Bilingual Education Programs: A Cross-National Perspective

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We examine alternative forms of bilingual education that have significant implications for intergroup relationships and the reduction of prejudice in two different national settings: Canada and the United States. The Canadian programs are intended for English-speaking students from the culturally dominant group, whereas the U.S. programs we discuss are intended for language minority and language majority students. Both aim to promote proficiency in English and another language. These programs provide many of the conditions that are argued to be essential for the reduction of prejudice and discrimination. They also provide students with the communication skills and cultural awareness that facilitates intergroup contact. The history and current structure of these programs along with salient educational practices are reviewed, and research relevant to changes in intergroup behavior and attitudes is discussed.

...if you want to really hurt me, talk badly about my language. Ethnic identity is twin skin to linguistic identity—I am my language.

—Gloria Anzaldúa, Borderlands—La Frontera: The New Mestiza

In this article, we examine alternative forms of bilingual education drawn from two different national settings—Canada and the United States—that have significant implications for intergroup relationships and the reduction of prejudice. The Canadian bilingual programs we examine are intended for language majority.

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English-speaking students from the societally dominant cultural group. These programs aim to promote proficiency in French and English and are generally referred to as second-language immersion programs; we use this term throughout this article. The U.S. bilingual programs we consider are variously referred to as dual-language or two-way bilingual programs. In contrast to the Canadian immersion programs, dual-language bilingual programs include language minority students with no or limited proficiency in English; the most prevalent language minority group is Spanish speaking. These programs also include language majority (English-speaking) students in the same classrooms, usually in approximately equal numbers. Like the Canadian immersion programs, U.S. dual-language programs also aim to promote proficiency in two languages, English and another language. We do not discuss forms of education in the United States or Canada that do not support the development of the native language of language minority students (e.g., transitional bilingual programs or ESL). Inclusion of U.S. and Canadian programs that share bilingualism as a goal allows us to examine the impact of bilingual education on the reduction of prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping in K–12 students from both minority and majority group backgrounds.

Bilingual-education programs are of interest from the perspective of intergroup relations and prejudice because they focus primarily on bilingual and academic development. Thus, they are important case studies of how much and what kinds of intergroup effects can be expected of programs that have an “incidental focus” on the reduction of prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping. Also, because they are a form of enriched education, offering students proficiency in two languages, they attract widespread interest in some communities and, thus, impact a considerable number of students. It is estimated that there are some 317,000 students in 2,115 schools in Canadian immersion programs nationally (Commissioner of Official Languages, 1999) and 50,000 students in dual language programs in the United States (Donna Christian, Center for Applied Linguistics, Washington, D.C., personal communication).¹

Both the U.S. and Canadian programs promote bilingual proficiency by using two languages as media of academic instruction for significant portions of the students’ schooling. English-speaking students in Canadian French immersion programs can receive between 50% and 100% of their schooling through the medium of French from French-speaking teachers. The amount of second-language instruction and the grade levels when the second language is used as the primary medium of instruction vary according to the model in operation in

¹We consider prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping, and related behaviors and attitudes by and about individuals and/or groups with distinct ethnic and linguistic characteristics. More specifically, we include consideration of English and French Canadians in Canada and Anglo and Hispanic Americans in the United States.
particular school districts (Genesee, 1987). The most common model nationally is early total immersion. In early total immersion programs, students generally receive 100% of their primary schooling, from kindergarten until grade 2 at least, in French. French is used for academic instruction for at least 50% of the curriculum until the end of elementary school. Dual-language programs in the United States typically involve Spanish-speaking children along with native English speakers in relatively equal numbers and, like the Canadian programs, vary in the amount of time spent in each language. However, it is almost never less than 50% in Spanish, and a typical model employs 90% Spanish-language instruction (see Lindholm & Gavlek, 1997, and Christian, Montone, Lindholm & Carranza, 1997, for further discussion of U.S. models).

Theoretical Perspectives

We consider four theoretical perspectives that link bilingual education to intergroup prejudice and discrimination: contact theory, status expectations theory, acculturation theory, and multicultural education. Contact theory has perhaps the most obvious relevance to our discussion. The main hypothesis of contact theory holds that contact between members of different groups leads to increased liking and respect for members of the outgroup, including presumably reductions in stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination. The conditions under which contact might be expected to have these desirable effects are numerous and complex, and there is general agreement that equity is critical (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew, 1998; Stephan, 1999). Dual-language programs present a particularly interesting case for examining the contact hypothesis because they provide sustained opportunities for direct intergroup contact and, in principle, they incorporate at least some of the situational characteristics that are considered critical for positive intergroup outcomes, namely, the potential for close and cooperative contact in a context that is anxiety reduced and equitable for all participating groups. Proponents and administrators of bilingual education hold to many of these conditions and principles as essential ingredients for successful programs (Christian et al., 1997; Lindholm & Gavlek, 1997). Clearly the extent to which specific situational conditions along with the societal and personal characteristics that have also been identified as positive associates of intergroup contact are actually operationalized in a program is an empirical question.

