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A K-5 BILINGUAL RESOURCE ROOM: THE FIRST YEAR

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Abstract

This paper is a descriptive account of a kindergarten through fifth grade bilingual resource classroom in a suburban school district in the Midwest, and the community, district, and school in which it is located. It includes information about bilingual program goals; students, teachers, and administrators; entry and exit assessment; the bilingual and ESL classes; and the activities and lessons for each grade level. The article concludes with critical comments and concrete recommendations, focusing on the need for language and culture training for teachers and administrators, testing of academic language, school-wide collaboration, teacher mentoring, improved program communication, parent involvement, new paradigms for empowering schools, and training for all teachers of language minority students.

Wood Elementary (a fictitious name) is located in a large consolidated school district west of Chicago. The district includes affluent suburbs and less affluent ones, and the town in which Wood is located has a range of low moderate to affluent housing. Hispanic families living near Wood share rent or mortgage or live in apartment complexes. The town is basically a white suburb, with the Hispanic families living primarily in the area around the three elementary schools. About twenty percent of the students at Wood are Hispanic, though at the other two schools the percentage is greater and growing more rapidly.

The Spanish-speaking community in the district is made up of first and second generation Mexican immigrants, though most are first generation, having arrived in the last five to ten years. The families are young, as is the majority of the US Spanish-speaking population. Also, as in Chicago and elsewhere, there is a great need for adult education programs, including literacy and ESL, to ease the transition to American culture and prepare newcomers for the greater literacy demands of the US work force.

The Bilingual Program

From approximately 1974-1980, this district had had a bilingual program, but in the 1980s the program had almost disappeared, due to cuts in bilingual education nationwide. A new director had been hired in the late 1980s and was essentially beginning the program anew, including laying out the necessary assessment plans, procedures, training, and materials, with assistance from the nearby OBEMLA (Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs) regional bilingual resource center. The program was transitional.

The total bilingual faculty of teachers and aides or tutors in the entire district in 1991-92 numbered about ten, serving elementary and secondary students. There were one to three faculty per building for the five or so buildings which had bilingual classes. Bilingual faculty were generally new: they had been hired on a regular basis for several years. In the Fall of 1991, Wood hired its first bilingual teacher who had her own resource room. In another elementary school, two other bilingual teachers had been added the year before, moving from other positions in the district while finishing courses and tests for bilingual certification.

Wood Elementary School

Wood enrolled about five hundred and fifty students in kindergarten through fifth grade and had one half-time bilingual teacher from 1989 to 1991. In 1991-92, with the hiring of a full-time bilingual resource room teacher and a bilingual tutor, Wood began its own bilingual classroom. The bilingual tutor had attended high school and elementary school in the same district and been a student in the bilingual

program in the 1970s , before federal monies "dried up." Wood had just begun to implement site-based management.

During the bilingual teacher's first year, there were no other bilingual staff at Wood - only the bilingual tutor. No written communications sent from the school were in Spanish, except school registration, lunch, and home language survey forms sent from the administration building. However, the bilingual teacher sent home regular communication to parents of students in the bilingual classroom and the kindergarten teacher often enlisted the help of the bilingual staff in translating her homework calendar sent home monthly.

Program Goals

The goals of the district-wide bilingual program were idealistic yet attainable and consisted of the following, as interpreted and observed by the bilingual teacher at Wood:

1. to teach ESL (English as a second language-basic, interpersonal communication in English;
2. to teach mainstream curriculum-in Spanish and "sheltered English
3. to teach literacy (first in Spanish to support second language literacy in English);
4. to involve parents in their children's education, and to involve the school in bilingual parents' groups
5. to promote native (Mexican) language and culture school-wide
6. to promote the integration of linguistically and culturally diverse children into the mainstream culture and school population.

