The Planting of Seeds: Preparing a Community for Two-Way Immersion

Crystal V. Shelby-Caffey, PhD
Southern Illinois University

Lavern Byfield, PhD
Southern Illinois University
Abstract

The examination of TWI programs is a burgeoning field and there is minimal work that specifically focuses on the foundational processes that contribute to implementation of TWI programs in a given school. This case study presented here centers on the agency of a group, the Los Niños Bilingual Coalition, whose expressed purpose was to establish a dual language program in a rural university town. Specifically, the questions guiding this study are: (a) What endeavors (individual and group) serve to lay the foundation for the implementation of a dual language/TWI program? (b) What challenges do groups encounter in their endeavors prior to the implementation of a dual language/TWI program? (c) How do groups respond to challenges faced during the pre-implementation process? These questions were not easily answered and the discussion provided herein provides but a glimpse into all the efforts undertaken to implement a TWI program. In searching for answers to these questions, we hope to provide assistance to others who are interested in implementing a TWI program.

Keywords: Two Way Immersion, Dual Language, Diversity.

Fueled by both long-term historic immigration patterns and more recent ones, the language diversity of the country has increased over the past few decades” (Ryan, 2013, p. 15). Census reports indicate that of the population in the U.S. ages five and over, 60 million (20.8%) speak a language other than English in their homes (Ryan, 2013). Of those who speak a language other than English, roughly 14 million (23%) are between the ages of five and nineteen; the age span during which children in the U.S. attend K-12 schools. During the 2012-2013 academic year, approximately 4.4 million students in the United States were classified as English learners (ELs) (US Department of Education & National Center for Educational Statitics, 2015). Despite the steady increase in ELs, students who enter U.S. schools speaking a language other than English are often viewed from a position of deficit. Many teachers as well as those in the English speaking community view these students as having both linguistic and intellectual problems that must be corrected. A consequence that ELs face as a result of deficit thinking is the devaluation of their home language and the need to completely assimilate while embracing the dominant language and culture. One proposed remedy to this “language as a problem” orientation (Ruiz, 1984) is to offer EL students some form of bilingual education.

Language Diversity in U.S. Schools

The richness in cultural, ethnic, and linguistic diversity present within the U.S and, by default, within schools, is evident in the data provided above. Consideration must be given as to how we are serving children who enter the U.S. educational system with a home language other than English. With the authorization of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, there has been a call for accountability regarding the academic performance of students with limited English proficiency (United States Congress House Committee on Education and the Workforce, 2002), as well as an outward show of support from a previous Secretary of Education for the implementation of dual language immersion programs (Bali, 2000). In an editorial, current Secretary of State, Arnie Duncan, and Assistant Deputy Secretary of the Office of English Language Acquisition in the Department of Education, Libia Gil, noted that:
Today, a world-class education means learning to speak, read and write languages in addition to English…we have a valuable yet untapped resource within the estimated 4.6 million students learning English… the heritage languages our English learners bring to school are major assets to preserve and value…(Duncan & Gil, 2014, para. 5 & 8).

If, as a goal of education, we are preparing students to participate in an increasingly global society, then multilingualism must be both encouraged and supported. In addition, students’ funds of knowledge should be viewed as valuable resources within classroom (González, Moll, & Amanti, 2005). Once emphasis has been placed on culturally sustaining pedagogies (Paris & Alim, 2014), students will come to view themselves and their peers as capable contributors to the learning process. Yet, the cultural lean toward deficit thinking is underscored by the scarcity of two-way bilingual and dual immersion programs that actively support multilingualism and an emphasis on culturally sustaining pedagogies.

Programs for ELs

Currently, within the U.S., there are a number of approaches used to teach ELs; each method aligning with one of two divergent models: 1) transitional bilingual education programs (TBE) that, ideally teach part of the curriculum in a language other than English (e.g., Spanish) along with English as a second language (ESL), and 2) dual language immersion programs such as two-way bilingual education or two-way immersion (TWI). Differing in their assumptions, approach and anticipated outcomes, there are supporters and detractors on both sides. There are some who might define TBE and dual language programs similarly since the ideal organization of a TBE program is earmarked by ELs receiving content area instruction in their home language (L1).

