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University of San Francisco

Raising Awareness of Bilingual Education: A Website and Resource for Immigrant Parents

A Field Project Proposal Presented to
The Faculty of the School of Education
International and Multicultural Education Department

In Partial Fulfillment
Of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts in International and Multicultural Education

By
Lesi Wang
May 2021

Raising Awareness about Bilingual Education among Immigrant Parents

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

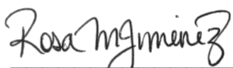
INTERNATIONAL AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

by
Lesi Wang
May 2021

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project (or thesis) has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

Approved:



Rosa M. Jimenez, Ph.D.
Chairperson

May 7, 2021

Date

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Dr. Rosa Jimenez and Dr. Didem Ekici for helping me to finish this field project. I really appreciate their support and patience. They helped me strengthen my writing and gave me the guidance to improve my field project - I really appreciate it. I also would like to extend my sincere thanks to my mother Jietao (Joyce) and father (Yongfeng) for their endless support and encouragement. Even though they lived far away from me (in China), I could still feel their love and support. I am proud to have parents like them! Thank you to my boyfriend, Kevin, my cats Miu Miu and Simba, for mentally supporting me to finish this field project during the pandemic. I cannot imagine writing papers without you guys sitting next to me. Many thanks to my students and my students' parents for their wonderful stories and experiences. I got so much inspiration from them. Many thanks to Andrew Wilson for helping me proofread my website. I really appreciate your work! Special thanks to Tienlon, Dorothy and Kaitlin for allowing me to use their children's photos in my field project website. The kids made my field project more vivid! I also appreciate their support as always.

ABSTRACT

Under the influence of English Only Movement (Macedo, 2000), bilingual education has been neglected for 18 years in California from Proposition 227 in 1998 to Proposition 58 in 2016. This leads to a result that many immigrant parents were not aware of the importance of bilingual education and have passive attitudes and perceptions towards bilingual education. For example, some immigrant parents think that English is more important than their home language, or that learning their home language will significantly hinder their children's English acquisition. Yet, according to the three-generation shift suggested by Baker and Wright (2017), immigrant families will often lose their heritage language in three generations if immigrant families do not take action to protect their home languages. Other reasons such as linguistic shame and misunderstandings of bilingual education will also intensify language loss as well as immigrant children's passive self-identification. Therefore, it is necessary to raise awareness of bilingual education among immigrant parents and guide them to obtain knowledge about their linguistic rights as well as bilingual education.

Keywords: bilingual education, parent engagement, language awareness

CHAPTER I INTRODUCTION

Statement of the Problem

There is a common phenomenon in many immigrant families in the United States: first-generation immigrant parents use their home language in the house and speak the home language to their children (second-generation immigrants); their children usually use limited home language or only use English at home. Alba et al. (2002) suggest the following:

In all the groups that we could examine, the majority of third- and later-generation children speak only English at home, which implies that, with probably limited exceptions, they will grow up to be English monolinguals who have at most fragmentary knowledge of a mother tongue. (p. 480)

When the second-generation immigrant children begin to have their own families (third or later generation immigrants), there will be very limited or even no home language use at home. The loss of these skills is detrimental to a family's sense of cultural identity. To prevent language loss, there is an urgency for immigrant children who have limited exposure to their home language to go to a bilingual school to learn the home language and culture. According to the three-generation shift, the minority language will be lost in three generations without interventions (Baker & Wright, 2017). Facing this predicament, however, many immigrant families, especially immigrant parents, may not realize the importance of bilingual education, which makes them ignore the importance of sending their children to bilingual schools. Or perhaps they may be focusing on English acquisition as a means towards success without understanding the unintended consequences of their children losing their mother tongue. As a result, immigrant children end up losing their home language and identities, in addition to the many positive impacts of being bilingual.

Some immigrant parents might have a perception that using English at home might contribute to their English language skills or they may not pay attention to what language their children prefer to use. They may even think that not using home language at home would be beneficial considering the target language is English in the United States. For instance, In Lao's research (2004), a study on the Chinese language actually spoken at home connotes that even though 40% of Chinese-speaking parents wished their children to use only Chinese at home, no more than 29% of Chinese-speaking parents only speak Chinese to their children. 61.3% of English-speaking parents speak only English to their children, and 35.5% of them mostly speak English to their children. Besides, some parents even refuse to teach their children their home language, because they think learning their home tongue will disturb their children's English study, which will lead to the failure of academic behavior at school. According to a research study 60% of immigrant parents are more likely to choose English immersion programs than bilingual programs since they think learning only English can help their children succeed in the classroom (Martinez & Hinojosa, 2012). Furthermore, according to Martinez and Hinojosa (2012), "all of the parents also thought that the more English their child knew, the better he would do in the future" (p.5). In other words, immigrant parents not only believe that English is the key for their children to gain academic success during their school years but also in the workplace in the future. Last but not least, some parents think that home language will affect their children's development because their children's schools do not honor their home languages. "...the participants reported that negative native language dispositions or beliefs held by teachers and administrators often transferred to the students and parents" (Winstead & Wang, 2017, p. 22).

Because of this, home language shame transfers from schools to families, which makes immigrant parents even less willing (or able) to send their children to get bilingual education. As a result of immigrant parents' limited knowledge or limited access to bilingual education and their children's bilingual education rights, their children are not provided environments where they can develop their home language and fully develop their bilingual identities. This causes home language and cultural identity loss among children which often ends up in assimilation instead of acculturation.

Background and Need

One of the ways of enabling immigrant children to keep both home and English language is through bilingual education. Research shows that immigrant children who are attending bilingual education have higher levels of home language attrition (Lao, 2004). Therefore, bilingual education plays an important role in reserving the home language and culture. However, it was a controversial issue not only in politics but also in the research literature.

The first bilingual education policy in the United States is the Bilingual Education Act in 1968, and this act affirmatively states that bilingual education programs are a significant part of the federal educational policy, and it is the "first official federal recognition of the needs of students with limited English-speaking ability" (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). California's Proposition 227 in 1998 was a turning point in America's history of bilingual education. It led to the resistance of bilingual education across the United States, and bilingual education was negatively affected in California. Under the colonialism of the English Only Movement (Macedo, 2000), non-native English-speaking students were not allowed to use their home languages at schools. Non-English languages were forbidden in classrooms, and those students were forced to speak English in the classrooms. However, California's Proposition 227 was

replaced by Proposition 58 in 2016, which led to a new era for bilingual education in California—it allows public schools to have more freedom over bilingual education.

Bilingual education was neglected by the California government for almost 20 years between the years of Proposition 227 in 1998 and Proposition 58 in 2016, not to mention the immigrant families. Although California has a new policy to promote bilingual education, the legacy of English-Only has had a deep impact on the state. Many immigrant parents are not aware of their linguistic rights, have limited knowledge of bilingual education, or have limited agency and lack of access. For this reason, there is a need to guide immigrant families on how bilingual education will influence immigrants' bicultural affirmation and identity due to the lack of bilingual education. According to Martinez and Hinojosa's study (2012) on immigrant parents' knowledge of bilingual education programs, "70% (of the parents) reported *not being informed*. Only 10% selected *somewhat informed*, another 10% said they were informed, but only 10% indicated to be *very informed*." (p. 6) Not having enough knowledge of bilingual education policy leads to the result that immigrant parents are more intended to miss the chance of sending their children to have bilingual education.

Moreover, even though some immigrant parents have access for their children to get bilingual education by joining bilingual school programs or going to bilingual schools, it does not necessarily mean that the parents use enough home language at home. "...Chinese language that children learned in Chinese–English bilingual schools often did not get reinforced at home because parents, especially English-dominant parents, did not use Chinese often enough with their children at home" (Lao, 2004, p. 114). The United States is a country without diglossia, which means for non-native English speakers, there is not an environment for them to use and learn their home languages, because English is the only dominant language in American society

(Baker & Wright, 2017). If immigrant children do not even have enough opportunities to practice their home language at home, it is even harder for them to retain their home language in the future.

For newcomer immigrant children, there is also an urgency to be in bilingual education. If these children migrate to the United States before they get a formal education in their home country, and have not received systematic home language education, they are more likely to use their home language less and more accustomed to using English at school. According to Anderson (2012), first language loss will happen when immigrant children use more L2 (English) than L1 both at home and in school. Therefore, getting bilingual education is beneficial for them to continue their home language learning, and can help them avoid forgetting home languages.

