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**"FACTORS INFLUENCING PATTERNS OF ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT AMONG LATINO STUDENTS:
*An Assessment of Educational Programs And A
Prescription For Change*"**

By

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The Chicano/Latino Policy Project is an affiliated research program of the Institute for the Study of Social Change at the University of California at Berkeley. The Policy Project coordinates and develops research on public policy issues related to Latinos in the United States and serves as a component unit of a multi-campus Latino policy studies program in the University of California system. The Policy Project's current priority research areas are education, health care, political participation and labor mobility with an emphasis on the impact of urban and working poverty and immigration.

The Institute for the Study of Social Change is an organized research unit at the University of California at Berkeley devoted to studies that will increase understanding of the mechanisms of social change and to the development of techniques and methods to assist the direction of social change for the general improvement of social life. It has a particular mandate to conduct research and to provide research training on matters of social stratification and differentiation, including the condition of both economically and politically depressed minorities as well as the more privileged strata.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The persistence of patterns of school failure among certain ethnic minority groups in the United States has generated numerous studies aimed at explaining this phenomenon. For Latino students,¹ the body of research that has grown from the study of the relationship between ethnicity and academic performance has produced three distinct types of explanations: (1) those which locate the cause of underachievement within the culture of certain students; (2) those which identify the lack of English proficiency and the promotion of bilingual education programs as the cause of school failure; and (3) those which indict schools and school personnel as the primary source of academic difficulties. Studies linking the underachievement of Latino and ethnic minority students to biological or genetic factors (Jensen 1969; Eysenck 1971) have increasingly become less common as the credibility of the research and reliability of the measures used for assessing intelligence have been criticized and questioned (Ogbu 1978, 30; Berry and Dasen 1974; Carter and Segura 1979).

Educators and policymakers have also been divided in their explanation of the causes of underachievement among Latino students. However, as the architects and implementers of educational programs, these groups have generally not had the luxury afforded by time and personal detachment to call for further study and analysis of the problem. Instead, they have been expected to design strategies to rectify the problem and alleviate the pressures created by the persistence of school failure, often without the benefit of reliable research.

This study was undertaken to assist a group of educators in assessing the factors influencing the academic achievement of Latino students in the Lockwood Unified School District (LUSD) and to prescribe a strategy for intervention. Utilizing an inductive approach to the research and a variety of qualitative data collection methods, this study also attempts to test the relevance and validity of existing theory and to explore new ways of conceptualizing the issues influencing school performance. Our goal in this paper is to use Lockwood as a case study for analyzing issues related to the academic performance of Latino students in California and throughout the United States, where patterns of underachievement continue to prevail as the norm.

¹ Throughout this paper the term Latino will be used in reference to people of Latin-American heritage, including those who were born in the United States and who refer to themselves as either Chicano, Hispanic, or Mexican American.

Profile of the District and the Latino Student Population

LUSD is a relatively small school district (approximately 8,000 students) located in northern California.² Although Latino children represent the fastest-growing ethnic population in California's public schools,³ their numbers in Lockwood are well below the state average. This is largely because of the high property values in the city of Lockwood and the low vacancy rate in the rental housing market. Currently Latinos represent about 10% of the district's population, totaling slightly under 800 students. These numbers are expected to double by the end of the century. As the numbers have increased, so have the academic and social problems experienced by Latino children.

Academically, Chicano and Latino students in Lockwood fall below the 50th percentile on standardized tests administered statewide. Of all the Chicano and Latino students who enter Lockwood High School, 38% either drop out or transfer to a new high school before graduation (CBEDS 1991). More specifically, the most current district office report on attrition (1993) shows that the three-year cumulative dropout-rate for Hispanic students in the ninth grade class of 1988-89 is 6.5%. While this figure is well below the national (approximately 40%) and state (approximately 45%) drop-out rates,⁴ Lockwood's lower rates may be explained in part by the fact that the district has kept no consistent records on dropout-rates for any of its students. Additionally, data collected in the most recent 1993 study was based on incomplete reports of student destinations after leaving Lockwood High School. Finally, of Latino Students who do graduate, school guidance counselors report that only a small percentage go on to college and even fewer complete a four-year degree.

Socially, at the junior-high and high-school levels, Latino students display a high degree of disinterest in school activities and engage in behaviors that result in a higher-than-average rate of suspensions, expulsions, and absenteeism. The disproportionate number of Latino students subjected to varying levels of sanction and censure in Lockwood schools follows patterns observed nationally.⁵ Particularly at the secondary level, teachers and counselors describe many Latino students as "disruptive," "alienated," and "isolated"

² The district name and names of individuals interviewed have been changed to protect the identities of the participants in the study.

³ Between 1950 and 1980, the Latino population in the United States grew by about 250%. In California between 1980-85, the Latino population increased by 30%, the fastest growth rate for any ethnic group in the United States and the largest increase for any state. By 1990, Latinos comprised 35.8% of California's population, and their numbers are expected to grow steadily in the years ahead. See Hispanic Policy Development Project (HPDP), p. 229.

⁴ For an extensive discussion of Latino drop-out rates, see Meier and Stewart 1991, 25.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

from other students and school personnel. Though not as prevalent as in some other California school districts, there are reports that a significant number of Latino students in Lockwood are affiliated with gangs.⁶ Moreover, as one of the smallest cultural groups within this multiethnic district--a district characterized by considerable conflict and tension among students from different ethnic backgrounds--Latino students express the need to maintain strong group cohesion and separation as a defense against the hostility of others.

The Latino community is also quite diverse. Although data available from the district do not contain information related to the national origin of students, interviews conducted with teachers, counselors, and parents revealed the presence of students from a variety of backgrounds. The majority of Lockwood's Latino students are of Mexican heritage; there are also significant numbers of Central and South American students. Among those of Mexican heritage, the population is further differentiated by national origin, with those born in the United States typically referring to themselves as "Chicano" and those born in Mexico identifying more closely with their national identity or even the state or region within Mexico in which they were born. Additionally, while most of the Latino students come from homes where Spanish is the primary spoken language, many of the Chicano students speak English at home and are not fluent or literate in the Spanish language.

Background to the Study

In December 1992 Pedro Noguera, an Assistant Professor in the University of California at Berkeley School of Education, was approached by Lucretia Farfan Ramirez, County Director of the University of California Cooperative Extension, who expressed an interest in sponsoring research related to the academic achievement of Latino students in the public schools. Ramirez was motivated to request this assistance out of a concern that efforts to address the educational needs of Latino students in this part of northern California seemed to be uninformed by relevant research. Additionally, from working with several school districts in the area she had become aware of the variations in approaches taken to respond to these issues. Recognizing that there was no evidence that any of the measures implemented at the district level were proving effective, Ramirez turned to the University of California for assistance.

⁶ A confidential study conducted by the school district in collaboration with the local police department reported the existence of gangs, at least three Latino, two Black, and one Cambodian. According to the study, with the exception of the Cambodian gang, none of the Lockwood gangs is affiliated with the larger gangs operating throughout California and the West Coast.

Initial discussions about the nature of the academic problems confronting Latino students and its many different manifestations led to the decision to choose a school district as the site for an exploratory case study. Lockwood was chosen because it seemed to represent adequately the issues and problems related to Latino academic performance. Also, the willingness of district personnel to cooperate and provide access to its schools for implementation of the research was a major factor influencing site selection. Utilizing funds made available through a grant from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Ramirez was able to provide funding to support this research project. A team of graduate student researchers was then assembled to assist with data collection, and Noguera was given primary responsibility for directing the project and writing the final report. In addition to the academic training possessed by each member of the research team, all had previous experience working in school settings in a variety of roles and circumstances. This practical first-hand knowledge of how schools worked proved to be a tremendous asset in formulating a research design and developing contacts within the schools.

