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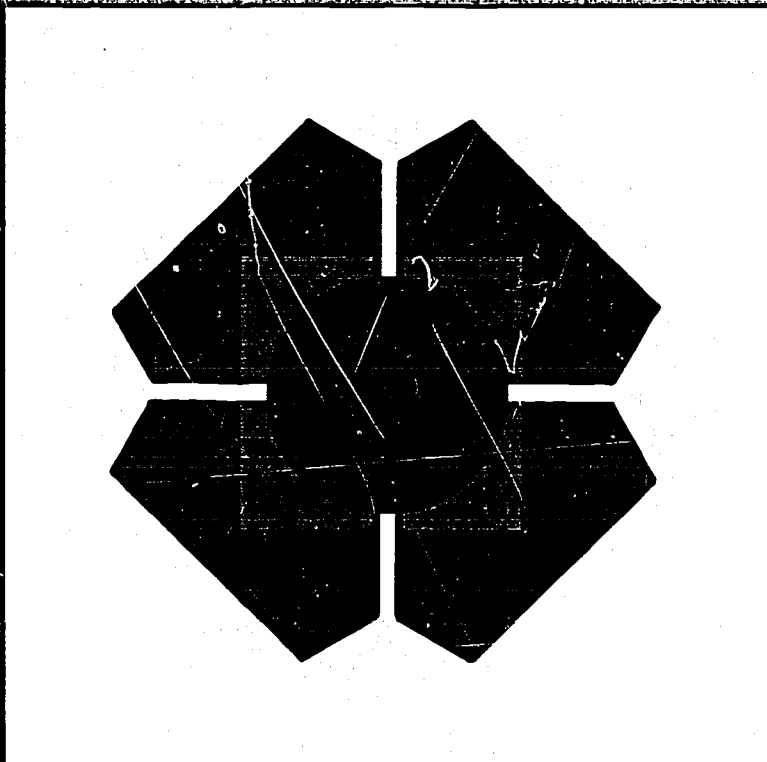
ABSTRACT

The symposium on Issues of Parent Involvement and Literacy marked the culmination of a collaborative project of Trinity College in Washington, D.C. and the Arlington (Virginia) Public Schools to reach out to limited-English-proficient (LEP) parents. Papers include: "Bilingual Education Policies: An Overview"; "Parent Involvement: Implications for Limited English-Proficient Parents"; "Literacy and the Limited English Population: A National Perspective"; "Elementary Literacy Materials"; "Directions in Literacy for Secondary LEP Students"; "Meeting the Educational Needs of the Nonliterate Limited-English-Speaking Adult"; "Basic Skills Education in the Army"; "Language and Community Building: An Intergenerational Approach"; "Literacy in the Refugee Camps in Southeast Asia"; "Illiteracy: How a School District Copes"; "Adult Illiteracy: Implications for Parent Involvement"; "Cultural Issues in Indochinese Parent Involvement"; "Parental Involvement: Building on Overseas Initiatives"; "Cross-Cultural Policy Issues in Minority and Majority Parent Involvement"; "Why Parent Tutors? Cultural Reasons"; "Parents as Tutors"; "Project Welcome"; "Parents Assisting in Learning"; and "Development of Parental Involvement in Bilingual Vocational Education. The appendices include 10 pages listing curricula and materials, videos, and other publications. (MSE)

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ISSUES OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND LITERACY



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Proceedings
of the Symposium
held at
Trinity College
Washington, DC
June 6-7, 1986

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"As for the best leaders, the people do not notice their existence. The next best, the people honor and praise. The next, the people fear and the next the people hate. when the best leader's work is done, the people say we did it ourselves."

Lao-Tzu
6th Century B.C.

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First and foremost, I want to acknowledge and thank the limited-English-proficient (LEP) parents and their children who provided the inspiration we needed to organize this Symposium.

My deep appreciation goes to Shelley Gutstein, Coordinator of Data Collection and Product Dissemination for the Trinity-Arlington Project who worked closely with me during the initial conceptualization and implementation stages of the Symposium. Shelley also helped coordinate the initial stages of this publication.

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Trinity-Arlington project staff members who deserve recognition are, Synthia Woodcock and Felicia Meir, Resource Specialists based at the Arlington Public Schools; Mulugeta Seyoum, Audio Visual Coordinator, Yonnara Keng and Dama Garate, Bilingual Community Coordinators. Along with the parents and students, they provided us with a lot of inspiration and the encouragement that this project was well worth the effort.

To Dora Johnson, who assisted with the editorial functions of the Proceedings and its companion Executive Summary, special thanks. This publication is a visible product of the closing of three years of challenging work for me as Director of the Trinity-Arlington project.

Dr. Mary Mahony, Education Program Specialist, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, U.S. Department of Education (OBEMLA), deserves a special thanks from all of us. It was because of her continued encouragement and guidance that we were able to accomplish a very special feat: to successfully involve LEP parents as collaborators, co-learners and facilitators of their [high school] children's vocational choices. Dr. Mahony's vision has made an impact where it belongs--with LEP parents and their children.

I would also like to thank Sister Donna J. Myrack, President, Trinity College, who made it possible for us to bring together the educators, researchers and policy makers to discuss the issues of LEP parent involvement and literacy at the College.

To Mrs. Carol Pendas Whitten, Director, OBEMLA and Mr. Rudy Munis, Director, Division of National Programs, OBEMLA my appreciation. Finally, heartfelt thanks to Mrs. Emma de Heiner, ESOL-HILT Curriculum Specialist, Arlington Public Schools, who made the collaboration between Trinity and Arlington a reality.

Carmen Simich-Dudgeon
Director
Trinity-Arlington, Teacher and Parent
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ISSUES OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT AND LITERACY

Introduction

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The conference at which the papers in this volume were presented was sponsored by the Trinity-Arlington, Teacher and Parent Training for School Success Project, a project of Academic Excellence funded by the Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA), Department of Education, Washington, D.C. The conference was convened for two main purposes:

To provide a forum for educators, researchers and policy makers to explore issues of parent involvement and literacy as they relate to limited-English-proficient (LEP) parents and students, and

to train interested educators from Washington, D.C., Virginia and Maryland about how to initiate and implement a successful LEP parent involvement program, modeled after the Trinity-Arlington project.

The symposium was the culmination of three years of collaboration between Trinity College, Washington, D.C. and the Arlington Public Schools in Arlington, Virginia to reach out to LEP parents by providing cultural and language information so that they could, in turn, become more knowledgeable and involved in their children's education.

The primary goal of the Trinity-Arlington project was to facilitate the acquisition of English language skills of LEP students from four language groups enrolled in elementary, intermediate and high schools in Arlington County: Spanish, Vietnamese, Khmer and Lao. During the 1983-84 school year the program was piloted at five elementary schools, and the subsequent year it was adapted for use in two intermediate schools highly impacted with students from the four language groups, and their parents.

During the 1985-86 school year, the program was adapted to serve LEP parents and students enrolled at two high schools. The parent involvement effort at the high school level was without precedent in the country. Very few, if any, parent involvement programs are aimed at the older student. The Trinity-Arlington project staff believed that LEP parent involvement at the high school level would be as successful as those implemented by the project at the elementary and intermediate school levels. We also believed that the involvement would result in English language gains of students and their parents. Other gains, we thought, would be a decrease in absenteeism and drop-out rates.

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Language and demographic characteristics of the high school students and their families

- o Over half of all Spanish-speaking families were from El Salvador. Many of these families were undocumented aliens, who worked at menial jobs and were grossly underpaid. These parents and their children were not eligible for any kind of public assistance, including health care.
- o About 20% of the families included both parents in the home. Students in approximately 80% of households reported that they lived with an adult other than their natural parents. This adult could be an aunt, grandparent, a relative, or an American foster parent. Some of the students were on their own.
- o Approximately 42% of the Vietnamese students did not live with an adult relative at the time this information was collected (beginning of 1985-1986 school year). Three lived with American foster parents. The remainder were on their own. In some cases, these students were heads of households themselves with younger brothers and sisters in the intermediate schools. Their parents were either dead or still living in Vietnam. These students came to this country as unaccompanied minors, but for reasons unknown to us, were not living with either American foster parents or adult relatives. Since a little over half of the Vietnamese students did not live with a parent or parents, the impact of the literate and educated Vietnamese parent did not extend to these students who are not receiving the parental support they need in order to succeed in school.
- o Approximately 60% of the Khmer-speaking mothers had never been to school. We assume they were not literate in their native language. These mothers were, by far, non-English-proficient.
- o Approximately 50% of all Spanish-speaking mothers attended elementary school. We assume that they had some degree of literacy in their native language.
- o Most Spanish and Vietnamese parents had had some form of elementary education, fewer had completed high school and fewer yet had some college education.
- o Parent self-assessment of their English language skills indicated that over 80% of all target parents spoke little or no English. Less than 10% reported having some English fluency. The same self-assessment held for their English literate skills, i.e., reading and writing.

Program implementation at the high school level

Our purpose was to involve LEP parents in the education of their children as collaborators, supporters and co-learners. To accomplish this goal, we needed the collaboration and commitment of participating teachers, counselors and administrators. In addition, we needed to identify bilingual community liaisons who spoke the language of the four target groups and who were knowledgeable and respected in the community.

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The project consisted of three components: teacher training, parent training and curriculum development. Teachers, counselors, administrators and bilingual liaisons were trained, via participation in two graduate courses about the need for parent involvement and the use of positive strategies for working with LEP parents. It was during these courses that participants developed a Vocationally-Oriented Bilingual Curriculum (VOBC). The VOBC consists of 19 home learning lessons which, in addition to providing valuable cultural and language information to parents and students, served as a catalyst to bring parent and child together, as co-learners and collaborators at home.

The home lessons reinforce vocational topics within the English as a Second Language program (ESL) in the Arlington Public Schools and similar programs nationwide. Underlying these parent-child activities is the belief that strong, supportive relationships between the students, their parents and school personnel are indispensable to promote student achievement, increase student motivation and result in LEP high school students planning with their parents their future careers and/or vocational choices.

What the Trinity-Arlington project accomplished

The impact data aimed at determining the effects of the project on the English proficiency of participating students. Over 364 LEP high school students attending two high schools benefited from the program. The final impact results were obtained from a total of 252 students for whom complete pre- and post-test data were available.¹

The following pre- and post-test data were collected: Ivie Self-Concept test, the VOBC Content Test, a locally-developed test administered in either the native language or English to parents and students; the High Intensity Language Training test (HILT), a locally-developed test of English proficiency. The HILT consists of four sub-tests for which we have pre- and post-data: Paragraph Writing, Study Skills, Listening and Reading. The latter was administered at one participating high school only. A nationally-validated oral test of English proficiency, the SOLOM test, was administered in the areas of: Comprehension, Fluency, Vocabulary, Grammar, and Pronunciation. The findings for the students, parents and teachers confirm many of the presentations at this symposium. In other words, the experiences of these three populations appear to be similar although carried out in a variety of locations and under different circumstances.

¹ The discrepancy between the total number of students in the program and the actual number of students for whom complete data exist is due to several factors beyond our control, i.e., high mobility of the student population, absenteeism, etc.

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Student Findings

- o Students reported that a) learning took place as a result of doing the home lessons; b) there was increased interaction with parent(s), siblings and/or guardians; c) there was an increased knowledge on the part of their parents, and d) there was a better understanding of the American education system and their own local school system in particular.
- o Students reported that they found a valuable link and relationship between ESL instruction and the VOBC lessons.
- o Students reported that they discussed the home lessons not only with parent(s) and guardians but more so with siblings. Although the Trinity-Arlington project aimed at involving parents in the education of their children, this finding speaks to two important issues:
 - a. Participating LEP parents work in two or three jobs, and are not available when their children arrive from school. (Many of the students were unaccompanied minors and/or heads of households.)
 - b. Parent involvement efforts should be widened to include the family as a unit, in terms of its potential for promoting educational achievement. This finding raises interesting possibilities about sibling learning at home. It gives some credence to sibling interaction at home around academic activities which appear to reinforce the work of the school.
- o Scores from three HILT sub-tests show significant increases for project students. Specifically, the analysis carried out on the Paragraph Writing sub-test shows a highly significant t-value of 8.61. The reinforcement provided by the integration of the VOBC home lessons with the ESL writing tasks may very well reflect the relationship between these highly significant findings and the VOBC. Evidence of this relationship came from student interviews where students reported learning specific language skills, such as writing, as a result of doing the home lessons.
- o An analysis of the SOLOM sub-tests indicates significant gains in comprehension (5.28), fluency (7.34) vocabulary (6.41), grammar (5.66), and pronunciation (3.36).

Parent Findings

- o Parents' response to the individual home lessons and to the project as a whole was very positive. Typical comments were: "This lesson helps Hispanic students realize what possibilities they have for going to the university."
- o Parents' contacts with the school increased as a result of the program. In addition, the nature of these contacts showed the impact of the program.
- o Parents have acquired knowledge about the school system and school procedures as a result of their participation in this program. Gains

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were recorded in English language skills, survival skills, and concern for their children. Parents learned that it is important to spend time with their children on school matters, even if they are unable to help them with their homework. Talking to them and encouraging them is important.

- o Parents often want to help their children but do not know how. This finding confirms the findings from parent involvement research with minority English-speaking children which Epstein discusses in her presentation in this volume and elsewhere. LEP parents reported that, although they thought they should be helping their children, they did not know what to do, or what form this help should take. Often parents said that their own limited oral English proficiency was a hindrance in their efforts to help their children in school-related matters. This was a recurring theme in almost all the Symposium presentations.
- o Parents' overall attitude about home and school relations seems to have changed in the direction of positive as a result of program participation.

Teacher Findings

- o Teachers who became most involved in the project were the ones who participated in the development of the VOBC.
- o Teachers who integrated the VOBC activities into their ESL instruction were those who felt that the project had an impact on the English skills of participating students.

The positive results combined with strong parent support has resulted in institutionalizing the Trinity-Arlington program. The VOBS is also being integrated as a regular component of the ESL high school curriculum.

The work ahead

In recent years, characteristics of the LEP populations, including the ones we served, have changed the ways in which school districts look at parent involvement. For one, parent involvement as we interpret it in our culture, is an involvement of literate parents toward developing literate and successful students. Children from literate, middle-class homes are surrounded by literate symbols from an early age on and their transition to schooling is generally a smooth and natural one. The LEP parents we worked with are a different story. Illiteracy in the native language and/or English presents a formidable barrier to this type of parent-school collaboration. We at the Trinity-Arlington project were able to link parents, students and teachers through the use of both literate and oral communication modes.

However, many unanswered, or partially answered, questions remain:

How can we as educators successfully "involve" semi-literate or illiterate parents in the education of their children?

What are the long-term effects of parent/family illiteracy--in the native language and/or English--on LEP students' achievement and future success in life?

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How can we best assist LEP parents help themselves and their children when so many of them are under severe financial constraints, and their time is equally severely limited because they hold down more than one job?

How can we best bring together illiterate parents and literate-bound children so that they will contribute and respect each other's language and experiences?

This volume is organized in six sections. The first section contains three papers which are from the plenary sessions of the Symposium. Ms. Carol Pendas Whitten, Director, Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs, U.S. Department of Education, provides an overview of bilingual education policies from the perspective of the Federal Government. Dr. Joyce Epstein, Principal Research Scientist at the Center for Social Organization of Schools, Johns Hopkins University, reports on research on parent involvement. Bill Bliss, President, Language and Communication Associates, challenges us to expand our concept of literacy and, subsequently, its meaning and its impact in the U.S. job market.

The papers and discussion summaries from the regular sessions are grouped under the following headings: From School to Work: Materials and Methods for Teaching the Limited-English Proficient Student; Perspectives on Literacy; Cross-Cultural Issues in Parent Involvement; Involving Limited-English-Proficient Parents; Title VII Projects of Academic Excellence: Efforts to Promote Parent Involvement and Literacy.

A sixth session also took place at this Symposium. This was the training session for educators who were interested in implementing a program in their schools based on the Trinity-Arlington model. For information on the products from the Trinity-Arlington project and these Proceedings contact the National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 11501 Georgia Avenue, Wheaton, Maryland 20902. Copies of these publications have been deposited in the ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) system.

A list of participants and materials displayed during the Symposium are appended.

Washington, D.C.
October 1986

BILINGUAL EDUCATION POLICIES: AN OVERVIEW

Carol Pendas Whitten

*Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs
U.S. Department of Education*

I am here today to tell you about the Bilingual Education reform initiative. The reforms that the Secretary seeks will enable school districts to apply for and receive bilingual education funds regardless of the methodology they choose. What Secretary Bennett wants to do, above all else, is to get the Federal Government out of the business of mandating curriculum to local schools so that local parents, teachers and school officials can set up programs based on local conditions, resources, and needs.

For example, the Fairfax County school system in Northern Virginia now provides special instruction to 3,800 limited-English-speaking students who speak 75 different languages. Over the years, Fairfax has designed and developed a serious, nationally recognized program that has met with great success. And yet, until last year, Fairfax County could not receive any federal Title VII funds from our Office of Bilingual Education. I could be speaking about Arlington, Virginia, Prince Georges County, Maryland, or the District of Columbia Schools; their statistics are the same.

The rationale behind Secretary Bennett's reforms, is based on the history of the federal role in bilingual education, a brief review of which follows.

In 1968, when the first Bilingual Education Act was enacted, Congress was especially concerned with the problems of Hispanic school children living in the Southwest. These children were often punished for speaking Spanish--the only language they knew--they were performing very poorly in school and were dropping out at a high rate. No effort was being made to provide them with the special English language instruction they needed to participate fully in the classroom. The original intent of Congress in enacting bilingual education legislation was clear from the beginning. The 1968 Act encouraged local school districts to develop "new and imaginative...forward-looking" programs, for the special educational needs of those children "who are educationally disadvantaged because of their inability to speak English."

In 1967 the Senate Committee Report on pending bilingual education legislation recognized the need to bring these children into the educational mainstream. It did not, however, want to interfere in local school affairs by dictating a method or approach to the teaching of English as is clear from the report.

Because of the need for extensive research, pilot projects and demonstrations, the proposed legislation does not intend to prescribe the types of programs or projects that are needed. Such matters are left to the discretion and judgment of the local school districts, to encourage both varied approaches to the problems and also special solutions for a particular problem for a given school.

That the local school districts had a responsibility to these students was confirmed by the Supreme Court in its Lau v. Nichols decision of 1974. The Court concluded that the San Francisco School system was not providing equal

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educational opportunity to its non-English-speaking Chinese students. The court informed the school system that they had to protect the civil rights of these students, by providing special programs which would meet their needs. However, like Congress in 1968, the Court refrained from mandating a specific approach to the teaching of this special school population. The Lau decision simply stated:

Teaching English to students of Chinese ancestry is one choice.
Giving instruction to this group in Chinese is another. There may
be others.

Despite the flexibility built into the original 1968 legislation, and despite the Supreme Court's affirmation of the right of local schools to determine the best approach to teaching their limited-English-speaking students, the Federal Government moved in the opposite direction in 1974. In that year, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) published directives for local school districts narrowly defining the districts' means of meeting the educational needs of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. These "Lau Remedies" narrowly limited options for elementary and intermediate schools, mandating programs that relied heavily on native language instruction. This OCR-mandated approach came to be known as Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE). Although the Lau Remedies were never formally enacted into law, OCR has, since 1975, negotiated compliance agreements with over 500 local school districts based on these remedies. Consequently, school districts have been very reluctant to make adjustments in their teaching methods in fear that they would lose their federal funds if found in violation of OCR's Lau remedies.

The Bilingual Education Act of 1974 also tied the hands of local school districts. When Congress reauthorized the Act in 1974, it curbed local control of program design and prescribed one approach, a native language approach, to all school districts seeking Title VII capacity-building funds. As a result, any school that provided instruction for its LEP students in English only was not eligible for federal support.

Ironically, just as the Federal Government began mandating this curriculum designed for the teaching of homogeneous groups, the demographic makeup of America's immigrants began to change dramatically. In the 1970's, the United States opened its doors to tens of thousands of immigrants from Southeast Asia, China, the Philippines, East and West Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe.

This trend continues into the present decade. Since 1980, almost half of all legal immigrants to the United States have come from Asia. And another 12% have come from Europe. School districts face classes which include speakers of Farsi, Arabic, Cantonese, Romanian, and dozens of other languages in addition to Spanish and Chinese.

The Los Feliz Elementary School in Los Angeles is a classical example of a school affected by this new trend. Less than a decade ago, Los Feliz was a school with a significant number of Mexican-American minority students. Bilingual programs could be geared to this homogeneous group of Spanish speakers. But the 1980's brought a dramatic change to this school. It began to receive students immigrating to the U.S. from all over the world, students who spoke Armenian, Cantonese, Vietnamese, Korean, and ten or twelve other languages. Presently, more than 70% of the student body at Los Feliz are classified as language minority, and both the California state and federal bilingual laws require that the school teach these children using a native language approach. Moreover,

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state law requires instruction in native culture and heritage. As can be imagined, school officials are struggling to serve these students, meet education mandates, and maintain academic standards.

The situation at Los Feliz has become a familiar story. No one can properly serve all their students' needs while adhering to rigid native language instruction requirements. Unfortunately, Congress has not yet fully recognized how much the conditions have changed since 1974.

It is not surprising then that Secretary Bennett's first goal for Bilingual Education was to return to local schools the right to determine the best method of teaching their limited-English-speaking students. Furthermore, he realized that the Federal Government had moved away from its original focus on helping local school districts bring their LEP students into the mainstream of American education. The simple truth was that the Federal Government's role had, over time, become heavy handed, intrusive and out of sync with new immigration patterns.

The secretary was concerned that all non-English-speaking students were not getting the education they needed. The acquisition of strong English skills is crucial to the future of our nation's new immigrants, for any young person who fails to learn English well and fails to complete high school faces a life of unemployment, illiteracy and poverty.

In 1984, Congress wisely recognized the need for funding alternative programs, but only 4% of the funds were allotted for such projects. As a first step, the Secretary has asked Congress to remove the 4% cap that was placed on funding of special alternative programs. If Congress agrees to the Secretary's request and lifts the cap, any school district that is attempting to help its LEP students will be able to apply for federal bilingual education funds.

On November 21, 1985, the Department of Education published proposed regulations for the implementation of the 1984 Amendments to the Bilingual Education Act. The final regulations will be issued June 19, 1986. This package represents a major step in bringing about the reform of the federal role.

The regulations center on three main objectives:

First, school districts have been informed that they have considerable discretion under the statute to determine the extent of native language instruction required in a transitional bilingual education project. The preamble to the proposed regulations explains that Bilingual Education legislation provides for instruction in the child's native language only "to the extent necessary to allow a child to achieve competence in the English language," and "in all courses or subjects of study which will allow a child to meet grade-promotion and graduation standards." As a result of this clarification, local education agencies, rather than the Federal Government, will decide the amount of native language instruction to be used, as well as the manner and duration of its use.

Second, recognizing that parental involvement is crucial to children's success in school, the regulations emphasize the statutory requirement that parents be allowed to become involved in their children's bilingual education program. The regulations call for extensive

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parental participation on two advisory councils for each school district. One council assists the district in preparing the application for federal funds; the other provides consultation to the district for the duration of the federal grant.

Third, under the regulations, we have emphasized that Title VII has always been a "seed money program," meaning school districts are required to demonstrate that they will build local capacity to continue their bilingual education programs once federal funds are no longer available. Thus, local school districts must outline a plan for managing and financing the instructional program when Title VII funds are reduced or are no longer available.

With these reforms the Department of Education is recognizing the major role that the local community plays in bilingual education. In other words, it recognizes that the 16,000 independent school districts must decide how best to teach their LEP students. They must develop the infrastructure necessary for these programs to continue, and they must involve parents fully in the development of bilingual education programs.

The Department has received widespread support for these reforms in newspaper editorials, and in personal letters from the American public. The support comes, for one very good reason expressed in an editorial in The Washington Post, "Secretary Bennett Makes Sense." The editors say in that editorial, "Children with language difficulty must be given special help, and the cultures of their native lands deserve respect and understanding, but we need not apologize, as Secretary Bennett points out, for offering assistance in a form that brings children more quickly into American language and culture and strengthens their ability to participate more fully in national life."

Or, as the New York Times editors wrote, "Mr. Bennett proposes returning to the principle of maximum local flexibility. He will ask Congress to remove the 4% cap. He's right! The Federal Government should not limit funds to only one pedagogical method. It should be concerned with the ultimate goal, helping children become proficient in English as quickly as possible."

The editors of The Washington Post and the New York Times do not in any way want federal support for Hispanic and other language-minority students reduced or eliminated. They, like Secretary Bennett, think that the Federal Government should simply increase flexibility in its program, thereby reestablishing the original focus of the program: helping children to learn English and to enter the educational mainstream as quickly as possible.

But none should confuse Secretary Bennett's call for reform with a call for retreat! As long as there is a need, the high levels of funding for the Bilingual Education Program will continue.

What the Federal Government should not do is to force state and local governments to adopt one method. The fact is that the primary responsibility for the education of our nation's young lies with the states. When the constitution was drafted, the framers deliberately left decisions about education to the states. The constitution does not give the Federal Government any direct role in the nation's educational system. In actual practice, the responsibility lies primarily with our 16,000 local school boards, and for 200 years, local jurisdictions have set the course of our nation's educational system.

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Congress has always left the job of education to the local people. The value of this approach has been explained well by Joan Parent, president of the National School Boards Association, who stated, "Local control quite simply means self-government. This concept is based on the fundamental principle that the best government is that which makes decisions closest to those who will be affected by such decisions. In public education, it means that the citizens in each community know best how they want their schools to be run and how their tax dollars should be spent."

We accept the fact that the federal role in American education is a supporting one. The Department of Education does not run schools, and does not decide what children are taught. That the federal role is limited is also clear from the statistics on the financing of education. The Federal Government contributes approximately \$10.5 billion to education, which is 7% of the total figure. Therefore, 93% of all money spent on American education comes from state and local governments.

Those who deal with the parents of LEP students play a special role in helping our non-English-speaking students become successful. As a former teacher and guidance counselor I realize full well that ultimately the success of all school reform depends on parents. We thus need to help carry the message to parents that their child's future will, to a large degree, depend on the example they set. It will also be determined by their interest, their concern and their participation in their child's education and their own.

