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Bilingual Education: What It Could  
Mean on the Navajo Reservation

by

Berniece A. Blackhorse

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree

of

MASTER OF SCIENCE

in

Department of Psychology

Approved:

UTAH STATE UNIVERSITY  
Logan, Utah

1989

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## ABSTRACT

Bilingual Education: What It Could  
Mean on the Navajo Reservation

by

Berniece A. Blackhorse

Utah State University, 1989

Major Professor: Dr. William Dobson  
Department: Psychology

The educational system in the United States is meant for the native speakers of English. As a result, students who are limited English proficient do not succeed academically in this educational system.

Literature presents much evidence as to the effectiveness and successes of students' academic performance when their mother tongue or home language is used in the classroom.

Successful bilingual program models which could be used with Navajo students was sought through the literature.

Through the literature there was no one method that was appropriate for all bilingual programs. There were three distinct program models discussed in the literature: the transitional, immersion, and maintenance models.

The transitional model is an English-as-a-second language approach. Students are taught in their first language but transition to

English as soon as possible is encouraged. English fluency is the goal. In the immersion program all instruction is in English. This immersion model uses the English language only. The students are surrounded by English throughout the school day. The maintenance model attempts to maintain the mother tongue. Appreciation and loyalty of the original language is one motivating factor for the maintenance model.

There are many problems surrounding bilingual education. These problems are in the areas of terminology, procedures, practices, evaluations and assessments, objectives, philosophies, goals, teacher training, materials, methods and even the implementation of a bilingual program. There is some academic advantages to using two languages. It provides the learner the advantage of participating and functioning in two cultures, socially and academically.

Amid all the controversy, the educational system is attempting to provide meaningful education for the limited English proficient students.

The primary recommendation of this paper is that bilingual programs focus on the needs of the second language learner, with cautions regarding the use of experimental programs.

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

More than 225 million people in the United States come from backgrounds of hundreds of different countries where different languages are spoken (Baca & Cervantes, 1986a).

The study on language minorities conducted by the National Center for Education in 1976 found that there were 28 million people who spoke languages other than English in the United States (Baca & Cervantes, 1986a). Five million of this group were school-age (6-18 years old), which represent 10% of the whole school-age population in the United States. According to this study, in New Mexico, 49% of the children were of non-English background, and in Arizona, it was 29%. These figures give ample evidence that bilingualism presents a major educational and cultural problem for our country, and other countries as well. Baca and Cervantes (1984b) state that bilingual education is a universal phenomenon found in most countries throughout the world.

Bilingual education, the use of two languages for instruction and interaction, has been and probably always will be a topic of heated discussion. In a sense, the disagreements over its implementation and use are understandable since more is at issue than a simple educational policy. When a school district decides to give endorsement to a bilingual curriculum, they are doing more than making a policy decision. They are also making a statement about the value they place on each of the languages and cultures used in the bilingual curriculum. A curriculum using only one language is stating that one language is the only language needed for academic success. A curriculum using two or

more languages for instruction is stating that there is some academic advantage to using and knowing more than one language and that the school district and classroom teachers endorse this ability.

Opponents of bilingual education often see it as a means of subverting traditional American values. They feel that it is the duty of the school system to teach all non-English speakers the language of society and politics in this country and that a program that does not emphasize the learning of English is not only producing students who will be unable to participate in the democratic process but is increasing the conflict that currently exists between cultural and linguistic minority groups (Fradd, 1987).

Opponents of bilingual education see bilingual education as (1) a tool that will suppress the host culture's traditions and values; (2) that there is a possibility that the non-English language will become an established language along with the English language; and (3) the continued use of the bilingual student's first language will not allow an increased knowledge of the English language, the culture and the history of the United States, which the upper middle class values. Politicians and the media have even exaggerated this concern into fear and bilingualism is, therefore, a real threat to many people. However, even if bilingual education is an emotionally sensitive issue, the educational needs and concerns still need to be addressed (Fradd, 1987).

Proponents of bilingual education believe that not all children enter the educational system in this country with the same linguistic skills or experience. Bilingual education recognizes this difference and rather than punishing the students for not having had the

opportunity to learn the English language, utilizes the native language and the English language to ensure that the student receives full benefit from his/her educational experience.

Despite their differences, both sides would agree on the fact that some children enter school with special needs, be they linguistic, physical, medical, or social in nature, and that some programs are more successful in serving certain kinds of students than other programs.

There are more limited English proficient students now than there were when bilingual education began almost twenty years ago because of the increase in international immigration and the birth rate of non-English language background people. Instead of two different non-English language groups, there are as many as fifteen in some schools, or even in some classrooms (Fradd, 1987).

Minority language students are more prone to academic failure because of their linguistic and cultural differences. Educational issues for these students also include economic, social and political concerns (Fradd, 1987).

#### Problem Statement

This study will focus on one ethnic group of the many referred to above; namely, the Navajo Indians. In spite of numerous bilingual programs on the Navajo Reservation, elementary school-age children are not becoming proficient in the English language as demonstrated in achievement test scores. This author has observed, as a teacher for the past twelve years on the Navajo Reservation, that the dominant Navajo speaking students are going through a bilingual education program at the

school without developing their second language well enough to function satisfactorily in a classroom. These students remain hampered because they cannot participate effectively in environments geared toward English speakers.

The dominant Navajo speaker is not bilingual. There are also students who are not dominant in either language. Their English language skills are not developed well enough for them to function meaningfully in a regular classroom. For reasons not clear, schools do not seem to be reaching these Navajo children and equalizing their education so that they will have a chance to become highly educated individuals who will possess all the qualities and skills of a successful mainstream American.

Traditional ways of teaching are not allowing some of these students to attain success (Fradd, 1987). With the complexities of languages and the problem associated with the speakers of these languages, it becomes "crucial for successful learning that both teachers and students operate within the set of cultural norms, or at least have an understanding of each others differing norms" (Bauman, 1980).

There are many kinds of children who are served by many kinds of programs on the Navajo reservation. These range from monolingual English-speaking children who attend regular public schools with all English curriculums to monolingual Navajo children who attend a BIA/contract school with bilingual or monolingual Navajo curriculums. In addition, not all Navajo children have the same degree of monolingualism or bilingualism. Some are monolingual Navajo, some are

mostly monolingual Navajo, but have some exposure to English. Some have equal exposure to English and Navajo. Some are monolingual English speakers. In each of these categories, there are degrees of both monolingualism and bilingualism and children may speak standard or nonstandard dialects of each language. For each of these wide ranging categories, each school district is more or less free to implement its own monolingual or bilingual program to best meet the needs of these students. As such there are a number of different bilingual programs on the Navajo reservation which have radically differing philosophies, curriculums and populations being served. In addition, there is not much cooperation or exchange of information or personnel between the programs, resulting in overlap, inconsistencies and different interpretations of a child's needs based on differing assessment criteria. Due to the diversity and lack of information sharing, there is a critical need to find out how many different bilingual programs are currently in existence on the Navajo reservation, what their philosophies are, what the curriculum is and who the program is serving.

The purpose of this thesis is to review all of the issues and components of bilingual education, seeking ideas and practices that could be used to enhance educational programs for the second language learner on the Navajo Reservation.



## CHAPTER II

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

History of Bilingual Programs Nationally

Bilingualism within the United States historically has not been valued. This view promotes the belief among educators and the general public that low income, limited English proficient students have a handicapping condition (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

During the 1960's, ethnic minorities attempted to bring into focus the inequality of social, economic, and educational opportunities by the Federal government, but it was not until 1967 that the Federal government began to deal with the educational opportunities of limited English proficient students. Through this effort by minorities, the Elementary and Secondary Act (ESEA) (P.L. 90-247) of 1967 was enacted. This legislation brought the Federal government into actively participating in the education of poverty-level students through the state and local educational agencies. The result was the development of supplemental programs for the low-achieving students through federal funds (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

The Bilingual Education Act was introduced in the United States Senate in January, 1967 and it became Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act Amendments of 1967. On January 2, 1968, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Bilingual Education Act into Public Law 90-247 (Andersson & Boyer, 1978). This bill opened many doors for bilingual students. It provided funding for 1) drop-outs to return to school, 2) for handicapped students to receive full benefits

of the educational systems, and 3) rural schools to have financial assistance to improve and bring about quality educational programs (Andersson & Boyer, 1978).

Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is called the Bilingual Education Act. It recognized the dominant "Navajo" speaking child and provided the opportunity for the child to be taught in his native language. In 1968, P.L. 90-247 provided financial help to public schools with the development of bilingual programs. In 1973, the comprehensive Bilingual Education Amendment Act provided federal assistance for the training of bilingual teachers and teacher trainees, as well as the development of bilingual materials (Baker, 1983).

The Title VII legislation was specifically intended for students who had not mastered the English language and were not necessarily in need of remedial instruction.

The Lau vs. Nicholas case reached the Supreme Court in 1974. In the Lau vs. Nicholas case, a Chinese parent took the school board of San Francisco to court. In this case the question was "do non-English-speaking children receive an equal educational opportunity when instructed in a language they cannot understand" (Paulston, 1980)? The Supreme Court ruled unanimously in favor of the plaintiff, basing its decision on Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. It ruled "there is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, curriculum, for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed for meaningful education" (Bergen, 1979). The Court also concluded that equal treatment of individuals did not necessarily mean equal opportunity (Paulston, 1980).

The 1974 U.S. Supreme Court ruling requires schools to "provide some kind of special assistance for English-deficient language minority students" (Baker & deKanter, 1983).

