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A Case for Adult Two-Way Bilingual Immersion

The present study investigates 2-way bilingual immersion (TWBI) as a potentially viable pedagogical model for adult language learners. A review of the literature on TWBI at the K-6 level is provided, followed by an examination of key issues in adult second and foreign language education. Implications for potential adult TWBI programs are discussed along with recommendations for further investigation. Finally, the author presents an exploratory study of a nonformal, community-based adult TWBI program in Los Angeles known as I HABLO U. The results of this study suggest that while adult TWBI shares many of the learner and administrative challenges documented in K-6 TWBI programs, adult learners in TWBI programs contend with a unique set of problems and also enjoy a number of advantages that K-6 learners may not experience. The author concludes that scholars must widen the focus of current research and evaluative efforts of TWBI to consider adult learners.

Over the last two decades, two-way bilingual immersion (TWBI) has enjoyed increased currency as a language-learning model for early K-6 education, with more than 370 confirmed programs in the US alone (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2010; Lindholm-Leary, 2004). These programs generally involve classrooms in which roughly equal numbers of English-speaking students and speakers of a second target language (e.g., Spanish, Korean, or Mandarin, etc.) experience instruction in both of the languages throughout the day (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007). While the approach is growing at the elementary level, adult two-way bilingual programs, by contrast, are comparatively scarce, and studies of adult two-way bilingual programs are all but absent from the literature on dual language education. In the following paper I address this lacuna by exploring the possible benefits of using a two-way bilingual model with adult language learners. To what extent do adult learners in a two-way bilingual learning situation experience advantages similar to those enjoyed by young learners in TWBI programs? What are the potential strengths and challenges of this model?

To explore the applicability of the two-way bilingual model for adults, I first present a review of pertinent literature, drawing on studies of K-6 TWBI

programs and research on adult second and foreign language education. Analysis of this literature offers important clues concerning the potential for an adult two-way bilingual approach. In the second part of this paper I report on an exploratory study of an adult two-way bilingual program known as "I HABLO U." This program, which was launched in the spring of 2010 in South-Central Los Angeles by the North Area Neighborhood Development Council (NANDC), provides weekly, cotaught two-way bilingual classes to adult residents of the immediate vicinity who are either native English speakers interested in learning Spanish, or Spanish-speaking learners of English. The results of this study reveal insights both into the challenges and the potential efficacy of adult two-way bilingual programs. I close with a discussion of practical strategies to maximize the benefits and minimize the drawbacks of this approach.

Overview of Two-Way Bilingual Immersion

At the K-6 level, two models of TWBI have been developed and extensively researched—the 90:10 model and the 50:50 model. For the 90:10 model, during the primary grades initially 90% of instruction is carried out in the partner language, with the remaining 10% conducted in English, and by the upper elementary grades English use is gradually increased to 50% (Howard et al., 2007). By contrast, the 50:50 model allocates equal instruction time in English and the partner language from the outset and for all grades.

Basic Goals and Rationale of Two-Way Bilingual Immersion

The motivation for TWBI is anchored in the observable cognitive and practical benefits of bilingualism and its various positive secondary effects, such as improved academic achievement and multicultural competency, both of which have been shown to accompany the learning of a second language.

Bilingualism and Biliteracy. Dual language education operates under the basic assumption that bilingualism and biliteracy have proven cognitive and practical benefits, and as such the foremost goal of TWBI is that all participating students should be either fully bilingual/biliterate or near-bilingual/biliterate upon completion of their program. Several studies have identified a positive correlation between bilingualism and enhanced cognitive functioning. In a study comparing bilingual and monolingual children, Bialystok and Martin (2004) confirmed that bilinguals have superior "inhibitory control of attention," enabling them to outperform monolinguals on tasks requiring them to ignore irrelevant perceptual information. Other studies have found similar connections between bilingualism and problem solving and creativity (review in Bialystok, 2001). Bilingualism has also been demonstrated to generate certain practical advantages. Citing demographic and market trends, recent research has indicated that, in many contexts, bilingualism dramatically expands opportunities for employment (August & Hakuta, 1997; Lindholm-Leary, 2004).

From a theoretical standpoint, TWBI has a number of obvious advantages as an instrument for second language acquisition. As opposed to traditional foreign language classes or segregated early- or late-exit bilingual education programs, in which the teacher is the only source of target language input, in

TWBI programs the presence of native speakers from both target languages generates a wealth of comprehensible input for the language learners of both groups (Krashen, 1981). Additionally, the constant interaction between the two groups affords the students valuable opportunities to advance their language skills through negotiation for meaning (Long, 1985).

Academic Achievement. Related to enhanced cognitive function, a second goal of TWBI programs is that overall academic performance should either match or surpass that of students in traditional, monolingual programs. This goal is most relevant at the K-6 level, where achievement in academics is an important consideration for K-6 stakeholders. Longitudinal studies of English language learners and native English speakers in TWBI programs have indicated significant improvements in reading and math achievement test scores for both groups (Lindholm-Leary, 2004). One study examined the standardized reading and math achievement test scores of students in a 7th-grade class in California, comparing the scores of those students who had been enrolled in a TWBI program since elementary school against the scores of those who had been in English-only programs. The results indicated that the native English speakers from the TWBI program scored significantly higher than the state average grade-level performance, while the English language learners from the TWBI program not only earned considerably higher scores than their English language learner peers from English-only programs but also matched the performance of native English speakers from English-only programs (Lindholm-Leary, 2004).

Peace-Building and Multicultural Competency. A third motivation for TWBI is its potential for promoting "positive cross-cultural attitudes" (Christian, 1994). In contrast to traditional early- or late-exit bilingual programs, which systematically segregate language-majority and language-minority students, TWBI brings the two groups together to promote rich, ongoing interaction from the very beginning. Valdés (1997) underscores the integration of the two diverse groups of children as one of the primary successes of TWBI. She celebrates the fact that "minority children are no longer segregated from their English-speaking peers" and that they are freed from the "linguistic isolation in which many minority children find themselves" (p. 412).

Freeman (1996) carried out a 2-year ethnographic/discourse-analytic study of the K-6 TWBI program at the Oyster Bilingual School in Washington, DC, where she discovered considerable evidence of successful multicultural competency. She conducted ongoing, open-ended interviews with stakeholders from all levels of the institution, including policymakers, administrators, teachers, parents, and students, the results of which she cross-examined to identify any significant collective points of convergence. The consensus was that by creating a culture of integration in which "communicating with people from different linguistic and cultural backgrounds [was] a simple fact of everyday life," both language-majority and language-minority students were able to "develop effective intercultural communication skills naturally" (p. 571). Central to the development of this integrative learning environment was the institutional effort to elevate and legitimize the minority partner language, Spanish, as a language

of equal status and social significance as the majority language, English. Emphasizing the intimate connection between language and identity, Freeman observed that when "students are socialized to view Spanish as a legitimate means of fulfilling the official educational function, by extension they will see Spanish speakers as legitimate participants in the educational discourse" (p. 572).