Finally, a word of praise to all of you. Your hard work and the example of excellence that you set, will make a real difference in the lives of these language minority students and their families. They will long remember what you are now doing for them. The world they face in the 1990's and beyond will be a complex, demanding one. Your students will live and work in a world whose complexity we can only imagine. Think of the reading, writing, and thinking skills they will need to deal successfully with the promises and dangers of the future. The foundation for their future is taking form in your classrooms, and they will always remember your dedication and your perseverance, and they will thank you! Our role in the Department of Education is to make your job a little easier!

PARENT-INVOLVEMENT: IMPLICATIONS FOR LIMITED-ENGLISH-PROFICIENT PARENTS¹

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Researchers, practitioners, and policy makers have begun to note the importance of parent involvement as a component of effective schools. The acknowledgements of the importance of parent involvement are based on research findings accumulated over two decades that show that children have an advantage in school when their parents encourage and support their school activities. The evidence is clear that students gain in personal and academic development if their families emphasize schooling, let the children know they do, and do so continually over the school years. However, not all families currently become involved in school-related activities or show interest in their children's school work. And, not all schools actively encourage and direct parent involvement.

Although everyone says parent involvement is important, there is little agreement on what schools should do about it. There are many types of parent involvement, and it is unclear how each type contributes to school effectiveness. There are many real problems associated with parent involvement, and solving them takes time and perseverance. Efforts have begun in research and in practice that should help parents, teachers, and social scientists study and understand the potential of parent involvement for improving the quality of education for students.

Over the past few years we have been studying teachers' techniques for involving parents in their children's education. We conducted a survey of 3,700 first, third, and fifth grade teachers and their principals in 600 schools in 16 school districts in Maryland. From the original sample, we interviewed in depth 82 teachers who varied in their use of parent involvement, surveyed over 1,200 parents of the children in these teachers' classrooms for their experiences with, and reactions to parent involvement, and obtained information on achievements and behaviors of over 2,100 students in the 82 classrooms. The data link a teacher's particular practices to the parents and the children in the teacher's classroom. These connections are required to study effects of different teaching practices on parents and students.

The principals, teachers, parents, and students also provided information on other types of parent involvement that occurred in their schools and classrooms. From these data and from a review of the literature we have identified five important types of parent involvement that differ in terms of their location, target group, and content and purpose of the involvement. And, we have looked in depth at a promising direction for improving teachers' practices of parent involvement in learning activities at home. A review of the major types of parent involvement follows with some interesting results from our research. I

¹This presentation is taken in part, from J. Epstein, "Parent Involvement: What Research Says to Administrators," in Education in Urban Society (in press), and from J. Epstein, "Parent Involvement," Encyclopedia of School Administration and Supervision (in press). Implications for limited-English-proficient parents have been added for this presentation.

would like you to think of how these different types of parent involvement can be adjusted to accommodate and assist limited-English-proficient parents. We will also discuss some ideas of how the research contributes to discussions of improving programs for students and parents with limited English proficiency.

1. BASIC OBLIGATIONS OF PARENTS

The most basic involvement of parents is providing for their children's needs for food, clothing, shelter, health, and safety. Parents perform the early child rearing obligations that prepare children for school and continue their responsibilities through childhood and adolescence. Once the children are in school, parents provide school supplies, and space and time for school work at home.

Most parents provide for their children's school-related requirements, including school supplies and space to work. Over 97% of the parents in a recent survey reported that their children had the school supplies they need, and over 90% said the children had a regular place where they could do homework. Administrators and teachers often remind or advise parents of their responsibilities to prepare their children for school. Lists and litanies are offered to parents to make sure the children do their homework, get enough sleep and eat enough breakfast to be alert in school, bring their books and supplies, and so on. The early Push-Excel and other programs develop contracts, pledges, or "ten commandments" to help parents arrange family life and set rules or practices to help students succeed as students. Because parents vary in their experiences and skills, some schools take active roles in helping parents understand and build positive home conditions for their children's school learning and behavior. Schools offer publications, materials, workshops and other programs to parents on parenting, child and adolescent development, nutrition, discipline, attendance, homework, TV viewing, violence and vandalism, the use of community resources and services, and other topics on home conditions and practices that contribute to student success in school.

2. SCHOOL TO HOME COMMUNICATIONS

The school has an obligation to inform parents about school programs and their children's progress, and parents are expected to act on the information they receive from the school. All schools send home memos, report cards, calendars of the school year, and notices of special events.

School administrators and teachers can vary the form, frequency, and likely results of information sent from the school to the home. They can influence whether the information can be read and understood by all parents, whether parents are alerted to check frequently with their child for memos and messages from the school, whether parents can work with the school staff to revise or improve school programs and policies, and, most importantly, whether parents can work with the school administration and teachers if their children's attendance, grades, conduct, and course work are not satisfactory. Teachers can be encouraged to phone parents who cannot read well, or to send notes through the mail to parents whose children are unreliable couriers.

Surprisingly large numbers of parents are excluded from some of the most common, traditional communications from the school. In our survey, over one-

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third of the parents had no conference with the teacher during the year. Almost two-thirds never talked with a teacher by phone. Although most teachers (over 95%) reported that they communicate with parents of their students, most parents are not involved in deep, detailed, or frequent communications with teachers about their child's program or progress.

Administrators and teachers can work with parents to support and to improve policies to inform parents, students, teachers, and others in the community about the school. Schools can schedule conferences at times convenient for all parents, including working and non-working mothers. Administrators can use their contacts and influence in the community service organizations (e.g., the Rotary, Lion's, or other associations) to encourage business organizations to provide parents with released time, flex-time, or other special time allocations for a morning or afternoon visit to school. Administrators and teachers can create conditions for more equitable and more substantive communications by teachers with all parents.

3. PARENT INVOLVEMENT AT SCHOOL

A third common type of parent involvement is parent assistance at the school. This is what many educators and parents think of as "parent involvement." It may include assisting teachers in the classroom, on class trips or at class parties; assisting administrators and teachers in the cafeteria, library, playground, computer lab, or other areas that require adult supervision; assisting the parent organization and school administration with fund raising, community relations, and political awareness. In most schools these kinds of activities are conducted by relatively few parents who can come to the school during the school day. Over 70% of the parents in our study were never involved in any activities assisting the teacher or staff at the school. Only about 4% (that is, about one or two parents per classroom) were highly active at school for 25 days or more per year. Although over 40% of the teachers had some parental assistance in the classroom several days a month, this assistance was provided by only a few parents. Over 40% of the mothers in our sample worked full-time and 18% worked part-time, limiting their ability to become involved at the school building during the school day.

Analyses of the data suggested that having some parents at the school positively influenced teachers to use other types of parent involvement. Volunteers at the school are evidence to teachers that parents are willing to work with them to improve the school and its programs, and evidence to parents that the school is open to them.

Administrators and teachers may be able to extend the number of parents active at school by encouraging all parents to volunteer in some way, and not just the small cliques of parents who are already motivated. For example, early each year, every school could survey parents to learn if and how they want to help at school or at home. This would provide an annual account of parental resources available to teachers.

Parents are also involved at the school as audiences for student performances, assemblies, demonstrations, and sports events. These are infrequent events that involve a minimal commitment of time from parents, but may be used by schools as occasions to conduct other meetings or provide information to parents. Parents also may come to the school as students for workshops, education and training sessions. And, they can be invited to visit the school on one of their

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vacation days or business holidays to observe in the classroom, talk with the child's teacher, or help at school.

The research indicates that most parents believe involvement is important, but relatively few can assist at the school.

4. PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN LEARNING ACTIVITIES AT HOME

A fourth type of parent involvement is parental assistance with learning activities at home. These activities may be coordinated and directed by the teacher, or initiated by parents with or without the knowledge of the teacher. Our research was designed to address the question: What happens and who benefits when teachers take the leadership to engage all parents--not just those who know how to help on their own--in learning activities at home with their children? This type of parent involvement refers to the teacher's requests and instructions to parents to assist at home with learning activities that are directly related to and coordinated with the children's class work. We studied fourteen techniques, including asking parents to read to the child or listen to the child read, conduct discussions, play informal learning games, tutor the child in specific skills, sign contracts to assure that certain assignments are completed, and observe teachers to learn how to teach the child at home.

I would like to raise four questions that people often ask about this most difficult type of parent involvement--difficult because it takes more time, coordination, and leadership by the teacher than the other types of parent involvement.

What techniques do teachers use most?

Teachers reported widespread use of three techniques that stress reading and books: having parents read to the child or listen to the child read; asking parents to take their child to the library; and loaning books and teaching materials to parents for use with children at home. Other practices (discussions, informal learning activities, contracts, and parent observations) were less frequently used by teachers, and were less often as effective and satisfying techniques.

What techniques do principals support?

Some principals actively supported teachers' practices of parent involvement in learning activities at home. Like teachers, they emphasized reading activities.

Principal leadership was particularly important for the teacher's development of workshops for parents. Conducting workshops for parents often involves the use of school resources. Teachers may be required to obtain their principals' assistance in obtaining rooms, materials, equipment, secretarial help, or custodial services. Or, teachers may respond to principals' encouragement to plan and conduct workshops. The teachers who conducted several workshops for parents over the school year were more likely to request parental help with learning activities at home. A link, then exists between the investment of the teachers' and administrators' time in conducting workshops and the ensuing use of parents as partners in their children's education at home.

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Administrators can design, direct, and support policies and practices that affirm parents' roles as partners with teachers in their children's education, and support teachers' initiatives for using parents as resources for improving students' skills.

What learning activities do parents become involved in at home?

Although only some parents can be active at the school building, almost all parents are involved with their children at home. More than 85% of the parents spent 15 minutes or more helping their child at home when they were asked to do so by the teacher. The parents said that they could spend more time (over 40 minutes on the average) if they were told how to help. Most parents (over 90%) became involved at least once in a while with homework activities with their children, but fewer than 25% received frequent and systematic requests and directions from teachers to assist children with specific skills.

What are the effects of teacher practices of parent involvement?

Effects on parents. Parents who received frequent requests from teachers to become involved in their children's learning activities at home:

recognized that the teacher worked hard to interest parents in the instructional program;

received most of their ideas for home involvement from the teachers;

felt that they should help their children at home;

understood more this year than in previous years about what their child was being taught in school.

Parents rated these teachers higher in overall teaching ability and interpersonal skills. Teachers who used parent involvement frequently rated parents higher in helpfulness and follow-through with learning activities at home, including parents with more or less education and single and married parents.

Effects on students. Although teachers and administrators believe that parent involvement is important, few are willing to invest the time needed for organizing practices and programs unless the activities will benefit the students' skills or attitudes.

We studied a small sample of urban elementary school students from whom fall and spring achievement test scores were available to see if students whose teachers emphasized parent involvement gained more in reading and math achievement than did students in other teachers' classrooms. With important characteristics statistically controlled, students whose teachers frequently used parent involvement made greater gains than other students in reading achievement from fall to the spring of their school year. We did not find the same pattern of effects for math achievement. Gains in math tended to be explained by other school and family factors.

Fifth grade students were surveyed from their reactions to teacher practices of parent involvement and their parents' help at home. Students whose teachers and parents used frequent parent involvement reported more positive attitudes toward school, more regular homework habits, more similarity between the school

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and their family, more familiarity between the teacher and their parents, and did more homework on weekends.

From all of the sources of information in our survey, a story begins to build: principals actively support parent involvement, especially reading activities; teachers request more parent involvement on reading activities at home; parents conduct more learning activities in reading than in other subjects, and the students' achievement in reading is improved. These results suggest the importance of subject-specific connections between types of parent involvement and student learning in that subject. If principals exercise leadership, if teachers request and assist parents to help students in particular subjects, then the students' mastery skills in those subjects should improve.

Many parents help their children with or without instructions from teachers, and many more would benefit from directions from the teacher on how to help with skills needed for the child's success and progress in school.

5. PARENT INVOLVEMENT IN GOVERNANCE AND ADVOCACY

A fifth type of parent involvement includes parents in decision-making and activities roles in governance and advocacy groups.

Governance. Parents participate in PTA/PTO or other organizations, formal and informal school committees, Advisory Councils or other groups at the school, district, or state levels. The parent representatives are advocates for children; participate in school improvement plans; help formulate or revise school policies, program priorities, curricula, budgets; help select new principals, teachers or staff; or participate in other school-related activities as mandated by federally- or state-funded programs, or local practice. These decision-making bodies are part of the official structure, under the leadership of school, district, or state administrators.

Advocacy. Independent advocacy groups, unions, or clearinghouses are typically initiated and supported by parents whose children attend public schools, and others in the community who are interested in maintaining and improving the quality of schools. These groups provide both groups with information about schools, education decisions, and local, district, state, and/or national issues that affect education. Independent advocacy organizations may analyze district, state or federal budgets; offer workshops and courses, and study and report on school goals or classroom practices. They may work to increase funding, influence legislation, or serve as "watch dogs" to assure school fairness and to prevent discrimination in desegregation and integration policies, special education, bilingual education, and other policies and practices. The key character of advocacy groups is their independence from the schools, with members able to speak and work without approval from school officials. They are, however, often involved in cooperative efforts with schools for school improvement.

The results of our research point out several issues that must be considered to build successful parent involvement programs to improve our schools.

One important issue is the need for schools to maintain parent involvement across the grades through high school. Grade level was the most important influence on teachers' uses of parent involvement at school or at home. Teachers

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of first grade students made more frequent use of parent involvement in learning activities at home than did teachers of third or fifth grade students. Teachers of fifth graders had fewer parents assisting in their classroom. Parents reported receiving fewer ideas from teachers in the upper elementary grades, and believed that the teachers of their older children did not want parents to help at home. Parents felt less capable of helping their older children in reading and math activities at home, although most wanted directions about how to help.

There is a dramatic decline of parent involvement practices by teachers and participation by parents in learning activities from grades 1 to 5. And this trend worsens in the secondary grades. Some parents continue on their own to assist and advise their children at home on learning activities throughout the high school years. Almost all parents remain interested in their children's schooling and success, and would like information and instructions from the schools about how to help their children.

A second issue is the need for schools to understand and work with all types of families. Families are changing. More children come to school from one-parent homes than ever before. About 24% of the elementary school children in our sample lived in one-parent homes. This is close to the national average, and the percent nearly doubles for black students in urban school districts. Single parents reported spending more minutes helping their child at home than did married parents, but they still felt that they did not have enough time to do all that the teacher expected. Married parents spent more time than did single parents helping teachers at school. Single and married parents were equally interested in helping and willing to help their children on learning activities at home.

Families differ. Children have better- or less-educated parents. In the survey we found that some teachers had worked out successful practices to use home learning activities with parents who had a college education, high school, or less than a high school diploma. Other teachers did not know how to involve less-educated parents, and claimed that the parents lacked the ability or willingness to help. The contrasts are significant: teachers who had organized the frequent use of parent involvement were able to get good results from all parents -- not just those who are traditionally thought to be helpful to teachers and to children.

Administrators and teachers must learn how to interact with differently structured families, one- and two-parent homes, mothers who work and unemployed parents, well-educated and poorly-educated parents, teenaged or young parents, non-English speaking or limited-English-proficient parents, and other types of families. Regardless of their family arrangements or characteristics, almost all parents care about their children's progress in school and want to know how to assist their children. We must consider how more families, even all families, can be informed and productively involved in their children's education.

A third issue is the need to use research results to improve practice. Based on our research, we are working with teachers and administrators to develop and evaluate a process called Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS) to assist teachers who want to increase parent involvement in math and science learning activities at home. There are four essential components in the TIPS process: clear goals, appropriate materials, transactional two-way communications, and evaluations.

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These components require teachers and administrators to: 1) identify the main goal for parent involvement, and outline a hierarchy of goals to guide the development over several years of a comprehensive program for parent involvement, including all types of parent involvement; 2) clarify how the materials selected or designed to be used in learning activities at home match the specific, stated goals for parent involvement, and are appropriate for the students' skills and parents' understanding; 3) require and build into the materials a two-way communication process so that parents can contact the teacher or other staff with questions, suggestions, or reactions; 4) include follow-up and evaluation activities to determine the strengths and weaknesses of the parent involvement program.

The TIPS process has been designed with prototypic math and science activities in the elementary grades, but the components can be generalized to other subjects and other types of involvement as administrators and teachers design or adapt parent involvement programs.

Let us return briefly to each type of parent involvement to begin to think of the implications of each type for the needs of limited-English-proficient families.

The first type of parent involvement referred to the basic obligations of parents to provide home conditions that support the children's schooling. The second type referred to the basic obligations of schools to communicate with parents. As schools and communities work to assist parents with limited English skills, the teachers and administrators will need to communicate in the parents' language of proficiency about the supplies children need, suggested study habits, changes in child and adolescent development, school programs and policies, and many other topics. Similarly, major publications, materials, and notices from the school may need to be translated for parents to assure their full understanding, and workshops for parents and parent teacher conferences may require that translators are available to assist parents to understand the information and communicate as an equal with their children's teachers.

Bilingual volunteers, other parents, or paid aides or staff can form an important communication network to translate information to parents. The LEP parents may become part of the group of translators as they improve their own English skills. These networks and services require strong support and coordination by the schools. Where there are large populations of LEP students and families, financial support from the school district will be required. But even where there are few LEP parents, some services to assist communications will be needed to develop family-school contacts that support student progress.

The third type of parent involvement referred to parents assisting at the school building. Although many parents cannot come to the school, many others do not come because they do not feel welcome or are not invited. LEP parents must be able to let the school know if and how they could assist teachers, administrators or students at school on tasks that need additional adult supervision. To do this, the school must conduct a survey or series of phone calls seeking volunteers in the parents' language of proficiency. And, once the parent comes to the school as a volunteer, there must be a bilingual parent, other volunteer, or school staff member who can welcome, direct, and instruct the parent about the needed activities without creating feelings of discomfort or inadequacy. Again this requires a coordinated network of translators who can integrate the LEP parent into the life of the school.

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The fourth type of parent involvement referred to parent involvement with their own children at home on learning activities designed by the school to boost students' progress. For LEP parents, directions are needed in the parents' language of proficiency to describe how they can assist reading, math, science or other skills by monitoring, talking with the child, asking questions, giving encouragement, listening to the child's answers, signing homework, and so on. There are many helpful learning activities that parents can conduct to keep their children motivated and improving in school. For example, the TIPS math and science activities that we are developing could be sent home in paired copies -- in the language the parent reads and in English so that the parent can understand the work the child is doing, and so that the student can complete the work in the language of school instruction.

The fifth type of parent involvement referred to memberships in governance and advocacy groups. Bilingual programs often request or require parents to serve on advisory councils. But, it is not enough to involve a few fully bilingual parents in limited governance roles. It is necessary to involve all parents in their own children's education. Community advocacy groups of bilingual and LEP parents can work independently of schools and in cooperation with schools to assure fair treatment of LEP children and their families. These groups can assist parents to understand their children's school program and practices, prepare parents to communicate with teachers and administrators, provide information on the implications of school decisions for their children's futures, and so on. Bilingual advocacy groups can monitor school district programs and budgets for bilingual programs and for services to parents.

Involving LEP parents in their children's education suggests three requirements from school districts: awareness of English proficiency among parents of the students; commitment to solving the problems of involving all parents, including developing comprehensive programs of all types of parent involvement; and action to extend opportunities for all or most parents to become involved in one or more types of parent involvement, especially in ways that will assist the daily success of their own children in school.

These requests to districts are based on both logical and legal connections between parent involvement and student success. The logical connections refer to results of research on bilingual education and parent involvement. The research suggests, for example, that students do better in reading English if the teaching of reading is preceded by oral training. Parents could be of great assistance to teachers in this pre-reading phase, as well as in later reading activities if teachers provide information in the parents' language of proficiency about how they can help their children. Other research suggests that students have greater difficulty learning English in the early phases, before they master speaking, reading, and writing skills and before they become fully bilingual. Parents could provide needed emotional support during difficult learning periods if teachers were able to communicate to them specific ways to boost student self-esteem and maintain student motivation--two natural skills of most parents if they have the information they need from the schools.

The legal connections refer to needed extensions and reinterpretations of the historic Lau vs. Nichols decision to go beyond concerns for children to give attention to parents and to the connections between families and schools. It is only a modest proposal, I think, to change the words of the Lau decision to reflect the results of research on parent involvement to state: "Where the inability of parents of school children to speak and understand the English language

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excludes the children from effective participation in the education program, the school district must take affirmative steps to open its instructional program to these parents and their children."

The research on parent involvement suggests that the language barriers between parents and the school, just as between the child and school, impede the equal participation of the children because the parents cannot effectively monitor student work and progress, raise questions or concerns with teachers, or assist their children as knowledgeable partners with the school. The needs of children, then, include having their parents understand school programs and contact and work confidently with the school in the interest of the child. School districts have not typically taken this affirmative action, although there are some exceptional districts that have made great strides in assisting and involving limited-English-speaking parents.

SUMMARY

Parent involvement and, specifically, the involvement of LEP parents are not simple issues. There are numerous types of involvement in each of the five basic categories we have identified, and for each type, special needs of LEP parents and their children must be considered. But, for all types it is not only the responsibility of the parents to help their children succeed in school, but also the responsibility of the school to make the appropriate connections with LEP parents. These connections should help parents understand the schools' practices and their children's opportunities, and should help the schools understand the families' cultures, strengths, and goals. Parents are an inevitable, inescapable, and important part of children's school life, and they want assistance from the school about how to help their children succeed at all grade levels. Most districts and schools have been dealing with issues of bilingual education of students without giving adequate attention to the connections that must be made between schools and families. We are only beginning to understand which types, formats, frequencies, and locations of parent involvement lead to specific student, parent, and teacher achievements, attitudes, and behaviors. We clearly need new research on school practices with families to determine whether and how parent involvement increases their children's success in school. The success of the children is more likely if their parents are informed and involved. This involvement must be direct and encouraged by the schools. School and family connections may, in the long term, be a powerful force for assuring the full membership of new immigrant children in American society.

This symposium is convened to ask the question: Que pueden hacer los padres; What can parents do? Simultaneously we should also ask the too-often forgotten question: Que pueden hacer las escuelas; What can the schools do? Parent involvement requires leadership from the schools to include all families effectively.

LIST OF REPORTS ON TEACHER PRACTICES OF PARENT INVOLVEMENT

I. Teachers' Practices of Parent Involvement

Parent Involvement: A Survey of Teacher Practices.
Henry Jay Becker and Joyce L. Epstein.
Elementary School Journal, November, 1982, 83, 85-102.
(P-11 Reprint \$.90)

Influences on Teachers' Use of Parent Involvement.
Henry Jay Becker and Joyce L. Epstein.
Report 324, The Johns Hopkins University, Center for Social Organization
of Schools, 1982. (P-12 Report \$2.05)

Teacher Practices of Parent Involvement: Problems and Possibilities.
Joyce L. Epstein and Henry Jay Becker.
Elementary School Journal, November, 1982, 83, 103-113.
(P-13 Reprint \$.55)

II. Students' Reactions to Parent Involvement

Student Reactions to Teacher Practices of Parent Involvement.
Joyce L. Epstein.
Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Education
Research Association, 1982. (P-21 Report \$1.05)

Effects of Parent Involvement on Change in Student Achievement
in Reading and Math.
Joyce L. Epstein.
Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Education
Research Association, 1984. (P-22 Report \$.90)

III. Parents' Reactions to Parent Involvement

Parents' Reactions to Teacher Practices of Parent Involvement.
Joyce L. Epstein.
Elementary School Journal, January, 1986, 86, 277-294.
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Joyce L. Epstein.
Educational Horizons, Winter, 1984, 62, 70-72. (P-32 Reprint \$.15)

Single Parents and The Schools: The Effect of Marital Status on Parent
and Teacher Evaluations.
Joyce L. Epstein.
Report 353 The Johns Hopkins University, Center for Social Organization
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IV. Other Issues Related to Parent Involvement

Homework Practices, Achievements, and Behaviors of Elementary School Stu-
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Joyce L. Epstein.
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Association, 1985. (P-41 Report \$1.20)

A Question of Merit: Principals' and Parents' Evaluations of Teachers.
Joyce L. Epstein.
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Research on Parent Involvement.
Joyce L. Epstein.
Pebody Journal of Education, 1985, 62, 18-41. (P-43 Reprint \$.60)

Parent-Teacher Conferences
Joyce L. Epstein.
Article to appear in Encyclopedia of School Administration
and Supervision, in press. (P-44 Report \$.30)

V. Summaries of Research on Parent Involvement

Testimony before the Prevention Strategies Task Force of the Select
Subcommittees on Children, Youth, and Families.
Joyce L. Epstein.
In Improving America's Education: Roles for Parents, June 7, 1984,
Washington: Government Printing Office. (P-51 Reprint \$.40)

When School and Family Partnerships Work: Implications for Changing
the Role of Teachers.
Joyce L. Epstein.
Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational
Research Association, 1985. (P-52 Report \$.60)

Parent Involvement: What Research Says to Administrators.
Joyce L. Epstein.
Education in Urban Society, in press. (P-53 Report \$1.20)

Parent Involvement (Five types of parent involvement programs)
Joyce L. Epstein.
Article to appear in Encyclopedia of School Administration
and Supervision, in press. (P-54 Report \$.55)

VI. Research and Development: Processes and Prototypic Activities
(For teachers' evaluations and cooperative research studies.)

Tying Research to Practice. TIPS: Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork.
Joyce L. Epstein.
Paper Presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational
Research Association, 1985. (P-61 Report \$1.80)

Teachers' Manual: Teachers Involve Parents in Schoolwork
Joyce L. Epstein
Manual for introducing the TIPS process and building parent involvement
programs. (P-62 Report \$3.65)

TIPS Process and Activities in Math, Grades 1 - 4.
TIPS Process and Activities in Science, Grades 2 - 5.
(Available on request from author.)

There is a copying charge (\$.05/page) and mailing fee for reports and
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PARENT INVOLVEMENT: IMPLICATIONS

LITERACY AND THE LIMITED ENGLISH POPULATION: A NATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Bill Bliss

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Washington, D.C.

In recent weeks, we have had our attention called on more than one occasion to the literacy needs of the nation's Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) population.