The 1968 Bilingual Education Act was also re-authorized in 1974 (P.L. 93-380). In this re-authorization, the low income requirement was removed. Efforts toward program evaluation were begun, but specifications for compiling data on outcomes or program effectiveness were never clear. Transitional programs, in which students who were still needing to learn English, continued to be funded. English speaking ability, rather than academic achievement, continued to be emphasized. Transitional meant that basic subjects could be provided in two languages, but courses in art, music, and physical education were preferably offered in English (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

The 1974 reappropriation provided funds for teacher training programs to prepare teachers to work in bilingual education programs. Prior to this, federal bilingual funding emphasized support for demonstration projects (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

In 1978, the Bilingual Education Act was again re-authorized. Although transitional bilingual education programs were still promoted in this second re-authorization, three major changes were implemented: (1) focus of instructional programs changed; (2) entry and exit criteria were required; and (3) research and information dissemination was initiated (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

The term limited English speaking ability (LESA) changed to the term limited English proficiency (LEP). Instruction for LESA students focused mostly on the development of oral language skills. Since the

1978 re-authorization in which the term limited English proficiency (LEP) was developed, emphasis shifted to focus on the four areas of language development: reading, writing, understanding, and speaking. Entry and exit criteria were intended to assist school districts to determine students needing bilingual instruction. The 1978 authorization also allowed the inclusion of forty percent of the students to be native English speaking students to learn about a different culture, but not a foreign language (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 (P.L. 88-352) focused primarily on the problems of Afro-Americans. School districts, using federal money, were to guarantee that there was no discrimination based on race, religion, or national origin. As a result of this federal legislation, other groups addressed concerns regarding economic and social discrimination (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

"The Civil Rights Act of 1964 spoke directly to the educational practices of schools insofar as minority children were concerned" (Bergen, 1979). Bergen (1979) goes on to say that this was to insure "that all had equal access to federally sponsored programs." It was not foreseen that "this Act would become a principal weapon for establishing bilingual programs" (Bergen, 1979).

A memorandum from the Director of the Office of Civil Rights [May 25, 1970] was sent to all school districts with more than five percent minority language students. It informed them that they must take necessary steps to assist students overcoming English language deficiencies. Based on language skill assessments, LEP students could

no longer be assigned to classes directed toward the mentally handicapped (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

"Tracking systems that kept students in dead-end programs were to be terminated. All school notices were to be in the parents' home language if the parents did not speak English" (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

The Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (P.L. 93-380) also provided a guarantee that minority language students would have equal educational rights, even if school districts did not receive federal funds (Fradd & Vega, 1987).

The early court decisions became cornerstones for future legislation and litigation. Some of the legislation, litigation, and executive orders affecting bilingual education according to Fradd and Vega (1987) are:

- 1) 1923 Meyer vs. Nebraska  
Struck down State regulations prohibiting use of non-English languages in public schools.
- 2) 1954 Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka  
Guarantees equal protection under the Fourteenth Amendment, which includes educational rights of minority language and handicapped students.
- 3) 1958 National Defense Education Act  
Programs funded for science areas (math, life, physical and earth sciences)
- 4) 1964 Civil Rights Act Title VI (P.L. 88-352)  
Guarantees that race, religion or national origin could not be used as reasons for discrimination.

- 5) 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA)  
(P.L. 90-247)  
  
Federal government allowed to become an active participant in the education of students from the lowest socio-economic levels, which provided for additional instruction to school districts with a large population of students in low socio-economic groups.
- 6) 1968 Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act known as Bilingual Education Act (P.L. 90-247)  
  
Addressed specific learning needs of students who were not proficient in English. Provided first federal funds for Bilingual Education.
- 7) 1974 Aspira vs. Board of Education of City of New York  
  
To provide bilingual education for all Hispanic limited English proficient students.
- 8) 1974 Lau vs. Nicholas  
  
Influenced bilingual education nationally. English requirement was found to be discriminatory and interfered with civil rights of students.
- 9) 1974 Re-authorization of the 1968 Bilingual Education Act  
  
Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (OBEMLA) established to oversee technical training and other program matters.
- 10) 1975 Lau Remedies (Executive Order)  
  
Office for Civil Rights enforced compliance with these requirements.
- 11) 1978 Bilingual Education Act (BEA)  
  
Second Re-authorization of 1968 Bilingual Education Act continued. To promote transitional bilingual education.
- 12) 1984 Bilingual Education Act (BEA) (P.L. 98-511)  
  
Funds allocated for six different types of instructional programs.

"Minority language students are often at high risk of academic failure because of their linguistic and cultural differences" (Fradd, 1987).

"In the past, many students from minority backgrounds have experienced difficulties in school and have performed worse than monolingual students on verbal intelligence tests and on measures of literacy development." These findings between 1920 and 1960 have caused researchers "to speculate that bilingualism caused handicaps and cognitive confusion among students" (Cummins & McNeely, 1987).

In 1980, the Secretary of Education, in an attempt to restore order to the confusion, proposed that bilingual programs would have to be inaugurated based on English proficiency test scores. The Secretary went on to say that in these programs, students should be taught English as quickly as possible and while learning English, these students should not be allowed to fall behind.

In 1981, the "new" Secretary of Education rescinded the 1980 regulations without proposing any new regulations. This has made the bilingual education rules ambiguous and a political issue.

The most recent bilingual legislation, the 1984 Bilingual Education Act (BEA) (Title II of PL 98-511), has changed the perception of limited English proficient students. It recognizes that "limited English proficient (LEP) students are a national linguistic resource" (Fradd & Vega, 1987). Fradd and Vega (1987) go on to say that in spite of the political opposition to bilingual education, there is a strong nationwide support for bilingual education.

The Bilingual Education Act of 1984 recognizes the problems of limited English proficient students: (1) there are a large number of

LEPs; (2) most have a different cultural heritage; (3) there are high dropout rates and low achievement; (4) LEP students experience limitations because of their limited English proficiency; (5) segregation because of their LEP; (6) the federal government has an obligation to provide equal educational opportunities to the groups of LEP students by providing appropriate instructional programs; and (7) for these children, learning takes place through the use of their native language and culture (Fradd, 1987).

#### Purpose of Bilingual Programs

There is a diversity of ideas as to the purpose and positive results of bilingual programs. There is a persistent view that bilingual education is a remedial program to assist limited English proficient students.

The Bilingual Education Act, Title VII, Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, as amended in 1967, P.L. 90-247, January 2, 1968, recognizes that there are people whose dominant language is other than English (Paulston, 1980).

Since the Lau vs. Nichols case was brought to court in December, 1973, it placed bilingual education in a different perspective when the Court ruled in favor of Lau. Following this decision, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) formed a group of education experts to develop policy guidelines that would be in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and the Lau decision. From the efforts of this group was derived a document entitled "Task Force Findings Specifying Remedies Available for Eliminating Past Educational Practices Ruled Unlawful under Lau vs.



Nichols." These findings became known as the Lau Remedies. The Lau Remedies were not federal regulations but guidelines to be used by the Office of Civil Rights for evaluation purposes in the education of language-minority children (Baker & deKanter, 1983). The Lau Remedies "are procedures for the sequential identification, assessment, and placement of non-English language background students." It recommends "that school districts provide a more equal educational opportunity through use of a student's native language and English as a Second Language in schools" (Brown-Hayes, 1984). Brown-Hayes (1984) also state that the Lau Remedies rely heavily on language proficiency instruments to assess the language skills of non-English language background (NELB) students.

One of the suggested Lau Remedies was to provide for "instruction of elementary students through their strongest language until the students are able to participate effectively in a classroom where instruction is given exclusively through English" (Baker & deKanter, 1983).

To satisfy civil rights requirements, the federal government assumed that transitional bilingual education would be the only answer to bilingual education (Baker & deKanter, 1983).

The primary goal of bilingual education is to teach children concepts, knowledge, and skills through their dominant language and to reinforce these skills in their second language. The child's best language for learning, readiness to learn, self-concept, and potential for growth and development are also other considerations in bilingual education (Baca & Cervantes, 1986b). There are a vast number of Navajo

children who, along with other children, have a background of low socio-economic status, who do not speak any English, or have very poor English and thereby encounter school failure even before entering the door of the school building. They soon notice the language of the home is not the language of the school and are confused about which is the "right" language. If Navajo is not spoken in the school, the child may come to believe that Navajo is valued less than English, and that if he speaks only Navajo, he is also less valued by the school (Baker & deKanter, 1983).

#### Kinds of Bilingual Programs

Bilingual education is described as using two languages during instruction for cognitive and affective development, rather than in just the linguistic and cultural areas. In designing and implementing bilingual education programs, there are many critical factors to consider, but it is the school districts philosophy and goals that determine the models to be used for their bilingual education programs.

The programs into which limited English proficient students are directed hopefully provide meaningful learning opportunities and have high achievement expectations.

The curriculum models used in these programs in the United States include the maintenance model, the transitional model, [English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) is a method of instruction frequently used within the transitional model but is not to be recognized as a Bilingual model], and the immersion program. The immersion or structured immersion model has not been popular in the United States. The

maintenance model, immersion model, and the transitional model are described below.

Maintenance Model. In the 1960's and early 1970's, language maintenance instruction was more widely available than it is now. The maintenance model for limited English proficient students was designed to continue students' fluency in their non-English language while learning English (Fradd, 1987).

Mother tongue retention of the first language takes on an extreme importance and facilitates the learning of the second language (Paulston, 1980). "The student's fluency in another language is seen as an asset to be maintained and developed" (Baca & Cervantes, 1986b). Language maintenance programs were attempted in bilingual education programs of early United States for the purpose of mother tongue retention. This experience by various European immigrant groups differed from the Chicanos, Puerto Ricans, American Indians, and other ethnic groups. The European immigrants' mother tongue maintenance were not successful because motivation was more for language loyalty and not for other purposes. Many used their mother tongue for maintaining ethnic group boundaries. Appreciation of the original language was not motivation enough to retain the mother tongue, however (Paulston, 1980).

This model is not as popular today since in most school districts, there are a number of different languages making implementation difficult. Also, there is a strong impetus toward having students becoming proficient English speakers (Baca & Cervantes, 1986b).

Immersion Model. There are two types of immersion models in the United States, the foreign language immersion and the structured immersion.

For English speaking students, foreign language immersion programs have been implemented in a few large school systems, but it is not widely used.

In the structured immersion programs, limited English students are given instruction in English and surrounded by English throughout the day. Advocates feel students master English more effectively in this manner than through transitional programs (Fradd, 1987).

There are two differences in the United States and Canadian immersion programs: (1) in the United States, the student's first language is not maintained and (2) the United States model is remedial for the students English language rather than developmental of the first language (Fradd, 1987).