Students participating in Canadian immersion programs tend to come exclusively from the majority ethnolinguistic group and, thus, do not have direct contact in the program with peer members of the second-language group on a daily basis. Arguably, however, even this program could engender positive intergroup outcomes because it provides indirect or vicarious contact with the target ethnic group through interactions with French immersion teachers, who are high-status members of the target group, and through engagement with instructional materials and
activities that reflect the target culture. Direct contact with members of the target language group is also possible once the students have acquired sufficient proficiency in the target language to effect such contact outside school; this is certainly possible in many bilingual areas of Canada.

Yet another theoretical perspective that links bilingual education to issues of prejudice reduction is expectation states theory (Cohen, 1994; Cohen & Lotan, 1995). Expectation states theory seeks to explain why and how some individuals or groups of individuals come to be dominant in the performance of collective tasks. More specifically, it seeks to explain why and how White and/or English-dominant students in U.S. schools come to dominate performance in classes that include students from other ethnic, linguistic, or cultural groups. Expectation states theory postulates that students who are perceived to possess high-status characteristics are judged by others to be more competent than students perceived to have low-status characteristics. Status characteristics are defined as socially evaluated attributes of individuals for which it is generally believed that it is better to be in the high state than the low state. They can be attributes that are relevant to the performance of specific tasks (such as reading ability) or general attributes that have no direct link to task performance (such as socioeconomic or ethnolinguistic background). Through a process of status generalization, students ranked high on specific traits come to be viewed by others as competent in other domains, even those with no direct links to the domain where status was first assigned. Over time, high-status students also come to view themselves as high in status and competence, and they are expected to and, indeed, often assume disproportionately dominant roles in task performance in comparison to students with low status. Increased performance leads to increased competence, and the cycle continues.

In conventional integrated classrooms, students have multiple characteristics that can come to be associated with high or low status and consequently high or low performance. These can include socioeconomic background, language/reading proficiency, cultural/ethnic group membership, and religion, to give some salient examples. Language minority students are at multiple risk of low status because they often possess multiple low-status characteristics: they are commonly from low socioeconomic backgrounds and often have lower levels of literacy, in addition to being members of low-prestige ethnolinguistic and possibly religious groups. Expectation states theory is important not only for understanding these documented patterns of prejudicial treatment but also for explaining, in part at least, the persistent underachievement of such students. Cohen and others have developed experimental interventions to equalize the status relationships among students in integrated schools. They have met with some success (Cohen & Lotan, 1995; Tammivaara, 1982; Webster & Driskell, 1978).

In dual-language programs, the factors associated with low status for minority students are attenuated and the status of language minority and majority groups may be expected to be more equal because (a) language minority students are
already proficient in a language that the language majority students are beginning to learn, and (b) the goals of the program are to promote bilingual proficiency among both groups of students. Moreover, cooperative learning activities are widely used in bilingual programs in order to accommodate differences in preferred learning styles among mainstream and minority students: cooperative multi-ability learning tasks can be an effective method of equalizing status among students with different abilities (see Slavin & Cooper, this issue). Although majority group English-speaking students in French immersion programs do not have daily contact with minority group French-speaking students, arguably, the status of the latter is enhanced because they have ethnolinguistic characteristics that are highly valued and sought after in immersion programs by immersion students.

Acculturation theory is not a single theory but rather refers to a body of research that is concerned with the psychological phenomena that are implicated in intergroup contact (Noels & Clement, 1996). Of particular relevance to our discussion, acculturation theory addresses the role of language and communication as mediators in the development of intergroup contact, ethnic identity, and acculturation (either to one’s own or another ethnolinguistic group). Lack of communicative competence in the language of another group can be a substantial barrier to contact. By promoting communicative competence in the language of other relevant ethnic groups in the community, bilingual programs provide opportunities for participating students to feel that they have important characteristics in common with the target group and/or to have positive cross-cultural experiences with members of the other group that would otherwise be impossible owing to lack of communicative competence. These possibilities are most likely in dual-language programs that include students from both the language minority and majority groups since they provide opportunities for sustained, personalized contact with members of the other group in a supportive, structured environment. Because students in Canadian immersion programs come primarily from the majority cultural group and because these programs are situated in schools and school districts under the jurisdiction of the majority group, they do not provide first-hand opportunities for direct contact with members of the target language group. Nevertheless, they provide opportunities for students to become familiar with and to develop a sense of shared ethnolinguistic characteristics with outgroup members as they learn that group’s language and as they engage with their immersion teachers and with instructional materials and activities that are grounded in the other culture. Also, as noted earlier, direct contact outside school with members of the other group is afforded once students’ language proficiency is sufficiently functional to engage in such contact, provided members of the target language group are accessible in the broader community.

