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WHY PARENTS CHOOSE A TWO WAY IMMERSION
PROGRAM FOR THEIR CHILDREN

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Education:
Bilingual/Cross-Cultural Education


by
Elisa Maria Barr
June 2006

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Approved by:


Dr. Enrique Durillo Jr., First Reader

Date

6/6/06


Dr. Barbara Flores, Second Reader

ABSTRACT

The research for this project takes place in a rural school district in Southern California. This project investigates the reasons why parents decided to enroll their children in a bilingual alternative program, Two Way Immersion (Dual Immersion). Despite the changes in bilingual education in California and the negative stereotypes about speaking Spanish, many parents have never the less decided to have their children learn a new language, Spanish, or maintain their primary language while learning English.

According to the literature found regarding Dual Immersion student placement, a vast variety of reasons including multicultural awareness, future job opportunities and a family connection through language were noted as areas that parents both English and Spanish dominate considered prior to enrolling their students in a Dual Immersion program. Multiple questions were posed to parents with children in the Dual Immersion program in an open-answer survey. These surveys were returned to the researcher, counted, sorted and tabulated. Findings suggest that parents dominate in both English and Spanish, have personal reasons for enrolling their students. Many of the findings noted concur with the reasons found in the

review of literature section. The results of this project suggest that parents value Dual Immersion educational opportunities in the public schools and indeed gave much thought into enrolling their students into the program prior to actually doing so.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thank you to Doctor Enrique Murillo Jr. for pushing and not pushing. To Doctor Barbara Flores, you are a gift to teacher preparation. Thanks to Dr. Margarita Machado-Casas: you inspire me with your hunger for knowledge.

A special thank you to all of the parents involved in this project. You see the future with eyes wide open.

DEDICATION

Para mis padres, Rodolfo y María Cabrera y su gran éxito en preparar a 8 hijos para este mundo. (To my parents, Rodolfo and Maria Cabrera and your success in preparing 8 children for this World.)

To Mark for your support during many hours at the computer.

To my daughters, Marisa and Pilar, the future is yours. Do your best to help others with your knowledge.

Lastly and most importantly, to my God.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND

Introduction

Springfield Unified School District (pseudonym) is located in a rural area in Southern California. It was established in the early 1900s as a stagecoach stop for travelers.

The community of Springfield has experienced a population growth as most communities in the state have. The population is made up of many ethnic minority groups which include African American, Native American, Hispanic, and Asian as well as Caucasian. This population makes up a diverse school population which includes 22.1% Caucasian, 10.7% African American, 49.5% Hispanic, 9.7% Asian, 4.8% Native American, and 3.2% Pacific Islander/ Filipino. The socio-economic status of the student population in Springfield Unified School District is based on free-lunch applications that have been approved. Eighty % of the population in the district qualifies for free lunch.

Setting up of the Program

In 1996, Springfield Unified School District began looking into alternative bilingual programs. After doing research district employees collaborated and wrote a grant

for a Dual Immersion program. In 1997 district administration received a grant to establish a Dual Immersion School within a school. After a year of preparation at the school site and with district and grant coordinators, three kindergarten classes were started with a total of twenty students in each. As the children advanced in grade levels, classes in those grades were also established. Currently the school has kindergarten through fourth grade with students going to a middle school for grades five and six.

There are three kindergarten classes, three first grade classes, three second grade classes, three third grade classes and two fourth grade classes. The kindergarten through third grade classes all have twenty students in accordance with class size reduction requirements. As class size reduction ends in fourth grade, those three classes are combined into two classes.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made regarding this project.

1. All parents in the district were informed of this program.

2. All parents were aware that this is a voluntary program.
3. Children entered into the program during their kindergarten year of education.
4. All parents want their children to be successful learners

Limitations

During the development of the project, a number of limitations were noted. The following section describes their limitations.

1. This study only includes students at Springfield Elementary and not other Dual Immersion school in the vicinity.
2. Parents representing two years of student enrollment were questioned.

Definition of Terms

The target language is the language that has been pre-selected to deliver knowledge with. Most commonly it is Spanish although other languages are also used.

The non-target language is English.

Primary language is the language most spoken in the home.

Dual Immersion is a program where students are taught in a target language and in English.

Two Way Immersion is a phrase often times used

interchangedly with the phrase Dual Immersion.

Bilingual is the ability to speak two languages.

Biliterate is the ability to read and write in two languages.

Biliteracy is when two languages are used to teach literacy skills (i.e. comprehension, plot, analysis, grammar).

The fifty/fifty (50/50) program instruction involves using both the target language and English equal amounts of time during the day.

The Ninety/Ten (90/10) program instruction involves using the target language 90% of the time and English 10% of the time.

The "Code and Chunk Method" involves collecting data and putting it together by reason, topic or idea.

Additive Bilingualism is adding a new language while developing primary language.

Subtractive Bilingualism is when the primary language is not developed and substituted by the new language.

English Language Development (ELD) is a method of teaching the English language to students that have a different primary language.

Organization of the Project

This project was divided into five chapters as per California State University San Bernardino standards. Chapter one includes the introduction of the project. Also included is how the project was set up, its assumptions, and limitations, definitions of terms and how the project was organized. Chapter two is the review of literature. The review of literature includes a description of a Two Way program and why parents, both dominant English and Spanish choose a Two Way program according to published research. Chapter three includes a description of how the data was collected for the project. Chapter four includes the results of the data with charts for each question posed. Finally, chapter five discusses the conclusions of the data and recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

History of Bilingual Education

Schooling in the United States has changed dramatically over the 20th century. Programs have been added, terminated and refined. As our population has increased in numbers, so has the ethnic diversity of our students.

In the early 1900s the population of students that spoke only English in the United States changed because of the influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe. Many of these new immigrants came without knowing English. There were no programs in place to meet the needs of all of these students. According to Rothstein (1998) new enrollees on the east coast included students from Russia, Poland and Italy. These students found failure instead of success. Rothstein further states that only 11 % of Italian immigrants that enrolled in high school actually graduated. The stresses of entering a new country, learning a new language and the need to earn monies for families were among the causes of the students' failure.

During the first half of the century, immersion schools were started for students that spoke a language

other than English. As written by Rothstein, (1998) many were looking to validate the home language, family traditions, religion and customs. Many parents chose to enroll their children and many did not. These differences of opinions and choices for enrollment were seen toward the end of the century as well (Craig, 1996).

Today's bilingual programs were put into place during the 1960s. These programs were specifically targeted to help Spanish-speaking students since this was the language that most new arriving immigrants enrolled with.

According to Cummins (1996), languages taught in the additive bilingualism method teach students a new language while developing the first language. In contrast, subtractive bilingualism has the second or new language replace the first language. In this case, the first language is not developed fully and is actually overtaken. Dual Immersion classes promote the learning of a new language while acknowledging the first language. As the amount of time of instruction increases for the first language through the child's educational career, the goal is to have instruction on both languages given in equal times to validate the importance of both. Again in contrast, Cummins (1996) states that the replacement of one's primary language by the second language as done in

traditional bilingual ELD courses leads to a lost language in the learner. When the language is not fully developed, used or practice, the ability to be truly bilingual and biliterate is lost.

There were different programs that were adopted. Some included English as a Second Language, the Preview/Review Method, the Alternate Language Method and Dual Immersion. The main purpose of these programs was to ensure that academic content was being taught in a student's first language or in an English program that had a controlled vocabulary. Strategies were adopted to ensure that students were not falling behind academically because of their primary language.

