

# The ACIE Newsletter

News from the American Council on Immersion Education

10th Anniversary Issue

May 2007  
Vol. 10, No. 3

## Top Ten Reasons For Becoming An Immersion Teacher of An Indigenous Language

By Keiki K.C. Kawai'ae'a, Director, Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education  
Hale Kuamo'o Hawaiian Language Center, University of Hawai'i Hilo, HI

*I ka 'lelo no ke ola, i ka 'lelo no ka make.*

(In language there is life, in language there is death.)

**T**he ability to sustain or revitalize a native language as a vibrant and living language is increased greatly by the availability of immersion schools. Qualified teachers who are fluent in the language are essential for insuring school success through the target language.

In 1983, there were fewer than fifty children under the age of eighteen fluent in the Hawaiian language. The inception of the Pūnana Leo preschools in 1984, and then the Papahana Kaiapuni K-12 immersion schools in 1987 has played a central role in the revitalization of the Hawaiian language.

Teachers who are fluent in the language and prepared to teach within an immersion setting contribute to the academic success factor and fluency of the students through Hawaiian. The year 2007 marks the twentieth anniversary of Hawaiian immersion education within the public sector. Some thirty-four schools with an enrollment of about 2,000 students are now available statewide from preschool to grade twelve.



Na'ilima Gaison teaches Kindergarten at Nawahiokalani'opu'u Hawaiian Language Immersion School

The immersion approach is also being used in higher education from the undergraduate through doctorate level. Ka Haka 'Ula O Ke'eliklani College of Hawaiian Language at the University of Hawai'i offers multiple degrees conducted through Hawaiian. Building educational models and enhancing environments where Hawaiian language thrives as the language of communication, business and education further contribute to the presence of Hawaiian as a living language.

The Kahuawaiola Indigenous Teacher Education Program is preparing a new generation of educators. This culture-based education program builds upon a record of Hawaiian language education success and

### WHAT'S INSIDE?

#### Teacher Voices

- Ten Reasons to Become an Immersion Teacher in an Indigenous Language 1
- Ten Things I Wish I'd Known as an Immersion Teacher 3

#### Best Practices

- Ten Teacher Behaviors that Improve Proficiency 4
- Ten Behaviors We Like to See 6

#### Research Reports

- Ten Most Consistent Findings From Research on Foreign Language Immersion 7
- Ten Research Findings on Minority Language Learners 9
- Ten Items on the Research Agenda for Two-way Immersion 11

#### The Bridge: From Research to Practice (see insert)

- Ten Responsibilities of Immersion Administrators

#### Immersion 101

- Ten Considerations to Successfully Implement a New Program 13

#### Milestones

- First Ten Immersion Programs in the U.S. 16

#### Techno Tips

- Ten Techno Tips from the ACIE Archives 18

#### Points for Parents

- Ten Answers for Parents 20

#### Student Voices

- Ten Quotes from Early French Immersion Students 22

## THE ACIE NEWSLETTER

Volume 10, Number 3

**American Council on Immersion  
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orientation.

Last November we challenged our readers to author a Top Ten list of some area of immersion education to celebrate the tenth anniversary of *The ACIE Newsletter*. As an incentive we offered a fee-paid spot at a CARLA summer immersion institute, a one-year subscription to *The ACIE Newsletter*, and the winning article featured on the cover of the May issue. We started receiving submissions as soon as the word got out. Ultimately, we received so many that we don't have room to print them all despite having increased the size of this issue. In the course of reviewing all the interesting perspectives we decided that we would honor the winner with publication in the *Bridge* pull-out, allowing us to highlight more significantly the contribution the author has made to the ACIE readership. That's where you'll find Nicole Boudreaux's *Top Ten Responsibilities of a Successful Immersion Administrator*. Congratulations, Nicole!

As the editor of this newsletter for the past seven years, I wanted to weigh in, too. Though it was extremely difficult to choose, here are ten of my favorites over the past ten years:

☛ *ACIE Articles Make Versatile Training Aids* by Michele Anciaux Aoki, November 2005, describes how to use the ACIE archives for professional development. We toot our own horn with this recommendation and cheat a little since this is like using one of your three wishes to have more wishes. (This one is not yet up on the CARLA website.)

☛ *Recognizing Multilingual Immersion Students* by Diane Dagenais, May 2005, illustrates the value of using students' native languages to compare and contrast with the immersion language in a natural language learning setting.

☛ *Learning Centers: Meaningful Contexts for Language Use in Primary Immersion* by Joanna Click, November 2004 *Bridge*, explains how to create interactive, language-rich activities at a variety of learning centers.

☛ *Forest Glen Parent Education Conference: Preparing Students ... Tomorrow's World* by Jennifer Hope Nolden, February 2004, brings parents into the school for their own mini-immersion conference.

☛ *Parent Activism: A Critical Component for Secondary Immersion* by Martha Johnson, May 2003, also provides a framework for planning a secondary immersion curriculum.

☛ *Teaching Learning Strategies in Immersion Classrooms* by Anna Uhl Chamot, November 2001, includes a lesson plan. A full description and translations of the strategies into seven languages can be found at [www.nclrc.org/eils](http://www.nclrc.org/eils).

☛ *English and Spanish Use by Three Fifth Graders in a Full Immersion Classroom* by Maggie Broner, June 2000, describes how interlocutors and task assignment influence language use in the immersion classroom.

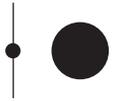
☛ *Standardized Testing: Overcoming the Threat to Immersion Programs* by Daunna Minnich, March 2000, includes recommendations on working with your Board of Education.

☛ *Hawaiian Immersion: Revitalizing a Cultural Heritage*, by Emily 'Ioli'i Hawkins, May 1999, offers a blueprint for the important work of preserving our indigenous languages and cultures.

☛ School profiles, various issues. From *Two Decades of Immersion Education in Cincinnati*, February 1999, to *Twin Cities German Immersion School*, November 2005 (not yet on-line), our school profiles are but a sampling of the diversity of languages and models that make up North American immersion education.

Thank you to all who tackled this concise expression of the myriad worlds of immersion education. Thank you for celebrating 10 years of the American Council on Immersion Education.

~Kimerly Miller, ACIE Editor



# Top Ten Things I Wish I had Known as an Immersion Teacher

By Mandy Fleming, Ph.D. student, Department of Spanish & Portuguese, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN

**U**pon graduating from college as an elementary and a secondary Spanish education major, I taught fourth and fifth grade for three years in a one-way, partial Spanish immersion program at Henderson Elementary School in Prince William County, Va. When I began teaching, I knew that I would only be there a few years before I returned to continue my studies at the graduate level. Now, as I reflect on my experiences and what I have learned both in the immersion classroom and since I left, I feel that I could have been a better teacher had I been equipped with what I know now.

◆ I wish I had known that I would be part of a unique community of educators, students, and parents. The willingness of elementary learners to experiment with a language and their excitement and openness to new ideas and customs was something that I haven't found elsewhere. Also, the dedication of both my fellow colleagues and the parents to the immersion program was something that will stay with me and is rare. I wish I would have appreciated it more when I was a part of it.

◆ I wish I had known that being an immersion teacher would change the way I approach learning foreign languages, teaching a foreign language at the university level, and how I want my future children to be educated. It would open new doors and opportunities for me and give me a unique perspective on language learning and education.

◆ I wish I had known that immersion in a second/foreign language is not the same as learning the first language; some attention must be given to language development. L1 and L2 learners experience different types of

interactions and quantity of input. As a result, immersion learners will not naturally acquire all of the intricacies of the language without meaning-focused attention given to language development. Establishing a sequence of study for the immersion language across grade levels allows each teacher to know what skills to focus on at a specific level and guide their integration of content and language instruction.