Issues in K-6 Two-Way Bilingual Immersion

While TWBI programs have various practical and theoretical advantages, effective implementation of these programs has posed a number of challenges for both learners and administrators at the K-6 level. Part of what makes dual language education attractive is its presumed ability to provide second language support for disadvantaged English language learners while simultaneously empowering native English speakers with valuable foreign language skills (Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). As it turns out, however, some of the most pressing challenges facing learners and administrators of such programs derive directly from the inherent difficulty of reconciling the diverse learner needs of two very different ethnolinguistic groups. Providing an effective, depoliticized, and truly equitable learning environment for both the language-majority students (e.g., native English speakers) and the language-minority students (native speakers of the partner language, e.g., Spanish) requires considerable planning and constant, ongoing program assessment (Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000).

First Language Support for Language-Minority Students

One of the most basic challenges to equity in TWBI programs is the potential disparity in first language support available to the language-majority and language-minority student groups. Given the greater social and environmental prevalence of the dominant language, this disparity in support typically favors language-majority students (Freeman, 1996; Valdés, 1997). Valdés (1997) argues that while TWBI programs are noble in their attempt to provide at-risk, language-minority students with first language support, the implementation of native-language instruction alone "will not automatically solve all the educational problems of linguistic-minority children" (p. 415). She emphatically advocates only "the highest quality instruction possible in their native language" and warns that frequent speech adjustments (e.g., slowing down, circumlocution, etc.) made during instruction in the partner language, though intended to facilitate acquisition by the language-majority speakers, can have potentially negative consequences for the first language development of the language-minority students (p. 416). Related to the problem of first language support is the issue of equal distribution of the majority and minority languages, which will be addressed presently in a later section.

Societal Power Structures

Social pressures emanating from both within and outside of the school can present a serious challenge for language learners in many TWBI programs (Valdés, 1997). Freeman (1996) suggests that these pressures arise when three

hierarchically ordered strata of discourse—societal, institutional, and situational—are in conflict with one another. For example, while mainstream U.S. educational and societal discourse tends to discriminate against language-minority students and stigmatizes non-English language use, at the institutional level a school with a TWBI program may promote an alternative discourse in which language-majority and language-minority students enjoy equal social and scholarly status. Moreover, individuals such as students and teachers at the situational level may interject their own discourse, which contributes further philosophical nuances that may cause friction with the societal and/or institutional discourses. Thus, while a school or program may have the good, forward-thinking intention of fostering a microculture in which students of diverse ethnolinguistic backgrounds interact freely and without prejudice, the influence of mainstream society constantly works to place limits on the extent to which individuals can transcend macrolevel norms for cross-cultural interaction. This explains why, for example, students from different languages and ethnic backgrounds in a TWBI program may openly communicate and socialize cross-culturally in the context of the classroom, yet at lunch or recess many consistently self-segregate into homogenous friend circles according to language, racial, or economic differences (Freeman, 1996).

Disproportionate Benefits for Language-Majority Students

Another issue related to the social landscapes that underlie two-way bilingual programs is the question of whether or not the benefits of such programs are necessarily equivalent for both linguistic groups. Researchers have pointed out that at the K-6 level, without proper support for the English language learners, TWBI may serve, quite contrary to its intention, to simply provide language-majority students with another source of human capital (bilingualism) that protracts, rather than bridges, the socioeconomic gap between them and their partner language peers (Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000; Valdés, 1997). Valdés (1997) emphasizes this point, suggesting that bilingualism, which has long been "a special advantage" for certain Hispanic populations in the North American job market, may empower language-majority populations at the economic expense and displacement of formerly advantaged bilingual minorities (p. 420).

Effective Placement of Students

In addition to challenges for students, researchers have noted a few key obstacles for administrators and teachers of K-6 TWBI programs. Developing an effective system for the placement of students in TWBI programs can be particularly challenging (Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). A number of factors contribute to this problem, most of which stem from the often-elusive nature of language dominance in the multilingual communities whose children comprise the student populations of such TWBI programs. The first basic issue that complicates effective placement is the notoriously wide range of language proficiencies of students entering these programs. For both the students identified as primary speakers of the dominant language and those classified as speakers

of the partner language, second language proficiency can vary from true beginner to near or fluent bilingual. This poses an obvious problem for teachers and administrators, who must strive to establish and maintain a learning environment that caters to students of all language proficiencies. Teachers and administrators are also obligated to carefully monitor the linguistic progress of all the students, which, in the case of the fluent bilinguals, can present another related issue that concerns the initial placement of students in either English-dominant or Spanish-dominant groups, for example. When the student's dominant language is not entirely clear, great care must be taken to ensure that the student is placed in the language track in which he or she would most stand to benefit. This issue is further complicated in cases in which the student's parents are able to influence the placement process and may, for personal or political reasons, elect to have their child placed in the dominant language track—irrespective of their child's actual first or dominant language.

Imbalanced Distribution of Majority and Partner Languages

Another administrative problem that researchers have identified at the implementation stage is the challenge of consistently providing equal distribution of the majority and partner languages during instruction (Freeman, 1996; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000). In her study of the Oyster Bilingual School, where each class has an English-dominant teacher who is intended to speak only English and a Spanish-dominant speaker who is supposed speak only Spanish, Freeman (1996) observed that while the English-dominant teachers rarely if ever code-switched to Spanish, the Spanish-dominant teachers frequently code-switched to English, ostensibly to ensure the comprehension of the language-majority students. While an imbalance of language representation in the classroom may have certain implications for the equality of the second language acquisition between the two groups, the potential negative consequences of this disparity go beyond the linguistic. Freeman argues that the juxtaposition of a monolingual English-dominant teacher with a bilingual Spanish-dominant teacher sends an "implicit message" that while knowledge of English is an absolute necessity for Spanish speakers, knowledge of Spanish, though valuable, is not essential for English speakers (p. 575).

This message can be further propagated if the assessment plans for performance in each of the two languages are weighted differently. Freeman (1996) provides an example from the Oyster Bilingual School that well illustrates this problem:

> Although the students received grades for their classes in Spanish and English, the grades did not carry equal weight. If, for example, a student failed the third-grade reading class in Spanish, that student could be promoted to fourth grade. If the same student, however, failed the reading class in English, that student could not be promoted (p. 576).

