

**Handbook of Special Education
Research and Practice**

Volume 4

Emerging Programs

Edited by

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PERGAMON PRESS

OXFORD · NEW YORK · SEOUL · TOKYO

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Challenges for Limited English Proficient Students and the Schools

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Abstract—Children who attend schools that require proficiency in a language other than the one of their homes are faced with dramatic challenges. In turn, the schools are challenged to meet their special demands so that the children's educational experiences are minimally meaningful. This chapter selectively reviews the work that has been done historically and currently of education and the culturally and linguistically diverse child. The goal of the chapter is to provide an even account of the cognitive, social, psychological, and sociocultural factors that play interrelated roles in the education of these special children in the United States.

Introduction

The abilities to speak, understand, read, and write English are basic to achieving even a minimal amount of academic success in the United States. However, many children enter school with none of those skills, and for them learning English is a major part of their schooling experience. In a real sense, students whose English proficiency develops primarily through schooling are challenged to far more work at school, and perhaps more difficult work, than their English speaking peers. At the same time, the school has additional responsibility and their own challenge to deliver both content and language to the limited English proficient (LEP) student.

The problem of educating minority language students is not one limited to a small number of children, nor is it restricted to a specific geographical area of the United States, and it does not involve only a handful of different first languages. The number of school-age children (age 5–17) who speak a language other than English at home is 9.6% of the United States' population which equals over four and a half million school-age children. The majority of those children reside in three states with 23.5% in California, 17.5% in Texas, and 13.4% in New York (Arias, 1986, Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 1980 Census of Population). The remaining 45% are distributed throughout the

other 48 states (Baca & Cervantes, 1984). Most of the minority language population is Spanish speaking but there are large numbers of speakers of Asian languages, including Vietnamese, Chinese, Korean, and Hmong. Increased immigration in the 1970s and 1980s has contributed to the incidence of minority language students throughout the country, but limited English skills are also prevalent for a part of the Native American and Native Alaskan population. In fact, minority languages, that is, languages other than English, have always been a reality of American life in its brief history.

Not all of those who speak a language other than English are limited in English; some are bilingual and are relatively proficient in both their mother tongue and English. However, most minority language children are LEP and are not bilingual upon entering school. During their time in school they both learn their second language and learn in their second language. For many of these children contact with English begins with school, and for some their most substantial contact continues to be the school while their mother tongue is the dominant language of their communities and within their families (Shannon, 1987). Estimates of the number of LEP students is between 1.5 million and 5 million school-age children (O'Malley, 1982; Waggoner, 1984, 1986).

Nothing about being limited in the majority language of this country and succeeding in school is simple. A complex set of factors influence what being LEP means at school and in one's life. This chapter will examine the issues in three major review sections prefaced by a background section and definitions. First, theory and research regarding the cognitive aspects of bilingualism will be considered as they are relevant to the LEP student. The second section considers linguistic factors of being LEP, including research about second language acquisition and individual variation. The third part will cover the societal and psychological level of how LEP students experience schooling. The societal level specific to the United States and the individual psychological and social

psychology of those limited in English will be considered. The final sections of this chapter will include a look at current practice that has been informed by the research on LEP students' experience in school representing each of the perspectives taken in the chapter, and a summary.

The focus of this chapter is on LEP students in United States schools. However, limited language proficiency of immigrant or minority children in schools is an issue that is not restricted to the United States. The issue has gained international importance and attention because the situation that has been experienced in the United States is being felt throughout the world. The Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) recently published *One School: Many Cultures* (1989) which examines language minority children in schools in countries throughout the world, including Sweden, Finland, the United Kingdom, Ireland, Spain, Italy, Yugoslavia, New Zealand, Australia, Canada, and the United States. The problems specific to any one of these countries are surprisingly similar to those here in the United States, with differences lying mainly in the histories and cultures involved. The thorough examination of the issues for the United States that this chapter provides will be useful toward an understanding of limited language proficiency and minority children in schools everywhere.

Background

In the little more than two hundred year history of the United States, immigration has continued to be a fact of life. The United States is almost entirely a nation of immigrants, with the exception of Native Americans, and they have arrived from almost every shore on the face of the earth. In the 1970s and 1980s immigration from Mexico, Central America, Southeast Asia, Asia, and the Pacific Islands has increased dramatically. The Mexican origin population alone has grown at a rate eight times that of the total population (Browning & Cullen, 1986). Estimates of the numbers of Asians and Pacific Islanders are projected at 4% of the nation's population and 11% of California's population by the year 2000 (Ima & Rumbaut, 1989). The countries of origin for the new immigration are as different as those of the immigration occurring at the early part of this century. Northern and North Central Europeans represented the bulk of the original immigration establishing the new nation, while Southern and South Central Europeans came later.

A multitude of languages has accompanied the cultural diversity that immigration has brought to American life. It is, however, a curious fact that English has come to be the majority language of this nation. Historical examinations have shown that English persisted as the national language rather haphazardly, and that 19th century education in this country was offered in many immigrant languages (Crawford, 1989; Heath, 1981; Kloss, 1977; Wagner, 1981). Certainly no legislative attempts at the

national level to this day have been successful at declaring English the official language. Heath (1981) points out that the lack of a national policy is in the spirit of the fundamental right to liberty upon which this nation was established. There existed an unwritten bilingual tradition that was not questioned until the turn of the century when it came to be that use of any language but English was viewed with suspicion. The American public's discomfort with the new and increasing influx of people from southern and eastern Europe at the early part of the century inspired a protective nature that used the ability to speak English as a symbol of being American. The association of speaking English with being American was also expected of the territories hoping to be incorporated into the Union. For example, in 1902 Senator Beveridge asserted that if New Mexico aspired to statehood its residents need to be "assimilated to 'American' language and customs" (Wagner, 1981, p. 39). The language of which he spoke was, of course, English.

Since the mid-1960s, minority language groups have been revitalizing the bilingual tradition. Probably the main factor that influenced minority language groups' ability to do this was the Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and particularly the ruling after *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) establishing the right of every student to an equal education. Through a series of legislative actions at the state and federal levels, minority language groups demanded their rights for equal education. Underlying much of their demands has been the recognition of their language rights; that to learn in English the minority language child must first learn English. The Bilingual Education Act passed in 1968 established resources for development of a compensatory program to assist LEP students with their learning of English. In the years following the Bilingual Education Act numerous cases were brought to local and district courts to demand that it be enforced. By 1974, a case went as far as the Supreme Court with *Lau v. Nichols*. The Chinese community in San Francisco claimed that their children's failure in school was due to their inability to understand the language of instruction. The result of that Supreme Court ruling and the various legislative activities has been the implementation of bilingual programs and the proliferation of English as a second language (ESL) programs, although the Court did not mandate exactly what schools had to do for the LEP student. In any case, formal recognition that one does not casually pick up a second language was an important result of that court action.

This brief history of recent legislation on behalf of minority language children also demonstrates how politically charged is the whole issue of the education of the LEP student. For example, some proponents of English language movements, those aimed at making English the official language of this country, feel that the nation is threatened by the large numbers of "others" and protecting the English language is one way to protect the integrity of the young nation (MacKaye, 1987). Language

easily takes on political importance in this way; it is used to identify one to a group or a status. In any case, it is axiomatic that to succeed in modern American society, being proficient in English is a requirement. Even after the Supreme Court ruling, common belief remains that one can learn English simply by being submerged in it at school. In other words, if a non-English speaking child simply participates in schooling carried out in English and plays among English speaking peers, that child will learn English, on his or her own. Public wisdom was, and continues to be, that the early immigrants succeeded in that way and so should the new immigrant. What gets ignored in this view is that the early immigrant did not need to finish high school or even achieve literacy in English to be gainfully employed and enjoy a fairly abundant American life (Chamot, 1988; Wong-Fillmore & Valadez, 1986). Today a high school diploma and concomitant basic English literacy skills are fundamental to achieving a modicum of success in America. Even with the efforts of the 1970s and 1980s with bilingual education and ESL programs, minority language students are more likely than any other group to drop out of school before graduating from high school. The drop-out problem is worse for those students from a Spanish language background, with statistics showing that these students are more likely to drop out than English speaking students (Steinberg, Blinde, & Chan, 1982; Waggoner, 1981). Waggoner (1981) states that:

language minority people in the United States who usually speak their native language are less than half as likely to have completed high school or to have attended college as people with English language backgrounds. They are more than ten times as likely to be among the five million people in the United States with fewer than five years of schooling. (p. 53)

This country is a nation of immigrants from virtually every other country in the world and they have brought and continue to bring with them their particular language heritage. The language heritage this young nation has adopted is English and the challenge to each immigrant is to learn English. The challenge to the educational system is to insure that this is made possible.