The team held meetings to discuss the scope of the project with district administrators, including the superintendent of schools and the director of Lockwood's bilingual education program. While there was substantial agreement that patterns of academic failure among Latino students represented a significant and pervasive problem, there was no clear indication as to its cause's. These discussions did, however, produce the following set of questions, which later proved instrumental in guiding the direction of the research:

- (1) To what extent was academic failure among Latino students occurring because of the way in which educational programs (e.g., bilingual education in grades K-6, ESL and sheltered classes at the secondary levels) were being implemented throughout the district?;
- (2) What influence did parental values and attitudes toward education have on the academic performance of Latino students?;
- (3) Were peer groups promoting negative attitudes toward school and how much influence did they have over the behavior of individual students?;
- (4) What role did teacher attitudes and the availability or absence of Latino adults at school sites have upon the academic performance of Latino students?

Research Methods

The team decided that it would take a comprehensive look at the K-12 educational program for Latino students in LUSD and also attempt to conduct observations of Latino students at school, home, and in their neighborhoods. Discussions with district administrators led to a

narrowing of the scope of the project to observations of bilingual classes K-6 (three schools), English as a Second Language (ESL) and sheltered classes in grades 7-8 (two schools), the Chicano Core Program at Lockwood High School, and the continuation high school. Although there were several Latino students enrolled in mainstream classes in schools throughout the district, because of their wide dispersal and small numbers, data related to the academic performance of those students were not included in the project.

Utilizing ethnographic data collection methods, classroom observations were carried out in the six schools. Observations of student interactions also were carried out in informal settings, e.g., during recess on school playgrounds, on bus rides to and from school, and during lunch at school cafeterias. In addition, individual and group interviews were conducted with students, parents, teachers, instructional aides, and school administrators to obtain a well-rounded picture of the educational services offered by the district to the students and to ascertain the range of attitudes and perceptions related to the academic performance of Latino students.

The team decided to adopt an inductive approach to the research for several reasons. First, as outsiders to the district, the team had to search for an explanation for the patterns of academic failure among Latino students, particularly because there were conflicting theories within the district. Moreover, while there is an existing body of literature based upon empirical research purporting to explain the phenomenon, there is no clear consensus for any particular theory among scholars. The team had little confidence that this body of literature would provide answers to the specific problems faced by Lockwood or that it would necessarily suggest an appropriate strategy for intervention. An inductive strategy would allow the team to approach the project with a set of open-ended questions that were informed by existing research but not restricted by previous findings. In this way, the team hoped to use the research to "discover" how the various factors influencing the academic performance of Latino students accounted for observed outcomes.⁷

II. RESEARCH ON THE EDUCATIONAL PERFORMANCE OF LATINO STUDENTS

There is considerable evidence that the educational performance of Latino students lags behind the majority population on a wide variety of educational measures. Utilizing quantitative data on basic issues such as school enrollment, academic advancement, and graduation rates, George H. Brown and his co-authors found what they termed "disturbing

⁷ The research approach closely followed the strategies for qualitative research developed by Glazer and Strauss (1967, 31-55).

trends" among Latino students when compared to non-Latinos.⁸ Perhaps the most ominous aspect of the report was the finding that while socioeconomic status (SES) was an important factor influencing student achievement, "at all income levels Hispanic students were more likely than whites to fall behind in school" (Brown et al. 1980, 97). Numerous other studies on Latino student performance have obtained similar results (HPDP 1984; Meier and Stewart 1991; Hispanic Almanac 1990).

A review of the literature and research on Latino student performance reveals three distinct types of explanations for Latino underachievement: (1) cultural explanations that focus on issues of identity, values, and aspirations, (2) pedagogical explanations that focus on problems related to language and the promotion of bilingualism, and (3) institutional/structural explanations that focus on the failure of schools and the discrimination against Latinos in society as key factors. A fourth category, which could be termed biological determinism, is not considered in this review because its appeal and influence among policymakers and researchers has been lost as the credibility of the research connected to this perspective has come under scrutiny (Carter and Segura 1979; Urrabazo 1985; Ogbu 1978). Exactly where one locates the cause of academic underachievement among Latino students has tremendous bearing on how the problem is defined and solutions and interventions are conceptualized.

Emphasizing the Cultural

Arguments based on the influence of cultural background on student achievement can be divided into three categories: (1) *cultural deprivation* theories, which explain academic failure by focusing on what are perceived as cultural deficiencies among Latinos (Bloom et al. 1965; Heller 1966; Reissman 1962); (2) *cultural conflict and discontinuities in communication*, which examine the ways in which differences related to cognition, language, and child-rearing practices contribute to misunderstandings between majority teachers and minority students and parents (Johnson 1970; Zintz 1978; Gumperz 1981); (3) *cultural patterns of adaptation* to discriminatory treatment by the majority group, which result in the construction of oppositional identities and behaviors (Ogbu 1974, 1978, 1981; Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi 1986; Matute-Bianchi 1985; Gibson 1988; DeVos 1978). While the perspectives underlying these theoretical explanations vary considerably, and the researchers whose work falls within these categories do not necessarily see themselves as part of a common cohort, the inordinate emphasis on culture in explaining Latino student

⁸ See G. H. Brown 1980.

performance links this body of research in important ways and distinguishes it from other approaches.

With the possible exception of some of the cultural conflict/discontinuity theories, the onus for remedying the academic difficulties experienced by Latino students is placed squarely upon Latino students, their parents and communities, rather than schools or policymakers. For example, writing from the cultural deficit perspective, Bloom suggests that the high rates of school failure among Blacks and Latinos can "be traced to experiences in the home which do not transmit the cultural patterns necessary for the types of learning characteristic of the schools and the larger society" (1965, 4). Similarly, Audry Schwartz (1971) argues that the value orientations of Mexican-American high school students depreciates the importance of success in school. "While it is recognized that pupils' values and achievement are substantially interdependent, the findings of this study suggest that affective factors in the cultural background of many Mexican-American students hinder their general academic achievement" (1971, 460). Finally, while some of the advocates of the cultural conflict/discontinuity perspective recommend changes in institutional and teaching practices to accommodate the cultural differences of Latino students, others, such as Johnson, focus upon machismo among Latino adolescent males (1979, 71) as a primary obstacle to school success.

Rooting his explanation of academic performance in a historical and comparative analysis, John Ogbu argues that the ethnic groups that were incorporated into the United States through force (e.g., slavery, colonization, conquest) are less likely to succeed in schools than those groups that were incorporated voluntarily (1974). According to Ogbu, groups such as Mexican Americans and Puerto Ricans have developed an "oppositional folk system of mobility" due in part to their perception that educational attainment will not necessarily lead to upward mobility because of pervasive discrimination (Ogbu and Matute-Bianchi 1986). This leads to what DeVos describes as "defensive non-learning strategies" (1978, 7) and the equating of academic success with "acting White" according to Ogbu and Fordham (1986, 176-206). While scholars like Ogbu attempt to avoid an overemphasis on culture in explaining the school performance of ethnic minority children by incorporating historical and structural factors into the analysis, the primary thrust of these arguments ends up making culture central to both the explanation and the prescription for change.

Language Issues

Beyond the misunderstandings created by cultural differences and discontinuities, several researchers have focused upon pedagogical problems related to the acquisition of English by Spanish-speaking students. Much of the literature related to this issue has focused on the

debate over the merits of bilingual education as a pedagogical practice. As a factor influencing the academic achievement of Latino students, bilingual education has become the subject of intense debate because of the large numbers of non-English speakers within the Latino population. In California, only 36% of those categorized as Hispanic come from homes where English is the primary spoken language (Bouvier and Martin 1985). Given the likelihood that large numbers of Latinos will continue to migrate to the United States in the years ahead,⁹ the number of non-English speakers within the Latino population will undoubtedly continue to constitute a major portion of the population.

The practice of providing bilingual educational services is not new to American public schools. During the nineteenth century, many states had laws that allowed for instruction in languages other than English (Malakoff and Hakuta 1990). However, as more and more emphasis came to be placed upon "Americanizing" immigrants after World War I, bilingual education was virtually abandoned as an instructional practice in public schools (Estrada 1979).¹⁰ With the advent of the civil rights movement in the 1960s, however, language-minority groups began calling for the creation of bilingual programs that addressed the linguistic and cultural needs of their children. The efforts of language-minority advocates led Congress to pass the Bilingual Education Act of 1968 (Title VII), a nonbinding mandate amended the 1965 Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The legislation's ambiguity led to several court challenges, which culminated in a landmark suit: *Lau v. Nichols* decided in 1974. In this case, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Chinese-speaking students, ordering school districts to provide adequate native-language instruction.

