolling their children in a TWI program. For these parents, this study will help clarify which scaffolds teachers are using with their children to make sure that content is comprehensible. It will

also help them in understanding what they are doing at home that is supporting their child in learning Spanish. It may also provide these parents with ideas of other things that they can do to support their child at home in learning a second language. Kindergarten teachers in TWI programs will also gain a lot from this study. They will learn which teaching scaffolds are most effective in helping EO students in TWI programs learn Spanish and understand the content of each lesson. Furthermore, they will learn how the students in the class help one another learn a second language and they will learn some ideas about how parents can support their children in learning. The team of teachers that I (myself, the researcher) work with, will gain a lot from this study, especially since their input and expertise will be included in many aspects of this project. The EO students in this study will also benefit from this research because the research will help their kindergarten teachers better individualize their instruction based on their learning styles. This study may also be useful to parents of Spanish speaking students in TWI programs. It will help them understand the different teaching strategies and materials that kindergarten teachers use when working with their children.

This study would not be of interest to people who are not concerned with learning about the strategies used in helping English speaking children become bilingual and biliterate through TWI programs. However, it may be useful to teachers, parents and students participating in other kinds of bilingual programs, such as, maintenance and/or transitional bilingual programs. This study may provide others that are working with children learning a second language with ideas and effective strategies to use with their students.

Overview of Action Thesis

The purpose of this study is to learn which formal and informal educational practices are most effective in contributing to the success of EO kindergarten students in learning Spanish. Chapter two provides an analysis and review of the literature that supports this topic. Chapter three explains the methodology used to conduct the research for this study. Chapter four provides an analysis of all of the data collected throughout this project. Chapter five, the final chapter of this study will include a summary of the conclusions drawn from the research and how that information can be used to help inform parents and teachers of EO students in TWI programs.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Overview

This chapter consists of a brief overview of the views and findings of several theorists and researchers on two-way immersion (TWI) programs, second language acquisition, peer, parent and teacher scaffolds and how this all effects student learning. It begins by defining what TWI is, what different TWI program models and designs look like, and it includes some of the benefits and risks involved in participating in a TWI program. This information is intended to help readers understand what two-way immersion is and why parents of EO (English-only), FEP (fluent English proficient) and ELL (English language learners) students choose to enroll their children in a TWI program. The chapter then goes on to explain the different elements in a TWI program that help children acquire a second language. Next you will find an explanation of what scaffolding is and how teachers, peers and parents all provide different, yet equally important scaffolds that support student learning. The last part of the chapter explains how all of these themes come together to provide an educationally rich foundation for all kindergarten students in a TWI program and how that affects student learning. Throughout this chapter many different literacy sources and scholars are cited based on their experiences and expertise in these areas.

Definition of TWI

TWI also known as dual language education (DLE) "refers to an integrated model in which speakers of both languages are placed together in a bilingual classroom to learn

each others' language and work academically in both languages" (Ovando & Collier, 1985, p.40). Such programs not only foster the goals of academic achievement in English and another language, but also include development of bilingual/biliterate skills and positive cross-cultural attitudes (Torres-Guzman, 2002). According to Lindhom (2002, as cited in Torres-Guzman, 2002) TWI/DLE programs possess the following four characteristics: (1) Instruction is taught through two languages, in which the target language is used for a significant portion of the students' instructional day; (2) the languages are used separately throughout the instructional day with no concurrent translation or code switching; (3) participants of the program include both native English speakers and native speakers of the target language; (4) the students are integrated for content-based instruction.

For language majority children (English speakers), TWI offers them the opportunity to study meaningful content material through a target language (i.e. Spanish) and allows students to interact socially as well as academically with native speakers of that target language. For language minority children (Spanish speakers) TWI provides those students the opportunity to spend some portion of their day nurturing and sustaining their native language skills and another part of their day as a resource person for language majority children (Crawford, 1995).

Different Models of Two-Way Immersion Programs

There are primarily two forms of TWI programs that exist in the U.S.: the 90:10 and the 50:50 models. The 90:10 model focuses on teaching in the target language for 90% of the day and teaching in English for 10% of the day. This happens during the first year of the program while the students are in kindergarten. As the students go up in

grade levels, the amount of time they are taught in English increases as the target language instruction decreases. By the time the students reach the upper grades (4th -6th grades) the students receive instruction in both languages for an equal amount of time throughout the day. By this time, they are taught all subjects in both languages. An example of the language breakdown of a 90:10 model may look like the following:

Grade level	Target Lang.	English Lang.
K	90%	10%
1	80%	20%
2	70%	30%
3	60%	40%
4	50%	50%
5	50%	50%
6	50%	50%

The 50:50 model focuses on teaching all content areas in both the target language and English throughout the instructional day at every grade level (K-6) and for equal amounts of time. Some schools choose to break down the instructional time in each language by day or by week. For example, a class may spend Monday and Wednesday in the target language and Tuesday and Thursday in English. Then on Friday, the class may spend 50% of the day in the target language and 50% of the day in English. An example of the language breakdown looks like the following:

Grade level	Target Lang.	English Lang.
K-6	50%	50%

TWI Program Design

It is imperative that a TWI program, be it 50:50 or 90:10, must begin with a group of students at the kindergarten level (or no higher than 1st grade) allowing for a gradual phase into the next grade level each school year. Therefore, a TWI program for grades K-6 will take approximately 7 years to be fully implemented. Moreover, the classes

should be made up of approximately 40% English dominant students and 60% language minority students.

> In some cases, the concept of dual language has been adapted too quickly in schools. Instead of being phased in grade by grade (Lindholm & Molina, 1996, as cited in Montague, 1997, p.4), it is initiated at several levels or in multiple classrooms simultaneously. This places undue pressure on the English speaking children to adapt quickly to language learning during a school year when formal, standardized testing begins to dictate instruction in several states (Morse, 1999, as cited in Montague, 1997, p.4).

According to Christian, (1996) the typical goals for TWI programs include the following: Students will (a) develop high levels of proficiency in their first language (L1) and in a second language (L2); (b) perform at or above grade level in academic areas in both languages; (c) attain high levels of self esteem and demonstrate positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors. In addition, teaching methods and strategies are not solely concentrated on language development. Rather the goal is to create a balanced curriculum focusing on language development, academic and social development throughout all grade levels.

Benefits and Effectiveness of TWI Programs

Benefits

There is a variety of research on the benefits and effectiveness of TWI programs. Longitudinal studies have been conducted that closely examine the academic results of such programs. Thomas and Collier (1997) for example conducted a study where they found that over time, students in TWI programs outperformed their mainstream counter parts on standardized tests. They also conclude that,

> it is the goal of these programs to produce communicative and literate children who can negotiate between two languages in their daily interactions. These are schools involved in dynamic education centered on our children, actually tapping into our nation's greatest resource" (as cited in Montague, 1997, p.3).

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The languages of the children are seen as resources that benefit each other.

Both minority and mainstream children benefit from TWI programs in many ways. For language minority students, some benefits include finding validation, excitement, and enthusiasm about their presence in classrooms. Differences between students are celebrated rather than ignored (Montague 1997). The status of both languages is viewed as equally important. Through TWI programs minority students' languages are preserved and cultures are recognized. Furthermore, these students are not segregated as is commonly seen in other bilingual programs, here students are constantly interacting with English models; which helps in the development of English language skills and promotes positive cross-cultural awareness. In addition, the language minority students' English speaking peers will better understand emotionally and cognitively what the process of second language learning is, since they will also be going through the process themselves. Since the mainstream students now understand the difficult process of learning a second language, they will be predisposed to helping their peers, which in turn, promotes a positive classroom community (Torres-Guzman, 2002). "For language minority children, primary language instruction is a tool for conceptual development that will enrich their ability to function in both first and second languages" (Lessow-Hurly, 1990, p.63). Based on Cummins' research as mentioned by Valdés (1997), this will enable them to better acquire a second language by transferring skills from the primary language (L1) to the second language (L2).

For English speaking students, they benefit from learning a second language not only from their teacher, but also from their peers, many of whom are native speakers of the target language. Beginning to learn a second language at an early age has many

advantages. For one, children are not as inhibited from practicing the language as many adults may be. Moreover, children are naturally curious about the world around them and, therefore, are often excited about learning something new. In TWI programs, English speakers are immersed into the target language for extended periods of time throughout their day. This motivates the child to use the target language in order to be an active participant in the classroom. Furthermore, when children are immersed in a second language early on, they often develop native-like fluency in that language. For the English speaking child, all of these components help create an environment where the child will feel comfortable taking risks while learning in a language rich setting.

For both language learners in a TWI class, other benefits include enhanced self-esteem, improved academic achievement, increased cross-cultural understanding, mutual respect among ethnic groups, developing skills in a second language, and equal access to education for all. Through their research Carlos Ovando and Virginia Collier have learned that the parents of English speaking children in TWI programs frequently become advocates for bilingualism when they witness the unique intellectual and social advantages it provides their children (Crawford, 1995).

Weaknesses of TWI programs

There are many challenges facing the implementation and success of TWI programs. With the help of federal funds many schools were able to establish TWI programs. However, due to the high cost of effective teacher training, quality materials and well-developed curriculum it has been difficult to maintain such programs. Due to the high cost of these programs and the lack of funds the integrity of the programs are at risk. Furthermore, TWI programs face the challenge of finding qualified teachers who

possess native-like fluency in the target language. Programs will suffer if the teachers are not qualified properly. Another challenge that TWI programs are up against is finding enough students of both languages to create balanced classrooms. This is especially true in areas where the population is primarily dominant in the target language. In this case English models become scarce and schools must resort to bussing English dominant students from other areas. This, in turn, becomes quite costly for the school and is often impossible to maintain.

Because teachers in TWI programs use instructional strategies designed to teach a second language, there is a concern that the target language is being modified to meet the needs of the mainstream children and thus the language minority children are not receiving adequate language instruction (Valdés, 1997). During English time the same situation can hold true in which the quality of English language is modified to meet the needs of the language minority students thus the English speakers are not receiving adequate language instruction. Valdés (1997) contends that research tells how using language that is even slightly distorted, influences the language development of children who are native speakers of that language. Another weakness that Lindholm-Leary (2001) found is that teachers tend to ask factual-recall questions more so than higher order questions. She also found that out of all the hours of instruction that were recorded in her research, 64% of the questions that teachers asked were lower order and 36% were higher order. Her findings have consistently shown that this kind of learning environment is not optimal for developing strong oral language skills or higher levels of academic cognitive skills. Schools need to ensure that teachers are well trained in incorporating higher order questioning strategies in their instruction.

Second Language Acquisition

There are many ways to learn a second language. Some are fortunate enough to be born into a situation in which their parents each speak a different language. In this case, often times the child is exposed to both languages from birth and grows up to be completely bilingual and often biliterate. For those that do not have the opportunity to learn two languages from their parents, they may acquire a second language through an educational program. Some such programs include, IBE (Immersion bilingual education), TWI, FLES (Foreign languages in the elementary school), or they may begin to study a second language in junior high or high school. All of these programs have their benefits and disadvantages. With the IBE program English speakers are completely immersed into the second language from the first year of school with no support or instruction in the first language until as late as second or third grade (Ovando & Collier, 1985). IBE programs are very popular in Canada and have proven to be very successful for the dominant language students enrolled. However, in IBE programs there is no mixture of language-majority and language-minority students. The program consists of solely language-majority students learning a second language with their teachers as their only "true" language models in the second language. Therefore, in an IBE program, students may become bilingual but they do not gain the benefits of social integration with students of their own age in the second language.

FLES programs consist of a foreign language teacher who comes to the class once a week for about thirty minutes to teach the children a short lesson that usually includes teaching commonly used phrases and children's songs in the foreign language. In the 1960's FLES programs were widely introduced in many U.S. elementary schools as a

method of exposing younger English speaking children to foreign languages (Ovando & Collier, 1985). Since the FLES program only involves exposing children to a second language for such short amounts of time, "there is little evidence that FLES has had any success in bringing about a significant amount of foreign-language acquisition among English-speaking children" (Cohen and Gray 1976/1984 as cited in Ovando & Collier, 1985, p.45).

There is also the method of teaching a foreign language to students beginning in junior high or high school. This method is commonly found in many junior highs and is present in most high schools. Taking a foreign language beginning in junior high or high school is often a very exciting and interesting endeavor for students. Many times it is their first opportunity to begin learning a second language and it provides them the prospect of learning about different countries' cultures and traditions. However, at the same time for many students that begin to study a foreign language in junior high or high school, they often feel that what they are learning is irrelevant to their lives. Many times they have no real context where they can use what they are learning except for in their classroom. This may cause students to feel a lack of motivation in learning the language. Furthermore, there is often a strong emphasis on grammar, conjugation of verbs and sentence structure instead of focusing on basic oral and written communication.

Through TWI children are provided the opportunity to acquire a second language naturally. They learn the L2 in an environment in which the focus is on understanding for meaning, not on grammar and sentence structure. This is the difference between acquiring language (such as in TWI programs) versus learning language (such as foreign

language programs in junior high and high schools). Ovando and Collier explain in their book Bilingual and ESL Classrooms that,

> acquisition is the natural process young children use for picking up first and second languages with little or no formal instruction. Acquisition requires meaningful, natural interaction in the new language with the focus on understanding the message rather than on its form (1985, p. 60).

On the same note, according to Krashen, fluency in a second language cannot be learned. He has found that mastering the grammar and vocabulary in the L2 does not prepare people to use that language for communication. Proficiency must be acquired in essentially the same way we learn our first language (Crawford, 1995). TWI programs are set up to do exactly that; help students learn a second language in a similar context to which they learned their first language. The focus of instruction is not to teach grammar and structure, but rather to teach for meaning and understanding. According to Krashen (as cited in Crawford, 1995, p. 126), "speaking per se does not cause language acquisition, but follows from it as a result of obtaining comprehensible input." This explains why students learning a second language typically go through a "silent period" at first. "When they begin to speak, they are not beginning their acquisition, they are showing off their competence" (Krashen as cited in Crawford, 1995, p. 126).

When looking at all of the different educational programs that are set up to help teach children a second language, it is clear that TWI programs offer the most effective approach. There are valuable techniques and methods in place in all second language acquisition programs that are often successful in helping students learn a second language; however, TWI offers more than just valuable techniques. TWI programs offer students the opportunity to learn language naturally from one another. According to Richard Tucker, a pioneer in Canadian immersion research,

the opportunity to actually study meaningful content material via a target language and to interact socially as well as academically with native speakers of the language offers numerous benefits. In addition, for the language-majority youngster the opportunity to spend some portion of the day nurturing and sustaining mother-tongue skills and [another] portion...as a resource person for the language-majority youngster offers numerous social, and academic benefits as well (as cited in Crawford, 1995, p.212).

Scaffolding

In order for young children to acquire language naturally, their school environment must be acquisition-rich. "Students' comprehension and participation must be scaffolded so that they can understand, interact, communicate, and learn despite their limited proficiency in the language of instruction" (Peregoy & Owen, 1999, p. 4). The teacher must make sure to focus on the message being taught and not the form of the message or the syntax of the second language. In order to do so, the teacher must use a wide variety of teaching scaffolds in order to help students comprehend and progress in their second language. Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky explains that scaffolding is a temporary support or assistance provided by someone more capable, that allows a learner to perform or complete a task or process that he or she would not be able to do alone (Dixon-Krauss, 1996). For example, when working with kindergarten students in literacy activities, the necessary teacher or peer assistance scaffolds must be used in order to permit learners to read and write texts at a higher level than they could achieve on their own. According to Snow (1977), routines also provide scaffolds where gradually more complex content may be implemented in order to challenge the learner to his or her next level of development (Boyle & Peregoy, 1999). With all of this in mind, teachers must make sure that all activities include a large range of visuals and that all lessons are taught using a variety of different teaching strategies, so that all lessons can provide a number of different

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scaffolds for all students. Some such strategies include role-playing, storytelling, problem solving, games, music, physical movement, drama, total physical response (TPR), repetition, etc. In TWI kindergarten programs, teachers have many opportunities to use all of these different scaffolds in a variety of contexts. Kindergarten students work in whole group settings, in small groups, and individually with their teacher. Some scaffolds are more appropriate for whole group lessons while others work better with a small group of students. For example, a role-playing lesson may work better when working with the whole group where as problem solving may be a more effective strategy when working with a small group of students. Repetition and TPR are some strategies that are very effective to use in all three settings. By using such scaffolds, teachers are not only helping second language learners comprehend each lesson and activity more efficiently, but they are also providing students with a hands-on, interactive, and fun approach to learning that is effective for all students.