If a public school district, such as the one that governs the Oyster Bilingual

School in Washington, DC, does not have established benchmarks for Spanish proficiency, students in TWBI programs within that district will experience significantly different outcomes for their performances in Spanish and English, respectively.

Coexistence of Standard and Nonstandard Varieties of Languages

A complicated issue that affects not only dual language education, but second and foreign language education altogether, is managing the confluence of standard and nonstandard (local) varieties of the languages of instruction. One of the most obvious troublesome areas is assessment. Hornberger and Skilton-Sylvester (2000) discuss a "partially hypothetical" scenario of a K-6 TWBI program in Philadephia that well captures the problem of testing language proficiency in multidialectal contexts:

> [A] school with a two-way programme serving Puerto Rican children in Philadelphia decides, after many years of English language standardised testing, to inaugurate Spanish language standardised testing as well, in an effort to obtain a more representative picture of their students' biliterate accomplishments; the only trouble is that the only standardised testing materials available reflect Mexican, not Puerto Rican language varieties and identities and thus, hardly promise to render a truer picture of the Puerto Rican students' expertise. (p. 115)

Any learning environment in which language students are exposed to dialects other than the standard variety of the target language has the potential to create problems when assessment is based solely or predominantly on the standard variety. In TWBI programs, in which there are two languages of instruction and in which the performance of both native speakers and nonnative learners for each language must be assessed, this problem can be especially complicated.

Issues in Adult Second and Foreign Language Education

To determine the effectiveness of TWBI as a potential model for adult language learning, it will be helpful to consider the specific challenges that can be reasonably predicted for adult learners in a hypothetical TWBI program. In the absence of current research that critically evaluates active adult TWBI programs, theoretical problematization will provide a preliminary backdrop for discussion of and, ultimately, recommendations for potential adult TWBI programs. As was the case at the K-6 level, many of the obstacles to successful implementation of TWBI at the adult level derive from the inherent difficulty of reconciling and simultaneously supporting two very different types of learners—language-majority foreign language learners and language-minority second language learners. However, while adult learners can expect to encounter many of the same problems as their K-6 counterparts (discussed at length in the subsequent Implications section), they must also contend with a number of challenges that are intrinsic to adult second and foreign language learning.

First Language Literacy

One of the greatest obstacles for language-minority adult second language learners (and their teachers) is a very common lack of first language literacy. The population that comprises adult, native English-speaking foreign language learners, by contrast, tends to have a stronger foundation in the literacy of its native language, with nearly 78% of the English-speaking U.S. population reading at or above the "basic" level, according to the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (2010, p. 3). Research on adult English language learners with limited native language proficiency from a variety of language backgrounds (e.g., Spanish, Cambodian, and Korean) has indicated that developing native language literacy can facilitate and expedite the development of literacy skills in a second language (Carlo & Skilton-Sylvester, 1994; Wagner & Venezky, 1999). Thus, first language literacy gives adult foreign language learners an obvious advantage over the non- or low-literate second language learners in the development of literacy in the target language. Additionally, studies have discovered a positive correlation between first language literacy and the development of second language oral skills, highlighting concrete disadvantages for low-literate or illiterate adults (Bigelow, Delmas, Hansen, & Tarone, 2006; Bigelow & Tarone, 2004; Slobin, 1993). One such disadvantage is a limited ability to process corrective feedback. In a study of adult Somali immigrants to Minnesota, Bigelow et al. (2006) tested adult second language learners with little or no first language literacy as well as those with moderate first language literacy, comparing the performances of each group on tasks requiring them to accurately recall an oral recast posited by a native English-speaking interlocutor. The results indicated that the adults with higher first language literacy were significantly more capable of accurately reproducing corrective recasts than those with lower first language literacy. This phenomenon suggests that a lack of first language literacy can make it difficult for adult learners to take full advantage of metalinguistic strategies and to keep pace with their more literate peers, including typical adult foreign language learners, in the development of oral skills in the target language.

Prior Experience With Formal Education

Related to issues of first language literacy is another challenge facing many language-minority adult second language learners—a lack of experience with formal education (Burt, Peyton, and Schaetzel, 2008; Geronimo, Folinsbee, & Goveas, 2001). This has the potential to present problems in the context of a TWBI program, in which literate native English-speaking adult foreign language learners would likely have at least the equivalent of a secondary education. Whereas educated language-majority students could use academic skills learned in school, language-minority students with little or no formal education would have no such advantage. Basic study skills and classroom routines such as taking notes or completing homework are not likely to be a question of second nature for students with less experience with formal education. This problem has obvious implications for achievement assessment, wherein equitable assessment of progress in the program would need to account for the

varying degrees of familiarity with any traditional Western teaching styles and testing instruments. Valdés (1997) cautions that using a "[w]hite, middle-class standard as a base against which all other students are measured" may give language-majority students an unfair advantage over language-minority students, thereby compromising the validity of the assessment data.

Adult Motivation

Student motivation is a vitally important consideration for administrators and teachers in adult education, who face the unique challenge of actively ensuring regular attendance. At the K-6 level in the US, where students are lawfully required to attend school, motivation is typically tethered to academic goals or parental influence, and as such, is decidedly different from motivation for adult students, whose participation in many language programs would be more or less voluntary (Guza, 2009). This would be especially true for those in free, community-based programs—a likely setting for adult TWBI—where an institutional atmosphere of nonformality (and a lack of monetary investment) could foreseeably reduce the gravity of the consequences for missing class (Guza, 2009).[1] The problem of student motivation is especially complicated for TWBI programs, because, as has been discussed earlier for the K-6 level, administrators and teachers have the formidable task of ensuring an equitable learning environment for both the second language and foreign language learner, each of whom is likely to have quite different goals and expectations for his or her program of study.

Critical Period Hypothesis and Interlanguage Fossilization

A further obstacle that sets adult language learners apart from child language learners, irrespective of the educational setting or native language, is a hypothesized neurodevelopmental "critical period" (Johnson & Newport, 1989; Lennenberg, 1967; Singleton & Lengyel, 1995) and the related phenomenon of interlanguage fossilization (Selinker & Lamendella, 1980). In essence, the critical period hypothesis proposes a period of maximal neuroplasticity, generally believed to begin at birth and end with puberty, during which the brain is in its optimal state for language acquisition. Second languages learned after this proposed critical period may be at a higher risk of interlanguage fossilization, in which, despite abundant effort and motivation, adult learners' progress toward proficiency in the target language plateaus before reaching native proficiency. These topics have been the subject of widespread and ongoing debate, and as such, an extensive review of the literature on these topics falls beyond the scope of this paper (see Scovel, 2000, for a review). However, these phenomena are important to bear in mind when planning for any adult education programs, including TWBI models, as they are widely recognized by researchers and practitioners alike as an obvious setback for adult learners and a fundamental difference between adult and child language acquisition. Slobin (1993) well summarizes the generally accepted notion of this disadvantage, saying of adults that "whatever may be the advantages of youth (critical period, plasticity, rote learning capacity, etc.), these learners have begun with some degree of 'biological handicap'" (p. 239).