Despite the court victories, debates over bilingual education continue to be waged throughout the country. Critics argue that children should not be placed in bilingual programs because it retards their acquisition of English and ultimately limits their ability to compete for jobs as adults. Anecdotal evidence has been the main source of support for the belief that bilingual education hinders the intellectual development of children. Two well-known examples of this view have been articulated by Richard Rodriguez in *Hunger for Memory* (1981) and Linda Chavez in *Out of the Barrio* (1991). Both authors argue that

⁹ Between 1980-89, the Latino population grew at a rate of 39%, higher than any ethnic group, except Asians.

¹⁰ Two main explanations have been given for the abandonment of bilingual education during this period: (1) Church schools, once one of the main sites for second-language acquisition, declined during the early part of the twentieth century. With the passage of mandatory attendance laws in public schools and the loss of public funding by church-affiliated ones, many children no longer had formal access to programs for acquiring or retaining a foreign language; (2) perhaps more importantly, the widespread nationalism and isolationism that swept over the United States after World War I saw learning a second language as a weakness and a nuisance at best.

efforts to promote the retention of a student's native language actually prevent students from acquiring proficiency in English.

Other critics have argued that bilingual education serves as a way of tracking non-English speakers out of mainstream classes and contributes to the resegregation of ethnic minorities within schools (Fernandez and Guskin 1981; Roos 1978; Cardenas 1975). In describing the effects of grouping students according to language, Kenneth Meir and Joseph Stewart (1991) write:

Bilingual classes in many cases become remedial rather than enriching As a result the students enrolled are stigmatized because they group these students into a category with inferior status within the school Educational opportunity is not provided and the end result can be a segregated education that reinforces rather than eliminates inequities in educational opportunities. (P. 78)

In her arguments against bilingual classes that segregate non-English speakers, Porter has argued that in such classes students receive less "time on task" (i.e., time devoted to learning English) and, consequently, are needlessly held back from acquiring English at a more rapid pace. She suggests that by limiting the contact between non-English speakers and English-speaking students, children are denied the opportunity "to use and practice the English language in thoughtfully planned, real-life situations which produce the greatest success in English-language learning" (Porter 1990, 83).

In defense of bilingual education, several researchers have found substantial benefits derived from efforts to maintain the primary language of non-English speakers even as they learn English in school. Peal and Lambert (1962) found that when variables such as social status, gender, and degree of bilingualism were controlled, bilingual students did much better than their monolingual peers on a variety of tasks. Numerous other studies have found that possessing two or more languages, including one's native tongue, contributes to improved academic performance (Padilla et al. 1990; Malakoff and Hakuta 1990; Dolson 1985). There is also evidence that for a language-minority child who has lived his or her first five years of life speaking a language other than English, establishing a firm foundation in the primary language can actually facilitate the learning of a second language (Anderson and Boyer 1978).

Jim Cummins (1979) has argued that basic interpersonal linguistic skills are far more easily developed than cognitive/academic linguistic proficiency. The former develops in less than two years but the latter may take up to seven years. Cummins argues that too often it is assumed that once children develop oral English fluency, they are academically prepared for instruction in the English language. Cummins argues that when children are

identified prematurely as Fluent English Proficient (FEP) and moved on to an all-English class, it can have a detrimental effect on their academic achievement (1979, 82).

In addition to the debate over bilingualism, there has also been controversy over the instructional methodology used to teach LEP (Limited English Proficient) students. The two sides of this debate have been characterized by differences over *subtractive* versus *additive* approaches. Proponents of the subtractive approach believe the use of the native language should be limited to those situations where it clearly helps students to learn English. Use of the native language is perceived as a vehicle for learning English and not for developing the native language. In contrast, proponents of the additive approach see the native tongue as an asset that ought to be improved and maintained. As such, the goal of bilingual instruction is to preserve and enhance the native tongue even as the child learns English.

An extensive study of teaching methodologies for LEP, Spanish-speaking students, commissioned by the U.S. Department of Education, affirmed the value of the additive approach. It concluded that providing students "with substantial amounts of native language instruction not only does not impede their acquisition of English language and reading skills, but there is some support that primary language instruction may facilitate the acquisition of content area skills such as mathematics" (Ramirez 1991, 1). The study found that the rate of educational growth in content area was faster when the transition of Spanish-speaking students to English-only classes was delayed (Ramirez 1992). These findings gave new impetus to the application of the additive approach to bilingual education.

Institutional/Structural Factors

The final category of theories and research seeking to explain the academic performance of Latino students focuses on the role of institutional and structural factors in producing high rates of academic failure. With regard to the structural factors, scholars have pointed to a history of racial discrimination and hostility directed at people of Latin American heritage (Acuna 1972; Barrera 1979; Baver 1984; Montejano 1987); economic exploitation characterized by a dual labor market in which Latinos are disproportionately segregated into low-status occupations (Moore 1985; Portes 1985; Chapa 1981); and political marginalization and under-representation at all levels of government and within the public sector (Navarro 1974; Jimenez 1981; Gonzales 1990). Within educational institutions, the subordination of Latinos is manifest largely by their absence. Particularly in higher education, the underrepresentation of Latinos in teaching and administrative roles is typically mirrored

within the graduate and undergraduate student populations by low enrollment and high attrition (Munoz 1989).¹¹

In public elementary and secondary schools, scholars have identified patterns of "second-generation discrimination" caused by the discriminatory use of academic grouping and discipline directed against Latino students (Meier and Stewart 1991). Differential treatment may also come in the form of lower teacher expectations or in the content of school curricula, which either omits or distorts the historical and cultural contributions of Latinos. Such practices, it is argued, produce an educational environment that is "disabling" or at best disinterested in the academic achievement of Latino students (Cummins 1979; Lucas et al. 1990).

The defining characteristic of studies that fall within the structural/institutional category is the attempt to contextualize and historicize the educational problems of Latinos. Educational issues are analyzed through a lens that seeks to understand their relationship to broader social concerns and to identify connections that penetrate school boundaries and educational parameters. For such scholars, the study of Latino education must be integral to an analysis of political economy, state and federal policy, social relations based on race and class or trends related to the demographic characteristics of the Latino population. Educational issues are seen as social, economic, and political issues, and as such, must be addressed through strategies that are comprehensive and multidimensional.

The Task at Hand

The research team used the three categories of explanations of Latino student performance as a guide in proceeding with the research. Specifically, these explanations were operationalized into the following set of broad questions that influenced both what was looked for, and ultimately, what was chosen as a focus during the data-collection phase of the project:

1. What influence do parents and family exert over student performance? How knowledgeable are parents about issues relevant to the education of their children? How do they perceive the quality of education their children are receiving?
2. What are student attitudes toward education? To what extent is academic achievement a goal that is sought after and valued by students? How do student peer groups influence academic performance and student behaviors?

¹¹ For a detailed discussion of Latino student eligibility, enrollment, attrition, and graduate rates see the Latino Eligibility Task Force, *Latino Student Eligibility and Participation in the University of California* (Santa Cruz: University of California, Division of Social Sciences, March 1993).

3. To what extent are the academic and behavioral problems experienced by Latino students in Lockwood related to problems caused by linguistic and/or cultural differences?
4. How does the content and structure of the Bilingual and ESL programs affect the academic performance of the Latino students enrolled in these programs? Is the academic and intellectual development of Latino students promoted or hindered by these programs?
5. To what extent does the particular structure and culture of the junior high schools and high school contribute to the occurrence of these problems? Do Latino students perceive themselves as part of the school community?
6. What are the attitudes and expectations of teachers and administrators regarding Latino students? How do they perceive cultural and/or language differences?