In addition to teacher directed scaffolds, the students provide many essential scaffolds for one another in learning a second language. Kindergarten students spend a lot of time working and playing together in free centers. During this time they are able to interact with one another and help one another learn. Since a kindergarten classroom in a TWI program consists of many different students with different language backgrounds, they have many opportunities to experience listening to natural language in the second language that they are learning. These free centers provide the students the opportunity to have social interactions based on play. It is common to hear Spanish speakers trying to communicate in English with EO students and vice versa. During this time students also spontaneously sing in both languages, recite poems and words or phrases that they have

learned in class. I have heard on many occasions English speakers and Spanish speakers working together to remember the words of songs and poems in both languages. Peregoy (1991) noted while conducting one of her studies on learner responses in a TWI program that, "the independent centers provided opportunities for naturalistic observations of children's spontaneous actions, interactions and verbalizations. In these centers, it was possible to see how children took charge of their own learning, including second language learning" (p. 471). In order to have a successful TWI program for both English and Spanish language learners it is essential that teachers create language acquisition rich environments for all students. The classroom must be a safe place for all students to take risks, feel comfortable making mistakes and learn from one another.

Parents also play a huge role in the success of their children in learning a second language. Some parents are fortunate enough to have some knowledge of the language that their child is learning. In this case those parents are able to more easily support and participate in what the child is learning at school. However, there are also many parents that enroll their children in TWI programs that are not familiar with the second language being learned. In that case the parent's involvement in their child's education is still just as important. Although they might not be able to help their children in the way of teaching them new vocabulary there are still many ways that they can support and participate in their child's education. A child's parent is their first and most important teacher. Therefore, just by spending time together and by showing a strong interest and concern for the child's education, parents are able to really help their child progress. One of the commitments they must make is to keep their children in the program a certain number of years in order to fully benefit from participating in the program. Torres-

Guzman also explains that parents are asked to support the minority language actively in a variety of ways. Parents are encouraged to take courses in the second language and to look for ways to involve their children in the second language outside of school (2002). For example, they can take their children to the library to check out books in the second language. Parents can also set up play dates for their children to play with native speakers of the second language outside of school. There are many ways that parents can become involved in their child's education, even if they themselves do not speak the second language.

Once all of these critical scaffolds are in place students will have all of the tools necessary in becoming proficient speakers, readers and writers in two languages. With the use of effective and appropriate teacher scaffolds, students will have many modalities to learn from. This will help all students with their individual learning styles gain access to the standards based curriculum. Vygotsky noted that,

> since learning and development are so intertwined in a child, we cannot teach strictly from a predetermined curriculum, which by its very nature cannot meet the needs of each and every child in the classroom. It is incumbent upon us to determine the individual learning needs of children in our classrooms if we are to provide for their continued mental development (Dixon-Krauss, 1996, p.97).

These scaffolds also provide students with the skills that they need to be active participants in the classroom in both English and Spanish. Furthermore, through the involvement of both parents and classmates, students will have the support and natural language experiences that they need to be successful. Therefore, through the combination of peer, parent and teacher scaffolds, students are provided the support that they need to be intrinsically motivated to learn and do their best.

Evidence of Student Learning

In order for EO kindergarten students to be successful in learning the content of each lesson as well as the target language, students must be "challenged cognitively but provided with the contextual and linguistic supports required for successful task completion" (Cummins, 1996, p.60). Lessons must not only be cognitively demanding but also context embedded. If lessons are cognitively undemanding, then students will learn little and become bored quickly in the process; however, if lessons are beyond what students can cope with cognitively, then they will also learn little and become frustrated. Therefore, to make sure that students are successful in learning the content of each lesson as well as the new vocabulary in the target language, the student must receive contextual support that is activated in the learner and embedded in the instruction (Cummins, 1996).

One key element in providing students with appropriate contextual support includes using methods and tools that activate students' prior knowledge. By activating students' prior knowledge, the learning process becomes more efficient. Prior knowledge represents one main thing that students bring to a learning situation that makes input/learning more context-embedded and comprehensible. Furthermore, it motivates students to use the target language in order to participate in discussions around the topic of interest. In addition, it allows teachers the opportunity to get to know their students as individuals with unique histories and provides a positive classroom environment in which cultural knowledge is shared and validated (Cummins, 1996). For EO kindergarten students in a dual language immersion program, the use of a variety of different teaching scaffolds, such as gestures, visuals, acting out meanings, dramatization and role playing,

reading a variety of multicultural literature... will help to activate students prior knowledge, which will help motivate students to participate and learn.

Ellen Riojas Clark found a great deal of evidence of student learning in her study entitled "How did you learn to write in English when you haven't been taught in English?": The language experience approach in a dual language program. She spent one year observing students' interactions weekly, with the staff, each other, in a kindergarten dual language immersion classroom. Throughout her observations, she noted a great deal of evidence of student learning. She attributed that to the variety of experiences available to all of the students. She explained that,

> the teacher is building on the different experiential backgrounds and strengths as she develops their academic skills. By validating the prior knowledge of the students, she sets the stage for them to be able to scaffold from their knowledge base. The principles of Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development are evident in the classroom instruction and methodology employed by the teacher (1995, p. 624).

In the study entitled "Multiple embedded scaffolds: support for English speakers in a Two-way Spanish immersion kindergarten," Suzanne F. Peregoy and Owen F. Boyle also found a lot of evidence of student learning. This study focused on the opening activities that teachers used in two bilingual Spanish immersion kindergarten classrooms. The researchers found that the teachers used multiple scaffolds in their opening activities, which provided students with the contextual support that they needed to learn the content that was presented as well as the target language. Furthermore, Suzanne Peregoy and Owen Boyle learned that as the year progressed the teachers added more complex verbal and dramatic elements to the routine in order to make sure that the material continued to be cognitively demanding and context-embedded (Peregoy & Owen, 1999).

Through the use of multiple teacher scaffolds, activation of prior knowledge, student interaction and socialization, and hands-on learning activities, students can be very successful in learning both a second language as well as the standards-based curriculum of the classroom. This is evident in a variety of research studies that have been conducted on second language learners in TWI programs. However, in order for students to feel successful and confident all of these elements must be in place.

Conclusion

This chapter focuses on the findings of several different researchers on TWI programs, second language acquisition, peer, parent and teacher scaffolds and how this all effects student learning. The research clearly shows that there are many benefits in participating in dual language immersion programs; such as, fostering positive cross-cultural awareness and acceptance among the school community as well as providing students with a comfortable setting to learn a second language naturally. However, there are also many challenges facing the implementation and success of dual language immersion programs; such as, finding qualified teachers who possess native like fluency in both languages, as well as finding enough students of both language backgrounds in order to create language balanced classes. However, when students are enrolled in a TWI program and are fully committed to the program for the entire length of the program, they will reap the benefits of being a part of a community in which all students are learning together and from one another. Whether or not the child is a language-majority or language-minority student, he/she will be in a position to acquire a second language naturally in a comfortable and safe environment. Furthermore, with the necessary peer, parent and teacher scaffolds in place students will have every opportunity

to not only learn the second language, but will also have full and equal access to the curriculum of their classroom. Student learning will be evident through their participation in class, their motivation to learn and be an active member of the class community, through their questions, concerns and responses, their day by day interactions with their peers, and through the work that they produce in class and at home. All in all, TWI programs are set up in such a way that all students of all language backgrounds have every opportunity to be successful.

Chapter Three

Methodology

Research Design

This research project is a case study of two English-speaking kindergarten students that are participating in my schools' TWI program. I was hoping to be able to work with two EO students from my own classroom for this project; however, this year I didn't end up having any EO students in my classroom. Fortunately there are EO students in two of the morning classes that were willing to participate in this study. The reason that I chose to do a case study on two EO kindergarten students in our TWI program was to learn what the formal and informal educational practices are, that are helping these students not only access the curriculum through Spanish, but also feel successful in learning the language. My motivation behind this project was to gather data about my own teaching in order to take a closer look at what I am doing that is helping these students understand the content of the lessons and learn Spanish at the same time. I also gathered data from parents and students in order to learn what they are doing to help these two students learn Spanish. The data that I collected will be valuable information for my colleagues, my students, the parents of the two EO students and myself, in helping us understand what scaffolds and methods are most effective in helping these EO students learn and understand Spanish.

Setting

The main setting for this study took place at Abrazos Elementary, a TWI charter school located in a coastal agricultural town that draws a lot of migrant workers to work

in the fields. Therefore, a large majority of students that attend schools in this town (including Abrazos) are children of migrant workers. The formal observations for this study were conducted in both my classroom and another kindergarten classroom at Abrazos. The informal observations were conducted in both classrooms as well as on the kindergarten playground outside. For the interviews, the parents of both EO students were given the option to meet at Abrazos or at their home. Both parents opted to meet at Abrazos in the kindergarten classrooms.

Research Participants

The subjects for this study were selected based on their language background. I recruited two EO kindergarten students in Abrazos's TWI program. Spanish speaking and bilingual students were not included because this study specifically focused on the educational practices used to help EO student learn Spanish in a TWI program. In Abrazos's TWI program the large majority of students are Spanish speakers learning English. Therefore, the teachers are well informed about which teaching methods are most effective in helping those students learn English. However, our program currently lacks English speakers and we are constantly trying to recruit more English speakers into our program. Therefore, this case study was set up to not only help inform my teaching of EO students and that of my colleagues, but also to help educate parents of incoming students about what we do to help their child learn Spanish in kindergarten and what they can do to help their child learn Spanish at home.

Data Collection

In order to collect data for this study, I used qualitative research methods, including interviews and observations. First I interviewed the parents of these two

students (see Appendix A). I asked them questions regarding the background of their child, any exposure that their child may have to Spanish at home or elsewhere, any preschool experiences that their child might have had and to describe their home literacy practices. I also asked the parents to share with me their hopes and expectations for their child in this program and why they chose to enroll their child in a dual language immersion program.

In addition to these interviews I spent a lot of time observing these two students in both formal and informal settings in order to learn what the most effective strategies at school are, that are helping them to be successful in learning and understanding Spanish. For informal observations, I observed these students during their recess (15 minutes), and during exploration (free centers, 30 minutes), once a week for eight weeks. Throughout those observations I focused my attention on various types of student interactions. I closely observed these two EO students interacting with their peers in a natural student-centered setting. I was looking for evidence of language assistance, language dominance in conversations and any mixture of the two languages. I recorded the theme of each interaction and I also recorded observations that may have been contrary to what I was looking for. An example of that may include an EO student only interacting with other English-speaking students with no evidence of language assistance or mixture of languages.

For formal observations I observed each student during a small group lesson (45 minutes) once a week for eight weeks. I used a check off chart (see Appendix B) that I created to record the different scaffolds that I use to help EO students better understand each lesson. In order to fill out the check off chart, I focused my attention on which of

the nine scaffolds on the chart I was using throughout the lesson. After each time that I used one of those scaffolds I checked it off on the chart. That way by the end of the lesson I was able to see which scaffolds I used and which scaffolds I did not use when teaching the lesson. The purpose of this process of self observation was to help myself identify whether or not I am using a number of different scaffolds when working with an EO student, and to learn which scaffolds proved to be most effective in helping that student understand the lesson and learn new vocabulary in Spanish. In order to learn which scaffolds were most effective in helping the students understand each lesson and to also check for evidence that these two students were actively engaged in each lesson and felt comfortable and successful, I decided to audio-tape each lesson. In order to learn whether or not these two students were accessing the curriculum and the goals of each lesson as well as feeling comfortable and successful, I needed to look for evidence of the following things. I looked for participation in the lesson, application of curricular knowledge by evidence of their finished product that they created during the lesson, information seeking questions, and responding with the group and individually. In order to record these observations of what I learned from listening to the audiotapes, I used another check off list that I created (see Appendix C). In order to validate these self-observations, I asked another kindergarten teacher to observe two of these small group lessons to check for evidence of student learning. I had that teacher observe one lesson with each of the two EO students that I was working with, and while she was observing the lesson she filled out the check off chart that I had created to check for evidence of student learning (Appendix C). Once I finished listening to all of the audiotapes and completed the check off chart for evidence of student learning for each lesson, I then

compared my results with her results. I found that our observations for evidence of student learning were very similar. This information helped validate the process that I was using in collecting this data.

Data Analysis

In order to analyze the data that I collected, I first read and reread all of my field notes, interview questions and responses in order to look for overlying themes and patterns that stood out. I realized that I had two main categories and several subcategories. My two main categories are formal and informal observations. Within the formal observation category, the subcategories include teaching scaffolds and evidence of student learning. Within the informal observations category, the subcategories include student interactions and parental support.

Once I separated all of my data into each category and subcategory I was able to pull out overlying themes. For example, within the subcategory of student interactions, the main themes that stood out include, language dominance, language mixture and language assistance. Within the parental support subcategory the main themes that stood out include hopes and dreams, language background and academic support. For the formal observation subcategories of teaching scaffolds and evidence of student learning, I found that the most efficient and effective way to analyze this data was to compile the results of the check off charts and display the results in the form of a graph. For the scaffold check off chart (Appendix B) I used pie graphs to display the results (Appendix D & E). For the check off chart on evidence of student learning I used a bar graph to display the results (Appendix F & G). This provided a way to clearly see the results of those

observations and analyze what those results mean for myself as a teacher and for those two EO students.

Once I was able to organize all of my data in a way that made sense to me, I was able to analyze the results and write about my findings. The most important piece of analyzing the data was taking the time to read through the data many times and pull out the overlying categories and themes.

Chapter Four

Data Analysis

Overview of Findings

This chapter provides an analysis of the themes that emerged as a result of the observations of two EO students, collected during small group instruction, recess and exploration (free play) and the interviews conducted with the parents of both EO students participating in this case study. This study was conducted from November through March of 2004 at the Abrazos elementary school campus. The presentation of the data will be organized into two main categories, formal and informal observations. Within each main category the data will be broken down into four subcategories, teaching scaffolds, evidence of student learning, student interactions and parent interviews. The two EO students that participated in this study will be referred to as Student A and Student B. All interview questions and charts used to collect data for this study as well as graphs created to analyze the data are located in the appendix.

Formal Observations

Teaching Scaffolds

In order to collect data on which teaching scaffolds were most effective in helping provide EO students with the tools they needed to understand and participate in a small group lesson that was solely taught in Spanish, I first had to create a list of all of the different possible teaching scaffolds used when working with EO students. After a lot of

thought, discussion with kindergarten colleagues, self-observation of my own teaching and observation of other kindergarten teachers teaching I created a list of nine different scaffolds that my kindergarten colleagues and I use when working with EO students. The scaffolds include:

1. Repeat what student said in English, in Spanish.

2. Ask the EO student to repeat new vocabulary in Spanish.

3. Act out, model, or use hand gestures to clarify.

4. Use visuals/manipulatives to teach and/or clarify new vocabulary in Spanish.

5. Ask bilingual student to translate what I'm saying into English.

6. Repeat new vocabulary while teaching the lesson.

7. Ask whole group to repeat new vocabulary in Spanish.

8. Draw a picture to clarify.

9. Ask EO student to repeat in English what I said in Spanish to check for understanding.

I observed which teaching scaffolds I used throughout eight different small group lessons for both student A and student B. As I taught each lesson I simultaneously marked the teaching scaffold check-off chart (Appendix B) in order to learn which scaffolds I used throughout each lesson. Since I was observing which scaffolds I was using while at the same time teaching the lesson; I acted as a participant observer in this stage of data collection. I had intended to record these observations for both students while teaching the same eight lessons. However, due to student absences and schedule logistics, I was unable to work with Student A and Student B on exactly the same eight lessons. Five of the eight lessons that I taught for both students were the same lessons and three lessons

were different. Although three of the eight lessons were not the same for both students,

the observation check-off chart remained the same. Furthermore regardless of what

lesson I taught, all lessons were 45 minutes long and were taught in a small group setting

with a total of five students to each group.

In analyzing this data I created pie graphs (Appendix D & E) in order to clearly

show the break down of how many times I used each scaffold throughout each lesson. I

then created two pie graphs that show an accumulation of the total number of times I used

each of the nine scaffolds throughout all eight lessons for both student A and student B.

