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ABSTRACT

The primary objective of this Elementary Secondary Education Act Title I program for mentally retarded children was to improve the ability of the 450 participants to communicate effectively in either English and Spanish or in both languages. The second objective was to improve the reading and mathematics scores of these bilingual mentally retarded students. The program was implemented in 96 classes at 27 schools in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx. Four hundred forty-two students ranging in age from seven years eight months to eighteen years two months were chosen to participate. The program became operative in February 1975. Observations, interviews with participating teachers and data from a survey questionnaire indicated that by using a bilingual approach the students were able to improve communication skills, develop better student/teacher rapport and through individualization, improve work/study skills. Though test data are inadequate to indicate that objectives were met, it would appear that this program served such an important need that its services should be incorporated into the overall future planning for the mentally retarded. The short duration of the program, the staffing difficulties, inadequate facilities and administrative constraints all contributed to procedural drawbacks. (Author/JM)

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Itinerant Bilingual Services Program for Title I
Eligible CRMD Children

January - June 1975

Mary C. Muller, PhD.

An evaluation of a New York City school district
educational project funded under Title I of the
Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
(PL 89-10) performed for the Board of Education of
the City of New York for the 1974-75 school year

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Chapter One

An Overview of the Itinerant Bilingual Services Program for Title I Eligible Mentally Retarded Children

As an effort to provide more effective educational opportunity in the field of special education, the Itinerant Bilingual Services Program for Title I Eligible Mentally Retarded Children is necessary and efforts to achieve this aim should be encouraged. This program was able to identify and service youngsters who, because of their double handicap, had been unable to benefit from their usual classroom instruction.

The primary objective of the program was to improve the ability of four hundred fifty participants to communicate effectively in either English and Spanish or in both languages. The second objective was to improve the reading and mathematics scores of these bilingual mentally retarded students.

The program proposal planned these services to be offered to approximately thirty schools. Supervisors from the Bureau of CRMD made a tentative pre-selection of school classes.

Actually, the program was implemented in ninety-six classes of twenty-seven schools in Manhattan, Brooklyn and the Bronx. The four hundred and forty-two students selected to participate in the program ranged in age from seven years eight

months to eighteen years two months. Their mental ages ranged from two years six months to ten years five months, according to the student record cards.

The program served trainable and educable mentally retarded students on both the elementary and junior high school level. Instruction in reading skills, mathematics skills and English as a second language was given on a tutorial and small group basis.

Funded at mid-point in the 74-75 school year, the program became operative in February when personnel with administrative responsibilities were hired (teacher/coordinator, teacher trainer, and two guidance counselors). The initial training period was completed by the end of February, and the majority of the teachers were placed by the first week of March.

The program was designed to offer the bilingual instructional services to selected schools in poverty impacted areas in the three boroughs by using teachers and paraprofessionals on an itinerant basis. Of the fourteen teachers who made up the instructional staff, ten worked in two schools; two teachers worked in three schools, and two teachers were assigned to only one school. Thirteen paraprofessionals were hired for this program to work as family assistants.

It was necessary to recruit and train the staff of this program throughout its four month duration. This was due to the difficulty of finding persons skilled in both bilingual education and the education of the mentally retarded.

During the month of April an administrative change was made. Due to overlap with other Title I programs, the Itinerant Bilingual services program was removed from several schools. Students had been simultaneously participating in other reading programs for the mentally retarded and therefore were removed from the bilingual program. The original assignments of five teachers were changed and the program was placed in different schools. These students have not been included in the final total of students. This situation presented difficulties to many concerned with the program.

The students selected for participation in the program were chosen on the basis of Hispanic identity and placement in classes for the mentally retarded. They all satisfied the poverty level requirement (i.e., Title I eligibility). All spoke Spanish and to a greater or lesser extent English. The regular classroom teachers for the mentally retarded in the participating schools, in conjunction with supervisory personnel, recommended the students who could best be served by the program. In addition, as the program progressed the assigned guidance counselors also reviewed data from students' records and files. Student selection was difficult due to the nature of the learning disability. Linguistic analysis was not yet available in order to determine which students would be in most need of the services. Only later during the course of the program were the teachers able to note the characteristics of the bilingual students and their particular learning needs. It is important to note that

during this program the new Language Assessment Battery test, developed by the Board of Education, was administered. It would have been advantageous to this program to have had new test data for students in this program.