Finally, multicultural education is a reform movement designed to promote major school change that is attuned to the cultural and linguistic diversity of contemporary schools (Banks, 1994). The movement has been centered in largely...
English-dominant countries, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and Britain, that have experienced extensive immigration and ethnic diversification. According to Banks, the general premise of multicultural education is that individuals’ views of themselves and others, as well as their ability to function productively in contemporary society, is enriched by education that includes multiple cultural perspectives. Such perspectives are thought to lead to more sophisticated cognitive and social functioning that, in turn, will allow students to live harmonious, meaningful lives in multiethnic communities. Multicultural education provides an alternative vision for organizing teaching and learning in contemporary schools, one that contrasts with the largely ethnocentric models that exist at present in Canada, the United States, and elsewhere. It clearly endorses and seeks to promote intergroup understanding, reduced prejudice, and effective cross-cultural relations, and it seeks these objectives in the context of the whole school program. Multicultural education is a significant component of both dual-language and French-immersion programs, since both consciously incorporate the tenets of multicultural education as well as some of the features of the three theoretical perspectives discussed previously. However, in contrast to these other perspectives, multicultural education is primarily a philosophy of education rather than a theory about the development and reduction of prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping. It nevertheless bears directly on the utility of bilingual education to achieve the same goals.

In the following sections, we briefly elucidate the history and structure of the bilingual-education models used in Canada and the United States that incorporate the foregoing theoretical perspectives and consciously work to reduce prejudice and increase intergroup harmony among majority and minority groups. Further, we present the extant research on the effectiveness of these models in achieving these social goals. An integrated summary and discussion of the results and implications of both types of bilingual education follow these case studies.

**Bilingual Education in Canada**

*Historical Background*

French immersion programs were created in the mid-1960s in Quebec in response to social and linguistic inequities between French- and English-speaking Canadians. French had until then been the disadvantaged partner in Canadian confederation despite its historical importance during the early colonization and subsequent development of Canada, its contemporary status as an official national language, its demographic significance as the native language of approximately 25% of the Canadian population, and its international status as a major world language. Evidence of the inferior status of French has been evident in legislation, which at times prohibited the use of French; in patterns of language use, which
favored the use of English in most bilingual contexts, even in Quebec; and in language attitudes that often denigrated the French language and those who spoke it.

Discontent over these linguistic and cultural inequities had been developing for some time among members of both the French- and English-speaking communities, especially in Quebec. The 1960s were marked by concerted political, social, and in some cases militant action in the French community of Quebec to redress the imbalance in power between the English and French and to recognize the majority status of French in that province. This period in Quebec history is referred to as the "Quiet Revolution." It is interesting to note that this is the same period in which many other significant sociopolitical changes were occurring in North America, and indeed worldwide, and most notably educational and legislative changes in the United States that fostered bilingual education. At the same time, there was an emerging awareness in the English-speaking community, precipitated by political, legislative, and social events, that French was becoming more important as a language of communication in most spheres of life and, concomitantly, that English alone would no longer ensure social and economic success in the province. The coexistence of French and English Canadians has been characterized by Canadian novelist Hugh MacLennan (1945) as two solitudes, an apt metaphor for Canada at the time and, indeed, for many other communities inhabited by people of different linguistic and cultural backgrounds.

In response to their dissatisfaction with this state of affairs, a concerned group of English-speaking parents in the suburban community of St. Lambert, near Montreal, began to meet in the early 1960s to discuss strategies for change (Lambert & Tucker, 1972). These parents attributed the solitudes that characterized their relationship with francophone Quebecers to their and their children's incompetence in French. They were determined to improve the quality of second-language instruction in English schools to respond to this state of affairs; immersion, as described in the introduction, was the educational improvement they developed. The first immersion class was opened in September 1965. The primary goals of that and current immersion programs are to provide the participating students with functional competence in both written and spoken aspects of French, normal levels of English-language development, and achievement in academic subjects commensurate with the students' ability and grade level. They also aim to ensure an understanding and appreciation of French Canadians, their language, and their culture, without detracting in any way from the students' identity with and appreciation for English Canadian culture.

Improved French-second-language learning was not intended to be the sole goal of immersion. Rather, it was intended to be an intermediate goal leading to improved relationships between English-speaking and French-speaking Quebecers and, more generally, Canadians. It was through this educational innovation that the St. Lambert parents sought to bring about change in response to important sociocultural realities in their communities. Many parents across the country have since come to embrace the same approach.
Examining the Social Impact of Immersion

The social impact of immersion has been examined by Canadian researchers from a number of perspectives: (1) the participating students' perceptions of themselves, English Canadians, and French Canadians; (2) their attitudes toward French Canadians and French-English relations; and (3) their attitudes toward and actual use of French. The research discussed in the next sections was conducted during the 1980s when immersion programs were in a phase of rapid expansion; little attention has been paid to sociocultural issues in more recent work. Support for immersion remains strong in Canada, as witnessed by the steady growth in student numbers, and as evidenced in Quebec by a growing trend for English-speaking parents to send their children to all-French schools. Taken together, these changes suggest that immersion has become a normal part of the educational landscape in Canada. By implication, the new landscape provides an opportunity to revisit the issues addressed in this article, taking these changes into account.