In the following pages, we present the findings from our research at Lockwood Unified School District. We encourage the reader to keep in mind the larger issues related to the education of Latino students and to view the specific information from Lockwood as merely a case study that hopefully helps to illuminate the obstacles to Latino student achievement and begins to set the direction for what can be done to improve the current situation.

III. K-6 BILINGUAL PROGRAM

Configuration of the Bilingual Program

At the elementary level, the bilingual program in LUSD operates in three schools: Yuma, Rosemont, and Calgary. Yuma and Rosemont are located in different parts of the city and serve children from kindergarten through the third grade. Both schools send their fourth graders on to Calgary, which is an intermediate 4-6 school. Among the three schools, there is a total of 228 Spanish-speaking LEP students and 94 Spanish-speaking FEP students. Each bilingual class has a student population ranging from 25 to 32 children. Approximately two-thirds of the children in each class are Chicanos and Latinos; the remaining third is predominantly African-American. There are very few White children in the bilingual program (about 25) and no Asian-American children. The majority of the children in the program are considered low socioeconomic status as determined by their participation in the free breakfast/lunch program. Although most of the children are of Mexican heritage, there are a few from Central and South America. All students were placed in the program voluntarily by their parents.

There are 15 bilingual teachers, eight of whom are native Spanish speakers and seven of whom are native English speakers. All teachers speak both languages, but their

levels of fluency in Spanish vary significantly. In addition, there are bilingual instructional assistants who also work in the classrooms. Each teacher receives anywhere from three to twelve hours of instructional assistance per week.

Rosemont and Calgary are temporarily based at the same school site.¹² These two schools currently share a principal and an assistant principal, as well as a variety of support staff. Staff meetings in general, and bilingual staff meetings in particular, are usually held jointly. As a result of this arrangement, there is more dialogue and cohesion among the bilingual teachers at these two school sites than is normally found among feeder schools in the district. In the case of Yuma, the school recently received a restructuring grant from the State of California.¹³ As part of the school's restructuring effort, the bilingual program is being integrated into the regular curriculum so that eventually all children enrolled at the school, native and non-English speakers alike, will become bilingual.

Teaching Methodology

The structure of Lockwood's elementary bilingual program most resembles the subtractive approach described by Cummins (1990) in that instruction in English occurs at the expense of retaining the native language.¹⁴ Although the stated goal of the bilingual program is to facilitate the student's transition to English-only classes, among the ten bilingual teachers in Rosemont-Calgary, there is no consensus on the goals of bilingual instruction to be implemented in the classroom. There are very few district level meetings that involve teachers from more than one school site, and there is very little dialogue among the teachers about instructional strategies and goals of the program. Instead, each teacher operates his or her own understanding of bilingual education in the classroom. As one teacher explained, "There is no shared philosophy among teachers. We don't share common educational goals, so it's hard for kids to receive a strong base from year to year."

The one exception to this lack of coordination was at Yuma. There, bilingual teachers share similar philosophical foundations regarding second-language acquisition, and they have used the time provided by the restructuring grant to establish an on-going dialogue on different ways to improve the program. "All of us have similar philosophies

¹² The decision to move the two schools onto the same site was made after the 1989 Loma Prieta earthquake severely damaged the former sites.

¹³ Under Assembly Bill 1274, schools throughout California have applied for planning grants from the state. Under this program, the funds made available are intended to provide school personnel with additional time and technical support to improve the school. Changes may include a restructuring of curricula, class schedules, teaching assignments, and policies and procedures.

¹⁴ For a discussion and contrast of subtractive versus additive approaches to bilingual instruction, see J. Cummins 1986.

on how to teach bilingual education," one teacher said. "Now we need to pay close attention to the specific details to have a homogeneous approach."

In all three schools, however, teaching styles are affected by the placement of English-only students in the bilingual program after first grade. Because teachers rely upon consecutive translation as their primary instructional technique,¹⁵ it is common to see Non-English Proficient (NEP) and LEP children seated next to a fully bilingual child who can provide further translation and explanation of classroom activities. For smaller groups, especially in reading and math, children are usually divided into homogeneous language groups. In this way, the teacher can work with one language group while an instructional assistant works with the other. In the absence of an instructional assistant, one or more groups must work independently on an alternating basis. NEPs and LEPs are sometimes given pull-out time with a tutor or instructional assistant to develop English-language or reading skills in the primary language, especially in the upper grades.

As LUSD's elementary bilingual program is presently structured, the amount of Spanish used in classroom instruction decreases substantially as the grade level increases. Thus, the amount of English spoken by the teachers is roughly as follows:

<u>Grade Level</u>	<u>Percentage of English Spoken (%)</u>
K	50
1	50
2	50
3	75
4	75
5	80
6	90

Even though teachers believe that there is symbolic importance associated with speaking to the children first in Spanish before translating into English, few of them follow their own recommendation. Thus, it is common for teachers to give the instructions first in English followed by Spanish, usually in an abbreviated or summarized form. While to an outside observer this clearly seems to shortchange the Spanish-speaking students, most teachers seem to do it unconsciously without realizing that their action goes against their

¹⁵ Consecutive translation consists of teachers providing instruction in both Spanish and English simultaneously. Typically, the teacher will explain something in one language and then repeat it in the other.

belief. The bilingual teachers express their frustration at having to translate everything they say. They realize the practice of consecutive translation is ineffective and time-consuming and that neither the Spanish-speaking children nor the English-speaking ones are learning much of either language through this approach. Still, they feel that given the linguistic composition of the class they can do little to ameliorate the situation.

"Our hands are tied," one teacher said. "We don't want to neglect the education of any of the children but how can we make sure that all of them become bilingual when their linguistic skills are so vastly different?" Most have concluded that anything less than a full immersion program—at least half of the day in one language and the other half in the second—would be ineffective.

All of the classrooms are richly decorated with colorful bilingual placards and signs. It is evident the teachers devote an inordinate amount of time to ensure that their rooms convey the message that both languages are welcomed and that acquiring bilingual fluency can greatly enhance one's self-esteem and expand the possibilities to learn about different cultures. With the death of César Chávez, a notable leader of the Hispanic community, several teachers posted bilingual signs with his picture in prominent places throughout the classroom. There are also posters of other renowned leaders of ethnic minority groups, especially African Americans who have been active in advancing social and political causes. The wall decorations are consistent with an overall effort exhibited by most teachers to positively reinforce student's self-esteem through cultural affirmation.

During the fall semester of 1992, the bilingual teachers at one of the schools—with the exception of the kindergarten teacher—divided their classes for one hour each morning according to the reading proficiency in the student's primary language. Each of the four participant teachers was in charge of one group of students, e.g., beginning and advanced Spanish- and English-reading levels, and would assume responsibility for teaching them in the student's native language. "You should have seen the progress of these children," said one teacher. "By the end of the semester we were reading difficult books in Spanish." Likewise, the teachers instructing the English groups also perceived the progress. As one of them stated, "We could go so much faster because we didn't have to translate everything we say." Despite the effectiveness of the full-immersion strategy, teachers said they had to suspend it because they were digressing from their thematic curricula and could not devote the necessary time required for the planning and organizing for the different age levels.

In general, bilingual teachers at the elementary level display a great deal of energy, creativity, and eagerness to teach. There is no evidence of favoritism with respect to a certain ethnic group or to certain students. On the contrary, teachers show equanimity in their teaching approach and fairness in addressing the needs of students. It was apparent

after more than 100 hours of observing teachers that--despite the structural limitations of their classes--they are committed to providing a positive educational experience to their students.