Although in 1992-93 these goals had not yet been written down or implemented program-wide, they seemed to be promoted by the bilingual program and program director. Most bilingual teachers attempted to meet as many goals as possible. However, because there were no bilingual teacher meetings during the 1991-92 school year until the end of April, there was little opportunity to interact with bilingual faculty about what the goals were, whether or not other teachers were reaching them, or how they were being reached. However, the bilingual teacher at Wood did attempt to work on the above six goals, as part of

her resource room curriculum and lesson planning, and these attempts are described later in this paper.

Students, Teacher, and Administrators

The students. Of the over 500 total school population at Wood in 1991-92, about 20% (100) were Hispanic, though only about thirty-eight students were served by the bilingual resource room teacher. If all students who needed service were served -- both newly arrived students and those who had begun school without bilingual instruction (but still needed it very badly), the "potentially eligible" bilingual education population in the school would have been closer to seventy students.

The bilingual teacher and tutor. The bilingual teacher in the resource classroom was an experienced ESL teacher, but somewhat new to the elementary school setting. She herself was bilingual from childhood, having lived in different countries as a child and in Mexican American communities in the U.S. for most of her life. She was knowledgeable about children's bilingual language development, having herself studied and trained teachers in the areas of ESL and bilingual education. She obtained her state bilingual certification by the middle of the Fall semester, since she already had elementary and bilingual certificates in another state.

As a bilingual "resource room" teacher, she saw herself in a role somewhere between a "pull-out" and a "self-contained" teacher. That is, as both teacher and resource room formed their identities in the school, the role that grew was that of a teacher with a daily schedule for certain kids, but who also had a large enough and flexible enough classroom that she could offer it as a place for kids to go to, when they needed help. Also, since the principal tried to promote collaborative working arrangements, it seemed that having an "open door" made it easier for teachers and students to become acquainted with the new bilingual classroom, step by step (*paso a paso*). However, a flexible schedule with drop-in options had drawbacks, when it came to taking breaks; i.e., the bilingual teacher needed to get to know other staff better to collaborate with them, but she rarely left her room.

The bilingual resource room tutor had grown up in an established Mexican American community in the same school district, since her

parents had arrived in this suburban area in the 1950s, before she was born. In fact, she visited Mexico for the first time the summer before beginning as bilingual tutor. She was very motivated to work with the children, though had had no teacher training, having received her B.A. in Spanish the previous spring. Most of the bilingual aides and many of the bilingual teachers lived in the school district.

The bilingual administrators. The administrators of the bilingual program were a district administrator who devoted about 10%-i 5% of her time to the bilingual program and the remainder to general program development, and an experienced teacher on "special assignment" who actually administered Chapter 1 reading programs across the district, but who was the main contact person for both bilingual and Chapter 1 teachers. This person was a bilingual member of the Hispanic community, having first come to the U.S. as an exchange student about 20 years earlier. Because of his mobility from school to school, checking on book orders, testing, and other day-to-day things, he had visited the bilingual teacher at Wood and was supportive of her teaching style, knowing she had worked hard to set up the full-time bilingual resource room at Wood.

The building principal. The principal of about five years was a positive, effective manager, noted for his personal and collaborative leadership style. Teachers daily sought his advice and he supported their decisions, promoting a high level of trust, engagement, and professionalism in the school. He encouraged thoughtfulness and sharing among teachers and modeled this in his interactions with them. He often worked late, collaborating on innovative proposals for a variety of district programs. He clearly supported a child-oriented philosophy of learning and teaching, evident as one walked into the school for the first time, and in the school climate. However, he was aware that he had little background in bilingual education, and, perhaps because of his non-intrusive leadership style, he did not often initiate discussion about the new bilingual program, nor bring together teachers for small group planning with the new bilingual teacher.

Assessment and Placement

A clear strength of the bilingual program in this district was the well-laid out plan for bilingual assessment which had been developed during the previous year with the assistance of a consultant from the regional OBEMLA resource center. At that time, the LEP assessment committee of the district, composed of a variety of teachers, bilingual staff, and administrators, had chosen a new oral language (English and Spanish) test, the Idea Proficiency Test (IPT); formulated timelines; and sketched out components of the entrance, ongoing, and exit assessment that was to be implemented by the bilingual program staff the following year. Entrance testing began immediately this same year.