*Intergroup perceptions and self-identity.* Using multidimensional scaling techniques, Cziko, Lambert, and Gutter (1980) and Genesee (1977) examined the ethnic identity of students in early Immersion in comparison to English control students; in contrast to Immersion students, non-Immersion students typically received 30 min a day of French-second-language instruction, beginning in the primary or middle elementary grades. The students were asked to indicate how similar, or dissimilar, a number of ethnic and personal concepts (including the "self") were to one another. These studies revealed that the social perceptions of the Immersion students were similar to those of the English-speaking students in all-English programs in two important respects. First, both groups identified two major ethnolinguistic clusters, one associated with English Canadians and one associated with French Canadians. Second, both groups perceived themselves to be more closely associated with the English Canadian cluster, indicating that both identified primarily with English Canadians. At the same time, the Immersion students differed from the non-Immersion students in that the former saw the English Canadian and French Canadian clusters to be more similar and, of particular interest, they also tended to view themselves as more similar to French Canadians than did the non-Immersion students. Apparently participation in immersion resulted in the Immersion students perceiving less social distance between themselves and French Canadians, perhaps because, as bilinguals, they shared a salient characteristic of French Canadians or perhaps because of their increased experiences and familiarity with French Canadian culture in the immersion program. At the same time, immersion did not appear to have had any adverse effects on the Immersion students' identification with English Canadians. These findings have been supported by other researchers using qualitative analysis of student essays about their immersion experiences (Blake, Lambert, Sidoti, & Wolfe, 1982; Swain, 1980).
Attitudes toward French and French Canadians. Studies of Immersion students' ethnic attitudes have yielded more complex results. In their pioneering longitudinal study of the St. Lambert immersion program, Lambert and Tucker (1972) assessed the attitudes of Immersion students toward themselves, English Canadians, and French Canadians. Their results revealed that in the primary elementary grades, Immersion students saw themselves and English Canadians in a more favorable light than did students in all-English schools. Similarly, the attitudes of the Immersion students towards French Canadians were more positive. When the attitude profiles of the same students were examined in the senior elementary grades, relatively few significant differences were found between the two groups: The attitudes of the Immersion students had come to resemble those of the non-Immersion students. Genesee and his colleagues have found similar patterns of attitudes among students who started immersion in secondary school: Grade 7 Immersion students expressed more positive attitudes toward French Canadians than did comparison students (Genesee, Morin, & Allister, 1974), but there were no differences between Immersion and non-Immersion students in grade 11 (Genesee, Allister, & Morin, 1974). Genesee (1987) has suggested that this shift may reflect the lack of ongoing contact between English and French Canadian students and, thus, the lack of a real substantive basis for maintaining positive attitudes. It is interesting to note here that English-speaking students who had attended all-French-medium schools where the majority of students were native French speakers expressed the most positive attitudes toward French Canadians in the Genesee, Morin, and Allister (1974) grade 7 study. Unfortunately, this group was not included in the grade 11 study, so it is not possible to ascertain whether they maintained their positive dispositions longer than immersion students who lacked such contact.

Intergroup contact and language use. Genesee (1978, 1981) has conducted a number of surveys in Quebec of Immersion students' language habits and intergroup contacts outside school. Immersion as well as non-Immersion students and their parents were asked to indicate in specially prepared diaries that were completed on a daily basis for 1 week what they had done during the preceding day, with whom, and in which language. The Immersion students indicated that they were more likely to respond in French when spoken to in French and that they were less likely to avoid situations in which French would be spoken. In fact, their diary entries revealed that they used French significantly more often than did non-Immersion students—with friends, salesclerks, and other service providers. The Immersion students also reported that they felt more comfortable and confident when speaking French with francophones than did English-speaking students who had not attended immersion. At the same time, there was little indication from their diaries that the Immersion students were more likely to actively seek out situations in which French was used, for example, by watching French television, listening to
French radio, or reading French magazines. Furthermore, the actual frequency and duration of usage of French in these ways was negligible when compared to the students' use of English in the same ways. The same response patterns were obtained from the parents of Immersion students. Additional evidence based on immersion students' evaluative reactions to simulated encounters between English- and French-speaking Canadians in public settings attests to limitations on their tolerance toward the use of French at the expense of English in situations in which English would normally be expected (Genesee & Bourhis, 1982).

In sum, there have been positive social outcomes associated with participation in immersion programs in Canada, as attested by Immersion students' views and attitudes of themselves, English Canadians, and French Canadians and their actual use of French. There are foreign language immersion programs for native English-speaking students in the United States and, although research has not been done to document their sociocultural effects, the Canadian evidence is optimistic in suggesting that similar effects could be achieved in similar U.S. programs. Although students from diverse socioeconomic backgrounds attend immersion programs in Canada, the findings reported here have not been broken out by social class background, and it is likely that the majority of participants in this research are from middle-class families. Thus we do not know to what extent these results generalize to all students. The extant evidence, however, also indicates that there are limitations on the types and extent of social outcomes arising from immersion.