First, we have learned the results of an English language proficiency survey commissioned by the Department of Education and conducted by the Census Bureau in 1982. The survey suggests that between 17 and 21 million U.S. adults are illiterate. That's about 13 percent of the U.S. adult population. The results are controversial. Critics have problems with the test that was used, and many feel that the statistics are too conservative and downplay the enormity of the illiteracy problem. Indeed, earlier studies have suggested an illiteracy rate as high as 20 percent, but let's keep in mind that prior to this the Census Bureau estimated that less than four percent of adults were illiterate. That mythical figure was based on the number of adults with less than six years of schooling, a definition of literacy that I venture to say everyone in this room would take issue with.

If you're like me, you're dismayed by this fixation with numbers. A phenomenal amount of professional and national energy is devoted to counting the number of illiterates in this population. Is anybody going to sleep any better if we knew that instead of 2.7 million, there are only 2.1 million illiterates in our society? Of course not. As it is, our current adult basic education programs only serve about 2½ million people in any given year. No matter how large we may believe the illiterate population to be, we are educating a disgracefully small percentage of it.

A few more points worth noting about the Census Bureau survey. It identified certain key factors with the illiterate population. Two of these are immigration and the reliance on a non-English language at home. Thirty-seven percent of the adults classified as illiterate don't speak English at home. And of those, 82% were born outside the United States, 21% entered the country within the previous six years, and 42% are living in neighborhoods in which a language other than English is predominant. And perhaps most compelling: up to 86% of the non-English speakers who are illiterate in English are also illiterate in their native language. This has profound implications for our parent involvement to efforts, which I'll return later.

There has been a second recent occasion for us to be alerted to the needs of the limited-English proficient. The issue of Education Week dated May 14, contained a special pull-out section on the U.S. school populations. The cover was a photograph which showed a large number of school children walking out the door and down the steps of their school: books in hand, sneakers on feet, and big smiles on their faces. The faces in that photograph sent message, the happy faces of Blacks, Hispanics, Asians and other minority children, walking toward us, the reader, under a banner headline that read, "Here They Come, Ready or Not!" There were two or three white faces in the photograph, but there was no mistaking the message; "they" referred to the ethnic and minority children who are making up a growing proportion of our school population.

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Some of the information in the report was illuminating. Of the 3.6 million children who will start their school years next September, one out of four will be living at the poverty-level, 15% will be immigrants who speak a language other than English, and 10% will have parents who are illiterate or lack previous education.

Immigration patterns and birthrates are transforming our school population and will in subsequent years transform our society. Currently, about 21% of our population is Black, Hispanic and Asian. Around the year 2000, these groups will be about one-third of our population. Half a million or so immigrants and refugees come to our shores each year. Another half a million or so, nobody has reliable data, come to us as undocumented entrants. A million newcomers each year, representing a rich diversity of languages, cultures and experiences. Forty percent of legal immigrants are coming from Asia, another 40% from Mexico, Central and South America, and the Caribbean. Of the undocumented entrants, 50% are coming from Mexico, and 25% from Central and South American countries.

This surely isn't news in the metropolitan areas of New York City, Los Angeles, Chicago, San Francisco, Washington, D.C., Anaheim, Miami, San Jose, Boston or Oakland. Almost half the nation's legal immigrants are locating in these communities.

Birthrates are also contributing to the growing ethnic diversity in our schools. White American women currently have a fertility rate of 1.7 children per lifetime, much lower than the rate in our language-minority populations. And White America is getting older, while Minority America has never looked younger. The average White American is 31 years old; the average Black is 25; and the average Hispanic is only 23.

The combination of immigration and birthrate factors is creating dramatic changes in our schools, especially in the early grades. We can learn a lot about the future of our society by looking at the generation entering their school years, the generation that will pass through our educational system and emerge from it at the turn of this century. The mirror that next year's kindergartners and first graders hold up to us shows us a nation that will be profoundly more diverse in its ethnicity and language in the year 2000.

Even today, in 1986, the nation's limited-English-speaking population is a fascinating mosaic of diverse peoples. According to the 1980 Census, 64% of the total LEP population in the United States speaks Spanish at home. About one out of four Hispanics report speaking English not well or not at all. A report by the National Commission for Employment Policy estimates that about 70% of children ages 5 to 14 who live in Spanish-speaking households have limited-English proficiency. And up to 46% of those ages 14 to 21 have trouble with the language.

The Hispanic communities across the nation are of course very diverse. Mexican Americans, the vast majority living in California or Texas, may be recent arrivals or descendants of families that date back generations. We need only read our newspapers to know that the present Mexican economy is in distress, that the inflation and unemployment rates are an incredible burden on the Mexican population. Many economists believe that the option to temporarily or permanently move north across the border is an escape-valve that is absolutely essential to Mexico's stability. Mexico needs to produce about 750,000 new jobs a year just to keep unemployment at its presently high levels. This is unlikely, and we must be realistic and expect a continued flow across the border.

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Puerto Ricans, living primarily in New York and New Jersey, are often characterized as having a so-called "sojourner" orientation, moving back and forth between mainland and island, either physically or psychically. This sense of impermanence of the living situation may contribute to the economic hardship experienced by this population. Fully half of mainland Puerto Ricans have annual incomes less than \$10,000, and almost half of those are below \$5,000.

Cuban Americans, centered in Florida, with other concentrations in New Jersey, New York and California, have very diverse circumstances. The refugees of the early sixties were predominantly from the business and professional classes. They have thrived economically, integrated into the society, their children are for the most part fully bilingual and with a higher-than-average educational level. The situation is quite different for the so-called Marielitos, the 125,000 who arrived in the 1980 boatlift. These entrants were certainly not from the same well-heeled families as those who came two decades before, but neither were most of them the criminals and mentally ill individuals that the media made them out to be. This population still has significant adjustment and educational needs, several years after their arrival.

The Central American entrants are in a sense most in need of our attention, and least likely to get it. They are for the most part undocumented. They come to us primarily from small towns in rural Nicaragua, Guatemala, and El Salvador. They have little previous exposure to an urban setting. Their level of previous education is low. They are often unable to read or write in their native language. They are overwhelmingly young men who suddenly find themselves not only in a new land with a new language, but for the first time they are living outside the structure and security of their home and family. It's rather ironic that, by law, we must educate the children, while the parents shy away from contact with us, preferring the security of low visibility.

The other significant group in the limited-English population are the various Asian communities. The year 1965 saw the relaxation of immigration policies that had previously excluded most Asian applicants. And the year 1975 of course brought the beginning of the flow of Southeast Asian refugees to our shores. The immigrants are Chinese, Korean and Japanese, and we have read recently in our national press about their legendary educational attainments. Adult Asian immigrants to this country are twice as likely as native-born Americans to have attended college.

In terms of English language ability, the Asian immigrant groups do well. Census data suggests that only 20% of all U.S. Japanese and 30% of all Chinese and Koreans are limited-English-proficient.

The success of these immigrant groups sometimes tends to blind us to the difficulties experienced by the Southeast Asian refugees, still flowing into our country from Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia. Southeast Asian refugee men arrive in this country with an average of 6½ years of previous education. The women have less than four years. Members of the Hmong hilltribes from Laos average less than 1½ years schooling, and have little or no exposure to a written code of language.

While the first wave of refugees a decade ago was a more urban and educated population, the waves that have followed have brought us farmers and fishermen, a predominantly rural population that actually has many similarities to the newcomers from Central America. Native language literacy rates are low, and there

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has often been little or no exposure to an urban setting. The children have often had little or no education, no surprise when a generation of childhoods has been shattered by war at home, perilous escapes, and months or years of languishing in refugee camps.

So these are the key groups we are serving, Hispanic and Asian communities that make up about 3/4 of the nation's limited-English speaking population. Of course there are others: Haitians, Afghans, Ethiopians, East Europeans. They are fewer in number, but their needs can be as great.

What now exactly do we mean by literacy when we talk about the educational needs of this population? Predictably enough, the usual definitions of literacy refer to the literacy needs of the nation's English-speaking population: the need to read, write and compute well enough to be able to function in the community and on the job. We're aware though that many Americans manage to "get by" without these skills, by using spoken language or the assistance of friends, co-workers, or family members. The limited-English speaker doesn't have this capacity to "get by," because he doesn't possess the ability to listen to, comprehend and produce the spoken language necessary to meet basic survival needs of everyday life. We might say then that this speaking ability is a prerequisite or foundation for the development of literacy skills in the limited-English population.

Speaking and listening skills are indeed at the heart of the most basic classes in English as a Second language (ESL). Professionals have as their primary goal the development of students' communicative competence. Reading may initially be dealt with only through practice in the recognition of key sign words such as those found on emergency and warning signs. Writing may consist essentially of practice in filling out simple personal information on forms. Literacy instruction as it is provided to the English speaker is an inaccessible luxury to the non-English speaker who does not yet possess the ability to engage in simple conversation in the language.

The two major national literacy volunteer organizations understand this. Both Laubach Literacy Action and Literacy Volunteers of America have special teaching materials, training manuals and orientation programs for volunteers who will be teaching ESL literacy to their students. These materials are essentially communicative, and prepare students to eventually access the other literacy instruction that is more focussed on reading and writing.

Those who work primarily with children may ask: Where does this ESL instruction take place for the parents of my students? Chances are it takes place in a local adult basic education program. Nationwide, such programs serve about 600,000 ESL students annually. They can be found in remarkably diverse settings: public schools, community colleges, vocational and technical schools, and adult education centers. Refugee resettlement funds also allow for a limited number of programs often operated by social service agencies, churches and other community organizations.

Funding for adult English language education has never been great, and Gramm-Rudman certainly hasn't helped. Much fewer than 10% of those needing English training could be served during the days of healthier funding, and cut-backs are making that worse. Soon we'll have more situations nationwide like the one at the Hollywood Adult School. The principal there recently told me more than five hundred adults are on a waiting list--waiting to enter a basic class in English.

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Let's examine some of the "mythology" that often surrounds discussions of literacy. Two myths in particular cause serious damage: they cloud issues, create unrealistic expectations, and lead us down paths toward solutions that will not always work.

Myth Number One: The current school reform movement benefits our minority students. Reports such as "Nation at Risk" and most of the others that have followed have called our attention to the serious erosion in the quality and rigor of education. However, we notice a recurring theme in these reports: the best of our students are still not good enough. In order for our nation to stand strong in an increasingly complex and demanding world, we need to strengthen our teaching of the sciences, math and other areas. The response to such reports has been quick and strong across our nation. New and higher standards of academic excellence are being enforced, promotion and graduation requirements are being expanded, and course content is becoming more rigorous.

These new standards and requirements may be just fine for the students who cope with the old ones. But what about the students who were falling through the cracks before? All we are doing is making those cracks wider and deeper.

Dropout rates among language-minority students are already at crisis levels. Thirty-five percent of Hispanics ages 18 through 21 have dropped out of school. Dropout rates for Spanish-speakers in major metropolitan areas are staggering: Miami - 32%, Los Angeles - 50%, Chicago - 70%, New York - 80%. Between 1975 and 1982, Hispanic college enrollment declined by 16%.

So, Myth Number One doesn't wash. School reform at present is a threat to improved minority achievement. Somebody needs to commission a sequel to "Nation at Risk." Call it "Children at Risk," and let it tell us what every school must do to help each and every student achieve the new standards and requirements.

Myth Number Two: We have entered a technological and information age that requires new, higher levels of literacy. Well, we may read a lot about our new technological age, and the Sunday employment ads in The Washington Post certainly list lots of jobs in computers, engineering and information technologies. But if we really want to see where the future lies, we need only pass by our neighborhood fast food restaurant or convenience store. The signs that hang out front which read: "Hamburger, Fries and a Coke - \$1.65," or "Try Our New Breakfast Bar," are more likely to read "Part-Time Help Wanted" or "Openings -Flexible Hours." My favorite is at a McDonald's: "Hiring - All Shifts - Earn Money -Make Friends."

The ten job categories that are creating the largest number of new jobs are: janitors, nurses' aides and orderlies, sales clerks, cashiers, waiters and waitresses, office clerks, nurses, food preparation and food service/fast food workers, secretaries, and truck drivers.

What's happening? We are running out of young people. The number of 18 to 24-year-olds available to enter the labor force is dropping and will continue to drop for several years. It's the result of the whole generation of baby boomers that delayed marriage and starting families. If that generation had settled down when its parents did, then we'd currently have plenty of teenagers available to do part-time work in our restaurants and supermarkets.

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Yes, we're living in a technological society, but it doesn't demand very technological skills from most of us. The next time you're at your favorite fast food restaurant, peer over the cash register as your order is being rung up. Do you know what you're likely to find on the register keys? Little symbols of burgers, fries and sizes of drinks. Or think of your supermarket's checkout counter. They've probably installed that new machine that scans each item and electronically records the price. Has technology increased the skills needed by the supermarket cashier? On the contrary, the cashier is now little more than a bagger who holds items over a little electronic window before placing them in the bag.

We need to explode Myth Number Two and face a cold, hard reality. A small proportion of our future work force will indeed require more sophisticated skills in order to assume leadership roles in business, industry and government. But the vast majority of the future work force will not need these skills to enter the service occupations that are expanding. As disturbing as it may sound, there is little economic imperative for the improvement of literacy or the reduction of current drop-out rates in this country. If such an economic imperative existed, you can be sure that education funds would be expanded rather than cut back, and there would be less emphasis by the federal government on volunteer solutions to the problem of illiteracy.

We need to be especially mindful of this in our present decade, with its emphasis on cost-efficiency, the bottom line, self-reliance, and the prevailing wisdom that spending on social programs just fosters further dependency.

If there is no economic imperative for the improvement of literacy, then why bother? Because there is a social imperative, which is of greater urgency. Unless we implement dramatic reforms in our educational system, we are on the brink of creating a two-tiered society in this country: the literate haves and the illiterate have-nots. Minority youth with deficient skills may be able to drop out of high school and be gainfully employed in 1986, but how long will they be able or willing to stay in these entry-level service jobs? We are committing an entire generation of minority students to a lifetime of work in jobs that we would never wish on our own kids, except as part-time ways to earn some money during their school years.

The political life of our nation is also at risk if a vast segment of our citizenry does not have access to information because it lacks the skills to understand it. And no one can predict what we will reap if we allow this and future generations of language minorities to grow up in despair at the opportunities beyond their reach. This is our social bottom line, and it urgently commands our attention.

Given the magnitude of the literacy problem for limited-English-speakers, particularly those in our schools, we should consider the following principles and suggestions as we endeavor to enhance parent involvement in the education of their children.

First, we need to have realistic expectations. We may seek to get parents involved in order to improve the child's education, but we may find that the child is in many ways more capable than the parent. In so many refugee and immigrant families, the child is quick to pick up enough of the language to become the family communicator, answering the telephone, dealing with the landlord and the superintendent, doing the shopping and other errands. How many

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times has the teacher of immigrant children heard that the student was absent because he took his father to the welfare office or she took her mother to the doctor? We should also not assume that the parent has much previous education or literacy skills in the native language. More than one school system has gone to the trouble of translating school manuals and sending home notices to parents in Spanish, only to find later that the parents were unable to read the information.

Second, we should remember that immigrant and refugee children often pick-up English fairly quickly, at least relative to the time it takes adults to master the language. The children become Americanized in a short time. They master the language. They ~~are~~ to conform with a vengeance, in matters of dress, hairstyle, music, going out, and hanging out. The children vigorously reject their parents' values. They are often frustrated by their parents' lack of English and embarrassed by their old country ways. Parental authority disintegrates and discipline problems arise, at home and at school. The outcome is too often child abuse by the parent, or substance abuse by the child.

Schools need to establish parent support groups that deal with these issues in the native language. Newcomer parents need to know about the cultural norms their children suddenly identify with, and the high value Americans place on the independence of their children. They also need effective strategies to handle discipline.

Schools should also develop parent-child cooperative activities that foster more positive relationships in the family. I suggest for your consideration the use of native language literacy projects, in which children help parents learn to read and write in the native language. Such an activity simultaneously develops the parents' skills, reminds the child of the worthiness of the native language and culture, and fosters a helping relationship between child and parent.

Third, we need to realize that the children who need our help the most are the ones who don't have a parent we can involve in our schools. So many of our Central American entrants, for example, find themselves living with an aunt or uncle, brother, sister, family friend, or just with other children. Or, even if one or both parents are in the household, each may be working up to two full-time jobs, in order to support the family here and other family members back in the native country. We must not be discouraged by poor rates of parent participation in our programs. We need to be creative in our scheduling, and we should consider setting up drop-in resource centers and other mechanisms to allow parents to flexibly access our services.

Fourth, our education programs must be part of a larger array of support systems and services: day care, medical care, employment services, consumer and legal assistance, counseling. We need to coordinate our efforts with the various community organizations that provide these services. And if any are not provided, we need to do something about that, because parents will only be able to respond to our efforts to the extent that these survival aspects of their lives are in order.

Fifth, we need to be aware of a key distinction within our limited-English school population--a distinction between our students who immigrated here and our students who were born and raised here in language minority neighborhoods. In a way, newcomers to this country have an advantage over those who are members of long-established minority groups. Newcomers were probably members of their majority culture back in their native country. They have not been subject to the

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American minority experience. They have not inherited a legacy of discrimination, urban decay, and welfare dependency. Newcomers may indeed arrive here with a different culture, but it isn't the culture of American poverty. Their expectations are high, their motivation is high, and for them, the American dream is alive.

We face our greatest challenge then in our service to our long-established minority communities. We cannot motivate individual students or parents if the community itself is not motivated. We need to follow the lead of community-based organizations by involving parents in the design of our programs, rather than simply designing them ourselves and then hoping they will participate. Community outreach, therefore, doesn't mean the P.R. activity that we use to promote our programs. Community outreach means the ground-floor parent and community involvement we use to build our programs.

Sixth, high school reform comes too late for many of our children. Large numbers of our students are over age for their grade assignments, so they wind up dropping out before they even reach high school. We need to focus our energy and programs at the junior high/middle school level. These children are still our captive audience, and they are exploring the options before them.

Seventh, and finally, we must work in partnership with the private sector in our communities. Many of our students are working one or more part-time jobs. The late afternoon shift at Roy Rogers. The evening shift at the Seven-Eleven. School has become the day shift, and in the short term, it's a job that doesn't pay very well at all. When the need to help support the family is great, having a job on the side changes to going to school on the side, and that's one step away from leaving the school entirely.

Part-time work can be a wonderful education. The student gains important communication skills, deals with co-workers and customers, and experiences teamwork and organization. But let's assure that part-time work is integrated with school instruction and guidance about the world of work and career options. Let's involve parents as we discuss with children their study and work experiences and help them explore the directions in life they wish to take. And above all, let's assure that all our endeavors promote in our students a more positive self-image and a strong motivation to stay in school.

To sum up, we need to create opportunities for our students to succeed, and opportunities for their parents to play a role in that success. That is perhaps the greatest gift we as a professional community can offer to our students and their families.

ELEMENTARY LITERACY MATERIALS

Molly Bensinger-Lacy
Fairfax County Public Schools

In 1975, Fairfax County Public Schools received its first large influx of refugees from Southeast Asia. For the most part, the students we received were urban, well-educated, and had had contact with U.S. and/or French culture. Our job as ESL teachers was mainly one of giving our students English labels for concepts they already knew in their first language. Beginning in 1978, we started to see a change in the type of student entering our program. In increasing numbers, our more recent students are from rural areas with little or no contact with western culture or with a technologically advanced society. Southeast Asian, Central American and Middle Eastern, they and their parents often have had little or no formal education.

The education of these less-prepared students requires us to provide, among other things, information for cultural adjustment, English instruction, literacy skills, and world knowledge. ESL teachers are called on in some cases to help students adjust to the use of modern toilets, to teach the use of writing implements to older students while trying to make clear the concept of phoneme/grapheme correlation, and/or to provide students with world knowledge about such basic concepts as the relationship between size and distance; e.g., why the sun appears small to us and yet is actually very large.

At present in Fairfax County Public Schools, there are about 200 nonliterate students in the elementary grades. There are also 150, 17-20 year-old students in vocational education programs, which are designed to address the needs of the older nonliterate students.

Four years ago, two high school ESL teachers who had a group of these non-literate or borderline literate students developed HELP (Highlighting English, A Literacy Program). It soon became clear that these students did not have the necessary prerequisites for the HELP curriculum, such as fine motor skills, visual processing skills and auditory processing skills.

About the same time, the number of elementary nonliterate students had begun to grow and teachers were requesting help. The regular readiness materials available at the elementary level were not successful with these children, and even beginning pencil and paper activities were inappropriate. So we went back to the drawing board and compiled PRE (Pre Readiness Instructional Program). Although HELP was originally for secondary students and PRE for elementary, they can be and are being adapted to both levels.

Two overriding principles influence all classroom activities associated with the PRE program. First, listening comprehension is primary, and speaking is a by-product of aural comprehension. Only where survival requires it should speaking be required. This approach is appropriate for any beginning L2 classroom but is particularly good in reducing stress in nonliterate students unaccustomed to formal education. Active listening is the goal at all times. Secondly, no traditional pencil and paper activities are allowed except near the completion of the program when copying of the alphabet is attempted.

The program for nonliterate LEP elementary students addresses the development or strengthening of gross motor skills, fine motor skills, auditory

processing, visual process, learning processes, and memory processes while students are learning to understand and speak English. Our objectives and instructional ideas were from people who know a lot about what is necessary before reading and writing can take place. Our sources include the Early childhood Program of Studies, the Kindergarten Program of Studies, the Motor Development Curriculum Guide (all from Fairfax County Schools, and commercial materials at these levels. Our language objectives are from the Fairfax County Public Schools ESL beginning level of objectives.

Total Physical Response (TPR). TPR is the primary means of L2 instruction in the PRE program. In TPR the second language is taught predominantly through commands coupled with physical response from the learner. Speaking is encouraged only after students demonstrate aural comprehension of an item. TPR can be used in any L2 classroom but is particularly suitable for use with our targeted population because of its deemphasis on speaking, which lowers stress, and the constant use of physical response improves on-task time for students not used to sitting in classrooms for long periods. Also, the command format provides a convenient way to practice prereadiness skills, e.g., Button/Unbutton the skirt; Pick up the blue buttons and put them in the bottle, which is practice of fine motor skills.

Sample Activities. Samples of activities to develop skills in the following areas are presented in figures at the end of this paper: Auditory processing, Visual processing, Fine motor skills, Gross motor skills, Learning processes, and Memory processes.

HELP consists of thirty lessons, one for each letter of the alphabet and one for each of the following: /θ/, /ð/, /ʃ/, /ç/, /hw/.

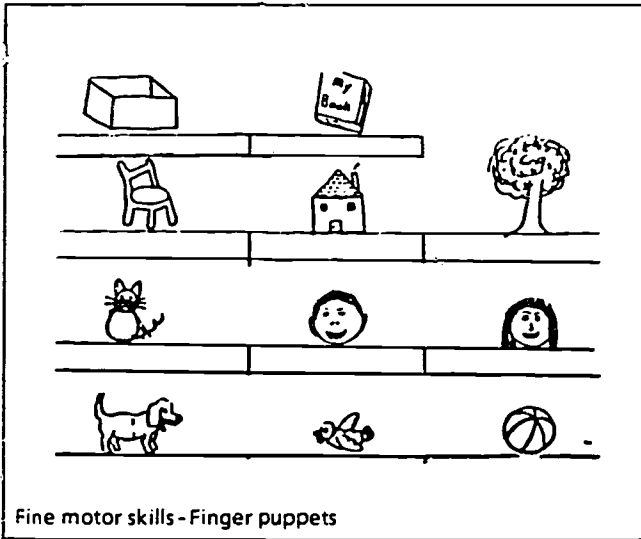
Strong points of HELP include an uncluttered format on student worksheets, tasks broken down into small increments to insure success, new types of activities introduced one at a time with plenty of time allowed for familiarization before the next new type is presented, and a good teacher's guide with extra resources and reproducible worksheets.

Each of the thirty lessons has basically the same format. First, the new letter is presented and practiced. Most new vocabulary for each lesson begins with the target letter. The words are traced, copied, presented in word searches, and in scrambled letter, matching, configuration, and cloze exercises. The words are practiced in phrases and then presented as part of a story accompanied by comprehension questions. Each lesson includes new grammatical objectives as well as built-in review.

The teaching techniques remain the same when HELP is used at the elementary level, with changes. The exercises are reproduced with larger print. Some stories are changed, some omitted, and some added to make the materials more appropriate for younger students. When new vocabulary of the lessons is introduced to elementary students, all of the suggested ways in the teacher's guide are used rather than a selective process.

Although both programs described above are still in draft form, they are being used in part or as complete programs by individual ESL teachers who have nonliterate students in their classes. A copy of either or both program guides are available from, Dr. Esther J. Eisenhower, ESL Program Coordinator, Lacey Instructional Center at Masonville, 3705 Crest Drive, Annandale, Virginia 22003.

Samples: Pre-HELP

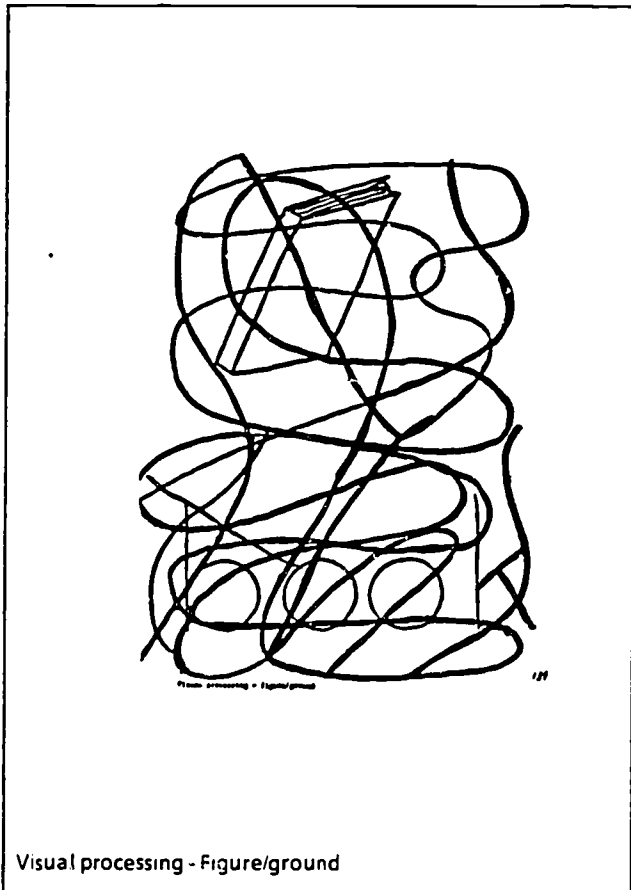


Fine motor skills - Finger puppets

Diagrams A, B, C, and D for gross motor skills. A is a zigzag line, B is a spiral, C is a cursive 'e', and D is a square spiral.