Definitions

Confusion exists over the following notions and terms (among others) commonly used in discussions about limited English proficiency. In this section we will introduce definitions as they are generally and currently agreed upon in the research literature and we will make clear the assumptions we are operating from.

Limited English Proficient (LEP). Recall that estimates for LEP students in the United States are between 1.5 and 5 million. One reason for the range is that the operational definition of LEP varies enormously. It can be assessed by self-report or report of parents about their

children, or use of standardized measures of any combination of speaking, comprehending, writing, and reading of English. Teachers' and other professionals' opinions or informal assessments are sometimes used. The standard or norm of English is problematic insofar as how one person is regarded as LEP or not. Another factor that greatly influences the differences in the LEP estimates is the way that reporting is done or not done by school districts.

Peng, Oxford, Stupp, and Pol (1982), in their review of analytic procedures used by various government agencies to gain information on the number of LEP children in the United States, found that each agency had a different goal in mind and used different criteria, therefore generating different numbers. In an attempt to define who LEP students are, the Office of Civil Rights developed an arbitrary set of levels with which schools could identify the population in need of special services. The five levels (from DeAvila & Duncan, 1978) are:

- A. Monolingual speaker of the language other than English (speaks the language other than English exclusively).
- B. Predominantly speaks the language other than English (speaks mostly the language other than English, but speaks some English).
- C. Bilingual (speaks both the language other than English and English with equal ease).
- D. Predominantly speaks English (speaks mostly English, but some of the language other than English).
- E. Monolingual speaker of English (speaks English exclusively).

These levels, however, are not operationally defined (DeAvila & Duncan, 1978). How one is measured or assessed enormously influences how one is classified. These issues will be addressed in detail in this chapter.

Language. This term will include the system of syntax, morphology, phonology, and semantics and pragmatics of a language in combination with speaking, comprehending, reading, and writing. Since we are discussing limited skills in a language needed for school tasks and within the context of education, it is important to note that we are usually considering this full description of language. However, whenever a different expectation of "language" is discussed, it will be made explicit.

LEP students speak a first language before learning English. The first language in this chapter is referred to as first language, L1, mother tongue, or native language. English is sometimes referred to as second language or L2.

Minority language. In the United States, a language other than English is a minority language, although it has come to include nonstandard varieties of English such as Black English Vernacular, Creole, and so forth. Only languages other than English will be discussed here and not nonstandard varieties of English as it is beyond the scope of the chapter. However, we assume, based on the literature, that many of the same issues that apply

in the case of minority language speakers also apply for speakers of nonstandard varieties.

Majority language. English is the majority language of the United States, although it has already been said in the background section that English is not the official language of this country as set forth by any formal national language policy.

Bilingualism. Throughout the chapter what is meant by the term bilingualism will be made clear. However, from the outset it should be stated that idealized bilingualism, as the word connoted, that is, completely equal abilities (of all language abilities) in two languages, is rare. More commonly, a person has more use of one of the languages as a function of using that language extensively for a variety of purposes. Minority language speakers in this country can have such a restricted use of the mother tongue that they can speak it very little and have a limited receptive facility with the language, such as to understand conversation among relatives.

In the United States it is often the case that the minority language speakers will learn English and gradually lose proficiency in their native language, a process called attrition. This type of bilingualism is subtractive rather than additive (Lambert & Tucker, 1972). Additive bilingualism, where there is no loss of the first language, is related to elite bilingualism and subtractive to folk bilingualism (Gaarder, 1977). Elite bilingualism is a voluntary learning of a second language whereas folk bilingualism is typical of immigrants and refugees who are required to learn a second language, that of the majority or host culture.

The Challenge of More Than One Language on Cognition

Debates about the relationship between language and cognition are long-standing. Knowing or learning a second language has been suspected of playing havoc with cognitive processes and, more recently, has been praised for enhancing them. Recently, several reviewers have pointed out that the social, political, and cultural issues that surround such investigations influence the way they are conducted and how findings are interpreted (Cummins, 1984; Hakuta, 1986; Hakuta, Ferdman, & Diaz, 1987). Undoubtedly the immigrant nature of the United States' population has influenced the way that research on this issue has been steadily pursued in this country since before the beginning of the 20th century. This first section, reviewing research on the relationship of cognition and bilingualism, is not meant to be exhaustive; rather, we present a historical perspective on influential and representative work throughout the 20th century and end with the most current work.

The 1962 study by Peal and Lambert marked a watershed for research on the relationship between bilingualism and intelligence. The majority of studies conducted previous to that time demonstrated that bilingual individuals performed less well than monolingual ones

on IQ tests and various other measures of intelligence (Saer, 1924; Smith, 1923; Yoshioka, 1929). The interpretation of the bilingual individuals' performance was that knowing two languages causes mental confusion. In fact the word "confusion" and references to knowing two languages co-occur in most concluding remarks. The Peal and Lambert study, however, found the opposite results; the bilingual individuals in their study outperformed their monolingual counterparts on both the nonverbal and verbal forms of tests of IQ. Furthermore, the monolingual individuals did not score higher than the bilinguals on any single subtest. The researchers explain that the difference in their findings from those of earlier studies was due to their careful controls for the following confounding variables: an operational definition of bilingualism, and matching the bilingual and monolingual groups for other variables that correlate with scores on tests of intelligence such as socioeconomic status (SES), age, and gender. Earlier studies, they pointed out, suffered from lack of controls. This topic is critical to how LEP students fare in schools because it is typically they who are the "bilinguals" that studies are concerned with.

One of the suspect practices of these early studies, including Peal and Lambert, is that of comparing bilingual with monolingual individuals. Sánchez (1934) made the observation that this kind of comparison had perhaps some dangerous and unstated purpose. He warned scholars that tests of intelligence should be used to help know how best to go about educating the child and not to compare various groups. He cited a study done by a Dr. T. R. Garth of Colorado who tested 1,000 Spanish speaking children in various communities in the Southwest. He found that the median IQ of these children was 78 or at the line below which is "moron." Sánchez (1934) asked:

Who would champion the thesis that half or more of the Spanish speaking, or any other such group, is dull, borderline, and feeble-minded when it is generally accepted that only 7% of "normal" groups be so classified? However, such a champion would find test results to support this cause. (p. 767)

Inherent problems of testing foreign or immigrant children became obvious from the efforts of the early studies. The children who entered school with little or no English were spoken of as having a "language handicap" and this disadvantage not only presented obstacles for their learning, but obviously also for the measurement of their "potential" to learn or whatever the IQ test purports to measure. Various studies before the Peal and Lambert study showed that bilingual individuals performed better on the nonverbal forms of intelligence tests and that perhaps by not testing them with the verbal form a more reliable measure could be done (e.g., Pintner, 1923). Anastasi and her colleagues conducted numerous studies of the measurement of IQ on Puerto Rican children living

in New York City. In the report of one study (Anastasi & Cordova, 1953), the authors warn readers that the nonverbal form of the IQ measure probably does not measure the same aspects of intelligence as the verbal form and therefore should not be substituted for testing of LEP students. However, the Puerto Rican children in these studies continued to receive low scores on measures such as the Cattell "culture-free" test of intelligence. This group of researchers attributed these results to "the very low socioeconomic level of the Puerto Rican children, their bilingualism which makes them deficient in both languages, their extreme lack of test sophistication, and their poor emotional adjustment to the school situation" (Anastasi & Cordova, 1953, p. 17).