Languages in Contact and Intergroup Conflict

The findings from a detailed ethnographic study of an early French-immersion program in Montreal by Cleghorn suggest possible mechanisms within immersion schools that might explain some of these mitigated effects (Cleghorn & Genesee, 1984). Cleghorn examined patterns of social interaction and language use among the French- and English-speaking teaching and administrative staff in an early French-immersion program in Montreal over the course of one school year. Observational data were supported by extensive interview data with staff members. Her results indicated that interaction among the staff was conflictual and could be related to societally based conflict. The teachers used two main strategies to minimize interpersonal conflict and to maintain professional harmony: (1) they avoided intergroup interaction in school, and (2) English predominated in interactions between staff that occurred out of earshot of students. On the surface, these strategies appeared to serve the goals of the immersion program, namely, that French should be used at all times with immersion students in school. Avoidance of French with the immersion teachers was further justified by the English-speaking teachers on the grounds that they felt that their French was inadequate and a poor model for the immersion students. Thus, avoidance of intergroup contact permitted these
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teachers to circumvent a potentially embarrassing situation and at the same time to uphold an important rule concerning language use in immersion. The predominance of English in encounters with other staff similarly served to avoid violation of the French-only rule and maintained a semblance of English dominance in the face of increasing encroachments by French. What is important about these findings is that they reveal that despite their best conscious intentions to create a school environment that modeled active bilingualism and intergroup contact, the English- and French-speaking teachers in this school had recreated the two solitudes that characterized intergroup relations in the community. Cleghorn discerned that the teachers' behaviors with respect to one another and the two languages were motivated primarily by norms governing teacher interactions in general, even though these norms re-created a set of societally based communication patterns that this innovative program sought to change.

Yet another mitigating influence on the social outcomes of French immersion can be found by examining the broader sociocultural context of which immersion programs are a part (Clement, 1995). The research just reviewed was conducted during a period of intense political change in Quebec: Among other events, French was declared the only official language in Quebec, which had previously granted English official status; children of immigrant parents were obliged to attend French-medium schools and not English-medium schools, leading to a substantial decline in the population of English schools; it became illegal to use English on public signs (with some exceptions) throughout the province of Quebec, in contravention of historic rights to freedom of public speech in Quebec and Canada; and a referendum was held in Quebec in 1978 that invited Quebeckers to seek separation from Canada as a means of protecting the French language and culture in North America. It is not difficult to imagine the depressing effects such events might have had on the participants of immersion programs and on intergroup relations in general. Clearly, an interpretation of the social impact of French immersion must take these broader sociocultural events into account.

Bilingual Education in the United States

Historical Background

Whereas Canadians experimented with immersion education in order to promote bilingualism and foster greater understanding of French Canadian culture on the part of anglophones, bilingual-education programs in the United States resulted from a very different impetus and, thus, have had a very different history. The first official bilingual program in the United States was established in 1963 at the Coral Way School in Miami, Florida, to allow the children of Cuban refugees to become competent in two languages (Hakuta, 1986; Mackey & Beebe, 1977). Most programs established in the United States thereafter, however, were
explicitly designed to transition students out of their primary language (usually Spanish) and into English as quickly and efficiently as possible (Nieto, 1993; U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, 1972). In short, U.S. programs have been viewed primarily as linguistic interventions, with little or no attention paid to intergroup issues that might affect students' adaptation to American schooling or society. In fact, a recurring theme during the 1970s and into the 1980s was the perceived conflict between the policies of integration and bilingual education. Bilingual education has often been characterized as incompatible with integration efforts because it required some separation of English learners from their English-speaking peers for purposes of instruction. Thus, from a policy perspective, not only did these bilingual programs, as they were initially conceived, offer no clear means of enhancing intercultural communication, but in some cases they actually contributed to intercultural strife, pitting English speakers against English learners and African Americans against Latinos. Nevertheless, the legislation and approaches of the 1970s paved the way for a significant evolution in bilingual education to include both minority and majority language students and instruction in both minority and majority languages.

By the early 1970s, some English-speaking parents, typically well-educated, well-traveled, and living in university communities, began to see the potential for bilingual programs, in the form of dual-language immersion, as a way for their children to become bilingual and bicultural. In contrast to earlier forms of bilingual education, dual-language, or two-way, programs typically include speakers of the two target languages and provide core academic instruction in both languages over a period of years with the objective of creating bilingualism and biliteracy in both groups of students. Most of these programs also explicitly include cross-cultural understanding as a primary goal (Delgado-Larroco, 1998). A well-documented example of such a school is Oyster Elementary in Washington, D.C. Oyster takes a "language as resource" position (in contrast to the "language as problem" approach of most transitional bilingual programs) and confronts issues of racial and ethnic stereotyping and discrimination directly. More specifically, the school places a strong emphasis on the richness and diversity of its student and parent populations so that the cultural diversity of the students is incorporated into classroom and schoolwide activities in all subject areas (reported in Freeman, 1998, p. 125). An ethnographic account of Oyster Bilingual School by Rebecca Freeman portrays in detail how the dual-language curriculum coupled with a philosophy of the school-as-a-cultural-communication-system shapes both the social and linguistic experiences of the Oyster student body. According to Freeman,