Conclusions

Research at the K-6 level has largely substantiated the surface attraction of TWBI programs, highlighting a range of observable benefits for both language-majority and language-minority students. However, these benefits are not without qualification, as researchers have noted several important challenges that can complicate the successful implementation of such programs.

Advantages and Challenges at the K-6 Level

In review, administrators and teachers at the K-6 level may encounter the following advantages:

- Enhanced cognitive functioning;
- Comprehensible input-rich learning environment;
- Improved academic achievement;
- Positive cross-cultural attitudes.

Practitioners can also anticipate various challenges, including:

- Insufficient first language support for language-minority students;
- Negative influence of societal power structures;
- Disproportionate benefits for language-majority students
- Placement difficulties;
- Equitable distribution of dominant and partner languages;
- Coexistence of standard and nonstandard language varieties.

Advantages and Challenges at the Adult Level

In theory, adult language learners stand to benefit from a number of the linguistic and sociocultural advantages enjoyed by students in K-6 TWBI, as they would be afforded the same opportunities for cross-cultural development and input-rich interaction with native speakers of their target language. Teachers and administrators of adult TWBI programs may also face some of the problems experienced at the K-6 level, as many of the underlying sociolinguistic conditions would be the same. However, in addition to those issues identified at the K-6 level, a review of the literature in adult second and foreign language learning has also revealed several critical challenges for adult TWBI that are unique to the adult learning experience. Owing to certain fundamental differences between language-majority adult foreign language learners and language-minority adult second language learners, these challenges arise out of the difficulty of assuring equity despite predictable disparities in first language literacy, formal education, and motivation. Additionally, adult learners must also contend with certain developmental and possibly biological disadvantages, including resocialization and a variously attested decline in neuroplasticity beyond the so-called "critical period."

In brief, the cross-examination of the two ethnolinguistic learner profiles has revealed that *language-minority adult second language learners* may have:

- Limited first language literacy;
- Little or no formal education;
- Goals tied to survival and immediate socioeconomic integration.

By contrast, potential *language-majority adult foreign language learners* may have:

- Moderate to high first language literacy;
- The equivalent of a secondary education or higher;
- Motivation based on personal enrichment and/or long-term economic viability.

Implications

The review of the literature on K-6 TWBI has many implications for adult TWBI. First, many of the benefits enjoyed at the K-6 level may well be expected to either directly transfer to or have some approximate analog at the adult level. For example, while improved academic achievement may be of lesser significance to adults than children, the applied cognitive and practical benefits of bilingualism, such as perceptual enhancement and certainly expanded employment opportunities, are likely to be of great use to adult learners. Similarly, robust comprehensible input and abundant opportunities for meaning negotiation are just as valuable to adults as to children, as adults equally depend on such conditions to further their acquisition of the target language. Also, and perhaps most important, the potential for developing multicultural competency is surely the same, if not better, for adult language learners. Adults have already developed advanced social and communicative skills in their first language, which may ultimately yield more significant gains in the promotion of cross-cultural awareness among the adult TWBI students as compared to their K-6 counterparts, who may not yet be as savvy or comfortable as adults in the realm of self-expression. Furthermore, many of the challenges that K-6 TWBI participants have encountered may inform the development of similar adult programs. In theory, adult TWBI programs are no less susceptible to the influence of macro- and microlevel societal power structures, whose potentially divisive forces may equally work to strain intergroup relations and may complicate equitable instruction at the adult level. Placement and evaluation of students will also continue to be challenging, as teachers and administrators can still anticipate a wide range of target language proficiencies as well as dialectal diversity between and within the two groups of adult learners.

Clearly a great number of lessons are to be gleaned from the research on K-6 TWBI; however, the successful application of these principles to adult TWBI will require further consideration, as adult learning poses additional challenges not found at the K-6 level. With regard to equity, for example, only after detailed cross-examinations of both adult second and foreign language learners have been carried out can the specific learning needs and goals of all of the students in the program be purposefully accommodated. Administrators and teachers will need to be consciously aware of potential disparities in native

language literacy and formal education background, and they must be prepared to resolve the stresses that these disparities may place on interaction between the two groups. As explained above, administrators and teachers will need to ascertain the specific learning needs and goals of the learners in both groups, and—when these needs and goals do not perfectly align—the curriculum must be planned or adjusted in such a way as to ensure that all of the students are able to accomplish both their personal objectives and those of the program itself. Moreover, through deliberate and egalitarian validation of the personal goals and needs of learners from both groups, administrators and teachers will be working to make certain that all students in the program continue to be consistently well motivated.

Recommendations and the Exploratory Study of "I HABLO U"

There is a clear need for reliable studies of existing adult TWBI programs to realize evaluation beyond the purely hypothetical. While the literature on K-6 TWBI is increasingly robust, and while a great many insights can be culled from adult learning theories, exploratory studies of adult TWBI programs will provide an effective means of corroborating—or contradicting—findings about TWBI at the K-6 level. Such studies would enable practitioners to identify those pedagogical techniques that are effective across adult learner populations and those that disproportionately benefit one group or the other. In addition, researchers can apply the interaction theories posited at the K-6 level to identify those sociocultural variables that are common to both adult and child learners and those that are unique to the adult learning experience.

