

# **A Comparison of Planning and Personnel Factors in Bilingual Programs Among Exemplary, Non-Exemplary, and Accreditation Notice Schools**

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## **Abstract**

Differences in planning and organizing factors in bilingual programs across three types of elementary schools (federal and/or state cited exemplary, non-exemplary and accreditation notice) were examined. One hundred and sixty-nine educators were surveyed on 22 items examining the effective school correlate of instructional leadership. Results indicated that bilingual programs for exemplary schools differed significantly from the other two types of schools with respect to the following planning and organizational variables: (a) identification procedures; (b) involvement of bilingual classroom teachers in program development; (c) degree to which program evaluation data is shared with classroom teachers; and (d) training on the use of pacing of first and second language instruction.

## **Introduction**

Effectiveness and quality of bilingual education programs have been the focus of much debate. Within the last fifteen years, research has been conducted on the effectiveness of bilingual education and effective bilingual classrooms and schools. The major studies addressing the effectiveness of bilingual education have produced inconclusive results (Baker & de Kanter, 1983; Danoff, 1978; Ramírez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991; U. S. General Accounting Office, 1987; Willig, 1985; Zappert & Cruz, 1977). Cziko (1992) provides the following reasons for the conflicting results:

- 1) differences in the values ascribed to bilingualism and multiculturalism...;
- 2) great variation in what is considered bilingual education...;
- 3) Considerable variability in both the population served by bilingual education and the linguistic, social, and affective contexts in

which bilingual education takes place...; and 4) methodological reasons (p. 13).

Other researchers have taken a different approach to the study of bilingual programs. The case study approach has been used to examine the characteristics of effective bilingual schools (Carter & Chatfield, 1986; Carter & Maestas, 1982) and effective bilingual classrooms (Tikunoff, 1983). This approach has provided information about characteristics and/or features of effective bilingual practices rather than simply comparing transitional bilingual programs with English immersion programs. Carter and Maestas (1982) described three effective bilingual schools as having, among other factors: good school climate, positive leadership, high expectations for student achievement and strong instructional focus. These factors are quite similar to the effective school correlates research (Southwest Educational Development Laboratory, 1988). Carter and Chatfield (1986) examined one of the aforementioned effective bilingual schools in the Carter and Maestas' (1982) study five years later. They found that the bilingual school remained effective. Carter and Chatfield concluded that the bilingual program was an "integral part" of the school rather than an isolated or separate program.

Review of this literature provides insight as to new research directions in bilingual education. First, limited research on effective school correlates and their relationship to bilingual education programs has been conducted. Additional research in this area is needed. Second, Carter & Chatfield (1986) developed a paradigm to examine the "relationship between bilingual program effectiveness and school wide effectiveness" (p. 200). Their paradigm has the following four cells: Cell I) effective school and effective bilingual program; Cell II) ineffective school and effective bilingual program; Cell III) effective school and ineffective bilingual program; and Cell IV) ineffective school~and ineffective bilingual program. Carter and Chatfield classified the three effective bilingual schools from the Carter and Maestas' (1982) study as being in Cell I. Moreover, they state that most schools with bilingual programs are in Cell IV. Thus, it is not surprising that they "suggest that most evaluative studies of bilingual programs have been conducted in Cell IV situations" (p. 228). Carter and Chatfield (1986) recommend using their paradigm in future research: "Research on bilingual education needs to take into account the relatedness of program to institutional

context. Unfortunately, bilingual programs have generally been studies in isolation” (p. 228). The literature is devoid of studies examining the characteristics of bilingual programs across different “institutional contexts.”

The purpose of the present study is to address these two issues. This study compared bilingual programs from each of three types of elementary campuses “institutional contexts”: federal and/or state cited exemplary schools; non-exemplary schools; and accreditation notice schools. Exemplary schools were identified by federal and or state agencies and judged to be outstanding based on on-site school visitations and their review of achievement data, school/classroom climate, principal and teacher characteristics, and other factors promoting academic success. Accreditation notice schools faced accreditation loss if state cited deficiencies were not corrected. Non-exemplary schools were neither exemplary nor on accreditation notice. These schools were perceived to be characteristic of average or neutral status with respect to performance. Educators from the three types of school campuses were surveyed in order to ascertain differences among their bilingual programs primarily on the effective school correlate of instructional leadership as well as on other relevant planning and personnel factors.