Immersion is modeled after the Canadian programs. The term immersion is used to describe programs where the child's second-language is the medium of instruction. Since the child is completely surrounded by their new language, it is termed immersion. Successful outcomes for this type of program in Canada is due to factors based on political histories, national goals, and social and economic resources. Canada is officially a bilingual nation with two official languages. The goal is proficiency in two languages, French and English. In the United States, the goal is proficiency in the English language (Fradd, 1987).

Total immersion is a more intense approach where the total curriculum is taught in the second language for an extended period of time.

Transitional Model. The primary goal of this program is the transition of limited English proficient students (LEP) to an all English curriculum. As students demonstrate proficiency in their second language, the use of their first language is phased out (Huebner, 1983). Transitional bilingual programs, which include an English as a Second Language component, is strictly a remedial program. The ESL method is not a bilingual method but is used in some bilingual programs. The teacher works with small groups of children and English language patterns and structure are emphasized and students repeat these patterns and structure.

In transitional programs, "the non-English home language is used until the student's second language (English) is good enough for them to participate successfully in a regular classroom" (Baker & deKanter, 1983). As students become more proficient in the use of English, the non-English language is phased out. "Congress has provided discretionary federal funding for transitional programs since 1966" (Fradd, 1987). The transitional model encourages the use of the student's non-English language toward eventual English fluency. To have student's function successfully and completely in English is the goal of this model (Fradd, 1987).

Regardless of which model is used, "In the final analysis, bilingual education is the same as regular education. It is the

necessary step which must be taken to insure equal educational opportunities for all children" (Bergen, 1979).

#### Problems Within Bilingual Programs

In researching bilingual education and attempting to separate programs, minority groups, ideas, and rationales, one finds there are many pros and cons concerning bilingual education programs, and these programs and issues become confusing. In Catherine A. Baker's (1983) article "¿Que Pasa?", she brings out several problem areas, such as money needed to implement bilingual programs, curricular content that has not been prescribed, theory and rhetoric do not coincide with practical applications, many states still require instruction only in English, and that there are still many legal conflicts, including differences in Federal and State statutes.

Bilingual education has been in existence twenty years but questions still being asked today are, "Does bilingual education really foster academic achievement? How can bilingual education help an 'alingual' student who is proficient in neither language? What sort of bilingual program works best with what sort of student? What if a child is entitled to a bilingual education and also to other special programs at the same time" (Baker, 1983)?

If educators are still asking these questions, teaching methodologies in colleges and universities should perhaps be re-examined. "Teaching methods are culturally biased, . . . with the expressed intent of developing a specific behavior that is supposed to be valued by the host culture" (Payne, 1983). The importance of

understanding culture and implementing this knowledge in the education of students should be emphasized. Whatever a culture stresses should be included in the education program so the same teaching methods are not used for all cultural groups (Payne, 1983). In 1973, the Comprehensive Bilingual Education Amendment Act provided federal assistance for the training of bilingual teachers and teacher trainees as well as for extending existing bilingual curricular materials (Baker, 1983; Garcia, 1981).

Many non-Navajo educators begin their teaching experience on the Navajo Reservation without the adequate skills and training for working with Navajo students. The Navajo child lives in two worlds, one is the school environment and the other is the home environment. As Holm (1973) states, "We see the situation of the Navajo child attempting to learn English at school as being quite different from the situation in which that same child learned Navajo. The same language-learning processes may be involved but the situation itself is quite different." Some teachers are aware of their limited training and begin to approach their teaching cautiously. Other teachers enter the classroom without regard as to who the students are, their background, culture, language, home environment, and community. These educators begin teaching these Navajo children as if they were English speaking children with no language differences. "Too many educators do not know the students, their community, or their ethnic-cultural background. This is not good. We must make the child better than he is; we must make him proud of what he is" (Mondragon, 1972). Without the awareness of the dominant Navajo speaker in the classroom, the child may feel there is little relevance

for his existence in the classroom. Early in the school year, the child begins to feel "that school is an Anglo concept and that it is secondary to the family" (Tempest, 1985). The student should be acknowledged for the skills he brings with him to the school situation, so he can be "viewed as the person of worth that he is" (Tempest, 1985). "The largest percentage and the largest number of non-English speaking Indians are found on the Navajo Reservation. The number of Navajo speakers actually continues to increase" (Holm, 1973). Whether school staff is Navajo or not, Navajo is the language used on the buses, in the dormitories, cafeteria, before and after classes, and on the playground (Holm, 1973). When the Navajo language is not valued, this creates a self-concept problem for the student.

Research indicates that a strong respect for the child's language and culture should be demanded. The use of his mother tongue will help him learn his second language much easier, and will also build concept development: (1) children should be taught by competent teachers; (2) parents should assume personal responsibility for the education of their children; (3) community must demand excellence in education and be willing to support the program, because parents have the potential power to demand this; and (4) students need to be convinced it is they who are ultimately responsible for their education (Rickover, 1983).

Holm (1973) continues to say for success in school and personal life, a child needs to communicate, to express needs, desires, problems, knowledge, or information. Home behavior problems, school discipline problems, academic failure, poor attendance, low self-esteem, lack of



motivation, and withdrawal are many of the symptoms resulting from problems with communication.

Children in public schools need to communicate effectively because the culture and heritage of the school is different from theirs. Often educators are not aware of the cultural difference in the students. The student begins to feel he is sacrificing his values and culture. The school should consider the culture and home environment of the student so students can begin to develop values, positive self-esteem, and desired behaviors. Lack of motivation, discipline problems and academic failure are all results of a poor or low self-esteem (Gelarde & Miller, 1984).

Many culturally related characteristics such as shyness, lack of aggressiveness, and non-verbal communication are misinterpreted by non-Indian educators to be behavior problems or handicaps.

Another problem is the separation of school and home. Schools need to be a part of and to value the child's environment and to recognize that a different life style exists outside of the classroom, that a Navajo child brings into a school a different language, a different culture, different attitudes, out-looks, and values. Parents of these students should be included in the school. Parents are an asset because they bring a view of the whole child, and have concerns for what kind of an adult they would like their child to become. Schools need to identify with and become part of the community in which they are located. Schools should not alienate themselves. Schools need to be accountable to the students, parents, and community they serve. All parents care about their children but often times they do not know

how to help their children receive a quality education. Involvement in the school will help them to communicate with the school personnel and help teachers understand their child. They, in turn, will understand the educational setting.

Often times, "when the Navajo parents send their children to school, they feel that they have done their part, the school is to educate the child . . . an institution that has full control and responsibility for the child. If the child does not learn, it is the school's problem. . . . Whether he achieves while in school is not an issue" (Tempest, 1985). Navajo parents, as well as educators, need to become knowledgeable about bilingual education and develop an acute awareness of where their children fit in the total bilingual program.

"Lack of proficiency in the English language and cultural discontinuity are causes for low achievement of experiences between the home and school" (Chattergy, 1983). The appropriateness or inappropriateness of actions or tasks results in either the favorable or unfavorable judgment of the student. What is acceptable behavior in one setting may be unacceptable in another. These behaviors will either be encouraged and praised or the "child will suffer unpleasant consequences" if the behavior is unacceptable. These frequent discouragements will discourage participation of the student. The student is then penalized for not participating since classroom success is based on effective participation (Chattergy, 1983).

The lack of awareness on the part of educational administrators for their influence on these students is also a problem. Educational administrators in school districts can make critical differences in

either minimizing or eliminating negative outcomes. They can have significant positive long-term outcomes on the child's schooling. Traditional methods of teaching are not providing these limited English proficient students with successful educational outcomes. Without administrative leaders in our educational system who are sincere about implementing effective bilingual programs, there cannot be effective learning programs. "Unfortunately, except for training on the job, few administrators have received professional information about how best to meet the educational needs of limited English proficient students" (Fradd, 1987).

Another problem is the fear that American traditions and values are threatened by bilingualism. The use of two languages in school has always been an emotional controversy, even before the inception of federally funded bilingual programs. People hold their language, which is part of their cultural heritage and their national identity, in high esteem and of much value. In the United States, it has always been understood that English is the mother tongue of the country. Using a language other than English creates a concern for Americans because they feel American traditions and values are threatened. This fear has contributed to some of the problems bilingual education faces. They also feel if first language usage is continued or encouraged in school, the language and history of the United States will be suppressed. The fear and undue panic of politicians and the news media have added to the problems of bilingual education programs. The issues that initiated bilingual education have to be continued to be addressed, confronted, identified and solved in rational terms. Vague and misleading terms

need to be identified and clarified. Issues, concerns and needs, and definition of terms need to be clearly defined so that there will be no misunderstanding and there will be a common understanding by the people of the United States when bilingual education is discussed. "The issues that initiated bilingual education can no longer be ignored or covered over with emotional rhetoric" (Fradd, 1987).

In the research of Steinberg, Blaine, and Chan (1984), school experience is discussed as a contributing factor in student drop-out. Although this study discusses drop-outs, it presents an insight into the treatment of dominant Navajo speaking students. "Lack of responsiveness on the part of the educational system . . . little individualization of instruction . . . inflexible curricula that do not account for different level of student readiness, little variation in approaches to teaching English, and personnel who view cultural or language difference as deficiencies" all relate to bilingual education.

Another problem with bilingual education is that it is still viewed as a remedial program. In most programs, English is the only language used and the basic language skills in English are not developed. The misunderstood purpose behind bilingual education is "a remedial vehicle for assisting limited English proficient students to adjust to life in the United States" (Fradd, 1987).

Fradd goes on to say that when English is the only language used for communication in instructional bilingual education programs, there are misconceptions about the expectations of a bilingual education program. Bilingual does not mean using one language. The term bilingual usually refers to students fluent in two languages, one of the

languages being English, yet "bilingual" programs are frequently just English remediation programs. Only when students are proficient in the use of two languages are they true bilinguals. If students are learning English, bilingual is an inaccurate term to apply to them. Limited English proficient may more appropriately describe these students. Bilingual and limited English proficient (LEP) students are linguistically and culturally different. For LEP students, a language other than English is probably used in the home environment, whereas a bilingual student has had exposure to both his first language and English. This comparison is made with the middle-class, mainstream, English speaking American population where there are few true bilinguals. Most are dominant English speakers.