Getting bilingual education can help immigrant children embrace their linguistic and cultural backgrounds as part of their self-identity. According to Lao (2004), children's unwillingness to use their home language is in part due to parents' negligence of (or misunderstandings) bilingual education. Parents' attitude directly influences children's bilingual education. For this reason, immigrant parents should be informed, provided support, and advocacy about the positive impact of bilingual education on immigrant children's confidence and connection with their heritage. At the same time, they should take measures to expose their home language to their children as much as possible to prevent language and cultural loss at home.

Purpose of the Project

The main purpose of this field project is to raise immigrant families' awareness of obtaining formal bilingual education, and guide immigrant families who may hold passive

perceptions, opinions, or misunderstandings of bilingual education to have a better understanding of bilingual education. Therefore, this field project is tailored for immigrant families whose children are not able to use their home languages and have not received bilingual education. The field project is designed as a user-friendly website that includes text information and infographics about bilingual education history, politics, ways to raise bilingual children, as well as the benefits of bilingual education. I generated an in-depth understanding of the immigrant parents' perspectives and attitudes towards bilingual education. I designed a questionnaire for 2 immigrant families in California to have a deeper understanding of:

- 1) How much they know about bilingual education;
- 2) Whether they had a chance to offer their children bilingual education;
- 3) What are their attitudes towards bilingual education and bilingualism; and
- 4) Do they think they have raised bilingual children?

After analyzing the data, I collected through the questionnaire, I conducted follow-up online interviews via Zoom to get more detailed information from the participants. My participants were two immigrant families: (1) the first family provided bilingual education at home and at school, and; (2) the second family's children who did not get a bilingual education at all. I wanted to have a deeper understanding of immigrant parents' experiences through listening to their stories, and then grasp the rationale behind their choices on bilingual education. The two stories that the participants shared were included on the field project website, so the target audience of the website might resonate with their stories. This website was designed in English for the time being. However, considering the varying English language levels that immigrant families might have, the language use of the website was made as simple as possible, and I tried to avoid difficult terminologies. Moreover, even though some immigrant families do not

understand English, this website can be easily translated by a browser translation extension (*Google Translate, DeepL Translator, etc.*) or a translation software (*YoudaoDict, etc.*). In the future, my aim is that this website can be translated into different languages for wider community access. I hope this website can be helpful to various ethnic and language communities. This website was first shared with the immigrant families of the students I worked with, and later with different immigrant communities in San Francisco, ultimately, becoming a public site.

Researcher Positionality

My enthusiasm for bilingual education comes from my personal experience. I grew up in a Cantonese-speaking family, and I spoke only Cantonese until I went to elementary school. Under the influence of the Promotion of Putonghua Movement (Mandarin Chinese), all classes at school were required to use Mandarin only. For this reason, I received Cantonese education at home and Mandarin education at school. Even though Cantonese is considered as a Chinese language in the United States, in China, it is only considered as a prestigious dialect. Because of this, nowadays the Cantonese language is gradually replaced by the common language in China, Mandarin. You can find more and more young children in my hometown Guangzhou, also known as Canton, cannot speak Cantonese, because they use mostly Mandarin at school, and their parents do not really care about what language their children speak. As a Cantonese, this is the last thing I want to see happen. Similarly, I do not want to see any languages lost in the United States either, especially those within immigrant and marginalized communities. Every language should be well-protected. Besides, I also grew up receiving Chinese-English bilingual education from the age of 4 when I first went to kindergarten. Growing up with multiple languages allowed me to realize the importance and advantages of being able to use two or more

languages. For this reason, with the love of language and education, I decided to concentrate on bilingual education, and try to promote bilingual education as much as possible.

Theoretical Framework: Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

This field project uses the theoretical frameworks from Culturally Relevant Pedagogy to raise awareness among the immigrant parents. In this field project, I explored to what degree culturally relevant pedagogy can help immigrant children build their confidence in themselves as well as academic behavior when their language and culture are valued in the bilingual classroom. In order to have an in-depth understanding of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, it is necessary to define what Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is and how it is effective in bilingual education. Culturally relevant pedagogy is called by many names, including culturally responsive, sensitive, centered, congruent, reflective, meditated, contextualized, synchronized and responsive (Gay, 2018). And researchers have defined it in different ways. Ladson-Billings (1995) defines culturally relevant pedagogy as a teaching method that is based on respecting and valuing students' family as well community culture, in order to support students academically, mentally. In addition, she suggests that when students' culture is incorporated into the classroom, they will feel more motivated and comfortable, then they are more likely to gain academic success (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Besides, Gay (2018) defines culturally responsive teaching as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" (p. 36). In addition, Vavrus (2008) suggests that "culturally responsive teaching (CRT) is an educational reform that strives to increase the engagement and motivation of students of color who historically have been both unsuccessful academically and socially alienated from their public schools" (p. 49). Ladson-Billings' definition (1995) focuses more on respecting students'

culture, while Gay's (2018) definition focuses more on using cultural knowledge to help students, and Vavrus's definition (2008) focuses on the involvement and motivation of students of color. However, the final goal of culturally relevant pedagogy is to urge educators to show consideration for students from different cultural backgrounds and their needs, in order to improve students' academic behavior, as well as help students to get to know themselves and respect others' cultures (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Gay, 2018; Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Vavrus 2008). To conclude, culturally relevant pedagogy is a student-centered approach that is aiming to help students with different cultural backgrounds succeed academically and socially.

Culturally relevant pedagogy is effective in bilingual education. According to Garza et al. (2020), "It is central to dual language education- an additive approach that is effective for educating emergent bilinguals and closing the achievement gap" (p. 1557). Application of culturally relevant pedagogy in bilingual classrooms can help educate immigrant students as well as close the gap between immigrant students and White middle-class students. The gap between immigrant students and White middle-class students is ubiquitous. This is because, according to Vavrus (2008), in general, White middle-class have privilege in values and expectations; on the other hand, other cultural, racial, and economic histories and community backgrounds are neglected or retrogressive. In her work, Jimenez (2020) leverages family stories and migrant narratives to honor students' bicultural experiences. Since culturally relevant pedagogy can narrow this gap, it should be applied in bilingual classrooms. Ladson-Billings (1995) indicates in her article that the reason why culturally relevant pedagogy works well in bilingual education is that culture and language are two important factors of one's identity. What bilingual education can help with immigrant children's self-identification is that it offers a chance for them to embrace their ethnic identity. Bilingual education introduces students to the language and culture

of their home. The more immigrant children know about themselves, their language and culture, the less they feel confused about their identity being Asian American, African American, Latino American, etc.

Osborne's study (1996) on the practice of culturally relevant pedagogy, indicates that by inviting students' cultures into the classroom, it fosters the development of both home language and English, involves minority students, as well as helps students develop their identity and self-esteem. By the same token, if schools offer bilingual education, immigrant children can learn their home language, and at the same time, they can have an opportunity to get to know more about their home culture outside of the household. By knowing more about the language and culture, immigrant children can also stay away from the impact of negative stereotypes towards them, and finally, they are more likely to gain academic success in the classroom.

Ladson-Billings (1995) also suggests that culturally relevant pedagogy should rely on the following three criteria: first, "students must experience academic success"; second, "Students must develop and/or maintain cultural competence."; and finally, "Students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order" (p. 160). These are also the positive perspectives and attitudes of bilingual education that immigrant parents should have: their children should be able to use both the home language and English, and at the same time, they are not confused about their self-identity. Home culture and American culture should be acculturated on their children, rather than exclusively Americanized. After that, through bilingual education, home language, as well as culture, can be retained.

Significance of the Project

This project is crucial for immigrant families in California since it will help them develop a positive attitude towards bilingual education as well as their linguistic rights. As a result,

parents of immigrant families will be more aware of the importance of bilingual education and more willing to send their children to get bilingual education. With bilingual education, immigrant parents who are seeking ways to support their child's bicultural/bilingual education. More importantly, this field project can help educators better understand immigrant families' linguistic needs and cultural backgrounds. Even though this project began in San Francisco's Bay Area and is intended for immigrant families in California, it can be used by immigrant families all over the United States.

CHAPTER II REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The United States is one of the countries in the world that have most immigrants, and among all states, the majority of immigrants choose to live in California and New York (Hirschman, 2014). In other words, California is one of the states which has the most immigrant population, and the large immigrant population in California also makes the English Learner (EL) population a substantial amount. According to Matas (2014), in 218 urban schools in California, there are 28.3% of students in the total enrollment are considered as English Language Learners (ELLs). Bilingual education plays an important role in the success of ELLs because it has positive influences on their social skills as well as cognitive skills. However, the passage of Proposition 227 in 1998 has limited immigrant families' access to bilingual education, which leads to immigrant parents' disregard of home language education and the significance of sending their children to receive bilingual education. "Proposition 227 instilled uncertainties in parents' beliefs about the language of success and status in the United States" (Barbian et al., 2017, p. 315). In this literature review, I will review previous research studies on immigrants' linguistic rights and bilingual education from three aspects. First, I will define what bilingualism is in this field project, and how the English-Only Movement influences bilingual education. Then, I will review researchers' findings on immigrant parents' attitudes and perceptions towards bilingual education both at home and at school. Finally, I will analyze the multiple benefits and effectiveness of bilingual education. The purpose of this literature review is to provide a deeper understanding of bilingual education, as well as to elaborate upon the perception and ideas that immigrant families have about bilingual education.