Of the many new and innovative programs to be implemented in education, Two Way Immersion is one of the most exciting. This literature review examines the history of Two Way Immersion, also called Dual Immersion. As this researcher went through its history, special interest was taken into how the program has been implemented and received. This review also looked at its present status and what lies ahead for the future.

Program Design

Two Way Immersion developed as an educational program that immersed students in a minority language (other than English) at a young age. It was established as a continual program that encouraged a commitment from families of the non-target speaking language to enroll in a program in which their child would be taught in the pre-selected language. There are two basic models of this program, the 90/10 model and the 50/50 model. The 90/10 model begins in the kindergarten or first grade level with the higher percentage of the instruction being done in the target language and the lower percentage being done in English. As children move up in the grade levels, English instruction is increased to 20 % in second grade, 30 % in third grade, 40 % in fourth grade, to 50 % in fifth grade.

The 50/50 model targets both languages with the same amount of time committed to each. The amount of time spent on both languages remains the same as the years progressed.

The target languages mentioned previously have included Spanish, French and Chinese. But in the majority of the programs, the target language in question was Spanish.

Two Way History

"The first program established shared many of the characteristics of what we know today as Two-Way immersion education" (Christian, 1996 p.1-2). As the years progressed, the program expanded, albeit slowly. "Its minimal increase cited fewer than ten documented programs in operation before 1981." (Sugarman and Howard, 2001, p.1). Many reasons contributed to this minimal growth. One of which was the Americanization of students to speak only English and leave their own culture behind. The initial programs that were implemented were located in high minority speaking communities with the first being in Miami in 1963 (Pellerano and Fradd, 1998).

The dramatic increase in Dual Immersion programs began in the 1980s. As the value of biliteracy increased, interest was gained and more programs were initiated. The majority of the programs were implemented in California, Texas, and New York as remains the case today.

A New Millennium

As the new millennium began, the number of Two Way programs increased even more. According to Howard and Sugarman (2001), there have been 249 Dual Immersion programs established. Of those, the vast majorities were

in Spanish, with 234. Chinese, French, Korean and Navajo made up the rest of the programs. In these 249 programs, the majority of them were in the three states previously mentioned (Howard and Sugarman, 2001). California has the distinction of having the highest majority of active Two Way Immersion middle and high school programs with 19 % of the total amount of schools reported.

Student Enrollment

Enrollment in Two Way Immersion programs was not automatic. It was set up as a totally voluntary program (Baker, 2000). Some important factors were established as criteria that can affect student success. The most important factor for enrollment was parental support of the program. Parents needed to be fully aware of their requirements as supporters of the program. The parental support was not only required in the classroom, but also at home for completion of homework assignments. As the material grew more difficult, many non-Spanish speaking parents found a little more difficulty in assisting their child. Teachers have become more aware of the parental need and have sent home detailed instructions, dictionaries, and books on tape to make enriching the

language at home easier for the parents (Cloud, Genesee, Hamajan, 2000).

Parental Choice: English Speaking Parents

Why such a growth in Dual Immersion programs in the last 20 years? Monolingual English speaking parents have seen the value of being bilingual in a society with diverse cultures. As noted by the survey conducted by Craig (1996), parents commented about the need for their children to develop awareness of various languages spoken in the world. Many parents commented about the link between bilingualism and cross-cultural understanding. Parents also noted the desire to intellectually stimulate their children by exposing them to a new language. A few wanted their children to learn the language of their grandparents. The positive exposure to cultural diversity was considered a part of the main reasons to enroll children in Dual Immersion program (Craig, 1996).

The second reason as researched by Craig (1996) was the belief of parents that acquiring a second language at an early age is easier. Many parents noted that they had difficulty in acquiring a language as adults.

Finally, enhanced career opportunities were also cited as a reason for enrollment in dual immersion

programs (Craig, 1996). Parents were already thinking about the benefits and future opportunities available to their children if they became not only bilingual but biliterate as well.

Parental Choice: Spanish Speaking Parents

There are also reasons that Language minority families have opted to enroll their children in the program. Many reasons cited by Craig (1996) included the need to retain culture and the importance of constant practice in the first language while the second language is being learned. Pausada (1991) adds that the majority of parents with children in a bilingual program wanted their children to be adept in languages, home and school, in order to get ahead in the world job market and financially. As written by Evans (1996), parents noted that knowing Spanish in addition to English would be beneficial when living or working in a community where not everyone is bilingual.

Advantages of Being Bilingual

According to Baker, (2000), being bilingual has many advantages. Baker states that bilingualism allows for communication with both parents when those parents speak different languages. Baker also states that this allows

for a close relationship between parents and children. Baker continues with, "being bilingual also allows someone to bridge between generations when grandparents, uncles and aunts and other relatives in another region speak one language that is different from the child's language. The monolingual child may be unable to communicate with such relatives.

Figure 1 (Baker, 2000 p. 2), shows what the advantages of being bilingual are. Many of these points go along with what is stated by Craig (1996), Pausada (1991), and Evans (1996).

As these positive attitudes have increased enrollment, one only hopes that the momentum for cultural diversity continues in our society. As stated earlier, although this program has gained popularity, with every passing year a new class has been added until it becomes a 13-year program. The results will be confident, bilingual and biliterate and multicultural graduates.

The Advantages of Being Bilingual

Some of the potential advantages of bilingualism and bilingual education currently publicized are:

Communication advantages

1. Wider communication (extended family, community, international links, employment).
2. Literacy in two languages.

Cultural Advantages

3. Broader enculturation, a deeper multiculturalism, and two 'language worlds' of experience.
4. Greater tolerance and less racism.

Cognitive advantages

5. Thinking benefits (creativity, sensitivity to communication).

Character Advantages

6. Raised self-esteem.
7. Security in identity.

Curriculum Advantages

8. Increased curriculum achievement.
9. Easier to learn a third language.

Cash Advantages

10. Economic and employment benefits.

(Baker, 2000 p. 2)

Figure 1. The Advantages of Being Bilingual

Summary of Articles

In conclusion, as noted in the articles reviewed, parents had many different reasons for choosing a Two Way Immersion classroom for their children. Parents were thinking about their children's future successes even

though these children were just beginning their education. Culture and exposure to different cultures was a catalyst to both English and Spanish speaking parents. As people become aware of the opportunities and the options available to them, they may consider this program for their own families.

CHAPTER THREE

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This project was conducted to describe parental insight into enrolling children into a Dual Immersion Program.

As children were enrolled into kindergarten the spring before beginning the school, their names were added to the list of parents interested in being placed into the Dual Immersion program. As the list was generated, it was separated into two subheadings. This list included thirty students whose first language is English and thirty students whose first language is Spanish. This list was requested by the researcher for the two years of collected data used in this project. The list stated the students' name, parents' names, addresses and phone numbers. Consequently, this list provided the researcher with the necessary demographic information to send out the parent questionnaires in both English (appendix A) and Spanish (appendix B).

Methods for Collecting Data

The participating families were sent a questionnaire during the 2001-2003 and 2002-2003 school years in English

and Spanish with fourteen questions that needed to be answered (Appendices A & B). Along with this questionnaire, was a cover letter stating the name of the researcher, reason for the study and the name of the participating supervisor and university. Along with this information was included the phone number of the researcher, should any questions arise to the purpose of the project, and for clarification. Also included was a self-addressed stamped envelope with the researcher's home address. In the first year of the study, sixty questionnaires were sent out and eighteen were returned. No phone calls from parents were received. The second year, fifty-seven questionnaires were sent out and thirteen were returned. Again no phone calls were received. The second year of the study found three student openings that had still not been filled for the sixty student slots allotted for the three classes. In total, one hundred seventeen surveys were sent out with thirty-one returned giving a return percentage rate of twenty-six for both years together (figure 2).

