A Framework for Additive ESL/Bilingual Education in Urban Schools: A Reflection on the United States' Situation

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This critical literature review is the result of a reflection about some of the problems affecting ESL instruction in U.S. Urban schools. The article first situates the problem of ESL/Bilingual Education, including historical background and political and human rights education standpoints. The second part of the paper offers some research-based considerations to improve the quality of instruction in ESL classrooms. The author's recommendations stem from Valenzuela's (1999) idea of *additive schooling* (p. 269-271) and how such schooling has to go beyond the classroom, influencing other factors affecting instruction. The final part of this paper is a discussion of some of the challenges ahead to promote better practice in these schools.

Key words: ESL; Bilingual education, Urban Education, Minority Human Rights, Critical Literature Review

Esta revisión crítica de literatura es el producto de una reflexión sobre los problemas que afectan la enseñanza del inglés como segunda lengua en escuelas urbanas de los Estados Unidos. El artículo inicialmente sitúa el problema de la educación bilingüe/ inglés como segunda lengua, incluyendo referentes históricos y puntos de vista políticos y de educación en derechos humanos. La segunda parte presenta sugerencias con base en investigaciones para mejorar la calidad de la enseñanza en las aulas de inglés como segunda lengua. Las recomendaciones del autor están inspiradas en la idea de "instrucción aditiva" de Valenzuela (1999, p. 269-271) y cómo esta instrucción tiene que trascender el aula de clase e influir en otros factores que afectan la enseñanza. La parte final es una discusión sobre los retos en el futuro para promover mejores prácticas en estas escuelas.

Palabras claves: ESL; Educación Bilingüe, Educación Urbana, Derechos Humanos de las Minorías, Revisión Crítica de Literatura

Before I started graduate school in the United States, I was an EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teacher in Colombia for over nine years. I had heard that ESL (English as a Second Language) courses were an alternative for English Language Learners (who are also minority students) to bridge the language gap and fully integrate into their academic settings. I had not heard about Urban Education, nor was I fully aware of how ESL was really implemented in different contexts. Reading Valenzuela's (1999) *Subtractive Schooling* was an eye opener. In her book, Valenzuela describes some issues facing minority students in some schools in Houston, Texas, and how these schools promoted subtractive practices. Subtractive practices can be understood as any kind of practice that does not promote meaningful learning or students' success in school. These practices can range from systematically eliminating students from the school system (Fine, 1991) to marginalizing students on the grounds of racial origin (Davidson, 1997), to not offering any chances for real growth within the curriculum (Valenzuela, 1994).

Specifically, reading Valenzuela's account of the 'horizontal mobility' ESL students had in one of these schools in Houston, as they never seemed to join regular or honours classes, made me wonder how ESL programs in urban schools are implemented and how they can be improved to be more helpful tools for minority students.

This paper intends to address this issue of how to improve Bilingual Education/ESL[1] instruction in Urban Schools. The following questions guide this study: (a) What factors (internal/external) affect ESL courses in urban schools, turning them into subtractive and linguicist[2] practices? (b) How can ESL courses help minority students benefit more from the school system without demeaning their identities?

This paper works under the assumption that ESL in urban schools and Second Language Learners' success are issues that transcend pedagogy, involving politics and human rights. The discussion first situates the problem from a top-down perspective, and then moves on to presenting some considerations from a bottom-up perspective, mostly focused on the school setting. Although most of these considerations are at a micro level, I believe it is important to be well informed of the macro issues, and vice versa. In addition, the idea of *additive schooling* (Valenzuela, 1999, 269-271), as a counterproposal that promotes students' success and caring for them, has to go beyond the school and take into consideration other external factors affecting instruction.

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[1] The terms Bilingual Education and ESL reflect very different views of a similar phenomenon, but oftentimes making a clear difference is quite blurry. For the purpose of this paper, I will use both in combination.

[2] Tove Skutnabb-Kangas (1988, 1994) coined this term. She defines linguicist as any practice that discriminates against speakers of any language, usually minorities.

This article and its findings also want to contribute to the debate about urban education and minorities in the United States. A good amount of this debate usually involves Spanish-speaking children (a position that I will eventually challenge). Being a native Spanish speaker myself, I can offer an insider's perspective on ESL, that of someone who *had to learn* to speak English in addition to Spanish in order to be an active member of academia and the world. I believe that being bilingual is a strength and not a "learning liability[3] ". In a broader sense, any educational proposal that deals with migrant children has to realize that if the price to learn a language is losing another, some change might be necessary.