Assessment Measures

When a child is placed for the first time in the bilingual program, his or her linguistic background in both English and Spanish is assessed according to the IDEA Proficiency Test. The cognitive-academic status of the student is determined yearly through the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS), which is administered only in English. All students, including NEPs (with the exception of those who have been in the country for less than three months), have to take the CTBS in English. This was mandated by the district in order for children to qualify for compensatory educational funding. The CTBS is administered in blocks of three hours daily for one full week. This week of testing generates many complaints on the part of the teachers: "It's the most stupid thing I've done," a teacher said. "My style of teaching and the content of what I teach has nothing to do with the test." Such opinions are shared widely by the teachers who feel that the test is useless and, worst of all, creates a traumatic and demoralizing experience for the students. It infuriates teachers to know that their students will do poorly, not because they are incapable, but because teachers emphasize cooperative learning and a thematic content not reflected in the CTBS. The end result of low standardized test scores is a reinforcement of the subtractive/remedial stereotype of the bilingual program. Further, teachers state that the low test scores further exacerbate tensions in the already sensitive relationship they have with parents regarding the bilingual program because the scores for NEP and LEP children are inevitably low.

Since so many language-minority children tend to perform poorly on standardized tests, they are sometimes considered to be learning disabled and are often recommended for pull-out programs or other special education services. In discussing the tendency for Spanish-speaking students to be inappropriately identified as requiring special education, Cummins writes: "ESL students may appear to have overcome difficulties in English since they frequently understand and speak English relatively well. However, when tested by IQ and other psychological tests in English they often score much lower on the verbal than on the performance subtests. This has led many students to be labeled as 'learning disabled' and to get a one-way ticket into special education classes" (1992, 3).

One LUSD staff member who has worked closely with the families of NEP and LEP students focused on the discontinuity in language usage between home and school. According to this individual, there is a gap between the colloquial-home Spanish, which she considers the Spanish version of Black English, and the more standardized Spanish

which is taught in schools. Because the program does not emphasize the full development of Spanish-language skills, she feels that the children are not given enough exposure to standard Spanish in order to develop it properly. Since standardized Spanish differs substantially from the Spanish dialect (and possibly "Spanglish") that they may speak at home or with friends, the children find it difficult to master literacy skills that have academic Spanish as a core. She believes that these children may be considered to have a learning disability because of their inability to communicate effectively in either language, even though the bilingual program itself is actually contributing to these language deficiencies.

In addition to the CTBS, children in the primary grades are administered a standardized test in Spanish. This testing is done at the beginning of the year on a pull-out basis. In general, test scores for the Spanish tests tend to be higher than those for the English CTBS. For example, one third grader participating in this study performed in the average to slightly above average range for CTBS reading but scored in the 94th percentile on the SABE (Spanish-standardized test) reading exam. Results from the SABE may be used to challenge a special education placement for a student who has received low scores on the CTBS. Unfortunately, children in LUSD are no longer administered the SABE after the third grade.

Another issue with assessment is that there is no mechanism to gauge the success of the overall bilingual program. There is a program evaluator for the district who "concentrates on testing," but most of the emphasis seems to be on following the test scores of individual children. While it is important to ensure that all children are achieving on a personal level, it is also necessary to examine the progress of the program as a whole. At Rosemont-Calgary there does not seem to be a great deal of organized reflection about the direction of the program on the part of either teachers or administrators. Despite the periodic bilingual staff meetings, teachers still express a great deal of frustration because of their perception that students are not achieving their academic potential. In conversations with our team, they asserted that they have voiced their concerns about the structure of the bilingual program on numerous occasions but have yet to see any of their recommendations put into practice. In addition, so much of the meeting time is spent on administrative issues that there is little time to discuss issues related to instruction for the bilingual program. In contrast, at Yuma teachers feel more optimistic about their meetings since there is a sense of cohesion and consensus regarding the goals of bilingual education. This cohesion, says one teacher, was the result of teacher input in the hiring process and the willingness of all of them to be open to new pedagogical alternatives. At present, Yuma is the only school switching to a site-base management approach with apparent initial success.

Children Speak About Bilingual Education

To gain a sense of how students enrolled in bilingual classes perceived the program, we asked all children to define bilingual education. With the exception of one English-speaking third grader, all of the children understood a bilingual class to be one where Spanish and English speakers can learn together. As one third grader said, "One is in English, and one is in Spanish. And the ones who don't know English, they can learn. And the ones who don't know Spanish, they can learn." The children were able to convey the dual purposes of bilingual education in the district: academic instruction in the primary language of the child and second language instruction for the purpose of acquisition. When asked why they were in the bilingual program, however, most children focused solely on the issue of second language acquisition, regardless of their primary language: "Because I want to learn a little bit of English 'cause I don't know that much still"; "Cause my mom wanted me to learn Spanish." Only one child, a third grader, verbalized both goals, "To learn English and to remember Spanish." Even in this response, the emphasis was more on language development than on overall academic achievement.

When asked to talk about how Spanish speakers would feel if there were no bilingual classes, however, their responses clearly indicated a connection between primary language and academic achievement. Student responses included: "They feel bad because they don't speak English and they don't understand anything." "They don't learn anything." "They feel embarrassed." One third grader took the opportunity to reflect on his own experience in the bilingual program:

"I remember I felt a little bit nervous every time I was asked a question in English when I was in kindergarten."

How come you felt nervous in the English class?

"I couldn't speak that much English in kindergarten, but I learned."

How did you feel when you switched to bilingual?

"I felt good."

Regarding the rationale for placing English speakers in the bilingual program, all students cited Spanish-language learning as the main reason. However, no students believe that English learners really develop proficiency in Spanish. As one English-speaking sixth grader stated:

"I don't really speak Spanish. I'm studying it."

How much Spanish do you think you know?

"A little bit, but not much. I know a little bit to get by, to maybe have a little conversation. But it's better than if I wasn't in here 'cause then I wouldn't know any. I know more than most people probably know. The others in English-only classes don't know anything."

The children were asked their opinion on the use of simultaneous translation as an instructional strategy, because this technique is relied upon in most bilingual classrooms in the district. One fifth grader at Calgary put forward the following response: "I get confused sometimes. The other day we were listening to a story, and every time we finished a page, they said it in Spanish. I couldn't really understand it because I think they were going too fast in Spanish. I could probably understand more if they went slower." We found that students who are English-dominant express the greatest difficulty with simultaneous translation. For the small number of children who were fluent in English and Spanish, it was more a feeling of boredom at having to listen to the same content twice:

"It's like somebody would be reading in English and then halfway through the paragraph she stops and says it in Spanish, so you have to listen to it again. Sometimes that was boring."

How would you react when you got bored?

"Sit there and listen. Listen as best as I could to the English part."

Both of these children highlight the problems with simultaneous translation: it is inefficient, reduces the amount of academic content that can be covered in a class period, and can confuse or "turn off" students.¹⁶

Overall, the students expressed satisfaction with the quality of instruction in the bilingual classes. All of the children interviewed perceived the bilingual classes as "just the same as all the other classes, except we work in Spanish and in English." None of the children seemed to associate any stigma with the bilingual program; on the contrary, most seemed proud to be associated with it.

¹⁶ Their experiences have been corroborated by scientific research, which shows that when languages are mixed in the same lesson, results are counterproductive. See, for example, Baker and de Kanter 1981; Dulay and Burt 1978.

Status of Linguistic Acquisition

If the overriding goal of LUSD's bilingual program is to prepare LEP students to succeed academically in monolingual English classes, the next logical step would be to investigate how closely the results match this goal. In general, teachers and staff associated with the program agree that the results are not strongly correlated with this goal. The bilingual manager states that the program is "functioning, but not excelling." She feels that the district needs to commit more resources to bilingual education in order to improve the results. She also feels that teachers need to "communicate what they'd be willing to do" to improve the bilingual program in order to gain support from their respective principals.

One of the principals was less optimistic than the bilingual manager. "I don't think the results match the goals. Reports indicate that the longer kids are in bilingual education, the worse they do [on the CTBS]. They lose the Spanish, and the English is not as strong as it should be." A bilingual teacher recognizes this problem chiefly in her bilingual LEP students, "who are bouncing back and forth between two languages and never getting grounded. The content of lessons gets bogged down with the translation." For the most part, the teachers are discouraged by the results of the program. According to one teacher, "The kids exit the bilingual program to the English-only program at the junior high, and they're not doing well. I have relatives who have not made a transition and they don't have support except for ESL. Their whole education stops until they learn English."