Below is the accumulative pie graph for student A.

Student A
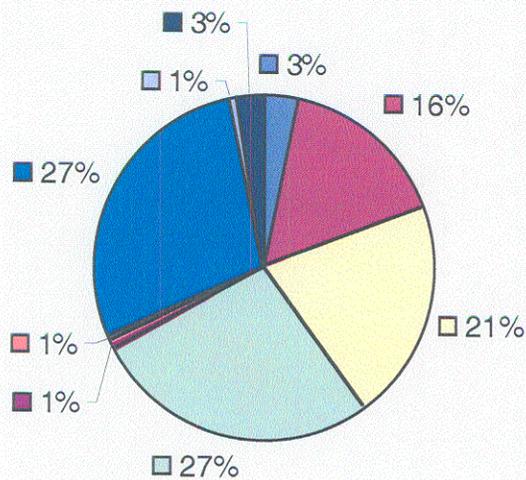### Accumulation of lessons 1-8

■	Repeat what student said in English, in Spanish
■	Ask student to repeat new vocabulary in Spanish
□	Act out, model, or use hand gestures to clarify
□	Use visuals/manipulatives to teach and/or clarify new vocabulary in Spanish
■	Ask bilingual student to translate what I'm saying into English
■	I repeat new vocabulary while teaching lesson
■	Ask whole group to repeat vocabulary in Spanish
■	Draw a picture to clarify
■	Ask student to repeat in English what I said in Spanish to check for understanding

Pie chart values: 3%, 3%, 16%, 27%, 1%, 21%, 27%, 1%, 1%

By viewing this graph it is clear overall which scaffolds were used the most and which were used the least with Student A. The two scaffolds that were used the most, 27% of the time include, using visuals/manipulatives to teach and/or clarify new

vocabulary in Spanish and asking the whole group to repeat new vocabulary in Spanish. The next scaffold used 21% of the time was acting out, modeling and/or using hand gestures to clarify. 16% of the time I asked Student A to repeat new vocabulary on her own in Spanish (not with the group). I repeated what Student A said in English, in Spanish only 3% of the time, as well as asking Student A to repeat in English what I said in Spanish to check for understanding. The three scaffolds used the least with Student A, only 1% of the time include, drawing a picture to clarify, asking a bilingual student to translate what I said into English, and repeating new vocabulary while teaching the lesson. I realized that I did repeat new vocabulary many times throughout each lesson; however, more often than not I had the students in the group repeat the new vocabulary with me rather than repeating it on my own. In order to see the title of each lesson as well as a breakdown of how many of each scaffold was used with Student A throughout each lesson, please refer to Appendix D.

Below is the accumulative pie graph for student B.

Student B
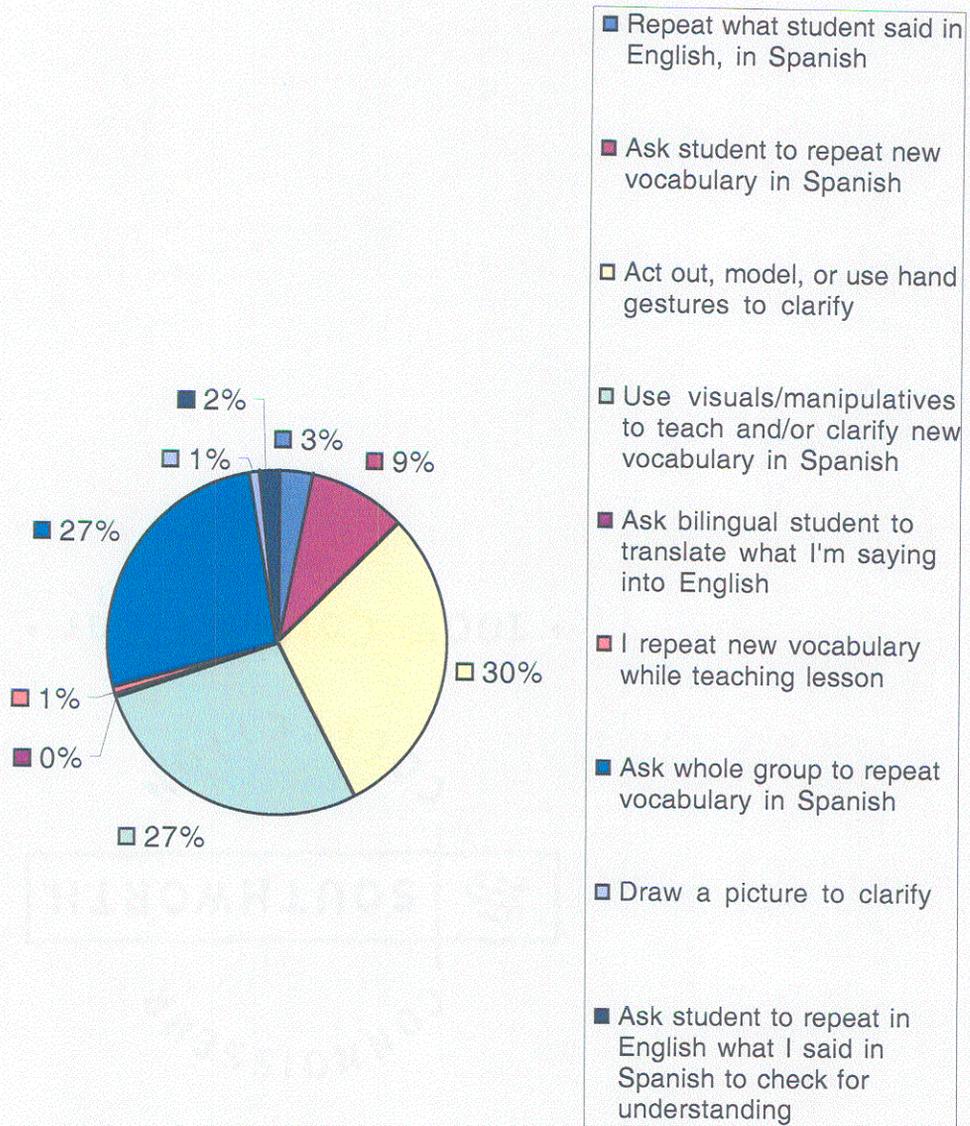## Accumulation of lessons 1-8

Legend:
- Repeat what student said in English, in Spanish
- Ask student to repeat new vocabulary in Spanish
- Act out, model, or use hand gestures to clarify
- Use visuals/manipulatives to teach and/or clarify new vocabulary in Spanish
- Ask bilingual student to translate what I'm saying into English
- I repeat new vocabulary while teaching lesson
- Ask whole group to repeat vocabulary in Spanish
- Draw a picture to clarify
- Ask student to repeat in English what I said in Spanish to check for understanding

Pie chart values: 2%, 3%, 9%, 30%, 27%, 27%, 1%, 0%, 1%

This graph shows that overall the scaffold that was used most with Student B, 30% of the time was, acting out, modeling and/or using hand gestures to clarify. The two scaffolds that tied at 27% include, using visuals/manipulatives to teach and/or clarify new vocabulary in Spanish and asking the whole group to repeat new

vocabulary in Spanish. 9% of the time I asked Student B to repeat new vocabulary on her own (not with the group). I repeated what Student B said in English, in Spanish only 3% of the time and only 2% of the time I asked Student B to repeat in English what I had said in Spanish in order to check for understanding. Two scaffolds used very little, only 1% of the time include, drawing a picture to clarify and repeating new vocabulary while teaching the lesson. Throughout these eight small group lessons I never once asked a bilingual student to translate what I said in Spanish into English for Student B. As with Student A, I realized with Student B that I did repeat new vocabulary many times throughout each lesson; however, more often than not I had the students in the group repeat the new vocabulary with me rather than repeating it on my own. In order to see the title of each lesson as well as a breakdown of how many of each scaffold was used with Student B throughout each lesson, please refer to Appendix E.

Evidence of Student Learning

In order to check for evidence of student learning throughout each small group lesson and to validate that the different scaffolds that I was using to teach each lesson were indeed effective, I audiotaped each lesson. I then listened to each tape and filled out a check-off chart (Appendix C) to record evidence of student learning. There were five different areas that I was listening for and marking on the check-off chart Appendix C. The five areas include:

- Participation in the lesson

- Application of curricular knowledge (student working on product created in lesson)

- Student asks information seeking questions

- Student responds with the group

- Student responds individually

As I began listening to the audiotapes I soon realized two very important things. One is that both students demonstrated participation in each lesson by asking information seeking questions, responding with the group and responding individually. Therefore, I did not need to mark the column labeled participation in the lesson. Secondly, I realized that both students were consistently always working on the product that they were creating in each lesson. Therefore, I decided that it did not make sense to mark the column labeled application of curricular knowledge. At this point I was able to focus on marking the three areas on the check-off chart labeled, student asks information seeking questions, student responds with the group and student responds individually while listening to each tape. It is important to note that while listening to each tape and marking each check-off chart I did not make any distinction based on the language the student used when responding. Whether the student responded in English or in Spanish was irrelevant, I was solely looking for evidence that the student was engaged, participating and learning throughout each lesson. Once I finished listening to all of the lessons and had completed marking all of the check-off charts (Appendix C), I then created bar graphs (Appendix F & G) in order to clearly show the results of how both Student A and Student B participated in and demonstrated evidence of student learning in each lesson. I then created two bar graphs that show an accumulation of how many times Student A and Student B both asked information seeking questions, responded with the

group and responded individually throughout all eight small group lessons. The accumulative bar graph for student A is below.

Evidence of Student Learning
Student A
Accumulation of lessons 1-8

250	
200	
150	
100	
50	
0	

Student asks information seeking questions   Student responds with the group   Student responds individually
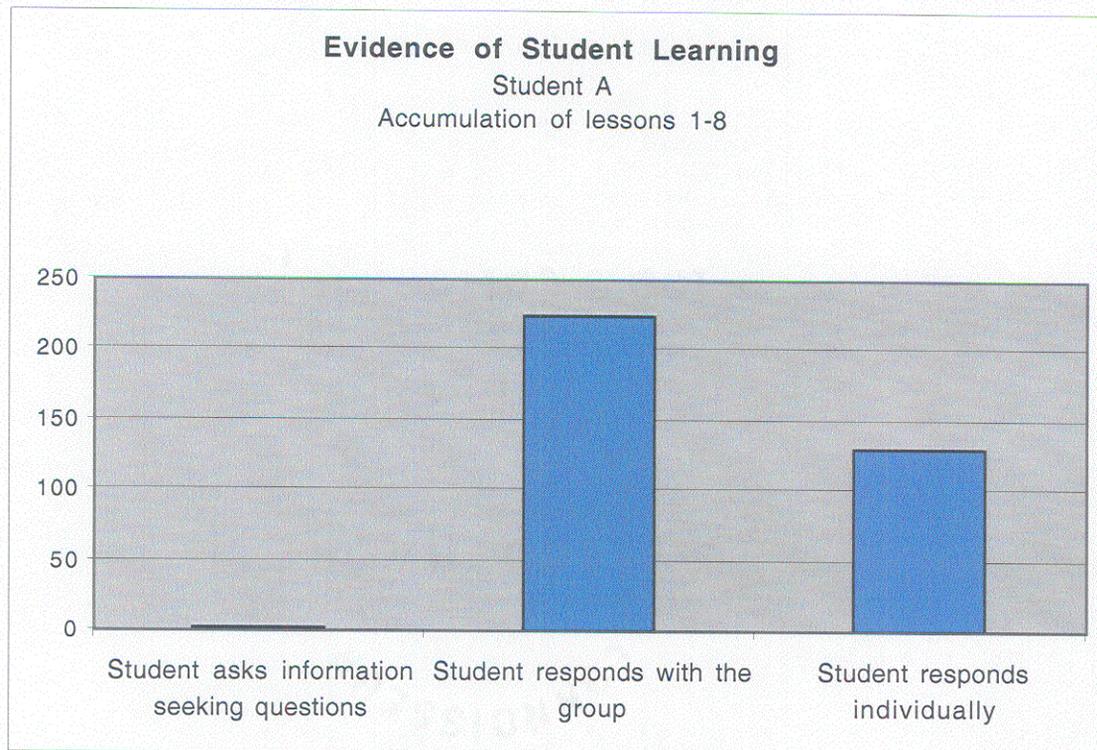
In viewing this graph, it is clear that Student A participated in the lessons most by responding with the other four students in the group. Throughout the eight lessons Student A responded with the group 225 times. An example of such a response may include answering a question posed to the group chorally, or repeating new vocabulary with the group all together. For example, in lesson number one *Macaroni Necklaces*, I used different colored pasta and created an ABAB pattern (a pattern using 2 variables) such as, red pasta, blue pasta, red pasta, blue pasta and so on. I then asked the students, "¿Cómo es este patrón?" *Describe this pattern*. The students then all said together, "rojo, azul, rojo, azul" *red, blue, red, blue*. Each time Student A responded with the group I marked one check on the check-off chart.

Student A responded individually 129 times and asked information seeking questions only once. In order to see the title of each lesson as well as a breakdown of how Student A participated in each of the eight small group lessons see Appendix F.

Below is the accumulative bar graph for Student B.

Evidence of Student Learning
Student B
Accumulation of lessons 1-8

Student asks information seeking questions	Student responds with the group	Student responds individually

(Bar graph with y-axis scale from 0 to 250 in increments of 50)
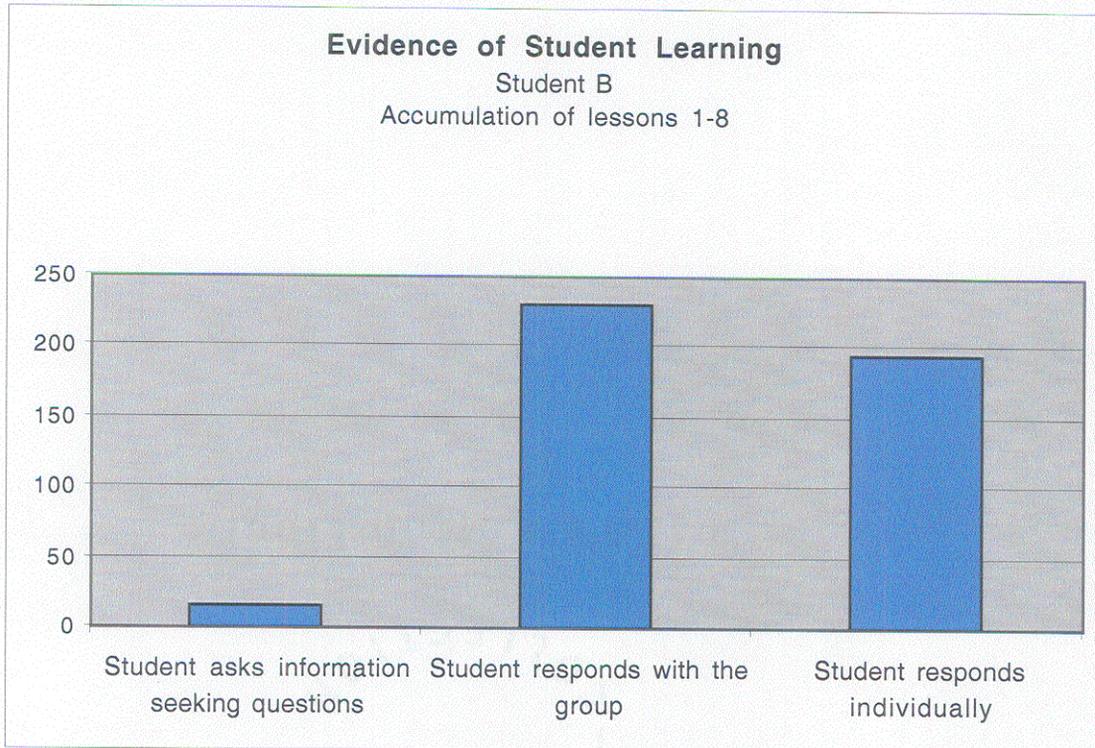
This graph clearly demonstrates that Student B also participated in each lesson most by responding with the other students in the group. Student B responded with the group 230 times throughout all eight lessons. Student B also responded a lot on her own, 193 times. She asked information seeking questions 16 times. In order to see the title of each lesson as well as a breakdown of how Student B participated in each of the eight small group lessons see Appendix G.
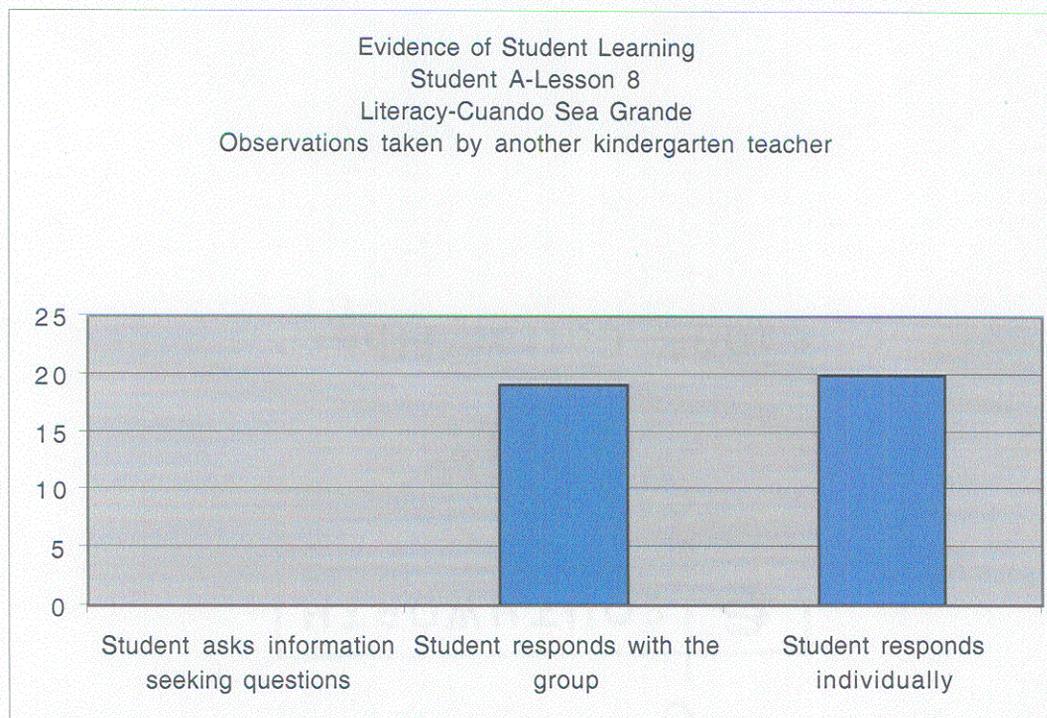
In order to validate these self-observations, I had another kindergarten teacher observe both Student A and Student B while I taught lesson 8 to their small group. I had