Bilingualism and the Impact of the English-Only Movement

In general, language is considered as a communication method both in speech and writing that is used by a certain group of people in a country or an area. Besides, culture is defined as a belief, custom, tradition, art, etc. that is shared in a certain country or a particular community. Yu (2020) concludes in her study that language and culture have a close relationship, and they are interconnected, and “language is the carrier of culture, and culture is transmitted through language” (p. 943). The relationship between language and culture is intertwined and inseparable. When it comes to the relationship between bilingualism and biculturalism, according to Baker and Wright (2017), bilingual individuals are more likely to be bicultural or multicultural to a different extent. Likewise, people who are deemed as bilingual are usually seen as bicultural as well, since language is often seen as a significant part of the culture (Yu, 2020). At the same time, a bilingual person should have the knowledge of both American culture and the original family culture. Garcia (2019) points out that bilingual education should not simply be one language plus another second language equals two languages, but the use of two different languages in classroom teaching and student assessment. For the purpose of this literature review, bilingualism will be defined as the ability to use both the home language of the immigrant family and English that is learned and used in the classroom. And bilingual education will be the education that aims to acquire home language outside of the household so that immigrant children will be able to use both the home language and English.

Nevertheless, the United States as a world-famous immigrant country (Hirschman, 2014), once had English Only Movement that remarkably influenced immigrant families and bilingual education in the United States. The English Only Movement is one of the main reasons that has impeded the development of bilingual education. The English Only Movement is a form of

colonialism for indigenous communities and for immigrants, and it has significant effects on ethnicities and cultures in the United States (Macedo, 2000). Macedo (2000) also points out that the English Only Movement is against bilingual education, and racism as well as ethnic and racial stereotypes are hidden behind the English Only Movement. Several legislations that passed under the English Only Movement directly influenced bilingual education in California, and among them, Proposition 227 stands out. As stated by Matas (2014):

Proposition 227 was written in a manner that would specifically impact language minority students in California's K-12 schools. The proposition mandated that students were to receive instruction primarily and overwhelmingly in English by placing them in Structured English Immersion (SEI) classes, the goal being for them to gain academic language skills in English. (pp. 45-46)

Linguistic minority students were forced to only use English in class and do their exams, even though it is against the immigrant students' and parents' will. "...the legislation required that all youth be immersed in an English-only environment for a period of time regardless of the desires or needs of the students and their parents or guardians" (Matas, 2014, p. 46). In other words, immigrant parents were not involved in their educational choices since this policy overlooked the needs and preferences of immigrant families. Macedo (2000) supports this by saying "The English Only movement's position points to a pedagogy of exclusion that views the learning of English as education itself" (p. 16). It seems that "English only" can help linguistic minority students succeed in an English only classroom and quickly adapt to the English-speaking environment as well as American society. However, in the opinion of Portes and Rumbaut (2001), "...forced English immersion promotes dissonant acculturation with negative consequences that can far exceed the alleged benefits of such programs" (p. 130). English

immersion that is against the will of immigrant children and parents is not beneficial at all for immigrant children's language development. In addition, because the English Only Movement restricts the use of the home language, linguistic minority students have experienced home language shame at school (Winstead & Wang, 2017). When linguistic minority students' language is not valued by the school and society, they will feel ashamed for using their home language, and eventually, it will bring the result of minority language loss.

Effectiveness of Bilingual Education

There are multiple benefits of bilingualism that have been examined in various disciplines. Here I will focus on the benefits of bilingualism toward cognitive skills, the effectiveness of socioemotional skills, and toward maintaining home language and cultural identity.

The Benefits of Cognitive Skills

Previous research studies have shown that being bilingual allows individuals to better develop their cognitive skills (Marian & Shook, 2012; Morilla-García, 2017; Lauchlan et al., 2013). Lauchlan et al. (2013) concluded that in the previous research studies, researchers proved that bilingual individuals outperform monolingual individuals on problem solving skills and creativity. In their recent study on the cognitive skills of bilingual and monolingual individuals, it signifies that bilingual individuals significantly achieved better than the monolingual individuals. One benefit that stands out is bilingual individuals have better metalinguistic awareness than monolingual individuals (Lauchlan et al., 2013). As defined by Lauchlan et al. (2013), metalinguistic awareness is "the ability to use knowledge about language" (p. 46). In other words, bilingual individuals can better use the knowledge of language, so that they can learn a new language faster and better. Marian and Shook (2012) suggest that being bilingual can help a

bilingual individual to better process and understand information, and this will lead to a result that people who can use two languages freely learn a third language faster and better than people who can only use one language learn a second language. For this reason, having the knowledge of language, bilingual individuals can put less effort in acquiring a new language than monolingual individuals do. Morilla-García (2017) also indicates in her study that being bilingual provides a place for meaningful learning and social context for individuals to think in two languages, which will help improve their cognitive and cultural skills. Accordingly, bilingual education can support individuals' cognitive development.

The Benefits of Social-Emotional Skills

Research highlights that bilingual education is beneficial to immigrant children's social-emotional skills mainly in two different ways: 1) bilingual education benefits immigrant children from gaining higher academic achievement; 2) it helps immigrant children embrace their ethnic identity, linguistic and cultural background.

According to Ladson-Billings (1995), "if students' home language is incorporated into the classroom, students are more likely to experience academic success." When immigrant students' culture and language are incorporated into the classroom, they will feel more motivated and confident in the classroom, then they are more likely to behave better academically. As stated in Chin's research (2015), access for immigrant students to take classes in their home language enables them not to fall behind when they are trying to catch up in English at the same time. In this way, immigrant students do not need to use their second language to take care of subjects other than English, so when they learn English in the classroom, they will not get distracted.

According to Baker and Wright (2017), "studies suggest that children's attitudes are particularly positive when placed in heritage language education. When the home language is

used in school, there is the possibility that a child's sense of identity, self-esteem and self-concept will be enhanced" (p. 382). Language and culture are two important elements of self-identity. If immigrant students' language and culture are represented in the classroom, and teachers can value their home language as much as English, it will help them to build confidence in their heritage, language, and culture, so they can embrace their ethnic identity, linguistic and cultural background.

Maintaining home language and cultural identity

Finally, yet importantly, bilingual education can help eliminate language loss, maintain minority languages within immigrant families, and foster a positive cultural identity. The United States is a country without diglossia (Baker & Wright, 2017), which means for immigrant students, there is not an environment for them to use and learn their home language, because English is the only main language in American society. Even though immigrant students become fully bilingual, it does not ensure them opportunities to use their home language as much as they use English. According to the explanation of the three-generation shift by Baker and Wright (2017), minority languages will disappear in three generations. It indicates that language loss will be easily applied to minority languages if immigrant families are not aware of language shift and do not have the consciousness of language protection. As claimed by Alba et al. (2002), the three-generation shift is more observably reflected in Asian languages, like Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, compared to Spanish and other European languages. For this reason, Asian immigrant parents should even pay more attention to bilingual education, and get their children formal bilingual education as soon as possible. By the same token, this situation will also apply to other minority languages. Therefore, it is necessary for all the immigrant parents to realize the importance of bilingual education, and help their children get bilingual education.

In addition to a positive bilingual identity, maintaining the home language can foster a positive cultural identity. According to Baker and Wright (2017), an individual's identity is expressed by language, and a language or languages often identifies one's origins, history, membership and culture. In other words, language acts as an ideogram and a guide of one's cultural identity. In Rodríguez Tamayo and Tenjo-Macías's study (2019), they claim that bilingual education appreciates and attaches great importance to students' culture and diversity and motivates students to maintain the home language, which is able to strengthen and foster students' cultural identity. Because culture is expressed by language, by maintaining home language in bilingual education, immigrant children can have the correct understanding of their own language and culture. In additional, Rodríguez Tamayo and Tenjo-Macías (2019) also state that:

when individuals become aware of their own culture, learning about other people's cultures may seem less difficult. Recognizing that everyone has unique traditions, values, and beliefs that are important to them (ethnic identity, language, religion and formal/informal community, neighborhood, and family connections) helps us see how we are connected, build trust, and foster stronger relationships. (p.91)

That is, having a positive cultural identity can promote greater recognition, understanding, tolerance, and appreciation to a new culture, which can lead to cultural harmony in current society that allows different cultures and backgrounds to bond together.