By the time of the Peal and Lambert study, the factors of degree of bilingualism or how bilingual was defined, SES and other environmental variables reminiscent of those Anastasi and Cordova point out, and problems with the test measures themselves had emerged as those that must be considered when testing minority language children and particularly when comparing them with monolingual children (see Darcy, 1953, 1963, for reviews). Therefore, Peal and Lambert were able to control for those variables and have results demonstrating that the balanced or true bilingual individual, that is, the individual for whom both languages are equally developed, and who is of the middle class, is intellectually superior to the monolingual individual. However, these studies are correlational studies and could not state that bilingualism causes cognitive strengths or vice versa, and Peal and Lambert admit this. They interpreted their findings that the bilingual individuals outperformed the monolingual ones on both verbal and nonverbal tests as due to a mental flexibility enhanced by bilingualism. They cautioned that, because it is an asset to know English in Canada, children there are bilingual who come from homes where that which is needed to succeed is transmitted to the children. A related criticism has been made against the Peal and Lambert findings that says that bilingual individuals are self-selected and that they are a special kind of individual who has chosen to know more than one language and that their success at doing so indicates a superior intelligence independent of bilingualism (MacNab, 1979). This is an important point, because more recent studies have been forced to recognize that the LEP student in the United States is generally an involuntary learner of English, and therefore demonstrates a different type of bilingualism from that of the English and French bilingual citizens of Montreal, or perhaps many other locations.

These early studies focusing on childhood bilingualism were concerned with the "language handicap" of the immigrant, or the foreign child's success or failure in school. They were not really concerned with bilingualism, or the mother tongue; rather, the chief issue was about the learning of English (MacNab, 1979). Linguists, on the other hand, who had studied bilingualism and language development of their own children had been reporting glowing accounts of the children's abilities to

express themselves in both languages, to separate the two languages, and to do all this without any obvious harm to their intellectual development (Fantini, 1985; Leopold, 1939-1949; Ronjat, 1913). Perhaps the children of linguists, and particularly those whose parents are scrutinizing their language, can be said to be as special and self-selected as the bilingual individuals of Peal and Lambert's study, which predisposes them for advantages.

The relationship of bilingualism to intelligence that is assumed in all the studies in this section is what Hakuta et al. (1987) refer to as cognitive bilingualism, suggesting that being bilingual is part of the mental state of the individual. Studies since Peal and Lambert's landmark study that are in this tradition have increasingly paid attention to the specific mental or cognitive abilities that bilingualism either coincides with or has some kind of a causal relationship with. Balanced bilingual individuals, those with equal proficiencies in both languages, have consistently been shown to have advantages over monolinguals on measures of metalinguistic awareness (Bialystok, 1986; see Diaz, 1983, for a detailed review).

Diaz (1985) designed a study that addressed three gaps that he found in the research on cognitive bilingualism. First, since bilingual individuals are different from monolingual ones on more than just the ability to speak two languages, he called for research that did not compare the two groups but rather compared within bilingual individuals. Second, since the Peal and Lambert study the tendency was to use only balanced bilingual individuals in research as it was felt that it controlled for the language proficiency factor. However, since balanced bilingualism is extremely rare among minority language populations, information was needed about LEP students. Therefore, Diaz called for research that studied groups with different degrees of bilingualism. And finally, most studies had been correlational and had substantiated that bilingualism does coincide with other cognitive abilities, but what was needed was an idea of causality. Diaz's study, therefore, involved 100 Spanish dominant Puerto Rican children between the ages of 5 and 7 with different levels of English (second language) proficiency (high and low) and tested them at two points in time, a longitudinal component in order to assess directionality of the effects. Diaz also included measures of the family SES and family language background. The cognitive abilities that he measured included analogies, several metalinguistic awareness tasks, and tests of nonverbal abilities. Diaz found evidence from this study to support the hypothesis that the positive benefits of bilingualism can be observed most prominently in the early stages of bilingualism. The longitudinal data supported a model that cause and effect would be from bilingualism to cognitive abilities.

The notion of degree of bilingualism is an important one. The children in Diaz's study were in kindergarten and first grade and had varying levels of English proficiency, but were Spanish dominant. Some of the children were of the high category and others were at the lower levels, but all would be learning English as they went

through school. This is a typical profile of minority language students who come to school, but another profile is that of the language minority child who enters school with English as the dominant language but with some minority language background. What does their first language look like? Is the dominant language or the mother tongue sufficiently developed when the child comes to school? These questions are of particular concern for minority language children in the United States, because there is reasonable doubt that the minority language can survive, much less thrive, against the pressures of learning and using English. Also, assuming that minority language use at home and in the community were sufficient to allow a child to develop that language, at what point can it be assumed that it is sufficiently developed?

Diaz's study augmented Cummins' (1976, 1979) hypothesis that there is a threshold beyond which one must develop the first language and the second language before the positive effects of bilingualism become evident. Diaz's data suggest that there may be an earlier period in bilingual development when the cognitive consequences take place. In any case, it is clear that language development for the child exposed to more than one language involves attention to both languages.

The Challenge of Learning and Using a Second Language

So far we have discussed various notions of bilingualism, but this chapter is centrally concerned with LEP students and the problems they face in school. The transitory phase of limited proficiency could lead to bilingualism, but more importantly, all the studies of "bilinguals" up until Peal and Lambert were not of balanced bilingual individuals; many of the subjects were, in fact, LEP. Recall from the definitions set out in the introduction of the chapter that "bilingualism" has different variations. The minority language child is most often of the subtractive bilingual variety—that is, the transitory phase of LEP generally does not lead to bilingualism, rather it leads to English monolingualism. English receives powerful support through schooling and, without similar support, the mother tongue atrophies. We will explore some of the extralinguistic reasons for the subtractive nature of bilingualism for minority language children in later sections. Here, it is important to clarify who the LEP child is in relation to notions of bilingualism, particularly as it concerns their L1. The finding that LEP children are limited in their first language is common throughout the literature; the early studies reviewed above each conclude with or allude to this notion. However, in more recent work, researchers have considered the context-specific nature of how language behaviors are manifested and the considerable variation of how individuals approach learning and using a second language and their subsequent use or disuse of their first language. These new avenues for judging LEP children's

abilities and performance have been extremely insightful for determining the nature of bilingualism and of limited language abilities for minority language children.

Before we examine recent studies of the relative proficiency of bilingual children we will briefly consider one of the early studies of bilingual children's language development to illuminate how the more recent studies have evolved in both perspective and interpretation. Smith carried out several investigations of the language development of American children and various minority language groups in Hawaii. Her survey (Smith, 1939) of the language of 1,000 Hawaiian children included the spontaneous speech of the children. She analyzed the data in a number of ways, including the number of English words, the ratio of English to non-English words, length of utterances, and errors. These results were then examined for influence of race, sex, and parental background information. Concerned only with the children's English development, Smith concluded that the children from a minority language background were "severely retarded" in their English language development. This demoralizing conclusion was based on the number of errors the children made and the way in which they mixed the two languages (the ratio). She attributed the retardation to the use of pidgin (mixing) and bilingualism in the home (p. 271). The minority language children in Smith's study spoke a language other than English at home, in addition to English, and she reported that they spoke English at school. The spontaneous speech samples that Smith collected from the children were recorded while they were playing at home and with siblings. Consider Smith's major findings: the minority language children used "pidgin" and the bilingualism of their home had a negative effect on their English language development vis à vis switching or mixing the two languages.