Methodology

For the purpose of this critical literature review, I searched for articles found in refereed journals specialized in or dealing with issues such as urban education, ESL, and Bilingual Education, as well as books dealing with Bilingual Education and urban schools. I used the following criteria to refine my findings: (a) I looked for articles and chapters that would situate the problem from a linguistic as well as socio-political stance; (b) I also zeroed in on articles and chapters that would present successful examples of ESL programs in urban or inner-city settings. I made sure they explained how these programs were implemented and the considerations the authors had when discussing or showing these programs. The research questions informed these criteria, as well as every step of my analysis and discussions. The findings and salient features I noted sometimes aligned with my expectations about ESL and urban education, and very often they helped me consider other alternatives I had not considered before.

The majority of the articles I found focused on Latino[4] students, especially Mexican students. I acknowledge it may be a limitation of this review. However, I will revisit this issue later in the discussion. For now I offer Shannon and Escamilla's (1999) as a caveat for the validity of this focus, "Mexican immigrants… settle in virtually every state of the union. But, most important, we focus on Mexican immigrant children in schools because they historically have had negative experiences in U.S. schools and these experiences are worsening" (p.348).

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[3] I have used this expression (learning liability) in several occasions in my graduate classes. I do not know if someone else has in fact coined it, and if so, I apologize for using an expression without the proper credit. On my different reviews of literature, I have not found anyone using this term before as is, so that is why I have claimed it.

[4] Throughout the text I will use expressions such as Latina/Latino or Chicana/Chicano simply as Latino or Chicano, more for the sake of economy than to make any sort of social statement, and because that is closer to how I would use them in Spanish, my native language. However, I agree with using the expressions in their combined form.

From the different authors cited in this review, Jim Cummins' and Tove Skutnabb-Kangas' work on linguistic rights and Eugene Garcia's discussions of bilingual education were most salient, given that they were some of the most cited scholars in other publications, including Valenzuela (1999).

Finally, a further look at the time frame the articles covered made me realize an interesting (at least to me) coincidence: The articles and chapters I read mostly range from 1988 to 2003: That time frame covers the time I spent as first a Second Language learner, and later a teacher.

Situating the problem

Defining the subtractive features of ESL instruction in urban schools seemed far easier before I started reading about it: I thought it was a problem of the curriculum, or maybe it was about blaming some really bad teachers. However, as Mirón (1996) argues in his analysis of urban schooling, there is a need to understand the social and historical contexts in which the problem is situated. Therefore, in order to solve the problem, or at least to understand it, we have to situate the problem of ESL in urban schools from other perspectives apart from the curriculum.

It's not just a language problem... Politics are also involved!

Inspired by Mirón (1996), I searched for articles that explained some of the historical background in Bilingual Education/ESL in the United States. Eduardo Hernández-Chávez (1998) presents an excellent overview of the historical contexts of the Bilingualism movement in this country. Hernández-Chávez points out that the discussion on Bilingual Education is not a recent problem. Actually, it seems to be well connected to the history of immigrants in the U.S. His review discusses historical facts, such as the problems Germans dealt with in the Midwest or Mexicans in California, Texas, or New Mexico. In addition, it presents some salient Supreme Court cases, which seldom helped minorities. For instance, *Meyer v. Nebraska* (262 U.S. 390, 1923, as cited on p.51), which ruled foreign language teaching as unconstitutional; *Castro v. California* (2 Cal, 3d 223, 1970, as cited on p.51), which ruled the right for Spanish speakers to vote, but did not rule in favour of using non-English voting materials; or *Lau v. Nichols* (94 S. Ct. 786, 1974, as cited on p.52), which enforced compulsory special instruction for Chinese students in the San Francisco area schools.

This historical overview, introduced me to the state of affairs of bilingual rights over time and its possible effect on schools. However, this report was issued in 1988, and I was not able to find a similar overview dealing with issues in bilingualism

in the last 15 years, which covers issues such as Title VII, Proposition 227, or even the most recent No Child Left Behind (NCLB, U.S. Department of Education, 2002) legislation enacted by President George W. Bush in 2002.