Immigrant Parents' Attitudes, Perception, and Participation of Bilingual Education

Researchers also studied immigrant parents' attitudes and perceptions of bilingual education (Budiyana, 2017; Farruggio, 2010; Lao, 2004; Martinez & Hinojosa, 2012; Schwartz et al., 2010; Schwartz, 2013; Shin, 2000; Zhang & Slaughter-Defoe, 2009). Besides, research

shows that there is a debate on whether bilingual education is effective or not among immigrant parents (Martinez & Hinojosa, 2012; Lee, 1999; Shin, 2000; Lao, 2004). Parents who support bilingual education believe that the reason why bilingualism is essential for their children is that bilingual education not only is beneficial to academic success at school but also teaches their children to show appreciation to others' culture and can help them with their future career (Martinez & Hinojosa, 2012). Those immigrant parents who have positive attitudes towards bilingual are of opinion that being bilingual is a good resource for their children's academic capacity as well as emotional-social skills. Furthermore, as stated by Zhang and Slaughter-Defoe (2009), immigrant parents who highly value their home language see bilingual education as a method to get their children closely related to their ethnic identity and heritage, as well as "a necessary family link that reinforces family ties and contributes to family cohesion" (p. 83). This kind of immigrant parents support bilingual education since they highly appreciate their family bonds, family culture, as well as home language.

On the other hand, immigrant parents' negative attitudes and perceptions can be concluded by three reasons. First, some immigrant parents believe that bilingual education is unnecessary in the United States society since the dominant language is English. Lao's research illustrates that there is far from enough home language use in immigrant households, where English proportion outweighs home language proportion. In essence, immigrant parents are not paying much attention to language use at home. Besides, not leading their children to use home language at home also brings the result that English will take most part of their children's language use both at home and in the classroom. Furthermore, many immigrant parents consider that English is more beneficial to their children's academic achievement as well as future career (Lee, 1999; Martinez & Hinojosa, 2012). The report of Lee's study (1999) on immigrant parents'

perceptions of bilingual education portrays that even though the majority of immigrant parents thought that if their children could use both English and their home language in the schools, it would be beneficial to their children's English language development. Two-thirds of the parents still believed that mainstream English classes would be better for their children. That is to say, even though immigrant parents know that bilingual education is beneficial, but not beneficial enough as mainstream English classes that they think would help their children more. This is also proved in Martinez and Hinojosa's (2012) study: "All the parents strongly agreed that if the child knew English, he could learn faster. In addition, all of the parents also thought that the more English their child knew, the better he would do in the future" (p. 5). Namely, under the impact of the English Only Movement, those immigrant parents who have negative attitudes and perceptions towards bilingual education generally believe that the dominant language, English, is more important academically and will benefit their children more than their home languages do. Finally, yet importantly, home language shame prevents immigrant parents from sending their children to have bilingual education. In view of the fact that the general society values English far more than home languages, many non-English languages were considered "primitive" and their culture "savage" (Macedo, 2000). Moreover, as suggested by Winstead and Wang (2017), home language shame first happened at schools and later transferred to immigrant households. Because immigrants' home languages are not honored and valued by the general public, the motivation of getting immigrant children bilingual education declines considerably.

Martinez and Hinojosa (2012) argue that a significant reason why immigrant parents value English more than their home language and did not support bilingual education is the lack of information about bilingual education programs. In other words, not understanding the objectives and benefits of bilingual education may result in immigrant parents having incorrect

and negative attitudes and perceptions of bilingual education. As claimed in Schwartz's research (2013), it "has shown that often immigrant parents do not understand in depth the model of the target bilingual educational setting and have divergent views on its objectives" (p. 2). Immigrant parents are not well-informed about bilingual programs in schools, and it urges schools to formally inform and guide parents to learn what bilingual education is, what the objectives bilingual education have, how it will benefit their children, and try to involve them in the school bilingual program. Kennedy (2019) states in his research that if the level of family and community engagement of bilingual education is high, it will foster immigrant students' academic outcomes and language proficiency. In other words, the more parents and families take part in school activities, the better the students will achieve academically. For this reason, bilingual education is not only for the immigrant students themselves but also for the parents, the whole immigrant family.

Summary

This literature review demonstrates that bilingualism and bilingual education are significantly impacted by the English Only Movement, and it brings to a consequence that immigrant parents' beliefs about home language and bilingual education become uncertain. And even worse, they lose confidence in bilingual education. However, bilingual education is effective in immigrant children's cognitive skills development, academic achievement, building self-identity, as well as the maintenance of minority languages. With this field project, I would like to use the research above and my knowledge in bilingual education to acknowledge immigrant parents' background of bilingual education and the effectiveness of bilingual education, in order to help them to form a more positive attitude and perception towards bilingual education.

CHAPTER III THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Description of the Project

The field project I developed was a website is for immigrant parents to get to know about bilingualism and bilingual education, the history of bilingual education, how to raise a bilingual child, as well as share their experience of bilingual education. The project is designed for bilingual education information distribution and exchange among parents and community members. The audience of this website will be able to contact the author to share information of bilingual education, and the author will update the website according to the information that is shared by the public after reviewing them. All content on the website is written and illustrated in relatively easy English without any specialized vocabulary. The aim was to provide simple and clear information, visuals and infographics. This website consists of seven sections: five of Raising Awareness of Bilingual Education, one section of communication for bilingual education information, and one section of author positionality. The seven sections are organized as follows:

- (1) **Home:** This section is the home page of the field project website. In this section, it briefly states the current problem of maintaining home language in immigrant families, that is, immigrant parents are often not aware enough of getting bilingual education for their children (and/or schools are promoting an English-Only model), leading to the result of home language loss. It also explains what bilingualism and bilingual education are, and the various benefits of bilingual education.
- (2) **Bilingual Education in California:** This section is about the history of bilingual education in California. It provides a timeline infographic of the development of bilingual education in California from the Bilingual Education Act in 1968,

Proposition 227 in 1998, and Proposition 58 in 2016. The timeline is explained in detail in the text.

- (3) **How to Raise a Bilingual Child:** This section is about how to raise a bilingual child. There are five tips in total, which are: a) keep learning about bilingual education; b) make sure there is home language exposure for your child; c) include as much value of cultural values and practices in-and-out of the home; d) try to make it fun; e) consider getting your child formal bilingual education. These tips are all further explained in detail on the website.
- (4) **Bilingual Education Stories:** This section contains two subpages: (a) Hana's Family Story; and (b) Camille's Family Story. The two stories are the transcripts of interviews with Hana's mother and Camille's father about their choice of getting or not getting bilingual education for their children. The purpose of the interviews is for the audience to resonate with their stories.
- (5) **Bilingual Education in San Francisco:** This section is a collection of bilingual schools and bilingual programs in Arabic, Chinese, French, German, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Russian, and Spanish in San Francisco. The school and program names, as well as their websites are provided in this page. If the audience would like to recommend other bilingual schools and programs, they can contact me to update to this page.
- (6) **Your Thoughts and Questions:** This section contains an online interactive site, Padlet page, for the audience to share their questions, thoughts, and experiences of bilingual education. The audience is able to add comments and answer questions to the posts directly on this section page rather than going to the original page of Padlet.

(7) **About Me:** This section is about me as the author – my experiences, purpose and positionality. I talk about my own experience of bilingual education, and why I am enthusiastic about bilingual education.

Development of the Project

I chose this field project because I have many American friends who are from Chinese immigrant families. When I visited their families, I found that my friends spoke English to their parents, and their parents spoke Chinese to them. It really made me feel strange because I did not know what language I should use when I talked to the whole family. Later when I became a bilingual Chinese teacher, I found that this situation is not uncommon. I realized that there is a need for bilingual education for immigrant families, but not every immigrant family can realize the importance and necessity of bilingual education, and many immigrant parents have misunderstood bilingual education. Thus, I decided to design this field project to help immigrant parents raise their awareness about bilingual education.

This field project website was finished in steps, and continues to be a work in progress. I began with choosing the right tool for me to design a website. First, I considered Atavist, which I have used for my undergraduate capstone project. But later I found that Atavist could only make simple pages, which did not fit my needs of designing this field project. Later I found Google Site, and Google Site was easier to use. After choosing the right tool, I began to design questions for the questionnaire and interviews for the two immigrant families that became my case studies.