At present, of the very few verifiable adult TWBI programs that are in operation, the majority are graduate-level teacher-training programs that cater to advanced adult foreign or second language learners with a postsecondary education or higher (Ana G. Méndez University System, 2010; Center for Linguistic and Cultural Democracy, 2010). While these programs doubtless merit investigation, TWBI programs for low-income adults may now be of greater concern to the second language acquisition and urban-education research communities. Adults with the equivalent of a secondary education or less and very little proficiency in the target language face sociolinguistic obstacles on the path to bilingualism that may exceed those of the well educated and near bilingual. In addition, the potential peace-building benefits of the TWBI model may have a greater impact in diverse, but highly segregated, poor urban communities as compared to graduate-education programs in which students may already be well accustomed to the cross-cultural interaction characteristic of institutions of higher education. Furthermore, nonformal, community-based programs may well be the most easily replicable, as the development and operation of these programs require far fewer resources and less infrastructure than formal state- or federally funded higher-education programs (NANDC, 2010). As such, it is nonformal, community-based programs as in the following example from a night school in Eastern Washington that I believe warrant research priority:

> The night school, held in Mr. Bradley's building, is a collaborative effort between a local community college and the school district. Approximately 300 parents annually attend GED and English classes at various levels. A unique aspect of the program is that it also brings in some native English speakers who want to learn Spanish. One of the classes includes both native English and native Spanish speakers, and instruction [is] provided as an "adult dual language immersion" class. The night school is seen as an important way to bridge cultural, social and linguistic gaps among adults, and for students to see their parents learning the language as well. (Calaff et al., 2009, p. 27)

In an effort to spearhead research efforts on nonformal, community-based adult TWBI models such as the program Calaff et al. (2009) describe, I will present and discuss the findings from an exploratory study of a program that was developed in the spring of 2010 by the Empowerment Congress North Area Neighborhood Development Council (NANDC) in South-Central Los Angeles. Known as "I HABLO U," this program provides weekly, cotaught TWBI classes to adult residents of the immediate vicinity who are either native English speakers interested in learning Spanish or native Spanish speakers who want to learn English (NANDC, 2010).

Methodology

The present study aims to explore the benefits and drawbacks of the TWBI model in the largely neglected domain of adult dual-language education. I collected all data for the present study through an investigation of I HABLO U, a nonformal, community-based TWBI program for adult residents in South-Central Los Angeles. The program functions as both an English as a Second Language class for Hispanophones and a Spanish as a Foreign Language class for Anglophones. At present, approximately 40 students participate in I HABLO U, with close to equal numbers of students from both language groups being represented in the program. It is an intensive course; the students meet for one 2-hour class per week for 14 weeks, with an optional second class per week for review. During the first hour, which is known as the "Community Session," students from one language group work in pairs or small groups with students from the other language group. The first 20 to 30 minutes of the Community Session are dedicated to a homework review, during which time students help one another to clarify and correct the written homework that had been assigned to them in the previous week's class. For the latter 30 to 40 minutes of the Community Session, students participate in bilingual activities that emphasize oral communication (e.g., interviews, information gaps, total physical response, etc.). Immediately following the Community Session is the "Language Session," wherein students separate into language groups for 1 hour of focused instruction in their respective target languages. The Language Session is designed to introduce forms and content that will directly facilitate communication in the activities of the subsequent Community Session.

My fundamental goal in this study is to provide further nuance to the issues raised in the current scholarly literature on TWBI by evaluating the learning experiences of adult second and foreign language learners in the I HABLO U program. As we have seen, education researchers have contributed a number of studies evaluating the TWBI model, yet the data—and the recommendations—on which these studies are predicated have derived almost exclusively from informants at the K-6 level. Moreover, the advantages and disadvantages of TWBI identified by these researchers, though adequately supported for K-6 learners, cannot be extended justifiably to adult learners in TWBI programs without further investigation.

I designed this project as an exploratory study with the goal of investigating the specific elements of adult TWBI that—from the perspective of the learner—distinguish it both positively and negatively from traditional, monolingual second and foreign language pedagogical models. I obtained the data via a short written survey (Appendix A) and through a series of semistructured life-world interviews (Appendix B). The survey solicited basic demographic information, including participants' age, sex, race, and nationality, and also asked participants to indicate the highest level of formal education that they had completed, from no school at all through advanced graduate education. In addition to demographic and education-background information, the survey also included 10 questions that contributed to the investigative part of the study. Five questions followed the Likert-scale format and asked the informants to rate their degree of agreement with five statements about their experiences in the I HABLO U program. The remaining five items of the survey were open-ended questions that required the informants to offer their opinions about and describe their experiences with various features of the I HABLO U program and language learning in general. The interview protocol consisted of 10 core questions, each of which attempted to elicit more extensive responses to themes addressed in the survey. The interviews lasted between 30 to 45 minutes. All students in the program were invited to participate in the short written survey, though only 16 total students agreed to participate—6 English learners and 11 Spanish learners. For the interview part of the study, a total of 10 participants were selected randomly from the roster—5 English learners and 5 Spanish learners. Eight of these 10 students agreed to participate in the interviews.

Data Categories and Presentation

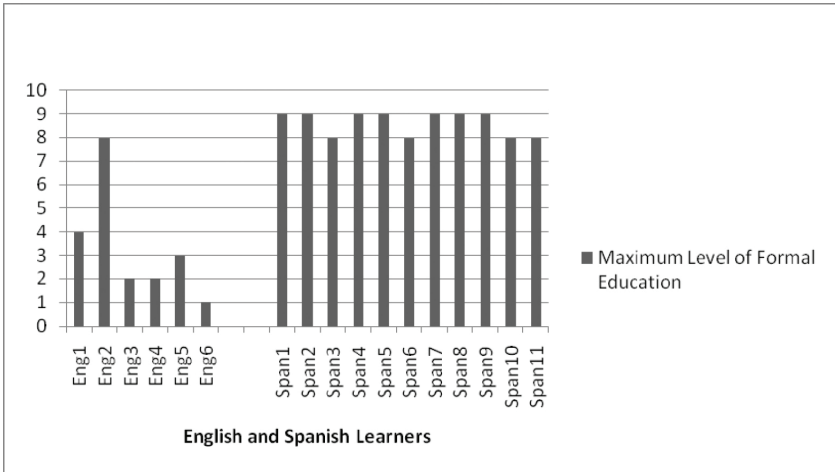
I have organized the data from the surveys and interviews into the three basic thematic categories: educational disparities, motivational characteristics, and power dynamics. In the educational disparities category, I will present data pertaining to the educational backgrounds of both the English learners and Spanish learners, including instances of conflict that appeared to result from imbalances in experience with formal education and first language literacy. In the second category, I will present data that illustrate the motivational trends of each of the two language groups. Specifically, I will report each group's underlying rationale for seeking to learn the target language and highlight differences in the level of urgency that each group ascribed to the task of language learning.

The third category of data is the largest and contains two subthemes that relate to power dynamics, including the sociobehavioral phenomena of intragroup competition and intergroup neutralization.

Educational Disparities

The surveys revealed significant disparities in prior formal-education experience between the English learners and Spanish learners. Survey participants were asked to report the highest level of formal education they had completed, with nine possible choices from "No School" to "Advanced Degree (Master's or Doctorate)." Figure 1 graphically depicts the maximum level of education reported by each participant, with a rising scale from 1, which represents "No School," to 9, which represents "Advanced Degree (Master's or Doctorate)."