Eventually, most students become proficient, at least verbally, in English but generally at the expense of losing their native-language skills. Language-minority children use English to a greater degree than Spanish in the classroom by the time they are in third-grade. For the typical LEP student who enters the program in kindergarten, by the time the child reaches sixth-grade he or she speaks more English than Spanish. One dramatic case of primary language loss was seen in a bilingual, second-grade class where the majority of students were English monolingual, and the teacher had no option but to spend most of the time speaking English. Consequently, according to the instructional assistant, the Spanish-speaking children were less fluent in their native language than at the beginning of the school year.

Given the fact that the bilingual program ends at the sixth grade, there is increasing pressure on the teachers to emphasize English-language instruction. One sixth-grade teacher explained that she tries to "key in on LEP kids" in order to sufficiently raise their test scores and English fluency so that they can be reclassified as FEP. Although the FEP kids are not entitled to extra help at the junior high school level, she still feels that they are better off if they are reclassified. Based on her observations of sheltered English courses at the junior

high, she concludes that expectations are significantly lower and content is substantially watered down for the NEP and LEP students. "It's the pits. They probably drop out."

African-American Students in the Bilingual Program

Perhaps more revealing than the goals for language-minority students are the goals for English-speaking students. According to an administrator, the main goal for English speakers is "to keep them on par with students in English-only classes, which is very difficult." In other words, there are no goals for Spanish acquisition for monolingual English students. Moreover, English-only students are considered to be achieving if their scores "break even" with students in the general education classes.

One administrator explained that the reason why the majority of English-speaking students in the bilingual program are African-American children is because these children are from outside the district, and therefore must accept their classroom assignment if they want to remain enrolled in Lockwood. Since the English-only classes are at maximum enrollment, the parents are told that they may only enroll their child in the district if they are willing to place him or her in a bilingual classroom. Although the parents do not necessarily consider second-language acquisition a goal for their children, they are willing to do this since they perceive the classes in this district to be "less distracting and more integrated" than classrooms in the student's home district. As the administrator explained, parents feel that "even if they only get half of the instructional time [due to partial instruction in Spanish], it is better than being with disruptive children all of the time." Clearly, this policy of placing children in bilingual classrooms because of the availability of space rather than to satisfy parental preference has serious ramifications for the success of bilingual education in the district.

One administrator gave another reason why African-American children are sometimes placed in bilingual classes. According to this individual, bilingual classes are considered "calmer" than general education classes. She believes that stereotypically, Chicanos and Latinos are considered to be more quiet and respectful of teachers; consequently, bilingual classes are assumed to have fewer discipline problems. African-American children who are experiencing behavioral problems are placed in bilingual classrooms in the hope that a more tranquil environment will tone down their behavior. A staff member corroborated this view when she said, "Sometimes the bilingual program is used to calm down hyperactive black children." Teachers are aware of this practice, and express resentment over the fact that their classes are being used as "pacifiers." One teacher said, "Kids with problems become very volatile and angry when placed in a bilingual class. It doesn't help calm them down." Another teacher said that this practice should be called

for what it is, an "informal tracking" system: "Some teachers have been here for years and have a great reputation, so they get all of the white GATE [Gifted and Talented] kids. The class fills up and there is no movement out of it. The bilingual classes are the least desirable to [English-speaking] parents and also have the most transient student populations, so there is always room in the bilingual classes." This explains why bilingual classrooms so often absorb transfer students from other districts. It also points to another problem in bilingual classes, that is, the difficulty of establishing a sense of community when there is so much movement in and out of the class. This sense of community is crucial for addressing classroom problems, especially divisions along ethnic lines that often occur in bilingual classes.

To get a closer look at the interethnic relations among the children, we observed their behavior during nonstructured times, which included recess and the school bus ride to and from school. These two occasions were chosen because we believed that in informal settings students might tend to behave in a less inhibited manner than they would in the presence of an adult. Up until third grade, it is still common to see friendly manifestations of physical contact, such as hugging, playing together, or putting a hand on a shoulder. Although at Yuma students often play soccer games that pit Blacks against Mexicans, we noticed no racial animosity and several play groups that were racially integrated. However, by the time the children reach sixth grade, the friendly contact has diminished considerably, and it is more common to hear racial slurs and discriminatory remarks among groups. Fewer play groups appear to be integrated, and there appears to be considerable tension along racial lines. This ethnic separation worsens even further at the junior high and high school levels.

Parental Involvement

The question of parental involvement in the school setting is always crucial, but in this district the matter seems to have taken on an even larger significance because of the troubled relationship between the Chicano and Latino parents and the district. A teacher who has been with the bilingual program since its inception understands the parents' anger. "[Bilingual] parents have the general feeling that the school doesn't want to serve them as well as general education students. It's not just something they imagine. It's the result of many situations over many years, starting from when they wanted to openly eliminate the program six years ago." This teacher explains that the Chicano and Latino parents need to be very strong and vocal in order to ensure the future of the bilingual program in the district. "There is a constant attempt to eliminate the bilingual program. The administration would shut it down if the parents didn't scream."

When "the parents" are mentioned by teachers or administrators, it is often certain parents in particular who are at the center of the debate. Most teachers and administrators feel that certain parents have contributed to a negative climate by dealing with issues in a confrontational and antagonistic manner. One teacher summed up the situation by saying,

There are some parents who don't know how to use power in a positive way. A lot of parents are apathetic and let the leaders run it. They are busy, and they give their power away. The leader confronts people [other parents and teachers] publicly. My own family stays away, and they used to be quite involved. They feel uncomfortable even if they're not being shouted at. It's been destructive to furthering the goals of the program.

An administrator elaborated on this by stating,

It's hard for people to trust each other and work together. Some are so abrasive that it's impossible to get together. Teachers don't really want to give in-services to parents because they feel that they would be 'taken apart.'

Last year, teachers were openly criticized by parents during bilingual advisory meetings, and this experience has made many teachers cautious in how they approach the issue of parent involvement. Feelings of distrust are very deep on both sides, a condition that makes it very difficult for people to work together on a programmatic level.

Of the 25 parents interviewed at the elementary level, six stated they had gone to a few meetings but the level of tension was so high that they decided to withdraw. As one parent explained:

I went to three meetings but by the time they were over, I was more stressed out than before they started. I work very hard throughout the day and the last thing I want to do is go and see a bunch of adults behaving like kids, finding ways to put each other down.

When the other 19 parents were asked why they did not attend the meetings, they all mentioned either lack of time, inadequate transportation, or the need for childcare. All parents agreed about the importance of participating in the meetings related to the bilingual program, but they were unsure what could be done to encourage more parental participation. A few parents mentioned the need for neutral parties who could serve as mediators during the meetings. Teachers agreed unanimously with this solution.

When teachers were questioned as to ways of improving parent/district relations, one teacher said:

It would take strong leadership from the school administration to not allow certain individuals to dominate the meeting. They need to develop skills for running meetings, such as not allowing personal attacks and sticking to one topic.

Another teacher went further by stating:

To change the parent dynamic, we need to have a principal and vice-principal who understand the bilingual program and Latino community. We also need a supportive bilingual manager who understands the goal of the bilingual program (not ESL), and who supports teachers. She should have good management skills instead of everything being an emergency. We also need a superintendent who understands and respects the Latino community. She ignores them by sending announcements in English only with no translations. I save them and return them to her, but I've never gotten any response.

In general, most teachers feel that the onus is on the school and district administration to repair parent/district relations.

As might be expected, the school administration has a somewhat different view of the matter. One administrator stated that she believes individual bilingual teachers need to meet with parents in order to let them know what is happening with the program:

Teachers have to be pro-active. If teachers establish a relationship with parents, then it is difficult for parents to be hypercritical. The administration has tried to recommend that, but it's hard for teachers to accept that recommendation because of the history with the parents.

In general, though, most teachers feel that they have good working relationships with the majority of their parents. Most problems seem to arise during group meetings, when parents, teachers, and administrators all seem to gravitate toward opposing factions.