When the bilingual teacher began at Wood, most of the placement testing had been done, though because it had been done by different testers throughout the previous year, some tests were more current than others. As for placement, the bilingual teacher had been told that the highest priority students were the youngest ones, i.e., kindergartners and first graders were first priority and upper grades were less of a priority, since not all students needing instruction could be served.

Bilingual and ESL Classes

Resource room bilingual and ESL classes were scheduled primarily according to the identified LEP students' grade level, class schedules, English and Spanish proficiency, and literacy abilities.

Kindergarten

The total time kindergartners were in the resource room varied, but generally was from about 8:40 to 10:00 a.m. After 10:00, the kids returned to their classes for music or physical education, and the tutor sometimes would help the kindergarten teacher put them on the bus or meet their parents from 10:45 to 11:15. The kindergarten group included eight or nine children, though increased to twelve the second semester when afternoon children were re-scheduled so they could attend the bilingual morning class. Most of these children were just beginning to speak English, though there was a range of abilities in English.

The kindergarten children were taught primarily by the tutor and they spent their morning class time in Spanish and English in conversations about their own lives and families, reading and retelling stories, learning ESL through TPR (total physical response), using authentic language (in both Spanish and English), while making things and doing a variety of typical kindergarten activities, such as those in the Evan-Moor book *Lea, piensa, corta, y pega*. These early literacy ("pre-reading") activities related to themes of family, health, safety, food, friendship, animals, weather, counting, movement, and classroom procedures. Often, the kindergarten teacher would send materials and instructions with the tutor so the pull-out children would do the same activities the other kindergarten children were doing. At other times, the bilingual teacher had made plans for all children in the resource room, such as a Mexican cultural lesson or a family literacy related lesson. Most activities took place in Spanish, though daily ESL was included, and naturally integrated into the activities. The ESL focus was on vocabulary needed for activities and themes and language for basic interaction.

First Grade

The first grade group had about twelve children the first semester and a few more the second half of the year. Most of these children already had some speaking knowledge of English, though a few did not, since they had arrived later or were less talkative. Most had attended pull-out classes with a different bilingual teacher the year before, though these had been mostly ESL only classes. The bilingual teacher soon decided that the focus for first-grade would be literacy, first in the native language, Spanish, using an integrated, whole language approach.

The scheduling for first graders was daily from 8:30 to 10:00 and then, after recess, from 10:30 to 12:00, though children from different classes often arrived at different times due to different PE and music schedules. When the numbers grew, due to new enrollments or a decision to serve additional children needing literacy instruction, half would come for the first period and half for the second period. This cut down on total time in the resource room, although groups were smaller and usually more productive for the teacher, who was usually alone with

the group on one side of the room, while the tutor worked with another group on the other side.

The first grade children were taught almost exclusively by the bilingual teacher, who focused primarily on developing literacy first through the native language, since most were in early or pre-literate stages of reading. But the bilingual teacher had other goals for this group as well. Some of these children needed help in first-grade math concepts, and ESL was a clear need, too. In addition, first grade teachers assumed that the bilingual teacher would be teaching whatever the children would be missing when they were out of their homeroom, but each homeroom teacher followed her own schedule. So, to handle all of these demands in the limited time available, she made every effort to integrate language and content and to integrate content across the curriculum.

Typical activities for first graders included language experience lessons in Spanish; singing and movement games in English and Spanish; math games in English and Spanish; social English such as greetings, requests, apologies, for the classroom and other contexts; and a little written English for basic concepts such as numbers, colors, and other experiences that the children brought with them to the classroom. Many of these activities revolved around seasonal themes. For example, if Halloween was coming up and children talked about ghosts, pumpkins, and candy, the teacher and tutor would look for read aloud stories, art activities, and other fun things by means of which students could learn cultural concepts, safety tips, and expressions related to Halloween. Some of these would be done in both languages, especially since materials were always more available in English.