I designed eight questions for the questionnaire to get the family background information and the basic information of how much they know about bilingual education:

- 1) What generation of immigrant do you consider yourself? (immigrant, child of immigrants, etc.)
- 2) Where are you originally from?
- 3) On a scale of 1 to 10, how well do you know about bilingual education?

- 4) On a scale of 1 to 10, how important do you think bilingual education is for your children?
- 5) Have you ever sent your children to a formal bilingual education program (bilingual school, having bilingual tutor, etc.)?
- 6) If you have sent your children to get formal bilingual education, what are the reasons you made this choice?
- 7) If you did not send your child or children to get formal bilingual education, what are the reasons you made this choice?
- 8) Do you think you have raised bilingual children?

I sent the questionnaire to the two families via emails but I only got one response from Hana's mother. Therefore, when I interviewed Hana's mother, I did not need to ask her the questions from the questionnaire; but when I interviewed Camille's father, I needed to ask him the questions from the questionnaire to get the information that I needed. After interviewing the two target families, I transcribed our interviews and put them to the "Bilingual Education Stories" section on my website. I omitted the background information questions in Camille's father's interview. Instead, I summarized the information and put it in the introduction of Camille's Family Story.

After finishing the "Bilingual Education Stories" section, I began to develop content and write the rest of the sections for the website. Since the rest of the sections are informative, to avoid lengthy text on the website, I used many infographics to divide the text into several parts. I also used different colors for the infographic backgrounds, so the audience would find it to be clear. I chose *Piktochart* and *Vector-Creator* to help me with making infographics. I referred to many blogs and websites to learn their typesetting. The final step was to change the fonts, font size, font color, and all the header images. All the header images are the photos of my students. I gained the parents' permission to use their pictures in my field project and on my website.

The Project

The project is a website that I developed for parents supporting their bilingual/bicultural children. It can be used by parents, community members, and for planning and facilitating professional development workshops. I am also happy to have conversations with you about my work or provide workshops to the community. I have included screenshot images of various web pages in this section. The name of the website is: *Raising Awareness of Bilingual Education* and the can be found at this link: <https://sites.google.com/dons.usfca.edu/sunny-bilingual/home>



Raising Awareness of Bilingual Education

Have you ever met this situation? I have many American friends who are from Chinese immigrant families. When I visited their families, I found that my friends spoke English to their parents, and their parents spoke Chinese to them. It really made me feel strange because I did not know what language I should use when I talked to the whole family. It's now common that a first-generation immigrant family speak their home language in the house and the parents speak the home language to their second-generation children. The kids may speak limited home language or only English at home. And when those second-generation immigrant children begin to have their own families (third or later generation immigrants), their descendants will speak very limited or even no home language at home. The loss of these skills is detrimental to a family's sense of cultural identity. To prevent language loss, there is an urgency for immigrant children who have limited exposure to their home language to go to a bilingual school to learn their home language and culture.



What bilingual Education is?

Bilingualism is the ability to use two languages freely. For example, a Japanese native speaker has learned English for years, and he or she is able to understand and use English fluently. The ability to use both Japanese and English fluently is *bilingualism*, and the person is *bilingual*. Likewise, when bilingualism applies to immigrants in the United States, it refers to the ability to use both the home language and English fluently. In bilingual education, the process of teaching and learning involves both a home language and English. The ratio of English and home language can be changed depending on immigrant students' needs. Bilingual education usually involves teaching and experiencing culture, which imbues students with cultural comprehension in the process of learning the home language.



What are the benefits of bilingual education?

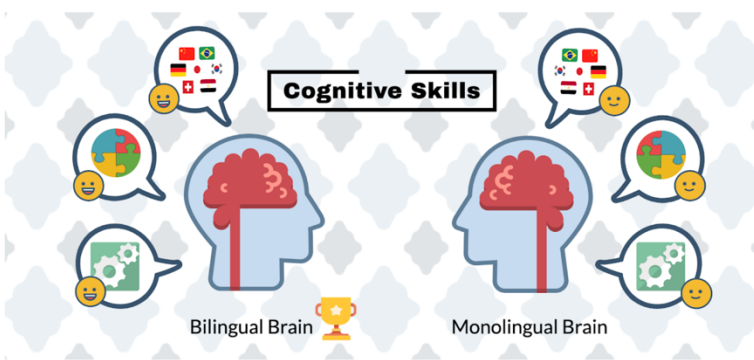
There are multiple benefits of bilingualism that have been examined in various disciplines. Here I focus on the benefits of bilingualism toward cognitive skills, the effectiveness of social-emotional skills, and competence within maintaining home language and cultural identity.

The Benefits of Cognitive Skills

Generally speaking, being bilingual helps your brain develop deeper skills in thinking, understanding, reading, learning, remembering, and so on. Researchers find that bilingual people do better on problem-solving and creative tasks than monolingual people, who can only use one language freely. Bilingual individuals generally achieve better than monolingual people. Researchers also suggest that being bilingual can help a person better process and understand information. This results in bilingual people having better overall language competency, and with that knowledge, they can learn a third, or even fourth language faster and

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better than monolingual people. With the development in cognitive skills, that bilingualism provides, individuals are more likely to succeed at school, in the workplace, and in other scenes of life.



The Benefits of Social-Emotional Skills

Research shows that bilingual education is beneficial to immigrant children's social-emotional skills mainly in two different ways: 1) Bilingual education benefits immigrant children by providing higher academic achievement. When immigrant students' culture and language are involved and appreciated in the classroom, they will feel more motivated and confident in learning, which will improve academic performance.

2) It helps immigrant children embrace their ethnic identity, and their linguistic and cultural background. Language and culture are two important elements of self-identity. If immigrant students' language and culture are represented in the classroom, and teachers

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can value their home language as much as English, it will help them to build confidence in their heritage, language, and culture, so they can embrace their ethnic identity, linguistic and cultural background as part of their self-identity.

Social-Emotional Skills

With bilingual education...

Behave better academically Embrace identity & background

Maintaining Home Language and Cultural Identity

Finally, bilingual education can help eliminate language loss, maintain minority languages within immigrant families, and foster a positive cultural identity. Having a positive cultural identity can promote greater recognition, understanding, tolerance, and appreciation of a new culture. This encourages cultural harmony in our diverse society that allows different cultures and backgrounds to bond together.

Language Loss

Minority Languages

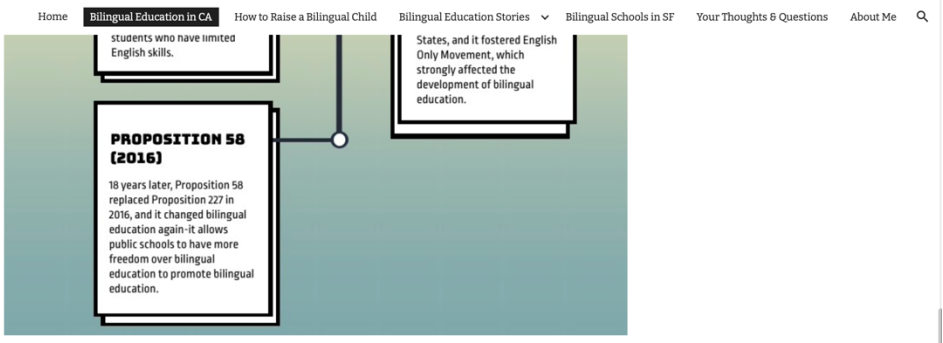
Positive Cultural Identity



BILINGUAL EDUCATION ACT PROPOSITION 227 PROPOSITION 58

BILINGUAL EDUCATION ACT (1968)
Bilingual Education Act states that bilingual education is a significant part of federal education policy, and it is the first official federal document that considers the needs of students who have limited English skills.

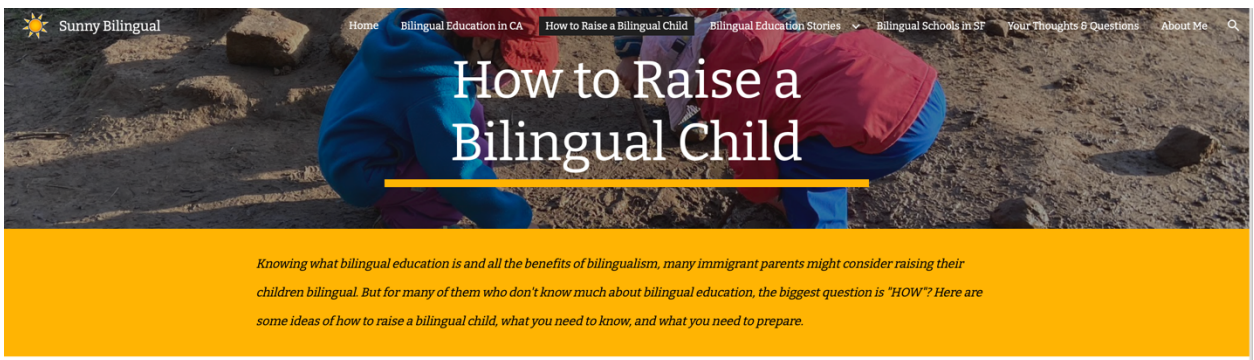
PROPOSITION 227 (1998)
Proposition 227 in 1998 changed America's bilingual education. It led to the resistance of bilingual education across the United States, and it fostered English Only Movement, which strongly affected the development of bilingual education.