1. Use regular or colored masking tape to make shapes on floor or playground.
2. Collect assorted objects: book with pencil on it, plate filled with sand, erasers, etc.
3. Instruct student to go to A (or rod) and hop (run or jump) the line holding one of the objects.

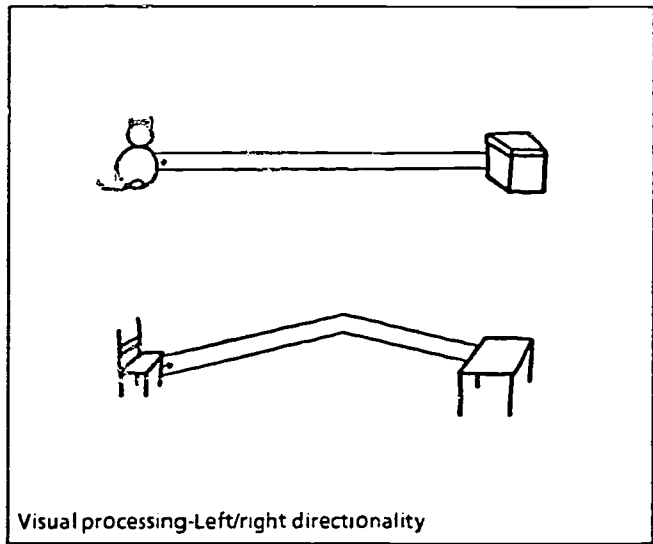
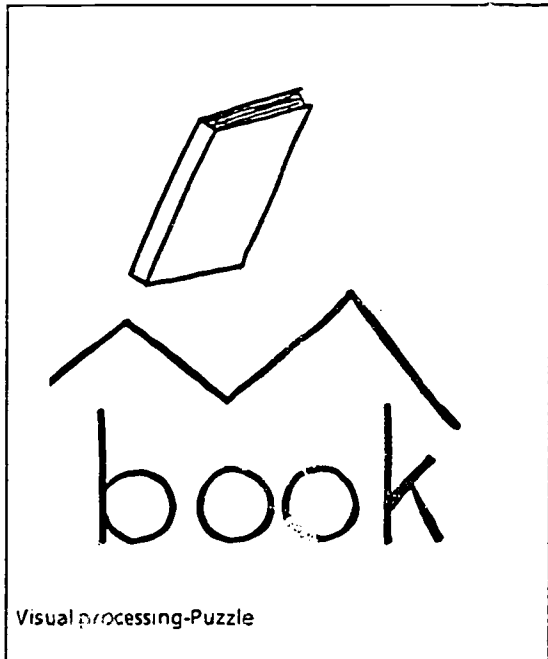
Gross motor skills



Visual processing - Figure/ground

A grid for auditory processing. It consists of a 4x8 grid of circles. Above the grid are four stick figures in different poses: sitting at a desk, standing, walking, and pointing. The grid is used for auditory processing exercises.

Auditory processing



Sample page from
HELP lesson


TRACE AND COPY


Kk


Kk


Kk


WORDS

 the king

 a kitchen

 a kite

 a key

 a kitten

k kiss **k** kiss **k** kiss

DIRECTIONS IN LITERACY FOR SECONDARY LEP STUDENTS

Susan Haverson

Salem-Keizer School District, Salem, Oregon

There is a challenge that needs to be confronted in the education of Language-Minority students, one that defines a new and dynamic vision that would yield a renewed sense of direction and purpose, and inspire the necessary energy and commitment to ensure the implementation of appropriate instruction. While looking at maintaining programs at greatly reduced funding levels we need also to look at making them much better.

What are the literacy needs of secondary LEP students? What literacy tasks are secondary students expected to be able to perform? Some of the expectations of the typical secondary school follow:

- o Students must be able to read for information and content in textbooks and in other printed matter.
- o Students must be able to write paragraphs and compositions.
- o Students must take tests and pass competencies.
- o Students must write book reports and research papers.
- o Students must fill out applications and other forms.

What then should the purpose of literacy instruction be for the LEP student? Survival proficiency? Academic proficiency? What do we want our students to be able to read for? To pass competency tests? To fill out job applications? Or do we have more long-term goals in mind when we talk about literacy instruction? Our perspectives on the issues will differ, and there needs to be healthy debate about how best to serve secondary LEP students to ensure their access--to the world of print, and to the world at large.

Frank Smith and the Goodmans convincingly argue that the target of reading must be meaning. My own experiences in the classroom and my students have also convinced me that one learns to read only through materials and activities that make sense to him or her, that can be related to what is already known (Smith, 1983). The importance of reading for meaning reinforces current practices in bilingual education programs around the country that provide initial reading instruction in the students' native language until the students have acquired enough strategies to transfer easily to English reading. I also support the notion that reading is not something that can be taught, rather it is the teacher's responsibility to make it possible to learn. In most reading classes I have observed in the Middle School or in remedial reading classes in the high school into which many of our LEP students are mainstreamed, reading is presented as a series of isolated skills which serves to confuse them about the function and purpose of reading and writing. In a classroom where the focus of instruction is on reading for meaning the readers are encouraged to make guesses and predictions about print, based on their prior experience or background knowledge and other available clues. Thus it seems that meaningful learning does not take place by presenting material in a step-by-step linear fashion. Teaching to a rigid set of objectives will never promote such learning because as with meaningful learning, one can never predict what the outcome will be (Smith, 1983). A definition of meaningful instruction might be this: Learning which engages the learner in a way that integrates the student's prior knowledge with the new material to be learned. Those familiar with schema theory will recognize that comprehension is

as dependent on what is in the reader's head as it is on what is printed, or, the more we know before we read, the more we learn when we read. This notion has tremendous implication for our secondary LEP students who are trying to make sense of an American History or Social Studies text when prior experience with the information is non-existent.

Methods of instruction that present activities that occur before students read content materials are essential to promoting literacy development. Providing background information and previewing content for the reader seem to be the most obvious strategies for the teacher of LEP students. "The idea is to avoid having students read the material cold." (Atwell and Rhodes, 1984)

For the secondary LEP student, this means spending a great deal of time in pre-reading activities to develop the necessary schema for comprehending the text. For example, at the Salem Newcomer Center, we have identified a variety of activities for our beginning students to help them develop a schemata for Social Studies prior to reading a text. These activities include the presentation of visuals, films, demonstrations, hands-on projects, brainstorming strategies and small-group work. The text is only introduced after we are certain that most of the information is already in the reader's head. Many teachers have suggested to me that this pre-reading approach is an unrealistic expectation for mainstream teachers to use with their secondary LEP students. I maintain that all of their students would benefit if teachers were willing to spend time in developing the background knowledge of their students. I would go so far as to suggest that students might even look forward to reading their history text if sufficient time were spent in preparing them to read it.

Reading and writing cannot be separated and taught as two distinct activities. Even the most beginning LEP students can produce written language and get a feeling of satisfaction and success from reading a story they have produced from their own experience. When writing consists most of the time of completing worksheets, answering questions, writing a paragraph or composition paying close attention to mechanics, spelling and punctuation, it is viewed as a boring activity by most students. If our students, on the other hand, are presented with writing as a process that helps them discover or refine patterns of organization about the language, which in fact helps them to become better thinkers, an interest in writing might be ignited, or at the very least, a willingness to consider writing as a useful, purposeful activity. I have noticed that my students enjoy working together in small groups on writing tasks as long as they are sure that the atmosphere is free of threat. They work together to write summaries of the content we have just learned, or to write another ending to an exciting story that has been presented to them. Journal writing has always been an activity that students have responded to enthusiastically. Reading and writing must be seen as activities that are meaningful. The teacher is the model. She must read with the students, write with them, and of course, at the same time, learn with them.

Smith proposes that "there is no reason why fluency in writing should not develop concurrently with fluency in other aspects of language. They have the same roots - the urge to make sense of the world and of oneself. Students should come to writing as a natural means of expression and exploration, like speech, music and art. As long as writing remains a natural and purposeful activity, made available without threat, students will be able to practice it and consequently, will learn." (Smith, 1983). He maintains that we learn to write by reading and that "students will learn to write and to enjoy writing only in the

presence of teachers or other adults who themselves enjoy writing. A desirable goal would be for all teachers to learn to become at least moderately competent writers. And for this they should not themselves turn to the exercises and 'how to do it' books anymore than they should try to educate their own students that way." (Smith, 1983)

Let us turn our attention to curriculum considerations in an effort to present LEP students with a more appropriate instructional design. The difficulty in talking about curriculum is that "the notion inherently embodies two flagrantly untrue propositions: that what is taught will be learned and that what is to be learned can fit into neatly, packaged, exactly-timed courses." (Hart, 1983) Current research in brain functions and human learning loudly protests these propositions. Students learn by being in an environment where learning is allowed to happen, where the natural processes of the brain to make sense of the world are not inhibited by being directed to focus on isolated skills that have nothing to do with meaning. Atwell and Rhodes talk about the differences between skill lessons and strategy lessons: "Skill lessons based on linear models of reading continue to dominate school reading curricula, the goal of which is to be able to check off a series of competencies mastered." Strategy lessons, on the other hand, are based on models that promote reading as a constructive process, are process-oriented, and encourage active student involvement in a way that helps readers link their backgrounds and knowledge to the topic or activity. Strategy lessons are usually characterized by student-to-student communication and divergent thinking. "While the uninformed observer may believe that the students are not attending to the task, it is precisely the reading, talking and thinking that is the task." (Atwell and Rhodes, 1984) Instead of looking for the right answers, the students are encouraged to share and extend what they know before, during and after reading the text. Instead of focusing on a series of competencies, the teacher is freed to follow the lead and pace set by the students themselves. (Atwell and Rhodes, 1984)

A curriculum design that might be implemented in such a classroom may have the following characteristics:

- o It takes into consideration the background knowledge of the students and the wealth of information and experience with which all students come to school.
- o It guides students to make predictions about the text information based on their background knowledge.
- o It does not waste time on teaching reading as a set of tiny skills with a lot of time spent on worksheets and skill sheets.
- o Reading is presented as a whole-language comprehension-centered activity.
- o Reading and writing are integrated, with one helping the other.
- o It encourages and supports the natural curiosity of the reader by providing activities that go far beyond the artificial walls of the classroom and capitalizes on the natural drive of the learner to make sense of his or her world.
- o It supports the belief that reading is as natural as speaking and that communicates the expectation for success with qualification at all times.
- o Reading and writing are viewed as process-oriented and not product-driven.

- o It provides for feedback in such a way that learners can find out if their pattern extraction and recognition of the language is correct or improving and it recognizes that "it only serves to confuse and inhibit to tell the learner who is on the right track, that an effort made is wrong because performance is poor." (Hart, 1983)
- o It allows the teacher to communicate her passion for reading. As Susan Ohanian so eloquently states: "You can't be neutral about reading. It requires partisanship and faith--faith in words and faith in kids. Without this faith, you begin to run scared and you're in danger of being smothered by other people's precautions and prescriptions. When you're able to act on your faith, you will be able to help students find their own strengths in a way that no system, no checklist, no set of objectives or skillbooks or duplicating masters can touch." (Ohanian, 1985)

In summary, on the issue of curriculum design, perhaps what is most needed is a better theory of learning, based on new understandings of brain functions and application of the operations and how learning takes place, and how learning styles vary, that gives recognition to the unique, cultural background experiences of the LEP student.

It seems unlikely that the need for change in curriculum design will be given much attention, at least in the foreseeable future. Due to the ever-increasing dictates and mandates imposed on educators in the name of accountability, competency-based instruction, pre- and post-testing, basic skills instruction, measurable outcomes and a host of other instruction-inhibiting buzz words seem to remain the order of today. The national concern about the growing drop-out rates in minority populations will hopefully lead someone in a high place to take a look at what is not working at the secondary level and to give thought to the notion that providing more of the same, indeed, intensifying the effort, will probably led to an even greater drop-out figure.

I have been asked to comment on materials in the field that I judge as useful in providing literacy instruction. Most of the materials I have reviewed designed for this purpose present reading and writing in a unnatural format bearing little relationship to the purpose of reading or the real world of the learner. On the other hand, there have been a number of books that my students have responded to with great enthusiasm. I have used high interest adventure stories that include examples of science fiction, sports stories, fantasy and mystery. Initially, many days are spent in preparing the students to read the text, in arousing their interest, in provoking their curiosity and in connecting their prior knowledge to the information in the story. At all times, the students are encouraged to ask questions for clarification or for confirmation of their sense of the information.

I am pleased to see that materials are beginning to be published for the beginning LEP student that recognize the import of background knowledge as a prerequisite to reading success. These materials put special emphasis on the important of language experience as the connection to other printed matter.

For the most part, published reading programs or basal reading series cannot demonstrate what reading and writing are for. "Teachers can demonstrate the utility of literacy by ensuring that students observe and participate in written language activities that have a purpose--stories to be written and read for pleasure, poems to be recited, songs to be sung, plays to be acted, newspapers and

announcements to be read, all the multiplicity of ways in which written language is used and taken for granted in the world at large." (Smith, 1983)

In conclusion, it seems that a variety of instructional changes are in order if we are to effectively serve secondary LEP students. James Britton articulates a need for change well: "There lies ahead of us the enormous task of translating what we know of language acquisition, language development, and the nature of learning into structures by which teaching and learning in school may be organized. Too often today the call for 'structure' takes the form of demanding the preservation of, or a return to, lockstep procedures that grew up in ignorance of the nature of learning and reflecting a mistaken view of knowledge and hence of curriculum. In this task, teachers must take a lead, both as to theory and as to practice, if the structures devised are to be workable and grounded in experience. The further participation of linguists, psychologists and sociologists will be essential." (Britton, 1977)

Returning now to a vision of secondary education for the LEP student, let us imagine a classroom where:

- o Students are actively involved in literacy activities that have meaning and application to the real world.
- o Students achieve success in literacy tasks because the curriculum has been designed to not only accommodate, but also to capitalize on their unique background and experiences.
- o Students become and remain literate in their first and second languages.
- o Students are in an environment where success and achievement for all are not only attainable but taken for granted.

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MEETING THE EDUCATIONAL NEEDS OF THE NONLITERATE
LIMITED-ENGLISH-SPEAKING ADULT

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Because of its size and the diversity of the population it serves, the Fairfax County Public Schools English as a Second Language (ESL) program for adults has faced most, if not all, of the literacy problems encountered by smaller programs. Approximately 1,800 adults are enrolled in 100 classes in any give term. They speak some 75 languages and represent 100 different countries. Their educational and cultural backgrounds vary as do their immediate goals and future aspirations. While 25% of these limited-English-proficient (LEP) adults have had some college education and 50% have completed somewhere between 9 and 12 years of schooling, another 25% have less than an 8th grade education and 10% have had less than 5 years. Some of the latter have never been inside a school-room or held a pencil. In all of the above groups, there are adults whose English ranges from zero command to quite fluent.

Before 1980, the LEP adult in our program who was not literate in his native language and the roman alphabet was a rarity. The few isolated cases brought to our attention were referred to the Northern Virginia Literacy Council for individual tutoring. While our ESL program for adults purported to emphasize spoken English, teachers relied heavily on texts and were not prepared to deal with the occasional nonliterate in their class.

In the early 1980's with a influx of refugees from Southeast Asia, Central and South America, and Afghanistan, the number of nonliterate and semiliterate LEP adults began to grow. By 1982, it had exceeded the capability of the literacy council, whose primary purpose was to teach literacy, not ESL, to provide tutors. Since the mission of adult basic education is to give priority to those "least educated and most in need," we felt a responsibility to serve this segment of the population above all others.

Our first tactic was to absorb the nonliterate adult into our regular ESL classes. In locations where there were several such adults, the students were regrouped for reading and writing activities. The nonliterate students could work on pre-reading activities and basic literacy skills during this time. Students who were beyond the beginning level in their speaking and listening skills could join the nonliterate beginners for literacy instruction. This solution had several advantages. It forced teachers to focus on oral communicative competencies and to rely less heavily on grammar and printed texts. Our "spoken English" classes more nearly approached what they were advertised to be. The solution was not without problems, however. There was much anxiety and resistance on the part of teachers. They were not used to teaching nonliterate students, and most did not have such training. They could no longer rely on a text for their course of study, and in fact, they would lose their nonliterate students if they used the blackboard or print materials to any great extent. Two other problems soon became obvious. The literate students learned differently, needed different materials and progressed at a different rate from the nonliterate adults in the same class. Also, it was very difficult to coordinate the reading/writing/literacy instruction with oral/aural instruction, especially when students were pulled from different classes for the former.

Because of the aforementioned problems, and because the numbers of nonliterate continued to grow, special "literacy" classes were established in 1983. In non-intensive sites, these were scheduled on opposite nights from the regular beginning and intermediate classes so an adult could take beginning or intermediate ESL, for example on Monday and Wednesday nights and literacy class were on Tuesday and Thursday nights. The majority of the nonliterate adults enrolled in a literacy class instead of a beginning or intermediate ESL class, however. They seemed to feel more comfortable in the literacy class and it apparently met what they perceived to be their greatest need. There was also some indication that two different classes meeting a total of four nights a week was too much for these adults to cope with.

The literacy classes were quite popular. As soon as the word was out that one could learn English even if one couldn't read or write, the classes filled quickly. In the second year, five sections filled with 10 or more students each. It was then that the complexity of the problem became apparent. With the only requirement of enrolling in these classes being an inability to read and write in English, some very heterogeneous groups appeared. We had students who spoke no English and students who spoke and understood quite a bit, some who were well educated in a non-roman alphabet language and some with little or no formal schooling or literacy in any language. When the diversity in socio-economic and cultural backgrounds of the students was taken into consideration, even a class of 10 or 12 presented a very wide range of needs and abilities. It soon became apparent that to meet the individual needs of such a diverse group of adults was an extraordinary task and would require extraordinary solutions, necessitating a reappraisal of the program.

In order to determine where to go from here, we find we must ask ourselves the following questions, realizing that it may take different solutions to meet the needs of various types of students.

WHO are our nonliterate LEP students? In their home country, did they function in a predominantly nonliterate or a predominantly literate society? Do they feel a need to become literate or just to speak and understand English?

WHY do these students need literacy skills in English? If they perceive a need for English literacy, what are their specific literacy needs? Do they need literacy skills to meet their everyday survival needs, as a tool to learn English, to obtain further education or to function as a literate adult in U.S. society at the level they functioned in their home country?

WHAT shall we teach them to best meet their needs? Survival sight words? Decoding skills?

WHEN shall we teach literacy--before, after or simultaneously with speaking and listening? Would we organize special sections of beginning and intermediate classes for the nonliterate students?

WHERE can we deliver this instruction most efficiently and effectively? In regular ESL classes, special literacy classes or individual tutoring situations?

HOW can we teach these adults most effectively? What are the best methods and materials to do the job?

For the immediate future, we plan to try a combination of group and individual instruction. Special sections of beginning ESL will be organized for the nonliterate LEP adult. Where the numbers warrant, special "literacy" sections will also be offered at the intermediate level. These classes will concentrate on spoken English using communicative activities, visuals and realia, and ESL texts specifically designed for the nonliterate adult. Certain symbols and sight words necessary for survival will be taught to the entire class (e.g., traffic signals, IN, OUT, DANGER). Other literacy instruction will be conducted individually and in small groups by volunteers under the direction of the teacher.

Volunteers will be recruited from the general public, colleges and universities, prospective teachers and advanced ESL students. They will be trained by literacy teachers in structured sessions to include literacy sensitivity, methods of instruction and introduction to materials. The goal will be to have a teacher and one or two volunteers for every class of 10 to 12 students.

The successful teacher of literacy to LEP adults uses a variety of methods and materials. Strategies our teachers have found most successful include:

Labels in the classroom. The daily exposure to the printed word associated with the object (window, door, table, chair, floor, etc.) is an efficient reinforcement and builds confidence. Words should be introduced gradually and labels removed when their usefulness has expired.

Matching pictures and spoken English to words and sentences is an effective strategy that focuses on meaning. Students are asked to identify which picture represents a spoken word or sentence, then to say the word or sentence in response to a picture. After the words or sentences are introduced in print, students identify the word or sentence in response to the spoken word and picture and finally read the word or sentence alone. This strategy helps the nonliterate adult see the printed word as "language written down." The ability to recognize larger chunks of language early in the learning process can be a great confidence booster for the nonliterate LEP adult.

Total Physical Response (TPR). Popular in teaching comprehension of spoken English, it can be just as effective in the teaching of reading. Students respond first to the spoken word, then to the printed word accompanied by the spoken word, and finally to the printed word alone. TPR can be used at the letter recognition level "Show me the letter 'H'," the word level, "Smile," and at the sentence level, "Go to the door."

The game, Concentration, in which the student matches picture cards to word cards is a good individual or small group activity which can be devised at the word, phrase and sentence level. Road signs, for example, lend themselves well to this type of exercise. The symbol for NO LEFT TURN is put on one card and the printed words on another. Students pick 2 cards each way and try to find a match.

The Language Experience Approach (LEA), a favorite of elementary school teachers, builds on ideas and language that is meaningful to the students. The student dictates to the teacher what s/he wants written down. The student can then "read" what s/he has just said. One way to elicit an LEA story from a group of students is to use a series of pictures. The students discuss the story suggested by the pictures and come to a consensus on

sentences that tell the story. The teacher then writes the story on the board. Other experiences can also be to describe the weather, a classmate, etc.

Close exercises are good follow-ups to a language experience story. They can be as simple as one word omitted, or as complex as every other (4th, 10th) word omitted.

Field trips enable students to learn immediately relevant language in a real life situation. Field trips need not be elaborate excursions--a trip to the restroom, public telephone or vending machine can provide valuable literacy materials if well planned. Students can look for words introduced earlier in class (MEN, WOMEN, COIN RETURN, EXIT, PUSH, PULL) or the teacher can introduce the words on the spot and follow up in class.

Songs and chants, so effective in teaching rhythm and intonation patterns, and to give a change of pace to a class, are also effective reading materials for the beginning reader. The repetition makes them easy to remember.

Puzzles (wordsearch, crossword, etc.) provide good reinforcement of sight words.

The phonics approach, stressing regularities in sound/symbol correspondence, is particularly effective with adults who are well educated in their own language. These adults have already been successful at becoming literate in one language and frequently want to learn to decode. It is, of course, important that teachers resist the temptation to simply borrow materials designed for English speaking children. Phonics materials for LEP adults must use key words that are meaningful to them and which they recognize aurally and can say. Three sets of commercially available materials designed for ESL adults use the phonics approach. Two sets, one by Longfield and one by Haverson and Haynes are literacy supplements designed to accompany English as a Second Language: A New Approach for the 21st Century, published by Modlearn. Another set, two phonics workbooks by Bassano are also used as a supplement to other materials.

For more depth and specific examples of strategies for teaching the nonliterate LEP adults, the following papers by Savage, Crandall, Ranard and Haverson are extremely helpful.

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BASIC SKILLS EDUCATION IN THE ARMY

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Several aspects of Army education are different from the issues being raised in this symposium. In the Army parents are not encouraged to become involved in the education and training of their children. Furthermore, the limited-English-proficient (LEP) soldiers are often literate and the illiterate soldiers are usually not LEP. The Army, however, does have illiterate soldiers and LEP soldiers, and the consequences of these deficiencies are quite serious. I will briefly discuss problems associated with limited literacy and limited-English proficiency in the military and then review some of the Army basic skills programs in these areas.

Next to our public schools, the Army is one of the larger organizations involved in teaching basic skills in this country. About 90,000 soldiers receive instruction in basic skills each year in order to patch up the breakdown of the school-to-work sequence. And it is work, or the job, that the Army is ultimately concerned about. In 1978 Congress mandated that on-duty education programs be related to soldiers' training and job needs. The new program called the Basic Skills Education Program (BSEP) was to provide soldiers with instruction in the reading, writing, speaking, listening, and computing skills that they needed to perform their military duties through their first enlistment.

In order to appreciate the effect of basic skill deficiencies on soldiers' performance, it is useful to briefly consider the sequence of early stages in a soldier's career. Figure 1 presents an outline of these stages, from the initial eligibility testing to joining the permanent duty unit and performing one's job.

There are number of criteria a person has to meet to become eligible for the Army. One of them is set by the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) which consists of ten sub-tests which include arithmetic reasoning, work knowledge, paragraph comprehension, science, electronics, etc. Four of these sub-tests determine a person's eligibility. The entire battery is used to determine which Army jobs a person qualifies for.

After passing the entrance examination, the trainees begin eight weeks of Basic Training (BT) where they are taught fundamental military skills. After BT, trainees go on to 7 to 25 weeks of Advanced Individual training (AIT) where they learn their jobs or Military Occupational Specialty (MOS). On completing training, soldiers join their permanent units and begin performing their Army jobs.

What are the possible effects of limited literacy on this process? An illiterate person is unlikely to get a high enough score on the four main ASVAB sub-tests to be eligible for the Army. If the person is eligible, he or she is more likely to only qualify for the more limited jobs such as infantry, artillery and maintenance, not jobs like engineering, electronics and data processing. The potentially negative effect of illiteracy and limited-English proficiency carries through the succeeding stages. There is data relating language skills and literacy to failing to complete training, poor job performance, attrition, safety problems, and low motivation (TRADOC, 1982; Salas, Kincaid and Ashcroft, 1980). This adds up to problems and higher costs for the military.

I will briefly describe basic skills instruction in the Army using four questions.

What are the populations deficient in basic skills?

There are two populations: Non-native English speakers or a real LEP population, and native English speakers who have not mastered the basic skills. These two populations are very different. The LEP population consists of approximately 85% native Spanish speakers, of whom more than 80% are from Puerto Rico. Koreans are the next largest language group. Nearly 90% of the LEP population are high school graduates, a sizable minority have had one or more years of college. Usually they have some skill in reading English, their greatest problem is with spoken English. More than 2,000 of these soldiers receive English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction each year.