Given the limited number of TWI programs identified in the Center For Applied Linguistics’s directory, it stands that many TBE programs in the U.S. either fully submerge ELs in English, or opt to offer early exit ESL services peripherally, as either a pull out or push in program. The primary goal of TBE programs is assimilation and is subtractive in nature. Students placed in TBE programs are transitioned into speaking English in a relatively short period of time and there is no concern for development of biliteracy nor home language. In many instances, the teacher providing the TBE services, does not even share the same language as the EL. In contrast, having a primary goal of bilingualism and biliteracy for both every student regardless of their home language, Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan (2000) speak of the additive nature of dual language immersion programs in which students’ culture and language are valued and are seen as linguistic capital. Utilizing both English and a non-English language (target language) for separate amounts of instructional time, TWI provides one such program model. Duncan and Gil (2014) note the following regarding dual language:

…many schools and communities across the country have established programs to encourage mastery of multiple languages…in effective dual-language classrooms, English learners and English-proficient classmates are provided opportunities to learn academic content while simultaneously becoming proficient in both languages (para. 10).
In U.S. contexts, most programs that are designated as TWI, are taught using some combination of Spanish and English and are designed using the 50:50 model, 90:10 model, or 80:20 model. Deeply embedded within each of these programs is a philosophy about second language learning that drives the instruction that ELs receive. TWI programs are designed to positively draw from students’ funds of knowledge (González et al., 2005) as a means to create cross-cultural awareness and linguistic transfer while maintaining an emphasis on high academic achievement ("Two-way immersion education: The basics," n.d.).

There are merely 458 TWI programs identified throughout the U.S. (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2015). This is an insufficient number of school-based programs as there are millions of ELs requiring services across the nation. As many school districts continue to subscribe to a deficit model, attempts to implement effective TWI programs are often met with resistance. Therefore, it is important to explore the pathway leading to implementation of a TWI program. Within this article, we describe the efforts of a group formed specifically for the purpose of establishing a TWI program within a community.

There is an abundance of literature regarding the implementation of successful dual language programs. However, resources addressing the challenges faced prior to full implementation and the steps taken to overcome those challenges are lacking. Christian, Howard, & Loeb (2000) noted that many questions about TWI remained unanswered and that those questions related particularly to implementation of TWI programs. While many explorations of TWI programs have occurred since the initial assertion, there are still rich opportunities to further investigate questions concerning implementation.

Methods

The question arises that if research has shown that an additive context along with ongoing L1 instruction are crucial to successful language learning, why isn’t the dual language model being used widespread to educate ELs within U.S. schools? Perhaps the answer lies within Clark, Flores, Riojas-Cortes, and Smith’s (2002) claim that the process of implementing a dual language program can be tumultuous and requires educators to carefully reflect on their own biases and misgivings in relation to the community that they are serving. As the examination of TWI programs is a burgeoning field, and there is minimal work that specifically focuses on the processes that contribute to implementation of a TWI program in a school and community, our work here provides a glimpse into one such case. The current discussion centers on the agency of a group whose expressed purpose was to establish a TWI program within an elementary school.

Research Question

Specifically, the questions guiding this study were: (a) What individual and group endeavors serve to lay the foundation for the implementation of a TWI program?; (b) What challenges do groups encounter in such endeavors prior to the implementation of a TWI program?; and (c) How do groups respond to challenges faced during the pre-implementation process? In searching for answers to these questions, we hope to provide assistance to others who are interested in implementing a TWI program.
Data Collection

Program development and implementation involves a dynamic process with a multitude of vantage points from which to view the experience. Data were collected over the course of one year and involved observation and semi-structured interviews. The use of both observations of group meetings about TWI program development, and interviews with key people involved during the pre-implementation phase allowed various facets of this ever changing process to be captured. In addition, the interviews provided descriptive data in the subjects’ own words so that the researchers could develop insights as to how subjects interpreted some piece of the world (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). Even within groups whose primary purpose is to implement a dual language program, an individual group member’s view of the process is unique. Interviewing multiple group members provided an indication of the groups’ dynamic, complex nature. Observational data collected during multiple group meetings of the Los Niños Bilingual Coalition (LNBC—a pseudonym) as well as during a community conference hosted by the group served to add depth to the information gathered during interviews.

Research Context

The context of this study was a rural, Midwestern town flanked by a national forest, as well as numerous orchards, vineyards, and wineries. The driving economic forces in the area included a major university, a state and a federal prison, and several manufacturing facilities. The nearby orchards employ large populations of Spanish speaking migrant workers, and subsequently, many of the children of these families attend local schools.