Eugene Garcia (2001) did not necessarily pick up where Hernández-Chávez (1988) left off. However, he presents another interesting overview of what has been said and done in more recent years, such as the "Americanization" movement that intends to eliminate second language instruction and push a political agenda to make English the official language of the United States. It is interesting to note that, unlike other countries, the United States does not have an official national language. Some states have adopted English as their official language, but such initiatives have not been enacted at the Federal level. Americanization advocates believe that this push to eliminate aid for minorities and the push to adopt an official stance toward English is the best alternative to solve the schooling problems most immigrants suffer. Nevertheless, this just adds up to the subtractive practices already existing in urban schools. Garcia argues, "The "Americanization" solution presumes that culturally different children are as a group culturally flawed." (p.51). In fact, examples such as Davidson's (1997) case study of Marbella Sanchez, where Marbella seems to be marginalized and considered a failure case just because she has a Latina background, or Valenzuela's (1999) ethnography, where students experience this feeling of inferiority expressed overtly and covertly by their teachers and administrators, prove this assumption.

Garcia (2001) also talked about recent initiatives from previous administrations, such as Titles I and VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, which offered special funding and resources to create and sustain bilingual education and ESL programs, and the policies related to Latino students. It also addressed the aforementioned efforts to establish English as the official language of the states and the country at large. So far, states like California (via Proposition 227) or Arizona (states with large minority populations, mostly Spanish-speaking) have enacted the "English for all Children" legislations. These initiatives do not offer enough alternatives for the integration of minority students into the educational system. These initiatives endorse practices such as reducing or eliminating bilingual education initiatives or even ESL instruction. Also, they create the false assumption that being bilingual will not allow minority students to join the U.S. society, or slow down their integration.

These initiatives are linked to the English-only movement, which espouses that minority students will never adapt if emphasis is given to their mother tongues (an element undermining the quality of ESL instruction, as a consequence).

Nevertheless, Mirón, Inda, and Aguirre (1998) challenge these assumptions in their study of how Mexican students viewed themselves in terms of their languages. The study concluded that, English Only legislations enacted or not, minority students in California are aware of the need and importance to learn English as soon as possible in order to really take advantage of their surroundings.

After surveying the evolution of some historical and political events surrounding Bilingual Education/ESL, I wanted to see what educational researchers have written about ESL policies or legislation, as opposed to reading actual legislation. I wanted to find examples of educational literature that *specifically* talked about states different from Arizona or California, once again relying on the caveat by Shannon and Escamilla (1999) discussed earlier. Though I did not find a lot of examples in my review, I do not believe that these are the only examples available.

Spring (2000) briefly discussed English-only initiatives in Maryland. On March 28, 1998, English became the official state language. Spring argues that this legislation "would make it more difficult for students from non-English speaking homes to succeed in school" (p.171). Simich-Dudgeon and Boals (1996) take us from the East Coast to the Midwest. They reviewed legislation in Indiana between 1976 and 1995. They also conducted interviews with policymakers, teachers, and community leaders to see their perceptions about language teaching and bilingual education. They found that policymakers do not see Bilingual Education as an issue pertaining them, and there is no clear definition regarding language minority students' rights. This lack of laws that protect LEP (Limited English Proficient) students was also evident in Sayer's (1996) analysis of the situation of minority students in Utah. In all cases, the lack of legislation is a stark contrast with a permanently increasing diverse student body in their school systems and communities.

...And so are human rights!

The discussion on subtractive practices against minority students now moves from the political to the human rights arena. There is a simple point leading this discussion: Offering quality education to minority students obeys to a mere principle of respect to their human rights and their identity. However, Skutnabb-Kangas (1999) argues that U.S. policies do not seem to reflect such a principle,

> "It may be interesting to note that the United States, posing as the defender of human rights globally, occupies, together with five other countries, a shared 156th-161st position out of 193 in terms of the number of its own ratifications of Universal Human Rights Instruments – hardly a morally convincing record." (p.6)

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For educators, it might be interesting to remember that the United States has not ratified the UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education from 1960, in force since 1962 and ratified by 87 states".