The other population consists of soldiers who receive instruction in reading, communication, or math because they do not meet Army standards. For Army purposes, mastery of the basic skills means functioning at, or above, the ninth grade level. Currently less than 80% of this population have high school diplomas, nearly 90% are native English speakers, 8% are Spanish speakers, approximately 50% are Black, and approximately 45% are white. The Army provides instruction to more than 80,000 these soldiers each year.

How do basic skill deficiencies affect Army performance?

One example of the relation between basic skill deficiencies and performance is reflected in the effect of limited-English proficiency on completing basic training. The Army's standard instrument for measuring the English proficiency of LEP soldiers is the English Comprehension Level Test (ECLT). The ECLT, developed by the Defense Language Institute English Language Center (DLIELC), is probably the most widely used English language test in the Armed Services. There are more than a dozen alternative forms of this test and replacement versions are developed every year. Each form consists of 120 multiple-choice items with four possible answers per item. Respondents make their answers on a separate answer sheet. Part I of the ECLT consists of 75 items: the stimulus portion is presented on audio tape, the multiple-choice response portion is given in the test booklet. The remaining 45 items in Part II are presented through the test booklet. Lexical items comprise 75% of the test content, with the remainder being structural items and paragraph comprehension (DLIELC, 1980). ECLT scores range from zero to 100.

In 1983-84, the American Institutes for Research evaluated an ESL program that provided six weeks instruction before trainees began BT (Rosenbaum and Stoddart, 1984). The evaluation included a follow-up of program graduates through BT. We found a linear relation between trainees' language proficiency and completing BT. Language proficiency in this case was measured by the ECLT. The ECLT scores of two groups of soldiers are compared in Table 1: those who complete BT and those who failed BT and were discharged from the Army. Both groups exited the ESL Program with a range of ECLT scores. However those with scores of 50 or more had a relatively low percent of attrition while the attrition rate for soldiers with scores below 50 steadily increased to more than one third for the lowest ECLT range.

What is the Army doing to improve basic skills?

We will first consider ESL instruction as indicated in Figure 1, then return to literacy instruction in a later section. LEP soldiers who score less than 70 on the ECLT when they enter the Army are sent to DLI in San Antonio for up to 24 weeks of ESL instruction before going to BT. The curriculum is the American Language Course (ALC). The course uses an audio/lingual structural approach, four hours/day in the classroom, two hours in the language lab. The course objective is to "modify students' behavior language patterns." Students learn dialogues, perform sentence pattern repetitions, sentence completion exercises, sentence transformations, etc. There is usually some conversational interaction, depending upon the skills of the teacher. LEP soldiers in permanent duty units who score less than 70 on the ECLT are eligible for the BSEPII/ESL program. This program varies across installations in duration and curriculum.

How successful is the Army at improving soldier basic skills?

As measured by gains on the ECLT the Army ESL programs seem fairly successful. The current program at DLIELC is a new one and we do not yet have data on it. We do have data on ECLT gains from a similar program conducted at DLIELC in 1981 for only three months. Program gains are displayed in Figure 2 where soldiers are grouped together by their entry ECLT score, 0-29, 30-39, etc. The figure shows that all groups continued to make language gains as they progressed through the course. Average language gains in this course were about 2 ECLT points per week. ECLT gains for the six week course referred to in Table 1 were slightly higher, approximately 2.5 points per week. Using the ECLT gains achieved in the six week course, we estimate that the course reduced attrition by nearly 40%. Follow up data, however, show that despite these gains, many soldiers feel they are still having problems with their ability to speak and understand English.

Let us now return to the literacy programs. Of interest is the BSEP I literacy program for soldiers who perform at less than sixth grade level as measured by the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE). Several years ago, this program instructed several thousand soldiers a year. In recent years, as the Army has been able to raise its standards and still meet its manpower objectives, the program population has been greatly reduced. As Figure 1 indicates, soldiers who arrive at their training bases and perform at less than sixth grade level on the TABE are placed in six week DSEP I program before starting BT. Unfortunately, we have little data on this program. It is very heterogeneous, developed by the teachers and education staff at each of the eight installations that conduct Army basic training.

By far the largest basic skills program is the BSEP II program for soldiers who have completed training and are stationed at their permanent duty installations in the U.S., Germany, Korea, etc. This program is intended to provide soldiers with proficiency in reading, communication and math. It is a varied program. One curriculum is used in the U.S., Korea, and Panama and a different one is used in Germany.

The U.S. curriculum is intended to be an individualized, open entry, open exit program and is, in effect, designed to increase soldiers' scores on the TABE. It is organized into 15 modules or units of instruction: seven in math, three in reading, and five in language. The curriculum uses a self-instructional model. Based on pre-test scores, students are assigned work in a module. When

FROM SCHOOL TO WORK: MATERIALS AND METHODS

they complete the work they are post-tested; if successful they go on to a new module and pre-test. The teacher is largely a curriculum manager. Table 2 shows the TABE gains for a group of soldiers who receive between 60-137 hours of instruction in this program, with an average of 100 instruction hours. Most gains vary between one and two and one-half grade levels. Table 3 shows the soldiers' success in reaching the ninth grade level. As expected, those who started closer to ninth grade are more likely to reach ninth grade.

How does the Army handle the illiterate LEP problem? It has two programs: one to teach soldiers English, another to teach them reading and communication. In the short run for initial training, this approach seems at least immediately successful. The results are not a clear, however, when assessed in terms of the soldiers' first enlistment or even re-enlistment. The limited data available suggests that some soldiers are still having problems with spoken English and it is likely that many resolve this problem by not re-enlisting.

<u>STEPS TO BECOMING A SOLDIER</u>	<u>BASIC EDUCATION PROGRAMS</u>
<p><u>Eligibility Testing</u></p> <p>Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) and other criteria</p>	<p>ESL instruction, DLIELC, Texas</p>
<p><u>Army Training</u></p> <p>Basic Training (BT) Advanced Individual Training (MOS/job)</p>	<p>Basic Skills Education Program (BSEP I)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy
<p><u>Duty Assignment</u></p> <p>Soldier joins permanent unit</p>	<p>Basic Skills Education Program II (BSEP II)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literacy • Math • ESL

Figure 1. Interface of Basic Education Programs with Stages in Soldiers' Career

ESL PROGRAM GAINS - 1981

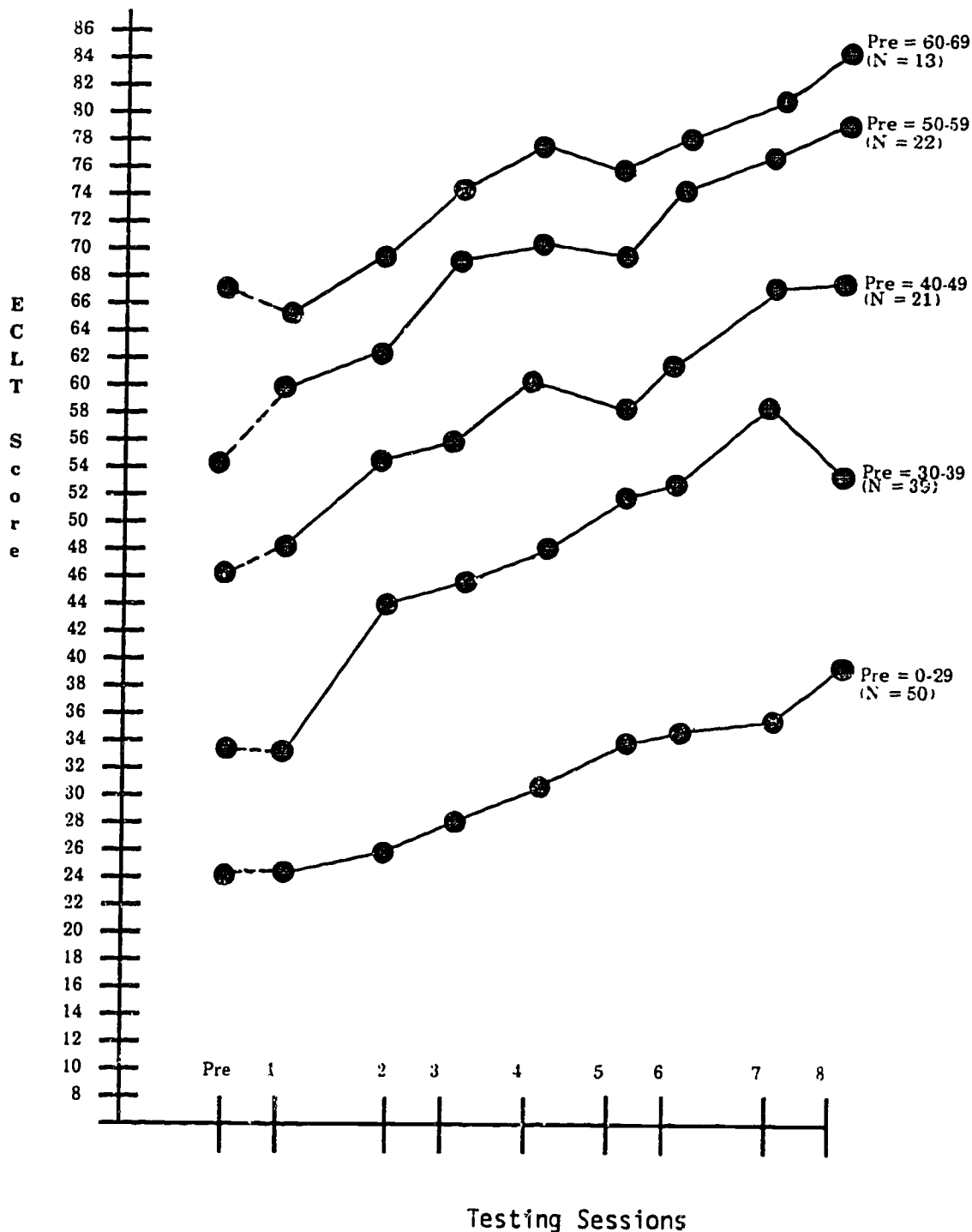


Figure 2. Median ECLT Scores by Testing Session and Initial Score Level of 3 Month Group.

TABLE 1

PERFORMANCE OF GRADUATES OF A SIX WEEK
BSEP I/ESL PROGRAM

Comparison of Soldiers Completing BT with Those Who Were Discharged from BT

Attrition Category	Exit ECLT score						n
	0-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	>69	
Completed BT	64%	75%	84%	91%	92%	93%	507
Discharged from BT	36%	25%	16%	9%	8%	7%	75
<u>n</u>	36	63	95	123	119	146	582

TABLE 2

BSEP II PROGRAM GAINS

Mean Grade Level Gains on TABE Subtests

TABE Subtest	<u>N</u>	Grade Level Gain
Vocabulary	1985	.9
Comprehension	1984	1.3
Total Reading	1918	1.1
Computation	2151	2.5
Concepts & Problems	2124	1.7
Total Mathematics	2064	2.1
Mechanics & Expression	1922	1.5
Spelling	1840	.7
Total Battery	1035	1.3

TABLE 3

Distribution by Pre-TABE Scores of Soldiers who Achieved the 9.0 Grade Level and Completed all Assigned Materials

Pre-TABE Grade Level Score	Math (n=873)	Reading (n=563)	Language (n=508)
5.0 - 5.9	1.6%	1.6%	14.6%
6.0 - 6.9	7.8%	11.6%	18.1%
7.0 - 7.9	42.4%	36.2%	29.9%
8.0 - 8.9	48.2%	50.6%	37.4%

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* * *

Discussants: Dr. Esther Eisenhower, ESL Program Coordinator, Fairfax County Public Schools, Fairfax, Virginia

Dr. JoAnn Crandall, Director, Communication Services, Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C.

Both discussants agreed with the presenters that the focus on literacy skills for LEP students should be long-term goal-oriented. Eisenhower emphasized the need for qualified ESL teachers and the necessity to provide them with resources and support, such as master teachers and summer training programs.

Eisenhower also raised the need to be vigilant in the placement of LEP children; often they are placed in slow classes because of their language skills rather than their cognitive abilities.

Whether or not literacy instruction can be provided in the child's first language, schools must not lose sight of the fact that they must teach their children English by providing them with the best curriculum available.

Crandall emphasized the need for differentiating between the needs which literacy tasks demand for academic purposes and those demanded for the world of work. Furthermore, the skills that are demanded are often ones which should be transferred quickly. Maintaining a balance thus becomes a difficult task. Crandall agreed that long-term goals should not be sacrificed to short-term goals and vice versa.

Crandall pointed out that adult ESL students are better placed by their higher education than their English--that, in fact, literacy is a key barrier. If someone has prior education then the speed at which that person will acquire English is dramatically different from the student who doesn't have the education. So to separate the nonliterate person out and provide him/her with the special help is a positive step.

Finally, she commented on the tone of the papers which all affirm that language development is a means to an end.

The discussion raised the question of making sure that physical problems such as the need for glasses or the effects of malnutrition, diabetes, etc., also be taken into consideration when dealing with LEP populations since they are serious factors in determining the success rate of adults (and children) learning to read.

PERSPECTIVES ON LITERACY

LANGUAGE AND COMMUNITY BUILDING: AN INTEGENERATIONAL APPROACH

Gail Weinstein-Shr

Project LEIF, Temple University Institute of Aging

In the last decade, English language programs for refugees have been increasingly geared toward job-related communications skills for employable adults. Little attention has been given to the place of language in the community as a whole, both within each ethnic group as well as between the refugees and their English-speaking neighbors.

Elderly refugees, for example, are typically ignored, as their adult children are trained for employment. This group is burdened by isolation, drastic role changes in their family and community, and a variety of other factors related to their relocation in the United States. This isolation contributes to tension in multi-ethnic communities where refugees have not had opportunities to interact with their new English-speaking neighbors in positive ways. With little experience in formal schooling, adults are ill-equipped to support their children in the schooling process. Young refugee children, therefore, also need a "leg-up" as they adjust to their new school settings.

Project LEIF, Learning English through Intergenerational Friendship, is a model program sponsored by Temple University's Institute on Aging, in which an intergenerational core of volunteers is recruited from older adult groups, local colleges, universities and local community organizations. Specifically, elderly native English speakers were matched with refugee children, and young native English speakers were matched with elderly refugees. The overall goals of the project were:

- (1) To recruit and train a corps of young and elder volunteers to teach English as a Second Language to refugee children and elders.
- (2) To provide a minimum number of hours of tutoring to a minimum number of Philadelphia residents and their families.
- (3) To increase the ability of older refugees to access existing health and social services and to break their isolation.
- (4) To help refugee children "catch up" in school.
- (5) To provide college students with an opportunity for community service and cross-cultural experience.
- (6) To develop organizational skills among refugee leaders.
- (7) To provide elders with an opportunity to work with children in a setting where they have much to offer.
- (8) To provide opportunities for positive cross-cultural interactions through participation in community events.
- (9) To foster understanding and communication among diverse ethnic sub-groups through the creation of cross-generational and cross-cultural relationships.
- (10) To provide a model for national replication.

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In this paper I will report briefly on how this demonstration program was implemented, including planning, recruitment, training, providing of ESL services, and multi-cultural events. Also provided is a summary of the results of an extensive evaluation of the first year of the programming, with thoughts on the promise and the pitfalls of intergenerational programming as an approach to language learning and community building.

Planning. The most time consuming and important phase of the project, in my opinion, was the planning phase. It was crucial to adequately assess both the needs and the resources of the community. Part of this process included identifying community leaders who may or may not have official positions in the community. An advisory committee was formed, including leaders of the Mutual Assistance Associations (MAAs), religious and community leaders who may or may not have official positions in the community, and experts in ESL materials and training. The MAA leaders helped assess the real needs of community members as they themselves perceived them (not just the needs that outsiders thought they had). They also helped to identify community members who desired tutors, and provided feedback to guide the planning of tutor training and selection of appropriate materials. ESL experts were helpful in choosing the materials, developing appropriate training, and selecting tools for language proficiency assessment.

Recruitment. Volunteers were recruited from college campuses, church congregations, community groups and older adult groups. A variety of recruitment methods were used, including use of the media such as radio and newspapers, as well as distribution of flyers, and personal presentations. The most effective methods of recruitment seemed to be in-person presentations, followed up with written information. Contacts were developed with key professors, community leaders and volunteer agency personnel.

Altogether, in the pilot year, 70 volunteers were recruited. Of these, 52 gave a substantial commitment to tutoring. Because of volunteer turnover, it was necessary to see recruitment as an ongoing process of keeping the program strong. As the program grew, recruitment became easier, since current tutors were the best promoters of all!

Training. All volunteers were required to participate in six hours of pre-service training, and six hours of follow-up shortly after tutoring began. The purpose of the division of hours was to permit tutors to focus their questions and their learning on the needs of their particular students. Training included a language exercise to sensitize tutors to the language learning process, as well as specific methods for teaching listening, speaking, reading and writing. During the training they were familiarized with the core curriculum materials as well as supplementary materials available. Training also included methods of adapting materials to students' individual needs as well as designing lessons from scratch. Tutors were given information about the culture, history and background of their students.

Bi-monthly in-service training sessions were provided to solve tutors' specific teaching problems, to introduce new teaching ideas and materials, to introduce more cultural information on the students, and to provide general support.

Provision of ESL Services. In the pilot year, five elder tutors worked in five elementary school classrooms with individuals or small groups, and 47 younger tutors worked with roughly 100 adult refugees in a community learning center as well as in students' homes. Student-tutor pairs were encouraged to

meet once a week in the learning center in order to break the students' isolation and to provide material and moral support for the tutors. The second session each week was ideally held in the student's home, permitting the tutors to learn more about the lifestyle and needs of their students and to foster a closer, more personal relationship between the participants. Where transportation or child-care were problematic, either site could be used for both sessions.

English lessons were focused not only on grammar and literacy, but rather on providing the student with communicative competence for daily living. The purpose was to enable students to begin to become more self-sufficient, and to form relationships with their English-speaking neighbors. For this reason, focus was primarily on listening and speaking skills for specific common situations.

To ensure that the learning center would be conducive to language learning and relationship building, community leaders were consulted in choosing a place that would be familiar and comfortable for students. Refreshments were provided to encourage informal gathering and conversation between tutors and students.

Multi-Cultural Events. Community events were planned for students and tutors to include their families and to become acquainted away from the books. Pot-luck suppers in which everyone brought food from their own countries were very popular. Activities at these events included recognition of the contribution of the tutors as well as the progress of the students. Folksongs were taught and sung. A farm trip was also a great success, particularly for students from agricultural societies and their tutors. Lesson plans about farm animals and implements were circulated to the tutors in advance, so language and fun activities could be integrated. The best way we planned these events was with the help of the advisory board as well as with the tutors and students themselves.

Evaluation. In order to provide promise for replication in other sites, the program was systematically evaluated with both process and outcome components. Data gathering included: 1) The number, ages and other relevant background information of the individuals recruited into the program as tutors and students; 2) the efficacy of various strategies for recruiting volunteers; 3) the number of recruits completing training and their evaluation of the training component; 4) the efficacy of strategies to reach adults and children most in need; and 5) the success of multi-cultural events. The outcome evaluation component consisted of a series of pre-post measures on those dimensions designated as targeted benefits, such as language acquisition and intergenerational/intercultural understanding. The findings are available at the Institute on Aging.

The hard data in the evaluation show that the recruitment and tutor-hour goals were more than met. The measures indicate that students showed improvement in language proficiency, tutors exhibited more positive and understanding attitudes toward Asian refugees.

However, it is the small successes that don't show as easily in the grand counts. One student went to the post office with his tutor, and then tried it by himself for the first time. Another student now answers the phone with a cheerful "hello!" rather than picking up the phone in confused silence or not answering at all. Tutors tell happily of the delicious food they are given. One tutor's family gave her student's family a Christmas tree, and helped to decorate it. The stories go on.

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The process has not been without pitfalls, however. In the original pilot, the staff hours needed to make the project work were greatly underestimated. Relationships with community leaders cannot be created instantly; they must be cultivated slowly for trust to grow. An intercultural project can only work if it is truly collaborative, and collaborative relationships require time to develop. Volunteers are not "free" resources; they require much input and support. Those who would venture to create a community program that works must have the resources (including time) to build an environment where learning can take place and trust can grow. From our experiences with Project LEIF, it is our feeling that it is worth the time and effort. Progress was evident in language learning. Above that, tutors and students learned about one another, found resources in one another, and created friendships that will last. Language learning and friendship are complementary goals; each creates the condition for the other. It is our hope that our experience can help the process by which communities can again become whole--with strong and enduring links across the generations and across cultures.

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LITERACY IN THE REFUGEE CAMPS IN SOUTHEAST ASIA

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In 1980, the U.S. Department of State began the largest training program ever mounted. All refugees coming to the U.S. from Southeast Asia, ages 16-55, were to be trained in English as a Second Language (ESL) and Cultural Orientation (CO) over a fourteen-week period. In 1982, the program was extended to 20 weeks for the lowest level students to accommodate a component on Work Orientation (WO), and in 1985 a new language and academic skills program, Preparation for American Secondary Schools (PASS), was mounted for adolescents, ages 13-16. At the beginning of 1986, the program was extended to 20 weeks for all refugees, with WO now required for higher level students as well. The main goal of the overseas training program is to give refugees a "headstart" or a "leg-up" on re-settlement; to give them the basics of ESL and CO, and introduction to the American world of work, and confidence in the fact that they can re-establish independent and productive lives in the U.S.

Of adult refugees in the training program, at any one time, 30 to 60% of the students are likely to fall into levels A and B. Level A represents those students who are totally non-literate and have no knowledge of English; level B students have some literacy in some language, usually their native language, but have no knowledge of English.

For both A and B level students, literacy, as well as language learning, is of prime importance. In a 20-week period it is only possible to equip lower-level students with enabling skills--in this case, learning to read, rather than reading to learn. This is done in several ways, depending on the ethnic group and/or the refugee camp. While curriculum goals are the same at all three training sites (Bataan, The Philippines; Galang, Indonesia; Phanat Nikhom, Thailand), methods and techniques of delivery differ.

In Phanat Nikhom, Thailand, a major emphasis is put on native language literacy (NLL) which is taught for 20 weeks along with oral English and English literacy. The Hmong and Mien, refugees from hilltribes which only recently acquired alphabets, have requested that they learn to read and write in their own languages, and this has been a motivating factor in teaching them English. Research on native language literacy as a factor in second language acquisition has shown us that students acquire language faster when they can relate to written symbols.

In Bataan in the Philippines, native language experience is used to get students to begin interacting with the English language in both oral and written forms. Nonliterate refugees come from three ethnic groups: Vietnamese, Lao and Khmer. Bataan also approaches enabling skills with more traditional exercises: matching, alphabet ordering, before/after games, site words, bingo, left hand/right hand discrimination activities, sentence scrambling, etc. Galang and Phanat Nikhom also use these same approaches, but designed to fit their own needs.

For the higher levels, (C, D and E), reading takes the form of manuals and forms at work, job and career information, instructions for medicines and household mixtures, the ins and outs of resettlement and reading about the U.S.

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Teachers try to impart the idea that the U.S. is a highly literate society, despite easy availability of the mass media, and that reading is a major tool in information retrieval and often problem solving.

Adults are also encouraged to take part in the learning experiences of their children, particularly their adolescent children attending the PASS program.* The idea of parent/teacher conferences is stressed, as is participation of parents in PTA and other school projects. Sometimes family literacy takes place on a voluntary basis in the evenings, and parents and children learn together.

It is hoped that the experiences in the refugee camps will transfer once the refugees reach their new homes in America. Even if there is not much participation in classes during the first few months, the training in the camps will help the new arrival to cope with the written word which bombards the senses in any American city or town.

*A description of the PASS program is included at with the presentation by S. Patrick Redding, Parental Involvement: Building on Overseas Initiatives.

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ILLITERACY: HOW A SCHOOL DISTRICT COPES

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District of Columbia Public Schools

Refugee and immigrant arrivals have always been a population in need. What is particularly critical about our population today is the national economic scene which they face when they arrive. The context has changed from an expanding industrial economy requiring manual labor, to one in which expansion is occurring at a slight rate in the highly technical, white collar sector. In addition, public services have been cut and the private sector cannot bridge the gap. Jobs and public services, the underpinnings that sustain a child's education, are running very thin indeed. The support to shore up the underpinnings is increasingly falling upon the schools; in our case, the Division of Bilingual Education of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS).

An outstanding example of this situation exists in the Hispanic community which accounts for 10% of the population of the District of Columbia.

- o D.C. Government services officially available to refugees and the undocumented is 0%.
- o Participation by Latinos in child and family services and protective services is less than 1%.
- o Latino participation in District housing is close to 0%.
- o Latino participation in District services to the handicapped is 2.2%.
- o Latino participation in District health services is 4%.
- o Latino participation in child care services is 4.5%.
- o Latino representation in the city's workforce is the same as it was in 1971, defying one of the government agency's Equal Economic Opportunity Affirmative Action plans: less than 1%.
- o Latino participation in employment training programs is 4%.
- o Latino representation in the District's sponsored programs in education, recreation and the arts is 3.4%.*

In the DCPS we have 7,326 students who have a home language other than English. They come from 132 different countries and represent 91 different languages. Of the 7,326 ESL students, 6,398 are enrolled as non-English speakers. Of these children almost 69% or 3,430 are Spanish speakers with the largest group coming from El Salvador.

*The figures cited are from the Ad Hoc Coalition for a Latino Community Agenda "Washington, D.C.'s Latino Agenda," June 7, 1985. Washington, DC: De Emilio Associates and Nena Terrell.

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The second largest group is comprised of students who speak one of several Chinese languages. Other major languages are French, Portuguese, Arabic, Vietnamese, Tagalog, Amharic, French Creole, and Tigrinya.

All of the above factors directly impact on our school system as the schools become the institutions to which newcomers turn for social forms of assistance.