With benefit of hindsight, we now know from many studies of bilingual communities that using both languages simultaneously, through codeswitching is common, a phenomenon that we will discuss in more detail later. It is not that the speaker cannot separate the two languages, rather that they choose not to, consciously or not. It is a speech style of bilingual communities and is learned within those communities, just as styles within one language are learned in monolingual communities. If the children had been asked to produce only English or only their other language for the speech samples, it is likely that they could have, particularly since Smith reports that the children spoke English at school. Smith simply gathered samples of natural language use that, if analyzed as "English" language use, would look entirely nonstandard. Recall that Smith counted the number of English words or their ratio to the other language among utterances. If in natural language use, some mother tongue words, particularly at home and at play among family members, will enter into the interaction, then the count was simply unfair. Again with the benefit of hindsight, the almost comically inappropriate assessment of the language of the Hawaiian children continued when Smith compared their vocabulary against a scale that

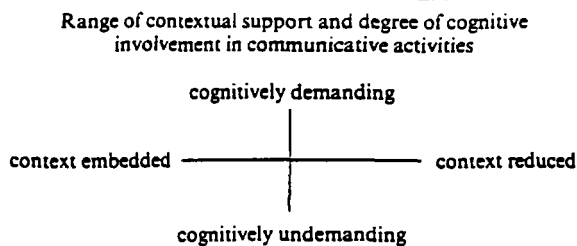
had been developed from and normed against American children in Iowa.

Work that examines the way that language behavior varies across contexts strongly suggests that minority language children are often wrongly assessed as not only limited in English but also in their L1. This insight owes much to the work of Labov (1972) where he looked at the language use of inner-city Black youth. After much trial and error, Labov and his colleagues discovered that under certain conditions the youth they were attempting to extract language from were nearly mute. However, when the examiner was perceived as more like the youths themselves insofar as ethnicity, manner, style of speaking, and topic choice, they became increasingly verbal. Labov invented ingenious methods for collecting language from this otherwise uncooperative group and consistently found that the more familiar the situation the more the youths would verbalize.

Recent work follows the perspective that individuals perform in context-specific sorts of ways and therefore LEP students or language learners will display language abilities in either their first or second language differently across contexts (Commins, 1989; Commins & Miramontes, 1989; Diaz, Moll, & Mehan, 1986; Wong-Fillmore, 1983). These insights have enormous implications for LEP students insofar as they are formally and informally assessed by educators and peers.

Related to the notion that one demonstrates different proficiencies of language in different contexts, Cummins (1981) promotes a model of the extent of demand on language that varies simultaneously along two continua. This model (see Figure 1) was his effort to explain why some minority language children appear proficient in more interpersonal and informal situations and less so in academic settings. Cummins reasons that some instances demand communication and comprehension that is embedded in the context in which it occurs, allowing the participants to have contextual or extralinguistic clues to guide the interaction successfully. At the same time, the situation may also involve a topic or activity that is not particularly demanding cognitively, perhaps something that the participants are familiar or even expert with. In that quadrant an individual could demonstrate language ability that appears fluent or native-like, at least successful at communication and comprehension.

FIGURE 1



From Cummins, 1981, p. 12.

On the other hand, language demands are quite different in the opposite quadrant where the content of the interaction is abstract with no physical manifestations in the setting itself. A university lecture on Plato's cave without drawing it on the chalkboard and without inviting personal experiences from the audience is an example of this kind of language. And, at the same time, language in this quadrant involves topics or activities that are beyond the intellectual reach of the participant. Many academic situations involve occasions for this last kind of language demand. If the language in this setting is the individual's less proficient language, it is likely that the demand will be too great for the person to demonstrate proficiency as he or she could have in less demanding situations.

Another dimension to the problem of precisely assessing the LEP student's abilities is that often the LEP student is from a group that is distinguished by far more than language; low SES and residential segregation are often concomitant factors. A substantial literature exists that examines the language problems that poor children experience (Bereiter & Englemann, 1966; Bernstein, 1975, 1975; Nist, 1974). Of course, it must be emphasized that the problems are only problems when the child attempts to communicate successfully and participate in mainstream and usually school settings. Later we will discuss an issue that emanates from the distinction of the child's competence as it reflects larger and perhaps more rigid social issues.

The ways that LEP children vary in their performance in L1 or in English according to context has led some researchers to propose the notion of semilingualism. A child in this stagnant pattern of relative language abilities suffers limitations in both languages. Influential work promoting the notion of semilingualism has come from work in Sweden, where the children of Finnish immigrants and migrants struggle in school in a way reminiscent of minority language children in the United States. Skutnabb-Kangas (1978) defines it as "... a situation where a child does not acquire the linguistic skill appropriate to her/his original linguistic capacity in any language" (p. 183). In the United States semilingualism has surfaced under different but similar labels, such as "pseudobilinguals" (DeAvila & Duncan, 1980), "limited balanced bilingual" and "limited English dominant" (Dulay & Burt, 1979), "nonfluent bilingual" (Segalowitz & Gattbonton, 1977, p. 77). The latter researchers claim that the nonfluent bilingual is found in the majority in many areas of the world and that they are more representative of what is meant by bilingual.

The most recent statement by Cummins (1984) on the relative proficiency of minority language children in this country (and in others) is much less damning than his and others' earlier proclamations. He says:

For present purposes, it is sufficient to note the subtractive nature of the bilingualism developed by minority students who tend to experience academic difficulties and the fact that among these students

proficiency in both languages is likely to be less well developed in some respects than among native speakers of each. (pp. 106-107)

The problem of children speaking two languages that are not as well developed as those of their counterparts who speak only one of the languages will be revisited in later sections. To conclude this section it seems appropriate to reflect on the evidence for children with equally undeveloped languages. In linguistics an important distinction is made between performance and competence. Chomsky (1965) warned that to examine performance, or that which the individual does at any given moment in any given situation, does not demonstrate what that same individual could do theoretically. Recalling the children's performances in all the studies cited thus far, no one could use such evidence to evaluate the full range of what the children could do under other circumstances or in ideal conditions. To use an illustration, recall Smith's study of the Hawaiian children. Her conclusions, as many other studies had offered, were that the children suffered from limited abilities in both languages; that they were disabled by their bilingualism. Assuming that the Hawaiian children were exposed to the vocabulary (in meaningful and relevant ways) in English for all the items expected of them on a subsequent test, could they not probably succeed on that test? Assuming, of course, that all else is functioning, they probably could. Now, if the assumption is that the disability brought about by being exposed to two languages were somehow connected to the children's ability to learn, would the children be then able to succeed after otherwise effective intervention? If we believe this assumption, then they probably could not succeed because being bilingual renders them disabled. Although studies since Peal and Lambert have shown positive correlates with bilingualism, the unfounded assumption that two languages are not better than one continues to operate.

The most profound effect of misjudging LEP children's abilities is on decisions about their placement in special programs. We have seen how it is possible that formal or informal assessment (or both) could determine that the LEP child is disabled beyond the challenge of learning a second language. It has been only since about 1980 that attention in special education has turned to consider the LEP child apart from all other children with special needs, as Dulay and Burt (1980) point out:

As bilingual education programs have begun to respond to the educational needs of "average" [LEP] students, it is becoming clear that great variety exists in the backgrounds and abilities of [LEP] students, just as one finds a range of abilities for English-speaking majority group students. That is, there are LES/NES students who are illiterate or who are mentally gifted or who have learning disabilities or communicative disorders. (p. 31)

Obviously, if determining who is bilingual can mean

such a vast collection of disparate things, then the widespread testing, labeling, and categorizing of children that goes on in schools can be hazardous for the minority language child. The problem cited most frequently in the area of diagnosing a handicapping condition in the case of the minority language child is the lack of proper assessment. One result of the assessment dilemma has been the persistent overrepresentation of minority language children in special education programs (Cummins, 1989; Ortiz & Maldonado-Colon, 1986; Ortiz & Yates, 1983, 1984). And this misrepresentation has been suffered most by Spanish speaking children, who comprise 75% of the LEP population (Baca & Amato, 1989). In fact, studies show that Hispanic LEP students have been placed in special programs at rates considerably higher than any Anglo or Black group when other factors such as SES were controlled (Mercer, 1973). Mercer's often cited 1973 study documented not only the preponderance of Mexican-American children in educable mental retardation (EMR) classes but that their placement in the special classes was not the result of teachers' and principals' overreferrals. Rather, Mercer found that the children ended up in EMR classes as a result of the diagnostic process itself. Recent studies have demonstrated a similar tendency (Mehan, Hertweck, & Meihls, 1986). Somehow the early views of the negative effect of bilingualism seem to have resurfaced with assessment of the LEP child; the suspect language handicap comes to bear once again.