In the United States, the term bilingual is used with students that are still learning English. For these students, the term bilingual is inaccurate. Their academic expectations are the same as those who are proficient English speakers. The term "limited English proficient (LEP)" (Fradd, 1987) perhaps more accurately describes their status. "Only when students are fully proficient in two languages" can they be accurately called bilingual. These individuals can be termed "balanced bilinguals" (Fradd, 1987). However, just because a bilingual is termed a "balanced bilingual" (Fradd, 1987), their proficiency in the two languages can still be below that of monolingual speakers. "The term comparably limited bilingual can be applied to these students" (Fradd, 1987). The terms "non-English language background (NELB)" and "language minority students" (Fradd, 1987) may be used with students who are linguistically and culturally different from the host culture.

Students can also be more dominant in one language, although they are bilingual, and they are termed in the language in which they are strongest (Fradd, 1987).

The number of limited English proficient students (LEP) may be as many as 6.5 million, but because of differences in terms and procedures, accurate data has not been established (Fradd, 1987).

There is a need for better understanding of the procedures and better practices implemented by which evaluations and assessments can be used to improve instructional services for LEP students. Standardized testing programs or a project evaluation to meet funding requirements do not respond to the needs of classroom teachers which will provide quality instructional services. Useful practices can include curriculum alignment based on student assessment; monitoring student progress based on standardized tests, classroom performance, and informal assessment procedures, and program documentation (O'Malley, 1988).

Several problems are associated with assessing a student's language proficiency, which may produce inaccurate counts. (1) Parents and guardians may be limited English proficient themselves, so they may give an inaccurate evaluation of their child's English language proficiency. Also, (2) because of the negative attitudes and misconceptions of bilingual education, parents will deny that their children are limited English proficient (Fradd, 1987). In Newcomb Elementary, with which this author is associated, Language Survey forms are sent home with students for parents to complete. Teacher observation and the child's response to the teacher's instructions in English or Navajo, and the child's expressive language often discloses

discrepancies on the parent's response on the Language Survey forms. Oftentimes, parents state that they want their child taught in English only. (3) Limitations of financial and personnel resources may pressure school districts to rely on teacher referral rather than using assessment methods to determine which students are in need of services. (4) They may also serve students who have already been identified rather than identifying other students who are also in need of these services. (5) Limited English language proficiency may be seen as measuring intellectual ability. (6) The academic language may be lacking even if student's expressive language is used. (7) Often times, a student's lack of academic success may be attributed to bilingualism and no other reason for failure is explored (Fradd, 1987).

A final and important problem in bilingual education is the lack of value of bilingualism in the United States.

#### Evaluation of Non-Navajo Programs

The 1970's appear to be the decade of bilingual program evaluations. Current literature on bilingual program evaluations are dated no later than 1978. More recent literature is not available. As G. Richard Tucker and Gary A. Criho (1978) in their conference paper state, "During the past decade, it has become fashionable to include an evaluation component with each new bilingual education program. The proliferation of empirical evaluation studies seems, however, not yet to have shed much light on very basic issues, such as the relationship between language of instruction and cognitive growth, academic achievement or the development of reading, writing and speaking skills."

Baca and Cervantes (1986) discuss areas that need to be implemented in the evaluation of bilingual programs. These suggestions are: Compare definitions. Does the definition compare with the appropriateness of "your" program? Which definition is the most appropriate and what is the definition really saying?

What is the goal of the program? What are the misunderstandings of this goal? Are the goals realistic and appropriate?

What is the design of the program? What are the crucial factors influencing this design?

Compare types of bilingual programs. Choose the most appropriate program that is appropriate for your goals.

What are the methodologies? How do they differ between programs? What evidence supports success and effectiveness of the program?

"Although there is a great need for additional research, enough studies have been conducted that show the positive effects of bilingual instruction."

"In the case of bilingual education, our analysis of the realities of language contact may reveal that no formula can achieve exactly what is desired" (Mackey, 1977).

William Mackey (1977) seems to agree with Tucker and Criho in that he states, "A general evaluation of bilingual education is as meaningless as the question of whether bilingualism is good or bad. . . . We can only evaluate specific types of bilingual schooling one at a time for a particular group in an attempt to answer . . . specific questions. . . ." Do we want to evaluate "the effects of a certain formula of bilingual education" or "how this formula compares with a certain type



of unilingual schooling" or "is it the bilinguality of the program or its effects" (Mackey, 1977)? An evaluation of a bilingual program depends on what feature of the education program we want to examine or what specific questions we want answered. "As attempts to evaluate bilingual education have multiplied, people have . . . discovered more and more outside factors likely to affect the results" (Mackey, 1977).

The program seems to have become more important than the people the program is supposed to serve. "Furthermore, it has become increasingly obvious that political and social pressures are usually more important factors in producing changes in educational policy than the results of empirical research" (Tucker & Criho, 1978).

"Despite limited research due to lack of funding and inadequate program evaluations, enough evidence has accumulated to indicate that quality bilingual programs can meet the goal of providing equal educational opportunity for students from non-English speaking backgrounds" (Troike, 1978).

"Criticisms of the effectiveness of bilingual programs should consider the lack of basic and operational research needed to improve program quality. The present study provides evidence from twelve programs attesting to the effectiveness of bilingual education" (Troike, 1978).

According to Cardenas and Cardenas (1977) ". . . Black, Mexican-American, and economically disadvantaged children have not enjoyed the same success in school as that of the typical middle-class American because of a lack of compatibility between the characteristics of minority children and the characteristics of a typical instruction

program." According to Cardenas and Cardenas (1977) "over forty incompatibilities have been identified and grouped into five broad areas: poverty, culture, language, mobility, and societal perceptions." Educational plans for these minority children must consider these incompatibilities to eliminate racism and bring about change. "A developmental matrix, produced by the interrelationship of incompatibilities and elements, serves as the basis of an instructional program which will improve the performance of minority children, protect the rights of minority children and provide equality of educational opportunity" (Cardenas & Cardenas, 1977).

The Spanish Immersion Program (SIP) in Culver City, California "offers an innovative and highly successful approach to the development of proficiency in a foreign language in the elementary grades. The approach differs from most bilingual programs in that for the first two years the students are completely immersed in Spanish" (Kalmar, 1975). From second grade on "an hour a day of English instruction is added to the program. Additional instruction in English is added each year until, by sixth grade, instruction time in the two languages will be approximately equal." This "program is aimed primarily at the native English-speaking child although a few Spanish-speaking children are involved" (Kalmar, 1975). This is an "inexpensive" program because bilingual school staff are used. "Test scores indicate that students also do as well as or better than the students in the regular English-speaking classrooms in their mastery of basic skills" (Kalmar, 1975).

This program, in relation to the immersion program in the journal article of Holden (1975), discusses that the "program had marked

success: academic achievement, mother tongue competency, and other areas of intellectual development were not hampered. By grade 7, children who had begun in the program not only performed better than peers who had been through English-only programs in vocabulary tests, reading, spelling, and language skills, but also performed at or above the level of their . . . peers. Attitudes towards French-Canadians also improved, as well as general thinking skills, as a result of a bilingual program".

Research of immersion centers in Canada, which offer only immersion programs, indicate "although there are no definitive conclusions, it is suggested that such centers may offer a better educational program than other types of immersion" (McGillivrey, 1978).

In the study by Plante (1976) this "pairing model" which "consists of one native Spanish-speaking teacher who teaches basic skills in Spanish and an English-speaking teacher who teaches speaking, reading and writing in English" concluded "that the pairing model does increase the Spanish reading achievement of Spanish-dominant elementary school children at a statistically significant level. The model increased English reading achievement at all grades; the increase was statistically significant at the second grade level. Arithmetic and language art skills were all improved in comparison with those of children in typical classrooms. Evidence indicates that the pairing model did enhance the development of a positive self-concept in the . . . children, who exhibited less negative behavior." Zirkel (1975) also agrees that a model providing a major part of the instructional day in Spanish in addition to English had generally positive results.

In an annual evaluation report of the Milwaukee Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program, the results of the 1975-76 assessment of pupil progress includes observations by parents, teachers, administrators, and an educational resource team. This evaluation indicated progress when standardized test results were used to compare "Bilingual Program performance when compared with national norms and Title I or Spanish-surnamed comparison groups." Positive attitudes and positive self-concept were also demonstrated (Milwaukee Public Schools, 1976).

In the longitudinal evaluation by Hord (1976) "Some of the conclusions reached were: (1) subjects who received instruction in the bilingual curriculum reached achievement levels in vocabulary, comprehension, total reading, language usage and structure, and spelling that were equal to or better than the achievement levels reached by their older siblings who received instruction in the traditional school curriculum, and (2) bilingual instruction was significantly better in producing educational gain in the subject areas of comprehension, total reading, language usage and structure, and spelling."

"In order to probe whether enrollment in a bilingual program retards the learning of English as a second language" a comparison was made between "students in grades K-3 who receive English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction in the context of a bilingual program" and "similar students who receive ESL instruction within the traditional school program". Analysis in this experiment "indicates that students learning English in a bilingual program learn just as much English as

students learning it through ESL classes within a traditional curriculum" (Balasubramonian, Seelye, & DeWeffer, 1973).

In the evaluation of the Spanish bilingual program in Wilson School District, Phoenix, Arizona, Valencia (1970) said, "evaluations were made of this individual program (with a varying number of meetings per week) and of the comparative success of the various programs." The various programs included "an English Oral Language Program (EOLP) for children using nonstandard English, a Spanish Oral Language Program for non-Spanish-speaking children and for Spanish-surnamed with Spanish oral language deficiencies, and a Spanish Language Arts Program for pupils with a basic structure and phonology in Spanish." This support is for EOLP for children with limited proficiency in English. "While the Spanish language programs are . . . important . . . they do not appear as well-developed as the English-as-a-second-language component. With refinement of the Spanish language component, it is expected that the Wilson program will enhance the bilingualistic and overall academic development of the beginning pupil with limited English and/or Spanish" (Valencia, 1970).

Most of the extensive evaluations on bilingual education programs have been on Spanish bilingual programs. Evaluations on Navajo bilingual education programs are few and are not evaluated in isolation. Rather, they are evaluated among several American Indian groups together.