"a primary goal of the Oyster dual-language program is to make space for the co-construction of positively evaluated minority social identities. Oyster, therefore . . . socializes[s] the minority and majority children alike into recognizing the existence of positive minority social identities whose differences are expected, tolerated, and respected . . . . Oyster educators use dual-language education, cooperative learning, and team-teaching.
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[in which the English and Spanish teachers model equal status] as the means to reach their goals for their target populations.” (p. 81)

There are more than 200 dual language programs in the United States (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1997), and a number have been carefully documented and researched and report findings with respect to intergroup relations that are relevant to our discussion. The empirical evidence with respect to the intergroup and sociocultural impact of these programs can be summarized in the following ways: (a) reducing prejudice among majority students, and (b) reducing prejudice among minority students toward the self and the dominant culture.

The Social Impact of Dual Language Immersion

Reducing prejudice among majority students. As noted earlier, transitional bilingual education programs, no matter how effective they are in helping students join the academic mainstream, implicitly foster prejudice against non-English languages because they are based on the “language as problem” model (Ruiz, 1984). Minority students’ non-English language is something to be dispensed with, and transitioned out of, as quickly as possible. Dual-language programs, in contrast, conceptualize non-English languages as a resource for English learners and as enrichment for English speakers. Thus, by valuing other languages, dual-language programs give these languages, and their speakers, greater prestige. The greater esteem in which the non-English speakers are held is thought to reduce prejudice against them.

Two dual-language programs have tested these theories. Elementary-school-age students in the Amigos Two-Way Immersion program in Cambridge, Massachusetts, who learned to use both Spanish and English, were as likely to form friendships with students from a different language background as they were to form friendships with those from their same language background (Cazabon, Lambert, & Hall, 1993; Lambert & Cazabon, 1994). The children also reported preferring multiethnic classrooms over homogeneous ones. In her longitudinal study of the Amigos program, Cazabon (1999) has examined the language and cultural attitudes of the students as they move through the upper grades of the program. Data collected from 204 Latino and 89 European and African American students in grades 4 through 8 reveal a high level of agreement among students from all ethnic groups that they “enjoy meeting and listening to people who speak another language” ($M = 3.5$ on a scale in which 3 equals most of the time and 4 is equivalent to all of the time) and that “knowing two languages will help you get a better job when you grow up” ($M = 3.72$). The latter sentiment was especially salient for the European American students in the program. Importantly, both African American ($M = 3.73$) and European American ($M = 3.76$) students also tended to agree highly with the statement that “learning Spanish is important so that you can talk with Spanish-speaking people” and that
“learning two languages makes you smarter” \(M = 3.55\) African American; \(M = 3.37\) European American). These results differed statistically significantly from the less positive attitudes expressed by English control students in all-English programs. These findings suggest that prejudicial feelings against persons from other language groups can be diminished in the context of a dual-language program and that students from diverse backgrounds can become quite conscious of the advantages that accrue to multilingualism.

Lindholm (in press) has studied the social and academic attitudes of students in nine dual-language (Spanish and English) programs in California using an 80-item survey. Of relevance to our discussion, the survey sought to assess a number of dimensions of students' attitudes, including their cross-cultural and integrative language attitudes, their self-esteem, and their attitudes toward academic achievement and schooling. Her sample included 611 third through eighth graders, approximately half Spanish speaking and half English speaking. Control students attending English-only classes were not included. Lack of control groups in this type of research is not uncommon owing to difficulties in identifying truly comparable language minority students in English-only schools or truly representative control schools; in some cases, English-only schools are hesitant to be compared to successful bilingual schools for fear of negative implications (Lindholm, personal communication). A high percentage of the students of color (Latino and African American) were from very low income homes, whereas those from European American homes seldom fell in this category. Lindholm found high positive ratings \(M = 3.5\) and no significant differences among groups with respect to cross-cultural attitudes and the value of knowing a second language. She also found moderately high ratings on items related to the students' attitudes toward academic achievement and schooling (e.g., like school, like to learn; \(M = 3.2\) all groups), with no differences among ethnic groups.

Reducing prejudice among minority students toward the self and the dominant culture. To some extent, the problem of reducing negative attitudes toward the majority cultural group is not dissimilar from the inverse process, reducing prejudice against non-English speakers. However, there is another level of complexity inherent in the problem of prejudice and distrust of the dominant culture. Whereas dual-language programs can be effective in encouraging friendships and harmonious relations between minority and majority group students, and they may even improve the way each sees the other, language minority students may still harbor feelings of inferiority and low self-esteem, and these can be manifested as ambivalence or hostility toward the dominant culture (Cummins, 1981; see also Steele, 1997). Evidence of this exists in the oppositional behavior exhibited by some Mexican American students in the United States (Matute-Bianchi, 1986). Unfortunately, these attitudes, which ultimately lead to lowered academic aspirations, are difficult to combat in the classroom because they involve reactions to a
society-wide prejudice. Lindholm (in press), however, in the study reported above, found encouraging signs of the potential for dual-language programs to ameliorate these negative attitudes. She found moderately high ratings for self-esteem among all student groups (based on items keyed to physical appearance and “life in general”; \( M = 3.2 \) all groups), with no significant differences among ethnic groups. Although ratings of self-esteem tended to decline among the adolescent students (consistent with the literature on adolescent development), there were no differences among ethnic groups within age categories, attesting to similarity among groups in this regard.