Skutnabb-Kangas also states that the use of a term like LEP goes against students' rights as they define children "in terms of what they do not know, rather than...in terms of what they do know" (p.7). Simich-Dudgeon and Boals (1996), Freeman (1996), and Sayer (1996) all share this position. They even included footnotes in their articles to clarify that they used this expression only because the U.S. Department of Education uses it. Nonetheless, Skutnabb-Kangas is partly wrong in her belief that the term LEP has disappeared from our vocabulary. For instance, take a look at Title III from the No Child Left Behind legislation[5] (Moving *Limited English Proficient Students* to English Fluency). I will make further references to this legislation at the end of this paper. For now, I wanted to show that this (as some scholars agree) berating terminology is still present.

Skutnabb-Kangas' also makes a very important point in terms of human rights and minority students vis-à-vis more recent terms such as *linguistically diverse students:*

> "But even the new terms rob these children of the only protection they have in international human rights law. Objectively, they are *minority students* (emphasis in original), and those who refuse to use the term are actually harming them. *Linguistically diverse students have no protection in international law. Minority students do."* (p.7, emphasis added).

I agree with this view of minority students. Some may argue that it is just a matter of semantics. However, more often than not, that is the way that many discriminatory practices start, especially if the omission of a term may have legal consequences.

Corson (1999) constructs an argument that English Only policies are a highly subtractive practice that is harmful to a social justice view of diversity. He analyses the effects of enacting policies to protect French minorities in Canada. Though Corson admits that it is not a fail-safe policy, it has helped create a better environment for linguistic diversity and tolerance. He also argues that English Only policies would mainly affect the status of Spanish speakers in the U.S., in fact violating some of their basic freedoms.

Jim Cummins (1994, 1999) has also made important contributions to the legitimation of minority students. He posits that a great cause of the mixed feelings

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[5] Further references to this legislation will only use the initials (NCLB).

about minority students are the confusing arguments exposed by English Only advocates. In fact, he critiques some of the proponents and followers of the anti-bilingual movement. Many have, in fact, advocated for bilingual education at some point in their scholarly lives, which only serves adds to more public confusion.

As one can see, some of what has made Bilingual Education/ESL practices in urban schools subtractive stems from a series of misconstrued ideas about how fostering bilingual education will contribute to the disintegration of U.S. society. These ideas advocate depriving minority students of any kind of special instruction so that their mother language does not interfere in their adaptation process. However, the truth is different. As Mirón and colleagues (1998) showed in their research, having more bilingual people would be advantageous to any country, including its economy, as Spring (2000) also discusses in his work.

A look at the school structure

I have situated the problem of Bilingual Education/ESL instruction in urban schools from a top-down perspective. The discussion has highlighted the generalities of policy-making and the validation of human rights as part of one's work with minority students. Now the discussion shifts to the place where our students spend a fair amount of time, the classrooms. Valenzuela (1999) offers an opening consideration,

> "Immigrant youth must face inordinate challenges to succeed. To begin with, they are regarded as 'Limited English Proficient' rather than as 'Spanish Dominant' or as potentially bilingual. Rather than as strength to build on, their fluency in Spanish is construed as a 'barrier' that needs to be overcome" (p.262).

I define this "barrier" described above as the "bilingual irony": Whereas being bilingual is a "learning advantage" in many countries (Colombia, for one) and governments enact legislation to promote bilingualism, the U.S. school system (and some of its legislation) sees being bilingual as a "learning liability." Valenzuela makes references to the issues minority students face in *Subtractive Schooling,*

> "As ESL programs are designed to transition youth into an English-only curriculum, they neither reinforce their native language skills nor their cultural identities." (p.26, note 15).

> "The 'track' within the regular track program subdivides ESL and non-ESL youth, creating a 'cultural track' that separates Spanish- from English-speaking students. Youth

in the former program are destined to be shunted into regular-track classes; ESL honors courses do not exist. Thus, after acquiring fluency in the English language, ESL youth typically experience only horizontal mobility." (p.31).

Toohey (1998) agrees with some of Valenzuela's (1999) ideas. Toohey followed a group of first graders that involved Second Language learners and native English speakers. Her findings align with Valenzuela's idea of caring for one's students and the importance of the community as a learning builder. Toohey points out the consequences of not creating a community early in the program, "This individualizing of the children starts a process of community stratification that increasingly leads to the exclusion of some students from certain activities, practices, identities, and affiliations" (p.80). One important point Toohey brings to surface is the fact that these subtractive practices in ESL classrooms are part of a continuum that starts from elementary school.