In one of the three studies regarding evaluations of Native American bilingual programs, the study was in "response to a need for more information regarding bilingual-bicultural education for other than

Spanish language groups. The study's objectives were to: (1) identify the major issues involved in bilingual-bicultural education for Native American, Indo-European, Asian and Pacific language groups; (2) document the goals, approaches, resources or costs that have been affected by these issues; (3) assess the impact bilingual-bicultural education has had in their communities; and (4) recommend possible federal program changes" (Battiste, 1975). One of the language groups included Navajo. "Among the major conclusions and recommendations: (1) Some evidence exists that Title VII is having long-range benefits to the bilingual groups being serviced. (2) There is a general lack of materials, teaching skills, expertise in planning materials development, and evaluation at the local project level" (Battiste, 1975). "Continuous technical assistance and training throughout the life of the projects" (Battiste, 1975) was another suggested improvement.

The Bilingual Education Act states that the alingual program is for "children of limited English-speaking ability" (Andersson & Boyer, 1978), meaning children whose dominant language is other than English, and therefore, they cannot successfully compete with dominant English speakers. The dominant Navajo speaking children are not successful in the classroom when they reach sixth grade. As Smith (1980) states, "One of the major problems is that bilingual educators clearly underestimate the complexities of language learning." Without comprehending the language of the teacher, the child cannot make himself understood, cannot express or explain his feelings, share in any discussion, stories, or rhymes (Melendez, 1981). What have bilingual education programs done to help these students? "There is little conclusive

evidence that they have bettered the education of minority-group children" (Smith, 1980). Navajo schools are not giving the dominant Navajo speaker a chance to learn his second language proficiently.

"The language difference is the biggest problem for Indians in public schools. Lack of linguistic proficiency causes failure in every subject area. Too many kids are repeating grades" (Mondragon, 1972). This statement was made in 1972 and now, seventeen years later, for those familiar with Navajo education programs on the reservation, this statement still echoes.

Another conflict that affects dominant Navajo speaking students exists in the school and classroom environments. The Navajo child begins his first school experience coming from a home where his world is meaningful and familiar into a school setting where his world is unfamiliar and meaningless. He is asked to stand in line, sit down, stay in the room, follow a time schedule, work in a small designated area along with other restrictions that are placed on him. Surely this child experiences a psychological shock; he becomes confused, distressed, feels helpless, and begins to immediately withdraw. There does not seem to be a connecting bridge between these two conflicting stages of life.

Statistics indicate that the drop-out rates for American Indian students is higher than for whites, but may be similar to or higher than those for other minority groups. Only 55% of Indian students graduate from high school, compared to 83% of white students (Kidwell, 1986).

The drop-out rate may be due to motivation. Adult family members cannot motivate their children because of their own low levels of

education. Thus, they are not aware of or cannot tell their children what further education will demand. The income level of families is a contributing factor to the poor motivation level. The 1980 census shows that the median income of Indian families was \$13,724; the average for white families was \$20,835 (Kidwell, 1986).

Parental involvement is crucial to the success of second language learners but Navajo parents are not assuming their role. Awareness of specific instructions for parents as suggested by Kidwell (1986) would be to develop a positive attitude in parents toward their child's education. These include the following: Be interested in what the child is doing at home and school. Talk to them and ask questions. Take time to listen to them. Show you are proud of them. Encourage them to do a good job. Respect elders. Teach the importance of sharing. Spend time doing special things with them. Let them go with you to tribal functions, meetings, ceremonies. Talk to children about places they go and new or old sights they see. Look over papers they bring home and praise them for their work. Encouragement and approval will make them want to do their best in school (Kidwell, 1986).

#### Evaluation of Bilingual Programs on the Navajo Reservation

In 1977, the Navajo Tribal Division of Education planned and developed a Bilingual/Bicultural Education Program for the Navajo Nation. Their rationale, educational philosophy, program goals and implementation of the Navajo Tribe's bilingual/bicultural "program" is grounded in the belief that language is the key to the preservation of a



culture and that firm command of one's culture is a prerequisite to successful comprehension of another language" (Navajo Tribe, 1977).

Within the Navajo Reservation, BIA boarding schools are prevalent and bilingual/bicultural programs are a major part of these schools. The Bureau of Indian Affairs role in American Indian education "is that of an advocate, helping Indian people get what they want and need in regard to education. The involvement of Indians in the educational program serving them is described as vital to the basic education objective of the BIA" (Hawkins, 1972). The BIA feels that "a central part of this objective is to carry out an effective program for students in Federal schools designed to prepare the student for successful living" (Hawkins, 1972).

To better understand the evaluations of bilingual education programs on the Navajo reservation, the use of a well written questionnaire, using specific techniques and strategies should be incorporated. "The general quality of bilingual research and evaluation is very poor. More and better research and improved program evaluations in bilingual education are necessary if the needs of language minority children are to be adequately met" (Baker & deKanter, 1983).

#### Status of Bilingual Programs on the Navajo Reservation

The term "bilingual" seems to be self-explanatory but when researching it, one finds there are many different ideas about this term. For example, skin color, surnames, dialects, history, and geographical locations have been used wrongly to identify individuals as

bilinguals. The term "bilingual" is not easily defined, even on the Navajo Reservation.

On the Navajo Reservation, children in schools seem to fit into one of the following categories: 1) the child whose dominant language is English, 2) the child whose dominant language is Navajo, 3) the child who uses both languages fluently, and 4) the child who is not fluent in either language.

In the preparation of this thesis, four schools were contacted for information about their bilingual programs. One responded positively, the second responded favorably, but a little reluctantly, the third referred the researcher to the Chapter IV coordinator, who in turn referred the researcher to three other outlying schools. These three referrals were not contacted because the author was interested in schools under State school districts. The fourth school said to call the next day. When called, they said the call would be returned. No call was returned.

Contacting the persons responsible for the bilingual programs presented some problems. Some people felt they had inadequate knowledge about the bilingual programs in their districts; there were inappropriate responses to inquiry, inappropriate referrals were made, and some individuals were very hesitant in discussing their programs.

Two schools were following the "Rock Point" model. The Rock Point model suggests an immersion type program with the language of immersion being Navajo.

Ft. Defiance Elementary School.

The bilingual program at Ft. Defiance Elementary School in Arizona, with Dr. Wayne Holm as the language specialist, is a Navajo immersion program.

This program is a Navajo immersion program because this type of program fits the needs of the local school area. Navajo students use their language while succeeding in school. The success of the student in the classroom is the success of the program.

The perception of present bilingual programs across the country is that they are in the same category as special education programs. Dr. Holm hopes the success of the students in this immersion program will change that perception — that bilingual education programs are not just dumping grounds for the less intelligent students (Blackhorse, 1989).

The Ft. Defiance Navajo immersion program began in 1985 with 50 kindergarten students. Each year since 1985, new students have entered this bilingual program in kindergarten. New grades are added to accommodate the students who were in the immersion program in their kindergarten year. To date, there are three classrooms each of kindergarten, first, and second grades, with 130 students. Next school year, third grade will be added to the program. To measure real success of a program, according to Holm, a program has to operate for four or five years.

Ten percent of the kindergarten students that enter school in Ft. Defiance speak Navajo well. One-third speak no Navajo. The other students speak or understand Navajo to some degree. Parents decide if

they want their student to participate in the Navajo immersion program (Blackhorse, 1989).

There are two levels of any language, conversational and academic. Most Navajo students lack the academic language which will help them think abstractly, gain general knowledge, make logical connections, and reason (critical thinking). Conversational language just helps a student "get by". "The 'real purpose' behind this immersion program is to help the Navajo students do better in school and experience successful learning. It is not the quantity but the quality that will measure the success of the program" (Blackhorse, 1989).

In the interview, Dr. Holm frequently touched on another problem which may seem obvious but is not seen or taken into consideration. There is a difference between the conversational and academic skills of the bilingual student. Cummins refers to his earlier research in 1974 and to Skutnabb-Kangas and Tonkoma, 1976, which revealed there is a "distinction between conversational and academic language skills." Unawareness of this distinction "can lead to prejudicial decisions regarding testing of minority students and exit from bilingual programs into all English programs." The minority student requires two years of exposure to English to reach "native-like" levels of conversational skills and requires five or more years for academic achievement to perform as well as his native English speaking peers (Cummins & McNeely, 1987). The native English speakers continue to make progress because they do not wait for the minority student to catch up to their level. Cummins and McNeely (1987) go on to say that administrators, teachers, and psychologists "often fail to take account of the difference between

these two aspects of proficiency when they test minority students." The assumption is that if the student appears to be fluent in English, "they have overcome all problems in learning English and that intelligence tests are valid." This assumption causes many students to be labeled as learning disabled or retarded on the basis of tests administered within one or two years of the students' exposure to English in school. The test scores are a direct result of the insufficient time the student has had with the English language. "Educators frequently assume that students are ready to survive without support in an all-English classroom on the basis of the fact that they appear to be fluent in English. Psychological tests should not measure academic potential until the student has been learning the school language for at least five years, because genuine learning capabilities would be masked by lack of proficiency in the school language. "The students' surface fluency in English cannot be taken as indicative of their overall proficiency in English" (Cummins & McNeely, 1987). The psychologists involved with testing second language learners should become advocates for the students by carefully scrutinizing the background and the context from which the child comes. Diagnosis should not play a primary role in locating a problem with the second-language learner. Psychologists should not "continue to test students until they indeed find the disabilities that could be invoked to explain students' apparent academic difficulties" (Cummins & McNeely, 1987).

### Tuba City Elementary School.

The Tuba City Elementary bilingual program includes kindergarten through eighth grade. With a parent's request and signed permission, students are placed in bilingual programs.

Tests used for placement are local criterion referenced tests and the Window Rock Language Proficiency Test. To measure success of students and the effectiveness of the bilingual program, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills is used.

This program is a transitional program. There are eleven bilingual education classrooms in the Tuba City School District with 177 students in grades Kindergarten through eighth.