◆ I wish I had known that as an immersion teacher, I would be both a language teacher and a content teacher. One is not more important than the other. Only by being both can one effectively teach in an immersion setting.

◆ I wish I had known that input alone is insufficient; students must be given opportunities and encouraged to produce meaningful, extended output. Only by creating with the language will they learn to communicate all of their thoughts and needs. Simple responses to close-ended, discrete answer teacher questions do not afford them this opportunity. Moreover, they need corrective feedback; targeted feedback in a second language is not bad, it shows us what doesn't work in the language.

◆ I wish I had known that I would not be alone; there would be people to help. Researchers and experienced teachers do share their knowledge about immersion methodologies, research findings, and more. Check out the CARLA website: [www.carla.umn.edu/immersion](http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion).

◆ I wish I had known that networking with other immersion schools would be a valuable experience. Together we can learn from each other's challenges and successes, in addition



TEACHER VOICES



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*Wish I'd Known, continued on page 23*



## BEST PRACTICES

*In-service immersion teachers frequently explore new ideas for teaching and learning in the classroom. Sharing ideas that work is the emphasis of this regular feature, Best Practices.*

*In this section, teachers can read about tried and true, practical instructional techniques that immersion colleagues might also adopt for their classrooms.*



*Myriam Met can be reached at [mmet@nflc.org](mailto:mmet@nflc.org)*

## *Top Ten Teacher Behaviors that Improve the Proficiency of Students in Dual Language Programs*

*By Myriam Met, Research Associate, National Foreign Language Center, University of Maryland, College Park, MD*

### TEACHERS PLAN CAREFULLY TO INCORPORATE LANGUAGE LEARNING IN EVERY CONTENT LESSON

**D**ual language teachers recognize that there is a strong interaction among language, literacy, and academic achievement. As they plan content lessons, dual language teachers incorporate language objectives and language learning activities into their content lessons.

### TEACHERS CAREFULLY MONITOR STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND COMPREHENSION

Dual language teachers use both verbal and non-verbal clues to ensure that students understand the language of instruction. Verbal responses to teacher questions and student-to-student interactions inform teachers of students' understanding of both content and language. Similarly, non-verbal clues such as body language, use of manipulatives or concrete objects that show teachers that students did not understand help guide teachers to re-state or re-teach, to elicit explanations from other students, or to demonstrate using alternative visualizations of the same information.

### TEACHERS ENCOURAGE/REQUIRE STUDENTS TO USE THE TARGET LANGUAGE AS APPROPRIATE TO AGE, TASK, AND LEVEL OF PROFICIENCY

Because student language improves as they use language as a core tool for expressing their ideas and for verbalizing their understanding of content, teachers in dual language settings firmly encourage (or even require) that student

interaction be in the appropriate language of instruction. While young students with limited proficiency in their new language may be allowed to respond in whichever language is most comfortable for them, older students will make more rapid progress in developing higher levels of proficiency when pushed into using their new language.

### TEACHERS STRETCH AND REFINE STUDENT LANGUAGE AS STUDENTS BECOME MORE MATURE LANGUAGE USERS

In the early stages of language development, language learners benefit from extensive use of visuals, concrete experiences, and body language to enhance their comprehension of teacher language. As students become more proficient in comprehending their new language, they expand their comprehension by using language to understand new language material as teachers use paraphrase, exemplification strategies, and comparisons to stretch and refine student comprehension. In a similar vein, teachers push student use of language to be more refined, complex, and precise. Students are encouraged to use specific vocabulary as opposed to generic terms and to produce more complex and longer utterances.

### TEACHERS ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS THAT INVITE EXTENDED RESPONSES

Research has shown that in many classrooms, teachers do most of the talking. And, in these classrooms, when teachers ask questions, they often ask questions that can be answered in a word or brief phrase. Because output is a key factor in student language growth, dual language teachers ask open-

ended questions that cannot be answered in a single word or phrase. Asking “Why?” questions or inviting students to support their responses with evidence are strategies for inviting extended responses.

#### TEACHERS ENGAGE STUDENTS IN STRUCTURED PAIR OR GROUP WORK

Language growth requires extensive opportunities for interaction with multiple partners. Interaction allows for fluency to develop through retrieval and synthesis of recalled declarative knowledge leading to automaticity; it promotes negotiation of meaning; it reinforces the use of language as a tool for making meaning. Structured pair and group work ensures that all students are engaged and benefiting from opportunities for interaction.

#### TEACHERS SCAFFOLD TASKS TO HELP STUDENTS GIVE LONGER AND MORE COMPLEX ORAL RESPONSES

Students who are learning a new language often have more complex ideas to express than their language repertoire allows. Teachers who scaffold output give students tools to express themselves in longer and more complex utterances, promoting both cognitive and language growth. Some useful scaffolds are graphic organizers that include key language as well as concepts, manipulatives, and visuals with print support in the physical environment that students may use as resources.

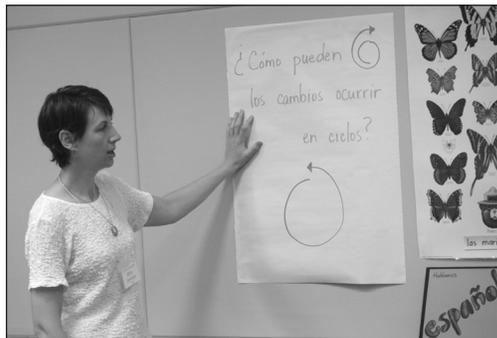
#### TEACHERS SCAFFOLD TASKS TO HELP STUDENTS GIVE LONGER AND MORE COMPLEX WRITTEN RESPONSES

Academic writing allows students to deepen their thinking by verbalizing their conceptual understanding. Students who put their ideas into words confront gaps in their conceptual or factual knowledge, as well as gaps in their linguistic repertoire. Teachers who use scaffolds such as graphic organizers, guiding questions, and instructional supports

around the classroom give students useful tools to organize their thinking, to capture key concepts, and to identify the language tools they will need for expressing their thoughts.

#### TEACHERS PROVIDE LEARNING CENTERS THAT PROMOTE LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT

In teacher-centered classrooms, teachers have more opportunities to talk than anyone else in the room. In student-centered classrooms, opportunities for student language use are far more extensive. Learning centers not only provide reinforcement of content, but also provide for interactivity among students, afford opportunities to listen to pre-recorded material, and engage students in writing tasks that are carried out either independently or with peers.



Master teacher Amy Egenberger introduces her “essential questions” before presenting a demonstration lesson during a summer institute at CARLA.

#### TEACHERS USE WAIT TIME

Research by Mary Budd Rowe indicates that when teachers wait 3-10 seconds to call on students after posing a question, the quality and quantity of student responses increases substantially. In dual language classrooms, where students must not only determine the correct content of the response, but must also consider how to encode that information in a language they are acquiring, the use of teacher wait time is even more likely to improve student ability to provide higher quality responses in their new language. ○

#### CONFERENCES

Canadian Association of Immersion Teachers Annual Conference

Entre mers et montagnes - le français nous appartient !

October 18-20, 2007

Richmond, British Columbia

<http://acpi-cait.ca/congres.php>

  
**La Cosecha**  
La Cosecha Dual Language Conference

November 14-17, 2007

Hotel Albuquerque at Old Town

Albuquerque, New Mexico

[www.lacosecha2007.org](http://www.lacosecha2007.org)

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## Top Ten Teaching Behaviors We Like to See When Observing in Dual Language Immersion Programs

Tara W. Fortune and Diane J. Tedick, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN



Diane Tedick, left, can be reached at [djtedick@umn.edu](mailto:djtedick@umn.edu). Tara Fortune can be reached at [fortu001@umn.edu](mailto:fortu001@umn.edu).