Implementation of the program progressed through three phases. The first phase was the orientation. During February, workshops and training sessions were given. This was followed by the placement phase when the teachers were introduced to school personnel, and details such as selecting students, finding teaching space and establishing an itinerant schedule were settled. The instructional phase was then put into effect. Though all of the teachers had some prior training in either bilingual education or education of the mentally retarded, none was regularly appointed by the Board of Education. The teacher trainer worked continuously to help the new teachers overcome the hurdles of a new assignment.

Lessons on reading skills and mathematics skills were presented to the students in both English and Spanish. With most students English was used for reading and Spanish for mathematics. Spanish was also used to give directions, explanations and to establish rapport. It was seen that in the affective domain Spanish was relied on very heavily. The bilingual aspect of this program was also incorporated into the instruction of English as a second language.

At the outset of the program the teacher/coordinator determined that in a four month span of time, effective instruction

would be the criterion for planning priorities. The teacher/coordinator was responsible for overall on-site administration liaison with district offices, schools and the Bureau of CRMD, and implementation of the program. Each week a staff meeting was held at the Queens Occupational Training Center. During these sessions the strengths and weaknesses of the program were discussed and difficulties resolved.

Three guidance counselors were assigned to the program and one for only half its duration. Their work concentrated on the identification of special adjustment needs of the students, health and welfare problems and maintenance of communication with school personnel. They also directed the testing procedures and supervised the paraprofessionals. The teacher trainer placed the itinerant teachers in schools, assisted in lesson planning, provided lectures, films and demonstration lessons. Evaluation of the teachers' performance was another responsibility which the teacher trainer carried out.

Table I
Actual Distribution of Services

<u>No. of Districts</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Classes</u>
16	27	96
<u>No. of Teachers</u>	<u>No. of Paraprofessionals</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>
14	13	442

Chapter Two

Evaluative Procedures

This program had three evaluation objectives. The first objective was:

"to assess the extent to which the participants have demonstrated statistically significant ratings in their ability to communicate effectively in their native language and English."

The instruments to be used were the New York City Board of Education Rating Scale of the Pupils Ability to Speak English and the Rating Scale of the Pupils Ability to Speak Spanish. During the first week of March the Rating Scale of the Pupils Ability to Speak English was administered individually to the students and total raw scores were noted. The post test was administered during the first week of June. The program personnel had been told that the Rating Scale of Pupils Ability to Speak Spanish was not available. No instrument was used to evaluate students' knowledge of Spanish.

Since the students in this sample had been tested as mentally retarded, grade levels could not be used to categorize the data. The Bureau of CRMD differentiates students with an I.Q. of 50 and below as trainable and those from 50 to 75 as educable. Classes are also separated on elementary and junior high age levels. Therefore, the data for the Rating Scale were separated into four categories: Group I, students of a chronological age between 7 and 13 yrs. with an I.Q. over 50; Group

II, students of a chronological age of 13 to 18 and an I.Q. over 50; Group III, students of a chronological age between 7 and 13 and an I.Q. of 50 or under; and Group IV, students of a chronological age of 13 to 18 and an I.Q. of 50 or under.

Of the four hundred and forty-two participants, pre- and post-rating scale data are available for two hundred and sixty-six students. The May 27th placement of one teacher made the inclusion of forty-four students' scores unwarranted. The others were absent. The data loss is as follows:

Table II
Data Loss English Language Rating Scale

<u>Participants</u>	<u>No. Tested</u>	<u>No. Not Tested</u>	<u>Reason</u>
442	266	59	Absent pre/post
		72	Absent post
		44	Late Placement

The data analysis called for the Median Test for correlated samples.

The second evaluation objective of this program was:

"to assess the extent to which the participants have demonstrated statistically significant differences between their real post/test scores and their anticipated post/test scores in reading and mathematics."