### Newcomb and Naschitti Schools.

In the Newcomb and Naschitti schools, the kindergarten through sixth grades are included in the bilingual programs, which are comprised of seventeen classrooms in Newcomb and eight in Naschitti. Navajo paraprofessionals are hired to teach the Navajo first language learners. It is assumed these paraprofessionals speak the child's first language and will aide in concept development through the child's first language.

These bilingual programs are transitional and use the IDEA (Individualized Development of English Achievement) for English oral language development. A daily requirement of forty minute lessons per student is supposed to be developed and included in the instruction of the IDEA program.

Training through workshops, on-site college courses, and summer on-campus courses for staff development is a component of this program.

The California Test of Basic Skills measures the "success" of all students. These test scores indicate that the students in Newcomb are at least an average of one and one-half years below grade level in their reading level. Any improvements in these scores are probably not indicative of the success of a well-operated bilingual program but rather the focus in the language arts area.

## CHAPTER III

## DISCUSSION

Navajo History

It may be helpful for this discussion if the reader understood more about Navajo culture so this chapter will start with a brief discussion of Navajo history and culture.

Unrecorded language has kept Navajos at a stand still for thousands of years. Only through traditions and folk-lore passed down through families or clans has the history been obtained. Language, archeology, comparative data, and other factors have helped to recreate the history of the Navajo. Anthropologists concur that the American Indian crossed into the New World over the short water span of the Bering Strait between eastern Siberia and Alaska, or over the Aleutian Islands that reach westward from Southern Alaska to Asia.

We know that the language spoken by the Navajo of today is Athabascan. Although there are English, Spanish, and Puebloan words, the Navajo language is still pure Athabascan. Through language, the Navajo is related to other Athabascan speaking tribes.

The first historical reference to the Navajos in the Southwest was in the "relaciones" of father Geronimo Zarate-Salmeron. It places the Navajos in the vicinity between 1538 and 1626.

The geographical location in the latter part of the 16th and early 17th century places the Navajo between the Chama River and the upper San Juan River in New Mexico.



Some anthropologists believe the Navajo entered the southwest about 1400 A.D. from the north. Some linguists, because of the language, also believe this to be so.

"For nearly five years - from 1863 to 1868 - Fort Sumner was the concentration camp for the majority of Navajo Indians, rounded up by an intensive military campaign conducted by General James Carleton and Colonel Christopher 'Kit Carson'" (Bailey, 1970).

In September of 1863, Brigadier General James Carleton, a "seasoned Indian fighter" conceived the idea of sending the Navajo to Fort Sumner (Bosque Redondo), because it would be "cheaper to feed them than to fight them." Thus, the "long walk" to Fort Sumner. In late April, 1864, more than 8,000 Navajos were at Fort Sumner. The Navajo were held prisoner for four years. They were men and women without a country. These years were years of hardship, disease, and near starvation. "The stress endured by the Navajos during this period will never be fully understood, for it is nearly impossible for white men to fathom the effects on personality and culture which this upheaval must surely have had" (Bailey, 1970). With the broken condition of the Navajo, they would no longer pose a threat to others so they were allowed to return to their homeland (a large tract of land lying within described boundaries) (van Valkenburgh, 1974). "The tribe was returned to a land area one-quarter the size of what their former domain had been" (Mitchell, 1973).

As early as 1865, when 8,000 Navajos were imprisoned in Fort Sumner, adobe buildings were used for Navajo schools. These early

schools were not successful because the Navajo showed very little interest in them.

"The Navajo Peace Treaty negotiated between the United States and the Navajo Indian tribe in 1868 marked the close of one of the most traumatic and tragic periods in the history of the American Southwest" (Mitchell, 1973).

The treaty of 1868 was signed at Fort Sumner on June 1, 1868. It was approved and confirmed by the Senate on July 25, 1868 and proclaimed by President Johnson on August 12, 1868. The treaty stated the Navajo Tribe and the United States were to be at peace. Tribal annuities, or monies, which might be paid to the tribe would be used for payment if the Navajos caused anymore harm. The treaty also stipulated that there would be compulsory education for children six to sixteen years old. The Navajo sent the least favorite and slave children to school and kept the stronger and better ones to herd sheep. In 1881, the first boarding school was opened. Attendance was low and irregular.

In 1887, legislation was passed by Congress and became law for compulsory school attendance for Indian children. When there were attempts to enforce this law, the Navajo attacked the enforcers. Compulsory education may have caused the Navajo to regard education as having little value in their culture.

In 1904, two new schools were opened. When John Collier became commissioner in 1932, forty-seven day schools were built and equipped.

There is a lot of pressure on the Indians of the United States today. The Indian carries with him his culture, history, traditions, and language. To most non-Indian members of our society, assimilation

and moving into the dominant society seems to be the solution for the Indians (Bauman, 1980).

Although many Indian languages have disappeared or are probably facing extinction, the Navajo language is not just enduring nor is it declining. It is an example of a flourishing language and has over 100,000 speakers, more than any other American Indian language. The Navajo Tribe is the largest in the United States and occupies the largest reservation (Bauman, 1980).

Many Navajo children learn only the Navajo language in the home, thereby successfully maintaining their language. English is learned in the schools. The number of Navajo speakers continues to increase, according to Bauman (1980). Employment outside the reservation and increased education causes some parents to neglect teaching the Navajo language to their children. The number of people learning to read and write the Navajo language is bringing about modernization of the language (Bauman, 1980).

The Navajo have a history of being a group of people who strongly resist a strict and restrictive style of living. The Navajo of today still feels he has control of his existence, as demonstrated in his reluctance to be at a specific place at a specific time, thus the term "Indian time." If one tries to meet deadlines, it may cause his/her death, so make no plans or preparations for the future. Very short term plans may be made but one has to be sure to state these plans are not specific and are indefinite. This traditional way of thinking has directly affected Navajo government, schools, and programs on the reservation.

On working at the schools on the reservation, one recognizes low attendance, the high drop out rate, low achievement, and discipline problems in the schools. These are signs that schools are not serving the Navajo student sufficiently and making their education worthwhile. Government funding is still quite important in providing funding to the schools.

The Navajo of today has not been convinced that education will cause his success. The Navajo values his culture. The ultimate goal of the Navajo Nation is self-determination; self-determination so that the Navajo Nation will survive and grow (Navajo Nation Education Policies, 1985). How will self-determination come about? Self-determination will come about through successful education. The Navajo War Leader Manueltio was convinced that "education was the ladder . . ." which would help his people gain independence and pride, and urged the Navajo to take that "ladder," although in the last ten years of his life, he was unhappy and certain that he was wrong in encouraging education. The Navajo of 1989 still believe in the quote "education is the ladder . . ." (van Valkenburgh, 1974).

The Navajo of 1989, as with the Navajo of 1868, still have their clan system. With Navajos, there is no distinction made between clan and blood relatives. They are all in one. No matter where a Navajo goes, there will always be relatives. Without knowledge of your clan, you are an orphan and will act as if you are one. Education of the clan system is of utmost importance to the Navajo.

As much "progress" as the Navajo have made, the medicine men are still the center of a Navajo existence. No matter where in the world a

Navajo lives, he returns within the Navajo four sacred mountains often, to use the services of a medicine man. One medicine man is not a cure all for every ailment or situation; however, each medicine man is a specialist in a specific ceremony or prayer.

The Navajos of 1989 are still Navajo Indians believing in the ceremonies, songs, and prayers of his people. They are still just as complex as the Navajos of 1865.

It is well recognized by everyone in the United States that there are minority races within a majority race. The Indians of America are a minority race. The Anglo-Saxon "white" race is the recognized dominant race. To some, perhaps "white" signifying purity. Navajos have been educated with this concept. As soon as comprehension of this concept is instilled, the Navajo feels inferior to the "white" people.

Schools on the Navajo reservation attempt to be like the white American schools. Schools have not been effective in their differing attempt to connect the two concepts of life, the Navajo and the white. These schools alienate themselves, causing the two cultures to continually be in conflict. The Navajo child's environment, culture, and language is not considered and is ignored. The Navajo parents send their children to school as a token of appreciation. Children do not have full support of their parents. Student's success in school does not seem to be a high priority with parents. The lack of the two cultures respecting each other causes underlying problems which probably never surface to be recognized and resolved. A total lack of respect by the Navajo parents for the school the child attends is observed through the lack of response and support through parent-teacher organizations,

classroom visitation programs, sports, games, other special activities and volunteer work. In fact, the Navajo recognize the public school as the "white children's school" and the Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools are termed "government's school." If the Navajo felt the schools on the reservation were their's, the terms used for them would reflect this acceptance. To the Navajo parents, there is no recognition of equality in the school system for Navajo children.

In discussions with various teachers from other schools across the reservation, the consensus, or attitude, seems to be that all children are English speaking with no language or cultural differences. Even the attitudes of the Navajo teachers, who obviously should recognize differences, seems to be one of purposely ignoring it, adding to the enigma of the situation. Perhaps they feel if they acknowledge the differences, they will have to sacrifice their ideals for a different philosophy. College level education most certainly does not recognize differences in ability, culture, beliefs, or philosophies. It gears individuals in one direction of thinking so when a Navajo teacher returns to the reservation, methodologies and approaches learned are not congruent with Navajo ways. In fact, many educated Navajo probably do not view themselves as being a part of their people. To get involved would lessen their educational quality and progress. Perhaps to be involved in the issue of Indian education would be so paramount and insurmountable that many purposely refuse to get involved. Some are willing to sacrifice their heritage for "assimilation."

Dedication, sensitivity, uniqueness, and a sense of caring because they are part of the Navajo people should be the qualities of an

educated Navajo. They should be the very ones planning programs to accommodate learning styles of the Navajo child and using methods, techniques, and strategies to accommodate the Navajo students.

### Bilingual Education

Title IV of the Civil Rights Act states that "no person in the United States shall on the grounds of race, color or national origin be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal assistance" (Chattergy, 1983). This law was challenged in the Lau vs. Nichols case and the Supreme Court's decision of 1974 upheld the mandate. Bilingual education is not an educational alternative but a civil right. The 1978 Bilingual Educational Act also required that districts provide limited English students with more than English oral skills. Instruction must involve total academic language proficiency which will help provide a guideline for an educational program for the limited English proficient student. The Lau Remedies provided five language categories to identify students that have difficulty with instruction in the English language: (a) monolingual speaker (other than English only); (b) dominant speaker (other language); (c) bilingual (speaks equally in both languages); (d) dominant English speaker (but also speaks other language); and (e) monolingual speaker (English only).