“... teachers talk less, and ... create endless ways for students to talk more.”

Over the past decade we have enjoyed the opportunity to sit in a variety of dual language immersion classrooms and observe practice throughout the country—from Hawaiian indigenous immersion in Hilo, to French and Spanish foreign language immersion in New Orleans, to Japanese partial immersion in Portland, to Spanish/English two-way immersion in the upper Midwest, and more. Often practitioners invite our feedback on program implementation and classroom instruction.

Reflecting on these experiences, we offer the following top ten teaching behaviors we have observed as making a positive difference in program outcomes and student progress.

- When teaching in the immersion language, educators and instructional assistants use only the immersion language; when elsewhere in the school, they use the immersion language as much as possible with others.

- Teachers set clear expectations and consistently hold students accountable for immersion language use. As a program community, the teaching and administrative staff establish and communicate a specific period of time (e.g., half-way through first grade) when exclusive use of the immersion language is expected for classroom interaction. Individual teachers believe that students can make meaning through the immersion language and make clear that English is not needed.



Tara Fortune addresses teachers at the 2006 summer Challenges institute sponsored by CARLA.

- Teachers address language learning and literacy development explicitly, both in English and the immersion language, in the context of content learning. To do this, they thoughtfully plan for two kinds of language objectives in each content lesson: content-obligatory and content-compatible.

They ensure that language objectives incorporate specific functions, grammatical structures, and vocabulary. In two-way contexts, teachers differentiate language objectives based on learners' language background to ensure that all students are engaged in developmentally

and linguistically appropriate learning experiences throughout the instructional day.

- Educators deepen student learning by purposefully recycling content at higher levels of cognitive demand and language sophistication. They are conscious of “upping the language ante” by expanding student language repertoires and pushing them to find more ways to communicate similar messages in a range of registers. As students progress, teachers also develop more challenging tasks that authentically elicit more sophisticated academic and communicative functions and the corresponding linguistic structures and vocabulary. Moreover, they remove language and task-based scaffolds that are so necessary early on but whose overuse can inhibit student growth.

- After introducing a new topic, teachers talk less, and instead create endless ways for students to talk more. They incorporate project-based student presentations, teach students how to provide feedback to one

*Behaviors We Like to See, cont. on page 15*

# Top Ten Most Consistent Findings from Research on Foreign Language Immersion

By Fred Genesee, Professor, Department of Psychology, McGill University, Montreal, Canada

**S**ince their inception in Montreal, over 40 years ago, second language immersion programs have been accompanied by extensive research to evaluate their impact on student performance. Because early immersion programs provide initial academic and even literacy instruction in some cases in students' second language, there have been concerns about the impact of immersion on students' literacy development and their academic achievement. These concerns have been a major focus of attention in the research that has been carried out. Of course, there has also been lots of research that has examined immersion students' second language development, both their overall levels of proficiency and specific aspects of their second language competence, such as grammatical development. The findings that are summarized below have been reported consistently by studies in Canada, the U.S. and elsewhere. These findings all come from studies that have evaluated programs for students who speak the majority language in their community – English in the case of Canada and the U.S.

## UN

Immersion students attain the same levels of proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening in English as students in all-English programs. Even students who struggle in their first language can benefit from participation in immersion in acquiring functional competence in a second language and attain the same levels of achievement in English as similar students in all-English programs.

## DEUX

There is no consistent association between how much time is devoted to English

in immersion programs and students' achievement in English. All students acquire age-appropriate native language skills in all domains of English whether they are in programs with little or lots of native language instruction. This probably reflects the extensive exposure to English that immersion students have outside school.

## TROIS

Immersion students achieve at the same level in their academic subjects as similar students in native language programs. In other words, immersion students are able to assimilate and acquire new academic skills and knowledge even if these are taught through a second language.

## QUATRE

Immersion programs are suitable for students with a wide range of learner characteristics, including students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds and English-speaking students from minority ethnic groups (e.g., African Americans, American students of Hawaiian descent, and Canadian students of Mohawk descent).

## CINQ

Students with below average levels of academic ability, as assessed by tests of cognitive ability or intelligence, do just as well in immersion programs when it comes to native language development and academic achievement as similar students in all-English programs. That is to say, their academic challenges do not preclude them from succeeding in immersion and, at the same, time they acquire higher levels of functional proficiency in the second language in immersion than they would otherwise.



## RESEARCH REPORTS

*In an effort to push the edge of what we currently know about learning, researchers continue to design and publish new studies on issues important to immersion education. Keeping up to date with current research is a time-consuming task.*

*This regular feature will help inform the immersion education public about recent research by providing our readers with brief summaries of selected studies.*



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*This Top Ten list is numbered in French.*

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Genesee, F. (2004). *What do we know about bilingual education for majority language students*. In T. K. Bhatia & W. Ritchie (Eds.), *Handbook of Bilingualism and Multiculturalism* (pp. 547-576). Malden, MA: Blackwell.

*Consistent Research Findings, cont. on page 10*



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*This Top Ten list is numbered in Hawai'ian.*

## *Indigenous Language Teaching, continued from page 1*

traditional knowledge crucial for insuring the continuation of the Hawaiian language and culture.

Here's why becoming an immersion teacher of an indigenous language is such an exciting and rewarding endeavor:

‘EKAHI (1)

Being part of the revival of a native language once on the brink of extinction.

‘ELUA (2)

Passing on the gift of language and culture through education.

‘EKOLU (3)

Enhancing the cognitive abilities of your students through acquisition of a new language.

‘EHA (4)

Raising the educational statistics and success rate of native students by addressing high standards of cultural, linguistic and academic competency.

‘ELIMA (5)

Teaching children whose families are active participants in the educational process and vision.

‘EONO (6)

Becoming a valuable cultural resource to your students, family and community as a keeper of the fire.

‘EHIKU (7)

Fostering cultural identity and a sense of belonging that promotes healthy well-being.

‘EWALU (8)

Educating the whole child through culturally congruent processes that help students build upon their life experiences.

‘EIWA (9)

Becoming an active practitioner of an indigenous language and culture. (Living through the language and being with the culture.)

‘UMI (10)

Helping students to walk within a multilingual world and to see through diverse cultural perspectives. ○



*Ku'ulei Alcomindras-Palakiko teaches Kindergarten-first grade Hawaiian language immersion students.*



## Top Ten Research Findings on Minority Language Learners in Two-way Immersion Programs

Kathryn Lindholm-Leary, Professor of Child and Adolescent Development, San Jose State University, San Jose, CA

**T**wo-way immersion programs have increased in popularity over the past 20 years, from a handful of programs in the 1980s to approximately 350 programs today. Part of the reason for this popularity is that research has consistently shown the positive impact of two-way immersion programs on the achievement and language proficiency outcomes of both native English speaking and English language learning (ELL) students. The findings that are presented below derive from research reviewed in the two chapters cited following the top ten list.

⇒ ELL students who participate in high quality two-way immersion programs achieve at levels that are comparable or superior to their ELL peers in the district and state. This is true whether one examines proficiency in English or achievement in reading and math as measured in English.

⇒ ELL students from two-way immersion programs who are reclassified by state criteria as proficient in English on average tend to achieve in reading/language arts and math measured in English at levels that surpass those of English speakers who are being instructed only in English.

⇒ ELL students in 90:10 programs attain the same levels of proficiency in English and the same or higher standards of achievement in reading/language arts and math (measured in English) as ELL students in 50:50 programs. Thus, more exposure to instructional time in English does not lead to an improvement in English language proficiency or achievement in reading/language arts and math as measured in English.