Shannon & Escamilla (1999) added another dimension to this continuum. They decided to check another source of the problem: Teacher Education. In their study of how teacher candidates were prepared to deal with Mexican immigrant children, they found that both their mentors at schools and their methods courses instruction said and included direct stereotypical comments against Mexicans. They mentioned the example of a course book featuring a section called "Personal Observation of the Mexican-American Community." They explained that "No other chapter of the book has personal observations about any other group," and further add that the chapter presents "a set of stereotypes related to Mexican Americans and treats Mexican Americans as if they were a monolithic and problematic cultural entity" (p.365). I have witnessed how harmful stereotypes can be and if teacher education programs are preparing teachers to perpetuate stereotypes, it is definitely a matter of concern.

Finally, Irvine & York (1993) analysed the possible reasons attributed to failure in minority students. In the case of Vietnamese and Hispanic students, the teachers related failure to language problems. It was surprising, however, to note that "The teachers in the study did not take any personal responsibility for the school failure of the minority students in this district." (p. 169).

So far I have outlined some elements that are not working within the classrooms, as well as some socio-political features that affect schooling. The issues affecting Bilingual Education/ESL in the United States are not simple. Any solutions offered to solve this problem have to bear in mind the need for these classroom practices to respect human rights and be framed in fair policies.

Considerations for an additive esl practice in urban schools

This section focuses on my considerations to avoid subtractive practices in schools. They are all framed using successful examples available in the research literature. I imagine that some are still wondering the purpose of my previous section, in light of the sudden shift from a global perspective to a narrower classroom perspective. I wanted to offer first an overview of the problem to realize that maybe I cannot propose things to solve it all. Instead, I want to help solve the problem from where I stand the closest: The classrooms, the teachers, and the students. I am also aware that some of the things I will say might be obvious to some. My counterargument is twofold: First, experience has taught me (just as some excellent teachers I have had in both my undergraduate and graduate courses have) that, in education, you cannot assume anything is obvious. Second, this review also addresses elements that emerged as a result of reading the literature that colleagues around the world can benefit from. These considerations are examples taken from the U.S., but they may as well apply to anyone working with urban students or ESL learners around the globe.

Consideration 1: Preparation is the key

Minority students are neither better nor worse that mainstream students *per se*. They just face different challenges. Teachers have to help them achieve and overcome these challenges. One problem with ESL teachers in urban schools is their lack of preparation to work with minority students. Dwyer (1998) provided evidence of what needs to be done in her example of how a school in New York prepared their staff to offer better instruction to immigrant children. The author found that teachers need to have plenty of opportunities to exchange ideas. There also has to be time to reflect on how the new ideas will be implemented, as the time spent planning will be worth it once the program is operational. Finally, we cannot just prepare teachers; we need to prepare everyone involved in the school who has anything to do with these children. Gee (1999) discussed how to help ESL students increase their interest in reading. Teachers need to be well-prepared for instruction and be able to add affective elements to their planning. In addition, material selection cannot be random. It should be a carefully-conceived activity, which includes thinking about the difficulty level of the books, balancing between easy books with more challenging ones. Sagliano & Greenfield (1998) shared this idea of proper preparation in their recommendations to implement an English immersion program they designed in Japan. Suggestions include ensuring time to read and discuss literature on teaching, as well as to plan classes; approaching

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the idea of cooperative teaching in a condition of equality and with sufficient time to plan; and, finding institutional support (p.27).

Garcia's (2001) description of project ALAS (Achievement for Latinos Through Academic Success) focused first on the project's strategies to help teachers, which included pre-service and in-service training sessions, monthly meetings for networking, and peer observation and assessment. In a previous work, Garcia (1994) made some recommendations for the role of Bilingual and ESL teachers, some of the things districts should seek in potential candidates, as well as some possible ways universities could help by providing certain courses, such as foreign language, language acquisition, cross-cultural studies, and methods of teaching a second language.

Also, when preparing teachers, there has to be a good balance between theories and the chance to practice them. According to Rhine (1995), this is an area for consideration in pre-service teacher education programs, which should include reflection using videotaped analysis of classes to avoid biases or harmful practices such as the ones Shannon & Escamilla (1999) stated in their research. The fact that Rhine discovered some of these issues in 1995 and Shannon & Escamilla still found them in 1999 is, in fact, a reason for serious scrutiny within teacher education programs to discuss how they are preparing teachers for minority students.