that teacher fill out check-off chart Appendix C. After I listened to all of the audiotapes and filled out all of the check-off charts for evidence of student learning for each student, I then compared my results with the results that my kindergarten colleague found when she observed the lessons. I found that my results were very similar to what she had found. Below you will find the bar graph that demonstrates the results that my kindergarten colleague found for evidence of student learning for Student A on lesson 8. Below that graph is the graph of the results that I found for the very same lesson with the same student.

Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 8
Literacy-Cuando Sea Grande
Observations taken by another kindergarten teacher

25	
20	
15	
10	
5	
0	

Student asks information seeking questions | Student responds with the group | Student responds individually

Other observations: Student can sound out letters to write independently. She was focused on her work. The student said the words in English for the main targeted words in Spanish (professions). She had one to one match when reading each word.

Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 8
Literacy-Cuando Sea Grande

	Student asks information seeking questions	Student responds with the group	Student responds individually
Value	0	21	22
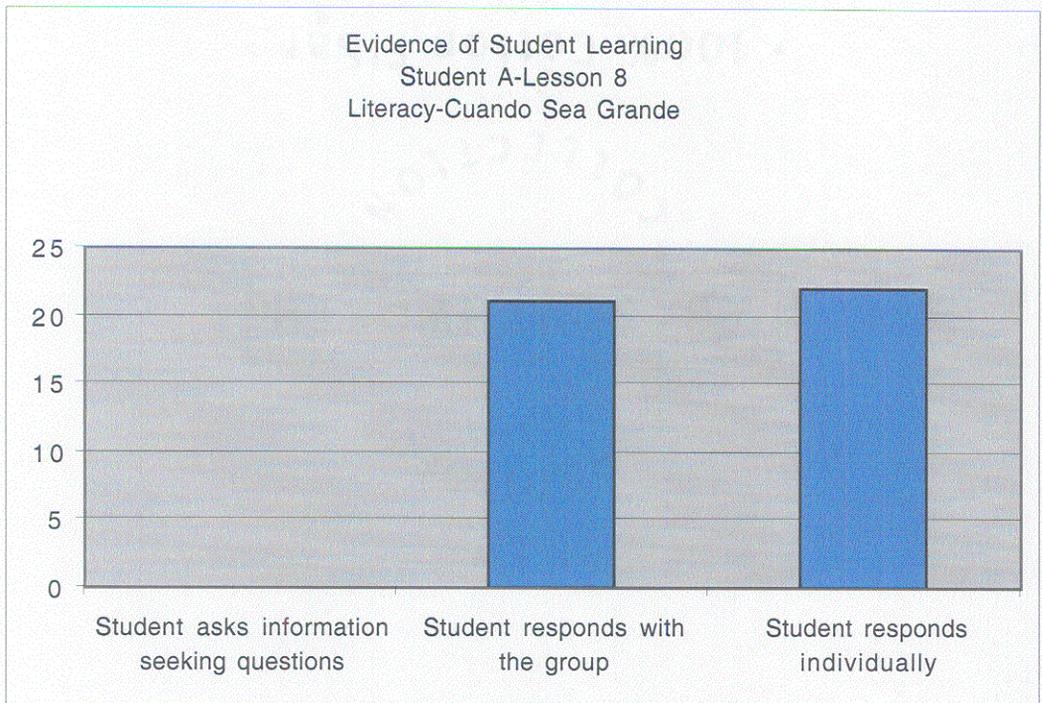
Next you will find the bar graph that demonstrates the results that my

kindergarten colleague found for evidence of student learning for Student B on lesson 8.

Below that graph is the graph of the results that I found for the very same lesson with the
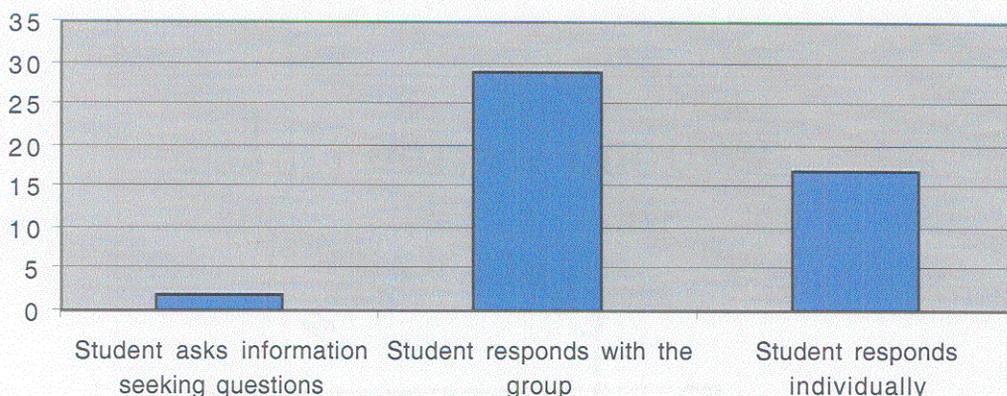
same student.

Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 8
Literacy-Cuando Sea Grande
Observations taken by another kindergarten teacher

Chart y-axis: 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 0

Bars:
- Student asks information seeking questions: ~2
- Student responds with the group: ~29
- Student responds individually: ~17

Other observations: Student was always engaged in the lesson. She had one to one match when reading each word. She participated with the group in choral reading. She sounded out each letter sound in each word independently. She self corrected her own work.

Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 8
Literacy-Cuando Sea Grande

Chart y-axis: 35, 30, 25, 20, 15, 10, 5, 0

Bars:
- Student asks information seeking questions: ~2
- Student responds with the group: ~29
- Student responds individually: ~27
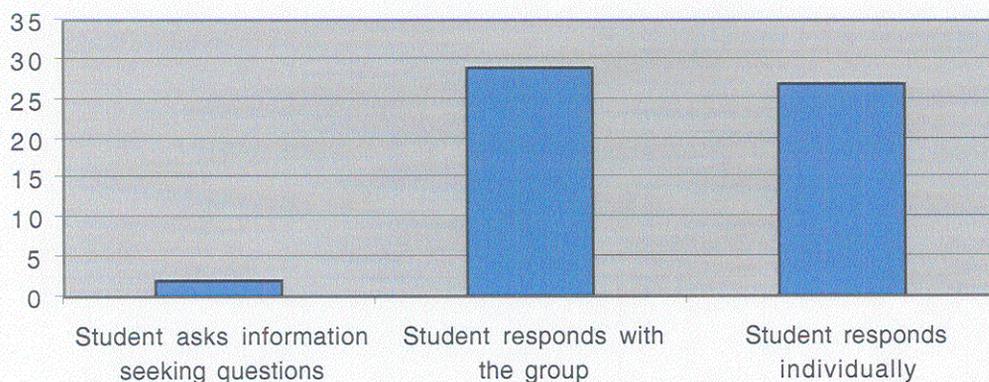
Informal Observations

Student Interactions

I decided to observe Student A & B during exploration and recess in order to collect data to see how their interactions with other students in the class supported their learning Spanish. I chose to observe them during exploration and recess because at these times the students are able to choose where they want to play and with whom. It seemed that this setting would provide the most optimal opportunities to witness the students interacting with other students in both Spanish and English in a natural way. I observed both Student A and B on eight different occasions. During exploration I spent thirty minutes observing the students and during recess I spent fifteen minutes observing the students. As I observed each student I took diligent notes on what I saw and heard. I wrote down many different conversations that took place between the students. Throughout this stage of data collection, I once again acted as a participant observer. In order to hear what the students were saying and see what they were doing, I had to sit close to them while they played. On many different occasions the students included me in their play. For example, both Student A and B spent most of their time during exploration in the playhouse. There were many times when they would ask me if I was hungry and if they could get me something to eat. Each time that the students asked me a question or spoke to me, I always responded in Spanish. Since the students included me in their play on many different occasions, I recorded in my observations many conversations that took place between me and the students. Student B had many more verbal interactions with me than Student A.

In order to analyze the data that I collected, I decided to color code the data based on a variety of themes that emerged from reading through my field notes. The themes that I looked for included,

- Language dominance in both Spanish and English

- Mixture of languages (using both languages within one sentence)

- Language assistance (when EO student asked me or another student for help in understanding something)

- Evidence that the EO student understood something that was said to her in Spanish by way of a gesture, no oral response.

- Evidence that the EO student did not understand something that was said to her in Spanish due to no gesture or oral response.

- Total number of times the EO student responded appropriately to something that was said to her in Spanish regardless of what language the EO student used to respond.

- Percentage of times other students spoke to the EO student in Spanish

- Percentage of times other students spoke to the EO student in English

Based on the data that I collected, I found evidence of the following for Student A and Student B:

	Student A	Student B
# of times spoke in English	35	57
# of times spoke in Spanish	0	6
# of times mixed languages	0	25
# of times received language assistance	4	13
Evidence of understanding by gesture, no oral response	10	4
Evidence of not understanding, no gesture or oral response	2	2
# of times responded appropriately to Spanish	9	23
% of times that students spoke to EO student in English	77%	84%
% of times that students spoke to EO student in Spanish	23%	16%

Student A

Student A never spoke in Spanish, she always spoke in English. She never mixed Spanish and English together within a sentence. She received language assistance on four occasions. One example of language assistance that she received is as follows: Student A was playing in the playhouse with two other students. I asked Student A, "¿Student A, me das té?" *Student A will you give me some tea?* Student A paused and looked confused. Then a bilingual student that was playing in the playhouse and witnessed this interaction stepped in. She said, "Tea, Student A, tea." Student A, then understood and looked for the tea kettle. On 10 different occasions Student A showed evidence of understanding what another person said to her in Spanish by way of a gesture. For example, I said "¿Quién me va a hacer comida? Quiero algo de comer." *Who is going to make me some food? I want something to eat.* Then Student A went and found me a plate of food. Student A demonstrated on 2 occasions that she did not understand something that was said to her. For example, Student A was outside playing in the sand table with another student. They were using hollow letters to write words. The other student said, "¿Student A, vas a hacer tu nombre?" *Student A, are you going to write your name?* Student A did not respond and continued playing. On nine different

occasions Student A responded appropriately after being spoken to in Spanish. One

example was when I asked Student A, "¿Dónde está Jenny?" (all names of students in

this section are pseudonyms) Student A responded, "I don't know." Out of all the times

that students spoke to Student A, 77% of the time they spoke to her in English and 23%

of the time they spoke to her in Spanish. The following is an example of a student

speaking to Student A in English when they were playing in the playhouse. The student

said, "Look your baby Student A, yeah, your baby." However, on another occasion, the

same student spoke to Student A in Spanish. She said, "Student A, estoy haciendo

huevos." *Student A, I am making eggs.*

Student B

Throughout all of the times I observed Student B in exploration and recess, the

majority of the time she spoke in English. On very few occasions she spoke in Spanish.

One example of a time she spoke in Spanish was when I asked her, "¿Qué vas a hacer

ahora, Student B?" *What are you going to do now Student B?* She replied, "Jugar." *Play.*

Student B mixed Spanish and English within a sentence 25 times. For example, one day

when she was playing in the playhouse she asked me "You want pollo *chicken*? Are you

done with the leche *milk*?" Another day she said to me, "We don't have coffee. We have

té *tea*, juice, leche *milk*, cranberry juice but no coffee." Student B received language

assistance 13 times. One example was when Student B asked me, "Do you want

something to drink?" I said, "Si, quiero jugo de naranja" *Yes, I want orange juice.*

Student B replied "What's that?" Then another student said, "Student B, do you have

more juice?" Then she showed Student B an orange. Then Student B said, "Here's your

orange juice." On four occasions Student B demonstrated evidence of understanding by

way of gesture. One example was when another student asked her "¿Es porque vamos a cocinar, verdad Student B?" *It's because we are going to cook, right Student B?* Student B responded by shaking her head yes. On two occasions Student B did not understand something that was said to her in Spanish. For example, one day at recess a student spoke to her in Spanish asking her about a certain game the other kids were playing. Student B did not seem to understand. She did not respond and then ran off. On 23 different occasions, Student B responded appropriately to something someone said to her in Spanish. For example, on 1/29/04 while Student B was playing in the playhouse she asked me, "Do you want coffee, tea or milk? I replied "Quiero té." *I want tea.* Student B said "Té, ok, té. Do you want milk or sugar? I said, "Yo quiero leche y azucar. " *I want milk and sugar.* Student B said "Do you want one or two spoonfuls?" Out of all the times that I recorded when other students spoke to Student B, 84% of the time they spoke to her in English and 16% of the time they spoke to her in Spanish. An example of a time a student spoke to Student B in English was on 3/3/04. They were in the playhouse and a student asked Student B, "Student B, do you have the chocolate?" On another occasion a different student asked Student B, "Dónde está patito?" *Where's the little duck?*

Clearly, this data shows that the majority of times that students spoke with both Student A and Student B they spoke in English. It also shows that the majority of times Students A and B spoke to other students they spoke in English. One thing I noticed was that most of the time the students that both Student A and B played with were bilingual. However, on occasion they did play with students that were Spanish speakers with very little knowledge of English. In these situations I found that the Spanish speakers often tried to speak English when speaking to the EO student. However, when speaking to

another Spanish speaker they almost always referred back to Spanish. For example with Student A, Jenny said, "Student A, come on, come on!" Then Jenny turned to Anita and spoke to her in Spanish about the game they were going to play. Then she turned back to Student A and said "over here Student A." Then she turned back to Anita and spoke to her in Spanish again. Another thing that I noticed a couple of times, was that after two Spanish speakers spent some time playing with or near Student A or Student B, they tried to speak to each other in English. For example, Student A was playing at recess on 12/11/03. She was running around the playground chasing some boys in her class. They were all laughing and having fun. I then noticed that two predominately Spanish speaking boys that were playing with Student A began speaking to each other in English using one and two word responses. On another occasion I noticed that one predominately Spanish-speaking girl, after spending some time playing with Student B in the playhouse, picked up the play telephone and began speaking into the phone in English. In chapter five I will discuss what the results of this data means.