⇒ There are significant correlations between achievement in English and Spanish for both

reading/language arts and mathematics. Thus, the ELL students who score the highest in reading, language and math achievement on achievement tests as measured in English also score the highest on achievement tests measured in Spanish.

⇒ While ELL two-way immersion students who are identified for special education services score low in reading/language arts measured in English, they achieve at levels that are commensurate with their English-only peers in English-only instruction. In addition, they tend to achieve close to grade level in reading/language arts measured in Spanish. Thus, these bilingual students have an advantage over their monolingual peers in that they possess bilingual language skills and they have literacy skills in two languages.

⇒ By fifth or sixth grade, almost all ELL students who had attended a two-way immersion program since kindergarten or first grade were rated as proficient in both languages. In addition, almost all of the students with a two-way immersion background who took the Spanish Advanced Placement test in grade 10 scored high enough for Advanced Placement credit.

⇒ In studies of secondary students who had been in a two-way immersion program in elementary school, results with both 90:10 and 50:50 programs showed that students had very positive attitudes toward school and the two-way immersion program. Most students believed that learning through two languages helped them learn to think better, made them smarter, and helped them do better in school. Students also felt valued in the program, were glad they participated in it, and would recommend it to other students. Although most students were in agreement, ELL



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## Consistent Research Findings, *continued from page 7*

“ There is no consistent association between how much time is devoted to English in immersion programs and students’ achievement in English. ”

### SIX

Immersion students acquire advanced levels of functional proficiency in the second language – far superior to that achieved by students in conventional foreign language programs.

### SEPT

There is a general tendency for students’ second language proficiency to be related to the amount of exposure they have to the second language in immersion – the more exposure to the second language, the higher the levels of second language proficiency.

### HUIT

Despite their advanced functional proficiency in the second language, immersion students’ second language skills are not native like. They make persistent grammatical errors, have a limited range of vocabulary, and their

usage is not idiomatic. These findings speak to the need for immersion students to have opportunities to use the target language with native speakers outside school if they want to achieve native-like competence.

### NEUF

Immersion programs appear to be equally effective with languages from very different language families (e.g., Hebrew and English or Hawaiian and English) and with languages from the same or related language families (English and French, or English and Spanish).

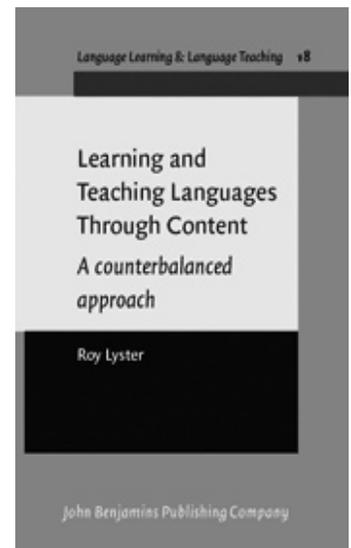
### DIX

Immersion students develop the same appreciation for their first language culture as non-immersion students and, at the same time, they may develop greater understanding and tolerance of the other culture as a result of participation in immersion. ○

### LEARNING AND TEACHING LANGUAGES THROUGH CONTENT: A COUNTERBALANCED APPROACH BY ROY LYSTER, MCGILL UNIVERSITY

Based on a synthesis of classroom SLA research that has helped to shape evolving perspectives of content-based instruction since the introduction of immersion programs in Montreal more than 40 years ago, this book presents an updated perspective on integrating language and content in ways that engage second language learners with language across the curriculum. A range of instructional practices observed in immersion and content-based classrooms is highlighted to set the stage for justifying a counterbalanced approach that integrates both content-based and form-focused instructional options as complementary ways of intervening to develop a learner’s interlanguage system. A counterbalanced approach is outlined as an array of opportunities for learners to process language through content by means of comprehension, awareness, and production mechanisms, and to negotiate language through content by means of interactional strategies involving teacher scaffolding and feedback.

Purchase the book from John Benjamins Publishing Company: [www.benjamins.com](http://www.benjamins.com)





# Top Ten Items on the Research Agenda for Two-Way Immersion

By Julie Sugarman, Research Associate, Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, DC  
and Elizabeth R. Howard, Assistant Professor of Bilingual Education, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT

Over the last twenty years, a number of research studies and program profiles have documented the implementation of two-way immersion (TWI) programs—a type of dual language education with a balanced population of native English speakers and native speakers of the program’s partner language, such as Spanish. Research on this particular branch of dual language education has also documented generally positive outcomes in bilingualism, biliteracy, and academic achievement among TWI students as a whole (see reviews in Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2003; Lindholm-Leary, 2005).

A robust and extensive research literature on other “one-way” dual language contexts (e.g., foreign language immersion, developmental bilingual education, indigenous immersion) exists as well. However, the degree to which findings from studies carried out in “one-way” programs that serve a linguistically similar student group can be used to inform “two-way” contexts remains unclear. Further, many unexplored topics about the design and implementation of TWI programs that are of vital interest to practitioners, researchers, and parents remain. This is our “top ten” listing of items on the two-way immersion research agenda.

## LANGUAGE OF INITIAL LITERACY

### INSTRUCTION

- For both native English speakers and native speakers of other languages, what are the effects of simultaneous initial literacy instruction in both the first language (L1) and second language (L2) vs. initial literacy instruction only in the L1 or L2?
- To what extent are these effects influenced by students’ background characteristics, such as native language, socioeconomic status, and

the development of pre-literacy skills in early childhood, or by program characteristics such as program model (e.g., 90:10 vs. 50:50)?

- What are the implications of these various approaches for long-term language and literacy development in both languages?

## SPECIAL STUDENT POPULATIONS

- What are the outcomes for students from both language groups with special learning needs who participate in TWI programs? Do outcomes differ based on the type of learning difficulty, the native language of the student, or the program model?

- What about newcomers who are native speakers of the partner language that enter the program after first grade with limited schooling or limited literacy in their native language?

- What are the academic and social outcomes for third language speakers—students whose native language is neither English nor the program’s partner language? What factors impact third language speakers’ academic and social outcomes? Similarity of the learner’s L1 to one of the program languages? Program model? Percentage of third-language speakers enrolled?

## CROSS-CULTURAL COMPETENCE

- How can the development of cross-cultural competence in TWI students be measured?
- Is it meaningful to compare TWI students’ cross-cultural attitudes and those of students in other types of educational programs?
- If we did make such a comparison, what level of difference between the two groups would be of practical significance?



Julie Sugarman can be reached at [julie@cal.org](mailto:julie@cal.org).



Liz Howard can be reached at [elizabeth.howard@uconn.edu](mailto:elizabeth.howard@uconn.edu).

Research Agenda for Two-way, continued on page 14



## THE BRIDGE

*Educational research is vital to validating effective practices, challenging ineffective ones, and encouraging innovations. Yet research is only valuable if teachers read and implement findings in their classrooms.*

*The Bridge feature is included as an insert to encourage teachers to collect them for future reference. We hope this pull-out insert will help immersion educators stay abreast of the latest research and allow it, when applicable, to affect their own practice.*

#### EVALUATOR'S TOOLKIT FOR DUAL LANGUAGE EDUCATION

[www.cal.org/twi/evaltoolkit](http://www.cal.org/twi/evaltoolkit)

*The toolkit was developed for personnel in dual language programs who want to conduct a program evaluation but who may not have access to expert resources to advise them on evaluation protocol. The site includes step-by-step instructions and numerous examples.*

*Please direct comments and questions to the authors, Kathryn Lindholm-Leary, [klindholmleary@mac.com](mailto:klindholmleary@mac.com) and Gary Hargett, [ghargett@teleport.com](mailto:ghargett@teleport.com).*



Nicole Boudreaux is originally an elementary school teacher born in France. Since her arrival in Louisiana thirty years

ago, she has taught in French and English at most grade levels. She found her calling when she discovered the immersion setting in 1992. After a few years in the classroom, she wrote her first successful Foreign Language Assistance Program grant proposal and became a French Immersion Program Coordinator. In addition to an elementary education degree and a Masters in Curriculum and Instruction,

she is working toward her doctoral degree.