Consideration 2: We cannot leave them behind!

In the case study of Marbella Sanchez, Davidson (1997) denounced marginalizing practices for minority students. He presented the case of Mr. Vargas, who believed that "low expectations for language minority students, reflected in an unchallenging curriculum, are a major impediment to their advancement." (p.37). Campos & Keatinge (1988) made a clear statement of the importance of the curriculum in terms of helping students in their description of the Carpinteria School District,

> "These students will be communicatively fluent in English within two or three years, whether the student is placed in a situation where English is forced or in a situation where English is rarely used in curriculum instruction, so long as they are developing cognitive skills and school is perceived as a place where learning occurs." (p.306).

Examples such as the Carpinteria School remind us that schools and teachers who believe in their students' potential are paramount for their success. Garcia's (2001) description of project ALAS included working on the students' self-esteem as a strategy for implementation. This includes recognition of achievements,

cooperative learning, problem-solving skills, and promotion of the appreciation of individual and cultural differences. (p.164). Garcia also pointed out how one of the key elements of project Avance was seeking higher student involvement, by doing things such as asking them to come up with themes for class to be added to the curriculum. This project also strived for a better integration between Limited English Proficient Hispanic students and more proficient ones. Gee (1999) also discussed how important it is for students to feel supported when they are working on improving their reading skills and getting more engaged to reading. He also talked about the importance of interaction, which would tackle the problem of not taking the community into consideration that Toohey (1998) addressed in her elementary school research.

ESL students should also feel there are chances for them to experience upward mobility in the curriculum, where they can eventually take regular classes without fear of failure. One example is Wertheimer and Honigsfeld's (2000) description of how a school in New York organized itself to face standards while helping their ESL students join mainstream classes. Co-teaching between ESL and content area teachers has been the most explored alternative thus far. While they offer challenging activities for ESL students, they lower the tension ESL teachers face about finding materials in content areas for which they are not ready. Wertheimer & Honigsfeld reported a decrease in the number of students in ESL classes and a better integration of the ones leaving into mainstream courses. Lucas & Wagner (1999) also explained how the transition process worked out in a school district in Elgin, Illinois (probably one of the most racially diverse suburbs in Chicago). An interesting fact is how they viewed ESL-Mainstream transition as a step-by-step process rather than as a one-step situation (as most English Only legislations define it, setting unrealistic time limits to be pulled out of the ESL classes). Their strategies included: subject scaffolding (progressively increasing the difficulty of the mainstream classes these ESL students were involved); a shift in how student achievement is viewed, which includes test scores, but also looks at grade point average (GPA), report cards and teacher's judgments on students; and, taking the students' self-concepts into account.

Putney and Wink (1998) also provide insights about getting students involved while respecting their pace and learning processes:

> "All students, nonnative speakers of English included, must have access to the core curriculum through a language they understand, and taught in a process that promotes intellectual growth. They must be encouraged and given the opportunity to talk, talk, talk about the content areas they are studying." (p.31).

They also argue that promoting interactions in our classrooms is the key to more successful and respectful practices for ESL learners, again defying Toohey's (1998) findings.

Consideration 3: The importance of a community

Schools are not isolated from the world. They are situated within a community, a fact that teachers cannot neglect. Jupp (1998) reminded us of where our priorities should stand, "Before we try to understand the people of the world, why don't we start by understanding ourselves and our communities?" (p.16).

Garcia (2001) offered one example of community involvement through Project PRISM (Pre-engineering Instruction/Science and Mathematics), in New York City. Project activities included bringing doctors and dentists to school, making connections between students, parents, and community agencies, and offering external counselling to the student body (p.178). PRISM also intends to create a strong community within the school by giving the students time to engage in individual and group activities. There is also room for individualized counselling and guidance from their teachers. Garcia reported success in this proposal, since a high number of students planned to attend colleges. (p.179). Freeman's (1996) analysis of Oyster Bilingual school also gave insights about running a bilingual program is based on the community's interests, even if those interests seemed dissimilar:

> "Any discussion of who does planning at Oyster Bilingual School must emphasize Oyster's description of itself as one community with common interests and common goals as opposed to several distinct communities... that are in conflict with each other."(p.568).