Figure 1
Maximum Level of Formal Education



Of the English learners, one reported having a received a bachelor's degree, one recorded having attended but not graduated from high school, one had finished only middle school, two stopped after elementary school, and one had never attended school. While all but one of the English learners had not completed secondary education, the Spanish learners, by contrast, had all graduated with at least a bachelor's degree and 7 of the 11 participants had obtained either a master's or doctoral degree.

The interviews also indicated disproportional prior experience with formal education. Several Spanish learner interviewees described incidents in which having a higher level of formal education directly influenced the quality of their interactions with native speakers of their target language in the class. One Spanish learner, Emily, explained that having both studied 4 years of French in high school and having tutored English occasionally complicated her ability to teach her Spanish-speaking partners effectively during the I HABLO U bilingual Community Session. She explained:

> I had a good time helping my partner … but I think the challenge in it is being able to translate what I would say as a grammar lesson into Spanish. … I was an English tutor for a while … so it's really hard for me to not use the language like "well, this modifies the noun," you know, like … I have to think of really simple ways to do it and that's been a challenge.

Another Spanish learner, Patty, also experienced interactional challenges resulting from educational disparities; however, Patty's problem arose not when she was teaching English to her Spanish-speaking partner, but rather when her Spanish-speaking partner attempted to correct her writing in Spanish. Patty related an incident in which she had a disagreement with her Spanish-speaking partner about a particular Spanish orthographical rule. She explained that though she had just learned that the letters *"b"* and *"v"* had similar pronunciations in Spanish, her partner insisted—erroneously—that the Spanish word *"voy"* was spelled with a *"b."* Knowing for certain that this spelling was not correct, Patty speculated that her partner perhaps was not "familiar with actually writing Spanish," but, rather than risk offending her partner, Patty conceded and wrote the word as her partner had suggested. She explained:

> I said [to myself], "You know, just leave it alone, and just put the *"b"* on there like she wants it there, because there was no way I could explain to her, "No … that's the sound *"b,"* [it's] the sound, but you write it this way." So I couldn't explain it to her, so I just went on and wrote the *"b"* and then changed it. But that's just one example … she wasn't the only one.

Analysis of the written responses to the open-ended questions on the survey partially corroborated Patty's speculation about her Spanish-speaking partners' first language writing abilities. Half of the English learner survey participants had between one and three spelling mistakes in their written Spanish, the most typical of which were dropping the silent *"h"* in words such as *"[h]ablen"* or confusing homophonous letters such as *"c"* and *"s"* in words such as *"hacen."* Patty admitted that she was less enthusiastic about having a Spanish-speaking partner review her Spanish homework after she became aware of the English learners' minor difficulties in their first language writing skills. "I didn't mind at all correcting theirs … but, it was a little different when they came to my [Spanish homework]. … I didn't even do mine anymore … we just went on and did their homework."

Motivational Characteristics

In addition to educational disparities, the surveys and interviews revealed a number of differences between the English and Spanish learners' sources and degrees of motivation to learn the target language. The explanations that learners of each group offered as to why they sought to learn English or Spanish constituted the first point of divergence. In the surveys, for example, 8 out of 11 Spanish learners reported that the primary reason that they wanted to learn

Spanish was to improve their communication with Spanish-speaking clients at their place of employment. All 4 Spanish learner interviewees also cited workplace communication as their chief motivation. Of the 3 remaining Spanish learner survey participants, 2 wanted to learn Spanish primarily to communicate with Spanish-speaking neighbors, and 1 viewed Spanish mainly as a means to improve communication with Spanish-speaking relatives or during travel to Spanish-speaking countries.

The Spanish learners' sources of motivation contrasted with those of the English learners, who characteristically emphasized the importance of learning English not just for communication at their jobs, but for better integration with English-speaking community members and, most important, for increased access to basic social and commercial services. One English learner interviewee, Eva, described English proficiency as "essential," and she explained that her motivation to learn the language was to be able to increase her access to basic services.[2] She explained:

> Primarily to go to a clinic or an office like Social Security or the DMV, for example, it's very, very important. The hospital … it's very important because I have been in the hospital and I speak the few words that I can speak … but it's not very much. I know at least how to tell them where it hurts, but it's not [enough] because sometimes the doctors explain the reason behind what I have and I don't understand them.

The motivational differences between the English learners and the Spanish learners were not only a question of source, but also of degree. The Spanish learners, in general, expressed a significantly lesser degree of urgency to learn their target language than did the English learners. For example, whereas several Spanish learner interviewees indicated that attending just one night of class a week was a scheduling challenge, all of the English learner interviewees said that one night of class a week was insufficient. Emily, a Spanish learner, emphasized, "You know, I could make it a different night, but I only have one night of the week," and, at the suggestion of additional classes, insisted, "I would just explode, with everything I have going on." In sharp contrast, each of the 4 English learner interviewees requested that the class meetings be increased to a minimum of three nights per week. When asked what she would change about the class, Rosa, an English learner, responded simply, "More time because it seems like very little time to me. … I feel like the time [in the class] goes by very fast. … I would change that—days. I want more days … one or two more days." Eva explained that she very often finds herself in class checking the time only to be surprised that the "time … has flown by."

Eva's perception of the class time differed considerably from that of Luke, a Spanish learner. He confessed, "Sometimes I'm just lazy, like for sure, I could have gotten more out of it if I wanted to, but sometimes I just … I'm going, 'I'm just gonna get through this till 9 o'clock, and then I'm going to go home and watch football.'" Luke further reflected on the difficulty of staying consistently motivated to learn Spanish given that English is the dominant language among

his work and friend circles, explaining that "it's so easy to revert, especially in our context where English is all around you, and I can't not speak English, because of my job." Luke further commented that remaining committed to learning Spanish demands "a lot of self-control [and] self-discipline" because speaking Spanish, though "a high priority," is a skill that he "technically [doesn't] need."

Power Dynamics

The third category of data involves two variously confirmed social behaviors within the I HABLO U program. The first issue to emerge was intragroup competition. When asked to describe the differences between the I HABLO U bilingual classroom and the traditional monolingual classroom, both the Spanish and English learner interviewees reported having been discouraged in previous monolingual language classes by a tangible sense of competition among fellow classmates who were speakers of their native language. Reflecting on her experiences in monolingual foreign language classes, Emily, a Spanish learner, complained that

> in a regular Spanish class … it's kind of like, you just get to find out what you don't know and find out what other people do know. … Sort of … "Oh, this person knows more than me" or this you know, "I should know that but I don't."