Since 1998, she has been an administrator in the Lafayette Parish School System where she oversees its 14-year old French immersion program (close to 1,000 students, pre-K through 8th grade in 6 schools) and its 2-year old Spanish immersion program (close to 100 students, pre-K through 1st grade at one school). She is currently working on the opening of a Chinese immersion program, hopefully in August 2008.

In this month's Bridge she draws on her experiences to recommend steps that successful immersion administrators will consider as they plan program implementation, realize their planning efforts, and assess their programs. Her article is the winner of our ACIE Author Competition.

*Félicitations, Nicole!* ○

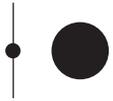
## Minority Language Learners, *continued from page 9*

students felt even stronger that the program challenged them to do better in school, gave them more confidence to do well in school, and gave them a better education.

⇒ The national rate for school dropout for Hispanic students, especially Hispanic ELLs, is higher than for any other ethnic group, and it has increased while that for other groups has decreased. Among high school students with two-way immersion backgrounds, most are in agreement that they are not inclined to drop out of school. However, even 87% of 9th and 10th graders, together with 93% of 11th and 12th graders, say they will not drop out of school. Of those who have at least considered dropping out, most say they will stay in school because they need an education. Almost one half of ELL students felt that the two-way immersion program kept them from dropping out of school.

⇒ In studies of middle and high school ELLs in two-way immersion programs, the majority of students say that they want to go to college, that getting a good education is the best way to have a better life when they are older, that getting good grades is important, and that good grades are important for getting into college.

⇒ In a follow-up study of the math achievement of two-way immersion ELL students in high school, even though the students had begun second grade with very low scores in math, by sixth grade and continuing into ninth grade, the students were achieving at grade level in math measured in English. In addition, the students were largely enrolled in college-bound coursework in math. ○



# Top Ten Considerations to Successfully Implement a New Immersion Program

By David Bernhardson, Special Projects Director, South Washington County Schools, Cottage Grove, MN

**O**ur suburban Twin Cities school board authorized the formation of a Spanish Immersion Task Force in November of 2002. The Task Force reviewed student achievement data from other immersion schools, looked at curriculum and instruction research in immersion education, met with parents, and interviewed teachers. Our Spanish Immersion school opened in September 2004 and we offer the following considerations when looking to implement a language immersion program:

## UNO

Build an immersion school and students will come. Today's parents seek second language instruction at an early age and "a passport to another world."

## DOS

Establish an admissions process early because interest will exceed availability. Our district recently changed from a first-come, first-served policy to a lottery system because some parents were arriving as many as 36 hours prior to the start of the enrollment process!

## TRES

Include resources to hire a curriculum coordinator - someone whose primary role is to attend to the many unique curriculum development needs of an immersion program. Content-based second language instruction is not merely translating English curriculum into the immersion language.

## CUATRO

Advocate consistently for the program in order to counteract misconceptions about immersion. Constantly remind district employees and community residents alike what immersion education is and isn't.

## CINCO

Select an immersion language where staff and materials are readily available. The pool of qualified candidates is not very deep.

## SEIS

Anticipate parent involvement and plan ahead for how their talents can be used to support the program. Our parents passionately serve as advocates for the program. They speak up on district issues that affect immersion and support it with funds.

## SIETE

Seek the advice of other immersion educators and teacher educators who are familiar with immersion research. In this last regard, the CARLA website is an outstanding resource ([www.carla.umn.edu/immersion](http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion)).

## OCHO

Listen to the students. They will exceed your expectations. In a recent high school Spanish class visiting seniors were awestruck by our second graders' level of proficiency.

## NUEVE

Be prepared for growth. Our research showed that the most successful implementation model starts with one or two classes of kindergarten and grows one grade level each year. Secondary planning starts when the first group of immersion students reaches fourth grade. Growth also means recruiting new teachers, developing curriculum and responding to parents who request that you add more sections!

## DIEZ

Enjoy every minute. Immersion is challenging and exciting. We are amazed every day at what our students have accomplished. ○



IMMERSION 101

*If we peel back the layers that currently envelop immersion schools, what might we find at the core?*

*In this column we will share with readers basic principles behind successful immersion programs, and show how challenges have been met at the classroom, school and district level.*



*David Bernhardson can be reached at [dbernar@sowashco.k12.mn.us](mailto:dbernar@sowashco.k12.mn.us).*

*This Top Ten list is numbered in Spanish.*

## REFERENCES

Howard, E. R., Sugarman, J., & Christian, D. (2003). Trends in two-way immersion education: A review of the research (report no. 63). Baltimore, MD: Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk.

Lindholm-Leary, K. J. (2005). Review of research and best practices on effective features of dual language education programs. Retrieved March 27, 2007, from <http://www.cal.org/twi/guidingprinciples.htm>.

## *Research Agenda for Two-way Immersion,* continued from page 11

### EFFECTS OF STANDARDIZED TESTS

#### IN ENGLISH

- How can the model fidelity of 90:10 programs be maintained in the face of the need to prepare all students, particularly the English language learners, to take high-stakes standardized achievement tests in English in third grade or earlier?
- Should programs increase the percentage of English instruction in the primary grades?
- When should formal English language arts be introduced?
- Should that decision be made on a student-by-student basis, depending on factors such as L1 literacy and oral English proficiency (for native speakers of languages other than English)?

### APPROACHES FOR ALTERNATING

#### LANGUAGES FOR INSTRUCTION

- What are the ramifications of the various ways to alternate languages for instruction, particularly in the context of a 50:50 model or the upper grades of a 90:10 model? Specifically, what are the advantages or disadvantages of a single bilingual teacher who provides instruction through both languages at distinct times of the instructional day vs. a 'side by side' model that involves one English-speaking teacher and another who teaches in the partner language?
- How, if at all, do student outcomes differ depending on whether languages are alternated on a half-day, day-by-day, weekly, or other schedule?
- Do student outcomes differ in content areas that are taught in both languages or solely in one language or the other? If so, in what ways?

### PEER INTERACTION

- What is the influence of peer interaction on the development of bilingualism and biliteracy?
- As students from the two native language groups are intended to serve as language models for each other in TWI programs, how can students be taught to support each other's language and literacy development, particularly in the partner language?
- In what circumstances and for what purposes are homogeneous groupings preferable to mixed language groupings?

### SECONDARY TWI PROGRAMS

- What should secondary (middle and high school) TWI programs look like?
- How much time should be allocated to instruction in English vs. the partner language?
- What pedagogical materials that are appropriate for secondary TWI students are available in languages other than English?

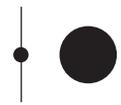
### LANGUAGE AND LITERACY BENCHMARKS

- What benchmarks should we expect students to meet in language proficiency and literacy development in the partner language?
- Should these benchmarks differ based on students' native language or the program model?

### THE USE OF PUBLISHED/SCRIPTED

#### CURRICULA

- What impact does the use of a scripted or highly-structured literacy curriculum have on biliteracy instruction and development?
- When such curricula are not available in the program's partner language, should teachers translate the lessons or try to present all of the material solely in English?