Themes relating to Mexican culture were also common in the resource room. Information from social studies books such as *Norteamérica: Ayer y Hoy* by Scott, Foresman and literature such as Lomas Garza's *Family Pictures/Cuadros de Familia* provided texts and pictures that could be used by many levels of students. Events such as Día de la Raza and Cinco de Mayo, as celebrated in Mexico and in the US were opportune occasions for delving into telling and writing activities, which were made even stronger with "family-oriented" homework the bilingual teacher assigned, almost on a daily basis. These books often served as a point of departure for storytelling, inquiry into

family traditions and parents' personal accounts of the meanings of Mexican historical events, and the development of language experience stories.

Thus, American culture, Mexican culture, and oral and written language development were integrated in these "whole language" activities. Active student discussion, pair and group participation and projects were important goals for this resource room. The teacher also enjoyed integrating science and social studies themes, and sample activities included talking about how a pumpkin grows, as in the Evan-Moor book, *Actividades de ciencia para poner en secuencia* and writing compositions about recycling and environmental themes.

Reading in English was not a main goal for first graders in the resource room, due to the limited amount of time the children spent with the bilingual teacher. However, first graders who were the strongest readers in Spanish did begin English reading with the resource room teacher in the Spring, and all first graders had begun some English reading in their mainstream classes. (The one or two strong Spanish readers were the same students who at times missed school before and after Christmas to visit family in Mexico.)

Second Grade

The second graders numbered from ten to twelve, and they came for one and a half hours every morning the first semester. The second semester, they came after lunch and resource room time varied for each child, since schedules for the three 2nd grade mainstream classrooms varied. Some came late and others left early to attend physical education or music. They were taught by the teacher or tutor or both, depending on the day, activity, and other demands.

For the most part, the second graders had had English language up to this point in their schooling, with little if any bilingual support. All, except very recent arrivals from Mexico, who were strong readers in Spanish (often above grade level), were still at beginning reading levels in both languages. Most of the second graders had acquired oral "social English," though written and academic English was still beginning. Daily, they received literacy instruction in two languages: in English in mainstream classes and in Spanish in the resource room. They seemed to enjoy learning to read in two languages and would often initiate their

own comparisons and observations about meanings, sounds, and spellings in the two languages.

The resource room had a different atmosphere in the afternoon, when older children came and more cross-age tutoring and pair work occurred. When second grade teachers sent "worksheets" or homework from their classes, small group math or language arts lessons took place, though Spanish reading and writing, often integrated with social studies or literature, were always a part of daily lessons for second graders. Moreover, when the entire room worked on a theme, such as Día de la Raza or the environment, and projects emerged via whole language student-centered activities, second graders were challenged to work at higher cognitive and creative levels, at times assisted by older peers.

Reading activities in Spanish, such as read-aloud stories and language experience activities and stories, some literary, others non-fiction, some similar to first grade stories, others planned just for them, usually delighted and motivated the second graders, since they knew how to read but most had had little if any instruction in Spanish. When discussing these stories, which they read or which were read to them, little by little, second grade children were able to talk about them in more depth in Spanish, then more and more in English, using concepts such as character, plot, action, setting, and so forth. That is, through comfortable conversation, they constructed rich, full meanings, grounded in their experiences, in Spanish, then in English, for the Spanish texts.

But second graders also needed help with their budding English literacy and with math, too. These other lessons, sometimes from grade-level basals or other texts, included talking about beginning writing concepts (sentences, details, beginning/ending compositions); listening to stories and retelling them; keeping a daily journal, integrating various curricular areas; doing "money math" via a class store with products labeled in two languages; making books to take home and share; and making things related to Mexican culture, social studies, and science themes. All of these could be done in both languages. The teacher also made sure students had time to read together, in both languages, in pairs with older, younger, or same-age peers, a common practice throughout the school because of the principal's strong support of shared reading and cross-age activities.