For many of our refugee families and children without families, the DCPS is their first encounter with the so-called "U.S. life." Whether from the Far East, the Near East, Africa, South America or Central America, they share many of the following characteristics in common:

- o A low level of literacy in their native language. Many are non-literate or severally academically delayed. This description often is also true for the parents.
- o Poor nutrition: small in stature, poor teeth, skin pallor.
- o Non-English speakers: approximately 2% speak English fluently, but 79% speak no English at all.
- o A lack of knowledge of our educational setting and expected behavior.
- o Early teens who are employed during/after school. Adulthood comes early to these children.
- o Boys 13-16 years of age without a family, relatives or permanent residence.
- o They and/or their families frequently move around within the city.
- o The families are divided among several residences.
- o They are from rural areas in their native countries. Some come from refugee camps.
- o They are children of war/revolution who have lived in fear of soldiers, real bombing, and seeing family members being taken and shot. For many of the children, to have seen dead bodies in significant numbers is not unusual.
- o They come from refugee camps where health and educational services are lacking.
- o They live in excessively overcrowded housing.
- o The head of the household is a single mother.
- o Parents work two full-time jobs.
- o They have large families.
- o They are parents who have lived here 5 years and then brought their children. Long separations from the parents are not unusual.

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How does DCPS meet the needs of these children? The assessment center at the Bilingual Division interviews the parents and children and attempts to help them secure the essential documents of birthdate documentation, proof of residency, and immunizations. We try to get an idea of the student's educational experience and achievement. Has the student been in a refugee camp? Has he been out of school, and if so, for how many years?. Interviews are conducted in English, Spanish, French, Vietnamese, Portuguese, Cantonese, or Mandarin.

In DCPS we receive as few as 11 and as many as 94 students per week. One week in which 94 students were received had the following composition:

Chile	1	Nigeria	5
China	2	Peru	1
Colombia	1	Pakistan	2
Dominican Republic	4	Philippines	1
Egypt	1	Soviet Union	1
El Salvador	57	Thailand	1
Ethiopia	1	Trust Territory of the Pacific	1
Guatemala	3	Venezuela	1
Mexico	1	Zambia	2
Nicaragua	5	USA (non-English speakers)	2

TOTAL = 93

Of the 74 Spanish speakers, 57 were Salvadorans.

A placement in DCPS takes into consideration the student's school boundary by residence, age, literacy level, and family needs. The following programs are considered when placing the student, where available:

- o A full bilingual school in English and Spanish.
- o LABS(Lang age Acquisition and Basic Skills) for Spanish speakers, ages 11-18. In this program, designed for non-literates or those severely academically delayed, instruction in science and social studies is provided in Spanish.
- o Microlabs designed to supplement the educational program by using micro-computers in the development of basic skills in reading, writing and mathematics.
- o Computer-based training from bilingual teachers, parents and students at two schools.
- o An ESL program, essentially a "pull-out" program which varies with the literacy or language needs of the students and the language abilities of the teachers.

In serving these students we are constantly working on curriculum development, monitoring a student's academic progress, and teacher accountability.

How does a school system cope? We hope, as in the DCPS, with compassion, commitment, and flexibility.

ADULT ILLITERACY: IMPLICATIONS FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Wayne W. Haverson
Oregon State University

"The refusal to acknowledge those who are our sons or daughters, brothers, sisters, neighbors, fellow citizens, or former students, but whom we have relegated to statistical oblivion, holds some dangers that a sane society would not ignore. Societal denial of the crime by which it lives (permitting illiteracy to continue) demonstrates political ineptitude and ethical betrayal; but it also tells us of the civic pride that goes before a fall." (Kozol, 1985)

Jonathan Kozol's words capture the depth of feeling about illiteracy in the United States today. Estimates of the number of illiterates or functionally illiterate in America and the cost of illiteracy to the public vary, but by any account, they are extremely high. Robert Barnes in a study done by the Census Bureau in 1982 found the illiteracy rate to be 9 percent for adults whose native language is English and 48 percent for those whose native language is not English.

In this study, commissioned by the Census Bureau, 3,400 adults completed a literacy test (Sample questions are included at the end of this paper.) The test had 26 questions requiring the same degree of difficulty as the sample. A respondent who got 20 correct answers out of 26 questions was considered to be literate in English. The failure rate was 13 percent.

The New York Times, which printed a report on the survey, made the following analysis of its findings:

- o Thirty-seven percent of illiterates speak a language other than English at home; among that group, 82% are immigrants and 21% entered the United States in the last six years.
- o About 14% of those who speak a language other than English at home were probably literate in their own language, based on their reported education.

The test identified various factors as potential risks contributing to the likelihood of illiteracy. These risks included education, immigration status, use of language other than English, race, age and poverty.

It should be pointed out, however, to quote Michael Harrington, "... forget the numbers game. Whatever the precise calibrations, it is obvious that these statistics represent an enormous, an unconscionable amount of human suffering... They should be read with outrage. (Havinghurst 1978).

Discussing and measuring the problem of illiteracy is not as important as doing something about it. What does it matter if there are 2 million or even 20 million complete illiterates? We're not even taking care of a small fraction of them. Adult illiteracy is, as Senator Simon suggests, the unspoken, hidden educational issue of the late 1980's (Kozol, 1985).

Forty-eight percent of those whose native language is not English in the Barnes study are nonliterate. For those of us who work in adult basic education

programs that serve limited-English-proficient (LEP) adult learners, this is not startling information. For those of us who are involved primarily with children, this may be new information. In any event, the implications for LEP parent involvement are enormous.

How can we expect parents to take an active interest in second language literacy programs, in developing skills and abilities that they themselves do not possess?

How can we expect those parents who are nonliterate in any language to provide an environment to encourage the development of literacy skills?

How can we as professional educators and policy makers help LEP adults provide a model of reading (in English or in first language) for their children?

How can we deal with this issue out in the open and make it a primary concern?

One immediate response is to provide LEP parents with more instruction in literacy in both first and second languages. The problem is that this poses a case of more not necessarily being better.

ESL literacy is being given increasingly important consideration in adult program design and methodology. However, relatively little published literature to guide the practitioner exists. Limited, if any, pre- and in-service training for prospective teachers of adult second language literacy is required. Perhaps, most importantly, there is a lack of understanding of the complexities of adult literacy. It is my belief that programs for adults, to an even greater extent than programs for children, need to be built on the collective knowledge of researchers from a variety of fields. At a bare minimum this must include: 1) a knowledge of the reading process; 2) a knowledge of the psychology of the adult learner, and 3) knowledge of the social context of literacy (Norman and Malicky, 1986).

In this paper, I will only deal with the reading process. Susan Ohanian clearly states that, "You can't be neutral about teaching reading. It requires partisanship and faith -- faith in words and faith in students. Without this faith, you begin to run scared and you're even in danger of being smothered by other people's precautions and prescriptions (Ohanian, 1985).

A review of the literature identifies two distinct philosophies of teaching literacy skills: 1) a decoding model and, 2) a whole language model. The decoding model focuses on pieces of language, building from the smallest units of language, i.e., sounds to larger units, or words and phrases; or on breaking down the larger segments of language into individual units (Smith, 1983). In the whole language model, the primary focus is placed on comprehension. Reading is defined as a language-thinking process involving an interrelationship of semantics, syntax and graphophonics (Goodman, 1970; Holdaway, 1985).

In decoding, great emphasis is placed on the mastery of sound-symbol relationships (Ekwall and Shanker 1983). It is based on the assumption that once this mastery has been achieved, meaning will automatically follow. Both beginning literacy and fluent reading are a direct result of decoding to spoken language. Learners are taught that once they have mastered basic phonics and letter-word recognition they can use these skills independently to glean meaning from print (Johnson, 1977; Cunningham, 1977).

Another form of decoding, a basic skills model, goes beyond sound-symbol and letter recognition. It identifies four distinct areas of language: vocabulary, sound-symbol relationships, grammar and comprehension. Each area is examined in isolation. The underlying assumption of this model is that meaning will follow if one can integrate the sub-skills that have been presented to the reader in the form of long lists of vocabulary words, grammar rules and exercises, comprehension questions relating to factual recall of predetermined material and sound-mastery (Lieberman and Shankweiler, 1979).

Both of these models of decoding are essentially ineffective in the teaching of meaningful reading skills to language minority adults who are beginning readers in English (Vorhaus, 1984). These readers need to develop strategies to unlock meaning rather than to spend time attempting to make sense of isolated letters, words, and rules (Jones, 1981; Smith, 1983). The human brain is limited in the amount of information it can absorb, process and commit to memory at one time (Dolan, 1982). This means that reading must be a selective process which is necessarily rapid and that cannot proceed word by word (Smith, 1983). The application and integration of rules in the teaching of reading can only result in an overload of short-term memory. In a building block or decoding approach the meaning of one word will be forgotten before the next word is built, and thus, no meaningful message from print will emerge (Holdaway, 1985).

Furthermore, decoding does not allow the adult language-minority reader to take an active role in the reading process, to bring a knowledge of the world and of the particular topic to the text (Amorosco, 1985). It denies the very nature of adulthood and places that person in a childlike environment, as though they were blank pages in a book waiting to be written (Marling, 1978). Frank Smith suggests that reading is only incidentally visual. Understanding print is far more dependent on what the reader already knows, what is already in his/her head than print on the page. For reading to make sense, it must respect the world view of the reader so that the reader can actively, yet unconsciously, participate in construction of meaning from the printed page (Goodman, 1970; Smith, 1978, 1983).

This approach, a whole language model, is based on an understanding that language systems are shared (Smith, 1978). It offers a greater chance for the success of the beginning language-minority reader. In this interdependent system, the reader discovers not only the distinctive features in letters and words, but also those in meaning. The reader learns to take chances, to risk errors in order to learn about printed texts and to predict meaning. It places the primary focus on reading and not on vocabulary building, rule mastery or sound-symbol relationships in isolation. The beginning reader develops the strategies of sampling, predicting, confirming or revising (Goodman 1970; Smith 1978).

Reading, then, is viewed as a successful interaction of conceptual abilities, background knowledge and process strategies. Comprehension is the target, not the decoding of sub-vocal utterances (Rigg and Kazemek 1983, 1985). The experience of reading and attempting to read presents the strongest component of the process of reading development. Reading is, as Ken Goodman suggests, a psycholinguistic "guessing game" by which the reader, a language user, reconstructs as best as he/she can a message which has been encoded by a writer in the form of a graphic display.

This, then becomes the faith the Ohanian describes. This can become the basis for literacy programs in the classroom and at home. Limited-English-

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proficient parents can become involved in providing basic literacy training in first or second language.

In developing the literacy training programs for LEP parents that have a whole language, comprehension centered approach, the following taxonomy of meaning-centered objectives should be given attention. In addition, this taxonomy can be used to assist LEP parents in developing learning activities at home:

1. The reader will be able to identify and interpret illustrations.
2. The reader will be able to sequence the order of the steps in a shared activity.
3. The reader will understand that oral language can be written.
4. The reader will be able to read his/her own language experience story.
5. The reader will be able to use the language experience story in order to make the connection to other printed matter.
6. The reader will be able to predict meaning based on backward and forward referencing.
7. The reader will develop a variety of individual strategies that will enable him/her to extract meaning from print.
8. The reader will develop the critical thinking skills required to make judgments concerning the correctness and usage of the English Language.
9. The reader will develop conceptual awareness by participating in activities that encourage recognition of categories, relationships and patterns.
10. The reader will develop predicting and inferring skills that help foster creative thinking.

Literate parents can help illiterate parents by working at home with a language process that is best learned in a global to specific fashion which minimizes abstraction (Jones, 1981).

To sum up, a whole-language-centered approach directs the learner to use his/her experiences as a means for extracting meaning from print. It uses as its foundation the prior knowledge and experience of the learner and slowly develops a framework from which the learner is able to make predictions about written language. Reading is a natural process that becomes more successful when recognition is given to what the reader already knows.

Frank Smith suggests that our challenge as teachers is not only to make reading comprehensible, but also to make sure that the instruction makes sense. Instruction that focuses on cultivating strategies to unlock meaning and that recognizes the language-minority reader as the greatest resource makes sense.

Too often in adult literacy programs there is not a match between the means to literacy and the major goals for literacy development, which are primarily social in nature. Work on words and letter sounds may teach adults how to read

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and write, but it frequently does little to help them become part of the literate culture. Hence, there appears to be a need for considerable rethinking regarding literacy programs for beginning adult readers. One of the answers to the dilemma of illiteracy, or non-literacy, is not to provide more of the same thing.

What then are the major implications of adult illiteracy in parent involvement with second language literacy programs?

Designers of programs for LEP parent involvement need to be aware of the major implications of the high percentage of nonliterate adults whose native language is not English in both first and second languages. Adults at low levels of literacy development are print-deprived and non-participants in the literate culture around them. They seldom have clear notions regarding why people read, and generally view reading as a decoding task. Rethinking literacy training programs for these parents, as well as for prospective teachers of these parents, would entail developing meaningful literacy activities at home.

Literacy, in both first and second language, must be seen as an empowerment, in a Freirian sense. It must be liberating in that adults are now able to function like literate adults in a literate culture. They become part of what Bhola describes as "the magic circle of the literate." What better way to join that circle than to provide the environment that will encourage and promote literate behavior in their children?

This, perhaps, is the major implication of adult literacy for parent involvement; the development in adults of a sense of fulfillment, resulting in a change in the way they view themselves and, in how they are viewed by those most significant others in their lives--their children!

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Census Bureau Sample

Sample questions given by the Census Bureau to 3,400 adults in 1982.

Directions: Choose the answer that means the same as the word or phrase with a line under it.

We cannot see you today. When can you return?

- a. When was the last time you came?
- b. Who should you call when you come again?
- c. On what date can you come again?
- d. Are those the papers you can return?

Enter your Social Security number here.

- a. Find
- b. Check
- c. Show
- d. Write

Directions: Choose the best answer to the question.

You should ask a friend or relative to help you fill out the forms if you cannot read or understand the application.

What should you do if you do not understand the questions on the application form?

- a. Answer all the questions by writing "None."
- b. Return the application unsigned.
- c. Write to the notary public.
- d. Ask a friend or relative to help you.

Directions: Read all of the paragraph first. Draw a line under the best word or phrase to complete each sentence.

Soon, you will receive a new medical services program identification card. It will replace all other medical _____ Before

- a. bills
- b. cards
- c. types
- d. checks

using the card you must sign _____ on the back. Don't

- a. the
- b. it
- c. on
- d. a

allow your medical information card to _____ by any other

- a. be used
- b. have destroy
- c. go lose
- d. get expired

person. Source: Census Bureau

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* * *

Discussants: Ms. Judy Daher, Principal, Redwood City Public Schools, Redwood, California

Ms. Linda Smith Kharde, Network Coordinator, Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C.

Daher pointed out that the presentations all spoke of empowering adults in various ways by providing them with literacy skills. She commented on a group that needs special attention, namely, high school LEP students who are orally competent in English but functionally illiterate. She pointed out that there seems to be a high correlation between their literacy skills and those of their parents, and that programs should address the needs of these parents.

Kharde reiterated the need to draw parents into the literacy process, but pointed out that schools should take into consideration the limited resources immigrants and refugees have when it comes to time and commitment.

Kharde stressed the necessity to develop better training materials for tutors.

The questions and discussion centered on the ways in which parents can be drawn into the school system and their children's education. There was a consensus that any method or activity which would reach and involve the parents was worth trying.

CULTURAL ISSUES IN INDOCHINESE PARENT INVOLVEMENT

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Today while public schools across the nation are experiencing an increase in their Indochinese student enrollment, Indochinese parents continue to have little, if any, involvement in school activities. This issue has become a major concern to most school officials and administrators. Methods to attract parents to actively participate in their children's educational development via school activities have been seriously assessed.

Several reasons appear to contribute to parents' non-involvement.

Language barrier. This is one of the major reasons for Indochinese parents not to participate in school activities. Many of them do not have adequate English proficiency to understand what goes on in PTA meetings.

Lack of transportation. Many low-income Indochinese families rely heavily on public transportation which generally slows down considerably during the evening hours and weekends when most extra curricular activities take place.

Economic reasons. Many Indochinese parents hold menial jobs and work odd hours. Holding two jobs at the same time is frequently an economic necessity to support large and extended families. School activities usually occur at hours that are inconvenient for them. After long working hours these parents have a little time left which is then taken up with grocery shopping, cooking, and other family responsibilities.

Alien to the American education system. Like the French, who have had a heavy influence on the Indochinese people, and other nationalities, the Indochinese come from a culture where education and school organization are under the aegis of government authorities. Parents as well as students have little to say about these matters. However, this does not mean that parents regard their children's education as unimportant. On the contrary, Indochinese students are working very hard and performing well in the American school system, thanks to a long tradition of family discipline instilled in their homes.

In Vietnam, PTA meetings are non-existent, although there are parents' associations. The function of these associations is more concerned with social activities such as raising funds for poor students.

How can the public school system attract and encourage Indochinese parents to become involved in school activities? I would like to suggest the following criteria which may lead to greater parent participation.

Bilingual staff. A bilingual career/guidance counselor should be hired and charged with assisting Indochinese students with academic and social activities. The counselor could serve as a liaison between the school administration and parents. In most schools in the Washington metropolitan area with a concentration of Indochinese students, a bilingual program with a small bilingual staff has been established. This staff focuses more on academic activities than on extra curricular activities or parent-school relations. In Montgomery County, Maryland, over 1300 Indochinese students represent approximately 14.6% of school enrollment. There is only one funded part-time bilingual teacher specialist to

work both with students on subject matters and parents on extra curricular school activities. It is absolutely necessary for each school district to establish an adequate bilingual staff in order to provide foreign-born students with tutoring and career counseling, and to work with their parents on extra curricular activities.

Needs survey. In the planning process of any project the school administration should conduct a survey by sending its bilingual staff out to meet with parents to inquire about the best schedules and locations for meetings, problems which need be discussed at meetings, their opinions on major issues, etc. It is worth noting that most Asians remain quiet in "non native language" public meetings. They would feel more comfortable expressing themselves in private individual meetings.

Indirect approach. Most Asians are easily intimidated by the American business-like direct approach. They prefer to socialize and build trust first before doing business with a stranger. Personal contacts and a type of gathering should precede business meetings.

"Imperative" invitation. In American society, life is usually better organized and more secure than in many other countries, especially those countries that have been at war for decades. Accordingly, daily life seems to be carried on more easily here, and community members participate actively and voluntarily in community activities. In addition, American people have a stronger sense of freedom and democracy. This is reflected in the wording used by public school requests for parent participation. But to Indochinese parents, school invitations must carry an authoritative command that makes them feel obligated to attend or participate in such activity for the benefit of their children.

Follow-up. This is an absolute "must" for the success of any program. Most school invitations or announcements are sent out to parents and no follow-up is done because no bilingual staff is available. Invitations of this type usually receive no response from Indochinese parents perhaps because of lack interest, pressures of jobs and survival, or lack of English proficiency. In some cases, parents are illiterate in their own native language or, they may be of Chinese origin and cannot read Vietnamese, Khmer or Laotian. In these instances, personal contacts or visits prove to be the best way to communicate with Indochinese parents.

Cooperation with Parents Associations. One of the most effective ways to encourage Indochinese parents to become involved in school activities when bilingual staff is limited, is to work closely with local parents associations. The school administration can initiate a program and do all the planning for it, then let local parents associations carry it out. These associations can motivate community members to participate in school activities and they seem to understand their needs and concerns better. Their input can be helpful to any school administration. The Teacher Corps-Cycle Eleven of Arlington, Virginia, is one of the best examples of the successful cooperation that can exist between school districts and community organizations.

Indochinese refugees seem to require much longer periods of time to adjust themselves to their new homeland than other immigrants. Their slow adjustment is due to the immense cultural differences between American culture and their own, and the trauma they experience before reaching this new and promised land. Integrating them into the mainstream, including participation in the schools, requires an extra measure of planning and patience.

**PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT:
BUILDING ON OVERSEAS INITIATIVES**

J. Patrick Redding

International Catholic Migration Commission

How do we increase the involvement of parents of our limited-English proficient (LEP) students in school affairs, especially if the parents are themselves LEP? This is a concern that many of us share, and one that is being addressed in many locations. One such location is far from American communities and schools. This process of encouraging involvement is a part of the pre-arrival training program for U.S.-bound Southeast Asian refugees being conducted in Thailand, Indonesia, and the Philippines. This paper briefly describes the pre-arrival program, and more specifically, the efforts aimed at encouraging parental involvement in school affairs. A second title to this paper might well be entitled "Building on Overseas Expectations," for these overseas initiatives are probably creating among parents certain expectations--intentionally or otherwise--regarding their anticipated involvement with the schools. The paper concludes with a brief discussion about what these expectations might be.

The Overseas Training Program. In the fall of 1980, the Bureau for Refugee Programs of the U.S. Department of State launched what has become the largest residential language and cultural orientation training program in the world. The Intensive English as a Second Language and Cultural Orientation (IESL/CO) Program prepares Southeast Asian refugees for successful resettlement and self-sufficiency in their new communities in the United States. By mid-1986, the program, which provides instruction to refugees ages 13-55 from Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, had graduated nearly 170,000 students.

Although the training sites in Southeast Asia are located in different countries with different physical environments and are operated by a number of different agencies, the program specifications, essential program goals, and curriculum objectives are consistent from one site to another.

Until the middle of 1985 the program was aimed only at adults ages 16-55. Program objectives in the 20-week course focused on English language, cultural orientation, and work orientation training. Specific objectives relating to parental responsibilities regarding the schooling of children were included from the very start. The content of these objectives focused on enrollment procedures, mandatory attendance, and teacher-parent meetings, among others.

There were several reasons for including such objectives within the program. Approximately half of the adults receiving training were illiterate in English. Many of them had little or no formal schooling. Furthermore, common school practices in the societies they had left differed from what they could expect in the U.S. In sum, their previous experience and lack of English language facility would make them prime candidates for "non-involvement" with the public school once they arrived. One part of the pre-arrival training program was aimed at encouraging parents to do otherwise.

Such training took on greater meaning in mid-1985 with the inception of a new component of the pre-arrival training program known as PASS, Preparation for American Secondary Schools.

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The Pass Component.* PASS is geared toward 13 to 16-year-olds who will most likely spend a significant portion of their time in public schools following their arrival in the U.S.

The PASS component is designed to replicate, to the degree possible, the learning environment found in the U.S. public secondary school. Classes are held five days a week for a 20-week period. Curriculum content focuses on ESL, American Studies, and mathematics. The school is staffed by a principal, vice-principal, social worker, guidance counselors, extra-curricular activities supervisors, education specialists, and teachers.

At the PASS site in the Philippines, the school day consists of six 45-minute class segments: three devoted to ESL, two to American Studies, and the last to mathematics. Friday's classes are shorter, to permit a seventh period which is devoted to extra-curricular activities, e.g., sports, clubs, singing groups.

While the American Studies classes are augmented by having trained interpreters in the classroom, the ESL and mathematics classes are taught entirely in English. This allows Vietnamese, Khmer and Lao youth to be placed together.

One opportunity which presented itself when PASS began was to take what had been previously discussed in the adult program in the abstract regarding parental involvement, and put it into a real and meaningful context. The effort to involve the PASS students' parents or guardians, who are themselves students in the adult program, became an important feature of PASS. Now a special orientation meeting at the start of each new training cycle provides parents with information about the program, lets them know that report cards will be sent home after 10 weeks and responds to any questions or concerns that parents might have. Parents are also encouraged to return to the school and meet with PASS faculty. A school social worker visits the camp neighborhoods to talk to parents and students.

One of the results of this overall training effort is to establish a set of expectations on the part of parents regarding interaction with schools in U.S. communities. Not all of these expectations have resulted from corresponding training objectives. Parents are learning about the process of schooling from the inside. As program participants, what they are being told is tested against what they actually observe. Moreover, facets of the "hidden curriculum" are also contributing to certain expectations. If we are to work effectively with the parents of our LEP students, then we need to be aware of what some of these expectations might be.

Some Pre-Arrival Expectations. Some of the general expectations that Southeast Asian refugee parents have concerning their interaction with the public schools may be described as follows:

The expectation of involvement. Parents know they can and should be involved with their child's education. It is sometimes easy for educators to dismiss the lack of parental involvement based on the fact that such behavior is "typical" in Southeast Asian cultures. That may be. But refugee parents are not

*A more detailed description of PASS is provided at the end of this report.

"typical" people. They are survivors and excellent learners. They have been told that involvement is expected, and they have experienced such involvement through the pre-arrival training program. If there is a lack of involvement, it is quite possibly related to the next expectation.

The expectation of who will initiate involvement. The overall goal of the pre-arrival training program is to promote self-sufficiency in the U.S. Adults are provided English language training, and provided basic knowledge and skills in cultural and work orientation classes. Yet all of this is happening in a very controlled environment--a refugee camp. This environment represents a social system which demands its own patterns of behaviors, and fosters its own attitudes and feelings. Individuals are told where they will stay, how food distribution will occur, what they must do with most of their time, when to report for class, and so on. Efforts to get parents involved in the PASS activities of their children are similarly commanded. So, while parental involvement is the norm, it is also true that such activity has been well planned and structured by training staff. In other words, it is an activity initiated by the staff, not the parents themselves. There follows, then, in many cases, an expectation that the institution (the school) will initiate the contact and facilitate the involvement.

Moreover, once these newest of Americans reach our shores, they will begin the long process of adjusting to our culture. In doing such, the lack of self-initiated involvement or participation in new institutions during the early stages of adjustment should not be surprising. One observer of cultural adjustment, S.N. Eisenstadt (1954), sees the following four stages in the nature of the adjustment process:

- o acquisition of language, norms, roles, and customs
- o learning of new roles to meet new situations
- o development of new identity and status-image
- o movement from participation in the institutions of the ethnic group to participation in the institutions of the new society/culture.

Hence, fully self-initiated involvement or participation in institutions like the schools will come only after the newly arriving refugees have been in the U.S. for some time. The expectation they carry for the short term is that school officials will initiate and facilitate their involvement.

The "expectation" of the fallibility of teachers. Program participants do not leave Southeast Asia expecting that teachers are fallible. Rather, they recognize that they can be. This needs to be emphasized because many of us still persist in thinking that the cultural inheritance of Southeast Asians prohibits them from viewing the teachers of their children with anything less than a high degree of respect or even awe. Outward behavior suggests such respect, but it often masks a healthy dose of skepticism about the capabilities of the individual teacher who might be working with their children.

In a study (Redding, 1984), conducted in Southeast Asia, Lao refugees were asked to rate on a scale of strongly agree to strongly disagree the following statement:

"A teacher's word should not be corrected."