## Research Agenda for Two-way Immersion, *Continued from previous page*

### AUTHENTIC AND APPROPRIATE MATERIALS

- Are there language arts curricula available in the partner language that are articulated with district- or state-mandated language arts standards but that are also culturally and linguistically appropriate for the partner language?
- What is the effect of using authentic curricular materials in the partner language on students' biliteracy development, academic achievement, and cross-cultural competence?
- What sorts of authentic materials currently exist in languages other than English, how can teachers be made more aware of them, and what sorts of adaptations, if any, are required before they can be used in TWI classrooms in the United States?
- How can teachers from other cultures incorporate their pedagogical practices into the U.S. context? ○

## Behaviors We Like to See, *continued from page 6*

another, and use learning centers and highly structured cooperative group experiences, etc.

☛ Practitioners briefly and collaboratively elicit, model and review the language students need to successfully engage in any activity before asking them to do so. For example, if students are expected to gather information to graph classroom food preferences, appropriate language to formulate questions and responses will need teacher attention and support.

☛ In the early primary years, teachers avoid teaching L1 word - L2 word equivalents (la casa = the house). Alternatively, they encourage word-object, word-action, word-picture, word-story, word-gist associations and help learners make cross-language connections by pointing out L1 - L2 similarities and differences.

☛ To foster ongoing language growth, teachers supply less "corrected" language to students and elicit more accurate language from students. To do this, they make use of corrective feedback techniques that require students to pause and self-repair, techniques that tend to be more effective yet less frequently used by immersion teachers.

☛ Teachers assess students' content and culture learning and language and literacy development both within the classroom and at the program level. They make use of this information in important ways to inform classroom instruction and program efficacy, and to communicate to various program stakeholders, including district level policymakers, parents and the community at large.

☛ And, last yet certainly not least...teachers care for themselves and their colleagues! Dual language immersion teachers are a rare and wonderful breed. ○



*Diane Tedick works with new immersion teachers at the 2005 Immersion 101 summer institute.*

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Lyster, R. (1998). *Immersion pedagogy and implications for language teaching*. In J. Cenoz and F. Genesee (eds) *Beyond bilingualism: Multilingualism and multilingual education* (pp. 64-95). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, Ltd.



IMMERSION MILESTONES

As immersion education progresses through its fourth decade in the U.S., schools around the country have much to celebrate. In this occasional feature we join the well-deserved festivities.

# First Ten Immersion Programs in the United States: A Proposed List

Compiled by Tara Fortune, Immersion Projects, CARLA, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, MN and Mary Livant, 3rd Grade Teacher, Normandale French Immersion School, Edina, MN

**uno**

*Spanish*

(1) 1963 TWO-WAY BILINGUAL IMMERSION (SPANISH-ENGLISH)

Coral Way Elementary School, Miami, Florida

(2) 1971 ONE-WAY FOREIGN LANGUAGE IMMERSION (SPANISH)

El Marino Language School, Culver City, California

**dos**  
*Spanish*

**trois**

*French*

(3) 1974 ONE-WAY FOREIGN LANGUAGE IMMERSION (FRENCH)

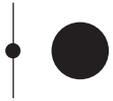
Maryvale Elementary School, Rockville, Maryland

**vier**

*German*

(4) 1977 ONE-WAY FOREIGN LANGUAGE IMMERSION (GERMAN)

Milwaukee German Immersion School, Milwaukee, Wisconsin



*Chinese*

(5) 1981 PARTIAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE IMMERSION (MANDARIN)

Chinese American International School, San Francisco, California

(6) 1984 ONE-WAY FOREIGN LANGUAGE IMMERSION  
(CANTONESE)

Alice Fong Yu Alternative School, San Francisco, California



*Chinese*



(7) 1984 ONE-WAY INDIGENOUS  
LANGUAGE IMMERSION  
PRESCHOOL (HAWAI'IAN)

'Aha Pūnana Leo, Kekaha, Hawai'i

(8) 1986 ONE-WAY INDIGENOUS LANGUAGE  
IMMERSION (DINÉ [NAVAJO])

Tséhootsooí Diné Biótla, Fort Defiance, Arizona



*Navajo*



*Japanese*

(9) 1988 ONE-WAY FOREIGN  
LANGUAGE IMMERSION  
(JAPANESE)

Yujin Gakuen, Eugene, Oregon

(10) 1992 TWO-WAY BILINGUAL  
IMMERSION (KOREAN-ENGLISH)

Cahuenga School, Los Angeles,  
California



*Korean*



## TECHNO TIPS

In an effort to push the edge of what we currently know about learning, researchers continue to design and publish new studies on issues important to immersion education. Keeping up to date with current research is a time-consuming task.

This regular feature will help inform the immersion education public about recent research by providing our readers with brief summaries of selected studies.



John Peacock's (*Spirit Lake Dakota*) writing in the endangered Dakota language has been exhibited at the Minnesota History Center and published in *American Indian Quarterly* and in *Studies in American Indian Literatures*. He can be reached at [jhpeacock@aol.com](mailto:jhpeacock@aol.com)

This Top Ten list is numbered in Dakota.

## Top Ten Techno Tips For Immersion Teachers from the ACIE Archives

By John Peacock, Professor of Language, Literature, and Culture, Maryland Institute College of Art, Baltimore MD.

## WANJI (1)

Gary Leatherman, Technology Specialist, L'Etoile du Nord French Immersion School, St. Paul, MN, recommends that small immersion schools with low budgets bring computer labs to students (rather than vice versa). Wireless iBook Mobile Labs, on a cart, have built-in LCD projectors for projecting the screen from the teacher's computer set up exactly like the screens of thirty wireless laptops on the students' desks. Use Mac OS X operating system to set up one laptop and NetRestore software to synchronize all the others. All the information remains on your Mac OS X server so that any iBook can be automatically updated or re-initialized by pressing a key. Reset all thirty computers in half a day rather than spend days installing discs on each one. Add subject-specific capabilities with special cart accessories. *Immersion Learning, Unplugged*, November 2004

## NUMPA (2)

Tony Erben, University of South Florida, Assistant Professor of Foreign Language Education & ESOL, recommends audiographics – net-based, real-time multimedia, data, and visual conferencing combined with audio capability for distance education and interactive learning. Share screens, send and store images and information from separate computers linked over a network. Information written or typed on one computer is immediately seen at all remote sites. Share software tools such as Windows and use them interactively. Make audio connections through the Internet. Import computer generated pictures and present them as video or slides. Monitor or allow students to use any or all of these facilities independently in order to see

and manipulate writings and displays. An electronic white board lets teacher and students interact in real time, import and rewrite documents seen simultaneously by all participants. Anything written with electronic pens on either a white board or graphic tablet appears on participants' computer screens and can be cut and pasted into a Word document. Not being face-to-face, participants cue each other more often, wait longer for questions to be answered, and signal when it's someone else's turn. *Immersion Teacher Education through Audiographics*, May 2002

## YAMNI (3)

Terri Geffert, second grade teacher at Bridgewater Elementary Spanish immersion School in Northfield, Minnesota, makes user-friendly multimedia Hyperstudio presentations that students can view at their computers and use to compose a KidPix slide show with the help of digital and video cameras to document their research. *Immersion Teachers in CoBaLTT*, February 2001

## TOPA (4)

Gloria Ruff, fifth grade teacher from Robbinsdale (Minnesota) Spanish Immersion School, uses the TrackStar website to organize web page assignments. She finds information on the Web, organizes it into her own TrackStar web page using models on the TrackStar website, and sets up the computer lab with her own TrackStar on the computer screen. Students use a word processing program to read the information and answer comprehension questions she has selected in the TrackStar window, and either print out their work or email their responses. *Immersion Teachers in CoBaLTT*, February 2001