Across grades, the principal also encouraged the bilingual teacher to incorporate Mexican culture into her teaching, since she had studied and taught both Mexican and Mexican American culture. The bilingual tutor often expressed appreciation for these lessons, since she had studied very little of her own culture attending American schools. The children also enjoyed learning about their culture and their parents' culture and could tap into their parents' knowledge for further inquiry. For this reason, the teacher also planned frequent "home culture" homework to involve parents and children in integrated literacy activities, building on parents' "funds of knowledge" (Moll, 1991).

Third, Fourth, and Fifth Grades

The limited English proficient (LEP) students in the upper three grades of the school were a lower priority than those in the first three grades, and their teachers often perceived them as discipline problems. Because these children had not had the appropriate native language instruction since kindergarten, they were often frustrated. However, several mainstream teachers understood this and so wanted them to have more individualized attention from the bilingual resource teacher. So, these older kids, about ten in all, one fourth of the total served by the bilingual teacher, came during odd hours; helped younger children; worked on integrated, "whole language" science, social studies, and Mexican cultural activities and projects; and brought in class work or homework they need special help with, from their mainstream classes.

ESL instruction for these children could be termed "sheltered" instruction, and involved working with English language texts in language arts, reading, science, social studies, and math from their mainstream classes, reading from the school or town library, other printed information found or acquired while pursuing a topic or area of interest, and their own and peers' writing from bilingual resource room projects.

Students from these three grades also kept logs with "problems" and corrections from their own writing, and they were encouraged to consult these logs whenever revising or editing something in the resource room. They also had "word banks" with words they chose to keep, words they knew how to read. Some wanted to keep word banks in both languages and were encouraged to do so by the resource room

teacher. Most students also had some time each week to work on the resource room computer, which by Spring semester was functioning with software for basic word processing and word recognition and math games in English for younger children. No bilingual software was available for the resource room that year.

Often these children participated in group activities that spanned several grade levels, usually 3rd, 4th, and 5th grades, but sometimes children from younger grades, too. Examples of lessons which involved all resource room students were a field trip to the zoo, "Día de la Raza" activities, "Cinco de Mayo" accounts, and environmental projects. Older children also chose their own themes for a science project, such as the solar system and volcanoes. Sources included encyclopedias; visuals and storytelling from "family language and culture homework" and objects students brought in. Objects were from the outdoors, the family kitchen, and other places, and included family heirlooms, bilingual pamphlets, "junk mail," and other authentic materials children borrowed or found.

These cross-grade themes often took on a family tone, because there were children of different ages in the room at the same time, and some were siblings as well. Moreover, materials often came from parents and class work often built on homework children had done with their parents, such as asking and answering questions about holidays, family "historias," and other daily living and work themes. Especially because of these home-school connections, Spanish reading and writing were included whenever possible, to increase motivation and self-esteem, enable greater parent participation, supplement information on a theme, and provide opportunities for older readers and writers to help younger readers and writers.

Classroom Assessment

Classroom assessment and evaluation, primarily for report cards at the end of each term and for communicating student progress to parents, consisted of samples of student work, in a portfolio-like system (Valdez-Pierce and O'Malley, 1992; Navarrete, et al. 1990). Student kept their work and periodically, with the teacher, decided what to throw away and what to keep. Although not a full-fledged portfolio assessment, nevertheless, the teacher attempted to keep these "sample

student performances" because she knew that they would help her and the students be more self-reflective about assessment in the classroom and connect more naturally with instruction and learning, and it would also help mainstream classroom teachers see the progress students were making. Also, because in this first year a report card in Spanish had not yet been written, the teacher was able to reflect many of the special projects and activities on her own tailor-made report card, so students could see how they were being evaluated. She varied the resource room report card for each grade, so that there were some similar and some different categories of work students did each term.

Reflections and Recommendations

Because the bilingual program in this district is still growing, all teaching staff continue to reflect on successes and future challenges. Further, although critical comments presented here come from one teacher, they may well be shared by teachers, administrators, and parents alike.