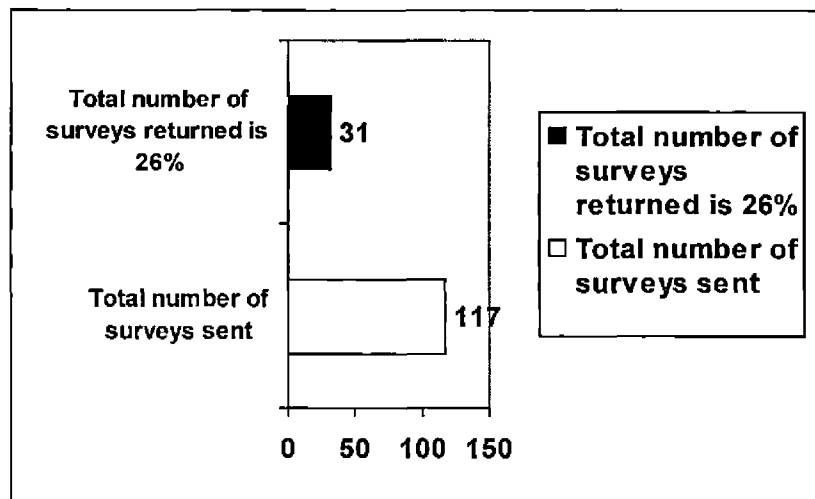


Figure 2. Total Number of Surveys Sent and Received

The data was then transferred to index cards with the questions written above and a yes/no column was then written under the question. Tally marks were used to mark in the affirmative or negative according to the response given by the parents. The questions that required more information other than a yes/no answer were set up the same way. For example, a question that asked for the dominant home language was set up with an English column and a Spanish column (Appendix C).

Open-ended questions were also included in the data collection and had a different way of being sorted. All statements were transferred to individual index cards. Therefore, some surveys had one index card because one open-ended answer was given and some had four index cards because four answers were given. Answers were written in

the language in which they were received, whether English of Spanish. All statements were coded by the year of the survey (year one or year two) and the families' last name. This was done so the researcher could go back and read the statement again in the parent's own writing.

The open-ended statements were then coded and sorted by the "code and chunk" method. Five main topics were discovered along with an "other" heading. This "other" heading included reasons stated by one or two parents that did not fit into another heading.

Parents were also asked if they would be interested in answering other questions by giving their name and phone number. This information was not transferred to cards. The researcher wanted to keep the information directly on the survey in case questions came up regarding the answers given.

Finally, not all respondents answered every question. Therefore, some of the totals for answers to individual questions did not add up the total amount of surveys received.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Questions One and Two

The first question asked for the parents to write their name. This question was followed by the question asking the age of the child that was enrolled in the program. Some parents wrote the ages of all of their children that were enrolled in the Dual Immersion program. The majority of the parents answered that their children were five years old at the time the survey was completed.

Question Three

Question number three asked: Which language is spoken most at home. Figure 3 shows the results of this question. Seventeen families spoke mostly English in the home accounting for fifty five percent of the total. Spanish was spoken mostly in the home in eleven of the surveys accounting for thirty six percent of the total. Finally, three families answered that they spoke both languages equally in the home. This made up nine percent of the results returned.

"Which language is spoken most at home?"

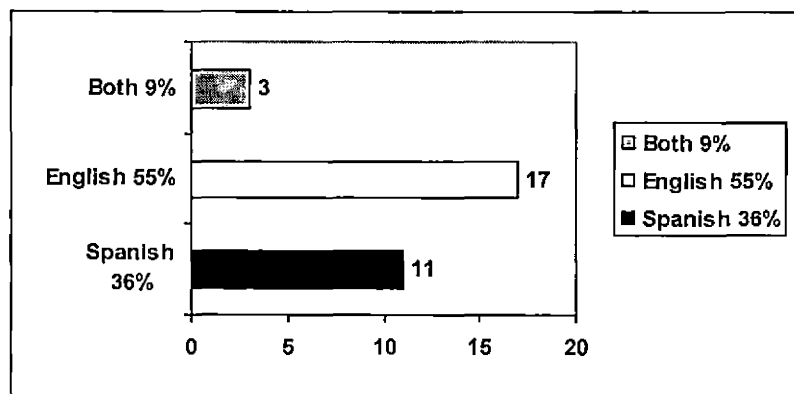


Figure 3. Language is Spoken in the Home

Question Four

The fourth question on the survey asked for parents to respond to the following statement: preschool experience in Spanish. Figure 4 shows that twenty-three families or eighty-five percent of the respondents stated there was no preschool experience in Spanish. Four families or fifteen percent of the respondents stated that they did have some preschool experience in Spanish.

"Did your child have any preschool experience in Spanish?"

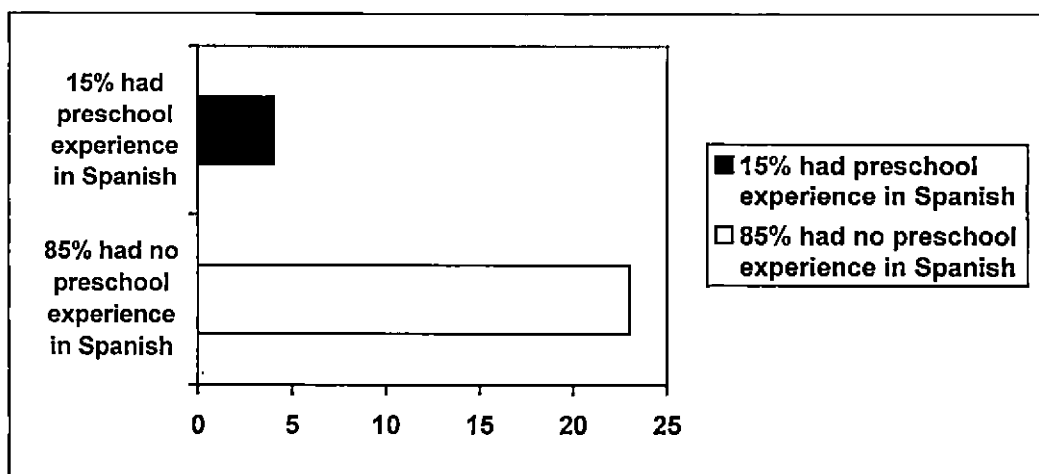


Figure 4. Percentage of Students with Preschool Experience in Spanish

Question Five

Question five asked, "Do one or both parents speak Spanish?" The combined results from both years state that twenty families or sixty five percent said that one or both of the parents spoke Spanish. Eleven families or thirty five percent said that neither of the parents spoke Spanish (figure 5).

"Do one or more parents speak Spanish?"