ZAPTAN (5)

Maureen Curran-Dorsano, Curriculum Coordinator, Normandale French Immersion School, Edina, Minnesota uses WebQuest to design cooperative learning assignments incorporating listening, speaking, reading, and writing as well as content-specific objectives that authentically use the target language. For a PowerPoint on WebQuest essentials, google Kathy Schrock's "Guide for Educators: WebQuests in Our Future; the Teacher's Role in Cyberspace." *WebQuests: Learning in the 21st Century*, June 2000

SAKPE (6)

Greg Anderson, from Adams, MN Spanish Immersion School, uses webpage-maker software (free download at [www.webpage-maker.com/download.html](http://www.webpage-maker.com/download.html)) to teach teachers web publishing offline and show them how their pages will look on the web. *Teachers Teaching Teachers Tech*, May 1999

SAKOWIN (7)

Summary of Greg Anderson's Web page design tips: For a step-by-step tutorial, search "building a web site" on any web browser or Internet provider site, or buy cheap, user-friendly software that walks you through the process. Bookmark and imitate web pages you like. Keep yours clear and simple: no long-loading sound and large graphic files. Use available, labor saving technology to change page content and meet users' needs. For school districts without space for your web site, get free space from advertiser-supported on-line services like Home Work Heaven and Geocities. *Jump In, The Water's Fine!* November 1998

SAHDOHAN (8)

To collaborate and exchange ideas and experiences with immersion parents, teachers,

administrators, and researchers, subscribe to Language Immersion in the America's LIM-A listserv by sending an e-mail message to [LISTSERV@lists.umn.edu](mailto:LISTSERV@lists.umn.edu). The body of the message (without subject line or signature) should read: subscribe LIM-A your first and last names. *LIM-A Listserv Samples*, February 1998

NEPCUNKA (9)

To search for a Content Based Language Teaching with Technology (CoBaLTT) lesson or unit; create and store online tests and quizzes and record student results; create rubrics for project-based learning and assess task difficulty for students -- consult CARLA online content-based CoBaLTT lesson and unit plans in many languages and at many levels. *Immersion Teachers in CoBaLTT*, February 2001

WIKCEMNA (10)

Read more about these and other archived techno tips at Techno Tips at <http://www.carla.umn.edu/immersion/acie/#tech>. ○

**Unit Overview, Part 2**

**Title:**

**Language:**

**Content (choose either a theme or an academic content area):**

**Content Theme:**

**Academic Content Area:**

- Science
- Math
- Social Studies
- Language Arts
- Health
- Technology

Other

**Unit Standards:**

**Communication:**  1.1  1.2  1.3

**Cultures:**  2.1  2.2

**Connections:**  3.1  3.2

**Comparisons:**  4.1  4.2

**Communities:**  5.1  5.2

**Target Audience:**

**Setting:**

**Proficiency Level:**

Based on the ACTFL Proficiency Guidelines for Speaking (1999)

**Unit Time Frame:**

**Unit Overview:**

The CoBaLTT website walks teachers through the steps of planning content-based instruction.



## POINTS FOR PARENTS

Parents often are looking for a place to access ideas about how to support their children's education. Immersion parents who may not be fluent in the language their child is learning at school have many questions.

In this regular feature, we offer concrete suggestions for extra-curricular support of language learning. In addition, we address specific parent concerns and invite parents to share their experience and expertise.

Questions about Canadian Parents for French can be addressed to Joan Hawkins, Manager, Research and Development, at [jhawkins@cpf.ca](mailto:jhawkins@cpf.ca).

## Top Ten Answers for Parents about Immersion Education

By Canadian Parents for French, Ottawa, Ontario

### WHY SHOULD I CHOOSE IMMERSION EDUCATION FOR MY CHILD?

Parents want to make the best educational choices for their children, and many would like them to have the advantages of bilingualism. The ability to understand and speak more than one language is not the only benefit of immersion education. Research shows that students gain additional cognitive, academic and employment benefits.

### HOW DOES IMMERSION DIFFER FROM OTHER TYPES OF LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION?

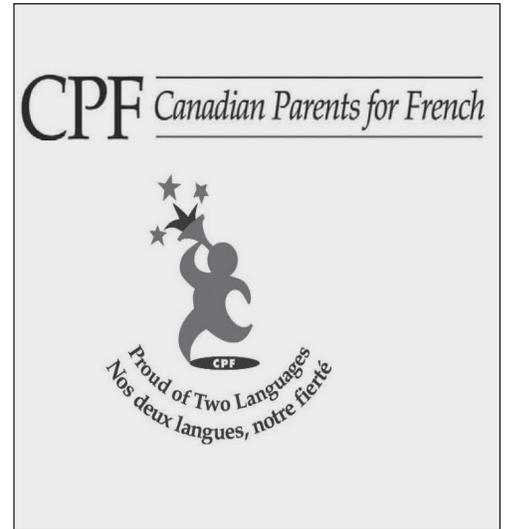
In traditional second language instruction, the target language is the subject of instruction. Immersion programs use the target language for instruction and as a means of communication. This authentic communication allows students to learn a second language in a similar manner to the way that they have learned their first.

### DO CHILDREN NEED ABOVE AVERAGE ACADEMIC ABILITY TO SUCCEED IN IMMERSION?

Students with lower academic ability do as well in immersion as they might in English programs and have the additional benefit of bilingualism. Researchers found that "below-average students in immersion scored at the same level as below-average students in the English program on English language and academic achievement tests." In addition, "below-average students in immersion scored significantly higher on second-language tests than the below-average students in the English program" (Genesee, in press).

### HOW BILINGUAL WILL MY CHILD BE?

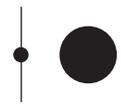
Immersion programs have generally produced better second-language proficiency results than traditional foreign language



teaching strategies. The intensive exposure to the target language is important because it allows students quickly to reach the level of second-language proficiency required to study other subjects in the new language. Immersion students approach native-like levels in second-language listening comprehension and reading by the end of elementary school, although they are distinguishable from native speakers in speaking and writing. High school immersion graduates should be able to work in or pursue post-secondary studies in their second language. In fact, in Canada, many high school immersion graduates attained an intermediate or higher level of second-language proficiency on Public Service Commission of Canada tests. (Lazaruk, in press)

### WILL IMMERSION EDUCATION AFFECT MY CHILD'S ENGLISH-LANGUAGE SKILLS?

Students can add a second language at no cost to their first language competence (additive bilingualism) because languages are interdependent. Skills developed in the second language are available for learning and using in the first language and vice versa. First-language arts are introduced by the middle elementary years, while family and



community also reinforce first language skills. (Lazaruk, in press)

Research has shown that “the effect of learning a second language on first-language skills has been positive in all studies done.... [and] the loss of instructional time in English has never been shown to have negative effects on the achievement of the first language.” (Bournot-Trites & Tellowitz, 2002) In fact, immersion students match and often surpass English program students’ performance by Grade 4 or 5 after first-language arts are introduced in the middle elementary years. (Turnbull, Hart & Lapkin, 2000)

#### CAN MY CHILD REALLY LEARN MATH AND SCIENCE IN THEIR SECOND LANGUAGE?

Reviews of research studies found that immersion students met or exceeded English program students’ performance in mathematics and science, and province-wide assessments in three Canadian provinces\* found that at grades 6, 8, and 10, respectively, immersion students did as well as or achieved at a significantly higher level than those in the regular program. (Bournot-Trites & Tellowitz, 2002; British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2000; Dube & MacFarlane, 1999; New Brunswick Department of Education, 2000; Turnbull, Hart & Lapkin, 2000.)