### **Methods**

**Subjects.** One hundred sixty-nine educators agreed to participate in the study. The sample consisted of: 152 classroom teachers, 11 support and/or resources personnel, and 3 administrators. Three additional participants did not specify their job classification. The majority of the sample was female (n=116). Only 18 subjects indicated that they were male, while thirty-five participants did not provide gender information.

Educators who were surveyed were from one of three categories of elementary campuses located in the southwestern United States: federal and/or state cited exemplary schools, non-exemplary schools (i.e., average or neutral status) and accreditation notice schools. All the elementary schools served a high percentage of non-English speaking (NES) and limited English proficient (LEP) Hispanic children. Thirty-five educators were from one of six federal and/or state cited exemplary schools. Twenty-six educators were from one of two accreditation notice schools. The remaining 108 educators were from a variety of non-exemplary/neutral status schools. All educators in this final subgroup consisted of degreed teachers

pursuing a course of study in bilingual education and simultaneously employed in neutral/non-exemplary public schools. This latter subgroup of educators from non-exemplary/neutral schools was obtained in order to increase the probability that this sample was representative of educators from neutral status schools rather than obtaining a sample of educators from a few neutral status schools that might be constrained to or affected by school factors.

**Instrument.** A survey was developed to examine differences between bilingual programs from different status types of elementary schools. Items developed for the survey were on the following 4-point Likert Scale: 1=strongly disagree; 2=disagree; 3=agree; and 4=strongly agree. Moreover, respondents were provided a “not applicable or unknown” response for each question. The items used in the survey were reviewed by state educational agencies, bilingual division personnel, university bilingual education teacher trainers, and public schools bilingual program personnel. In spite of the fact that the survey examined different educational components, the focus of the study centered on planning and personnel factors. Although respondents completed 22 items which addressed these two issues, the researchers were primarily interested in examining five areas: (a) identification procedures, (b) involvement of bilingual classroom teachers in program development, (c) degree to which program evaluation data is shared with classroom teachers, (d) educators’ view of native language instruction, and (e) training on the use of pacing of first and second language instruction. These five areas were selected to be examined more closely because the researchers believed that they were critical problem issues occurring in the field of bilingual education.

## **Results**

Five one-way Analysis of Variances were conducted on each of the areas in order to examine differences among bilingual programs from the three types of elementary school campuses. When warranted, Scheffé tests were used to locate significant differences between groups. Descriptive statistics were obtained on the remaining 17 items. Table 1 provides a summary of all inferential statistics results.

**Table 1**  
**Summary of Inferential Statistics Results**

Item	Exemplary (n = 35)			Non-Exemplary/ Neutral (n = 108)			Accreditation Notice (n = 26)			F value
	n	x	SD	n	x	SD	n	x	SD	
1. Appropriate student oral language dominance identification procedures which comply with state guidelines are in use throughout the district.	33	3.73	.77	98	2.86	.77	20	3.10	.72	18.61**
2. Bilingual classrooms teachers are continuously involved in the organization and development of their bilingual education program.	34	3.32	.98	95	2.13	.96	20	2.20	.83	20.54**
3. Evaluation data secured for the purpose of planning and organizing improvement in the program is shared with classroom teachers.	34	3.68	.68	95	2.53	.84	21	2.7	.87	26.21**
4. I support the educational methodology of using the child's native language (L1) as the beginning instructional medium in the classroom and the sequential classroom introduction of English	33	3.76	.44	102	3.24	.86	22	3.41	.80	3.42**
5. Training on the use and pacing on the two languages (English and the native language) has been provided by the district to bilingual and ESL teachers.	33	3.33	.82	94	1.98	.89	23	2.26	.81	30.09**