The program proposal and evaluation design called for the use of the Metropolitan Achievement Test. This standardized test is norm referenced with grade level equivalents. This student sample was both mentally retarded and had a language handicap with English as a second language. Therefore the test was inappropriate. Though there are no test data to be analyzed for statistical significance,

attempts were made to comply with the evaluation objective. Three Metropolitan Achievement Tests were ordered: Reading Readiness, Primary I Level and Primary II Level. There were no precise criteria available prior to testing this sample to determine the proper test level for each student. For instance, when testing was attempted it was found that tests on the Readiness Test should have been administered to many students rather than the Primary I or II Level. According to program personnel, due to the short length of the program, reordering tests for re-administration would have resulted in a program of delayed and continual testing with no time for instruction. The breakdown of attempted testing in reading is as follows:

Table III
Data Loss MAT Reading

<u>Reading Readiness</u>	<u>Not Tested</u>	<u>Reason</u>
<u>Attempted</u>		
106	83	Inappropriate Level
	24	Late Placement
	22	Absentees
<u>Primary I (Reading)</u>		
<u>Attempted</u>	<u>Not Tested</u>	<u>Reason</u>
57	26	Inappropriate Level
	19	Late Placement
	7	Absentees
<u>Primary II (Reading)</u>		
<u>Attempted</u>	<u>Not Tested</u>	<u>Reason</u>
50	30	Inappropriate Level
	3	Late Placement
	15	Absentees
<u>Total Attempted</u>	<u>Not Tested</u>	
213	229	

The attempted pre-testing took place during the early part of March. Because of the itinerant nature of the program and lack of experience of the teachers the testing schedule was erratic and incomplete. The teachers had to cope with the students reactions which included inability to attend to the situation and scribbling on the test booklets. An attempt was made at post testing which brought similar results. Scores were reported but the tests were incomplete. Of all the participants in the program, there were thirty-six pre-and post test reading scores reported. These were for all students in all four age/I.Q. categories including all three reading tests. There were no post scores available in mathematics. The number of cases of complete reading data is distributed as follows:

Table IV
Total Number of MAT Reading Readiness
Pre/Post Test Scores by Level and Group

<u>MAT Reading Readiness</u>	<u>No. of Pre/Post Scores</u>
Group I	8
Group II	1
Group III	3
Group IV	1
<u>MAT Primary I</u>	<u>No. of Pre/Post Scores</u>
Group I	9
Group II	8
Group III	0
Group IV	1
<u>MAT Primary II</u>	<u>No. of Pre/Post Scores</u>
Group I	0
Group II	5
Group III	0
Group IV	0

The Mathematics test data appear below.

Table V
Data Loss MAT Ma

Mathematics

Not administered on the Readiness Level - 235 not tested

Primary I

<u>Attempted</u>	<u>Not Tested</u>	<u>Reason</u>
12 ^o	64	Inappropriate Level
	30	Late Placement
	3	Absentees

Primary II

<u>Attempted</u>	<u>Not Tested</u>	<u>Reason</u>
10	47	Inappropriate Level
	26	Late Placement
	15	Absentees

Total

<u>Attempted</u>	<u>Not Tested</u>
22	420

The third evaluation objective was:

"To determine the extent to which the program as actually carried out, coincided with the program as described in the Project proposal."

The evaluative procedures used to meet this objective included staff interviews, on-site observations and a survey questionnaire. Throughout the program continuous contact was maintained in order to be kept aware of program progress. Visits included conferences with interested persons not assigned to the program

such as, school psychologists, guidance counselors and district office personnel. All phases of program implementation were reviewed. A survey questionnaire prepared for the program elicited data from the teachers for this objective. (See Appendix B)

Chapter Three

Findings

The general objective to develop more effective communication skills was assessed primarily by a survey of classroom teachers on program outcomes. However, the data from the pre/post Rating Scale of Students Ability to Speak English did not clearly indicate that the objective was met. The results of the Median Test are as follows:

Table VI
Median Test Results of Pupils
Ability to Speak English

<u>Group</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Z</u>	<u>p</u>
I	115	1.40	$p < .08$
II	92	1.52	$p < .06$
III	34	0.66	$p < .25$
IV	25	0.54	$p < .29$

None of the differences was significant beyond the usually chosen .05 level. The very short duration of the program and the many administrative constraints must be taken into consideration. Also, this rating scale was not sufficiently discriminating. A more structured instrument would have to be used to note possible behavioral change.