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Twenty-three of thirty-six respondents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement. The reasons generally given were summed up well by one 53-year-old, ex-soldier, who was illiterate in English.

[A teacher] is just an ordinary human being like us. What is different about him is that he already finished his studies. But then even if he is a teacher he also commits mistakes because people are not perfect in everything. Even animals with four legs can slip, and . . . surgeons make mistakes. It is not right if we don't correct the teacher [if] what he explains to us is not all correct and we know it. Since the teacher is not perfect, if we don't correct him, there will be the bad effect not only on us but many other students as well.

The point to be made here is that parental silence or lack of involvement is not necessarily a signal of approval regarding school affairs. The parents of our LEP students are likely to have as many concerns as are found among other parent groups. Interactions with school officials should allow these concerns to emerge.

The expectation that schools will foster the rapid acculturation of children. When older individuals are faced with the necessity of adjusting to a new culture, it can often be a difficult process. The knowledge, skills, and attitudes they carry from their native cultures is "baggage" that is functional or non-functional in varying degrees in the new environment. That is less so for the young, and their quick adaptation may be both a source of envy and fear among elders. Thus the greatest concern among many parents is that their children will lose their cultural inheritance by becoming all too quickly "Americanized."

Parents know that it will be in the schools that these changes are fostered. Indeed, this is one of the major functions of the schools of any society--to socialize its citizens. Southeast Asian refugee parents are well aware of this. For our part, we should be aware of how threatening that may be for these parents.

There is, however, another side to this expectation. While parents fear the rapid "Americanization" of their children, they also realize that this change is inevitable. Moreover, parents realize that their children's ability to adapt more quickly can be a valuable resource. In the same survey of Lao adult students mentioned earlier, nearly 90% of the respondents felt that they had much to learn from their children--a beneficial predisposition for families about to resettle in a strange land.

Parents, therefore, may see schools as both a source of fear and promise in regard to the acculturation of their children. But whether they see it one way, or the other, or both, it is bound to be an important dynamic affecting their own interaction with the schools.

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Preparing Refugee Youth For American Secondary Schools The PASS Program

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

In 1980, the United States Department of State began sponsoring English language and orientation programs in refugee camps in Southeast Asia. These programs provide training for adult refugees, ages 16-55, from Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia who will be resettled in the U.S. Until recently, however, adolescents among the refugee population were not included in the Overseas Training Program. They arrived in the U.S. without the previous exposure to formal English language training and the introduction to American culture that adult refugees received. Often lacking any previous schooling, the teenagers arrived in the U.S. unfamiliar with school procedures and appropriate social behaviors and were sometimes well behind their American peers in academic achievement.

An important new program, called Preparation for American Secondary Schools (PASS), began recently in the refugee training centers in Thailand and the Philippines. The goal of the PASS program is to prepare 13-16 year-olds for American secondary schools. The 20-week curriculum emphasizes language, math skills, and cultural orientation. In addition, students develop cross-cultural, interpersonal, and coping skills that will ease their transition to American life and, specifically, to American schools.

PREPARATION FOR PASS

Preparation for the PASS Program began in January 1985 with a planning conference in Washington, D. C. Leaders in the field of refugee youth education and representatives from the voluntary agencies and Indochinese Mutual Assistance Associations met with staff of the implementing agencies (The Consortium: composed of The Experiment in International Living, Save the Children and World Education; the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC); and the Center for Applied Linguistics) to identify the essential elements that the curriculum should include. Following the conference, representatives from the Overseas Refugee Training Program visited schools across the country to talk with teachers and counselors about the specific academic, social, and cultural problems that refugee adolescents face. The U.S. educators thought it was important to focus on developing language skills, interaction and interpersonal skills, and basic school skills such as how to work independently, take a test, or participate in class. Through the exposure to these skills it was hoped that the adolescents would develop the self-confidence needed to adjust to the American school system. Many schools provided samples of their ESL curricula and other teaching materials.

PROGRAM DESIGN

Based on the recommendations from the U.S. educators and the experience of teachers in the overseas program, a program design and curriculum framework were developed. Pilot classes began in April 1985 in the Phanat Nikhom Refugee Camp, Thailand and in September 1985 at the Philippines Refugee Processing Center, Bataan, the Philippines. Students attend class between four and five hours daily for 20 weeks. There are six 40-minute periods per day, including three periods of ESL, one period of Basic Math, and two periods of American Studies. The curriculum attempts to integrate language skills and academic concepts.

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The ESL curriculum includes survival oral competence, grammar, and the learning of ESL through content material. Equal emphasis is placed on the development of reading, writing, listening comprehension, and conversation skills.

The math curriculum exposes students to basic computational and problem-solving skills and emphasizes the language of mathematical operations.

The American Studies portion of the curriculum includes survival competencies found in the adult curriculum. It also focuses on the values and skills teenagers need in order to fit comfortably in an U.S. high school. Topics in ESL and American Studies complement and reinforce each other.

Over the 20-week period, various activities are designed to expose students to common school experiences such as extra-curricular activities, eating in a cafeteria, going to the library, going to homeroom and taking electives. Other ways in which the program imitates an American school are by requiring students to do homework, take tests, change classes at the sound of a bell, carry hall passes, and interpret report cards.

Parents are also involved in their children's education. They attend parent-teacher conferences, they read and sign notes sent from school, and in the case of discipline problems, the parents may be asked to see a counselor or the principal.

EVALUATION

The PASS program hopes to graduate students who will reach the U.S. with the confidence and flexibility to adjust and succeed in an American high school. There should still be the expectation that these students will have some problems, but they will arrive equipped with more knowledge about school and the U.S., and more skills to cope with changes than previous refugee youth. As students graduate from the program and begin to resettle in the U.S., the overseas program would appreciate any comments and advice from service providers who work with graduates of the PASS program.

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CROSS-CULTURAL POLICY ISSUES IN MINORITY AND MAJORITY PARENT INVOLVEMENT

Virginia P. Collier

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Parent involvement in public schools in the United States has always been an unresolved issue. School staff frequently bemoan the lack of parent involvement in schools. Usually teachers want parents to attend parent-teacher conferences, to volunteer for assistance such as accompanying students on field trips or preparing food for fund-raising projects, to help their children with homework, and to ensure that their children attend school regularly. However, perceptions of school staff of parent involvement, and parental perceptions may conflict considerably when issues of control of the school surface. The fact is that in U.S. public schools, parents have little or no decision-making power.

Many experiments with community control of schools have come and gone. One example was Barbara Sizemore's short-lived PACTS plan for the District of Columbia Public Schools, in the early 1970s. Parents, administrators, community members, teachers, and students (PACTS) formed decision-making councils to govern the schools. All five groups could have an equal voice. Parents were very vocal, and professional educators felt the system was chaotic. The experiment ended in less than one year. Similar stories could be described for many of the urban school systems. D.B. Tyack, an educational historian, describes this conflict over power and school control issues as a continual pattern within urban U.S. public schools in the twentieth century, with educational personnel generally winning most of the battles for centralization, standardization of curricula, and institutionalization of what he calls "the one best system." These battles were won by educators at the expense of all the diverse community interests (Tyack, 1974).

Today we seem to be in an era which includes an unusual mixture of relative toleration of cultural pluralism while dominated by conservative policies on the national scene, which in turn influences what are generally conservative school board policies. School boards and school personnel are concerned about improving minority achievement but are uncertain what to do to bring about changes. School personnel want minority parents to be more involved in schools because they feel that ultimately parent involvement will improve minority achievement. But the tension is not easily resolved between professional educators' perceptions of the role of parents in schools and parents' expectations of what their role should be--between simple parental support of school policies with home reinforcement of school skills, versus parents as advocates and change agents at the decision-making level.

Majority Parents. Cross-cultural concerns related to this tension are endless. Majority parents have greater access to the possibility of participating in school decision-making. Majority parents are largely of middle-class background. They have more control over political and economic resources than minority parents. The school program is designed to serve the needs of majority children. Their first language is standard English, the prestigious language of the society, with institutional support. Majority parents' language and cultural identity is developed and maintained at school (Dolson, 1985).

Language-Minority Parents. In contrast, language-minority parents are a diverse group with diverse needs. Large numbers of language-minority parents

come from a working-class background, yet most have aspirations to middle-class status. There are immigrant minorities who have moved more or less voluntarily to the U.S. for economic, social, or political reasons. There are indigenous minorities who have become incorporated involuntarily into U.S. society through slavery (Afro-Americans), conquest (Native Americans, Mexican-Americans), or colonization (Puerto Ricans, Native Hawaiians) (Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi, 1986). There are language-minority parents of every conceivable language and cultural background, including great variety in educational background, social class, and experience. They come from rural and urban settings, as well as technological, industrial, or pre-industrial societies. There are also many language-minority students without parents, in this case the unaccompanied minors who come from war-torn countries.

In contrast to majority parents, language-minority parents have much less access to control of resources. They may not yet be proficient in English, the language they need for access to resources and potential influence in school decision-making. Their first language is a subordinate language which is undervalued in the U.S. and has little institutional support (Dolson, 1985). They may feel strongly that their children are acquiring unacceptable and immoral values at school (Bui Duc Ton, 1978). They may want to take an active role in directing their children's educational development or they may prefer to rely on the authority of school personnel to decide what is best for their children. Most of all, language-minority parents want their children to succeed academically and yet some are aware that some minorities continue to experience persistent disproportionate school failure (Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi, 1986). They want to change this pattern. Some preliterate parents feel the most powerless of all.

Given this enormous range of diversity among parents, both majority and minority, how can we develop an appropriate model for cross-cultural parent involvement in U.S. schools? Egalitarian principles tell us that we can aspire to encourage participation of all citizens in the total life of the society. Although we do not always provide easy access to participation, linking the life of the school with that of the community in all its diversity is one means of helping all parents achieve a stronger sense of ownership in the education of their children.

Parent Advocacy in Bilingual Education. Probably the most dramatic attempts at increased language-minority parent participation have occurred in the development of bilingual education programs in the U.S. Creating a curriculum which has a closer link to community language and cultural patterns would seem a natural context for greater minority parent access to schools. Yet there have been many struggles and hundreds of unresolved issues remain.

Some bilingual programs were initiated through language-minority parents' advocacy, lobbying, and planning efforts, such as those in Dade County, Florida (Mackey and Beebe, 1977); Boston, Massachusetts (Ambert and Melendez, 1985); Los Angeles, California (Ovando and Collier, 1985; a city in Michigan (Benavides, 1979); Milwaukee, Wisconsin (Guskin, 1981); Wilmington, Delaware (Waserstein, 1975); Rough Rock, Arizona (Wabaunseem, 1977), and Washington, D.C. (Collier, 1980). Since the Lau v. Nichols (1974) Supreme Court decision, bilingual parent and community groups have increasingly taken their cases to court to force schools to implement educational programs more appropriate to the needs of their children. However, Ambert and Melendez (1985:257) point out that instituting lawsuits does not necessarily imply continuing parental involvement once the court order is issued, because educators again resume the leadership in the school program.

Parents as Teachers' Aides. Another form of parent participation has been through joining the system as professional educators. Many language-minority parents have been hired as teachers' aides in bilingual programs. With time these aides have pursued coursework to be fully certified and have thus joined the system and created their own small spheres of influences on decision-making.

Parent Advisory Councils. The Title VII Parent Advisory Councils mandated by the Bilingual Education Act were also designed to provide another form of parent participation. However, in analyses of the effectiveness of these advisory councils, most studies have shown that they have little decision-making power, but operate at the lowest levels of citizen participation, placation and sanctions (Cruz, 1979; Matute-Bianchi, 1979; Rodriguez, 1979). The main function parent advisory councils seem to serve is to improve or change parent behavior rather than to allow parents to improve or change the educational program (Rodriguez, 1979). Rarely do parent advisory councils operate at the most powerful levels of parent participation: serving as checks and balances for the school system and as change agents.

Parent Leadership Training Institutes. Another strategy some school districts have taken is to provide parent leadership training institutes such as those in Chicago (Cerde and Schensul, 1979) and California (Ogbu, 1978). The Chicago project developed and trained parent advisory councils, helped parents move into elected positions, provided teacher in-service training on community relations, and disseminated information to parents. The California training combined minority and majority parents and educational staff from many school systems to discuss and resolve issues of common concern in schools and to develop mutual cross-cultural understanding.

Parent Education. This type of training is very effective with upwardly-mobile language-minority parents who have some formal educational background and potential leadership skills. However, there are many language-minority parents who need parent training that includes instruction for their own educational development. York (1979) describes parent participation in a Mississippi Choctaw bilingual program which incorporated parental decision making combined with use of parent resources and development of parents' literacy skills. Choctaw parents participated in program decisions, clarified conflicting values and goals, and helped develop instructional materials. At the same time they participated in Choctaw literacy programs and organized a writer's workshop to create Choctaw literature based on oral traditions.

Title VII parent education funds have supported evening and weekend courses for parents to develop ESL, literacy, and math skills for those parents who have not had the opportunity to receive a formal education. Some programs have modeled skill building through curricular materials designed for parents to work with their children and learn together at home (Cervantes, Baca and Torres, 1979).

Parent education is even more effective, however, when developed in the form of problem-posing dialogues between parents and educators, who are considered an equal partnership. The model of second language and literacy training developed by Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator, is powerful in its consciousness raising and development of leadership skills. As Wallerstein (1983a:191) explains:

Freire encouraged people to view themselves as active creators of culture, not passive recipients of history. He believed people

create and recreate their culture as they earn a living, pass on values, and interact in social groups. By encouraging students to believe in themselves as agents of change (p. 191).

In developing curricula for parent education, it is valuable to adopt some of Wallerstein's (1983a; 1983b) interpretations of Freire's approach for a U.S. context. Three stages of the approach involve serious listening to students (through observation similar to that of an anthropologist and participation in community life); dialogue (in which students and teachers become equals as they share personal needs, hopes, concerns, and develop mutual understanding); and critical thinking and action (e.g., parents' rights, ways to improve the environment, access to upward mobility and a decent life). Through basic classes in literacy, math skills, and ESL using Freire's approach, parents and teachers can join in a partnership that leads to greater parental leadership and participation in the decision-making process in schools.

Integrated Minority-Majority Parent Involvement. We have discussed models of parent involvement in which language-minority parents have become vocal advocates of change or have been empowered with new skills to become more effective participants in the schooling process. We also have to address ways to integrate minority and majority parents' concerns in a cross-cultural context. Usually in a majority-minority parent context, even with the best of intentions, majority parents ultimately dominate power decisions, if the school staff allow any parental decision-making to take place. Sometimes serious conflicts can occur between majority and minority parents' wishes. Frequently minority parents withdraw in frustration or they leave the decisions to those who have had more formal education or those who speak English well and can articulate their concerns.

Parent training may ease the process and help minority parents to participate more effectively. Even more effective have been those few programs where minority and majority parents are placed on an equal status, in two-way and immersion bilingual schools. Two-way bilingual schools, using two languages of instruction, effectively integrate majority and minority students and parents with common goals. Students must learn each other's language and experience the other's culture through a bilingual curriculum, and parents learn to function in a bicultural context in the school. Both languages and cultures are valued in the school and each language is given 50 percent of the total academic time.

Immersion bilingual schools were first developed in Canada to provide instruction in French to speakers of the dominant language, English. A fairly typical early French immersion program provides all instruction in the second language, French, for kindergarten and first grade. English language arts is introduced beginning in second grade. By fourth grade, half of the academic curriculum is taught in French and half in English.

This model has been adopted in some 30 U.S. public schools and is becoming increasingly popular. In the U.S., immersion schools where the language taught is the native language of language-minority students of that community, these students are invited to participate if they so choose. For language-minority students, the immersion school becomes a bilingual maintenance school, in which they receive their first two years of literacy instruction and basic school skills in their native language and then are gradually introduced to English until by fourth grade all students are receiving half their academic instruction in English and half in the other language. Immersion bilingual programs that are integrated, two-way schools have been extremely successful with majority and

minority student academic achievement, for students of both lower- and middle-class backgrounds, and of many ethnicities (Genesee, 1985).

Since both two-way and immersion bilingual schools are for all students and they are enrichment models, the stigma of compensatory educational programs is avoided. Majority and minority parents frequently become enthusiastic advocates for acquiring second languages and attend after-school classes to learn the second language along with their children (Forsythe, 1981). Parents of immersion programs have even started a new professional organization, Advocates for Language Learning, which is composed of equal numbers of both parents and professional educators.

Issues on majority and minority parent involvement in schools are complicated, and school personnel are reluctant to share their power in educational decision-making. But there are hopeful signs of increased language-minority parents' participation in the process of majority-minority parent-school cooperation. Let us all work for continuing empowerment of language-minority parents and for models of effective cross-cultural school-community educational settings.

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WHY PARENT TUTORS: CULTURAL REASONS

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The 1984 amendments to the Bilingual Education Act have provisions for funding a new program entitled "Family English Literacy." This program is based on the growing evidence that parent participation fosters student achievement, especially when parents recognize their role as "first teachers" and "learners."

Four projects are currently funded for the first of a three-year cycle in California, Colorado, Texas and New Jersey. This paper concentrates on a case study in the "Interagency Family English Literacy" (IFEL) project operated by a consortium in northern urban New Jersey in five cities: East Orange, Newark, New Brunswick, Perth Amboy and Trenton. Although adults from three minority languages (Haitian Creole, Portuguese and Spanish) are being served, the remarks in this presentation are limited to the Hispanic group because it is the largest of the three at the present, and the most familiar culturally.

Dr. Luis Laosa presently at the Educational Testing Service in Princeton has addressed a component of the Family English Literacy Program, namely, the Home-School continuity concept. Based on studies of Hispanic and other parent-child interactions, he has proposed a developmental, socioculturally relativistic paradigm (Laosa, 1979). Social competence involves functional adaptations to specific environments. And insofar as different environments may have their own specific demands for functional adaptation, for a child to be successful in two different environments may depend on the degree of overlap of the demands of the environments.

Based on Dr. Laosa's studies of Chicano families, it is clear there is a strong association between parental schooling and home language use:

...schooling is a much better predictor of home language use than is occupational status. Parent-child interactions in the homes of the more highly schooled Chicano parents tended to take place more frequently in English than in Spanish."

These same studies also indicate that with the same educational level of the parents, child-initiated interaction in English occurred more often. This generational difference observed in several studies indicates an increase in the use of English by children over parents.

Data from the Adult Performance Level Study, conducted at the University of Texas in 1975, indicate that approximately 56 percent of Hispanic adults can be considered functionally illiterate compared to 47 percent of Blacks and 16 percent of Whites. According to these figures, quoted by the National Council of La Raza, over half of Hispanic adults lack sufficient English Literacy to function competently in our complex society. They cannot hold jobs requiring the ability to read; they cannot read and understand leases, contracts, and explanations of finance charges; they cannot decipher the poison warnings on household products or make sense out of the notes which come home from their children's school. They cannot read to their children.

Hispanic illiterates show similar traits exhibited by their English-language counterparts: poor self-image, the need to hide their inability to read and write as well as a persistent avoidance of the educational institutions which remind them of their early alienation from school through absenteeism or failure.

Hispanic illiterates show a cultural trait which particularly handicaps them. Most illiterate Hispanics -- even those who are American citizens such as Puerto Ricans -- originate from countries and cultures where education and instruction are viewed as functions of the educational institutions which are uniformly, centrally and hierarchically operated by professionals without democratically fostered parental participation. Education is viewed as something belonging to teachers who know best and who must be respected.

In addition, Laosa's studies of parent-child reading among Chicano and non-Hispanic White families seem to indicate that, with the same educational level, non-Hispanic White mothers tend to read more often to their children than Chicano mothers. This observation appears to support my contention that the Hispanic parents often do not see themselves in the role of "first teachers" of their children.

The Hispanic illiterate within the consortium of the New Jersey Family English Literacy project is likely to be a displaced homemaker, a single, female head of a household or the mother of LEP children. Because of their low educational and socioeconomic status, and poor urban environment, the children do so poorly in school to the point of being held back, and thus of becoming potential dropouts. By helping the parents to become literate and better role models for their children, we are working towards the time when these parents will feel more comfortable in assuming the "first teacher" role for their offspring. The IFEL provides an opportunity to reach for such a goal.

It also stands to reason that in the process of literacy and within a cultural context, parent tutors can do a better, cheaper and more efficient job than professional tutors, or even educators. This belief is based on the "homophily principle" which asserts that effective communication occurs when the source and the receiver share common attributes such as beliefs, social status, culture, etc. This communication is also effective when the transfer of an idea from a source to a receiver results in an intended change in knowledge, attitude, or overt behavior on the part of the receiver. Interaction with those quite different involves more effort to make communication effective.

The principles of homophily of interaction, communication, consensus, and variation within specific situations best describe the underpinnings of the New Jersey Family Literacy project.

The New Jersey Family Literacy project aims at training parents, particularly displaced homemakers, to become parent tutors of Hispanic illiterate adults. By selecting displaced homemakers to be literacy tutors, the project has the following advantages:

Culturally, these Hispanic females are viewed by other women as role models. The tutors, being displaced homemakers themselves who have worked to overcome their low educational attainment, can go to illiterate women and through their behavior be an excellent example to other illiterates trying to become functionally literate. The illiterate can say, "If you did it, so can I". Moreover, tutoring requires a good amount of caring for the person being tutored. Tutoring involves a great deal of the motherly care that Hispanic females have

lavished on their children. In our project, tutoring is comparable to the culturally Hispanic function described as "compadrazgo". In Latin countries, parents of a newborn choose its godparents from among close friends. Being a "compadre" or "comadre" amounts to establishing family ties almost equal to those existing among blood relatives. Experience demonstrates that the tutor-tutee relationship is a bond similar to those among "compadres."

Psychologically, for the tutor to assist the tutee to overcome her feelings of low self-esteem, defeatism and lack of motivation, it is paramount that tutoring reflect a high degree of empathy. Before any language instruction can take place, the tutor needs to show an understanding of the illiterate's problems, her willingness to offer supportive peer counseling and her being available to the friend in need. This tutor-tutee empathy can be better achieved among culturally close individuals who not only have the same language background, but who preferably live in the same "barrio," or the emotional environment, that can help achieve mutual empathy.

Programmatically, the Family English Literacy project is aimed at language development, preferably in the home setting. Since the goal is to promote language proficiency among parents and children in the home, communication issues that arise between parents and children are also dealt with. So it is important that tutors be parents who have had experience and training in parenting, at least to the point of being good listeners. They are also supposed to assist families in need of help by referring them to the appropriate agency.

Because parents and children belong to two different generations, somehow more strikingly diverse than previous ones, i.e., grandparents and parents, clashes based on different cultural values frequently take place. Tutors need to help parents understand the consequences of a particular authoritarian style in a society that deals with children in ways that are more democratic than disciplinarian.

In practical terms, two major thrusts make up the rationale for tutor training programs: parents' self-image and the emphasis on learning.

An example of the first thrust is at Elementary School Number five in Perth Amboy, New Jersey where Mrs. Rose Lopez has been very successful in attracting parents into the school with "Parent Recognition Nights" when teachers honor the parents and entertain them with "veladas" (concerts, songs, dances, etc.). Mrs. Lopez also involved illiterate parents in learning by helping them feel successful through arts and crafts. Parents thus went from being an audience to leading roles which helps in their becoming "first teachers" in their children's education. Other types of "self-image enhancing practices are those undertaken by Joan Davis of the Glendale Unified School District in California through the Project "Welcome".

The second thrust of emphasis on learning is a series of principles which are thoroughly incorporated into the tutors' frame of reference. They deal with subjects such as Learning Begins at Home; It's Time to Learn; Learning is Vital; Learning is Lifelong.

[Editor's Note: Dr. Oliva's presentation was based on 23 transparencies. Space did not allow us to use copies of these transparencies, and the paper has been revised to accommodate the reader.]

CROSS-CULTURAL ISSUES

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Discussants: Ms. Mimi Lozano-Holzman, Title VII Project Coordinator, Huntington Beach Union High School District, Fountain Valley, California

Mr. Nga Duong, Title VII Project Coordinator, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle, Washington

Lozano-Holzman commented on the high percentage of Spanish speakers in many of the school systems. She addressed the specific problems that Mexican children have, particularly at the level of cultural expectations. She drew on her own experience and the misunderstandings that can arise from differences in the ways Anglos and Mexicans set goals, the strengths of each and the necessity to emphasize the cultural strengths of the minority group.

She also pointed out that the mistake most service providers make initially, is to assume that the needs of all minority LEP children can be solved in the same ways.

Duong also emphasized the necessity to account for different experiences and different backgrounds. For example, he pointed out that just because students are Vietnamese does not necessarily mean they have the same experiences and needs. The universal issue is that solutions should be sought for individual situations.

INVOLVING LEP PARENTS

Mrs. Dama Garate
Bilingual Community Liaison
Trinity-Arlington Project, Arlington Public Schools, Arlington, Virginia

The Hispanic community in the District of Columbia metropolitan area can be categorized into three groups. First came, the Cuban refugees of the early sixties. They were political refugees, but a large majority of them were educated and had the official support of the U.S. government. The adjustment of these refugees was painful but relatively easy because of the official support they received.

The second wave of refugees came from Latin America, people fleeing financial and political turmoil in South and Central America. It is difficult to pinpoint to their exact numbers. A picture of their educational backgrounds is also not clear.

The third group of people have begun to appear in large numbers during the last four years. They come primarily from Nicaragua and El Salvador. They share the same background as other Latin Americans in terms of language, culture and religion, but there are some clear differences between them and the previous two waves. The people from El Salvador come from a war zone and in general are here without official recognition. Most lack a formal education. Many of the teenagers are working instead of going to school. In fact, they are encouraged to do so.

In trying to reach this new group and involve the parents and children in the school system, we have had to use different methods--namely, to find out what the needs are and address them. Thus we have to meet such primary needs as counseling, getting food, help with finding jobs--all the things in which schools have not been traditionally involved. Family-related problems also must be dealt with. Salvadoran families, in particular, when reunited have often been separated for many years, and family adjustment can be very difficult. The support of the school is crucial when the students (and the family) can be provided with counseling and thus alleviate the pressure the student is experiencing. Such help can create a better frame of mind and encourage the student stay in school.