During the interviews with parents, several of the questions centered around parent/child interaction. Of the 25 parents, eight were recently arrived immigrants from Mexico who said the relationship with their children was deteriorating because of the linguistic barrier. They said their children were losing their native tongue at a rapid pace, much faster than the ability of parents to learn English. In several cases, the parents spoke in Spanish and the children replied in English. These parents feared that by the time their children were teenagers they would be unable to communicate with them at all. One mother said in Spanish, "The more she learns English, the more she loses her Spanish, but I want her to have both."

To compensate for this loss of Spanish, many parents send their children to Mexico or any other Spanish-speaking country during the summer. "Next summer will be the second time that our daughter goes to Mexico," another mother said. "We want her to spend time with her grandparents and to really master Spanish well. If possible, I'll try to enroll her in a school in Michoacan during her two-month stay so that she becomes a disciplined student. Here [in the United States], teachers allow too much freedom to the children. They need a stronger hand." Eight other parents expressed similar views. They felt public school teachers were too lenient and did not demand enough from students. Parents expected teachers to give out abundant and rigorous homework, which they did not see occurring in most classes.

Of all the parents interviewed, four went regularly to their children's school to provide assistance to the teacher. Despite their busy schedules, they said showing up at school was an essential component of their child's education. When we went to observe a kindergarten class, Eric greeted us warmly. "Viste a mi papá? Vino a ayudar a la maestra," (Did you see my dad? He came to help the teacher.), he said very proudly. Eric is a child who is generally shy, but that day he was extroverted and extremely happy to have his father close by. "I try to come as often as I can," Eric's father said. "If more parents paid closer attention to their child's well-being, we wouldn't have so many problems." According to several parents, they would pay closer attention if they knew how. Especially for recently arrived immigrants, in many instances they feel inadequate to handle the challenges posed by the new society, with a new language and new customs. Parents manifested the need for workshops that would provide them with practical tips on how to better assist their children as they grow up. They were particularly concerned about ways to foster a continuous and frank dialogue in which parents and students could support each other in a healthy and constructive manner.

IV. SECONDARY PROGRAMS: ESL, SHELTERED CLASSES, AND THE 9TH-GRADE CHICANO CORE PROGRAM

In this section we will examine the structure and teaching methodologies of programs geared specifically to meet the needs of Chicano/Latino students at the secondary level: the ESL program, sheltered classes, and the 9th-grade Chicano Core program. In our evaluation, we will compare the stated teaching methodologies employed in the programs with the pedagogy that we actually observed in the classrooms.

While there is a formal methodology behind each of these programs that implicitly or explicitly aims to "empower" the minority or linguistically challenged students, we

consistently observed the greatest discrepancy between formal goals and actual practice in the sheltered program. This weakness affects not only its own success but also the success of the other programs as well. This may be a classic case of the right hand undermining what the left hand is doing. Ultimately, the students are the ones left with the confusion created by conflicting expectations from the different components of their educational system.

Description of the Programs

Lockwood Unified School District offers the ESL program to students whose primary language is other than English. ESL students are categorized into three groups: NEP, LEP, and FEP. Students are placed into different levels of ESL according to their NEP or LEP status. FEP students take mainstream classes once they pass the appropriate tests. Among the three secondary schools sampled, there are a total of 210 Spanish-speaking LEP students distributed among 17 ESL teachers.

At the junior high level, the curriculum is similar for all LEP students. At one junior high, for instance, NEP and LEP students are expected to take two separate, 45-minute courses on a daily basis through their first year in both ESL Acquisition and ESL Reading Back-up. Both of these courses are part of a program of language development that integrates listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The primary purpose of ESL Acquisition is the attainment of communicative competence. Listening, speaking, and vocabulary skills are emphasized through interactive practice with English functions, and grammatical skills are taught in practical situations and academic contexts. In terms of the Reading Back-up course, its primary purpose is to improve comprehension, speaking, reading, and writing, while providing back-up support for the literature being taught in mainstream English classes. While NEP students take both ESL Acquisition and the Reading Back-up course, LEP students take the Reading Back-up in conjunction with their regular English course.

According to the ESL program descriptions, there are four different levels of ESL classes. A description of the objectives at each level follows.

ESL I

This level focuses on the communication of messages within contexts. Students respond to commonly used phrases, such as greetings and polite phrases, and recognize and answer simple questions. Writing is in the form of simple sentences and dialogues learned in the oral part of the program. Reading is related to oral production and complemented with writing as well.

ESL II

Once fluency in oral usage of the English language has been obtained, students are introduced to more reading and writing. They write paragraphs that are self-generated from a picture, a book prompt, or from guided questions. Reading is intended increasingly to integrate oral language with reading and writing. Students start to analyze reading selections and are encouraged to read for information retrieval. Vocabulary building is an important component of ESL II.

ESL III

Students on this level have had exposure to a wide variety of situations in which English and language activities are put to use. Beginning skills are reinforced and expanded, and students are encouraged to correct themselves in both speaking and writing at this level. There is more interaction with English-speaking students in mainstream classes. Students also are presented with more challenging reading materials that contain more difficult words and idioms. They are asked to read for inference and are expected to respond at higher levels of thinking (evaluation, application, synthesis). In writing, they create short compositions and stories.

ESL IV

This is the transitional level where students participate in activities that will lead to skills used in the mainstream classes as they prepare for high school and beyond. Speaking is expected to be grammatically correct. At this level students write short compositions, stories, plays, and poems. Students read from a variety of genres and continue building vocabulary, word analysis skills, and comprehension.

In addition to language instruction, the ESL programs at both junior high schools monitor the progress of students as they are being mainstreamed. This aspect of the program is designed to ensure that students who have transitioned to mainstream courses are able to perform in an English-only environment. Monitoring is also used for LEP students for whom placement in ESL or sheltered instruction would not be appropriate. One of the ways in which this may be done is by assigning a bilingual tutor to monitor the student's progress in the mainstream courses. The tutor meets with the student's teachers as well as the student to assess progress and then reports back to the ESL program coordinator. When there is a concern regarding a student's progress or placement, parents are contacted and attempts are made to work together to find a solution.

Sheltered Classes Curriculum

Sheltered instruction is a component of the bilingual program offered at the secondary level to focus specifically on subject-matter content for students whose English-language skills are deficient. Children receive second-language instruction that is "sheltered" from information beyond their grasp, initially in subjects that are less language intensive, such as mathematics, and later on in those that require greater facility with English, such as social studies. Among the three secondary schools, there are 19 sheltered teachers offering core curriculum areas of mathematics, history, and science. The curriculum in sheltered courses is intended to be the same as in mainstream ones, and all the courses are taught in English.

Chicano Core Curriculum

The Chicano Core program was instituted in the fall of 1992 to provide academic and social support for a small group of ninth-grade students. Many of the 22 Chicano students originally recruited to the class were considered "at risk" in that they had a history of academic and behavioral difficulties. At the high school level, both ESL and Chicano students who are identified as "high risk" may be enrolled in the Chicano Core classes.

The core program consists of three courses: History/Social Studies, Academic Orientation, and Freshman English. The program, offered only to freshman students, is designed to reach out to Chicano and Latino students to reduce the drop-out rate and prevent academic failure and social isolation. The methods used to achieve these goals emphasize an enriching course curriculum centered around culturally relevant material and the creation of a classroom environment that is supportive of and responsive to the personal needs of students. The staff comprises a teacher, a counselor, and one University of California at Berkeley clinical psychology researcher, all of whom are Latino.

By the end of the 1992-93 school year, only 15 of the original 22 students remained. According to the teacher and guidance counselor, the seven who quit the program left for different reasons. For example, some either transferred to a new school or chose independent study.¹⁷

¹⁷ The school district uses independent study to enable a small number of students to complete their studies without actual attendance at school. In most cases independent study is utilized when a student has special needs (e.g., illness, the need to work to provide income for family, extended travel); there have been some occasions, however, in which independent study has been used to remove disruptive students on a permanent basis from the school site.