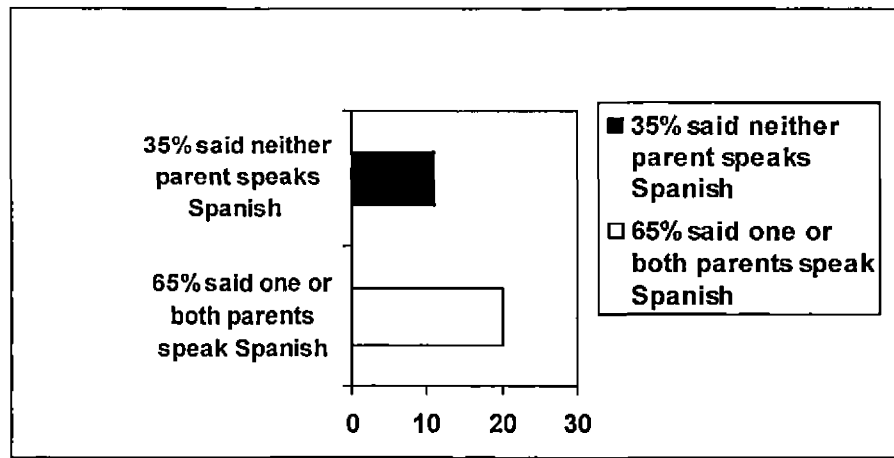


Figure 5. Percentage of Parents that Speak Spanish

Question Six

The question that followed asked "Do one or more grandparents speak Spanish?" Twenty-two respondents or seventy one percent stated that yes: one or more grandparents did speak Spanish. Nine of the respondents or twenty nine percent stated that there were no grandparents that spoke Spanish (figure 6).

"Do one or more grandparents speak Spanish?"

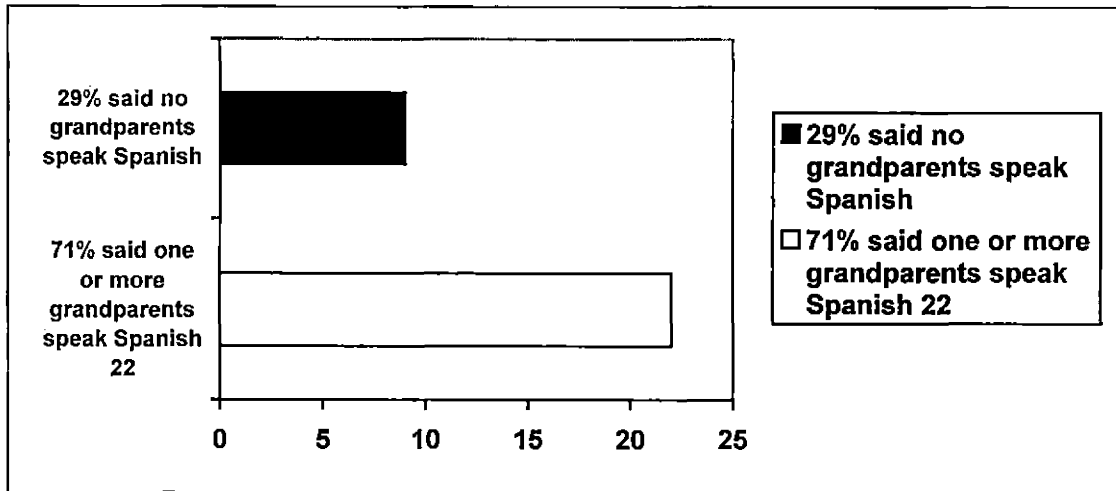


Figure 6. Percentage of Families that have Grandparents that Speak Spanish

Open Ended Questions

The following question was an open-ended question that asked, "How did you hear about this program?" Figure 7 shows that there were seven different responses to this question. The answer "friend" received nine responses or thirty percent. This response was followed by "family" with eight responses or twenty seven percent. Next, four families or thirteen percent were told about the program at a Two-Way informational meeting that was given by district personnel. Three respondents or ten percent stated that they received information directly from the school that had the program. Another three responses or ten percent stated that they already had a child enrolled in the program. Two

families or seven percent stated that they received information about the program from the preschool that their child attended. Finally, one parent or three percent stated that she received her information from the Two-Way Immersion directory on the internet.

"How did you learn about the dual immersion program?"

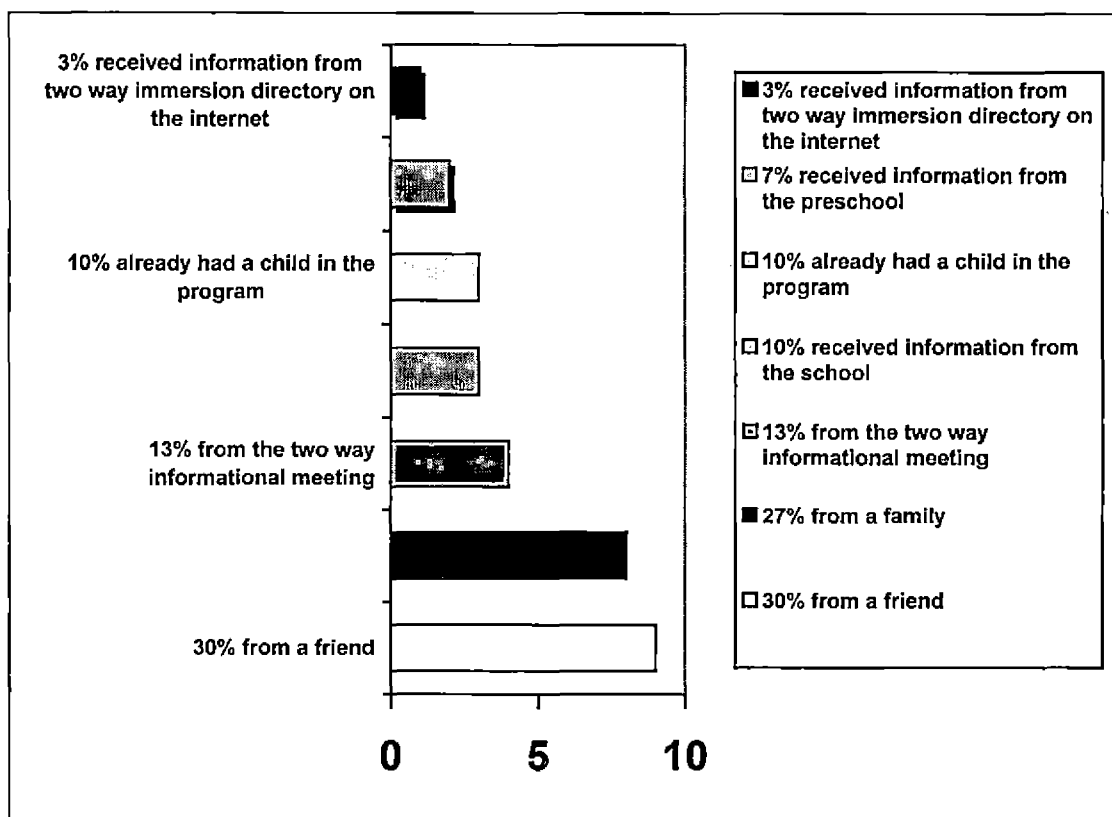


Figure 7. Percentages of How Parents Learned about the Dual Immersion Program

Parental Choice

The next question on the survey was also an open-ended question. Parents were asked, "Why did you

decide to enroll your child into a Dual Immersion (TWI) program? Please write all of the reasons you considered."

The thirty-one respondents stated a combined total of seventy-six reasons they chose to enroll their children in the program. All of the responses were put in groups of similar reasons this resulted in a total of five main reasons. A sixth category labeled "other" had responses that did not fit into one of the main categories. To be considered a main category, at least two similar reasons had to be placed under one main heading.

First Most Frequent Response

The response with the most reasons from parents was that they wanted their children to be bilingual and biliterate (figure 8). There were twenty-three total responses in this area with thirteen or fifty seven percent coming from English speaking homes and ten or forty-three percent coming from Spanish speaking homes.

"Wanted their children to become bilingual and biliterate."