These positive effects, however, may be challenged once students leave bilingual programs and are mainstreamed into English-only schools and classrooms. When Freeman (1998) followed a cohort of students from Oyster School into junior high school, she found evidence that although students held positive attitudes toward their outgroup peers in elementary school, the pressure to conform to the majority culture and language led them frequently to choose between rejecting their own cultural background and being shunned by the White students in the junior high school.

Languages in Contact and Status Differences

As in Canadian bilingual programs, it is important to acknowledge the limits as well as the strengths of dual-language programs in effecting intergroup change. A yearlong ethnographic study of a kindergarten Spanish-English dual-language program in northern California reveals striking parallels to those reported by Cleghorn and Genesee when viewed from the perspective of the conflicting norms or forces that bilingual teachers must contend with and the potentially contradictory effects that can result if contending social forces are not reconciled (Delgado-Larroco, 1998). Delgado-Larroco’s study focused on teachers’ patterns of language use and their instructional strategies with English- and Spanish-speaking pupils in a dual-language classroom. In the class studied, 54% of the students were native English speakers and 46% were native Spanish speakers; 90% of instruction was in Spanish and 10% in English. As is common in such programs, there were large socioeconomic differences among the students and their parents, with the Spanish-speaking parents having substantially less education and income than the English-speaking parents. These differences played a significant role in classroom communication and instruction.

In brief, Delgado-Larroco observed that although the program appeared to incorporate positive attitudes toward both language groups and the teachers explicitly acknowledged the need to attend to status equalization, the native English speaking students enjoyed a superordinate role and higher status than the native Spanish speaking students. Delgado-Larroco (1998) attributed this difference to the higher status and cultural capital of the English-speaking parents, who were
more visible and active than the Spanish-speaking parents in the development and implementation of the program. The influence of the English-speaking parents was evident in the primary focus that the teachers placed on the English-speaking students and their educational needs when planning and delivering instruction. The teachers openly expressed concerns about the developmental needs of the English-speaking students because of parallel concerns expressed by their parents. The Spanish-speaking students, in constrast, served as language models and instructional aides to the English-speaking students while their own developmental needs were a secondary focus of the teachers’ attention.

It is important to emphasize that the patterns of language use and the instructional strategies adopted by these dual-language teachers made pedagogical sense—in particular, catering to the instructional needs of the native English-speaking students could be rationalized in terms of their rudimentary Spanish language skills—and using the native Spanish speakers as models and translators for the English-speaking students, arguably, recognized the linguistic superiority and, thus, raised the status of the native Spanish-speaking students. However, in effect, the Spanish-speaking students had no voice, and their language and overall academic development (and consequently their status) was subordinated to that of the English-speaking students. In short, and like the experience in immersion programs in Canada, the dual-language program had re-created the intergroup divisions and status differentials that characterized these two groups in the community at large.

Summary and Discussion

Research on Canadian and U.S. bilingual education reveals positive changes in domains related to intergroup attitudes, identity/self-esteem, language use, and in some cases affiliation and contact. Our analysis of the extant findings with reference to the four theories presented at the outset suggests to us that each of these perspectives sheds light on the conditions that might facilitate changes in students’ attitudes and perceptions of others. Our comments here are necessarily cautious, since this research was not designed to test these theories. There is evidence for the main arguments put forward by contact theory, though the results from immersion would suggest that direct contact, though desirable, is not necessary for changes in intergroup perceptions. The emphasis in contact theory and expectations states theory on intergroup contact with equal status is well supported in our review. The Cleghorn and Delgado-Larroco research provides new insights about how important this factor is and what may be necessary to achieve equal status in school settings. Salient elements of acculturation theory pertaining to cultural identity and communication skills are largely lacking in the other theories but, we believe, are fundamental to school interventions that seek to alter intergroup relations, especially among groups who speak different languages. Communication issues may
also be relevant even when distinct languages are not involved, for example, issues involving African and White Americans who speak different dialects of English. The tenets of multicultural education are borne out in the surveys conducted with immersion and dual-language students that demonstrate, in our opinion, a broadened, more tolerant, and inquisitive view of the world around them. In our view, the salient features of each of these theories need to be considered in program development.