Parent Interviews

In addition to learning what I was doing in the classroom that was contributing to the success of EO students in learning Spanish, as well as focusing on how other students in the class were helping EO students learn Spanish, I also interviewed the parents of the two English-speaking students in this case study to learn what they are doing to help their children be successful in this dual language immersion program. I audiotaped each parent interview and then transcribed the interviews in order to accurately record everything that was said during each interview. I then read through each interview several times until I came up with five main themes that emerged from this data. The themes include:

- Goals, hopes and expectations that the parents have for their children and for themselves.

- Academic support at home

- Exposure to Spanish outside of school

- Students' attitudes towards learning Spanish

- Previous school experience

Pseudonyms will be used for the names of the two parents interviewed. The parent interviewed for Student A will be referred to as Peggy. The parent interviewed for Student B will be referred to as Cathy. In addition, this section will include many direct quotes from both parents.

Goals, hopes, expectations

When asked what their goals, hopes and expectations were for their children in Abrazos TWI program, both Cathy and Peggy had very similar responses. They both explained that they want their children to be bilingual and biliterate in Spanish and English. Peggy explained,

> I always wished that I was bilingual and it's much harder to pick it up now as an adult, and since she had the opportunity; I wanted her to be able to do it, like it was nothing. I hope that she'll be caught up. I worry about her being caught up in English to where other kids are going into first grade. I hope she'll be able to be on the same level for both English and Spanish. Picking up all the vocabulary and the grammar and all that and also to just learn Spanish as well, to be bilingual.

Cathy responded,

> I hope that she becomes fluent in Spanish and can read and write in Spanish. I hope that this program grows to eighth grade, you know, a K through 8 school because I know that there's no junior high out there in this area right now that offers a Spanish program, you know, an intensive program for junior high.

They also both said that the reason that they specifically chose Abrazo's TWI program was because it was the only TWI program that they knew of close by.

When asked about what kinds of goals, hopes and expectations they had for themselves in regards to learning Spanish, they both responded in very similar ways as well. Peggy said right now she doesn't know much Spanish. She said that she understands some but can't really speak it. She said that she also wants to be bilingual because,

> my mom was bilingual, she grew up in Mexico and we always had babysitter, nanny kind of people that only spoke Spanish when I was little. Somehow I communicated with them but I never really learned it. I don't know, I felt like I was missing something. Especially living in here, everybody speaks Spanish here. All the jobs that I'm interested in you have to be bilingual, like in the head start program.

Cathy explained that she does speak a little Spanish, but that she has never really spoken to her child (Student B) in Spanish. She told me that her parents are bilingual and many of the members of her extended family are bilingual. She said that she can understand a lot in Spanish but has more difficulty with speaking Spanish. She explained,

> the most Spanish I learned was when I immersed myself when I was teaching with the parents and co-workers that I worked with. But I have not worked for like 5 years now and so I don't have anywhere else to practice my Spanish. I mean I can get by, I know I can, but to say that I do it on an ongoing basis where my vocabulary is growing isn't true. Student B is going to pass me. I'm going to have to ask her, how do you say this in Spanish?

Both Peggy and Cathy explained that they are both working on improving their Spanish, and that seeing their children learn Spanish has been a great motivation for them. Peggy has bought herself a series of 24 learn Spanish at home lessons. She studies the book and listens to the CD's that go with it. Cathy took a class at the local junior college last semester. However, the class ended up not being what she had hoped for.

The class was too easy for her and included a lot of instruction based on grammar. She was looking for a class more focused on conversation. They both plan to continue to study Spanish in the future.

Academic support at home

Both Peggy and Cathy support their child's education by helping their children with their weekly homework assignments. In the Abrazos kindergarten program the students have homework daily. Each homework assignment takes about 15 minutes to complete with parental support. When asked what language they use when working on the homework, Peggy replied,

> sometimes we do it in Spanish, but usually in English. She does the writing piece in English. I always write the question in Spanish and she writes the answer in English.

Cathy explained that they always do the homework in Spanish, including the writing piece. I then went on to ask both parents what their home literacy practices are, and whether or not their children are reading in Spanish and/or English yet. Peggy replied,

> we have some books in Spanish that I bought through the book club here at school and she actually has started reading on her own. She's reading in Spanish and English. *Did you specifically teach her to read in English?* No, she just picked it up. In Spanish, with the homework books, I don't read them to her, at first I was reading them and pointing to the words, and now I just give it to her and she reads the whole thing. She's totally sounding everything out. *Does she get confused in English with some of the sounds?* E is her biggest one. She'll ask me and I'll tell her e and she'll ask me English e or Spanish e. That's about the only one.

Cathy explained,

> we read about every night, and she's been reading to me since she was about 2 years old. She would look at the pictures and make up the story. She loves to write her own stories and make her own books. *Is she reading on her own?* Yeah, in Spanish and English too. *Does she get confused in English with some of the sounds?* Yeah, sometimes, but she'll figure it out.

Exposure to Spanish outside of school

When asked what kind of exposure their children have to Spanish outside of school, both Peggy and Cathy explained that they don't do anything different or special to expose their children to Spanish outside of school. Peggy explained,

> my mom works with her, just using little words whenever she stays over there, but not too often. We have the jumpstart Spanish program and we have a Spanish leap pad book. We also have the Spanish picture dictionary. *Do you go to the library and check out books in Spanish?* We do but not in Spanish, in English.

Cathy explained,

> I don't do anything different. We do all her homework in Spanish. *Do you go to the library and get more books in Spanish?* It is the same as before. If we go and buy a book, I'll give her the option if she wants to buy it in Spanish. *Does she often choose to buy it in Spanish?* No she doesn't. I think she feels like she gets enough Spanish here at school and I'm ok with that. I'm not worried that she doesn't choose that, I'm not worried at all.

Cathy also explained that although Student B's grandparents are native Spanish speakers and fully bilingual, they always converse with Student B in English. She said that since Student B has been in the TWI program, her grandparents have begun to use a little bit more Spanish with her, but Student B gets shy and embarrassed. Cathy hopes that she will overcome that shyness.

Previous school experiences

Peggy explained that Student A did not go to preschool and did not have any other previous school experiences before kindergarten. Cathy explained that Student B did go to preschool, but her preschool was in English. She said,

> there was no Spanish there. In that preschool they have a morning session that is in English and an afternoon session that is in Spanish. I chose not to put her in the Spanish because to this day she still does better in the morning. She just functions better in the morning. By the afternoon she's just burnt out.

Therefore, neither Student A nor Student B had any previous school experiences with Spanish before entering Abrazos TWI program.

Students attitudes towards learning Spanish

One thing that became very clear to me through these interviews, was that both Student A and B had very positive attitudes towards learning Spanish. As a matter of fact, they both decided for themselves at a young age that they wanted to learn Spanish and therefore, both decided on their own that they wanted to participate in Abrazos TWI program. Peggy explained that Student A definitely wanted to learn Spanish. She said,

> our neighborhood school is Calabasas and I was trying to decide between just walking two blocks over there, or driving over here. Student A said that when she started kindergarten, she wanted to learn how to read and she wanted to learn how to speak Spanish. Those were her two requirements, which is why we didn't go to Calabasas. We came over here instead.

When I asked Cathy why she wanted her child to learn Spanish, she replied,

> well, I think she's the one who really wants to learn Spanish. Of course for me, I think speaking Spanish and being bilingual is important, but she's the one who prompted this idea to want to speak Spanish. When she was three years old she said, I need to learn Spanish and why am I not learning Spanish in my preschool?

I then asked both parents whether or not their children still had a positive attitude towards learning Spanish, now that they have been in the TWI program for almost a year. Peggy explained that Student A is still very motivated to learn Spanish and seems to really enjoy it. She said that she is really intent on watching people talk when she sees people speaking Spanish in public. Cathy explained that Student B is also very motivated to continue learning Spanish. She said that she always comes home from school excited to share what she learned.

Many conclusions can be drawn from the data collected in this case study, including which teaching scaffolds were most effective, how students show evidence of

participation and learning, how student interactions in a TWI program assist one another

in learning a second language, and what parents do to support their child's education.

Chapter five will discuss what these results mean, what recommendations can be made

based on these results, what action will be taken to share this information with others, and

a final conclusion.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the many themes that emerged out of the data and

confirmed that both formal and informal educational practices are important in

contributing to the success of EO students in learning Spanish. Chapter five include a

summary of the findings, the implications of this research, recommendations based on the

research as well as an action plan.

Chapter Five

Implications, Recommendations and Action

Summary of Findings

What teaching scaffolds are most effective in helping EO students succeed in learning Spanish as a second language, as well as, being able to fully access the kindergarten curriculum in a 90/10 TWI program? In order to validate that these scaffolds are indeed effective, in what ways do EO students participate in small group lessons that show evidence of student learning? How do other students help EO students learn Spanish, and how do their parents support them in learning Spanish? These questions were investigated in this case study of two EO kindergarten students participating in a TWI program. Over an eight week period I noted the teaching scaffolds I used most when working with these students once a week teaching a small group lesson in Spanish (see Appendix B). I also tape recorded each lesson to check for evidence of student learning and then listened to the tapes and used a check off chart to record how they participated in each lesson (see Appendix C). Furthermore, I observed both students once a week during recess and exploration (free play) in order to see how informal student interactions supported them in learning Spanish (see Appendix D & E). Lastly, I interviewed the parents of both students in order to learn what the parents were doing to support their child in learning Spanish and the content driven kindergarten curriculum in this TWI program (see Appendix A).

Overall, the data revealed that with the support of teacher scaffolds, student interactions and parental support, EO students have every opportunity to be successful in both learning Spanish as a second language as well as fully accessing the kindergarten

curriculum in a TWI program. Below I have explained in detail the specifics of what the data revealed.

On the whole the literature supported the findings of the data. For example, the data revealed that with appropriate and effective teacher scaffolds, EO students can understand, and fully participate in a small group lesson that is taught completely in Spanish. According to Peregoy and Owen, "students' comprehension and participation must be scaffolded so that they can understand, interact, communicate, and learn despite their limited proficiency in the language of instruction" (1999, p. 4). Furthermore, the literature explained that students are most successful in learning a second language when they are in an acquisition rich setting in which they feel free to take risks and learn language from one another naturally. Peregoy (1991) noted while conducting one of her studies on learner responses in a TWI program that, "the independent centers provided opportunities for naturalistic observations of children's spontaneous actions, interactions and verbalizations. In these centers, it was possible to see how children took charge of their own learning, including second language learning" (p. 471). This became quite clear when I was collecting data on student interactions. The two EO students participating in this study seemed very comfortable and happy working and playing with the other students in the class regardless of their language background.

The literature also explained that parental involvement and support is a crucial component in helping EO students feel successful in a TWI program. According to Maria E. Torres-Guzman (2002), all parents of both English and Spanish speaking students are asked to trust and support the process in TWI programs. Parents are asked to support the minority language actively in a variety of ways. Parents are encouraged to

take courses in the second language and to look for ways to involve their children in the second language outside of school. Although the data revealed that the parents of these two EO students have not sought out many ways to involve their children in Spanish outside of school, they are very supportive of the program and are involved in various ways of supporting their child with Spanish at home. Moreover, both parents are actively working on improving their own Spanish skills. The rest of this chapter will examine and analyze the findings of the data and will provide recommendations for future research on this topic.

Teaching Scaffolds

After reviewing all of the data that I collected about teaching scaffolds I learned that the scaffolds that I used most with Student A and B included; using visuals/manipulatives to teach and/or clarify new vocabulary in Spanish, asking the whole group to repeat new vocabulary in Spanish together and acting out, modeling and/or using hand gestures to clarify. I believe that using visuals/manipulatives is one of the most effective strategies to use when working with EO kindergarten students in a TWI program, because when teaching new vocabulary in the second language, the use of visuals/manipulatives provide the teacher with the tools necessary to help the learner understand and follow along without having to use that child's first language. Since the kindergarten students in Abrazos TWI program spend 90% of their day learning in Spanish without any English translation, clearly in order for Spanish language learners (SLL) to be able to understand and participate in each lesson, visuals and manipulatives must be provided. For all students, the use of visuals often provides the scaffolds necessary to help them activate their prior knowledge on any given topic. This in turn engages and motivates the

students to participate in the lesson and share what they know about the topic being studied.

In addition to using visuals, I have found it very helpful to have students repeat new vocabulary several times throughout each lesson. By repeating new vocabulary, students not only learn how to pronounce the new word correctly, but it also helps them remember the word. For EO students much of the vocabulary used in each small group lesson are new for those students. However, through collecting this data, I also came to realize that although the majority of students in the class are Spanish speakers, a lot of the vocabulary that we (kindergarten teachers) use is new for all students. For example, we are currently studying the theme the green forest and one lesson involved introducing the students to the names and characteristics of forest animals. Although four out of five students in the group were Spanish speakers and the lesson was taught in Spanish the vocabulary was new for everyone. The Spanish speakers as well as the EO students were unfamiliar with most of the animals presented in this lesson. Therefore, I had all students repeat new vocabulary together. I also found that by having all students repeat new vocabulary together, it avoided any one student from feeling singled out or different.

Although visuals and manipulatives are a very effective means of helping EO students understand the vocabulary and content being taught in a lesson, there are still several occasions throughout each lesson in which these students need further scaffolding. I recall when working with Student B many times when she would say "I don't understand, maestra *teacher*." Therefore, if I did not have a picture or object to use to help her understand a word, I found that by acting it out or modeling it, I was often able to get the meaning across to her. Through my experiences teaching second language

learners, I have learned that by acting out, modeling or using hand gestures to clarify meaning, it is a much more effective strategy in helping the student remember the new vocabulary rather than asking a bilingual student to translate what I said into English. With the scaffold of using direct translation, the student often disregards what they heard in the second language and only remembers what was said in their first language. Therefore, direct translation is a strategy that we try to use as little as possible.

Another scaffold that I sometimes use when working with EO students, involves asking the student to repeat in English what I said in Spanish in order to check for understanding. I found that I did not use this scaffold very much when working with Students A and B; however, I have found this to be an effective tool in helping me learn whether or not the student is understanding and following along in the lesson. I realized when working with both Students A and B that I did not need to use this scaffold with them often because I was able to see that they were understanding the content of each lesson through their consistent participation.

Although there are several other scaffolds that myself and my kindergarten colleagues all use when working with EO students in our classrooms, the scaffolds listed above proved to be the most effective scaffolds to use when working with Student A and B. These were the scaffolds that best helped them learn new vocabulary in Spanish, follow along throughout each lesson successfully and access the content of each lesson as well as learn how to pronounce new words correctly.

Evidence of Student Learning

Throughout each of the eight small group lessons that I taught with both Student A and B, I audiotaped each lesson and then went back and listened to those tapes in order to determine how they each participated in each lesson. I found that both Student A and B actively participated and were engaged in all lessons. They both responded most with the group and responded less individually. I believe that they both responded more with the group rather than individually because of the way that I taught each lesson. I was constantly asking them to respond with the group and therefore they did. I found that neither Student A nor Student B asked many information-seeking questions. Student A asked only one question while Student B asked 16. I believe that the discrepancy between the two students is because of their personalities. Student B is more vocal and inquisitive while Student A is more passive and quiet. I believe that neither of the two students asked a lot of questions because they did not need to. They were always able to follow along in each lesson. I attribute this to all of the various scaffolds that I used with both students while teaching each lesson.

Student Interactions

In order to learn how the other students in the classroom were helping the EO students learn Spanish, I observed each student on eight different occasions while they were playing in exploration (free play) and during recess. During this time I found that both students spent the majority of time speaking English and that most often they played with students that were bilingual. I found that they spoke very little in Spanish. I was not surprised to learn this because, according to research, it takes students learning a second language 4 to 7 years to acquire native-like fluency in the second language (Thomas &

collier, 1997). Therefore, since both Student A and B are only in their first year of learning a second language, I would not expect them at this point to be producing a lot in the second language. Rather at the time that this study took place, November through March, I would expect the students to be taking in a lot of new vocabulary and understanding a lot, but not yet speaking a lot in the second language.

I found that overall Student B spoke more than Student A. She mixed the languages quite often while Student A never once mixed the two languages. Student B received language assistance more than Student A and Student B responded appropriately to something that was said to her in Spanish more than Student A did. I attribute this once again to the different personalities of the two students. Student B is much more vocal and Student A is more quiet and shy.