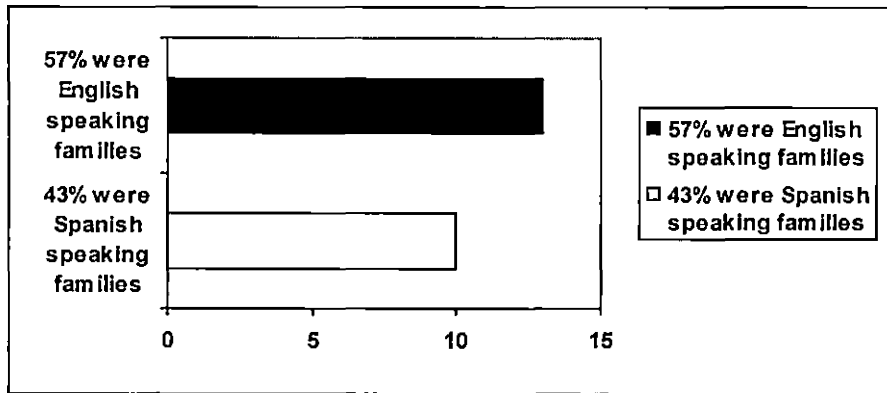


Figure 8. Percentage of Parents that wanted their Children to be Bilingual Biliterate

Some of the comments were as follows:

- "Why would I or how could I pass up such a great opportunity of learning two languages starting at such a young age." (Pam, English speaker)
- "I wanted my child to learn a second language." (Faith, English speaker)
- "(I) want my child to be bilingual/biliterate." (Tanisha, English speaker)
- "*Porque es mejor para el niño y para mi como mamá pare que el aprenda bien su Español y su Ingles.*" ("Because it is better for the child and for me as a mother that he learns well both

his Spanish and English.") (Rosa, Spanish speaker)

- *"Porque yo pienso que es mucho mejor doble inmersión que un solo idioma."* ("Because I think that dual immersion is much better than just one language.") Selma, Spanish speaker)
- *"Para mi y para este país es muy importante que hablemos dos o más idiomas."* ("Because for me and for this country it is very important that we speak two or more languages.") (Gabriela, Spanish speaker)
- *"Es muy importante ahora en este país hablar dos idiomas."* ("It is very important that now in this country that we speak two languages.") (María, Spanish speaker)

Second Most Frequent Response

The response with the second most reasons was that parents were looking ahead to their child's future. Parents believe that opportunities can increase with the knowledge of two or more languages. Of the fourteen responses noted ten or seventy-one percent were from English speaking families (figure 9).

"Wanted better opportunities for their children."

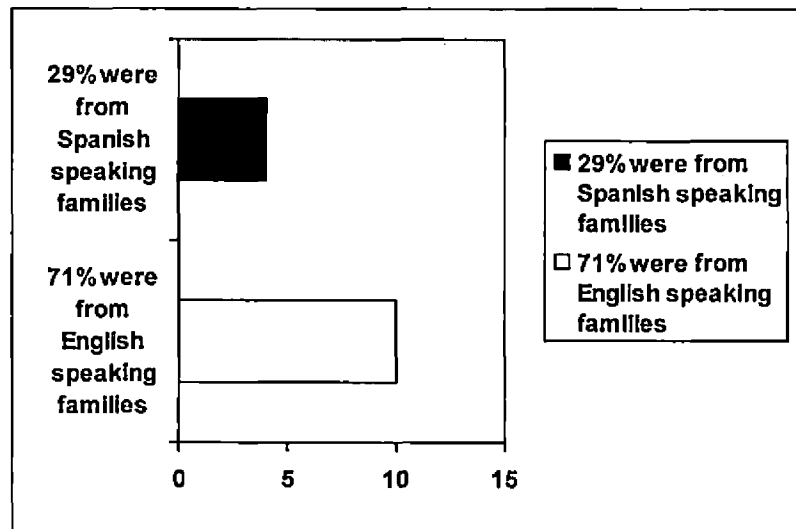


Figure 9. Percentage of Parents that wanted Better Future Opportunities for their Children

Some of the more interesting statements were:

- "I see how not knowing Spanish holds me back in the world and I want to give my daughter the opportunity to learn, especially while she's young."
- "She will be a step above others being bilingual." (Megan, English speaker)
- "It will be positive for him as an adult (jobs, communication)." (Ashley, English speaker)
- "Her future looks brighter knowing two languages." (Maria, bilingual speaker)

- *"El día de mañana sea un bien para él y para todos nosotros."* ("Tomorrow it will be good for him and for all of us.") (Rosa, Spanish speaker)
- *"Un mejor futuro para ellos."* ("A better future for them.") (Maria, Spanish speaker)
- *"Porque hay más oportunidades para ellos en el futuro."* ("Because there are more opportunities for them in the future.") (Consuelo, Spanish speaker)

Third Most Frequent Response

The third most noted reason for enrollment in a Two Way program was that parents wanted to expose their child to a different culture than their own. Notably, all of the responses in this area were from families that speak mostly or only English in the home (figure 10). Eight families responded with statements and feelings about different cultures.

"Wanted their children exposed to different cultures."

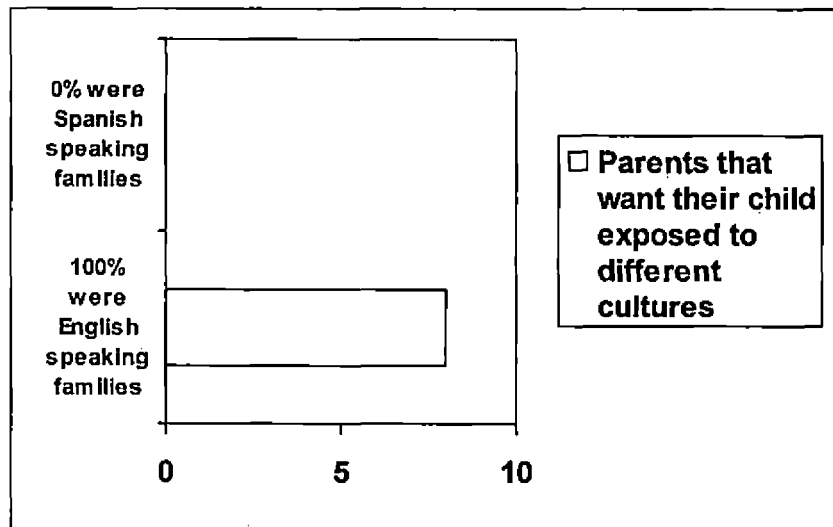


Figure 10. Percentage of Parents that wanted their Children Exposed to Different Cultures

Some of the more interesting statements were:

- "(He) will be able to communicate with many cultures." (Tanya, English speaker)
- "Great opportunity to learn Spanish and about the Hispanic culture." (Becky, English speaker)
- "Awareness of their culture and relationship to their heritage." (Karen, bilingual speaker)
- "A good way to introduce him to multiculturalism." (Ashley, English speaker)
- "I also felt it would open up doors in their minds that usually are not opened until later." (Faith, English speaker)

- “We felt the fact that our child will be friends with children who come from Spanish speaking only families. Diversity is great!” (Josie, English Speaker)
- “I felt it would be a good opportunity to be exposed to children who spoke a different language.” (Faith, English speaker)

Fourth Most Frequent Response

The fourth reason stated by families was that they wanted to build a family connection through language. Five responses were given in this area with three or sixty percent coming from English speaking families and two or forty percent coming from Spanish speaking families (figure 11).