At the same time, our review indicates that changes in intergroup attitudes and behavior emanating from bilingual education were not always sustained over the long term in either of these national settings, nor were they as substantial in all cases as might have been hoped. This is probably not surprising given the difficulties that other interventions have had effecting changes in intergroup attitudes and behaviors even when their explicit focus is on such change. These results may also reflect the extent to which bilingual programs actually operationalize the conditions that theory on the reduction of prejudice and discrimination has argued are critical in producing change. For example, cooperative learning strategies are often adopted in U.S. bilingual programs in response to identified differences in culturally conditioned learning styles among students, not necessarily as a way of equalizing status relationships and promoting intergroup friendships per se. The research by Cleghorn and Genesee (1984) in Canada and by Delgado-Larroco (1998) in the United States underlines the complex and conflicting forces that can act on teachers in bilingual programs and illustrates why and how more substantive or sustained effects might be mitigated. Both of these studies indicate that when decision making and educational planning in bilingual schools are based on pedagogical factors without sustained, explicit attention to societally based intergroup factors, teachers tend to re-create in school the same intergroup relationships that exist outside school. Clearly, if bilingual education programs are to provide models for improved intergroup attitudes and relations, professionals working in these programs must understand how to counteract the centrifugal societal forces that act to maintain intergroup prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping in school. Educators working in these programs need to be expert in intergroup and cross-cultural matters in addition to conventional matters of pedagogy.

It is instructive to note here that when Delgado-Larroco drew the kindergarten teachers’ attention to the potentially negative impact their practices were having on the minority language students and their development, they were able not only to recognize these unintended effects but also to develop alternative strategies that served both groups of students more equitably (Delgado-Larroco, personal communication). The insights that Delgado-Larroco derived from her in-depth investigation and shared with these teachers are often lacking among even the most well-intentioned teachers because they are not obvious. Indeed, it would appear from both the Cleghorn and Delgado-Larroco studies that it is precisely because
certain instructional strategies or interaction patterns in school make sense from a conventional pedagogical perspective that their contradictory implications for the cross-cultural goals of bilingual education are difficult to discern. In the dual-language program examined by Delgado-Larroco in California, for example, concerns for equal status and educational development are probably best met by raising the status of Spanish and the Spanish-speaking students ahead of English and the native English-speaking students since, arguably, such a strategy would not only equalize the status of the two groups by compensating for the otherwise inferior status of the Spanish speakers but also set a higher standard for Spanish language development—clearly an advantage for both groups of students in such a program. Raising the status of one language and one language group above that of the other in order to achieve sociocultural equity is not an intuitively obvious strategy, nor is it uncontroversial. Recent events in California make clear the challenge that such a strategy represents. Voters in that state decided in 1998 that, except in some cases, English learners should be educated in English-only classrooms, in which no opportunity would exist for minority and majority languages and cultures to come into explicit contact. These conditions clearly undermine the potentially positive impact of bilingual forms of education.

Efforts to redress prejudice and discrimination in the classroom are fraught with long-term difficulties because they challenge the social order in school and beyond. For example, according to contact theory, students from one ethnolinguistic group must have sustained, personalized learning experiences of a cooperative or collaborative nature with students from another group if preexisting perceptions and expectations about that group are to be modified. However, cooperative learning runs counter to conventional North American norms in education, which stress competitive, individualized learning with overt, concrete reward systems. Or, according to acculturation theory, positive intergroup changes arise from acquisition of a second language and the development of communicative competence in that language if the learner becomes acculturated to the target language’s culture. It is not clear to what extent or how many English-speaking parents want to expose their children to such socializing effects; indeed, anglophone parents with children in French-immersion programs in Canada are sometimes concerned that their children will lose their cultural traditions if they get a heavy dose of French culture in school. Although there is no evidence that this occurs, the fear still remains.

Because of the consequential nature of the issues raised above, it cannot be expected that teachers alone will or can tackle them without broader support, even if they have the necessary professional knowledge and skills. Tackling issues of intergroup prejudice, discrimination and stereotyping in bilingual/immersion education (and indeed in any educational program) requires consensus among parents and other community leaders on desirable and appropriate goals. Parents must understand and identify the nature and extent of the sociocultural goals they want or find acceptable, since efforts from within the program itself that exceed their or
the community's expectations will meet with strong opposition. Programmatic goals that encompass reductions in prejudice, discrimination, and stereotyping require extensive and sustained resources and commitment: appropriate multicultural instructional materials and professional development opportunities, and staff who embody and understand the multicultural diversity that is at the heart of these issues must be provided. Provision of these resources requires the clear, committed, and sustained support of community and school leaders who control resource allocation. Such commitment, however, is becoming increasingly difficult to secure in the United States as substantial portions of the citizens support policies to reduce the presence of non-English languages and cultures in public schools. Although these concerns are not the stuff of theory and research on prejudice and discrimination, they are nevertheless critical if programs to reduce intergroup prejudice and discrimination are to be put in place in school settings on a large scale. There is still much to explore here: the influence of socioeconomic or ethnic background and the long-term impact of participation in these programs on the reduction of prejudice and discrimination. Nevertheless, the evidence reviewed here suggests that bilingual education for language minority and language majority students can be effective in promoting some of these goals on a large scale.

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