The civil rights movement of the 1960s helped promote reform in this area while it influenced the provision of bilingual and ESL programs for LEP students. The issue was highlighted as litigation forced the legislature to conclude that testing in English or tests normed on an inappropriate population were biased against LEP children. For example, in California, in the case of *Diana v. State Board of Education* (1970), the court ruled in favor of the nine Spanish L1 children in the suit to be removed from the EMR classes in which they had been placed after assessment on a verbal IQ score. After a similar ruling in 1977, almost ten thousand minority language students were reinstated in regular classes (Oakland & Laosa, 1977). So much attention was called to the concern of inappropriate assessment of minority language children that Public Law 94-142 (the 1975 Education for All Handicapped Children Act, Langdon, 1983) conspicuously addresses that particular issue and states:

Procedures and materials for assessment and placement of individuals with exceptional needs shall be selected and administered as not to be racially, culturally, or sexually discriminatory. They are to be provided and administered in the pupil's native language or other mode of communication unless the assessment plan indicates reasons why such provision and administration is not feasible.

Apart from recurring problems encountered when no feasible means for assessment in the child's native language are available, testing in the L1 is not problem free.

Merino (1983) suggests that appropriate assessments must be based on (a) the dialect the child is learning; (b) norms developed from Spanish speakers; (c) a collection of detailed language history; and (d) L2 performance compared with L2 research (pp. 396-397). We will discuss each of these suggestions as each are consistently made in the literature.

Taking into account the dialect a child is learning as first language is particularly important for the Spanish speaking child in this country, as Merino and others have pointed out (Elías-Olivares, 1983). The Spanish spoken in any given region of the United States will differ from the Spanish spoken in any given monolingual country because Spanish is in constant contact with English and its varieties (Weinreich, 1968). Perhaps the most important perspective to maintain in the case of minority languages in the United States is that the dominant language, English, will have a more profound impact on the minority language rather than the reverse. Therefore, the L1 that the minority language child learns at home may be different from a standard Spanish derived from a monolingual country and the Spanish that is used for assessment purposes. The differences, however, are not so great that the child cannot comprehend what is said to him or her (Merino, 1983). Therefore, testing in the L1 is preferred over testing in English for the LEP child even if the test is normed on Spanish speakers from monolingual countries, provided that careful consideration of the dialect is taken into account. Furthermore, the confounding effects of low SES survive testing in the L1, and should be treated with caution (Kaufman, 1979).

Those who have emphasized the need for testing LEP children in their L1 often also call for more than a unidimensional assessment, and advocate what Merino refers to as a collection of language history. A call for assessment of language used for meaningful purposes or natural communication has been made by many researchers (Langdon, 1983; Mattes & Omark, 1984; Oller, 1983; Ortiz, 1984; Rueda, 1989; Simon, 1985). Recall the studies cited earlier that examined how children perform differently in different contexts. Again, when assessing minority language children, giving them every opportunity to demonstrate their abilities assures that they will not have to be inappropriately evaluated.

While inappropriate assessment may make an ability appear to be a disability, not recognizing when language development is following a rate and sequence that is normal is equally harmful. This problem has emerged as a serious one for the minority language child in schools today since the efforts to provide equal education to all students regardless of abilities (including English) have spawned special programs. These programs are typically remedial in nature and aim to compensate the learner or make compensation for the learner where the weakness is thought to lie. This "medical model" has been criticized by some researchers concerned with LEP students in special programs (Cummins, 1989; Rueda, 1989). Furthermore, bilingual programs have been described

in the very same way (Shannon, in press) in that the transitional models that move the LEP child from instruction in their L1 to all English are designed in such a way that "corrects" the minority language child's deficiency, that is, their limited English proficiency. Once the child is assessed as FEP, or full English proficient, he or she is considered "fixed." The compensatory or fix-it nature of some special programs has been accused of making the child appear broken, or not whole.

That individuals behave differently across contexts has been established and that display of proficiency may be masked or promoted by the setting or circumstance. In addition to that dimension, how one performs can be misinterpreted. Typically the child who is referred for special programs is assessed against what the professional or teacher deems is not normal behavior in the school setting. Among placements, a child could be judged to have communication or language development problems or any number of learning disabilities or behavior problems. Behaviors that an LEP child demonstrates may be typical of second language development but may mask an abnormal development pattern in the child's first language. A child could have overall language development or learning problems that are generalized over both languages. The problem of proper assessment becomes critical in order to do the LEP child any justice whatsoever (Figueroa, 1989; Langdon, 1983; Maldonado-Colon, 1986; Mercer, 1973; Rueda, 1981, 1989).

By juxtaposing typical second language learning behaviors with those associated with atypical language development, Ortiz and Maldonado-Colon (1986) provide an illustrative way to view the problem of misdiagnosing LEP children. They show how similar and even identical behaviors are characteristic of typical second language learner's use of the second language. By providing detailed examples of aspects of a second language learner's language, we demonstrate how similar and how different these behaviors are from atypical language behaviors.

We have collapsed most of the communicative behaviors that Maldonado-Colon and Ortiz (1986) examine into what is referred to in the field of second language acquisition as "interlanguage." Interlanguage is a term coined by Selinker (1972) and an idea that has had considerable influence on research and theory in second language acquisition, although by no means uncontroversial. In any case, it is useful as a window through which to view the process of acquiring a second language after a first language has been developed. Interlanguage is the language system that the learner uses until the second language is fully acquired. Thought of as a continuum, the learner moves from communication in a first language, in this framework called the NL (native language), to the target language (TL). Along that continuum the learner uses an IL, or interlanguage. In other words, until the TL is fully acquired, the learner employs certain strategies to communicate that are (a) not native-like in either the NL or the TL; and (b) fairly variable among learners, although patterns have been identified. These

patterns describe the characteristics of the normally developing second language. Sampling from a typology of strategies set out by Tarone, Cohen, and Dumas (1976), we can appreciate how the learner approximates or makes a transition (Corder, 1967) to the TL. At the same time, we can see how these typical behaviors can be construed as problematic communication behaviors.

Figure 2 illustrates some communication strategies used in second language learners' interlanguage. Transfer from the first language is commonly cited as a problem in second language acquisition. Some work has focused entirely on how the first language interferes with learning and using the second language. However, since the advent of interlanguage and Corder's (1967) call for a reconsideration of learner's errors, the first language can also be seen as a facilitator to learning a second language. Briefly, an individual who already possesses proficiency in one language has had experience of sorting out a language system and can apply that knowledge to unraveling the mysteries of another language. However, in that same way, knowledge of how one language works can interfere with understanding how another operates. It is in this way that the learner uses the strategy of transfer. Suppose the learner's first language is Spanish and to negate he places "no" in front of the verb, for example, in "I no like pizza." Preverbal negation is the system in Spanish (whereas the English system is postauxiliary), and when in doubt or without knowledge, the strategy is to use the NL system to produce the TL system, resulting in a form of IL. This is a useful strategy for the learner to be able to communicate. However, it can also be evaluated as demonstration of a delay of language development because it is use of inappropriate syntax. Although preverbal negation is commonly found in the speech of children learning English as their first language, if the sentence "I no like pizza" is uttered by an older child it appears problematic.

The strategy of overgeneralization involves applying knowledge of one rule throughout the system ignoring irregularities. For example, if the learner has acquired the rule for plural in English, that is, addition of the morpheme "s," he or she might attach the regular plural to all nouns, such as "childs" or "mans." Again, the strategy of overgeneralization is a productive strategy also used by first language learners, but appearances in

the speech of older speakers (as is often the case with second language learners) makes the strategies look as if they are errors or symptomatic of problematic language development.