The first bilingual education policy in the United States is the [Bilingual Education Act](#) in 1968. This act affirmatively states that bilingual education programs are a significant part of the federal educational policy. It is the "first official federal recognition of the needs of students with limited English speaking ability" ([Stewner-Manzanares, 1988](#)). California's [Proposition 227](#) in 1998 was a turning point in the history of America's bilingual education. It led to the resistance of bilingual education across the United States. This affected the development of bilingual education in California. Under the colonialism of the English Only Movement ([Macedo, 2000](#)), non-native English-speaking students were not allowed to use their home languages at public schools. Non-English languages were forbidden in the classroom, and those students were forced to speak English by their schools. However, California's Proposition 227 was replaced by [Proposition 58](#) in 2016, which led to a new era for bilingual education in California—it allows public schools to have more freedom over bilingual education.

Bilingual education was neglected by the California government for almost 20 years between the years of Proposition 227 in 1998 and Proposition 58 in 2016, not to mention the immigrant families. Although California has a new policy to promote bilingual education, many immigrant parents are not aware of their linguistic rights, have limited knowledge of bilingual education, or have limited agency and lack of access. For this reason, there is a need to guide immigrant families on how bilingual education will affirm immigrants' bicultural identity due to the lack of bilingual education.

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- Keep learning about bilingual education
- Ensure childhood exposure to the home language
- Involve children in cultural activities at home
- Try to make it fun
- Consider getting your child formal bilingual education

1. **Keep learning about bilingual education.** Many immigrant parents have negative attitudes and perceptions towards bilingual education, such as thinking bilingual education is unnecessary in an English-speaking country like the United States, or that learning their home language might influence the acquisition of English. However, when parents know more about bilingual education, they will understand how bilingual education can be advantageous to their children. When one learns about bilingual

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education, they will have a chance to know about the changes of bilingual education policies, as well as some new methods or useful experiences shared by researchers and parents. This can make bilingual education easier.

2. **Ensure childhood exposure to the home language.** If you want to maintain your home language, speak as much of it as you can with your child. If your child doesn't have an environment speaking home language outside of the household, the only place he or she can speak and hear your home language is within the household. It's important to make sure you have enough language exposure within the household. You don't need to worry about your child can't understand you. They can understand more than you think!
3. **Involve children in cultural activities at home.** Language is an essential part of culture. If you want to teach your home language to your child, try to teach culture as well! It can be a dish to cook, a festival to celebrate, a craft to make, or a custom to wear. These are the things that you can relate your language and culture together. More importantly, these are all great parent-child activities that can build bonds between you and your child.
4. **Try to make it fun.** You don't expect a child to sit down and listen to you to teach home language. You can make learning language fun by reading books, playing games, singing songs, etc. Additionally, you can make playgroups of your home language for your child. So your child can use your home language when playing with other children.
5. **Consider getting your child formal bilingual education.** There are many bilingual schools and bilingual programs all over the United States. If it's necessary, you can choose those bilingual schools or programs for your child to learn the home language systematically. Bilingual schools and programs can create an environment for your child to use home language outside of the household, which allows more home language exposure.



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Bilingual Education Stories

As a bilingual teacher myself, I always want to know why some families chose bilingual education but some didn't. To better understand how much immigrant parents know about bilingual education, as well as their attitudes and concerns towards bilingual education and bilingualism, I conducted interviews with Hana's family, which had a chance to get their children bilingual education, and Camille's family, which didn't choose to get their children bilingual education. The two families both have their own reasons why they chose bilingual education or not. If you want to know about their stories, please keep on reading!



Hana's family's story



Camille's family's story



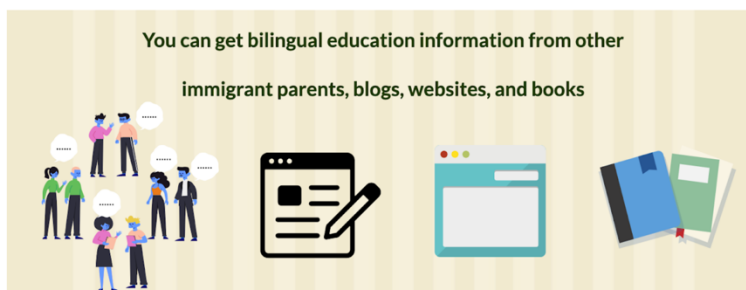
Hana's Family Story

Hana is a five-year-old girl who is living in San Francisco, CA, with her parents, a younger brother, and her grandmother on her mother's side. Her mother is a first-generation immigrant originally from Mainland China, and her father is from the United States. This interview was to have a better understanding of why Hana's mother chose to teach Hana and her brother Chinese (her home language) at home, and her expectation of her children's bilingual education.

As you mentioned in the questionnaire, you said you are pretty familiar with bilingual education. Can you tell me where do you usually get your information on bilingual education?

I didn't know much about bilingual education before Hana was 3. At that time Hana was at a full English preschool, so she spoke very limited Chinese, and she only spoke English to me. And then one day I talked to my friend, who is Taiwanese. Her child is one year older than Hana. She told me that her child basically all spoke Chinese to her. And I was like, "wow". At that time I thought Hana's Chinese was pretty much hopeless, but my friend introduced me a website written by a second-generation immigrant mom, who learns Chinese with her children (*Chalk Academy*). I read all the articles on that website, and then I thought, a second-generation immigrant can teach her children very good Chinese, so why can't I? And then I read some related books about bilingual education, and those books have left me a very deep impression. From then on, I joined a few Facebook groups about bilingual education, and gradually I get to know more and more about bilingual education. I visit lots of blogs written by some second-generations and Taiwanese immigrants, but I haven't seen ones written by immigrant parents from Mainland China. After reading those blogs and

books, I already have a deep understanding of bilingual education. So the communication among parents and information from the internet are two main sources for me to get to know bilingual education.



Are you afraid that if your children will not be willing to speak Chinese in the future?

We have a "language strategy" in our family that one parent speaks one language. For example, I speak 99% to 100% Chinese to my children. And I remember from many of the books I read saying if you want to maintain a minority language in a family, you need to make sure that you have at least 20 to 25 hours per week of minority language exposure. So when my kids go back to normal school after the pandemic, we definitely need some family time to maintain the language exposure. Besides, if we can form a habit of speaking Chinese between the children and me, it's more likely for us to keep this going in the future. We haven't considered to sending my children to a Chinese school, but there are still many ways that we can connect to Chinese language and culture. I have many second-generation immigrant friends who were sent to Chinese schools by their parents, and they eventually became unwilling to learn Chinese. I first thought let the children to choose whether they want to learn Chinese when they grow up, but later

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I changed my mind. What we are doing at home right now is actually a very good way to relate my children to Chinese language and culture, and they won't get tired of learning Chinese. There are many good ways that worth taking time to try. I can't assume that my children will be still willing to speak Chinese in the future, but for the time being, especially when they are still young, they have the interest of learning and speaking the language, and that's good enough.

My cousin also went to Chinese school when he was young. He learned some Chinese at school but later forgot it all. His family also ended up only speaking English. I think the immigrant parents from the last generation were too busy earning money, so they didn't have much time to learn about how to maintain the language at home. In my family, we have lots of books for the children. So from very young age, Hana has read so many books in Chinese and about China. You can imagine that in many Chinese immigrant family from the last generation, what the parents could only do was to only speak Chinese to their children. Then when the children went to school, the language at school and play language all switched to English. Her Chinese became weak. But if there are so many Chinese stories with rich content about our culture, such as all kinds of celebrations and festivals, the children will get interested, and can really relate to their culture. Language in daily life is too gray, but language in books can actually bring fun and knowledge to the children.

You also mentioned that you think bilingual education is very important to your children because it helps maintain the language and culture. What other aspects of life do you think bilingual education can help?