There is much confusion surrounding bilingual education in the United States. The confusion seems to be related to the areas of: (1) which program design and model of operation is appropriate for the limited English proficient (LEP) student; (2) appropriate terms and

definitions associated with the components of bilingual education; (3) the effectiveness of bilingual education; (4) the effectiveness of bilingual programs; (5) evaluation and assessment processes and procedures; (6) the identification of students to be placed in these programs; and (7) the entry and exit criteria for bilingual programs.

There is also confusion about the purpose of bilingual education. Children come to school for their academic learning and also to learn socially acceptable behavior. Bilingual education should be seen as part of this educational process, but it is seen by many as a remedial program. Other terms frequently associated with bilingual education are supplementary, compensatory, education alternative, handicapping condition, and even special education. Some Americans see the purpose of bilingual education as maintaining the mother language instead of as learning the English language. These same people even see bilingual education as producing and maintaining a permanent subculture instead of maintaining American traditions, culture, and values.

#### Bilingual Education as a Political Issue

Bilingual education has become a political issue. Political and social pressures seem to be important factors in influencing changes in educational policies. Bilingual education is viewed by some policy makers to be un-American. Even the positive effects of using two languages in instruction for LEP students seem to be ignored by educational leaders, politicians, and the media.



### Bilingual Education as a Threat to Americans

People who do not value bilingualism associate bilingualism with the disadvantaged, the poor, and the uneducated. These people do not respect differences in culture nor language. Despite this type of "closed-minded" attitude, there exists within the United States a diverse population. This population is continually changing as new people arrive into the country from various nations, for various reasons. Bilingual programs that consider social, economic, and divergent populations are more successful at meeting the educational needs of the bilingual students. Critics seem to choose to ignore the fact that time is required to develop English proficiency.

### Bilingual Conflicts

Even on the Navajo reservation, bilingual education exists in conflict. To the Navajo, education is not a priority. They do not value education; employment is of more value than education. One does not need to read evaluations nor statistics to realize that the school drop-out rate on the Navajo reservation is severe. This is encountered through everyday life on the reservation. Navajo parents of today, because of their childhood experiences in schools, do not support the schools their children attend. This is demonstrated through their absence at parent-teacher organizations, school boards, clubs, functions at school, activities, and parent visitations. Nor do Navajo parents come in as volunteers to help in the classrooms or schools.

Jobs are of more value to the Navajo. Employment is what feeds the family. Many Navajo men will leave their homes and families for

employment. Navajos know that education will bring in more and better wages but their families need food on the table now. They will accept any type of employment that is available and they take pride in any type of work because the end result is money for family needs.

If a family member wants an education, s/he achieves it by whatever means s/he can. One cannot expect, nor should they expect, their family to help them financially. The resources from the family just are not there.

There has always been resistance to education among the Navajo. Perhaps education became compulsory for many Indian children when there was still strong resistance to the encroachment of the whiteman, and it remains part of the present day Navajo way. It may also be the past experience of parents in schools. The treatment they received in school was an assault on personal identities with a total lack of respect for the individual. There may be misunderstanding of the roles of the school. The Navajos value their language, culture, and traditions, but education is not valued; the school values the English language but not the Navajo language, nor the culture or traditions of the Navajo. The prevailing attitude in schools is to teach English, not Navajo. The hostile attitude of parents and unconcerned attitude of both parents and school personnel is affecting implementation of effective bilingual education programs. Lack of integration of both cultures has serious effects and causes the loss of effective and appropriate education for the second language learner.

### Intellectual Accomplishments of Bilinguals

Research indicates that there are two types of language, academic and conversational. A second language learner requires five or more years to become proficient in his second language, and then begins to use it successfully for academic learning. The conceptual knowledge he developed in his first language will require less input in his second language. As several researchers have shown, the use of two languages for instruction has very positive results in the academic performance of LEP students. The use of the Navajo language to acquire academic language and literacy skills in reading and writing would bring about a more meaningful education to the LEP student. The emphasis in many bilingual programs on the reservation seems to be to use the Navajo child's first language only long enough for this dominant Navajo speaker to become proficient in English, and not for acquiring academic skills. This also may be a misunderstanding on the part of the school personnel who do not realize that a child can become proficient in English and still not have the academic language to acquire academic skills. The use of two languages will be an important influence on the child's academic and intellectual development because becoming proficient in the second language will add to skills s/he already possesses.

Formal learning in the mother tongue has not always been encouraged for the Navajo student, and even today, in many schools across the reservation, speaking Navajo is not encouraged. By forcing students to learn in English before they are ready may leave children illiterate in their mother tongue and may also leave children illiterate in their second language as well. The needs of a non-English or LEP

student is far greater than for the native English speaker. The Navajo people should be advocates in promoting the use of the Navajo language in schools. It should be understood that by approaching education in any language, one can be successful.

#### Developing and Implementing a Bilingual Program

One of the purposes of this thesis was to review all of the issues and components of bilingual education, seeking ideas and practices that could be used to enhance educational programs for the second language learner on the Navajo Reservation.

The information found dealt with the following: history of bilingual education, policies, issues, philosophies and ideas in establishing a program, success of program components, pros and cons (is it worth the trouble and expense), effectiveness of bilingual programs, types of programs, various controversies surrounding program components, researchers' perceptions of bilingual education, language needs of children, evaluations of various program components, academic achievements of bilingual students, teacher training programs, and individual studies of programs which may or may not have included a control group. There were no detailed reports regarding all of the components of bilingual programs, such as classroom organization, program design and implementation, procedures, guidelines, qualifications of personnel, tests used, evaluation designs, and how to establish or set up a program.

### Evaluation of Bilingual Programs

The three models most mentioned and discussed in the literature are the maintenance, immersion, and transitional models.

There are several reasons why the maintenance model would be used: (1) the language of a certain ethnic group has become extinct or lost so the language is being revived and restored; (2) the language is fast becoming extinct and attempts are being made to save the language; (3) the present language (in existence) has few fluent speakers so attempts are being made to maintain the language by teaching the language so as to have more speakers of that language; (4) language loyalty or appreciation of the mother tongue of their heritage so they can remain identified with their heritage; and (5) to create boundaries for their group.

The maintenance model on the Navajo Reservation could be used for Navajo students who do not speak and understand their native language and who wish to become proficient and fluent in the Navajo language. The parents' appreciation of the mother tongue of their heritage is probably the reason most parents' enroll their children in existing bilingual programs. Usually, most of these parents are fluent speakers of the Navajo language but for various reasons, their children do not speak the Navajo language and they want their children to learn and speak Navajo. There are not any so called maintenance models on the reservation but several schools do teach non-Navajos or non-Navajo speaking children the Navajo language and literacy skills in their bilingual programs. The maintenance model under this concept could be incorporated along with

any other bilingual model. Navajo children would then have opportunity to become proficient Navajo speakers.

On the Navajo reservation, the most popular name given to bilingual programs is the transitional model. The transitional model concerns itself with moving limited English proficient students into English as quickly as possible. This model seems to reflect the concern held by many Americans, that using another language prevents the development of English skills and fluency. The concern here should not be to move into the English language "as quickly as possible." Research indicates that a non-English speaker or an LEP student needs at least five years of exposure to his second language to become academically proficient in that language. Many educators and policy makers fail to understand the complexities of learning an academic language. There eventually will be a transition from the non-English language to proficiency in English if the time factor is not stressed or pressure put on the child to learn his second language "as quickly as possible." Research also indicates that the non-use of the child's mother tongue in instruction may cause eventual dropping out of school because the child continues to fail academically when he was not given sufficient time to learn English. The transitional model seems to bring about a distorted image of what bilingual education is or is supposed to be.

In a transitional model, the English-as-a-second-language (ESL) is a component. Through structured lessons which require drill and practice, the child hopefully acquires correct grammar and sentence structure. In the ESL lessons, phonemic discrimination may not be a problem for the LEP student because of his knowledge of English whereas

for a non-English speaker, it is a major hindrance to his learning if he cannot decode what he hears the teacher saying.

Navajo language sentence structures are in reverse from English. Example: "Look at the bear" in Navajo would be "Shash ninili " or "Bear look at." (Shash is bear). To a Navajo child who is learning English, the word "bear" as he understands it in the Navajo context would be at the beginning. If he is learning English, the word "bear" would be at the end. Also, some English consonants are absent in the Navajo language such as r, f, v, th (soft and hard sounds), so Navajo speakers make substitutions for these sounds. For instance, the name Roger may be pronounced "Waaajo" in Navajo, or the word "those" may become "dose", substituting d for th, or w for r. Also, the letters d and t and b and p sound the same. So with the complexities of learning a second language, the Navajo students English pronunciations of words may sound like inappropriate English grammar. The Navajo speaker is trying to use what he (unconsciously) knows about his language structure and grammar and attempts to apply them to the English language, not realizing that the structure of English is frequently opposite of Navajo.

For a transitional model to be effective, one would need to understand the complexities, perplexities, distinguishing features, phonology and morphology of the Navajo language. For this reason, perhaps, bilingual programs called transitional program models on the reservation are in reality English immersion programs. School personnel, because they are exposing the non-English or IEP students to English throughout the day, they assume the students are making a transition from Navajo speakers to English speaking students.

In these pseudo-transitional programs, English literacy instruction is emphasized. If any instruction is done in Navajo, it is only used to help the non-English speaker or LEP student to bridge the gap between Navajo and English for proficiency in English.

In many schools on the Navajo Reservation, the main component in the bilingual program is the transitional model. The "pairing" or cooperative teaching method is seen by some schools as a transitional model, because one-half of the day is for English and the other half for Navajo. Students taught in this type of bilingual program spend one-half day being totally taught in English and other half-day taught totally in Navajo. For the purpose of learning the academic language, this type of "transitional" model should not be used because it seems to discriminate against the non-English speaking student.