Oyster's example reminds us of what a school should do: Build community, be a reason to be united instead of separated. This was reflected in the idea that "parents, teachers, and administrators share an understanding of the goals, processes, and anticipated outcomes of the educational reform in which they are about to participate." (p.569). How can we start a process if those around us have no clue what we are doing? That is the question Freeman posed in her discussion, and it should be the one framing our proposals for meaningful change in our classrooms. Rose (1995) also showed us the example of a bilingual program in Calexico, California, as an example of how making the community more relevant brought about more successful classrooms:

"There was a belief here, as in other effective bilingual classrooms I've seen, in the power of participation, a belief that engagement in the classroom will lead to rich cognitive and linguistic development, extending outward to the world beyond" (p.79).

Rose reminded us that the community in Calexico did not want to dissolve the U.S. society just because there were Spanish speakers. Instead, those people were fully aware of the need and advantage their children had as being better speakers of English.

A school has to help build community, not isolate it. So far, this section has shown examples of how to bring the community outside our classrooms to be more active. What about the community we should build *inside* our classrooms? Ortmeier's (2000) description of Project Homeland, reminded us first of a reality in ESL classrooms:

"In our effort to teach ESL students English, we coax them into assimilation. We often miss their need to validate their pasts, their parents, their homelands, and each other. Often, ESL students are uninformed about where their fellow students come from." (p. 11).

To then remind us of what schools should do, "Project Homeland is designed to provide students with opportunities to learn about other cultures, validate their homeland experiences and demonstrate to the mainstream school community that they have much to teach us." (p.17).

Ortmeier's idea is simple: ESL students will perform better once they have a better sense of who they are and they feel validated. In her discussion of how to build a cultural community, Coffey (1999) explained that, albeit time-consuming, building a cultural community within our classrooms has plenty of benefits: Students are empowered; they develop strong social settings; and they learn to see the world through different eyes and appreciate difference (p.30), a goal that English Only and other coercive policies may not achieve.

Consideration 4: A change of perspective

Coffey (1998) talked about empowering students "to understand their role in an intercultural classroom" (p.30) as a key element of instruction. ESL instruction has to be more empowering to their students, making them aware of their possibilities. We cannot forget that many of these minority students arriving at urban schools had a history that sometimes was associated with success. For instance, Davidson's (1997) account of Marbella Sanchez, in which Marbella talked about her being successful in school *because of* being Mexican, is a clear example that we

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cannot neglect that minority students' may have been successful in their previous school experiences. Teachers must acknowledge that they can succeed *because of* being minority students and not, as I felt after reading some legislations, *in spite of* being a minority. Yali Zou (1998), an immigrant herself and a professor at the University of Houston, reflecting on her own success and struggle as a second language learner, stated,

> "Unless the process of second language acquisition is explored from the immigrant's perspective, it is impossible to understand the complex psychological processes involving the redefinition of self and the motivation to achieve in spite of the difficulties faced in a school setting." (p.4).

Here lies one interesting point for consideration: we can learn to understand another person's struggles if we have a better idea about what he/she is facing. Spring (2000) devotes a few pages in his book to present the hypothetical case scenario of a U.S. citizen moving to Russia and his/her possible struggles to justify why bilingual education might be useful (for a better account, see p.175-176). In a similar fashion, Kubota, Gardner, Patten, Thatcher-Fettig, and Yoshida (2000) conducted an activity to expose mainstream students to a foreign language class situation. A teacher and some minority students sharing a common target language interacted in a normal classroom with these students. The results showed that mainstream students were in fact more understanding of minority students' struggles and were more likely to offer help when their peers were in doubt or did not understand instructions.

These are just a small set of recommendations and examples to improve the quality of instruction in Bilingual/ESL classrooms. There are some very interesting ideas I really had not considered, and hopefully other teachers and student teachers reading this article will benefit from them also.

The challenges ahead

This revision of the literature on ESL instruction in bilingual schools in the U.S. is a good reminder of the road ahead of us and all we need to do to promote additive practices in the classrooms. This section, however, will only focus on three challenges that educational researchers and practitioners, not only in the U.S., but anywhere ESL students are in a classroom in the world, must eventually try to solve. These challenges will provide, if not more answers, at least better directions to focus our quest for solutions.