It was found during the testing for this program that the MAT was not appropriate for this sample. The MAT has been used by the Bureau of CRMD to establish an administrative designation of a functioning level. For instance, if a student can test

at a grade 3 level he could, at a certain age, go to another CRMD class in a junior high school with a CRMD unit. If not, he may go to a training center. This test, however, cannot be used to predict with this sample. The situation is compounded by bilingualism.

The implementation of this program did not exactly coincide with the program proposal. There was difficulty recruiting staff, and the coordinator, two teachers, and a social worker were not hired. The guidance counselors assisted the teacher/coordinator with many administrative duties. The criteria for student selection were not precise, and this caused some delay and confusion in some schools. The recommendations of the CRMD regular classroom teachers for student selection proved most worthwhile.

Generally, the facilities for teaching were not adequate. This was due to lack of space, not lack of cooperation. Coming into a school in March caused much of this difficulty. Some teachers worked in noisy hallways or lunchrooms, others in the back of a classroom. Since development of communication skills was an important objective, it would have been desirable to have quiet areas where aural-oral techniques could be used. In under utilized buildings some teachers were more fortunate.

Materials arrived late. There was a surprising lack of audio cassette recorders. The verbal development of students might have been served had these been used. A great deal of

bilingual material was purchased, but not all was appropriate for this sample. Vocabulary and reading level were not always suitable. Yet it was only through experimentation that this could be determined. The teachers made much of their own material as they assessed the needs of a specific lesson.

Parent involvement was slow to develop. However, a workshop for Spanish speaking parents of trainable adolescent girls was successful in one Manhattan school. Attendance was high and the use of audio visual aids encouraged group discussion about personal hygiene. Some parents were taken to clinics, others were counseled on the particular needs of the mentally retarded. As was mentioned before, the short duration of the program made it difficult to accomplish all that was intended.

Observations and interviews with teachers, resource persons and administrators resulted in a very favorable reaction to the nature of the program. Appreciation for the work of some teachers was demonstrated by letters from administrators and students. Many of the people working with the mentally retarded students felt that the language difficulty was the predominant reason for school success. In some instances it was also noted that the designation "mentally retarded" could be erroneous and unfair due to language factors in psychological testing. In the majority of cases in this sample the differences between verbal and performance I.Q. scores was substantially higher on the performance level. This could be researched further.

As is often the case in a target population of this type many of the children suffer physical handicaps, speech impediments, hearing loss, vision problems, brain injury and severe emotional difficulties.

The survey of classroom teachers' reaction to this program indicated that there had been an improvement in the communication skills of the students such as: increased classroom participation, ability to follow directions, and the ability to express themselves more coherently. They also noted the emergence of a better attitude regarding the students' self-image. There was no change noted in self-help skills but there was some indication of more parent involvement. Personal hygiene was seen as an important emphasis for trainable mental retardates.

Chapter Four

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

The Itinerant Bilingual Services program attempted to meet the needs of a selected mentally retarded target population whose language handicap necessitates a program of this kind in order to provide academic environmental conditions in which learning can take place. Observations, interviews with participating teachers and data from a survey questionnaire indicated that by using a bilingual approach these students were able to improve communication skills, develop better student/teacher rapport and through individualization, improve work/study skills. In addition, the program, by identifying these students' needs, helped regular CRMD classroom teachers cope with a particular difficulty which heretofore had not received specific attention.

Though test data are inadequate to indicate that objectives were met, it would appear that this program served such an important need that its services should be incorporated into the overall future planning for the mentally retarded. An itinerant bilingual program could continue to identify students whose learning disability is based more on a language handicap rather than a lack of intellectual competence. Youngsters who cannot speak English should not have to run the risk of mislabeling. The performance level of these students have always been assessed against the baseline of the English language.

Trainable mental retardates who are bilingual pose a difficult policy decision for curriculum planning. A functional life style must be developed but which language will best meet the needs of these individuals was a question of this program.

This program indicated that language dominance is a complex phenomenon. Cases where no English was spoken were rare. However, the mixed usage of Spanish and English was very common. Though English has social dominance in the culture of the school, Spanish is used to express intimate feelings, hopes and fears. The teachers found that often the older students did not want to use Spanish because they saw it as a stigma of inferiority coupled with their academic placement. One of the salient features of this program was to help change this attitude and work toward a more positive self-image.