Situated within a community of approximately 25,000 people, Stark Elementary (a pseudonym) is a public elementary school and is one of four attendance centers in the school district. Students in pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and first grades attend Stark before moving on to the second and third grade building. Stark is separated by 245 miles from the nearest TWI program and, once implemented, its TWI program became one of only sixteen schools in the state offering a TWI program at the elementary level. With a rapidly growing population of ELs and support from the nearby university, Stark became the focus of the LNBC’s efforts to implement a TWI program.

Participants

A university faculty member spearheaded efforts of the LNBC. The group was comprised of local educators and parents, all interested in TWI programming. Each participant was sought because of their varied role within the group. The roles were as follows: person who spearheaded the TWI implementation efforts, liaison between local school administration and LNBC, parent, community member, local school administrator, and a local teacher. Three of the participants, Janet, Michele, and Linda were members of the LNBC. They were each affiliated with the local university and were actively working with the surrounding community to inform them about TWI programs. The final participant, Yvonne, was an administrator in the Etherton Consolidated School District (ECS), located roughly 400 miles north of Stark Elementary. Yvonne was involved in initiating a TWI program in her hometown and continued to oversee that program in her role as a district administrator. Three of the participants identified as White, while Janet identified as Jewish.
Data Analysis

Each interview was recorded and field notes supplemented the recordings by providing contextual information gathered during the interview. Recorded interviews were then transcribed and data were examined for recurring themes within the context of program implementation efforts. Themes identified within individual interviews were then crossed referenced with interviews from other participants. The cross referencing served as a sort of cross-case analysis (Meriam, 2001; 2009) that allowed us to examine data from our participants as individual cases that contributed to our understandings of the main case (efforts of the group). We were able to identify thematic patterns that we then referenced against observational data, and information gathered during additional, informal, conversation style interviews with the participants. The intentional mapping of the identified themes with other data was critical in supporting triangulation (Stake, 1995; 2005) and providing for robust understanding of LNBC’s efforts to start a TWI program as we sought answers to our research questions.

Findings

The incentive for wanting to implement a dual language program can be markedly different from one community to the next. However, the overriding factor seems to be the academic achievement of both ELs and language majority students. Though Janet, the faculty member at the nearby university who spearheaded the LNBC also lived in the school district, she did not have children of her own that would benefit from her efforts. We were curious to learn how and why Janet undertook such a lofty endeavor. Janet described how she became interested in starting a local TWI program:

I got the idea one year ago when I attended the La Cosecha Conference in Albuquerque, NM and I talked to people from Colorado who had problems getting their own program started…I asked them…how they got their program started and they said they formed a consortium. But…that you have to just start talking to people and organizing people and getting them together to meet regularly and talk about it. I came back all excited about that and…I put an email out to people I thought would be interested saying, “let’s start this”…and people said “we’re interested” and we set up a meeting time and off we went.

The first seed had been planted. It was at the La Cosecha Conference that Janet met Yvonne, an elementary administrator who had successfully overseen the implementation of a dual language program over 400 miles away. Yvonne would prove to be an ally in the dual language efforts taking place on Janet’s home front. Below, Yvonne discussed the impetus for the dual language movement in her hometown:

Parents [in Etherton] had wanted this for ten years. They first approached the school board in 1995 and the school board kind of rebuffed them and said “go write a charter proposal”, which they did. They…got money together. They hired a consultant and they wrote a charter school proposal…we sent people out to visit programs and just did a thorough investigation of program models and research across the country…the school…figured that they would just get a charter school proposal every fall if they didn’t do something for the parents… We started two kindergartens in the fall of 2000.
Forming the Los Niños Bilingual Coalition

Years after Yvonne’s efforts in Etherton were successful, one of the researchers delved into a graduate course offered as a linguistics “workshop”. Every participant enrolled in the workshop held an interest in TWI and later became the core members of the LNBC along with various members of the community. The expressed intent of the group being to inform parents, teachers, administrators, and the community about TWI programs in hopes of garnering support for implementing a program locally. It was at this time that one of the researchers met Janet, the professor who taught the workshop and spearheaded the LNBC. In addition, Janet had already recruited her colleague Michele as well as Linda, a bilingual education teacher who worked in Stark’s school district. While meeting with like-minded individuals proved fruitful, Janet knew that in order for her idea to blossom, it was time to move the discussion beyond the intimate group.

Additional seeds were planted when, under Janet’s direction, the LNBC organized multiple conferences and town hall meetings in hopes of sparking a local parental interest in TWI. The purpose of the conferences was to inform parents, teachers, and administrators about the benefits of dual language immersion, the rights of ELs according to the state code, and discuss efforts to develop a local program. There were approximately 200 people in attendance at the first conference representing 78 families. Of the families present, 100% expressed an interest in dual language immersion.