Challenge 1: The effects of policies

In their analysis of the implications of Proposition 227 in California and Arizona, Mitchell, Destino, Karam, and Colón-Muñiz (1999) concluded that researchers need to clarify some features of educational legislation and the possible effects of enacting these laws in the classrooms. In fact, since there has been a shift in the United States from Title VII, which funded some of the studies or framed the proposals on bilingual education and ESL that I read (e.g. Dwyer, 1998, and Lucas & Wagner, 1999) to Title III of the NCLB Act, further research needs to address this shift. A review of this legislation found that there are very little to no references to Bilingual Education and Title III specifically uses the term "Limited English Proficient," (which, as noted, many researchers oppose because of its negative connotations) it will be crucial to see how that would affect ESL programs and minority students.

Challenge 2: More research on other minority students

In the methodology section of this paper I stated Shannon & Escamilla's (1999) explanation for the sometimes overwhelming presence of literature on Mexicans. Though true, it must be challenged. There is a strong need for research about how ESL instruction affects not only other minority students of Latin American or Spanish descent but also Asians. It should also cover Africans: Even though many of them speak English in their home countries, it would be interesting to see how migrant African students cope with U.S. instruction and to probe whether or not a different variant of English can be a decisive factor in the adaptation process. At this point the question of whether or not there are not salient studies on other minorities and where to find such information is another challenge for researchers on minorities.

Challenge 3: There are 50 states…and so little data on so few states?

This reviewed covered some of the most relevant journals in the field of ESL/Bilingual Education (e.g. *TESOL Quarterly, TESOL Journal,* and *Journal of Bilingual Education*). Nevertheless, little research was found about how different states face those issues. That raises questions about the possibilities for research on migrant populations and the political decisions made that affect them in the educational arena. Some may argue that most minority ESL students are located in a few states (California, Arizona, Texas, Florida, Colorado, Illinois, or New York), but the numbers are growing and gradually moving to other states. Educational research cannot deny of such realities in the work scholars conduct on minorities.

Challenge 4: Teacher education

For different scholarly purposes, I have had the opportunity to review some of the major journals on teaching and teacher education[6]. I have always been surprised by the scarcity of articles dealing with teacher preparation to teach ESL. Even journals such as *TESOL Quarterly and TESOL Journal* do not address teacher education in full detail. There is an interesting body of research about how to prepare teachers to deal with racial diversity. But, this research is still limited when it comes to language minorities as a specific group that has its own challenges and needs. That is another issue that I will make sure to keep looking for. This is a challenge for my own work, but at the same time it is an open invitation for colleagues interested in teaching education around the world: The scarcity of publications is an area to exploit and hopefully other scholars will answer the call.

Coda

This review on ESL instruction in the United States is a response to some of my own curiosities about some wrongdoings in urban education. I wanted both to expose some of the causes and possible solutions, inspired on what seems to have worked for others. Another goal was to situate these issues not only from a pedagogical perspective but also from political and human rights perspectives. I share Tove Skutnabb-Kangas' ideas and beliefs about linguistic human rights and the need for classrooms where, as Valenzuela (1999) points out, we can have "an inclusive pedagogy that respects all youth *regardless of their linguistic abilities.*" (p. 104, emphasis added). If teachers can forget for a while about how well one speaks a second language to remember that who our students are and what they can do is more important than their oral proficiency, maybe then will we be able to construct more caring classrooms.

However, this reflection goes deeper than a mere scope of the U.S. situation. The ideas mentioned in this article are intended to fuel reflection on whoever reads this article to think about *their own students.* There are minorities of all kinds all over Colombia and the world. Subtractive practices are taking place day in and day out in English classrooms. If we believe that dignifying classroom instruction is the key to successful students, we all need to engage in this dialog. That, in the end, is the overarching challenge to which we should devote time and efforts if we want to help minority students succeed. I am a minority student and a foreign citizen in an English-speaking country. I have been fortunate to have been successful as a graduate student and as a novice scholar. But, to me, my own success is not enough. My

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[6] Some of the reviewed journals include *Teaching and Teacher Education*, and *Journal of Teacher Education.*

dream is to help many others realize that being bilingual can be the key to be more successful in life and that we, as teachers, must help them succeed.

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A FRAMEWORK FOR ADDITIVE ESL/BILINGUAL