I know some immigrant parents from other bilingual education group saying that the aim for bilingual education is to raise bilingual talents. But for me, bilingual education is not utilitarian. I think the goal of bilingual education is to find out "where I am from" and "where I belong to." People always experience the process of "finding the root." When knowing both Chinese and Western culture, you will find your horizon expanded, and you will think more deeply. They can see the world from different aspects. There are actually many more benefits of bilingual education. But to me, the goal is not for my children to find a better job, to have better brain development, or to master a skill. The goal of bilingual education is to relate to the "root." I am now leading my children to learn the language and culture, and this is a very good family activity. It's easier for them to learn the language now than later.

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Do you have any experience of raising bilingual children to share? What do you think you should insist on when you are raising bilingual children?

I think I must insist on speaking Chinese to my children when they are young, until I can't insist anymore. Just like what I have mentioned, you have to have at least 20-hour language exposure to maintain the language. I can't predict whether Hana and her brother can use two languages fluently enough to talk about something deep in the future. It's hard to say now. But I will make sure that I speak only Chinese to my children.

One more thing that I will insist on is reading books with them. Now we are reading picture books together, and later we will read chapter books and children's literature together. I will read books for them till they don't want me to read to them anymore. There's a book called "The read-aloud handbook", and this book suggests that parents should read books to children. Even though they can read, you should still read with them. Reading books can help children build the relationship with books, and is good for building vocabularies. And after all, it's a very good family activity.

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Do you think there will be any problems if your children only speak English in the future?

I believe if I pay enough attention like now, this situation won't happen. If it really happens, I will make decisions depending on the current situation. So I can't answer this question now. My prediction is that if I keep using Chinese with them, they can maintain the language at a certain level and keep using Chinese with me. Everything I do now is to "plant the seed," the seed of both Chinese language and culture.

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 Instagram: lesisunny

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Sunny Bilingual Home Bilingual Education in CA How to Raise a Bilingual Child Bilingual Education Stories Bilingual Schools in SF Your Thoughts & Questions About Me

Camille's Family Story

Camille is a college student who is living in San Francisco, CA, with her parents and an older brother. Both of her parents are first-generation immigrants originally from Mainland China. Camille and her older brother didn't have formal bilingual education when they were younger, but Camille chose to study Chinese language when she went to university. This interview between Camille's father and I had given me another perspective of bilingual education, and what bilingual education will bring to his children.

How much do you know about bilingual education? Do you know anything about the bilingual education policy in California?

We don't know much about bilingual education or the bilingual education policy in California. I have immigrated to the States over 35 years ago. I came to the States in February 1985. I have spent more time in the States than in China. I came to the States when I was around 19, but I received very good Chinese language and cultural education. I had worked for around two years in Guangzhou before I came to the States. So I have a deep understanding of Chinese culture and history. However, I never think of raising my kids with bilingual education, because they were born and raised in the States, and I let them choose for themselves. It is hard to predict where they will be, in China or in the States, in the future, but they have more opportunities in the United States, because they were born here and are Chinese Americans. They just have Chinese heritage. So I think English is relatively more important to them. Chinese is just a second language for them to communicate with the older generation. Chinese is less important in this case. So I didn't force them to have Chinese bilingual education when they were younger.

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Sunny Bilingual

Home Bilingual Education in CA How to Raise a Bilingual Child Bilingual Education Stories Bilingual Schools in SF Your Thoughts & Questions About Me

Do you think bilingual education is important to your children?

I think bilingual education is not that important to them. It's quite enough as long as they are able to communicate with us and the older generation. They grew up with grandpa and grandma, and grandpa and grandma could only speak Chinese, no English at all. So they have no problem hearing and speaking Chinese in daily life as long as the topics don't go too deep. The only thing is that they can't read or write Chinese.

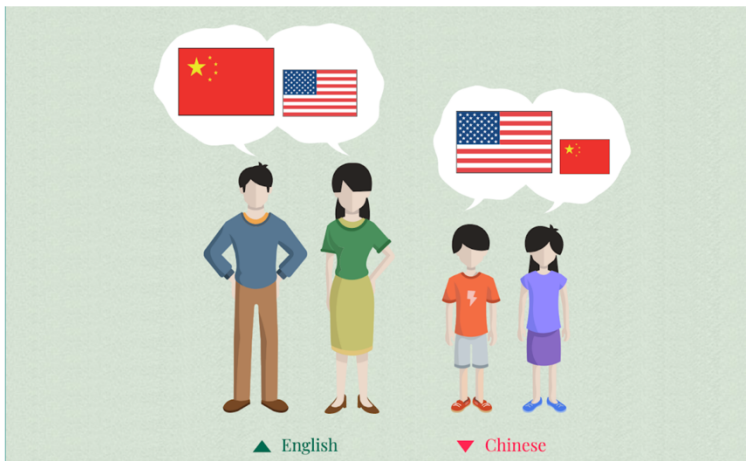
Camille mentioned that she never received bilingual education when she was younger. Why didn't you send her to learn Chinese?

This is because I think it's important to consider whether the children are interested or not. I have very good Chinese skills. I can speak very well both Cantonese and Mandarin. I also have very good foundation of Pinyin [*Mandarin Chinese romanization system*] also. I once thought of teaching my children Chinese Pinyin to learn Chinese from their young age, but because I was earning money for the family at their young age, I didn't have much time to stay at home to teach them Chinese. I tried teaching them Chinese several times, but it seemed that they were not very interested. And you know, for the kids, if they are not interested but you insist to do so, it means you are "forcing" them to do it. Then they will resist doing it from then on. If the kids want to do something and are interested in it, when they learn it, they will get twice the result with half the effort. I have been in the States for years and I haven't seen any Chinese American children who are interested in learning Chinese from a very young age. And when they're older, like my children, after graduating from high school, they really want to learn Chinese, so they can find different ways to learn it. So I don't need to push them to learn Chinese.

When I was young I learned lots of different things, like calligraphy and kungfu. I really wanted to teach my children what I know, but I found that I couldn't push them to do anything. The situation was totally different when I was young. When I was in Guangzhou, my parents pushed me to learn this and that, in order to have more opportunity in the future and not need to go back to the rural village to farm. So my parents sent me to learn kungfu and made me stay at home to practice calligraphy every day. The situation was

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different back then, and all the parents wanted their children to have even one more skill to help them stay in cities. But my children are now living in the States, they don't have the pressure and need to do so. So if you push them to learn piano, dancing, or any other skills, I feel like it's oppressing them. Growing from young to old, I have experienced so much pressure, and I don't want them to experience what I have experienced when I was young. I want them to grow up happily.



What language or languages do you use in the household?

We speak more English to the kids than Chinese, because sometimes I don't want to explain too much if they don't understand. I know where their Chinese level is at, so when I reach something they can't understand, I will use English. When their grandparents were still with us, the kids only use Chinese to them. I try my best to use Chinese at home to my children, but if I say something that they don't understand, I have to translate it into English.

Do you mind that your children's Chinese is not fluent?

Of course we mind. We of course wish that their Chinese is good enough. But we really don't want to push them when they grow up. I don't want to ask for more as long as they can behave at school and do well on exams.

Have you ever regretted that you didn't send your children to receive Chinese bilingual education?

I have never regretted it, because I never wasted a penny on "bilingual education." I have many friends and relatives who spent lots of money sending their children to Chinese bilingual after-school programs or Chinese schools from preschool to high school, but after they graduating from high school, they gave all the Chinese skills back to their Chinese teachers (*they forgot all the Chinese they learned at school!*) They couldn't speak even a single word of Chinese. Can you imagine how much money their parents have spent on learning Chinese from preschool to high school? When they entered universities, they forgot all the Chinese because they never had a chance to speak or use it. Isn't it a big waste and a huge burden to the parents? It's also a burden to their kids. My children really appreciate that I didn't send them to get an extra course load when they were young.



You mentioned that your family is a very traditional Chinese family. How do you maintain the Chinese culture in your household?

From their very young age, I told them stories about our old times, Chinese history, and stories about their grandparents at dinner time, when we are sitting together. So my children are familiar with our history. When we have time to sit together, I will try my best to tell them stories of China. Thus they won't be knowing nothing about China. So even though they are not bilingual, they are somewhat bicultural.

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Sunny Bilingual Home Bilingual Education in CA How to Raise a Bilingual Child Bilingual Education Stories Bilingual Schools in SF Your Thoughts & Questions About Me

Bilingual Schools in San Francisco

Here is a collection of bilingual schools and bilingual programs of different languages in San Francisco. Please feel free to check on the websites provided.