The various strategies that fall under the general category of avoidance are no less productive than transfer or overgeneralization. Assume that the learner is involved in an interaction whose topic is not one the learner typically discusses in his or her second language and therefore is not an opportunity for the learner to display competence. In that situation the learner might employ the full range of avoidance strategies. For example, if in the discussion a word comes up that the learner does not know in his or her second language he or she might paraphrase it, for example, say "the thing where you put the disk," for "drive" when talking about computers. Or the learner may get around the word by circumlocution and avoid the specific location of "drive" by referring to the computer: "put the disk in the computer." Another avoidance strategy would compel the learner to abandon the topic completely, thereby eliminating any further problems with communication. This could occur when the learner anticipates pronunciation difficulties. Finally, the learner could simply ask the interlocutor how to say the word by appealing to authority and then get on with the interaction. These avoidance strategies could make it appear as if the speaker cannot produce or understand a language, although for the second language learner these strategies are productive efforts at using the target language while in the process of learning it.

These examples of interlanguage demonstrate that the learner has productive strategies for using the second language before proficiency is fully developed. However, viewed as evidence of language disorders, the strategies serve learners only to characterize them as incompetent. The injustice created is further uncalled for when one considers that interlanguage is a universal learner behavior, that is, all second language learners, regardless of their first language and other background features, demonstrate the same sorts of strategies. Finally, and a further note on the universality of learner strategies, many are found in first language development as noted above.

When people have two languages at their disposal they may choose to use both even in the same interaction. This is commonly referred to as "codeswitching." Once believed to be an aberrant behavior and one indicating that the speaker who used two languages in a single utterance was not proficient in either language, codeswitching has revealed that some types are actually only done by fully proficient speakers of both languages. Research on children who are raised in multilingual environments from birth has shown that they are able to separate the two languages from as early as three years old. Several often cited studies which describe young bilingual children's mixing, shows them operating from a unitary or undifferentiated language system before that age (Murrell, 1966; Redlinger & Park, 1980; Volterra & Taeschner,

FIGURE 2

Communication strategies that may be realized in a second language learner's interlanguage

Transfer
Overgeneralization
Avoidance
 paraphrase
 circumlocution
 message abandonment
 appeal to authority

1978). Reviewing this research, Genesee (1989) reinterpreted the findings to suggest that the children were able to separate the languages (three in the case of one child) from the outset of beginning to speak. He claims that the children have incomplete systems of their languages (syntactical, morphological, phonological, or lexical), just as young monolingual learners do, and therefore use what is at their disposal, which may involve mixing the languages. Just as the communication strategies above are productive devices to enable the learner to use not yet proficient language skills, the bilingual child will use pieces of any system that are sufficiently operable in order to communicate. Given adequate exposure to the languages, eventually the child can demonstrate separate proficiency in each system. However, in a bilingual environment, mixing can be accepted and even modeled by the adults; therefore the gradual disappearance of mixing never actually occurs. Research abounds that codeswitching is not random and that complex linguistic (Poplack, Sankoff, & Miller, 1988; Zentella, 1980) and social rules (Blom & Gumperz, 1972; Gal, 1979; Heller, 1988; Valdés, 1981) govern how one uses the two languages in particular interactions. However, for the uninformed, codeswitching appears as if language development has been deformed by the bilingual environment. Recall the earlier studies of bilingual children that condemned the bilingualism of minority children's homes as the culprit causing the random and unfortunate mixing of the languages.

Loss of first language skills, a phenomenon known as language shift, is a common process for minority language populations everywhere (Fishman, 1964; Fishman, 1966; Gal, 1979; López, 1978, 1982; Veltman, 1983). The social and historical press to learn the majority language can overwhelm any individual's or group's desire to maintain their first language. Poignant anecdotes about how minority language parents would not speak their native language with their children at home, although their own proficiency may have been very weak, are found throughout the literature (see Rodriguez, 1982). Minority language children are reported to prefer use of English in most contexts outside of the immediate family and usually desire use of the minority language only with parents or older relatives (López, 1982). Lack of use of a language results in atrophy. Recent work (Campbell & Lindholm, 1987; Campbell & Schnell, 1987) has emphasized the language loss occurring among minority language groups in the United States and laments this wasteful loss of linguistic resources. These scholars point out that while the rich variety of languages are allowed to be abandoned, we expect our secondary school and university students to learn a foreign language. The demand to learn English is clear; speakers of other languages in this country are required to learn a second language at the expense of, rather than in addition to, their first language. Hence, the definition of bilingualism for minority language groups in this country is typically subtractive.

In sum, typical second language learner behaviors can

be interpreted as language or communication disorders. However, it is equally important to recognize true language development problems that may occur with bilingual children in their first language. Not only is this important from a language development perspective, but also from a cognitive perspective if the language behaviors are truly indicative of some underlying problem in cognitive processes or somehow interrelated (Stark & Wallach, 1980). Cummins (1984) distinguishes learning disabilities and language disorders from that which second language learners encounter as language barriers. In any case, for bilingual children, sorting these categories out is a subtle and complex problem.

The Challenge of Socialization to Language and Culture

Minority language children are not only raised in an environment that involves a language other than English, but the ways of using language can vary considerably from the ways of the majority language group. The differences naturally stem from the cultural fabric of those groups. These differences among minority language groups are often at odds with the majority language group's practices. These differences have been examined for minority language children in this country and elsewhere with a focus on implications for schooling. The underlying assumption is that language use in school (in all its forms: oral and written) is an extension of language use common to the majority language group. In that sense, the minority language child, the LEP student, is at a clear disadvantage against the majority language child, the middle-class, monolingual English speaking student, at school, beyond the fact that they do not speak English.

The belief of the intellectual inferiority of the LEP individual that was prevalent in the first half of the 20th century is still with us due, in part, to the fact that minority groups are often also low socioeconomic class. During the 1960s, educational research attempted to explain the widespread school failure of minorities and the role that social class might play. The work that resulted spawned theories about school failure of the minority child centered on their deficiencies (Bereiter & Englemann, 1966; Bernstein, 1975; Deutsch, 1967; Hess & Shipman, 1965) and programs to correct the deficiencies, such as Head Start, were established. The blame for school failure was on the minority child, family, and culture and not on the school. In the case of the child who was from a low socioeconomic background and from a non-English speaking home, it is clear that blaming failure on these confounding factors was an easy target.

The theories of ethnocentrism and the consequent elitism that favored the majority middle-class culture that the "deficit model" work established, provoked alternative explanations for the failure of the minority child in school (Erickson, 1987). The new perspective examined the culture and ways of learning that were specific

to minority groups and then made explicit the culture and ways of learning that were expected of everyone in schools. The Kamehameha Early Education Project (K.E.E.P.) in Hawaii (Au, 1980; Au & Jordan, 1981; Boggs, 1972; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vogt, Jordan, & Tharp, 1987) and work focused on the Native American child (Dumont, 1972; Erickson & Mohatt, 1982; John, 1972; Philips, 1972) began to substantiate the alternative view. Rather than blame the minority child and make efforts to compensate for the deficits, school failure was attributed to the mismatch of the home and school cultures; difference and not deficit was the culprit. The press for compensatory programs was transformed into a call for culturally relevant interventions. By a detailed description of the K.E.E.P., we can clearly see the basis for the alternative explanation.

The K.E.E.P. began in 1971 with the goal of reversing the persistent school failure of native Hawaiian children. The researchers established a laboratory school that matched a typical public school setting for this population, but one that they could manipulate and observe. The tack the project took was deliberate and systematic and examined one of a small set of hypotheses centered around improving the children's reading scores. The first intervention attempted to raise the students' motivation by encouraging industriousness. While the Hawaiian students did become more industrious, their reading scores remained far below norms.

Cognitive and linguistic factors were the focus of the second hypothesis, but those also failed to account for the children's reading difficulties. The children scored at a mean of 100 on the Weschsler Preschool and Primary Scale of Intelligence (WPPSI) and similar results were obtained from Cattell's "culture-fair" test of intelligence, discounting a cognitive factor preventing them learning to read. The linguistic factor that was suspect was that the Hawaiian children's first language was Hawaiian English Creole, a dialect of English. However, after testing for that factor it also failed to account for the children's reading failure.