\*  $P \leq .01$     \*\* $P \leq .001$

### **Identification Procedures**

The following item was used to address the identification issue: "Appropriate student oral language dominance identification procedures which comply with state guidelines are in use throughout the district." One hundred sixty-two (162) of the one hundred sixty-nine (169) subjects responded to this item. Eleven of these subjects replied "unknown or not applicable" and were not included in the analysis. Means for each type of elementary campus were: (a) exemplary status = 3.73 (n=33) with a standard deviation of .77; (b) non-exemplary/neutral status = 2.86 (n=98) with a standard deviation of .77; and (c) accreditation notice status = 3.10 (n=20) with a standard deviation of .72. The ANOVA revealed significant differences, ( $F(2,148) = 18.61, p < .001$ ), among the bilingual programs from the three types of school campuses. The Scheffé test indicated that bilingual programs from exemplary elementary schools significantly ( $p < .05$ ) exceeded bilingual programs from non-exemplary/neutral and accreditation notice elementary schools. The bilingual programs from the non-exemplary/neutral and accreditation notice school did not differ significantly from one another on this item.

### **Involvement of Bilingual Classroom Teachers in Program Development**

The following statement was used to address this topic: "Bilingual classroom teachers are continuously involved in the organization and development of the bilingual education program." One hundred fifty-nine (159) of the one hundred sixty-nine (169) of the subjects provided a reply to this statement. Ten of the 159 subjects who did respond indicated that they did not know. Thus, the analysis was based on 149 educators' responses. Means for each type of elementary campus were: (a) exemplary status = 3.32 (n=34) with standard deviation of .98; (b) non-exemplary/neutral status = 2.13 (n=95) with a standard deviation of .96; and (c) accreditation notice status = 2.20 (n=20) with a standard deviation of .83. The results of ANOVA showed significant differences, ( $F(2,146) = 20.54, p < .001$ ), among the bilingual programs from the three types of school campuses. The Scheffé & Test revealed that the bilingual programs from exemplary elementary schools significantly ( $p < .05$ ) exceeded bilingual programs from the other two types of status school. The non-exemplary/neutral and accreditation notice schools did not significantly differ from one another.

### **Degree to Which Program Evaluation Data is Shared with Classroom Teachers**

Educators were asked to respond to the following statement: "Evaluation data secured for the purpose of planning and organizing improvement in the program is shared with classroom teachers." Only five subjects failed to provide a rating for this question while another 14 stated that they did not know. The analysis was based on 150 educators responses. Means for each type of elementary campus were: (a) exemplary status 3.68 (n=34) with a standard deviation of .68; (b) non-exemplary/neutral status =2.53 (n=95) with a standard deviation of .84, and (c) accreditation notice =2.57 (n=21) with a standard deviation of .87. Significant differences, ( $F(2,147) = 26.21, p < .001$ ), were found among the three types of schools. Results of the Scheffé test revealed that the mean from the bilingual program from exemplary elementary schools significantly ( $p < .05$ ) exceeded the means of bilingual programs for the other two status schools.

### **Educators' View of Native Language Instruction**

Educators were asked their view of native language instruction by the following statement: "I support the educational methodology of using the child's native language (L1) as the beginning instructional medium in the classroom and the sequential classroom introduction of English." Nine subjects did not respond to this question and another three replied with an "unknown or not applicable" response. One hundred fifty-seven (157) of the one hundred sixty-nine (169) subjects did reply to this statement. The means for each group were: (a) exemplary =3.76 (n=33) with a standard deviation of .44; (b) non-exemplary status =3.24 (n=102) with a standard deviation of .86; and (c) accreditation notice status =3.41 (n=22) with a standard deviation of .80. The ANOVA procedure revealed significant differences, ( $F(2,154) = 3.42, p < .01$ ), among the three types of schools. Results of the Scheffé test revealed that the exemplary status schools and the accreditation notice schools were significantly different ( $p < .05$ ) from the non-exemplary/neutral status schools but not from one another.