**Languages are listed alphabetically.*



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 **ARABIC**

San Francisco Islamic School: <https://www.sfislamicschool.org/>

Qalam San Francisco: <https://www.qalamsf.com/>

BAY AREA ARABIC SCHOOL: <https://www.baaschool.org/>

 **CHINESE**

Presidio Knolls School: <https://www.presidioknolls.org>

Chinese Immersion School at DeAvila Elementary School: <https://www.sfusd.edu/school/chinese-immersion-school-cis-de-avila>

Chinese American International School: <https://www.cais.org/>

New Journey Mandarin Immersion Preschool & Childcare: <https://www.newjourneypreschool.com/>

 **FRENCH**

Lycee Francais: <https://www.lelycee.org/>

French American International School: <https://www.internationalsf.org/>

Les Petits Canards French Immersion Preschool: <http://lespetitscanards.com/>

Au P'tit Monde de San Francisco: <http://www.aupitmonde.com/>


 **GERMAN**

German School of San Francisco: <https://www.germanschool.com/>

Kinderhaus: <https://www.kinderhausf.org/>

German International School of Silicon Valley: <https://www.gissv.org/gissv-home-english>

 **ITALIAN**

La Scuola: <https://www.lascuolasf.org/>

Istituto Italiano Scuola: <https://sfis.org/>

ItaLingua Institute: <https://www.italingua.org/wp/>

 **JAPANESE**

CLARENDON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL: <https://www.clarendonjbbp.org/>

Rosa Parks Japanese Bilingual Bicultural Program: <https://www.jbbpsf.org/>

Soko Gakuen: <https://sokogakuen.org/>

Nihonmachi Little Friends (NLF): <http://www.nlfchildcare.org/>

 **KOREAN**

샌프란시스코 한국학교 San Francisco Korean School: <https://www.sfkoreanschool.com/>



Claire Lilienthal Elementary School: <https://www.clairelilienthal.org/korean-immersion-program>

RUSSIAN

Russian American International School: <http://www.russianamericanschool.org/>

Russian Language Academy: <http://www.russianlanguageacademy.net/home.html>

RUSSIAN HILL ACADEMY: <https://www.russianhillacademy.net/>

Russian Hill School: <https://www.russianhillschool.org/>

SPANISH

Mi Escuela en Español: <https://www.wonderschool.com/ca/san-francisco/mi-escuelita-en-espa-ol-324>

SF Spanish: <http://sfspanish.ning.com/>

SE HABLA ESPAÑOL: <http://www.sehablaespanolsf.com/>

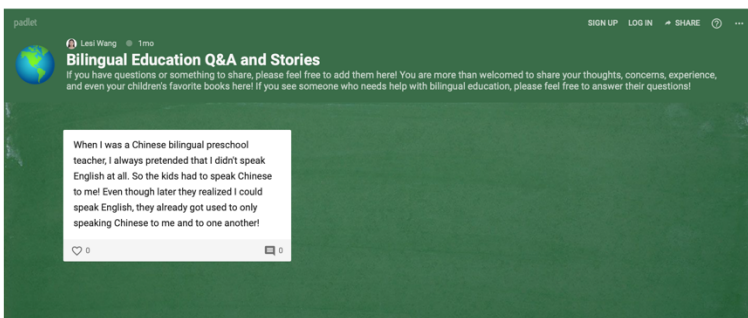
WEEKEND en español: <http://www.weekendenespanol.com/>

"If you want to recommend some good bilingual schools and programs to other immigrant families, please let the author know the school and program names, and what language they offer. The author will update this page."

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This is a place for you to share and ask! If you have questions or something to share, please feel free to add them here. You are more than welcome to share your thoughts, concerns, experience, and even your children's favorite books! If you see someone who needs help with bilingual education, please feel free to answer their questions.



About Me



My name is Lesi Wang, and I am a Chinese bilingual teacher. My enthusiasm for bilingual education comes from my personal experience. I grew up in a Cantonese-speaking family, and I spoke only Cantonese until I went to elementary school. Under the influence of the Promotion of Putonghua (Mandarin Chinese) Movement, all classes at school were required to use Mandarin only. For this reason, I received Cantonese education at home and Mandarin education at school. Even though Cantonese is considered as a Chinese language in the United States, in China, it is only considered as a prestigious dialect. Because of this, nowadays the Cantonese dialect is gradually replaced by the common language in China, Mandarin. You can find more and more young children in my hometown Guangzhou, also known as Canton, who cannot speak Cantonese. They use mostly Mandarin at school and their parents do not really care about what language their children speak. As a Cantonese speaker, this is the last thing I want to see happen. Similarly, I do not want to see any language loss in the United States either. **Every language should be well-protected.** Additionally, I grew up receiving Chinese-English bilingual education from the age of 4 when I first went to kindergarten. Growing up with multiple languages allowed me to realize the importance and advantages of being able to use two or more languages. For this reason, with the love of language and education, I decided to concentrate on bilingual education, and try to promote bilingual education as much as possible.

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CHAPTER IV CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Even though nowadays, the U.S government has put forward some policies to support and promote bilingual education, there are still immigrant parents failing to realize the importance of bilingual education, or having negative attitudes and perceptions towards bilingual education. One reason that stands out is that bilingual education had been neglected for a long time under the influence of English-Only Movement (Macedo, 2000). Based on the theory of the three-generation shift by Baker and Wright (2017), minority language loss is very likely to happen in three generations in immigrant families. If immigrant parents do not take action to help their children get bilingual education, it might lead to the result of minority language loss, home language shame, and negative self-identification.

The website designed for this field project attempted to raise awareness about bilingual education among immigrant parents, and guide immigrant parents to understand bilingual education correctly. In addition, for those immigrant parents who have not considered bilingual education before, after viewing the field project website, they are strongly encouraged to have some kinds of bilingual education for their children, even if at home or at school. This field project website aims to provide necessary information on bilingual education in California – as a place for immigrant families to share bilingual education experiences and information. This field project website contains the following contents: 1) definition of bilingualism as well as bilingual education; 2) the benefits of bilingual education; 3) the history of bilingual education development in California; 4) the ways to raise a bilingual child; 5) two bilingual education stories collected from two immigrant families; 6) a collection of bilingual schools and programs in different languages in San Francisco; 7) a Padlet for the audience to share bilingual education

experience and experience; 8) author's background and positionality. When immigrant parents finish viewing this website, they should be equipped with basic knowledge of bilingual education, and have ideas of how to raise a bilingual child, what they need to know before they raise a bilingual child, and what to prepare for to raise a bilingual child. This field project is significant for immigrant families, because the final goal of this field project is to help immigrant families to understand their linguistic rights for minority languages, protect their home languages, and prevent language loss in the United States. It is understandable that not all the immigrant families will choose bilingual education for their children due to many different reasons. However, I believe that there will be more and more immigrant families having positive attitudes and perceptions towards bilingual education, and considering bilingual education after they have better understandings of bilingual education.

Recommendations

This field project and website can ideally be shared in different immigrant communities and schools. For immigrant communities, this field project can be shared among immigrant parents. This field project website is especially helpful for immigrant parents who are not familiar with bilingual education but want to get to know more about bilingual education. After they get interested in bilingual education, they can share this website with other immigrant parents, which will help promote bilingual education among immigrant families. For schools that offer bilingual programs, this field project can be one of the supportive materials for immigrant families, especially newcomer immigrant families, to get to know their linguistic rights and bilingual education. If the schools do not offer bilingual programs, this website can still be shared to immigrant families that are interested and offer support for helping them raise a bilingual child at home.

For the time being, this website is only written in English. Nevertheless, considering immigrant parents' different English proficiency levels, this website avoids using terminologies and uses relatively simple sentences, so that even immigrant parents with limited English proficiency can read. For families that may need to use machine translators to translate the whole website, using simple sentences and avoiding terminologies can make software/online translation more comprehensible. In the future, this website will provide contents in different languages. The field project website has many things to improve and will never be fully completed. In the future, I will add more contents, such as bilingual family activities and crafts, news of bilingual education, recommendations of books, parents' questions and answers, a section to organize immigrant families' shared experiences, and so on. The website will keep being updated according to new bilingual education policies, new bilingual schools or bilingual programs in San Francisco.

Raising awareness about bilingual education, and about understanding the value of being bilingual and bicultural are life-long passions. There is an idiom in Chinese that I think can very well describe the goal of bilingual education, which is “融會貫通 (rónghuì-guàntōng)”. It basically means gaining a thorough understanding of the subject through mastery of all relevant material. In the case of bilingual education, it's to gain a thorough understanding of two cultures, languages, as well as different values; and it's not just simply combining two languages and two cultures. The final goal of bilingual education is not merely teaching children to use two languages, but also requiring them to have a deeper understanding and critical thinking of two cultures from a multicultural and multi-dimensional perspective.

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