One area that did surprise me was how often students spoke to both Student A and B in English rather than in Spanish. I had expected to find students speaking the majority of time to both EO students in Spanish, but that was not the case. On the contrary, the majority of time the students, regardless if they were bilingual or not, almost always seemed to try to speak in English when they spoke to Student A and B. This showed me that by having English-speaking students in the class, it motivates many Spanish-speaking students to speak in English to those students. This in turn could then take away from the English-speakers opportunity to be as motivated to try and speak in Spanish to the Spanish-speakers. However, while collecting this data, I acted as a participant observer and therefore, had many conversations with both students. Since I am one of their Spanish language models, I only spoke to them in Spanish. I found that with both students, this motivated them to try and use some new vocabulary that I

presented to them in Spanish while they were playing. I did find that Student B seemed more motivated to try and use new Spanish vocabulary than Student A.

I also found that on several occasions both students showed evidence of understanding when they were spoken to in Spanish by way of gesture or by responding appropriately in either English or Spanish. This in turn allowed me to conclude that although neither Student A nor Student B produced a lot in Spanish, they were able to understand quite a bit.

Parent Interviews

After interviewing the parents of both students I found that they were both interested in the TWI program for very similar reasons. They wanted their children to learn to be bilingual and biliterate in English in Spanish because they both believed that it would help them in their future. However, I was very surprised to find that both Student A and B were very motivated themselves in wanting to learn Spanish and that both of them essentially made the final decision about wanting to participate in the TWI program. I was surprised to learn that children at such a young age would have the ability to determine that learning Spanish was something that they really wanted to do and something that would be beneficial to them.

Through interviewing the parents I learned that neither student had much exposure to Spanish before entering the program, which again surprised me since both students were so motivated to learn Spanish and participate in the program. I was not surprised to learn that both parents are very supportive of their children in helping them at home with the homework and that both parents provide their children with opportunities to read and practice Spanish at home if they so choose. I also learned that

through their children's motivation to learn Spanish, they too have become quite motivated to improve their skills in Spanish. One parent took a class at the local junior college while the other parent bought a set of take home Spanish lessons and workbooks. In addition I learned that both parents feel that they do not need to seek out other activities outside of school for their children that involve learning more Spanish. They both felt that their children receive enough Spanish at school. After speaking with the parents of both students it became very clear that in order for an EO student to be successful in a TWI program, the child needs to feel an intrinsic motivation to want to learn Spanish themselves.

Implications and Recommendations

The data that I collected for this study leads me to imply that EO kindergarten students in a TWI program can be successful in learning Spanish as a second language as well as the content driven curriculum, as long as all of the necessary formal and informal educational practices are in place. First, the teacher needs to examine his/her strategies in order to ensure that he/she is using effective teaching scaffolds that are appropriate for each individual student. This study has proven that when working with EO students in a TWI program it is essential that the teacher use a variety of visuals and manipulatives as well as having all students repeat new vocabulary. Furthermore, the teacher needs to use scaffolds that include acting out, modeling or using hand gestures in order to clarify the meaning of new vocabulary.

Aside from teacher scaffolds, students must have access to informal scaffolds such as natural student interactions. When students have the opportunity to interact with one another freely in a safe, risk free environment, they will then feel comfortable to

learn language from one another. In addition to student interactions, EO students need a lot of parental support. The parents must fully trust the process involved in learning a second language in a TWI program in order for their children to be successful. Furthermore, the students must be intrinsically motivated to want to learn the second language.

Action Research

Throughout the past four years that I have been working at Abrazos elementary, I have learned that most parents of EO students that are considering placing their child in our TWI program have many fears and uncertainties. I have found that most often parents are unclear about what methods we as kindergarten teachers use to make sure that their children are not only learning Spanish but also the standards-based curriculum. Although all of the kindergarten teachers try to explain to these parents the different strategies that we use to help EO students succeed in our program, they are still often left feeling somewhat uncertain and afraid. Therefore, I decided to do this study in order to clarify for myself, my colleagues and those prospective parents, what exactly we do do that provides their child with the tools necessary to learn a second language as well as the content driven kindergarten curriculum.

Now that I have collected this data that clearly shows the different formal and informal educational practices that we have in place to contribute to the success of EO students in our program, I still needed to put it in a shorter, simpler format for parents to have access to. Therefore, I decided to make a brochure that informs parents about our TWI kindergarten program here at Abrazos elementary. The brochure includes the following areas:

1. What will my child do in kindergarten?

2. What can I do as a parent to help prepare my child for this program?

3. How do kindergarten teachers make subject matter comprehensible for English-speaking students in Spanish?

4. How do the teachers check for understanding?

I feel that this brochure will be very helpful and informative for prospective parents. I also believe that it will help guide their questions to the kindergarten teachers in a more efficient manner.

The results of this case study, opens the door for further more extensive studies on this topic. In order for TWI programs to continue to thrive they need more participation of English-speaking students. However, in order for parents of English-speaking students to feel comfortable enrolling their children in such a program they need to be provided with research that explains how and why their children will be successful. Therefore, further examination of the topics presented in this study can only help to continue clarifying the fears and uncertainties that many parents hold about TWI programs.

Conclusion

This research project provided me with the opportunity to not only examine my own teaching, but to also observe the interactions and use of language amongst the students. Furthermore, I had the chance to learn a great deal from the parents of two students in our program about what they were doing at home with their children to support them in learning a second language as well as the standards-based curriculum. Although this study has come to an end, my research has not. I plan to continue to make the time to focus on my own teaching practices as well as observing student interactions

and speaking with parents about how they support their children at home. All in all, this study was really just the beginning to a whole new future of learning about myself, my students, their families and the ways that we can all work together to help each other learn.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

1. Why do you want your child to learn Spanish?

2. Why have you chosen this program for your child?

3. What are your hopes and expectations for your child in this program?

4. What has been your child's experience with Spanish?

5. Does he/she have any exposure to Spanish at home and if so in what ways?

6. Is he/she exposed to Spanish in any other setting besides home or school and if so could you describe that setting?

7. Has your child had any experience attending preschool?

8. If so could you describe the school environment for me?

9. What language was used at the preschool for instruction?

10. What are your home literacy practices?

11. How do you support your child in learning Spanish?

12. Are you in the process of learning Spanish as well?

13. If not, do you plan to?

Teacher scaffolds for EO students in small group lessons

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Repeat what student said in English, in Spanish																														
Ask student to repeat new vocabulary in Spanish																														
Act out, model, or use hand gestures to clarify																														
Use visuals/manipulatives to teach and/or clarify new vocabulary in Spanish																														
Ask bilingual student to translate what I'm saying into English																														
I repeat new vocabulary while teaching lesson																														
Ask whole group to repeat vocabulary in Spanish																														
Draw a picture to clarify																														
Ask student to repeat in Eng. what I said in Sp. to check for understanding																														

75

Evidence of student learning

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Participation in the lesson																														
Application of curricular knowledge (student working on product created in lesson)									/																					
Student asks information seeking questions																														
Student responds with the group																														
Student responds individually																														

Other observations:

76

Appendix D
Student A-Lesson 1
Math-Macaroni necklaces

Legend:
- ■ Repeat what student said in English, in Spanish
- ■ Ask student to repeat new vocabulary in Spanish
- □ Act out, model, or use hand gestures to clarify
- □ Use visuals/manipulatives to teach and/or clarify new vocabulary in Spanish
- ■ Ask bilingual student to translate what I'm saying into English
- ■ I repeat new vocabulary while teaching lesson
- ■ Ask whole group to repeat vocabulary in Spanish
- □ Draw a picture to clarify
- ■ Ask student to repeat in English what I said in Spanish to check for understanding

Pie chart values: 0%, 0%, 6%, 18%, 29%, 6%, 12%, 0%, 29%

Student A-Lesson 2
Literacy-Watsoville Hace Mucho Tiempo
(Watsonville A Long Time Ago)

- 0%
- 0%
- 0%
- 4%
- 25%
- 36%
- 0%
- 0%
- 35%

Student A-Lesson 3
Literacy-Hacemos Tamales
(We Make Tamales)

- 0%
- 0%
- 2%
- 17%
- 38%
- 14%
- 0%
- 0%
- 29%
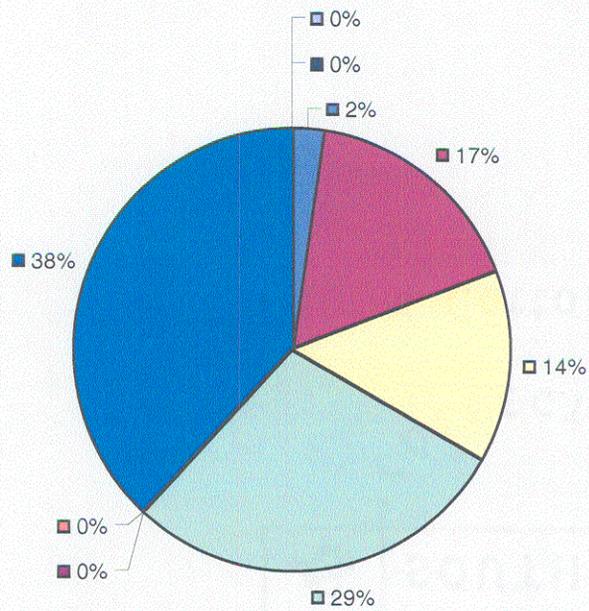
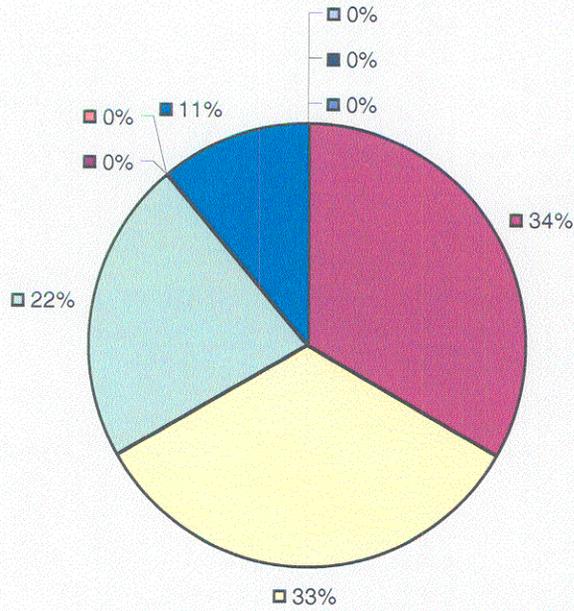**Student A-Lesson 4**
Math-Sort/classify/build with 3D objects
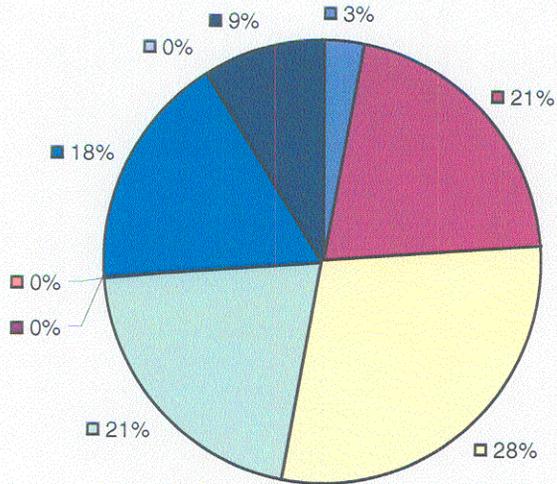
Student A-Lesson 5
Literacy-¿Cómo eran los dinosaurios?
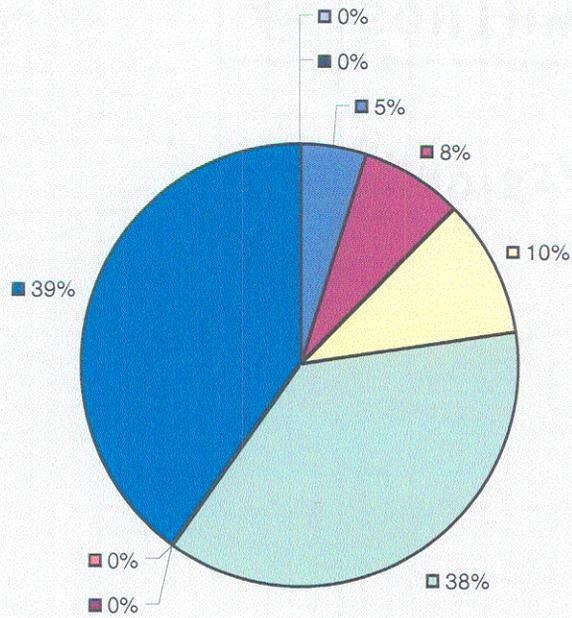(What were the dinosaurs like?)
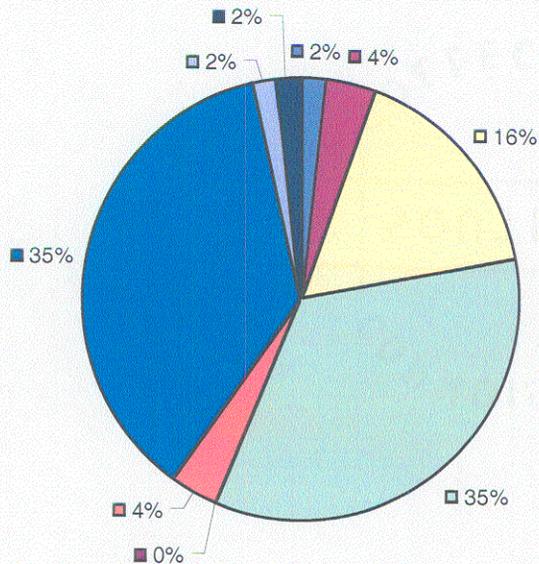
Student A-Lesson 6
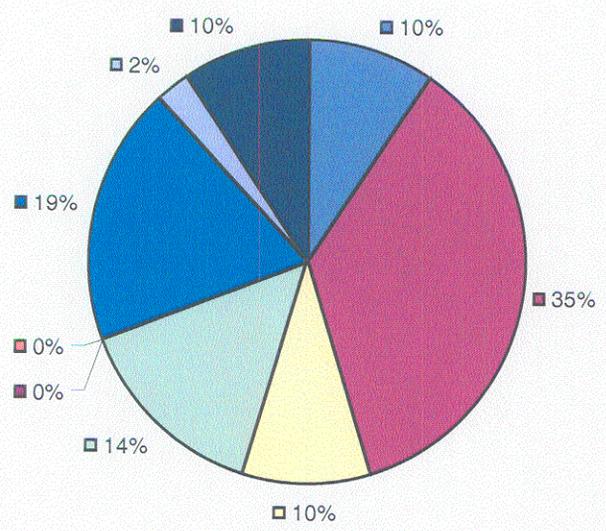### Literacy-Hace mucho en la tierra
(On earth a long time ago)

- 0%
- 0%
- 0%
- 11%
- 0%
- 0%
- 34%
- 22%
- 33%

Student A-Lesson 7
Math-Money/counting/number recognition

- 0%
- 0%
- 5%
- 8%
- 10%
- 39%
- 0%
- 0%
- 38%

Student A-Lesson 8
Literacy-Cuando Sea Grande
(When I Grow Up)