### **Training on the Use and Pacing of First and Second Language Instruction**

Educators were asked to reply to the following statement:

“Training on the use and pacing of the two languages (English and the native language) has been provided by the district to bilingual and ESL teachers.” 166 of the 169 educators responded to this statement of which 16 stated that they did not know. Means for each type of status schools were: (a) exemplary = 3.33 (n=33) with a standard deviation of .82; (b) non-exemplary = 1.98 (n=94) with a standard deviation of .89; and (c) accreditation notice = 2.26 (n=23) with a standard deviation of .81. The ANOVA procedure revealed significant differences among the three types of status schools, ( $F(2,147) = 30.09, p < .001$ ). The exemplary status school was significantly different ( $p < .05$ ) from the other two types of school. The non-exemplary and the accreditation status schools did not significantly differ from one another.

**Remaining Items.** The remaining 17 items were analyzed via descriptive statistics. The items were not analyzed using inferential statistical procedures due to the number of items which would increase the probability of making a Type 1 error (i.e.; “The rejection of the null hypothesis when it is correct” Borg & Gall, 1989, p. 351). Tables 2 and 3 provide a summary of the results of items pertaining to planning and organizational variables and personnel factors, respectively.

With respect to planning and organization items, the exemplary schools had the highest means on every item except for item 8. When examining the items as a whole, it is evident that there are apparent instructional leadership differences among the bilingual programs located in the three types of schools. Administrators’ instructional leadership (Table 2, items 2, 3, and 5) were rated highest in exemplary schools. Teacher variables (Table 2, items 1, 4, and 6) related to planning and organization were also rated highest in exemplary schools. Parental involvement and input (items 9 and 10) were given a higher mean rating in exemplary schools than in the other two types of schools.

The characteristics of educators across the three types of schools favored the personnel of bilingual programs from exemplary schools. As evidenced by ratings on Table 3 items 2, 6, and 7, educators from exemplary schools stated that they received effective training on English as a second language (ESL) instructional



**Table 2**  
**Planning and Organization Items**

Item	Exemplary (n = 35)			Non-Exemplary /Neutral (n = 108)			Accreditation Notice (n= 26)		
	n	x	SD	n	x	SD	n	x	SD
1. The educational needs of the district's Limited English Proficient (LEP) student population were assessed prior to the implementation of the state bilingual instructional program.	33	3.36	.6	81	2.79	.83	18	3.06	.80
2. An administrator with experience in curriculum and language instruction has been given the responsibility of program implementation.	32	3.63	.49	81	2.49	.71	22	2.55	.74
3. Program goals and objectives have been developed and are integrated in the district's plan for first/second language instruction (L1/L2).	34	3.53	.6	99	3.95	.80	22	3.18	.73
4. Teachers have been inserviced on the districts goals and objectives.	35	3.67	.54	98	2.91	.93	25	3.04	.74
5. A professional administrator has been given the responsibilities for first and second language time/treatments designs, curriculum program development and supervision of program.	33	3.46	.7	94	2.76	.80	21	2.86	.48
6. Bilingual classroom teachers are periodically involved in the organization and development of the bilingual education program.	35	3.40	.74	86	2.41	.98	23	2.48	.79

**Table 2 continued**

Item	Exemplary (n = 35)			Non-Exemplary /Neutral (n = 108)			Accreditation Notice (n= 26)		
	n	x	SD	n	x	SD	n	x	SD
7. My campus Language Proficiency Committee (LPAC) does a creditable job of addressing the academic program of LEP children and follows state/district procedures in exiting LEP students out of the bilingual program.	34	3.74	.51	89	2.76	.85	23	3.17	.78
8. LEP students in my district are not overrepresented in special education.	30	2.77	.68	81	2.89	.73	20	2.95	.61
9. The school district provides a strong parental involvement program supported by local school district funds and/or liaison personnel.	35	3.77	.43	91	3.09	.84	23	3.17	.72
10. PTA/PTO meetings in my campus are conducted in English and in native language of the non-English speaking parent.	35	3.77	.43	91	3.09	.84	23	3.17	.72