*\*Although other provinces and territories conduct province-wide assessments, they do not separate the results of immersion and English program students.*

#### WILL IMMERSION GRADUATES HAVE TROUBLE IN UNIVERSITY OR COLLEGE BECAUSE THEY DIDN’T TAKE HIGH SCHOOL SUBJECTS IN ENGLISH?

A survey of Canadian university students (Canadian Parents for French, 2005) found that the majority of immersion graduates surveyed reported no difficulty in adjusting to university courses offered in English. In fact, immersion graduates have more options than other students because in Canada they

may choose to take some or all post-secondary courses in their second language. The majority of survey respondents reported no difficulty in making the transition from high school to university courses in French.

#### WHAT ARE THE COGNITIVE BENEFITS OF BEING BILINGUAL?

*[Editor’s note: Research on the cognitive benefits of immersion education specifically is limited. Some researchers argue that immersion students’ language proficiency may not be developed as sufficiently as that of fully bilingual individuals who researchers feel more consistently exhibit the behaviors discussed below.]*

- *Mental Flexibility*

Bilinguals are better able to analyze their knowledge of language. They learn that there are at least two ways of saying the same thing and understand the relationship between words and their meaning. They are able to focus more on meaning and take into account only relevant features when there is distractive information. (Heightened metalinguistic awareness.) Bilinguals demonstrate more mental flexibility and perform better on tasks requiring mental manipulation. They are original in verbal expression, demonstrate non-verbal intelligence and can answer open-ended questions more freely than monolinguals (Lazaruk, in press).

- *Increased sensitivity to others; heightened awareness, receptivity and appreciation of language.*

Students with two well-developed languages are more sensitive to communication. There is some evidence to suggest that they are better able to understand the needs of others and to respond appropriately. Through exposure to cultural differences they may become more respectful of differences between people and their cultures and may be able to communicate with a large variety of people (Lazaruk, in press).

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## STUDENT VOICES

*Immersion teachers often look to research and the experiences of other educators to inform their curriculum planning and instruction. In this feature we hear what students think about immersion learning.*

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## Working in Pairs: Top Ten Quotes from Early French Immersion Student about their Peer Collaboration

*By Merrill Swain, Professor, and Sharon Lapkin, Professor  
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In the last ten years, we have been interested in the role of collaborative dialogue in second language learning. Collaborative dialogue occurs when students work together on a task and talk to each other about content and language issues that arise as they carry out the task. Together, students are often able to perform better than they would on their own as each student contributes to the collective knowledge being created. At the completion of a study, we interview the students in order to understand their perceptions of the activities they engaged in. One question we regularly ask is if and why they appreciate working with a peer. Some of our favorite responses, provided below by grade seven immersion students, reflect the importance they place on hearing the opinions of their peers; their willingness to share ideas and to be corrected; and the positive feelings they have from helping others, and being helped. One student found working in pairs “easier”, and another believed that “it helps you go faster”. And in the case of our top choice quote, we love his view that it is “more exciting” and “more colourful”.

“When I’m on my own I’m very productive. But ...it’s not very big and exciting. It’s just straight to the point...when I’m with a partner, it’s, I don’t know, it’s more colourful.”

“It’s sort of cool to have a person that you can talk to and say, ‘Oh, you know, is this right? Is this the way you do it?’... they can help you, guide you sort of. And you guide the other person. It sort of feels good and you know what you are doing, and then the other person is just like ‘I don’t know what I’m doing’ and then you can help them. That’s why it feels good.”

“I think it was beneficial to both of us ... if I had a certain opinion and if it was wrong, then I could learn from it. And if it was right, then my partner could learn from it.”

“Maybe because what I picked up could be useful and also what she picked up, because I could’ve missed a few things and she could’ve had them. So, if we had put them together, maybe we would have remembered more.”

“You can have like two points of views and two opinions on how a sentence sounds, like

if it sounds right. And you can double check your answers to make sure they’re right instead of just knowing by yourself.”

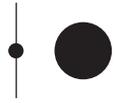
“Because we got to talk about it and when we weren’t sure of a word you just asked your partner. You can compare what you think and stuff. And it’s also not always your ideas that are in the story.”

“I liked how we got to do it together ... and then see what our mistakes were and ... it was easier than doing it by yourself.”

“If I wouldn’t understand something, she would back me up and, like, tell me the right answers and help me out.”

“So, it’s cool to have someone you can sort of socialise with and do your homework at the same time. ... you go faster I think.”

“I think you have less [sic] mistakes because when someone helps, when you’re doing something in pairs, you have different ideas and you can incorporate them to make it better.” ○



## *Wish I'd known, continued from page 3*

to sharing resources. The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) has an on-line directory that may help you find other schools in your area or beyond: [www.cal.org/resources/immersion](http://www.cal.org/resources/immersion).

◆ I wish I had known that native speakers of the immersion language are not in the classroom to meet the needs of other students. Their language needs (in the immersion language and in English) must not be neglected. Yes, they can add an interesting dynamic and bring in a new layer of culture and diversity, but they are not there to serve the language needs of the other students.

◆ I wish I had known that the immersion language needs to be valued not only within the classroom, but also within the entire school. Students note the attention given to each language by the school. By not emphasizing the value of the immersion language at the school level, students come to feel that it is something extra and not of primary importance. Using it in daily announcements, in the hallway, as the language of assemblies, etc. can help to give the immersion language a higher status within the school.

◆ I wish I had known that parents would be excited and nervous about educating their children through a language they may or may not know. They do not necessarily know what to expect, what is normal and what is not; communication with them about what immersion is, what learning through a second language looks like, and about individual student progress is essential. It can make both the student's education and your life easier! ○

## *Parent Answers, continued from page 21*

### WHAT ARE THE EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS OF IMMERSION EDUCATION?

Bilinguals have access to a wider range of national and international jobs. Thousands of businesses operate in more than one language – airlines, import-export companies and other international businesses require employees with second-language skills and cultural sensitivity.

### HOW CAN I HELP MY CHILD IF I DON'T KNOW THE LANGUAGE?

Immersion teachers know that most parents don't understand the target language. Indeed, immersion programs were designed specifically for children of unilingual parents. You can help make your child's second-language experience positive and lasting by being supportive and enthusiastic. Research shows that students

whose parents have positive attitudes towards the target language do better in immersion programs. Remember that most skills learned in the first language are transferred to the second. Read to your children in English, encourage English writing, and introduce English-language word games like crossword puzzles, word searches, Scrabble and Password. Provide opportunities to use the target language outside of the classroom: borrow or buy books and videos, watch second-language TV with your child, and expose your child to second-language events and activities like plays, interest courses, and sport activities. ○

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**GUIDE FOR  
CONTRIBUTORS**

We welcome submissions to be considered for publication and give preference to those that relate to our current features, including best practices, parent communication, new teacher tips, technology and second language education, immersion research, guest editorials, and "The Bridge," an insert with a focus on bridging research and practice.

Manuscripts should be between 750 and 1,500 words. All references and notes should follow the specifications described in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA), 5th edition, and must be placed at the end of the article. Please include the title of the article, your name, address, telephone number, e-mail address, institution, a short biography as well as pictures.

Manuscripts can be submitted, preferably by email, to:

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**Submission Deadlines**

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**T**he American Council on Immersion Education (ACIE) is an organizational network for individuals interested in immersion education—teachers, administrators, teacher educators, researchers, and parents.

Conceived by immersion teachers in Minnesota and funded in part by the National Language Resource Center (NLRC)

in the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA) at the University of Minnesota, ACIE aims to facilitate communication among immersion teachers and others interested in immersion education.

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Years in the teaching profession \_\_\_\_\_ Years in immersion teaching \_\_\_\_\_

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