■ 10%   ■ 10%

□ 2%

■ 19%

■ 0%

■ 0%   ■ 35%
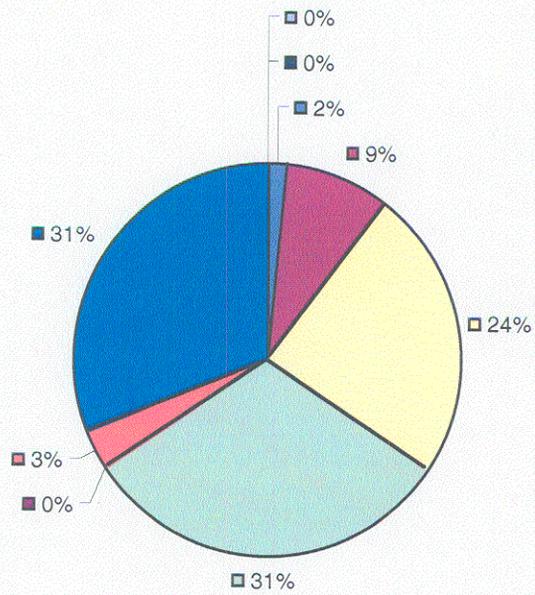
□ 14%

□ 10%

Appendix E
Student B-Lesson 1
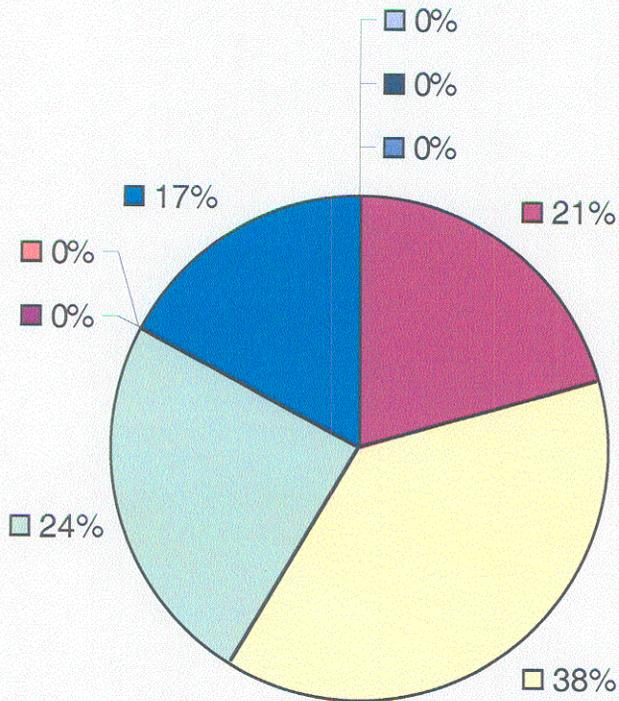
Math-Macaroni necklaces

Legend:
- Repeat what student said in English, in Spanish
- Ask student to repeat new vocabulary in Spanish
- Act out, model, or use hand gestures to clarify
- Use visuals/manipulatives to teach and/or clarify new vocabulary in Spanish
- Ask bilingual student to translate what I'm saying into English
- I repeat new vocabulary while teaching lesson
- Ask whole group to repeat vocabulary in Spanish
- Draw a picture to clarify
- Ask student to repeat in English what I said in Spanish to check for understanding
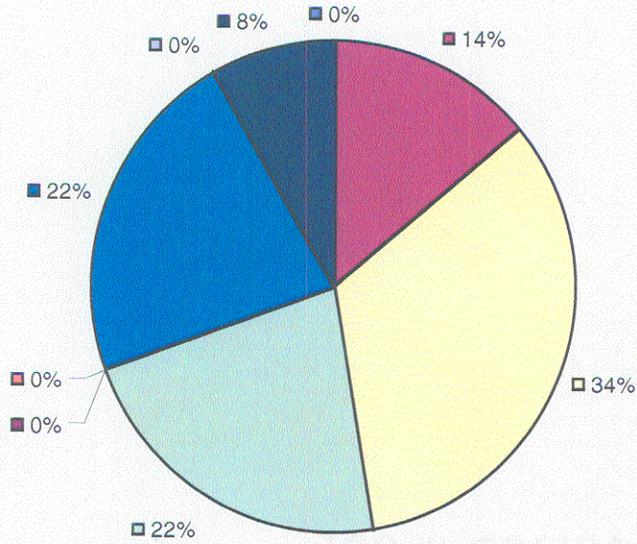
Student B-Lesson 2
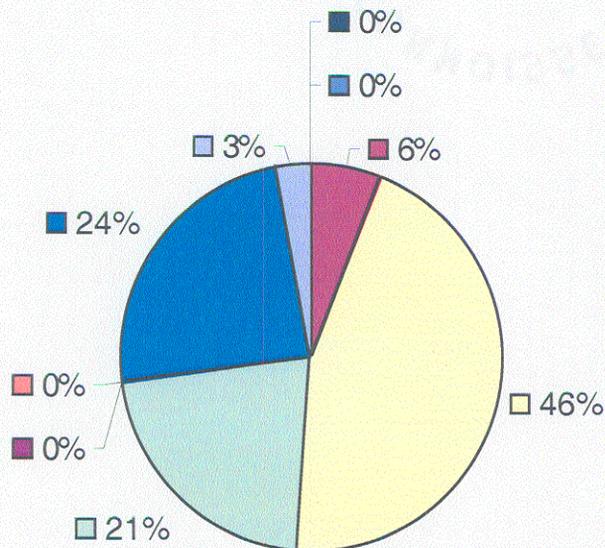### Book-Watsonville Hace Mucho Tiempo
(Watsonville A Long Time Ago)

- 0%
- 0%
- 2%
- 9%
- 31%
- 24%
- 3%
- 0%
- 31%

Student B-Lesson 3
Math-Dot to Dot Gingerbread Man

- 1%
- 0%
- 7%
- 8%
- 34%
- 23%
- 2%
- 1%
- 24%
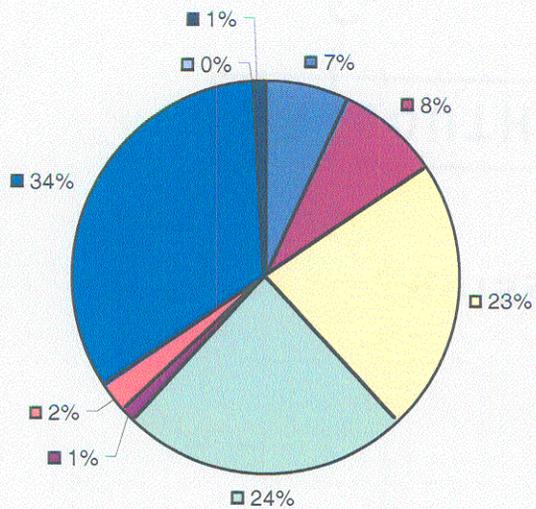
Student B-Lesson 4
Math-Sort/classify/build with 3D blocks

- 8%
- 0%
- 0%
- 14%
- 22%
- 0%
- 0%
- 34%
- 22%

Student B-Lesson 5
Literacy-Learning log

- 0%
- 0%
- 3%
- 6%
- 24%
- 0%
- 0%
- 46%
- 21%

Student B-Lesson 6
Literacy-¿Quién soy?
(Who am I? Community helpers)
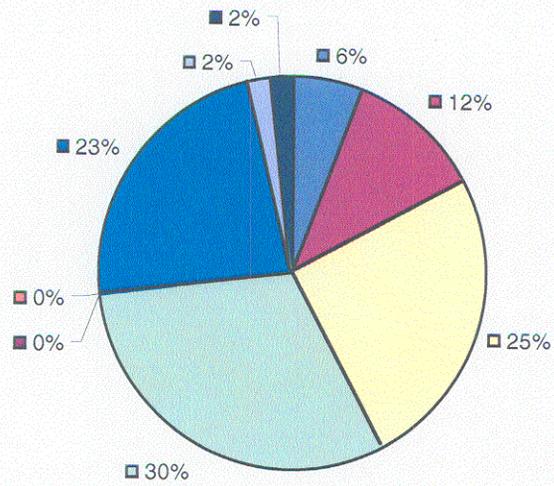
2%
2%
6%
12%
23%
0%
0%
25%
30%

Student B-Lesson 7
Math-Money/counting/number recognition

4%
0%
0%
36%
30%
0%
0%
30%
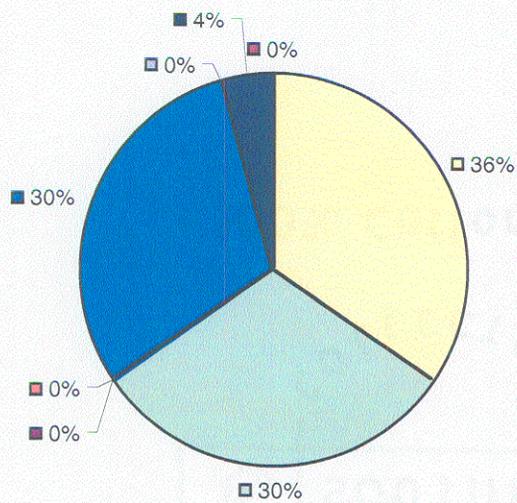
Student B-Lesson 8
Literacy-Cuando Sea Grande
(When I Grow Up)
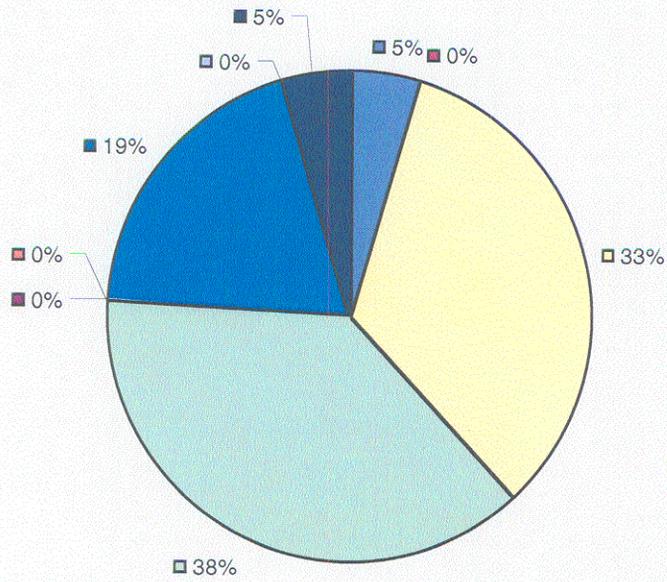
Appendix F
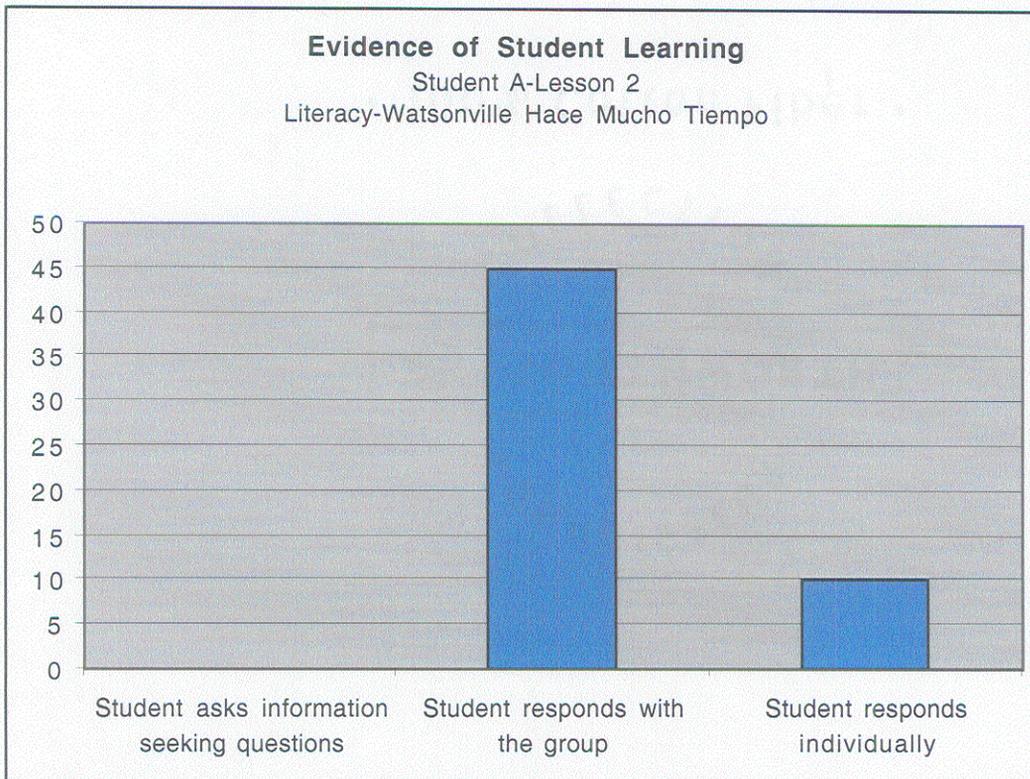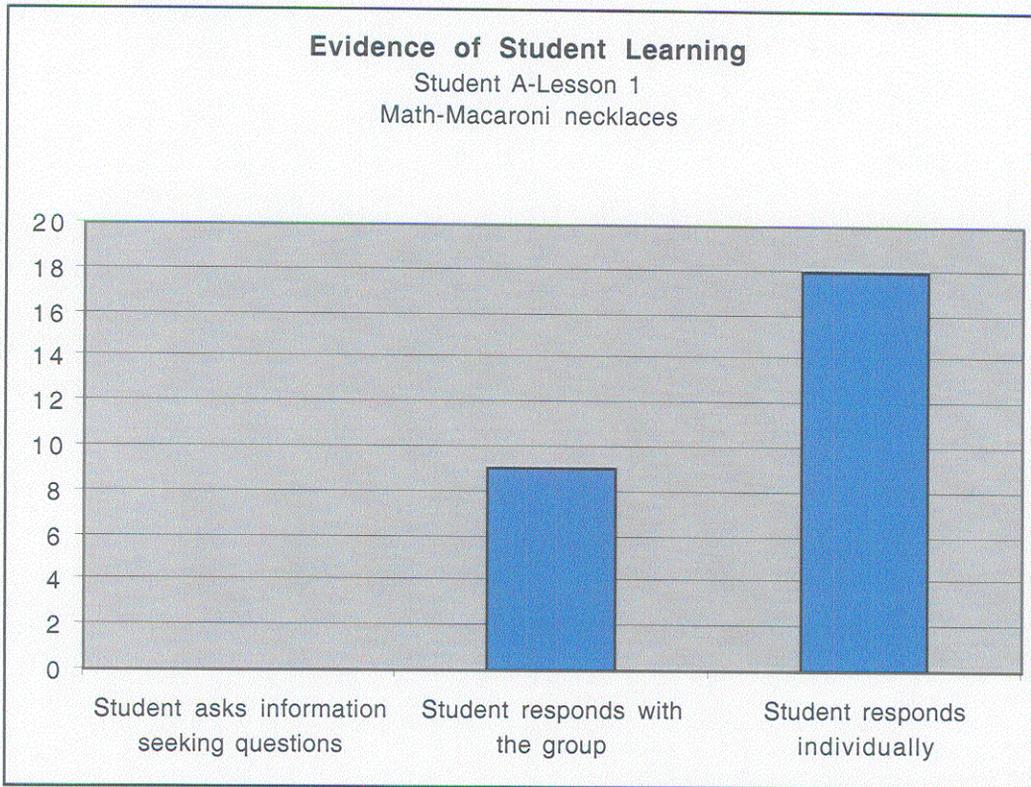
Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 1
Math-Macaroni necklaces

Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 2
Literacy-Watsonville Hace Mucho Tiempo

Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 3
Literacy-Hacemos Tamales

	Student asks information seeking questions	Student responds with the group	Student responds individually
Value	0	~29	~13.5
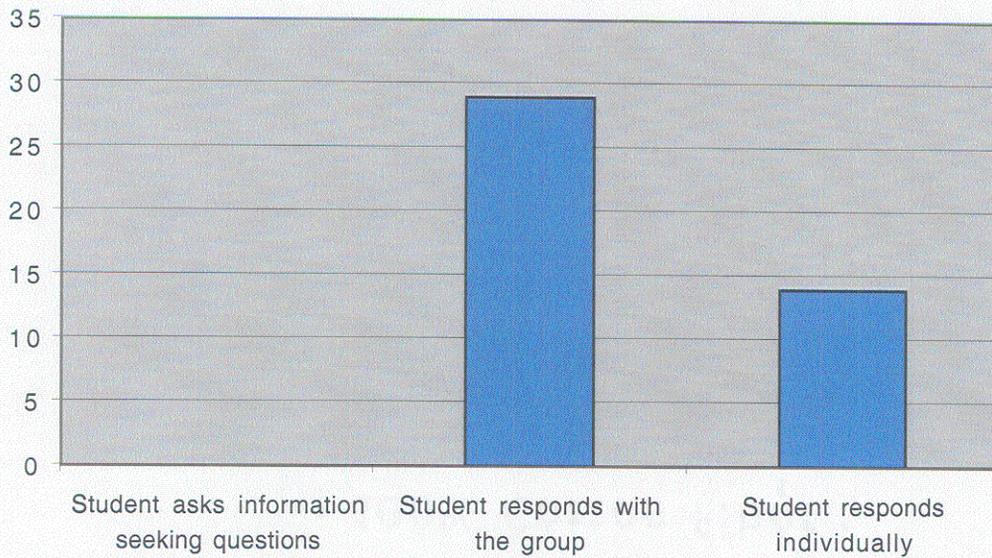
Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 4
Math-Classify/sort/build with 3D objects

	Student asks information seeking questions	Student responds with the group	Student responds individually
Value	~1	~34	~26

Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 5
Literacy- ¿Cómo eran los dinosaurios?