Local families were eager to have a TWI program in their community. However, the LNBC’s efforts seemed to be met with resistance from local school administrators and a general disinterest from local teachers. Therefore, Janet decided to offer trainings to local teachers and administrators. Having now garnered the support of additional parents, LNBC members began rallying the school boards in an attempt to encourage interest in the program. The LNBC also presented data supporting the feasibility of having a TWI program in the local community.

Buds of Resistance

The group’s efforts were mildly successful and the idea did not appear to be taking root with district teacher and administrators. LNBC members soon began to suspect that sentiments within their community were consistent with the national resistance to bilingualism. As the group continued to organize informative conferences, support from local teachers and administrators was questionable. Janet conducted an in-service for local administrators that focused on bilingual education, dual language instruction, and the research and laws supporting and encouraging both. To her dismay, there was a dismal showing of fifteen local administrators and the impact of the training seemed negligible as there were no immediate changes or discussions that stemmed from her efforts.

Janet expressed frustration about the many disregarded opportunities extended to teachers and administrators by the LNBC. She was perplexed when she “sent invitations to the school boards and administrators of five districts offering them $1000 per person to attend the La Cosecha Dual Language Conference and not a single one accepted it”. Her experiences with another nearby town with the most Spanish speakers in the area fueled her belief that they were “not interested and basically said that “we’re very happy with our programs and we’re not interested in considering this and we don’t want to go to any conferences. We don’t want to learn more about this”. Janet was disappointed that no one from Stark’s school district would go to La Cosecha and that other nearby districts did not even respond to her offer.
Acknowledging that LNBC had seemingly met strong opposition from the school boards in the majority of nearby communities, Both Linda and Michele formulated opinions as to why this has occurred. As a local ESL teacher, Linda’s perspective was unique. She was a core member of LNBC as well as a tenured teacher within the district. It was at her urging that the local district even began an ESL pull-out program. She had a strong positive relationship with fellow teachers, building and district administrators, and university faculty. Noting the lack of support from Stark’s superintendent, Linda believes that local administrators view the university’s involvement as overreaching. “They felt the university was coming in and saying “this is what you’re going to do…[the] district hears ‘here’s what we want you to do and here’s how you’re going to do it, here’s when you’re going to do it’…” Rather than seeing the university as a resource, local districts viewed it as a threat. This was obvious when the LNBC presented data and information to the local school board about the state statute regarding ELs. As Linda explains, “People [LNBC and professors] have been seen as rude. At the last board meeting we were told to stop coming in and being so confrontational and that if we would not be confrontational...no way were they ever going to talk to us if we were coming in pointing the finger at them….” Resistance from local administrators was most notable in their lack of response to and interaction with LNBC. Not one single local administrators attended the community conferences or town hall meetings.

As a university faculty member, Michele, on the other hand, saw things from a different perspective. It was her belief that the resistance was the result of historically tense race relations in the community; tensions which she believed were exclusive to this community. Michele is much more forgiving in her explanation when she states that “there are issues in [the town and in local] schools that have existed for decades…It appears…that many things have been allowed to fester and our attempts to bring this to the school administrators and people have been…not understood in a lot of ways.” She also attributed the resistance to “misunderstandings and miscommunication”.

Michele acknowledges that communities are complex and that every community is different. But, she understood that obtaining the support of community members, school and district administrators, and local teachers was crucial in order for LNBC’s dreams of a TWI program to come to fruition. Michele attributed the school board’s admonishments on the strong personalities of LNBC’s group members. She realized that their passion and zeal for TWI may have been overbearing and impeded the school board member’s ability to listen. But, revealed that ultimately, LNBC wanted to meet privately with the school board and district administrators to discuss the possibility of implementing a TWI program at Stark.

It Takes a Village

Despite the seeming resistance to a TWI program, the LNBC continued to press forward, attempting to rally parents in support of the program. Unanimously, interviewees agreed that parental support was key to any efforts to implement a TWI program in a community. Yvonne, the administrator from ESC, explained that garnering active parental support was crucial to getting the TWI program in Etherton started. She noted that “They [parents] have to lobby the school board. They have to be talking at school board meetings, they have to be sending school board members… copies of research. They have to find somebody in the district that will listen to them”. It was Yvonne’s contention that parental support would be the driving force that swayed the district.
The LNBC was all too familiar with the challenges of maintaining a core group of parents who were willing to consistently stand up for the TWI program. Both Janet and Linda spoke about the need for parental support. Here, Janet spoke about the presumption of deflected responsibility:

…I think that although people want it and if there were a program they’d be the first in line to sign up…I’m not sure because of the culture of this community… that people have the temperament to fight…people from Etherton told us “you’ve got to go to every school board meeting and demand and demand and demand. I don’t know if people from [this part of the country] have the stomach to get into a hostile situation. But, I do think they want a program very badly…they seem to expect that the university people are going to go to the school board meetings and fight their fight for…But, it’s got to be their fight!