Successes

The bilingual program, as implemented in Wood Elementary, has had many successes: support by the principal for bilingual instruction, integrated holistic language instruction, implementation of initial stages of testing and placement, a budding cross-grade whole language environment, and the winning of a grant for bilingual program innovations at Wood. On the other hand, there are still many challenges facing Wood.

Critical Comments

1. Lack of Information and Support for Bilingual Instruction. Many mainstream teachers' and administrators' lack of information about bilingual education made it difficult for a "school-wide approach" to evolve at Wood. Scheduling and collaboration were ongoing problems. Second graders, for example, had not had native literacy in first grade, thus holding them back in most subject areas and second language development.

Recommendation: Collaboration. As a team, all teachers need to collaborate on instructional planning and scheduling, with the principal, and, if needed, outside consultants. This includes in-services, meetings, and site visits, focusing on topics such as "what is bilingual education and ESL," "what model will work best for children in this school," "how do bilingual teachers teach," "bilingual testing," "teaching home culture," "Spanish for all kids and staff," and "translating and interpreting." Setting up a bilingual classroom takes planning and this involves everyone, not just the bilingual teacher.

2. *Monocultural, Monolingual Attitudes.* This district, as with most, was "English-only," as seen in negative comments about Spanish-speaking parents by a top administrator during a teacher workshop, and in comments by school staff revealing common misconceptions about bilingual education.

Recommendation: Language and Culture Curriculum and Training. Schools need to include the cultures of all children in curricular and extra-curricular activities. But cultural inclusion must go beyond a superficial "holidays" approach (Banks, 1989). It must include training of administrators, staff, community, and board members in ways to restructure schools to set up empowering education for all students (Cummins, 1989).

3. *Testing Only BICS.* Oral proficiency tests, such as the IPT, test basic interpersonal (social) communication skills (BICS), not the cognitive academic linguistic proficiency (CALP), which involves school language use and ability. As a result, many students are not served and many more are exited too soon; consequently, they often do not do well in mainstream classes. And, if students' learning is not monitored carefully, a lack of progress is often blamed on other factors, not on a lack of CALP or inappropriate testing and placement.

Recommendation: CALP Testing and Monitoring. Entry and exit placement decisions must be guided by language tests which examine both social language and academic language, and include ongoing, holistic, performance-based assessment (Navarrete et al., 1990; Valdez-Pierce & O'Malley, 1992). This type of assessment includes multiple measures and modalities, and is especially important for bilingual students, because it connects assessment with instruction, thus

being more valid and reliable. It also helps bilingual and mainstream teachers monitor progress and coordinate instruction.

4. *Lack of Communication.* A difficult aspect of the bilingual teacher's first year at Wood was that she had little contact with other bilingual teachers. When there was contact, it was usually at a meeting with little time to get acquainted or share concerns (about materials, scheduling, using two languages, entry-exit procedures, and student problems & potential solutions). She found communication gaps at Wood, too. Because information was exchanged at lunch, the bilingual teacher did not always know what she needed to know about the school, since she didn't leave the resource room often. In addition, because she was "support staff" and didn't have her "own students", she didn't receive the same mail from the office that other teachers did. Misunderstandings occurred without this information, and these "gaps" made collaboration between mainstream and bilingual teachers more difficult.

Recommendation: Bilingual Teacher Meetings, Mentors, and Teacher Collaboration. Bilingual program administrators need to create time for bilingual teachers to meet, interact, and share topics that they have chosen because of needs and interests. Also, bilingual teachers, pull-out and self-contained, need the same information that mainstream teachers do, especially since they have so many schedules to arrange, and grades to teach and develop materials for. Having one bilingual teacher as a mentor and a second teacher, for a bilingual mentor, would be very useful, for support and communication from colleagues in parallel positions. Finally, administrative support for bilingual-mainstream teacher collaboration is crucial to success for teachers and students alike.