"Wanted to build a family connection through language."

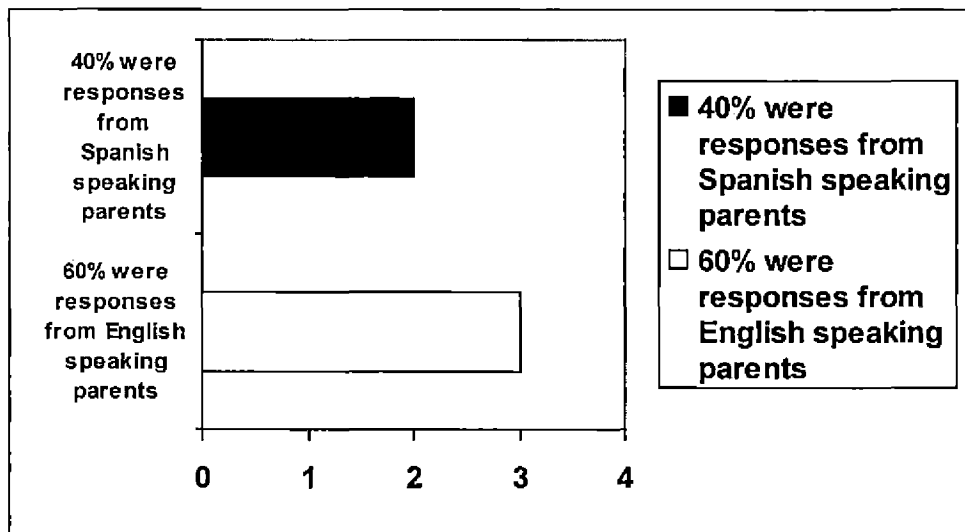


Figure 11. Percentage of Parents that wanted to Build a Family Connection through Language

The statements read as follows.

- "Speaking Spanish would enhance my children's relationships with their Spanish-speaking relatives." (Lara, Bilingual speaker)
- "Desire for my children to have the ability to communicate with my Spanish-speaking relative." (Karen, Bilingual speaker)
- "So she could speak to her family members that don't speak English." (Megan, English speaker)
- "*Que no se pierda las raíces y la cultura del cual de donde venimos.*"
("That they will not lose their roots and their

culture from which we came.") (Consuelo, Spanish speaker)

- "Por nuestras raíces y familia." ("For our roots and family.") (Adela, Spanish speaker)

Fifth Most Frequent Response

The last main topic of interest regarded the desire for children to be challenged academically. Interestingly, all of the four responses came from English speaking families (figure 12).

"Wanted their child to be challenged academically."

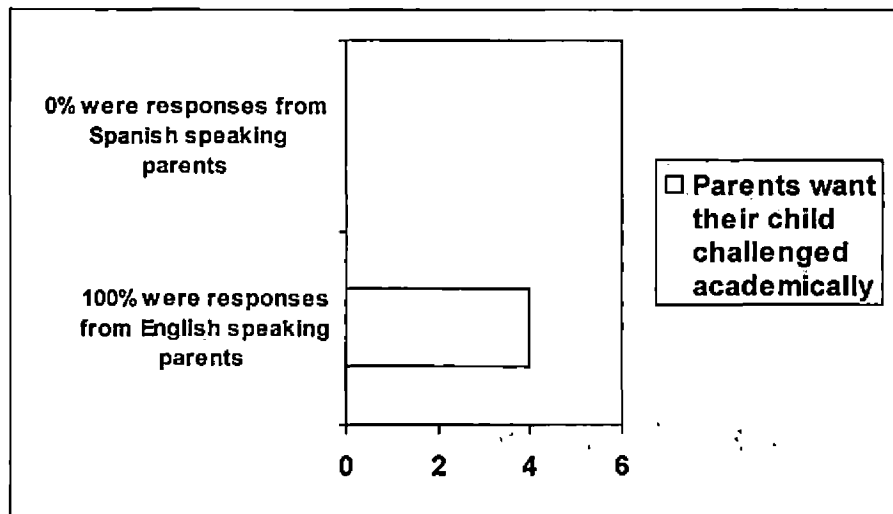


Figure 12. Percentage of Parents that wanted their Children to be Challenged Academically

Parents stated:

- "Academic structure seems more challenging."
(Grace, bilingual speaker)

- "To challenge my child." (Dira, English speaker)
- "(Child's name) would be less likely to get bored." (Josie, English speaker)
- "I wanted to challenge him academically."
(Ashley, English speaker)

In tallying up responses there were many that did not fit into a main category. These responses gave personal feelings, reasons and opinions. Of the twenty-four noted responses, seventeen were in English and seven were in Spanish.

Two parents stated they did not speak English and could not help with homework. Two parents, also Spanish-speaking stated that it seemed like a good program. Three parents stated that they believe learning a second language is good for the brain.

- "I believe that biliteracy can increase cognitive skills." (Ashley, English speaker)
- "Learning a second language is good for your brain." (Lara, bilingual speaker)
- "We know that being bilingual increases intelligence." (Josie, English speaker)

Parents also noted a Southern California Connection to learning a second language.

- "Spanish is very useful in our area (Southern California)." (Lara, bilingual speaker)
- "Spanish is a very important language and is spoken by many." (Nicole, English speaker)

Finally, two other interesting comments came from the same parent.

- "Thought peer-group would better. Fewer troublemakers." (Amy, English speaker)
- "Thought parents of classmates would be similar to us in that we want more for our kids." (Amy, English speaker)

Random Parent Responses

Although the following parent comments did not fit into any specific category, they were of interest to the researcher. It shows that parents did take several personal feelings into placing their children into the Dual Immersion program:

- "As a parent, it is my duty to facilitate success for my children's future. It is my duty to teach my children all I know and to find ways for them to learn what I cannot teach them."
(Nicole, English speaker)

- "Because Latinos are looked down if they don't speak Spanish." (Maria, bilingual speaker)
- "*Porque observo todo lo que mi hija (hija mayor) aprendió.*" ("Because I see all that my (previous) daughter has learned.") (Tere, Spanish speaker)
- "*Me gusta porque mi hijo no habla muy bien y le sirve mucho para que aprenda hablar más bien.*" ("I like it because my son does not speak well and it will help him learn to speak better.") (Gloria, Spanish speaker)
- "Para ayudar con la tarea. No hablo Ingles." ("To help with homework. I do not speak English.") (Carolina, Spanish speaker)

Question Eight

This survey also included other statements that helped the researcher to see if these parents already had prior experience in the program. The question asked, "Do you have any other children enrolled in the program?" Twelve or thirty-nine percent of the families, stated that yes, they did have children that were previously enrolled or currently enrolled in the program and nineteen or sixty-one percent said that no, they did not have any

other children in the program (figure 13). I also asked the ages of the children. The children ranged from ages seven to eleven years.

"Do you have children that are currently enrolled in the Dual Immersion program?"