Chart axis values: 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40

Categories:
- Student asks information seeking questions
- Student responds with the group
- Student responds individually

Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 6
Literacy- Hace Mucho En La Tierra

Chart axis values: 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25

Categories:
- Student asks information seeking questions
- Student responds with the group
- Student responds individually

Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 7
Math-Money/counting/number recognition

Bar chart with y-axis from 0 to 35 (in increments of 5):
- Student asks information seeking questions: 0
- Student responds with the group: ~29
- Student responds individually: ~12

Evidence of Student Learning
Student A-Lesson 8
Literacy-Cuando Sea Grande

Bar chart with y-axis from 0 to 25 (in increments of 5):
- Student asks information seeking questions: 0
- Student responds with the group: ~21
- Student responds individually: ~22

Appendix G

**Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 1
Math-Macaroni necklaces**

Student asks information seeking questions	Student responds with the group	Student responds individually
0	13	23

(y-axis: 0, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30)

**Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 2
Literacy-Watsonville Hace Mucho Tiempo**

Student asks information seeking questions	Student responds with the group	Student responds individually
0	48	20

(y-axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60)

Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 3
Math-Dot to dot Gingerbread Man

Student asks information seeking questions	
Student responds with the group	
Student responds individually	

Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 4
Math-Classifying/sorting/building with 3D objects
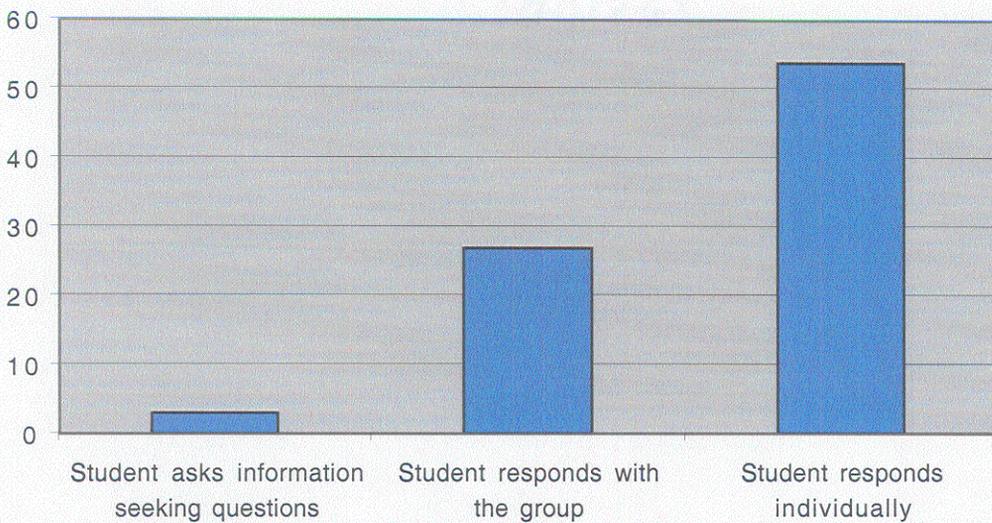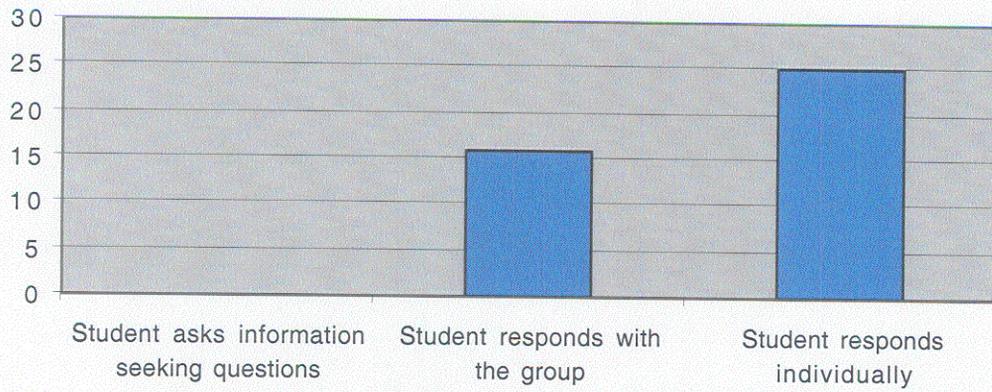
Student asks information seeking questions	
Student responds with the group	
Student responds individually	

Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 5
Literacy-Learning Log

30		
25		
20		
15		
10		
5		
0		
Student asks information seeking questions	Student responds with the group	Student responds individually

Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 6
Literacy-¿Quién soy?

40		
35		
30		
25		
20		
15		
10		
5		
0		
Student asks information seeking questions	Student responds with the group	Student responds individually

Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 7
Math-Money/counting/number recogntion

Chart with categories:
- Student asks information seeking questions
- Student responds with the group
- Student responds individually

Y-axis: 0 to 20

Evidence of Student Learning
Student B-Lesson 8
Literacy-Cuando Sea Grande

Chart with categories:
- Student asks information seeking questions
- Student responds with the group
- Student responds individually

Y-axis: 0 to 35
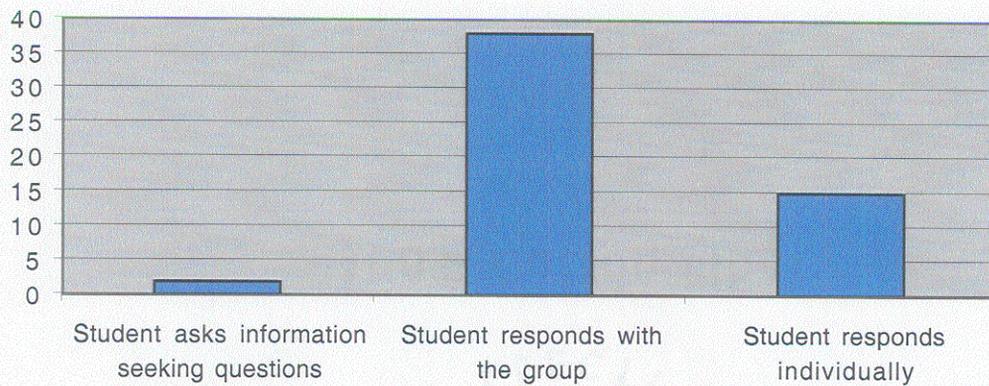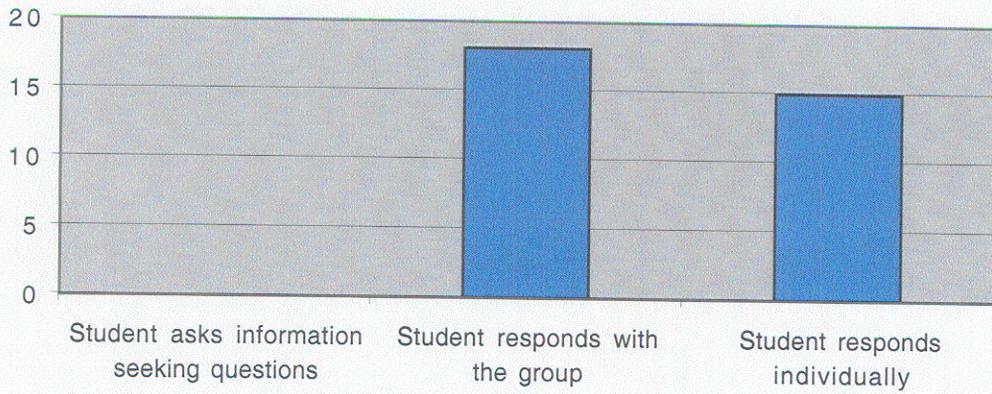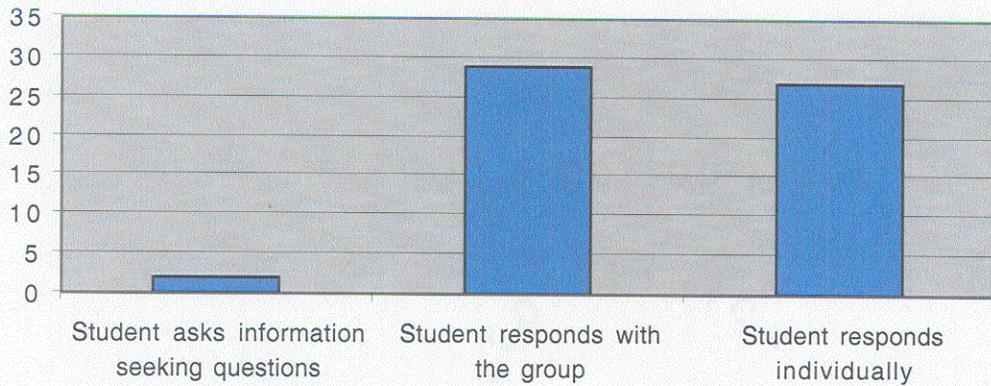
ALIANZA

CHARTER SCHOOL

Pajaro Valley Unified School District
440 Arthur Road • Watsonville • CA • 95076
831 • 728-6333 • FX: 728-6947 • VM: 332-9754 • E-mail: michael_jones@pvusd.net
Michael G. Jones, principal

Consent to Participate in Research

Dual Language Immersion: The educational practices that contribute to the success of English only kindergarten students in learning Spanish

I am asking you to participate in a research study. I want to make sure that you know all about the project, its possible risk and benefits, safety, privacy and confidentiality issues, and your right to withdraw at any time. Please read this consent form carefully and feel free to ask me any questions before you decide whether to give me your informed and willing consent. Thank you.

This study will be conducted by Sheri Nacht, from the Masters of Arts in Education program at California State University Monterey Bay. The results of this study will contribute to my thesis project. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because your child is an English only student in my classroom.

Purpose of the Study

This study will involve focusing on two English only students to learn what the formal and informal educational practices are that contribute to their success in learning Spanish in Aliana's two-way immersion program. I feel that this information will really help inform my own teaching and will provide me with ways to better serve those students. I also believe that the data that I collect will be very useful to you. It should help you clearly see and understand what I am doing, what you are doing and what other students are doing to help your child learn Spanish.

Procedures

If you volunteer to participate in this study and are ok with your child participating in this study, I will ask you and your child to do the following things:

1. In September I will ask you to participate in an interview with me about your child. This interview can take place at either the school or at your home, which ever you prefer.
2. At the beginning of the second trimester I will begin collecting data from the two students involved in the study.
3. I will observe them once a week during recess. At this time I will write down everything that I see and hear them doing and saying when communicating with other students.
4. I will also observe these students once a week in small group lessons and once a week during journal time. At this time I will be looking for what instructional methods I am using to help these students comprehend the lesson. I will record my observations on a check off list that I have created.
5. I will be observing these students once a week, over a period of eight weeks.
6. Once I have collected all of my data I will use a variety of methods to analyze the data and write up my masters thesis report.

Potential Risks and Discomforts

There are few potential risks involved in participating in this study. One possible risk to you is that I may ask you a question during the interview that you may not feel comfortable answering. If this should occur please feel free to let me know that you would prefer to not answer that question.

One potential risk to your child in participating in this study is that he/she may at times feel uncomfortable because sometimes I will be observing him/her and taking notes. In order to help your child not feel singled out or uncomfortable I will make sure that he/she and the rest of the students in the class clearly understand what I am doing and why. I will make sure that they understand that I will be observing these two students in order to learn what I am doing to help them understand Spanish. I will also explain that I will be observing to see how they help your child learn and understand Spanish. I will explain to the class that your child is no different than anyone else because everyone in the class is learning a second language. We will discuss how the Spanish speakers are learning English just as the English speakers are learning Spanish. I will also tell them that I am going do this research so that they can help teach me ways to be a better teacher to them.

Potential Benefits

This study will provide many benefits to you, to me and to your child. Through my observations I will be able to really focus on how well your child is learning Spanish. I will be able to clearly see what I am doing that is really helping your child understand each lesson and learn new vocabulary. This will also help me individualize instruction for your child on a deeper level. This information will inform my own teaching and that

of my colleagues, about how to most effectively teach English only students in our program. Furthermore, this information will be very useful to you because it will help you learn and understand exactly what I am doing to make sure that content in comprehensible to your child. Through the interview you will be able to see what positive things you are already doing with your child at home. In addition, this information should help you in reflecting on what else you might be able to do to support your child in learning Spanish as a second language.

Nature of Record Keeping

I plan to share my observations and notes with my co-teacher and teacher aide. I believe that the information that I collect will be a useful tool for all of us in providing the best instruction possible to your child.

Payment for Participation

All people involved in this study will do so on a volunteer basis and will not receive any monetary compensation.

Confidentiality

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by law.

Participation and Withdrawal

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you do not want to answer and still remain in the study. I may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

Identification of Investigators

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact me, Sheri Nacht, Alianza Elementary, 440 Arthur Dr., Watsonville, CA 95076; 831-728-6333; Sheriros@hotmail.com, or my faculty sponsor, Dr. Liz Meador at California State University, Monterey Bay, 100 Campus Center, Bldg 3, Seaside, CA 93966; 831-582-3159; Elizabeth_meador@csumb.edu

Rights of Research Subjects

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a

research subject, contact the Chair of the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects, Linda Rogers at California State University, Monterey Bay, 100 Campus Center, Bldg 15, Seaside, CA 93966; 831-582-5012.

Signature of Research Subject

I understand the procedures described above and that I am over 18 years old. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction, and I freely agree to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____

Name of Subject

_____

Signature of Subject

_____

Date

Or

I have read the contents of this consent form, asked questions, and received answers. I give permission for my child to participate in this study. I have received a copy of this form for my records and future reference.

_____

Parent/Guardian

_____

Signature of Parent/Guardian

_____

Date

Signature of Investigator

In my judgment the subject is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study.

_____

Signature of Investigator

_____

Date

ALIANZA
CHARTER SCHOOL

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440 Arthur Road • Watsonville • CA • 95076
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Michael G. Jones, principal

Assent to participate in research

Dual Language Immersion: The educational practices that contribute to the success of English only kindergarten students in learning Spanish

1. My name is Sheri.

2. I am asking you to help me learn about the all the different ways that you learn Spanish. In order to do this I will observe you during recess to see how your friends are helping you understand Spanish. Also, when you are working with me in small groups and in journals I will sometimes take notes about the different ways I help you understand when I am speaking Spanish.

3. If you agree to help me you won't have to do anything different. You will just have to understand that sometimes I will be watching you and taking notes about how everyone in the class is helping you learn Spanish.

4. By agreeing to help me there is a possibility that you might feel a little uncomfortable every once in a while because I will sometimes be observing you and taking notes about what I see and hear. But I will make sure to explain to all of your classmates about what I am doing. I will tell them that I will be learning from you just like you all learn from me.

5. If you agree to help me by letting me take notes about how you are learning Spanish from me and your friends it will help me be a better teacher to you. I will learn from you what I am doing that is really helping you learn and understand Spanish. I will also learn other things that I can do to help you learn better.

6. I want you to talk this over with your parents before you decide if you want to participate. I will also ask your parents if it is ok with them for you to help me. But even if your parents say it is ok with them you can still decide not to help me.

7. If you don't want to participate you don't have to. Remember that helping me is up to you and I will not be upset if you don't want to.

8. You can ask me any questions that you want at any time. If you have a question later that you didn't think of now, you can call or ask me later. My phone number at home is 818-6745.

9. By signing your name on this paper you are agreeing to help me. I will give you and your parents a copy of this form after you have signed it.

Mark yes if you want to participate and no if you don't.

_____ No

_____ Yes

Study subject's name _____

Date _____

Person Obtaining Assent

I have read this form to the subject. I will provide the subject and the subject's parents with a copy of the form. An explanation of the research was given and questions from the subject were solicited and answered to the subject's satisfaction. In my judgement, the subject has demonstrated comprehension of the information.

_____ **Print Name and Title**

_____ **Signature**

_____ **Date**