**Table 3**  
**Personnel Factors**

Item	Exemplary (n = 35)			Non-Exemplary /Neutral (n = 108)			Accreditation Notice (n= 26)		
	n	x	SD	n	x	SD	n	x	SD
1. Instructional faculty and staff are selected on the basis of professional endorsements and personal attributes required to serve culturally and linguistically different minority students.	34	3.62	.60	102	2.53	.93	21	2.48	.81
2. Ongoing staff development is being provided to para-professionals and professionals serving the district's LEP student population.	35	3.43	.74	99	2.49	.80	24	3.08	.72
3. Supportive Staff (librarians, counselors, etc.) receive program information and training.	27	3.44	.75	83	2.43	.84	21	2.62	.59
4. Teachers placed in bilingual classrooms serving native language dominant children (Spanish dominance or other non-English language) are proficient in the child's native language.	35	3.60	.55	105	2.55	.83	23	2.74	.92
5. Bilingual teachers at my campus, who belong to the same ethnic minority as their LEP students, are proficient in the english language.	35	3.3	.60	104	2.93	.84	23	3.00	.60
6. Effective training on ESL instructional strategies has been provided by my school district.	35	3.14	.69	99	2.12	.96	24	2.63	.88
7. Effective training on Spanish/English reading methodology has been provided by the school district.	35	3.31	.72	100	2.02	.93	24	2.50	.89

strategies and Spanish/English reading methodology from their school district. Additionally, these same educators also stated that they received on going staff development to a higher degree. Teachers in exemplary schools had the highest mean with respect to their proficiency in the child's native language.

### **Discussion**

Data analyzed on personnel and planning factors noted significant differences across different institutional contexts favoring the bilingual programs from exemplary schools. Based on personnel responses, bilingual programs in exemplary schools were significantly different from bilingual programs from non-exemplary/neutral and accreditation notice schools on the following primary areas examined: identification procedures; involvement of bilingual classroom teachers in program development; degree to which program evaluation is shared with classroom teachers; and training on the use of pacing of first and second language instruction. Although the bilingual programs from exemplary schools had the highest mean when compared to the other two types of status schools on educators' view on native language instruction, the exemplary status schools were only significantly different from the non-exemplary/neutral schools and not from the accreditation status schools. This may be due to state accreditation notice school personnel being made aware of their school limitations during the course of the study. This may have resulted in quick corrective measures in this particular area. A technical limitation of this study was that cell sizes across the three types of schools were not equal. An examination of the standard deviations across the three types of schools for most of the five items on Table 1, however, indicate that they are very similar.

Exemplary and accreditation notice status school survey respondents gave their schools a higher approval level in implementing appropriate language dominance identification procedures which were in compliance with state guidelines. School entry procedures for new students may require parents to respond to questionnaires that allow school officials to determine a child's preferred home language. If it is determined by means of an interview or questionnaire that the child uses another language besides English, the student may then be tested with a language dominance test. State approved language dominance assessments, including parental consent, determine bilingual education program

placements. Non-English and LEP student populations in exemplary and accreditation status schools were identified as mandated by the state. Student program placement procedures need to be functional and proper to support administrative decisions for the selection of bilingual education as an instructional approach. Student program misplacement was, thus, not a concern for these two status school groups.

Two critical factors which marked a significant difference between the exemplary classroom teachers and the accreditation notice teachers, including the non-exemplary status teachers, were: (a) in their on-going involvement in the development and organization of the bilingual education program and (b) in being participants to sharing program evaluation data for the on-going purpose of assessing what works and what does not work. Exemplary school teachers were directly involved in program planning and improvement resulting in site-based level curriculum decision-making. These teachers were, therefore, given ownership for program success, while the two other teacher groups were minimally involved if at all.

All three surveyed groups supported the educational methodology of using the child's native language as the beginning instructional medium in the classroom and the sequential introduction of English. Personnel from the non-exemplary/neutral status schools, however, rated this to a significantly lower degree.