Although many programs on the reservation are called transitional models, they are in essence English immersion models. They are immersion models because the language of instruction is English. Even the ESL lessons are taught in English. Navajo is used only as a connecting bridge between Navajo and English. These English immersion programs used by many schools become a sink-or-swim program for Navajo students. The hypothesis behind immersion models (or the immersion models which call themselves transitional models) are that second language learners academic difficulties are attributed to insufficient exposure to English. Attempts are, therefore, made to expose these students to as much English as possible, so English is used throughout the school day.



Even the one-half day English and one-half day Navajo programs are immersion models because Navajo and English are not used together when instruction is being conducted.

There are a few schools on the reservation that rightfully call their bilingual programs immersion models. The language of immersion is Navajo. Navajo is the language used for instruction and developing literacy skills throughout the day. Only with parental permission are students selected for these programs. The regular classroom uses only English instruction, and are not considered bilingual programs. In one immersion program, by fourth grade, the students spend one-half day in English instruction and the other half-day in Navajo instruction. Since research indicated that it takes five years for a student to become proficient in his second language, the results have not yet been evaluated in this three year old program.

For the Navajo Reservation, the immersion model is perhaps the ideal model to incorporate into the Navajo bilingual programs with the language of immersion being Navajo. The students that qualify for the bilingual program, based on their language needs, would be placed in a Navajo instruction only classroom, or a one-half day English instruction and one-half day Navajo program. Navajo classroom teachers would be used for the total Navajo instruction program or if none are available, non-Navajo speaking teachers with highly qualified Navajo speaking paraprofessionals would be used. In the one-half day Navajo or English instruction program, team teaching, cooperative teaching, or "pairing" models could be used, so Navajo and English are being spoken in the same classroom.

The immersion model sounds like an ideal model but in reality it means change, hard work, dedication and commitment by both parents and teaching staff. The rethinking of the whole range of the educational system serving the non-English speaking and IEP student would have to be restructured. The restructuring, the time, the trouble, and the expense of this educational process would truly be worth the effort.

Another problem area that research has focused on is the problem of language assessment. It is evident from the research that assumptions cannot be made that the tests being used to identify IEP students will measure what they should be measuring. Tests used as measures must fit the objectives and goals of the program. Examiners must understand the components of the test for proper evaluation and assessment of the student. What in the child's language is the tester looking for when assessing language proficiency (phonological, lexical, syntax, or contexts of language)? With the Navajo students, the syntactical and use of language in various contexts are probably the most important aspects to identify. The phonology (pronunciation) and lexical (dialect) of students are not that diverse so these two would not pose any great problems if assessing the Navajo language, but if English is being assessed, these two would be critical.

When evaluations of bilingual programs are studied, one needs to bear in mind that many of these evaluations have limitations due to the many variables found in making comparisons. These variables influence and affect the interpretation of outcomes of programs.

Factors that may affect bilingual education program outcomes are:  
(1) the degree of implementation; (2) school personnel attitudes; (3)

training of school personnel (teachers and administration); (4) staff turnover; (5) learning environments; (6) funding; (7) appropriate bilingual materials; and (8) language assessments.

Evaluations indicate few bilingual programs are well implemented nor do they remain at a high level of implementation for a long period of time. Evaluations need to be studied in terms of appropriateness for the group involved. Perceptions and bias' in evaluations are also another factor that influences evaluations.

Evaluations in research state that there are no simple or single answers to questions in bilingual education.

There does not appear to be evaluations in the literature later than 1978. The evaluations that have been done do not shed much light on very basic issues.

There is little information as to how minority groups are evaluated. There does not seem to be a specific evaluation procedure used for this type of evaluation.

The evaluations found in the literature in general indicate that bilingual programs are effective and students that go through bilingual programs perform better than those going through an English only program. Public support for bilingual programs seem to be diminishing however.

It is difficult to keep politics out of bilingual program evaluations. Legislators can propose changes which affect bilingual education policies. Some politicians' attitudes and prejudices toward non-Anglo cultures may have crucial effects on programs, there are many leaders that desire programs that provide second language learners with

learning opportunities. Political support is needed for bilingual education programs if bilingual education is to survive.

## CHAPTER IV

## CONCLUSIONS

Bilingual Education

Even though there is much confusion surrounding bilingual education, research evidence indicates that the long range effects of bilingual education does provide equal educational opportunities for the second language learner. The endeavors of individuals who are committed to bilingual education are enhancing successful education for these minority students.

Bilingual Education as a Political Issue

Bilingual education will always be a political issue because of political and social pressures. Bilingual education is not only an educational issue but also a political issue.

Bilingual Education as a Threat to Americans

To many Americans, bilingual education is a real threat. To them, the language, culture, traditions and values of America is in jeopardy. They feel bilingual education students will not learn their second language nor learn the history or culture of American, so they feel bilingualism is un-American.

Intellectual Accomplishments of IEP Students

Bilinguals are seen by many as incapable of intellectual accomplishments and bilingualism will always be blamed for the students' lack of success in school. It is still widely believed that using the student's first language will retard academic progress or prevent the

mastery of their second language (English) but there is no real evidence to support this idea. In fact, there is strong evidence that the use of two languages in instruction has a significantly positive effect on the performance and learning outcomes of IEP students in the mastery of language development and academic learning.

### Bilingual Conflicts

Bilingual and regular education exist in conflict. The parents value their language, culture, and traditions. The schools value the English language and the American way of life. They do not value the Navajo language, culture, or traditions. It is more productive to educate the school personnel on Navajo values, language, culture, and tradition than it would be to try to change the parents views of American values which are based on upper middle class monolingual speakers. It is essential to resolve conflicts so students can stay in school to learn and acquire academic literacy skills for employment or college. Perceptions should be explored and methods devised to resolve conflicts.

### Developing and Implementing a Bilingual Program

The subject of bilingual education has so many phases and aspects that the literature becomes complex and is almost incomprehensible. There are no easy solutions or answers to developing and implementing a successful bilingual program. The commitment and endeavors of individuals seem to mark the successes of good programs.

### Evaluation of Bilingual Programs

There are evaluations of bilingual programs in the United States in the literature for other minority groups. On the Navajo Reservation, there are on-going evaluations but the review of literature does not reflect this. Evaluation reports support positive outcomes and positive effectiveness of bilingual education programs in the United States.

Research indicates minority students are more apt to fail in the school system as a result of their linguistic and cultural differences.

Researchers also agree that for second language learners, the best medium for learning is the mother tongue, or home language. Children who learn through two languages learn as well as those who learn only through one language. The mother tongue also eases culture shock of the school, helps the child retain a positive self-concept, and a sense of self-worth as the child experiences success in school.

There are very few true bilingual programs on the Navajo Reservation, whose goal is to produce academically bilingual students.

Most bilingual programs on the Navajo Reservation are English immersion programs. Some of these programs are called transitional models but they are not transitional models because English is the only medium of instruction. The so-called transitional models purpose is not to create bilingual students but to assimilate them into American Anglo society.

Bilingualism is not the intent of the Bilingual Education Act. The goal of this legislation is for all minority children to become proficient in the English language.

It is extremely difficult to find a valid testing instrument that will assess language proficiency. Academic language ability and academic achievement cannot be measured through a language dominance test. Communication or oral language proficiency ability may be determined through language dominance tests. These testing measurements are an important component of the Bilingual Education law. They help to determine proper placement to provide appropriate programs that will benefit the LEP student.



## CHAPTER V

### RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Bilingual Education

Research needs to be continued if the confusion of vital issues surrounding bilingual education are to be resolved. Programs need continuous monitoring and assistance through the life of the program.

#### Bilingual Education as a Political Issue

Up-to-date explanations of bilingual education should be an on-going process made available to the public and especially political figures. These should be addressed in terms that would be stated clearly to enhance common understanding. Political rhetoric should be avoided because of the ambiguity it causes.

#### Bilingual Education as a Threat to Americans

To avoid confusion about the purpose of bilingual education, people of the United States should be educated to realize that the Bilingual Education legislation was not intended to promote any other language but English.

#### Intellectual Accomplishments of LEP Students

Develop an awareness among educators that bilingualism does not cause academic difficulties. Academic failures are caused by two factors: (1) not providing meaningful learning opportunities; and (2) the lack of high achievement expectations for bilingual students. Value and respect for both cultures needs to be brought to the attention of

school administrators and school personnel continuously. All schools on the Navajo Reservation should be totally bilingual.

### Bilingual Conflicts

In-service training on the values of the Navajo people should be mandatory for school personnel. School personnel should be taught what issues are in conflict between the parents and the school, and ways to try to resolve these conflicts for better understanding. Year-round schools should be considered for Navajo students.

### Developing and Implementing a Bilingual Program

Bilingual programs on the reservation should use the Navajo language as a medium for learning in the primary schools, kindergarten through sixth grade. This is an important component for the Navajo bilingual programs.

There is a need for specific information for what makes a bilingual program successful, as well as information on how to set up a successful program which would meet local needs and circumstances.

The immersion model of the bilingual program focusing on the Navajo language, should be established and incorporated in the present educational system on the Navajo Reservation.

All schools on the Navajo Reservation (Bureau of Indian Affairs boarding schools, parochial [mission], public, and contract schools) should study student program outcomes and come to a consensus about what aspects of a bilingual education program should be implemented in order to have successful bilingual programs across the reservation. There is need of a regional or central office which provides services, expertise,

evaluation and assessments, testing instruments, and information dissemination on the Navajo Reservation for the Navajo bilingual programs.

#### Evaluation of Bilingual Programs

The Navajo need to develop sophisticated evaluation processes. School districts should be required to increase cooperative efforts, stressing need for on-going commitment, so evaluation processes will fit the programs on the reservation.

Navajo bilingual education programs should use present sources and resources available to them to develop effective programs that will benefit the Navajo students and be within the framework of the Bilingual Education law (P.L. 90-127). Present sources and resources available should be used to devise and develop valid language proficiency assessment procedures. These assessment procedures should include different components of language proficiency so a single test score cannot be used for a multitude of purposes.

Evaluations, whether negative or positive, of Navajo bilingual programs need to be written up and published.

A grant should be written to evaluate all Navajo bilingual programs.

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