However, unlike Janet, Linda believed that the lack of parental involvement was a natural consequence of “children grow[ing] quickly and…moving out of that targeted age”. She conceded that there was difficulty in gathering support from parents whose children may very well have moved on by the time the program was fully implemented.

**Concerns about Funding**

As discussions progressed to program design and possible implementation, the question of funding was inevitable. With educational budget cuts, districts were and are struggling to recover those funds from alternate sources. At a time when money is tight, many underfunded programs are being cut. Participants acknowledged that, inherently, finances are a consideration when any new program might be implemented. However, because of Michele’s involvement with other bilingual initiatives, she recognized that “You’re not looking for additional funding. You’re going to have the same teacher and…it’s just regular funding. There’s also Title III money that can be used…there are bilingual funds that can be used for efforts like this to buy material”. Other districts within the state accessed state and federal funds for their TWI programs. Yvonne unabashedly acknowledges that ESC used state funding to start their program. In addition, she noted that they regularly “used [state] funding for all the extra since [their] two-way immersion teachers [were] replacing teachers that use to be in that position…it’s the most cost effective method.” Yvonne was adamant that TWI was more cost effective and, her experience confirmed that notion.

**Job Security**

In working with local teachers and trying to inform them about dual language, the matter of job security was a frequent recurrence. Local teachers expressed apprehension about supporting a program which they believed threatened their jobs. Was it possible to reassure veteran, monolinguals that their position would not be sacrificed in lieu of a bilingual teacher? Throughout LNBC’s discussions with the school board and administrators, an unusually large number of teachers retired or left the district. In Yvonne’s district, no one ever lost his/her job because of the TWI program. It was all done through attrition. She explained that “as somebody retires they’re probably replaced with a bilingual teacher. There always was [the sense that teachers
might lose jobs]. The teachers always knew that if they were monolingual in English…they would be relocated.” She emphasized the fact that no one lost their job altogether.

Participants sensed a reluctance on the part of Stark’s administrators to hire bilingual educators. Janet understood that districts often faced situations in which they had unexpected openings. However, she expressed frustration with Stark’s administrator’s unwillingness to hire equally qualified bilingual teachers. Further, it appeared that they did not feel obliged to hire bilingual teachers, instead referring them to a district surrounded by orchards and having a high concentration of Spanish speaking migrant workers. Janet, who also happened to hold a teaching license, rebuffed “bilingual means I can teach in English [also]. I’m a good teacher in English [also]…It’s ridiculous”. Interestingly, there were several who were certified bilingual teachers who were members of the LNBC and, who had applied for and not been hired for a position in Stark’s school district.

Discussion

The challenges faced by the LNBC are not dissimilar to dual language efforts taking place all across the country. The process that leads to the implementation of a dual language program in the U.S. is wrought with the same tensions that have long fueled the immigration debate (Lessow-Hurley, 2013). The underlying resistance to the dual language movement is rooted in cultural and linguistic dominance. The current discussion surrounding bilingual education is embroiled in the American superiority complex.

Overall, the challenges faced by the LNBC speak to larger issues. Nonetheless, there are grassroots movements springing forth across the nation. The participants in these movements, like the participants in Etherton and the members of the LNBC, are people who believe that bilingualism’s time has come and is valuable. Numerous calls to action have been made in favor of TWI programs. So, how might the process unfold for others interested in implementing a TWI program? What endeavors serve to lay the foundation for the implementation of a TWI program? The answer to this question varies. Be it a whisper into someone’s ear extolling the virtues of dual language or a cult-like movement of vigilante parents demanding bilingualism for their children, it is time for that call to action to be answered. Once acted upon, the process begins to unfold as seeds are planted into the minds and hearts of the local school board members, administrators, and community. This sowing requires tenacity, grace, and the skillful art of subtle seduction. The suitors must remain steadfast in their efforts to unite parents and community members while maneuvering the delicate balancing act in which school board members and administrators are dissuaded from deferring to business as usual.