5. *Sporadic Communication with Bilingual Parents.* To comply with federal bilingual funding guidelines, a "parent advisory committee" (PAC) was in place at Wood, although PAC meetings were infrequent. However, generally, parents were positive, especially if their children were beginning English language development. But, often, as their children's classes and English demands focused more on CALP (academic language & content development), parents felt that their children would miss the all-English mainstream setting, where, they believed, they would learn more. They also felt that their children should

have only one set of homework assignments, not two. Bilingual and mainstream teachers shared these concerns. Also, the school's site-based management team did not include any parents whose children were enrolled in the bilingual program.

Recommendation: Greater Participation of Bilingual Parents. Teachers, principals, and parents need to have regular opportunities to meet as a group (in Spanish and English), so they can share concerns, discuss common goals for the children's education, plan actions to improve the school, and provide support for one another. Parents of bilingual children also need to be invited to participate in the school decision-making, not just to serve as volunteers for field trips and holiday parties. Teachers need in-service workshops to learn how to communicate more effectively with language minority parents and how to begin "co-teaching" relationships with parents. Language minority parents, above all, need to feel comfortable in the school, to motivate their increased visitation and participation.

6. *Old Models and School Paradigms.* Another obstacle at Wood may have been the fact that bilingual education was at times compared to special education. For example, "inclusion," which involves moving students "back" into mainstream classrooms, was an issue, growing out of concern for bilingual kids' isolation. Although a valid concern, including bilingual kids in mainstream classrooms needs careful planning with an eye toward sharing language and culture in both directions. A "pull-in" model can work well, but "inclusion" has different implications in bilingual education contexts, and, if not done carefully, could place children in the old "sink or swim" situation.

Recommendation: New Paradigms, Structures, and Relationships. Schools need new models to help think and talk about the new roles and relationships needed to make instruction more empowering for all students. Bilingual teachers and parents need to have input into both bilingual and mainstream programs, to make these more respectful and inclusive of all languages and cultures. Curriculum and instruction that are holistic, inquiry-based, cooperative, and student-centered, that create and build on home-school partnerships, and that incorporate performance-based assessment are needed: i.e., innovative approaches in all areas of schooling (Rivera & Zehler, 1990).

7. *Many Students Underserved.* The bilingual teacher at Wood served over forty students on a daily basis, and this did not include "potentially eligible students." There were not enough teachers to work with all the students who needed assistance in literacy, ESL, and other subject areas. She had been told, "It's like putting Band-Aids on open wounds. These kids have needed bilingual instruction since kindergarten and haven't had it; we need to spend our time with the younger kids. We can't serve everyone; we have to set priorities."

Mainstream teachers, who saw these children for most of their school day, did not have the training or background in ESL, sheltered English, or dual language instruction to assist them effectively in their classrooms, so many students did not receive instruction that met their needs. These were not good learning conditions, and consequently, many students were not prepared to continue successfully in school, over the long duration.

Recommendation: More Bilingual Teachers; Training for All Teachers. More bilingual teachers are needed to meet the needs of all students, and training in second language learning and teaching is needed for mainstream teachers in whose classes bilingual children spend most of their school day.

It is hoped that these comments will help readers think critically about Wood and other schools, for it is through critical self-reflection that parents, teachers, schools, and districts will eventually learn how to improve their bilingual and ESL classrooms and programs.

Conclusion

Although literacy in the native language was the main goal for the early grades in the resource room, ESL was alive and well across all grade levels. However, ESL was not an isolated component, taught for an hour each day. Program goals were similar to CALLA (cognitive academic language learning approach) goals, for bilingual contexts: "to prepare students to transfer what they learn in their native language to the same kind of learning experiences in English; and to use both languages to support and enhance student learning of both content and language" (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994:173).

Perhaps because the bilingual program was just beginning at Wood, the bilingual children did not get the most effective instruction possible. However, the award of a grant at the end of the year, for a home-school liaison, staff training in second language learning and teaching strategies, and classes in Spanish language and Mexican culture indicates that positive steps were taking place at Wood. Hopefully, other such innovations will bring the school and the bilingual community closer, so that, together, they will be able to build a bilingual program that better meets the needs of the bilingual children.

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