The short duration of the program, the staffing difficulties, inadequate facilities, administrative constraints, all contributed to procedural drawbacks. If a program such as this were to be recycled it would need more effective planning prior to implementation with input from psycholinguistic and sociolinguistic consultants. Objectives should be more specific and test instruments appropriate for the target population.

Itinerant Bilingual Services Program for Title I Eligible CRMD Children

Function No. 09-58612

Use Table 28 for norm referenced achievement data not applicable to Table 27. (See instructions before completing this table.)

28. Standardized Test Results

In the table below, enter the requested assessment information about the tests used to evaluate the effectiveness of major project components/activities in achieving desired objectives. Before completing this form, read all footnotes. Attach additional sheets if necessary. 27

Component Code	Activity Code	Test Used 1/	Form		Level		Total Group		Number Tested		Pretest			Posttest			Statistical Data		Subgroup 9/
			Pre	Post	Pre	Post	N 2/	ID 3/	4/ N	5/	Date	Mean	SD 6/	Date	Mean	SD 6/	7/ Test	8/ Value	
6086	720	MAT 64	A	B	RR	RR	235	61	See Data	Loss Form								H	
6086	720	MAT 70	F	H	P1	P1	109	61	See Data	Loss Form								H	
6086	720	MAT 70	F	H	P2	P2	98	61	See Data	Loss Form								H	
6096	720	MAT 70	F	H	P1	P1	109	61	See Data	Loss Form								H	
6096	720	MAT 70	F	H	P2	P2	98	61	See Data	Loss Form								H	

- 1/ Identify test used and year of publication (MAT-58; CAT-70, etc.)
- 2/ Total number of participants in the activity.
- 3/ Identify the participants by specific grade level (e.g., grade 3, grade 5). Where several grades are combined, enter the last two digits of the component code.
- 4/ Total number of participants included in the pre and posttest calculations.
- 5/ 1 = grade equivalent; 2 = percentile rank; 3 = z score; 4 = Standard score (publisher's); 5 = stanine; 6 = raw score; 7 = other.

- 6/ SD = Standard Deviation
- 7/ Test statistics (e.g., t; F; X²).
- 8/ Obtained value
- 9/ Provide data for the following groups separately: Neglected (code as N), Delinquent (code as D), and Handicapped (code as H). Place the indicated code letter in the last column to signify the subgroup evaluated.

OFFICE OF EDUCATIONAL EVALUATION - DATA LOSS FORM
 (attach to MIR, item #30) Function # 09-5861-2

In this table enter all data loss information. Between MIR, item #30 and this form, all participants in each activity must be accounted for. The component and activity codes used in completion of item #30 should be used here so that the two tables match. See definitions below table for further instructions.

Component Code	Activity Code	(1) Group I.D.	(2) Test Used	(3) Total N	(4) Number Tested/ Analyzed	(5) Participants Not Tested/ Analyzed		(6) Reasons why students were not tested, or if tested, were not analyzed	Number/ Reason
						N	%		
6 0 8 6 1 7 2 0		61	MAT RR	235	Attempt 106	235	100	mental deficiency and language handicap, therefore test inappropriate; attempt resulted in no scores or incomplete scores	235
6 0 8 6 1 7 2 0		61	MAT P1	109	Attempt 57	109	100	mental deficiency and language handicap, therefore test inappropriate; attempt resulted in no scores or incomplete scores	109
6 0 8 6 1 7 2 0		61	MAT P2	98	Attempt 50	98	100	mental deficiency and language handicap, therefore test inappropriate; attempt resulted in no scores or incomplete scores	98
6 0 9 6 1 7 2 0		61	MAT P1	109	Attempt 12	109	100	mental deficiency and language handicap, therefore test inappropriate; attempt resulted in no scores or incomplete scores	109
6 0 9 6 1 7 2 0		61	MAT P2	98	Attempt 10	98	100	mental deficiency and language handicap, therefore test inappropriate; attempt resulted in no scores or incomplete scores	98

- (1) Identify the participants by specific grade level (e.g., grade 3, grade 9). Where several grades are combined, enter the last two digits of the component code.
- (2) Identify the test used and year of publication (MAT-70, SDAT-74, etc.).
- (3) Number of participants in the activity.
- (4) Number of participants included in the pre and posttest calculations found on item#30.
- (5) Number and percent of participants not tested and/or not analyzed on item#30.
- (6) Specify all reasons why students were not tested and/or analyzed. For each reason specified, provide a separate number count. If any further documentation is available, please attach to this form. If further space is needed to specify and explain data loss, attach additional pages to this form.