Teachers should be more realistic in their expectations. To expect a child to study thoroughly in an overcrowded apartment is unrealistic. To ignore the effects of war on these students is also unrealistic. Teachers should learn about and take into account the experiences and the living conditions of these students and make the necessary adjustments in their demands on them.

INVOLVING LEP PARENTS

Mr. Pirun Sen
Parent Advisory Council Coordinator/Native Facilitator
Title VII Portland Public Schools, Portland, Maine

In communicating with the parents of LEP children, I emphasize that they are partners with the teachers as educators and administrators. I encourage them to learn English and become involved in the social aspects of their children's schools, because they can then teach their own children at home, and they can communicate their children's needs, and their own, through parent groups. In becoming involved, they also become partners in research with the educators of their children.

Most parents are reluctant to participate, so I visit their homes and invite them and their sponsors to parents meetings. In this first contact, I provide as clear an idea about the agenda and what the expectations are for such meetings.

The Parent Advisory Council meets once a month in Portland. Announcements are sent home and they are then broadcast on the local TV station [in English].

Despite the efforts to advertise these meetings, we have encountered some problems. Continued lack of understanding about the nature of the meetings; lack of a consistent place to meet--the sites change, although efforts are made to keep them within walking distance of most families, and sometimes lack of participation on the part of teachers.

However, I have found that persistence produces results, and we now have cooperation between the parents and the teachers. Parents have begun to come to the meetings and the contact with the teachers there has made them more trusting. In turn they have become what we hoped--partners with their teachers in educating their children.

Hiep Tran Thien
Chairperson
Parent Advisory Council, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle, Washington

N.D. Duong
Director
Title VII Academic Excellence CAI Project, Seattle Public Schools, Seattle, Washington

The Title VII Projects and the Parents Advisory Council (PAC) in the Seattle schools are deeply concerned with the issue of parent involvement in effective schools.

We would like to limit our remarks to two topics: (1) a cross-cultural overview on parent involvement, and (2) suggestions on techniques and strategies to get the parents involved.

Cross-cultural overview on parent involvement. In our capacity as PAC chairperson and project implementor of our respective projects, we have spent the past three years visiting project schools, attending monthly meetings, organizing training workshops for parents, and sharing input in the decision making process. The experiences learned from these activities have helped us become firmly

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committed to the idea that parent involvement plays a key role in the success of any educational program.

In Vietnamese culture, school is viewed as an extension entity of the home. The children continue to receive an education which is designed to help them fit into the society at large. The teacher is highly respected and given special social status. The Vietnamese saying, "QUAN, SU, PHU" (the King, the Teacher, the Parent), means that the King comes first, next comes the teacher, and the parent is third.

The perception of the parents is not necessarily accurate. The typical American school environment is not always an extension of the home. Thus the bilingual student becomes the object of a tug-of-war, with the school representing the new and dominant culture and the family embodying the old culture.

However, education is always considered as the first priority for our children's future. Parents regard American schools as institutions staffed with highly trained teachers and other professionals who are dedicated to serving our children. Thus to visit the school is similar to bothering the teacher, and interrupting the teaching-learning process. Parents come to school only when they are notified of their children's problems which has led to the belief that our parents are not interested or concerned about their children's education. The fact is that parents do not like to interfere with authority.

In reality, very few parents understand the school system, its policies and practices. Lack of English language ability and poor communication skills keep parents away from involvement in school activities such as an open house, teacher-parent conferences, the school dance, school athletic events, etc. These activities are not related to "book learning" so they are considered unnecessary and unimportant.

The Vietnamese child is usually subjected to intense pressure from his parents to study. Learning English is seen as the most urgent need for all of our children as well as for their parents. Children are expected to spend a lot of time alone at their desk "learning" more English. It is not uncommon to find a Vietnamese student who spends entire weekends at home studying.

Vietnamese children are caught between two cultures, one is their own and the other belongs to the host society. The ability to switch back and forth between the two cultures is the essence of cultural adjustment. And upon this ability depends much of their success in being accepted by both forces: their family on one hand, and the new society in which they now live on the other. This is an acquired ability which requires a keen sense of observation and a conscious effort (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1976).

Suggestions for effective parent involvement. Parents of students in bilingual programs form one of the greatest potential support mechanisms available to school programs. All successful programs have developed strong relationships in this area. But productive parents and community involvement must be planned and developed as an integral component of the overall educational program.

The beginning of a strong bilingual program is the realization on the part of the parents that their input and advice are sincerely desired. A good

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starting place is in orientation sessions which will set the stage for this productive working relationship.

Parent and community contributions can take place in any or all of the following areas: Planning the bilingual program; assessment of students; selection of instructional materials; providing cultural resources; volunteering to help in the classroom; providing transportation; assisting with translation of school communications; and tutoring, counseling, etc.

The following elements should be considered as important in the planning and implementation of parent involvement activities:

- o Utilization of bilingual aides as effective links and motivational forces to parent involvement
- o Using the teacher's community outreach activities as an effective recruitment process for parents for school programs
- o Sending school communications in a language the parents can understand, whenever feasible
- o Planning orientation and discussion sessions at frequent intervals
- o Developing a formalized plan for parent involvement
- o Creating of an advisory council where that approach seems appropriate
- o Offering a training program, meetings, and workshops for parents to develop their leadership skills to help them function more effectively
- o Providing literacy course for illiterate or preliterate parents
- o Encouraging school staff's participation in community events in order to create a close connection between school and community
- o Organizing frequent school visits so the parents are familiar with the environment
- o Demanding a commitment to the program from the school staff and administrators

In summary, effective parent involvement plays an important role in the success of all educational programs. Active parent participation helps increase student achievement. The closer home-school communication lines are, the better mutual respect and trust between parents and teacher.

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Vilay Chaleunrath
Executive Director
Indochinese Community Center, Washington, D.C.

Many Indochinese parents in this country do not understand the roles they have to play in their children's educational process for many reasons.

They are uneducated, and many have never attended school. Thus a note that is sent to them is ignored because the parent can't read it.

They do not speak English. Thus they do not know how to provide information when it is requested, particularly when it is in writing.

They are unfamiliar with the school system. Such things as curriculum materials, textbooks, books, workbooks, etc. are strange to them. Elaborate facilities such as chemistry labs baffle them, so they are also ignored.

They are struggling to make ends meet. Many parents work two jobs in order to provide sufficient income to raise the children. They then have very little time to spend with their children, and so are unfamiliar with the school and what the child is actually doing there.

They cannot provide a good environment where their children can study. Living conditions are overcrowded in most cases.

To draw parents into a partnership with the schools demands a lot of patient work on the part of those who are in charge. Some recommendations follow.

More bilingual counselors or workers should be hired who could serve as liaisons between the school (students and teachers) and parents. The liaison person could also be of assistance in identifying other problems, such as housing, mental health, etc.

Social events, where parents are encouraged to share items from their cultures should be organized. Potluck suppers with ethnic foods, arts shows where items from each country are displayed, and so forth.

Workshops should be organized where parents can learn how to take more responsibility for their children's education.

Sessions can be scheduled where the teacher can explain to the parents what their child's school work is about so they can follow up on the child's progress.

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Discussants: Ms. Marta Guzman, Resource Specialist, Arlington Public Schools, Arlington, Virginia

Mr. Yonnara Keng, Bilingual Community Liaison, Trinity-Arlington Project, Arlington Public Schools, Arlington, Virginia

The discussants agreed with the speakers. There is consensus in the following areas:

- (1) Trust on the part of the parents needs to be fostered. This is done by constant communication.
- (2) Parents should be given the opportunity to develop a plan of action based on their needs and the needs of their children.
- (3) Teachers and administrators must be made aware of these needs, and provide some response to problems, thus giving the parent a visible sign that this involvement is truly a partnership.
- (4) There must be more bilingual staff in the positions of aides and resource staff available in the schools. The Trinity-Arlington project is a good example of how bilingual aides can help towards the decrease of problems in our LEP student population.

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PARENTS AS TUTORS

Title VII Project
Implemented in Brownsville, Texas

Monica Sandoval
Brownsville Independent School District Texas

The Parents as Tutors (PAT) project is an Academic Excellence Project funded by Title VII to serve 150 parents of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students at 13 campuses from Kindergarten through the second grade in the Brownsville Independent School District.

This project is a follow-up of a formerly funded Title VII project that served pre-kindergarten LEP students and their parents through an instructional television program. This pre-K ITV Program was approved as an exemplary program by the State of Texas Demonstration Programs for School Improvement (DPSI) network. The program is now carried out with local money in all 23 elementary campuses.

The PAT project started in the 1984-85 school year with Kindergarten parents at 13 campuses. The project has three major goals: 1) increased parental involvement; 2) increased self-concept, and 3) increased academic achievement on the part of the students. The overall objectives the first year were to provide training to parents in six cluster sites. This training was geared to build the knowledge base of the parents in the following areas:

- o Parental involvement
- o Child growth and development
- o Motivation
- o Self-concept
- o Language development
- o Curriculum in state Transitional Bilingual Education Programs
- o Home learning centers

In addition, the training focused on the development of the parents' tutoring skills.

The tutoring began slowly with generic activities that all parents conducted in their homes and reported on at regular meetings at their cluster sites. By April of the first year we gave parents activities that were directly related to their children's skill level and proficiency level in English and Spanish. The activities focused specifically on language arts and math.

In the second year, when the students are in the first grade, meetings are held every two weeks with parents at the cluster sites. Child care and transportation are provided for parents, based on need. Sessions are alternated to give parents information on topics they chose as most closely related to their

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needs and interests. During topic informational sessions, commercially developed activities are made available to the parents.

In the alternating sessions, parents are involved in developing activities created by staff to focus on language arts and math that are correlated to the district curriculum and the state essential elements. Parents are involved in cutting, coloring, pasting and laminating the activities that they are going to use in tutoring the child. They are encouraged to provide a range of experiences to their children. Activities must be more than pencil and paper, for example, visits to the library, reading to the child and field trips. Discussions about particular problems and/or successes are also discussed in small groups with parents.

In order to monitor the effectiveness of the activities used by each parent, contracts are completed by the parent indicating the amount of time each activity took, how often it was used, whether the child liked it and whether the activity seemed appropriate for the child's skill level. In addition, a Log of Tutoring activities is kept by each parent.

Approximately 80% of the parents served are completely and/or dominantly Spanish-speaking. Around 80% were educated in Mexico with most completing only up to the 6th grade. Of those, the majority have been living in the U.S. from 2 to 15 years. Some were born and educated in Brownsville. Many of the parents participating in the PAT project are now attending adult ESL classes provided by the district's Adult Education Department and some have received their GED since becoming involved in the project.

In the third year, the project will continue to provide parent training to increase each parent's knowledge base and refine tutoring skills in the areas of language arts and math. We will also begin development of a parent training manual and a replication guide. Staff will begin to work with the administrators and teachers to train them to carry on the project at their schools after Title VII funding is no longer available.

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PROJECT WELCOME

Title VII Family English Literacy Program
Implemented in Glendale, California

Joan Davis

Glendale Unified School District

Project welcome is a Title VII-funded education program serving the needs of parents of limited-English-Proficient (LEP) students enrolled in three elementary schools in the Glendale Unified School District.

Glendale, is a community of 144,000 inhabitants located immediately north of downtown Los Angeles and extending to the foothills of the San Gabriel mountains. The District operates three senior high schools, four junior high schools and nineteen elementary schools with a total enrollment of 20,000 students.

Since 1980, the district has experienced a dramatic increase in its student population from Armenian, Korean and Spanish primary language backgrounds. In 1980, 18.4% of the total enrollment in the district was LEP. This percentage increased to 24.6% in 1981 and was 30.8% at the start of the 1985/86 school year.

Project Welcome is serving the needs of Armenian, Korean and Spanish speaking parents at Cerritos, Jefferson and Mann elementary schools. The curriculum consists of English as a Second Language-Literacy, Health and Nutrition, and Self-Esteem-Parenting.

The project was launched with an intensive recruiting effort in October 1985. Recruitment consisted of on-site briefings of teachers at staff meetings, presentations to PTA and other parent groups, as well as classroom visitations to distribute a take-home informational piece. Follow-up phone calls were made to schedule testing and classes were formed and scheduled to occur at times most convenient for the parents.

Morning classes were offered at two sites on a two session per week basis. Evening classes were conducted at all three sites, also on a twice per week basis. It was discovered that morning classes were preferred by homemakers with small children while fathers were generally available to attend evening classes.

It became quickly apparent that on-site babysitting services were necessary to assure the success of the morning classes. This has led to an unforeseen benefit to the project in that pre-school children of the three language backgrounds have had an opportunity to play together, learn English songs and games, and have a mini pre-school experience.

The parent English classes are taught by a trained ESL teacher and aide. Parents are learning English using a low anxiety, natural approach, Total Physical Response, a technique which utilizes the whole body to learn language. Other techniques are songs and chants; use of lots of pictures and props, pair tutoring in which students work together, as well as the more traditional approaches to language teaching and learning.

The second component of *Project Welcome*, Health and Nutrition, was launched in January 1986. The nutrition curriculum was developed with the cooperation of the California Dairy Council, the Carnation Company, and the University of California, Cooperative Extension. Prospective participants were recruited

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through outdoor coffee klatches in front of the schools as parents waited to pick up students, through telephone calls to parents who expressed interest in ESL classes, and through informational flyers sent home with the students.

Armenian, Korean, and Spanish speaking teachers with health or nutrition backgrounds conducted the classes which focused on proper nutrition, food preparation demonstrations, recipes, and shopping hints.

Classes were scheduled in the morning or evening according to the availability of teachers and the preferences of the students. For morning classes availability of baby sitting was, once again, of tantamount importance. The six-week nutrition classes were held on all three campuses.

The four-week health unit utilized the Mary Poppins approach, "A spoonful of sugar to make the medicine go down." With the assistance of students and instructors from the Glendale High School Cosmetology Department "hands on" demonstrations were interspersed with didactic presentations.

The first session included skin and nail care. Parents were given facials, make-up, and manicures by the high school students. The school nurse conducted the second session, a film and discussion about the prevention and control of head lice. The cosmetology students returned for the third session which included haircuts and new hairdos for everyone. The last health session featured dental hygiene presented by the district head nurse.

The third component of the project for 1985/86 was directed toward improving self-esteem with special emphasis on the concerns of immigrant parents.

Through the cooperation of the Korean Youth center sessions were presented in Korean. Foothill Family Services and Verdugo Mental Health Center presented sessions in Spanish. Topics included: how to have more effective discipline in the home; ways to improve communication between parents, children and school; how to resolve home-school conflicts; comparisons between American and native cultures, and finally, resources available in the community to treat more serious problems.

The original proposal for *Project Welcome* incorporated classes which parents had asked for, and close consultation with parents continues by way of regularly scheduled Parent Advisory Council meetings. Areas of interest to be explored in the coming year have been identified.

A special literacy program is planned for the summer of 1986, which will utilize the tutoring talents of parent participants who attended a special weekend workshop in January. There they learned how to effectively teach reading and writing to other parents who have not had the opportunity to attend school in their native country.

Parent tutors who attended the January workshop were invited to participate in a special Saturday workshop in May where they were shown how to increase their leadership skills and work more closely with the school.

During its first year *Project Welcome* has succeeded in accomplishing its major goal as set forth in the original proposal: "Project Welcome is designed to extend a comforting hand of friendship to parents of limited-English-proficient students who are newcomers to our country, our culture, our language, and our school system."

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PARENTS ASSISTING IN LEARNING (PAL)

Title VII Program

Implemented in Broward County, Florida

Delia Garcia

Florida International University

Parents have finally been rediscovered. This rediscovery during the last decade, has resulted in the recognition that parents are a potent force in the lives of their children. Educators are now more interested than ever in devising ways to involve parents in their programs and in defining the nature, kind and extent of the relationships that should exist between parents and schools.

However, even with this renewed interest, the language-minority parent population is a group which is frequently ignored and consequently does not play as significant a role in the educational process. These parents of students who are a majority in certain localities of our country, should be encouraged to participate in schools by teachers and administrators. In an era where the link between home and school has been identified as a significant determinant in a child's social and academic achievement, the need to include and actively involve all parents, regardless of race, culture or language spoken becomes of eminent importance.

There are critical questions confronting us. How can we begin to include the language-minority parent as an equal partner in the educational process? Are we effectively utilizing the skills and contributions these parents can make? How can we facilitate the involvement of these parents in our children's schools? Have we truly examined our parental involvement programs, to see that they meet the special needs of language-minority parents? To address these issues represents the beginning of a renewed and effective partnership between the home, school and community.

The *Parents Assisting in Learning Program (PAL)* is a Title VII training project designed to create and promote greater Hispanic parental involvement in the educational process of our children.

The PAL Program evolved from the Parents can be Tutors and CAPI programs, two previous model projects in the area of parent training. The project is currently implemented in Broward County, Florida. It represents a cooperative effort between Florida International University and the School Board of Broward County.

The programmatic objectives of the program aim at:

- o Increasing parents' knowledge of the educational system in the U.S., and how this relates to a largely foreign bureaucratic system.
- o Assisting parents in becoming actively involved in factors which affect their children's education. This is a process of attitude change in role perception, and encouragement to take an active role in the activities of the school.

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- o Providing parents with concrete methods and bilingual materials which they may use at home with their children.
- o Training parents in home-based academic tutoring of their children in the three areas of basic skills covered in the State Assessment Test (Mathematics, Reading, and Writing).
- o Expanding knowledge of parenting skills and patterns of family interaction.

The major thrust of the program is to involve Hispanic parents whose children who have demonstrated difficulty in Florida's State Assessment Test, or who are classified as limited-English-proficient (LEP), in specific activities designed to improve the student's academic achievement and English language proficiency. Program objectives are accomplished through the implementation of cycles of Parent-Child Training Sessions and Follow-Up Activities. The training emphasizes the importance of the interaction between parent and child as a means of enhancing the ability of students to acquire greater academic skills and English language proficiency.

The Parent-Child Training Sessions are offered at selected Broward County Public School during the evenings. The following topics are addressed:

- o The importance of parental involvement in schools
- o American educational philosophy
- o Parenting skills
- o Tutoring skills in Math, Reading, and Writing
- o Importance of state and national tests such as the Florida State Assessment Test
- o Human interaction

The training needs of parents and children are addressed in a series of ten bilingual (Spanish-English) manuals developed by project staff. These are distributed free of charge to the parents. The manuals provide parents with specific activities and skills required to facilitate home-based tutoring to their children.

The ultimate success of the project is determined by the number of students in the program who are promoted to the next grade level, and where applicable, they are able to master all objectives of the State Assessment Test. Parental participation is measured through attendance at parent-teacher conferences, PTA/PTO meetings, number of hours spent tutoring, involvement in Parent Advisory Committees, and other related school activities. In addition, parents are pre- and post-tested on specific pre-determined criteria of material covered in the training cycle.

Through the PAL program certain strategies for promoting parental involvement have developed which we believe are an important component of the program.

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1. Contrary to the belief of many school administrators, the Hispanic community is very concerned with the educational experiences of their children. Hispanic parents have been a largely untapped resource in education. It has been shown that they are receptive to participation pleas when approached in a warm, personal, positive, and supportive way. Parental reception approaches should deal with the feeling of fear, frustration, and alienation regarding the American educational system. Parents must feel welcome and comfortable at their children's school.
2. Parents must believe that what they are doing is meaningful and will contribute to their child's social and intellectual development.
3. Parents are more likely to participate to the fullest extent if they receive practical information and learn skills which are readily applicable at home. What we see happening is that most parent involvement programs lack the specificity of purpose required to maintain ego-involvement. As a result, participant turnover and dropout rates are high. When parental involvement is directly related to the child's developmental welfare, the turnover and dropout rates will be attenuated. Identifying student achievement and the quality of the parent-child relationship as central concerns of a parent involvement program, serves to maintain motivation and interest.
4. If participants are Spanish-dominant, and most do not have command of the English language, parent training sessions should be conducted in Spanish. Unnecessary translation is distracting and often disturbing to participants and parent coordinators.
5. While training sessions are taking place, it is suggested that the school provide tutorial and child-care services for elementary school children who accompany parents.
6. The parenting skills component should be given careful attention in a training program for Hispanic parents. Parenting in the context of a foreign culture is a particularly difficult task. The cultural gap which exists between foreign-born parents and American-born children transcends generational gaps.
7. The use of novel techniques which enhance interest in the program is necessary.
8. There is a need to send out weekly written notices to the parents reminding them of the specific involvement required (training sessions in this case). In addition, weekly telephone calls are the most effective means of communication for it serves to establish linkages and rapport.

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DEVELOPMENT OF PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT IN BILINGUAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Starr Betses

*Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical High School
Tyngsboro, Massachusetts*

Our highly successful parent training model is a Demonstration Grant in its third and last year of implementation at the Greater Lowell Regional Vocational Technical High School (GLRVTS) in Tyngsboro, Massachusetts. This project proposes a model for attaining meaningful parental involvement for the benefit of both parents and students. The majority of participants are Hispanic LEP parents and their sons or daughters.

Three years ago our bilingual program itself was in place; staff, texts and equipment were commendable. However, one factor which has a great influence on the students' performance was weak. Our missing link was the parents. They were pleased with our program and as a result they were passive and uninvolved. We wanted them to work with us to the benefit of the children and the school and the parents themselves.

Our premise was that parents have basic needs that must be met before they can effectively and confidently contribute to the Anglo middle class format that most schools require of their Parent Advisory Councils (PAC). In non-threatening group building activities, we addressed the parents' basic needs for an understanding of the educational, social and political systems in the United States. We also motivated parents by instructing them in career awareness to meet the pressing needs of their own lives.

A needs assessment showed that the parents had to be encouraged to realize that, regardless of their level of education or knowledge of English, they could make meaningful contributions to their children's education. Parental involvement started on a one-to-one and small group basis. Meetings were unhurried and personal. Time and flexibility were essential considerations since each cluster of parents had varying needs. The parent trainer met her objectives systematically, structure came into place and parent leaders evolved.

Evaluations here conducted to determine the progress made by the parents based on data obtained from records kept by the project staff, observations, interviews and anonymous questionnaires concerning training and PAC meetings. We also used a pre-post test to assess the impact of the training sessions. Findings proved that we had achieved much more than we had aspired to.

I. Parents demonstrated significant improvement in all skills on the training list according to a pre-post measurement instrument. The greatest gains were in their ability to:

- o state the purpose of the school
- o summarize the role of the PAC
- o list school regulations
- o explain and follow a complicated admissions process
- o describe the structure of school administration
- o explain the role of the school committee
- o describe special education services
- o summarize the rights and requirements of the Bilingual Law
- o describe strategies for addressing teenage problems

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- o explain how to motivate students and keep them in school
 - o explain the benefits of vocational education
- II. Parents' responses to an anonymous questionnaire were highly favorable. Among the comments were the following:
- o Meetings were held frequently enough and they were well-organized and helpful. At least 30% of the parents attended each meeting.
 - o They had been given the opportunity to make recommendations to the bilingual program and they praised it.
 - o A large number of parents wanted to continue with the program even though their children would be graduating.
 - o Mothers arranged a thank-you luncheon and, on behalf of the PAC, presented plaques to teachers at the graduation Bilingual Award ceremony.
- III. Parents initiated contact with the school and significant strides were made.
- o During the first project year, phone logs showed a 700% increase in calls by the parents to the school for school related purposes. Year II indicated a 200% increase over Year I.
 - o There was a remarkable decrease in student absences. The mean number of absence in 1984-1985 was 6.44 as compared to 18.28 in 1983-1984. The average decrease was 62%.
 - o The drop-out rate decreased markedly. During the 1984-1985 academic year, the drop-out rate for Hispanics at GLRVIS was under 6 percent. Consequently, a greater number of Hispanic students at the GLRVIS graduated. Other high schools which serve students from the same neighborhoods had an estimated drop-out rate of 60% for Hispanic students.
 - o Parents thoroughly understood the admissions process and completed it without assistance which led to increased enrollment in the bilingual program.
 - o Parents incorporated to form a non-profit organization called PUEDA.
 - o Parents attended local, state and national bilingual conferences, including NABE '86 in Chicago, to share their successes and expand their understanding of Bilingual Education.

As the Title VII Parental Involvement Demonstration Project comes to an end, the Hispanic parents of our students are actively and enthusiastically participating in the PAC and favorably impacting their children's education. While this year's data has not been analyzed, we have observed that about 50% of the seniors are planning to continue their education at the community college or university level.

Looking towards the near future, our concerns are two-fold. First, we aspire to maintain the superior levels of motivation and involvement of our Hispanic parents. Second, we are contemplating the development of a similarly meaningful program for the Southeast Asian parents whose children are beginning to enroll in our school. We expect their needs to be different and we plan to address them in the same vigorous ways of our first program.

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TITLE VII Projects

Discussants: Dr. Aurora Martinez Quevedo, Office of Desegregation, San Jose, California

Mr. Ricardo Martinez, Legislative Analyst, Committee on Education and Labor, U.S. House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.

Martinez Quevedo addressed her comments to the similarities and some differences between what was being discussed in the papers regarding Title VII projects and a highly successful program, which is a cooperative agreement between the Mexican government's Ministry of Education and the state of California. This project is based on learning groups made up of parents who themselves help with a facilitator to facilitate literacy skills for each other. The goal is to get adults where they are certified both in Mexico and California as graduates of an elementary, junior high or high school program.

She commented on the themes of illiteracy, self-esteem, nutrition, and ESL which are similar in other programs. So is the development of needs assessment by local communities.

Martinez Quevedo commented on the need to continue to implement programs such as those described in this session. The ultimate objective of such a program is to get them to a point where they are truly being run by the local parents themselves.

Martinez commented on how far the Title VII projects have come in involving parents of LEP children. He encouraged the audience to continue to raise the issue that the problems of literacy for LEP children go beyond the needs of recently arrived immigrants and refugees. The language and literacy needs of native-born LEP children are also pressing and Title VII projects should continue to address that population also.

Martinez pointed out the discrepancy between the needs for more trained personnel to deal with the ever-increasing numbers of LEP kids, and the Secretary's office which says there are enough personnel and less LEP children. He encouraged the audience to maintain pressure on state departments of education about this issue.

He concluded his remarks with an encouragement to contact the Committee on Education and Labor for help or answers to questions.

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