A significant mean difference between personnel from exemplary schools and the non-exemplary/neutral and accreditation notice status was recorded in the area of training. The two latter groups surveyed indicated that inservice training on the instructional pacing of native language and ESL instruction had not been provided. Dual language transitional programs require specific curriculum guidelines if teachers are to carefully pace a transition from first to second language.

A review of the descriptive statistics on Tables 2 and 3 merits discussion. Responses to items dealing with planning and organization issues (Table 2) provide a consistent picture that suggests that bilingual programs in exemplary schools have greater strengths in the area of instructional leadership. Teachers from campuses identified as exemplary by federal or state agencies indicated that an experienced administrative supervisor was held accountable for program implementation. Teachers in the schools also indicated that the educational needs of the district's language

minority students were assessed prior to the implementation of a state bilingual instructional program. In these schools, program goals and objectives were thereafter implemented into a strategic educational plan for first and second language instruction. Classroom teachers in exemplary schools received inservice training on district goals and objectives for its bilingual program. Moreover, a critical factor in most dual language curricula is time/treatment designs. Most school districts use a general state plan outlining the amount of classroom instructional time prescribed for first and/or second language instruction. Exemplary campuses tended to develop a more comprehensive instructional design with continuous teacher input. Teachers in exemplary schools were also keenly aware of their students assessed language dominance levels. Teachers surveyed from exemplary school campuses indicated a higher confidence level than those from neutral campuses concerning the credibility of their Language Proficiency Assessment Committee. This confidence may have resulted due to their continuous involvement in program development which they indicated on a separate item.

Parental involvement was another area of planning and organization that differed across different types of schools. Periodic parent-teacher organization campus meetings at exemplary schools were conducted in both English and in the native language of the non-English speaking parents. These meetings appear to have value. The commitment of the district to invest local funds and time to reach out into the community strengthens considerably the bond between parent, child, and school. State accreditation notice school personnel were made aware during the course of the study that a void existed in their district's parental involvement component and steps in some cases were quickly taken to correct that concern. It may be that quick corrective measures may have produced, in some instances, smaller mean differences between exemplary and accreditation notice schools. Moreover, it is important to note that the survey was conducted at the beginning of corrective administrative/teacher planning by the accreditation notice school campuses. This may help explain why accreditation notice school mean scores on 7 of the 10 items on Table 2 were higher than the non-exemplary/neutral schools.

Responses to items associated with personnel issues (Table 3) in the survey indicated that teachers from the exemplary schools perceived that their classroom placement was based on completing a

professional endorsement deemed necessary to teach language minority and culturally diverse student populations. Exemplary campus personnel perceived their campus bilingual classroom teachers to be more proficient in the student's native language than teachers from the accreditation notice and non-exemplary/neutral schools. The capacity to deliver instruction in the students' native language, including English, is crucial to the success of any dual language program. Additionally, such personnel from exemplary schools indicated receiving special student support services from school district and in-house professionals. Supportive professional staff in cited exemplary school campuses were evidently receiving more (item 3, personnel factors) ongoing inservice district training on factors relating to the teaching language minority students. Exemplary school campus teachers indicated to a higher degree that their school district was doing a better job in providing ESL and Spanish/English reading methodology training than the accreditation notice and neutral teacher groups. At the time of the survey the accreditation notice teachers were just beginning to receive inservice training in these two areas as part of the district plan to correct accreditation status. Mean score differences between non-exemplary neutral and accreditation notice group responses (Table 3 item 6) may be indicative of this training.

Two conclusions can be drawn from the results of this study. First, bilingual programs in exemplary schools had effective instructional leadership when compared to the other bilingual programs in the other two types of schools. This instructional leadership was displayed by having appropriate identification procedures in place; allowing teacher input into the organization and development of the bilingual program; sharing evaluation data of the bilingual program with teachers; and providing appropriate and relevant training on the use and pacing of the two languages. Second, Chatfield and Carter's (1986) paradigm merits consideration for future research examining the role of instructional leadership in bilingual education.

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