The third and last hypothesis questioned the role of culture, both the school culture and that of the Hawaiian children. Based on findings from various studies about how the children were socialized to language in their homes (Boggs, 1972; Gallimore, Boggs, & Jordan, 1974; Jordan, 1978; Tharp, 1978; Watson-Gegeo & Boggs, 1977), the project attempted to incorporate some of those patterns into reading lessons. For example, the teacher had to earn the respect of the Hawaiian children in order to be trusted as the teaching adult. This required the teacher to be warm and in control at the same time. The most significant difference between what had occurred before—standard phonics and basal oriented reading lessons—and the cultural intervention was how the lessons were structured more like the traditional Hawaiian "talk-story." In this culturally relevant mode of storytelling, the Hawaiian children and the teacher became participants in the telling of the story, or "co-narrators." Students were not only allowed to interrupt

another's comment or response, but were encouraged to participate in this manner so different from standard procedures at school. It was after this culturally relevant intervention that the Hawaiian children's reading scores improved dramatically.

The K.E.E.P. story is significant when contrasted with Smith's findings on Hawaiian children conducted a generation earlier. Rethinking the reasons why minority children have difficulties at school finally required a reckoning with the underlying assumptions and biases that had plagued research for the best part of this century. Through systematic trials and learning from errors, the K.E.E.P. project tapped ways that the children found appropriate to display their cognitive and linguistic talents. The problem was not that the children were deficient in those skills, rather that school settings actually warped or inhibited their emergence.

We have seen thus far in this chapter how the culturally relevant approach holds promise for the LEP child. Children whose first language is not English, or not standard English, face challenges toward school success beyond simply learning the language. However, it remains that culturally relevant approaches for LEP children have typically centered on language. Bilingual education and bilingual services are examples of such efforts. However, viewed more broadly, recent work in the cultural difference tradition has highlighted areas where LEP children benefit whether or not the approach involves the child's first language (Diaz et al., 1986; Heath, 1986; Trueba, 1988).

The perspective that cultural difference research has taken represents just one alternative to deficit models. Some researchers have promoted theories that explain minority children's school failure as a result of the social psychological dynamics between the minority and majority groups (Ogbu, 1978; Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi, 1986; Tajfel, 1982). Others have extended that point of view by specifically examining how learning a second language is affected by intergroup relationships (Ball, Giles, & Hewstone, 1984; Giles, Bourhis, & Taylor, 1977; Schumann, 1978; Skutnabb-Kangas, 1988; Skutnabb-Kangas & Toukoma, 1976; Wong, 1987). We will briefly consider each of these areas as they further illuminate the situation in which LEP children find themselves.

Based upon anthropological research that he carried out in the Northern California farming region, Ogbu (1978) developed a conceptual framework that begins to explain the differences in how different minority groups fare educationally in this country. This work explains why minority children fail at school rather than how they do, as the cultural difference work purports to (Ogbu & Matute-Bianchi, 1986). Generally, differences among groups depend upon their historical and political posture vis à vis the majority group. When we examine the minority groups for whom English is a second language and from which the LEP children in schools came, many of those groups are in a historically and politically subordinate position to the middle-class English-speaking majority. Hispanics, Ogbu argues, are

among those minorities that are "caste-like," implying that moving out from such position is unlikely and that it would depend on the power relationship changing between the minority and majority groups. The implication of this has for Hispanic LEP children is that as they are socialized within their minority language group, they are raised in an environment that may emit messages of their own subordination which may in turn prevent success as measured by majority standards.

In contrast, Ogbu argues that recent immigrants from the same countries of origin as Hispanics, for example, do not necessarily suffer the same kind of restriction to caste. Because recent arrivals initially are not aware of the subordinate status they are not burdened or restrained from it. A tradition of research and theoretical work that echoes similar syntheses as Ogbu's has been promoted from abroad (Skuttnabb-Kangas, 1978) and in this country (Paulston, 1982) for explaining minority groups' success or failure with majority language learning and achievement in school. Critics of this line of inquiry argue that such a view eliminates, or does not account for, individual differences within a group and particularly where challenges have been met. In any case, LEP children are in the middle of these great debates, and it is of no use to them for anyone to surrender or retreat because history has set the stage for failure, nor is it beneficial to highlight successful individuals and champion their tenacity and good fortune while lamenting the minority group as a whole.

To illustrate the complexity of the dilemma LEP children face in schools involving social, cultural, historical, political, as well as linguistic factors, Asian immigrants and refugees form a compelling case. The Asian child, regardless of place of origin, is often lumped in with all other "Asian" types (Ima & Rumbaut, 1989). The Southeast Asian from Vietnam, Cambodia, or Laos; the Pacific Islander from Fiji or Samoa; and the East Asian from Japan, Korea, or China are each as different from one another as any other distinct national group. The differences are fundamental and include social, cultural, historical, political, and linguistic dimensions.

The implications for the Asian LEP child are many. First of all, it is true that Asians fare better academically than do other recent immigrant groups, but this has been especially true for the Asian immigrant students who are part of the East Asian "brain drain." Recent research on Southeast Asian refugees (Ima & Rumbaut, 1989) documents that the grade point averages (GPAs) of LEP juniors and seniors are above the average for the white majority student, and the Southeast Asian student consistently scores high on the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) math subtest. However, the study points out the social background characteristics which contribute to low reading and language scores for Vietnamese, Vietnamese-Chinese, Hmong, Lao, and Khmer refugees. The level of education for the parents of the refugee child is much lower for this group than was true for the earlier immigrant. Nearly all of the Hmong mothers, for example, had no education at all. The Hmong typically were

subsistence farmers and their language was strictly oral until about 1950. Also, the recent refugees had spent some time in refugee camps before coming to the United States, which creates a disruption to their lives. But the factor with the greatest impact is the brutal war that traumatized them and forced them out of their homeland.

Religious and philosophical orientations differ among Southeast Asian groups and some may contribute to success in American society and schools while others may be at odds (Cheng, 1989; Ima & Rumbaut, 1989). For example, the Vietnamese and Chinese-Vietnamese who follow the Confucian doctrine believe in a patrilineal and highly disciplined structure of society which means children work hard to succeed in school to demonstrate respect for their fathers. Those who follow Taoism are taught not to interfere with nature and adopt a fatalism about events around them. While faced with the stress and shock of being a refugee in a radically different society, these individuals may not fare well at all. These background characteristics together describe how tremendous the culture shock is for the Southeast Asian refugee and that language alone is not the only barrier to overcome.

The Challenge of Theory to Practice

It is not within the scope of this chapter to provide a comprehensive account of educational practice for LEP students, but we will highlight some of the current themes that have emerged for practitioners in teaching the LEP child.

Bilingual education has been the educational experiment for LEP students since the 1960s. However, bilingual education in practice can take on many forms and among them are the broadly classified approaches known as transitional, maintenance, and immersion models. The transitional model begins all content instruction in the child's native language with a component for teaching the child English as a second language (ESL). Gradually, the native language instruction is lessened and replaced by instruction in English along with ESL. Many transitional programs last two or three years, after which the LEP child is instructed entirely in English. Maintenance programs, as the name suggests, are structured similarly to transition models but the native language is never removed and after three or four years remains a language of instruction, although English is the primary language of instruction. Immersion programs involve the child's native language minimally, and the student is immersed in instruction in the second language from the start. Another immersion model, bilingual immersion instruction, provides maintenance bilingual education for the minority language child and immersion for the native English speaking child in the minority language. Both groups receive language arts instruction in their native language. A final subsidiary to immersion education is the submersion approach. Submersion is best characterized as precisely what was offered before bilingual education: the LEP student par-

icipates in the regular all-English program from the beginning with absolutely no support from the native language or from ESL. There is enormous controversy over which of these approaches are best or most effective for LEP students in this country (e.g., Baker & deKanter, 1981; Willig, 1985). However, it is not possible to sort out the debate here. (See Crawford, 1989, for a thorough review and analysis of the history, politics, and theory of bilingual education.)