Itinerant Bilingual Services Program for Title I Eligible CRMD Children
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Measures of growth other than Standardized Tests

31. This question is designed to describe the attainment of approved objectives not normally associated with measurement by norm referenced standardized achievement tests. Such objectives usually deal with behavior that is indirectly observed, especially in the affective domain. For example, a reduction in truancy, a positive change in attitude toward learning, a reduction in disruptive behavior, an improved attitude toward self (as indicated by repeated interviews), etc., are frequently held to be prerequisite to the shift toward increased academic achievement by disadvantaged learners. Where your approved measurement devices do not lend themselves to reporting on tables 26, 27, 28, or 29, use any combination of items and report on separate pages. Attach additional pages if necessary.

Component Code

Activity Code

Objective Code

6 1 4 6 1

7 2 0

8 0 1

30

Brief Description Objective: To assess extent to which students demonstrated statistically significant ratings in their ability to communicate effectively in English. Students were grouped for data analysis on basis of chronological age and I.Q.

Number of cases observed: 4 4 2 Number of cases in treatment: 2 6 6

Pretreatment index of behavior (Specify scale used): _____

New York City Board of Education Rating Scale of the Pupils Ability to Speak English. Groups were as follows: Group I - CA 7-13 with I.Q. over 50; Group II - CA 13-18 I.Q. over 50; Group III - CA 7-13 with I.Q. 50 and under; Group IV - CA 13-18 with I.Q. 13-18

Criterion of success: indefinite, the .05 alpha level was chosen on Median Test

Was objective fully met? Yes No If yes, by what criteria do you know? Comparison of pre- and post test scores

Group	N	z	p
I	115	1.398	p .08
Comments: II	92	1.52	p .06
III	34	0.66	p .25
IV	25	0.54	p .29

None of the differences were significant beyond .05.

Evaluation Questionnaire

Function# 09-58612

In an effort to acquire some general impressions, albeit subjective data, we would appreciate your cooperation with this questionnaire. Our objective is to be able to report some of the more salient features of the program. Please feel/^{free}to add pertinent personal comments. Thank you.

(Place an "X" on the appropriate lines)

AS A RESULT OF THE ITINERANT BILINGUAL PROGRAM FOR MENTALLY RETARDED YOUNGSTERS COULD YOU NOTE DIFFERENCES, THAT IS ANY CHANGE OF BEHAVIOR ON THE PART OF THE PUPILS PARTICIPATING IN THE PROGRAM IN THE FOLLOWING AREAS:

	More	Less	Same
Communication Skills			
either Spanish or English			
1) can participate in class discussions	_____	_____	_____
2) can give and follow simple directions	_____	_____	_____
3) can express simple coherent thought	_____	_____	_____
4) can volunteer information when necessary	_____	_____	_____
Self Image as Bilingual Student			
5) has positive attitude toward use of Spanish	_____	_____	_____
6) uses Spanish to clarify a misunderstanding	_____	_____	_____
7) confuses speaking Spanish with lack of academic ability	_____	_____	_____
8) accepts use of Spanish for instruction	_____	_____	_____
Self-Help Skills			
9) aware of importance of clean appearance	_____	_____	_____
10) practices good health habits	_____	_____	_____
11) improved classroom attendance	_____	_____	_____
12) works cooperatively	_____	_____	_____
Family-School Relationships of Bilingual Parents			
13) parent has better understanding of mental retardation	_____	_____	_____
14) parents use clinics and welfare agencies	_____	_____	_____
15) parents seek more help from school	_____	_____	_____
16) parents feel bilingual program as an asset	_____	_____	_____