What challenges do groups encounter in their endeavors prior to the implementation of a dual language/TWI program? The participants identified several challenges faced by the LNBC. Though the data presented seems to distinguish multiple challenges, the overarching themes are community involvement and buy-in from local administrators, teachers, and school board members. Here we see two very different aspects of the pre-implementation phase; one in which parents were the driving force behind the movement and one in which university faculty members were the driving force. Undeniably, parents wield more power in making demands of the district in which their children attend. Local parents in Stark’s school district were slow to realize the power that they had in swaying the school district in support of a TWI program. The hesitance on the part of parents’ to ruffle the feathers of administrators was less an issue of them having the
“stomach” for fighting and more an issue of living in a relatively small community in which all of their actions were under a microscope and could reflect negatively on the very children whose behalves they were rallying.

As stated, though it was not difficult to pull together groups of parents who were in support of the program, it was extremely difficult to ask them to be the voice for a program from which their children may never benefit. This was an ongoing struggle for the LNBC. They addressed the issue by continuing to hold conferences and educate parents to garner additional supporters whose children might benefit from their efforts. In this regard, it was almost like the constant selling of a dream, for parents who wanted something different, something more for their children.

The clashes with the school board and administrators presented a great challenge. This appeared to be partly the result of miscommunication and partly related to personality conflicts. It is easy to take someone’s words and actions and view them as hostile. Whereas, if you really knew that person, you would know that their zeal for equity and their desire to see all children succeed is the fire that ignites their flame. This lack of understanding was a major impediment during the pre-implementation process. Once personality conflicts occurred, parties from both sides viewed those from the other as rude, unresponsive, and conniving. If they stepped back, they would have seen that they all wanted the same thing, what was best for the children.

Other issues developed primarily as a result of the aforementioned conflicts. Concerns raised on behalf of the district about funding and job security were pseudo-challenges. They were passive retaliatory tactics used to stonewall the LNBC’s efforts based on the personality conflicts. From the moment that the superintendent decided that Janet was overbearing, it seems that she also decided to wash her hands of anything related to the TWI program. Granted, the sentiment about Janet within the LNBC was similar. Janet had a strong personality and even stronger opinions. However, because coalition members had developed a relationship with her, they knew that her intent was not ill willed. The district’s claim that funding was not available was found to be untrue. The school district was already receiving funds to run a bilingual education program. However, they chose to allocate those funds toward a pull-out ESL program. The funds could have been used to support the TWI program. In addition, there was a potential pool of bilingual teachers, several within the LNBC, for the district to hire had they chosen to do so.

LNBC dealt with the clashes between their group and the administrators and board members by actively recruiting individuals who maintained positive working relationships with the administrators. These LNBC members were then positioned such that they conducted business on behalf of the coalition. Inquiries about funding sources and teacher job security were addressed by the coalition, who submitted a detailed proposal with a rationalization for how the program might operate within the district. This strategy proved very successful for the group as a 50:50, Spanish/English TWI program was implemented at Stark just two years after the LNBC’s first official group meeting. In addition, one of LNBC’s group members was hired as the district’s first teacher with a bilingual certification for the TWI program.

Conclusion

Despite legislation whose peripheral objective is to close the achievement gap between language minority and language majority students, a major disparity still exists. Likening the educational system to a levee, there is a breach that negatively impacts not only language minority students, but other minority students as well. Many of the existing bilingual education programs in the U.S. continue to subscribe to subtractive, compensatory methods for educating language minority students. Though additive enrichment programs such as TWI are most successful in
educating ELs, their expansion is relatively slow here in the U.S. This study examined the challenges that the Los Niños Bilingual Coalition faced during the pre-implementation phase of a TWI program. A more complete rendering of this problem would be evidenced by further researching the pre-implementation phase of dual language programs throughout the U.S. as well as abroad. Realizing that the culture of a given community has an impact on program implementation, it is imperative to speak with community members and parents in addition to those affiliated with the group that supports implementation of dual language programs.

If our view of bilingualism and multilingualism here in the U.S. is shifted and turned upon its head to reflect the plurality that we often purport to uphold in this country, then perhaps we, as a society, will begin to value multilingualism and the accompanying literacy and embrace TWI as a tool for promoting such. Perhaps, it is at that point at which we will begin to view ELs in our schools as assets from whom we can learn, instead of as liabilities who are overburdening our school systems. Future generations will then reap the benefits of all the seeds that have been sown in the name of bilingualism.
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