Another Spanish learner, Tara, likened this to a "pecking order," in which she claimed she felt as though "someone's higher than the other." Eva, an English learner, echoed Emily and Tara's comments and went beyond them to say that in her experiences in monolingual, uniformly Spanish-speaking ESL classes, the more advanced students often teased the less proficient students. "Latino classmates make fun of you. They'll say 'Oh … she didn't know how to say it … that's not how you say it,' and so you always feel embarrassed when they say stuff like that."

While interviewees from both the English and Spanish learner groups experienced discouraging competition in traditional monolingual classes, several interviewees from both groups found that power dynamics were neutralized in the TWBI classroom. Nearly every interviewee from both groups said that he or she felt "safe" during the bilingual part of I HABLO U, and each interviewee offered a different explanation for this phenomenon. Emily reasoned that the bilingual interaction felt

> safe because there's the same level of awkwardness from both sides. It's not like you're with English speakers who just speak better Spanish than you, you're with Spanish speakers who speak better Spanish but worse English. And you're an English speaker who speaks better English but worse Spanish. So the two of you can have it come together in your faults and what you're good at and bring those things to the table.

Tara, a Spanish learner, also found comfort in the sense of mutual vulnerability.

She admitted that she had been nervous to interact in Spanish with the native Spanish-speaking English learners during the first few weeks of the course, but she eventually came to realize, "They're in the same boat I'm in! They don't know a damn thing about English!" Tara claimed to observe this gradual process of embracing vulnerability among the English learners as well. She said:

> And the native-speaking students were also … some of them were feeling what I was feeling and then they let their wall down, too. So now you got two people that got this wall up—but they're friendly—but they've got a wall … it's not 100 feet, it's 30 feet … and then all of a sudden, week after week, the wall … there's no more wall. So whatever the vulnerability was it's like, "OK, we're in the same boat here."

The English learners also attested to the positive effects of shared vulnerability and frequently described this as "equality." Rosa, an English learner, explained that, in the bilingual setting, "You feel equal because of all the people around you. Nobody is less important or has a lower academic level or social status or anything. You feel like everyone needs each other and that we're all equal." Another English learner, Marta, agreed and said that the feeling of equality helped people from both language groups to reevaluate potentially negative cultural stereotypes. She said:

> Because we learn from them and they learn from us … that's where the culture comes from. They learn that we are also nice people. Many people are sometimes almost afraid of us, of Latinos. And sometimes we are afraid of black people. But in reality we are all the same!

Patty, a Spanish learner, expressed a similar notion about breaking down cross-cultural prejudices. She said:

> It's two different cultures together and you have preconceived ideas about one, and then when you have the two coming together you … you know, you find out OK, everything is the same. [They] have the same experience that I have. It's just in a different language.

Analysis

The data above suggest that disparities in education and motivation may present a challenge to teachers, administrators, and ultimately students of TWBI programs. The English learners in I HABLO U were significantly less educated than their Spanish learner counterparts, which presented some problems in establishing a mutually beneficial system of co-mentorship and co-teaching. The English learners' lack of familiarity with formal language learning made it difficult for some Spanish learners to teach the English learners effectively. In other cases, the English learners' first language literacy made receiving written instruction in Spanish counterproductive, which gradually resulted in a unilateral exchange. The English and Spanish learners also brought

vastly different sources and degrees of motivation to the task of learning a second language. Generally speaking, the Spanish learners considered knowledge of Spanish to be helpful in specific contexts, such as the workplace, but "technically" unnecessary, whereas the English learners, by contrast, found English vitally important in many facets of their lives for basic social services and participation in the local economy and society. Given this contrast in urgency with respect to learning the target language, it is unsurprising that while the English learners uniformly requested more nights of classes, the Spanish learners generally found it challenging to make time for just one class a week and to stay consistently motivated to learn Spanish.

Despite these differences in formal education experience and motivation, several students in I HABLO U clearly experienced a number of tangible social benefits from participating in the TWBI program. For example, while interviewees from both the English and Spanish learner groups experienced a discouraging sense of competition in prior traditional monolingual classes, several interviewees from both groups found that power dynamics were neutralized in the TWBI classroom. Interviewees from both language groups described the bilingual learning environment as "safe," an effect brought about by a condition of mutual need—to learn one another's language—and shared vulnerability. Because both groups were faced with the same "awkward" and intimidating task of a testing their skills in a new language, neither the English learner nor the Spanish learner found him- or herself in an unqualified position of power. In addition to elevating confidence and self-image, the neutralizing effect also appears to have deconstructed certain ethnic prejudices and promoted positive cross-cultural attitudes among certain learners.

Discussion

The survey and interview data from the I HABLO U program echoed a number of the problems that researchers have observed and cautioned against in K-6 TWBI programs. Among these shared problems were insufficient first language support and inequitable distribution of the dominant and partner languages. In I HABLO U, each of these problems emerged in the Community Session, during which time students were asked to review and correct the homework of a classmate of the opposite language group. The informants noted several instances when language-minority English learners had struggled to provide helpful and accurate assistance with Spanish homework. One consequence of regularly receiving imprecise or limited feedback in Spanish was an imbalance in the distribution of the dominant and partner languages, which generally favored the English learners. If the English learners were given better support in their first language, through concurrent enrollment in heritage language instruction, for example, they might be better prepared to participate in a learning environment whose success depends on a consistent bilateral exchange. However, as will be discussed presently, alternative pedagogical strategies and curricular adjustments may represent a more effective solution to restoring equity in the I HABLO U classroom.

In addition, while many of the challenges of TWBI at the adult level are

similar to those documented at the K-6 level, the data presented here clearly suggest that learners in adult TWBI programs may encounter both problems and advantages that learners in K-6 TWBI programs do not experience. Many of the differences in the experience between K-6 and adult TWBI may stem from developmental factors. Let us return to the example above from the I HABLO U Community Session homework review. While a lack of first language support would likely hinder full participation for both K-6 and adult learners alike, two further obstacles may be influencing adult learners in this context—first language literacy and limited formal education. At the K-6 level, learners from both language groups are developing both first language literacy and formal education skills at the same time; thus, learners from both language groups can use these skills and knowledge in the classroom and, crucially, expect their classmates from the opposite group to be equally competent. The same cannot be said of the I HABLO U classroom, where virtually all of the Spanish learners had fully developed literacy and a range of formal educational skills while the English learners, by contrast, generally had limited first language literacy and little to no experience with formal education.