The appropriate placement and treatment of the minority language child in one of the above programs is critical, but particular concern must be raised for the LEP child with communicative or learning disabilities. Aside from the obvious problem of misplacing the child because of misdiagnosis, providing the proper environment poses a problem. Just as it is important to evaluate children in their native language, some argue that it is crucial to teach children in their native language and therefore placement in a bilingual instructional environment is essential (Cummins, 1984; Mehan et al., 1986; Ortiz & Yates, 1984; Ruiz, 1989; Willig & Swedo, 1987). Addressing first language development before, or at least in tandem with, concern about second language development is seen as theoretically sound. Cummins' Linguistic Interdependence Hypothesis underpins much of this line of argument. He asserts that until a first language is fully developed (arguably from five to twelve years of age), a second language should not be expected to be introduced to the exclusion of the first language (Collier, 1987). Therefore, for all minority children, bilingual education or instruction in both languages should begin in kindergarten and continue through the elementary grades. Removing support of the first language, Cummins claims, weakens the learner's ability to learn the second language. In the case of the child who has developmental delays or problems with the first language, it is argued that attention to development of the first language is critical.

Others argue that if the child has problems in the first language and those problems carry over to the second language, he or she should not be instructed in both languages and that emphasis should be placed on the second or majority language to insure the child's success in school. The debate over bilingual instruction for the special needs child is not dissimilar to that over bilingual instruction for the minority language child experiencing typical development.

A full description of the bilingual immersion model is a useful summary of the full range of bilingual approaches. During the 1970s, immersion education was experimented with in Canada, where native English speaking children were instructed in French as a means of their acquiring French as a second language. When the success of those programs was heralded, many United States educators and policy makers felt that immersion should then be the model for minority language students in this country. In response to this movement, Canadian researchers set out to inform the United States that much of the success of the Canadian immersion programs was

due to the nature of the bilingual situation in Canada, one that is very different from that of the United States (Lambert, 1984; Swain, 1984; Swain & Lapkin, 1985). Because English holds a perceived status of prestige in Canada, learning French was not done at the expense of English and therefore created additive bilingualism. Minority languages and their speakers in this country lack prestige and minorities typically learn English to replace their native language, fostering subtractive bilingualism. Because of the status of minority languages and their speakers, immersion would simply become submersion, as it was before any effort was made to make schooling more appropriate and effective for the LEP child.

Bilingual immersion programs recognize the different types of bilingualism of majority and minority language children (Lindholm, 1990). Taking the example from a bilingual immersion program in California, the majority language, or native English speakers, receive immersion education much like the Canadian model. They are instructed in the minority language, Spanish, for academic subjects, and then receive language arts in English. The instruction in Spanish is restricted to that language and English is not used as a means of communication. Within the same program, bilingual education is offered to the Spanish speaking children where most academic subjects are taught in Spanish and they receive English language arts. The bilingual model gradually introduces more English instruction but transition to all-English does not occur until after five years of native language instruction. The two language groups are equally represented and provide native speaker models for one another.

The bilingual immersion model promotes learning of English for the minority language child in ways that have shown to be effective while not ignoring and abandoning the first language. At the same time, it provides an effective way for English speaking children to learn a second language. This model has the most promise of securing language resources in this linguistically rich country.

We have seen the ways that children can be seen as competent or incompetent based on the context in which their behaviors occur. Almost a decade of influential work of this context-specific view of performance has come from the Laboratory of Comparative Human Cognition and its collaborators. While the cultural difference model may involve language behaviors (and often does) here we describe work that has specifically focused on the context-specific approach with LEP Hispanic students. Not only does the context for learning require culturally relevant ways of learning and doing, it also may require the native language, in this case Spanish, to mediate instruction.

Studies of reading and writing achievement of LEP Hispanic working class students in San Diego schools (Moll & Diaz, 1987) demonstrate how a context-specific approach to reveal the minority language child's abilities often requires a two step process: a qualitative assessment of how children behave and what expectations are made

of them outside of school, followed by an intervention that is based on that information. It is in this way that the researchers contend that "just as academic failure is socially organized, academic success can be socially arranged" (Moll & Díaz, 1987, p. 302). The students in these studies were performing poorly academically before the intervention. In the reading study, English reading lessons did not involve any expectation of the children's comprehension. When the researchers examined if the children understood what they had read in English by asking them to respond in Spanish, the children displayed that they had comprehended what they had read. In this study, the concept of a zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1962) was applied to the LEP students' strategy for English reading by using Spanish as support for what they could do. The intervention required that the students have grade-level material to read (and not watered-down because of their LEP status) and the focus had to be on comprehension and not the lower-order thinking skills required previously of them, such as decoding. An integral part of the intervention was the use of Spanish whenever necessary for support by either teacher or students. The teachers were to read to the students in the first lessons and ask comprehension questions in Spanish.

In the writing study, the researchers explored how writing was used in the community to inform them how they might improve writing lessons at school. As was true for the reading lessons before the intervention, the writing lessons involved lower-level skills and students were not expected to do extended writing assignments. In the community it was found that homework was the only opportunity for literacy skills to be used. The intervention then involved writing for authentic purposes and, to motivate the students, the topics were those of importance to them in their lives such as problems with immigration or gangs. Also, the students were expected to write extensively so that the teacher could teach from their material. Both the reading and writing interventions created conditions for success for the Hispanic LEP students.

An innovative approach to the education of LEP students that recognized that LEP students who may have had bilingual education and ESL may still require special supports in the mainstream has been developed by O'Malley and Chamot (1990). Their Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach, known as CALLA (kala), is designed to optimize the regular classroom as a place where everyone can learn, including the LEP student. A comprehensive approach that was developed in California for the mildly disabled LEP child is the Optimal Learning Environment (OLE) (Ruiz, 1989).

Summary

The relationship between language and cognitive development and processes, the nature of second language learning and use, and the social psychological status of

the minority language group are each complex factors that are involved in the challenge of being limited in English and a student in United States schools. Furthermore, each of these broad factors are compounded by individual differences, and theory and thought in each of the areas are evolving which means that what we know now may be substantially different from what we will know tomorrow. It is significant that in the mid-20th century it was widely believed and empirically supported that bilingualism had negative effects on cognitive ability. It took enormous efforts on the part of the scientific community to base work on a different set of assumptions in order to arrive at the current findings that dispute those claims. Furthermore, knowledge that is gained in one area, second language acquisition, for example, will advance knowledge in the other areas and guide approaches to practice. All of the complexity and change has a profound impact on how the minority language group's children experience schooling and how schools respond to their needs.

What is known is that learning English is clearly not the only challenge that the LEP child takes on. For those who teach LEP children or are in some way responsible for their well-being in schools, it is important to be aware of all the issues involved in order to minimally assess what is really going on for the LEP child and how to approach providing a meaningful and effective school experience. Each of the innovative approaches to practice for the LEP student that is described here is based on the knowledge that has been gained from the various disciplines that have been concerned with language and mental development and processing; learning, teaching and language acquisition; and the sociology and anthropology of human cultures. Meeting the challenge for limited English proficient students and the schools, the requirements of which have been made explicit here, is a complex task that demands careful consideration to all that it entails. The task must be understood, at least, to involve far more than second language learning and use. Therefore, educators who have responsibility to minority language students in any capacity cannot assume that the burden lies with language specialists or bilingual professionals.

This chapter has attempted to put into historical perspective schooling and LEP groups in this country. A century of work has only begun to make sense out of the factors involved and the consequences of not paying careful attention to how they interact. The estimates of LEP individuals for this nation today soar to as many as five million. A survey conducted for the U.S. Department of Education found that nearly half of all public school teachers in the United States have or have had LEP students in their classes, but also found that only one teacher in seventeen has had course work in techniques and materials for ESL instruction. We do not recommend that all teachers receive ESL training, but we do urge that all professionals, including teachers, administrators, and special program providers become knowledgeable in fundamental facts about the state and

status of LEP students in American schools in order to effectively meet the challenges.

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