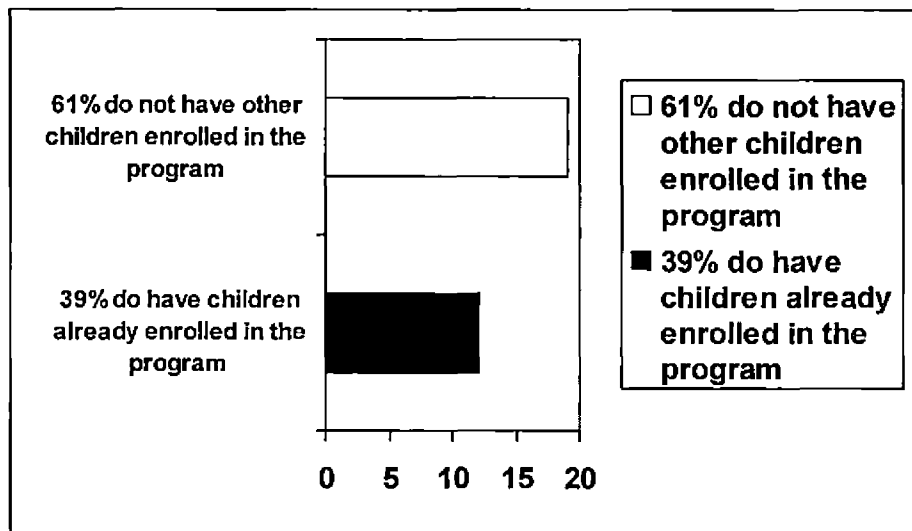


Figure 13. Percentage of parents with other children in the Dual Immersion Program

Question Nine

Also asked in the survey were questions requesting more background information. The question, "Do you live within SUSD boundaries?" was asked to get a number of how many parents bring their children from other neighboring towns. Twenty parents or seventy percent answered in the affirmative stating that they did live within district boundaries. Eight families or twenty-nine percent stated

that they lived outside of the district boundaries (figure 14).

"Do you live within the Springfield Unified School District Boundaries?"

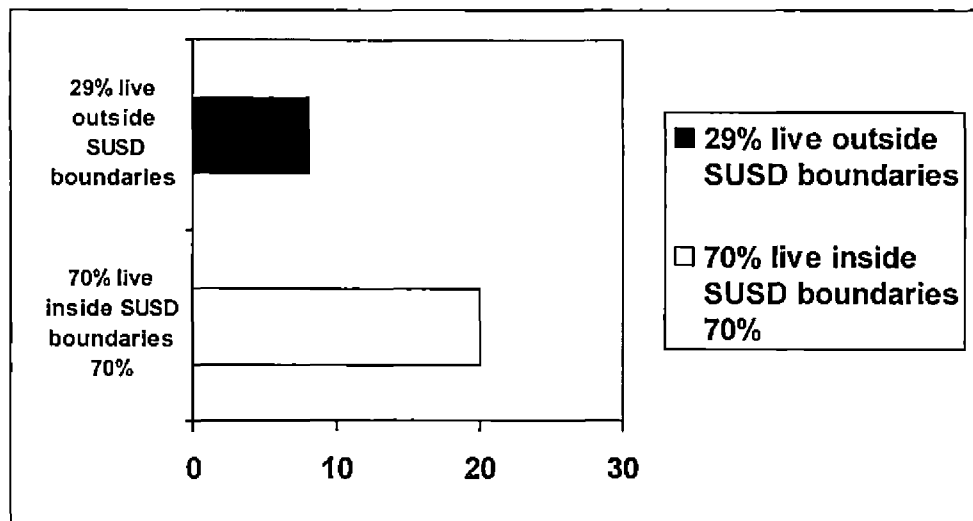


Figure 14. Percentage of Parents that Live in Springfield Unified School District Boundaries

Question Ten

Also asked of parents, "Did you attend the informational meeting?" Twenty-eight families stated that in fact, they did attend the meeting and three or ten percent stated they did not (figure 15). This meeting was conducted to respond to any areas of interest or concern that parents may have had. District personnel and kindergarten teachers conducted this meeting.

"Did you attend the district sponsored informational meeting before school started?"

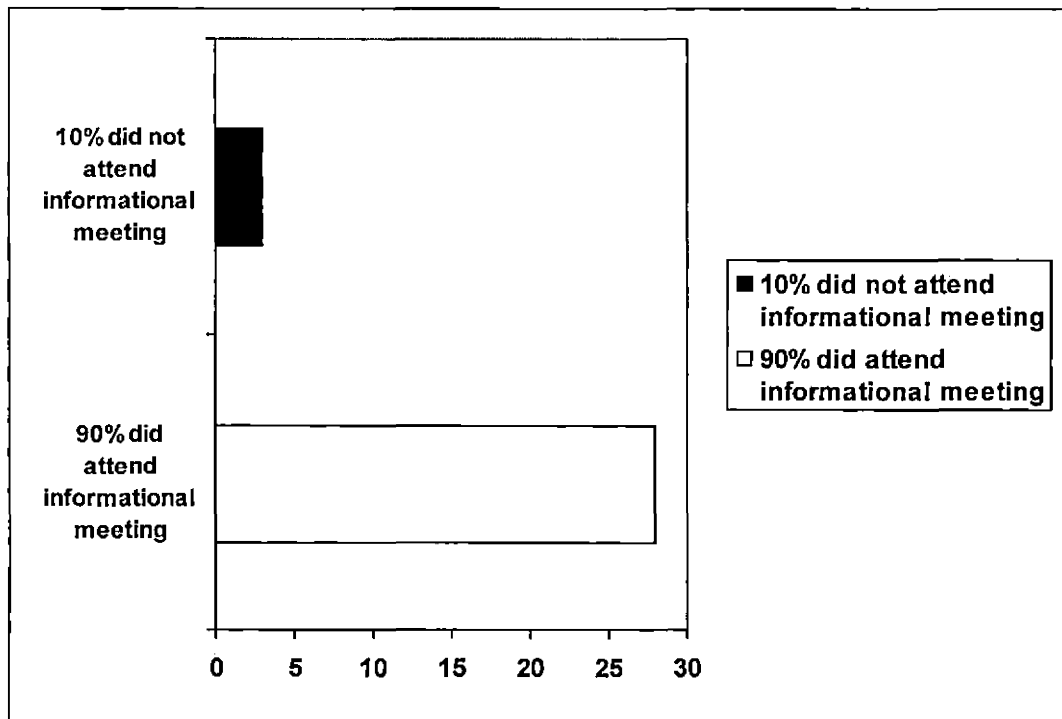


Figure 15. Percentage of Parents that Attended the District Sponsored Informational Meeting

Question Eleven

Classroom visits were encouraged before enrollment into the program and the question, "Did you visit the classrooms?" was posed. Thirteen families or fifty-four percent stated they did observe classrooms and eleven or forty-six percent stated they did not (figure 16). This was also a way that the district's personnel enable the

families to judge for themselves if the program is the right fit for their children.