Despite these educational disparities, the adults in the I HABLO U program experienced significant learning benefits that were neither observed nor predicted by researchers at the K-6 level. Perhaps most striking were the contrasting ways in which the adult and K-6 learners experienced social power relationships. While power dynamics posed serious challenges to learners, teachers, and administrators at the K-6 level, imbalances in social power were effectively neutralized in the I HABLO U program. Learners from both groups reported feeling more confident and less threatened than in traditional monolingual classrooms. Several lauded the "safety" of the I HABLO U classroom, and for many this feeling of safety was anchored in a sense of mutual need and vulnerability that the learners of both language groups experienced together. This phenomenon may also be rooted in sociopersonal development. Language-minority child language learners enrolled in K-6 TWBI programs must simultaneously develop first language sociocommunicative skills and second language linguistic proficiency, whereas language-minority adult learners (regardless of their first language literacy) approach second language learning having already developed communicative skills in their first language. Whether the divergent experiences of adult and K-6 learners can be attributed to developmental factors, the preliminary evidence from the I HABLO U program makes a compelling case for revisiting and expanding research on TWBI. Clearly, the second and foreign language learning community is in need of a more comprehensive evaluation of the TWBI approach; researchers must make an effort in future studies of TWBI to ensure that the experiences of both K-6 and adult learners are adequately represented.

Pedagogical Strategies and Curricular Adjustments

While the data from this brief examination of the I HABLO U program are hardly sufficient to assess the global effectiveness of the adult TWBI approach, each of the three thematic categories that emerged from the survey and

interview data points to potential strategies for educators who are interested in developing their own adult TWBI programs, but who seek to maximize the benefits and limit the drawbacks outlined in this study. Many of the observed challenges in each category may well be fully or partially resolved through targeted curricular modifications and programmatic enhancements. For example, nearly all of the conflicts that arose out of educational disparities between the English and Spanish learners can be linked to the curriculum's emphasis on formal writing and grammar during the homework review part of the bilingual Community Session. Given the limited formal education experience of the English learners, it is little wonder that the generally more educated Spanish learners, the majority of whom were already well acquainted with written homework and grammar-focused language instruction, experienced a distinct advantage over the English learners on tasks such as reviewing and correcting written grammar exercises. By requiring a 20- to 30-minute homework review, the Community Session is structured in a way that systematically favors a skill set in which only one group is proficient. As a consequence, the program calls the Spanish learners' attention not to their fellow students' expertise as native speakers of their target language but rather it highlights their partners' formal educational deficiencies. In so doing, the program unwittingly exposes an imbalance of power between the two groups; the overemphasis on form jeopardizes the otherwise valuable "same boat" or neutralizing effect described and praised by several learners as an advantage that they had not previously enjoyed in more traditional language classes.

Perhaps the most straightforward means of mitigating the challenges posed by formal educational disparities between the two groups would be to eliminate the homework review and other explicitly form-focused elements from the Community Session altogether. By removing 20 to 30 minutes of abstract, grammar-based written exercises, instructors could reallocate class time to activities that emphasize and more closely reflect oral communication in meaningful, naturalistic contexts. Examples might include communicatively oriented activities such as semistructured one-on-one interviews or information gap exercises, or task-based activities whose completion requires the cooperation of all members of the group. Instructors might also consider collaborative storytelling, role-playing, or any other activity that promotes student-generated content, as these not only feature naturalistic communication but also further validate the learners' existing knowledge and creativity. These strategies would effectively level the playing field for the heretofore disadvantaged English learners, whose oral communicative competence in Spanish, as fully socialized, adult native speakers of the language, would be expected to approximate that of their native English-speaking counterparts. Moreover, by enabling learners from both groups to contribute equitably to their two-way bilingual immersion partnerships—irrespective of their formal educational backgrounds—instructors can create and foster the safe, power-free learning environment that permitted the English and Spanish learners from the present study to openly and unguardedly interact with, teach, and learn from fellow students of an entirely different language, culture, and worldview.

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Author

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Notes

[1]For a further discussion of existing adult two-way bilingual immersion programs, see the Recommendations section.

[2]The English learner data from both the surveys and the interviews have been translated by the author into English from Spanish.

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Appendix A
English Survey Instrument

Please provide the following demographic information:

Age:_____ Sex (circle one): Male Female

1st Language:_____

Nationality: _____

Ethnicity (circle one): Black Asian White Hispanic/Latino Other

Highest Level of Education Completed (circle one):
No School Elementary School Middle School
Some High School High School Diploma Some college
Associate's Degree Bachelor's Degree Advanced Degree (Master's/PhD)

Please indicate how much you agree with the following statements (circle one):
1 (strongly disagree) 2 (disagree) 3 (neither agree nor disagree)
4 (agree) 5 (strongly agree)

I feel comfortable learning Spanish from and alongside native Spanish speakers.
1 2 3 4 5

Learning a second language is more challenging as an adult than as a child/adolescent.
1 2 3 4 5

Teaching other students my native language has raised my confidence as a student/language learner.
1 2 3 4 5

The language skills that I learn in the Language Session (2nd hour) are often helpful during the Community Session (1st hour).

1 2 3 4 5

Having native Spanish speakers to talk to in class has helped me to improve my speaking skills in Spanish.

1 2 3 4 5

Please answer the following open-ended questions:

Why are you trying to learn a second language? Please check all that apply:
Job [ ]
School [ ]
Communication with friends or family [ ]
Communication with children [ ]
Other [ ] _____
Explain how knowing Spanish would help you personally:
_____
_____
_____

For you personally, what is the most difficult aspect of learning a second language?
_____
_____
_____

Describe the 2 or 3 most significant differences you have noticed between I HABLO U and other language classes that you have had:
_____
_____
_____

Have you benefited from studying face-to-face with native speakers of the language you are trying to learn? Why or why not?
_____
_____
_____

Describe the most enjoyable and least enjoyable aspects of *teaching* your native language as a mentor to individuals trying to learn it:
_____
_____
_____

Appendix B
English Interview Protocol

1. Tell me a little bit about why you want to learn Spanish/English.

2. Describe your past experiences with learning Spanish/English.

3. As an adult, what do you think is the most challenging part of learning a language?

4. How has I HABLO U been different from your other language classes (or learning environments)—both positive and negatively?

5. How much do you feel you have progressed or achieved in I HABLO U compared to your expectations or to other language courses you've taken?

6. What do you think about the Community Session? Is it helpful and why or why not?

7. Tell me about the most rewarding experience you have had during the Community Session.

8. In I HABLO U, sometimes you're a student, but other times you're a teacher. How does it feel to be a teacher? Can you tell me about a memorable experience teaching another student Spanish/English during this course?

9. How does being a teacher sometimes affect your role as a student?

10. What about being taught by other students? How helpful has this part of the course been and why?

11. Is there anything else that you'd like to share about your experience in I HABLO U?