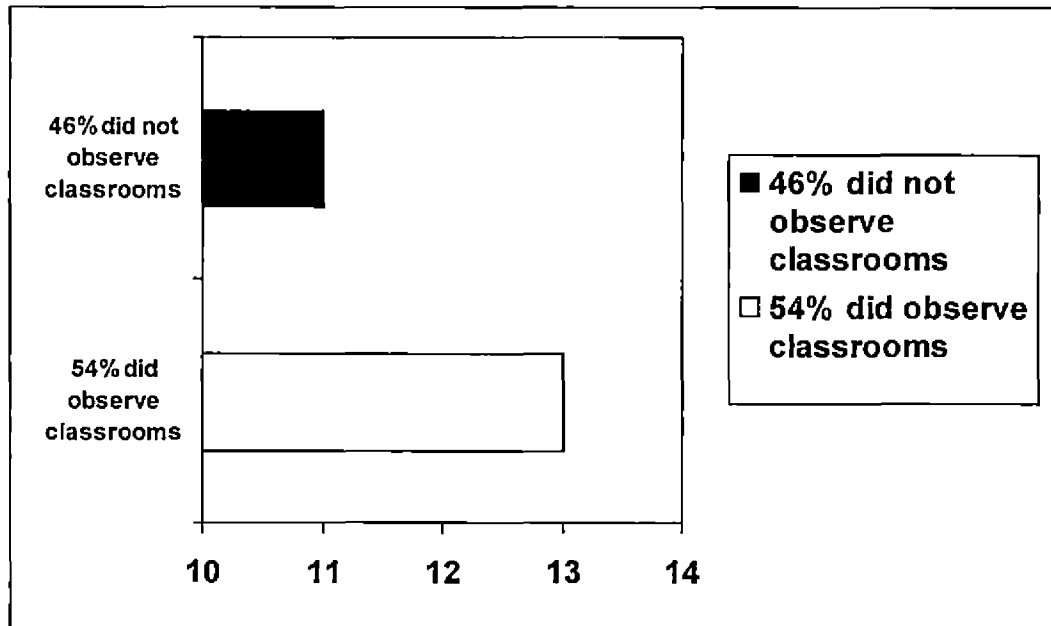


Figure 16. Percentage of Parents that Observed Dual Immersion Classrooms before Enrolling their Children in the Program

Question Twelve

Finally, the survey concluded with the question, "Would you be willing to be interviewed to a later date about your thought regarding Dual Immersion (TWI): All parents stated they would indeed be willing to be interviewed. Although no interviews were conducted, the information was asked of parents in case the researcher needed to clarify any statements or comments.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The parents that responded to this survey came from different backgrounds, although most were monolingual, some were bilingual. These monolingual parents were looking for alternative educational opportunities not available in most areas. They saw a need for fully developed bilingual/biliterate skills and were hoping that this program would provide that for their children. The monolingual Spanish speakers were also looking at maintaining their children's primary language while including English literacy.

Interestingly, many of the comments written by parents in the survey match the statements written by authors in the literature review. Parents want to give their children advantages that may help them in an ever changing, multicultural world. These parents, English speaking, Spanish speaking and bilingual want to foster biliterate citizens that value cultures and languages.

Conclusions

In comparing the reasons for enrollment in the Dual Immersion program to the findings in the literature

review, many similarities were discovered. The first being that according to the literature review, parents see the value of being bilingual in a society of diverse cultures (Craig, 1996). This validates the response from parents in the survey that states that they want their children to be bilingual. This was also written in Bader's (2000) chart (figure 1). Both English dominant and Spanish dominant parents see the advantages of additive bilingualism and see Dual Immersion as a means of achieving that for their children.

The second reason as discovered by the researcher for enrollment in the program by parents was that they wanted better opportunities for their children. This was also noted in the literature review. Craig states that parents are already thinking about their children's future opportunities. As discovered by the researcher, parents in this rural area are thinking ahead at futures opportunities that will come to their children because of the advantage of knowing two languages. Both English dominant and Spanish dominant parents note these ideas in their responses to the survey.

Baker (2000 p.2) notes in his chart, (figure 1), that one of the advantages of being bilingual is "greater tolerance and less racism." This exposure was also noted

by Craig (1996). Parents noted this same sentiment and it was third in the reasons of enrollment in the Dual Immersion program. Parents wrote that they wanted their children to learn about different cultures or to learn more about their culture by using language as a means of instruction. As stated by parent Faith, "I (also) felt it would open up doors in their minds that usually are not opened until later. This rural area where the study was conducted has a high percentage of non-white students and by exposing these children to different cultures early in their educational career, the children would develop empathy towards those people.

Recommendations for Further Research

In conducting this project, many questions were discovered that would require further research. These questions include the following:

1. How many students enrolled in a Two Way program in Kindergarten are still enrolled in the third grade?
2. How many students enrolled in a Two Way program in Kindergarten are still enrolled in the sixth grade?

3. How many students enrolled in a Two Way program in Kindergarten graduate from a Two Way program?
4. How do test scores of Two Way students compare to scores from students in a traditional educational program?
5. How many students become truly bilingual/biliterate and how is it measured?
6. How do parents feel about a Two Way program after their child has been enrolled in said program for 2 years?

Summary

This project was designed in order to find out why parents chose the alternative bilingual program, Dual Immersion, for their children. The project was conducted in the Springfield Unified School District over a two-year period. The researcher sent out surveys in both English and Spanish to all families that enrolled their children in Kindergarten for the following school year. These surveys were coded and chunked by answers and comments made by the parents, analyzed and put into the results section of the project.

The results of the literature review showed that there were many reasons for enrollment into the program

including exposure to multiculturalism and becoming bilingual/biliterate by learning a new language or maintaining a primary language while learning English. Future opportunities in the workplace were also noted in the literature review.

The survey results coincided with the results noted by the authors in the literature review. Parents stated that they firstly were looking to give their children the ability to be bilingual. Spanish speaking parents wanted their children to maintain their primary language while learning English. Opportunities in the future, as written in the literature review, were also in the results section of this project. English-speaking parents also wanted their children to be multicultural by having them interact with children of other cultures. Both English speaking and Spanish speaking parents noted that they wanted a connection within their families by having their children learning a new language learn or maintain the language of their culture. Finally, English-speaking parents noted a wish to have their children academically challenged by maintaining their primary language while learning a new language.

The results of this project showed no new data as found in the results of the literature review. Parental

reasons for enrollment into the Dual Immersion program were also noted by the authors. The parents and authors both noted a variety of reasons that families choose to enroll their children into the bilingual program, Dual Immersion.

APPENDIX A
PARENT SURVEY: ENGLISH

Parental Choice Survey

Your name _____

Child's age: _____

Which language do you speak most at home? _____

Preschool experience in Spanish _____

Do one or both parents speak Spanish? _____

Do one or more grandparents speak Spanish? _____

How did you hear about this program?

Why did you decide to enroll your child into the Dual-Immersion program? Please write all of the reasons you considered.

Do you have any other children enrolled in the program? _____

If so, what are their ages? _____

Do you live within the Springfield Unified School District boundaries? _____

Did you attend the information meeting for parents of new enrollees? _____

Did you visit the classrooms before you made your decision to enroll your child?

Would you be willing to be interviewed at a later date about your thoughts regarding Dual-Immersion? _____

If so, please print your name and telephone number

APPENDIX B
PARENT SURVEY: SPANISH

Inquesta de padres

Su nombre _____

Edad del niño/a. _____

Lenguaje que hablan más en casa. _____

Experiencia en pre-school en la idioma Español. _____

¿Hablan uno o dos de los padres Español? _____

¿Hablan uno o más de los abuelos en Español? _____

¿Cómo se informó usted de este programa?

¿Por que decidió matricular a su niño/a en el programa de Doble Inmersión? Por favor escriba todas las razones que considero.

¿Tiene usted otros niños en este programa? _____

Si tienen, ¿cuáles son sus edades? _____

¿Vive usted en la área de asistencia del Distrito Escolar de Springfield? _____

¿Asistió la junta de información para padres? _____

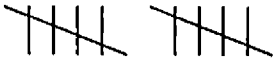
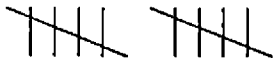
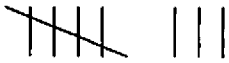

¿Observo las clases antes de decidir matricular a su niño? _____

¿Podrá ofrecerse para una entrevista en persona acerca de sus pensamientos del programa de Doble Inmersión? _____

Por favor apunte su nombre y su numero de teléfono.

APPENDIX C
DATA COLLECTION SAMPLE

What language is spoken most at home?

Spanish	English	Both
	 	

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