Teaching Methodologies

Although we observed marked differences among the three programs in the pedagogical methods and consequent student engagement in the classroom, the stated teaching methodologies of each program, are all based on a similar philosophy that is meant to empower students. We turn now to a more extensive treatment of the educational philosophies and practices that formally define each program. We then examine in depth how actual classroom practices diverged from these formal descriptions in the sheltered classes but not in the ESL and Chicano Core Program.

ESL Teaching Methodology

Although specific teaching methods vary among and within the two junior high schools and the high school, the framework from which the teachers work is similar. The teachers approach language acquisition by using the whole language method. Whole language instruction is based upon the following key elements: (1) student experience as a point of departure for writing; (2) the use of literature from which written comprehension and vocabulary can be gleaned; (3) recreational reading that is relevant from both a cultural and experiential standpoint; and (4) the learning of syntax and grammar within a familiar context. Basic skills such as phonics, the understanding of tenses, and the mastery of contractions are taught through individual lessons when the need arises, rather than through drill exercises.

According to the ESL Curriculum Guide, teaching methods and the development of teacher's skills should include: (1) introducing language in a context so that the input of language is comprehensible; (2) monitoring comprehension through strategies that may not necessarily require the students', full production of language; and (3) sequencing activities leading from listening comprehension, to oral production, to the eventual introduction of reading and finally writing.

Theory and research on second-language acquisition is discussed in the LUSD teacher's handbook "Expectations for LEP Students" and is intended to inform ESL instruction, by providing teachers with specific guidelines regarding what they can expect from their second-language learners. A set of principles, for example, developed by Cummins for the purpose of empowering language-minority students are included in the handbook. By giving teachers this guidance, LUSD hopes that they can appropriately evaluate student progress and performance.

Sheltered Courses Teaching Methodology

The primary difference between sheltered and mainstream courses is the method of instruction provided by the teacher. Sheltered teachers attempt to provide more context for linguistically difficult material to facilitate learning. For example, sheltered history uses history as a context for reinforcing academic and thinking skills for ESL students. It claims to be an integrated language learning program, which focuses on textbook reading skills and strategies, activities which use a variety of methods to increase understanding. Students read passages appropriate to their reading level and respond to questions which test for comprehension. Teachers also assign writing activities with guided questions.

Unlike ESL teachers who directly focus on the differing linguistic needs of their students, sheltered teachers must first focus on the content of the courses that they teach. They must attempt to convey the subject matter of the course to students of various linguistic backgrounds. Particularly at the high school level, some sheltered teachers may have classes with students speaking eight to ten different languages and varying levels of experience in English.

Besides their skill level in English, students also vary in their knowledge of the subject matter of the course, especially in math. While a student may have been in an advanced class in his native country, linguistic barriers often are used to justify retaining him or her in a lower-level math class. This frequently leads to frustration and boredom for the student and may lead to a complete lack of interest in the course. Due to the limited number of sheltered classes available, there are no advanced placement courses or other academically demanding classes available to ESL students. The teacher's challenge within the sheltered classes, therefore, becomes how to meet the varying linguistic needs of students while simultaneously trying to assign material that is appropriate to their diverse abilities.

Tutors, who are present in most sheltered classes, are invaluable to the program, especially for NEP students who typically would not be able to function in some sheltered classes. Because the books and assignments are all in English, we observed tutors translating questions word for word for students who were otherwise helpless. From in-class translations and after-school assistance with homework to directing advanced students to resource materials, these tutors are crucial for the ESL student.

Chicano Core Teaching Methodology

As stated above, there is but one teacher for the Chicano Core program. The approach she uses in teaching is designed to draw from her students' experiences to create a curriculum that is both relevant and culturally affirming. Although she states that she does not employ

a particular teaching method, she does challenge her students with academically rigorous material within a context that is meaningful to them. She does this in a manner that demonstrates a high level of positive regard and respect for her students. We observed her using many different avenues for exploring the class material: (1) developing research projects in small groups; (2) creating plaster tiles that depict one's sense of identity; (3) developing practical skills such as how to write a resume and interview for a job; and (4) bimonthly field trips designed to expose students to political and cultural centers in the metropolitan area. To keep her students motivated, she continually encouraged them to recognize the power of knowledge and realize that the process of reaching a goal is just as important as the end in itself.

All of these programs espouse a teaching methodology that is student-centered and designed to empower them to think and act independently. However, our observations showed us that while there was a consistent match between the espoused methodology and actual pedagogy in both the ESL and Chicano Core classes, this was often not the case in sheltered classes.

Observations of Pedagogy

At both the junior high and high school levels, we found teachers who consistently brought in culturally relevant extracurricular materials and conducted innovative and interactive classroom exercises to engage their students. At the same time, there were other teachers who were clearly less engaged with the students. Their pedagogical styles were less interactive, and in interviews they tended to blame the students for what they perceived as shortcomings, such as lack of motivation or frivolous attitudes toward school. In the following sections, we will first describe the successes that we observed in the ESL, and Chicano Core; we will then contrast these classroom environments with the less successful sheltered classroom experiences.

ESL Classes

The ESL classes are taught by a group of dedicated and enthusiastic teachers. In all cases, the classrooms seemed to be exceptionally positive, pleasant learning environments for children. The atmospheres within the classrooms were relaxed, and we observed students working together in small groups and independently. The rooms themselves were clean, well-ventilated, and bright, typically decorated with culturally affirming wall hangings. The students seemed to like their teachers, and the teachers seemed to have high expectations for the students. Despite the challenge entailed in teaching these classes, the manner in which the teachers covered the material appeared academically rigorous.

In the ESL classes, we found students working at their own levels and teachers providing a great deal of individual attention. Several teachers even stayed after school to help students who were experiencing difficulty with course material. Much of the teaching and learning in the classes that we saw was interactive. Clearly, many of these teachers were trying hard to engage their students with materials that were challenging and relevant to the students.

For example, in one junior high class, the teacher brought in an article from a local newspaper about "banda," a music and dance craze among Mexicans. This article was fairly difficult for some students because of the level of vocabulary and style of writing employed by the author; it seemed as though the material would definitely be a challenge even for the average, native English-speaking high school student. Yet we watched these mostly Latino, 7th- and 8th-grade ESL students struggling through the big words as they took turns reading out loud. Throughout the exercise, the students never seemed to lose interest. With the support and assistance of the teacher, who became quite animated when explaining metaphors, they got through the article. The relevance of the material to the actual life experiences of the students, the collaborative and interactive teaching process, and the challenging content of the material all seemed to have a positive influence on these usually hyperactive junior high school students. The ESL teachers, on the whole, were impressive in their commitment to teaching.

In the Lockwood Unified School District, the ESL departments are staffed by dedicated teachers who provide a supportive environment for the students. Students reported that teachers are consistently concerned about their attendance and often call home to inquire about their absences. Furthermore, students report that ESL classes are extremely helpful in teaching them English.

Chicano Core Classes

The new Chicano Core program focuses on Chicano and Latino literature and history as well as current social and political issues. Within a high school that in most other ways seems indifferent to or hostile toward Latino students, the program has become an important source of emotional and academic support. During each visit, the classroom environment was consistently friendly and lively. The walls are decorated with images depicting the Mexican and Chicano cultures as well as students' projects and artwork.

In interviews with students enrolled in the program, they emphasized how their participation in the Chicano/Latino Core program, and the teacher particularly, had encouraged them to believe in their own abilities to succeed. One student made the following comment, "I used to hate school. Most of the time I would just cut class and hang

out with my friends. This class has helped me to change my attitude about school because for the first time I'm learning something about myself and my people." One Student mentioned that the field trips, which were organized around the career goals of the students, motivated her to think that she could do whatever she aimed to do. The students contrasted this teacher's positive encouragement with the negative and even somewhat hostile attitude that many other teachers displayed toward Latino students. The students speculated that such an attitude could cause some students to drop out. Two freshmen students stated that they wanted to make it in school, and behavior such as drug use and cutting class was "stupid."

The teacher of the Chicano Core classes was exceptional in her obvious commitment to following through on her student-centered methodology. While there are many examples of her culturally identified, student-centered teaching style, we will give just one that illustrates a congruence between the program's stated aim and actual teaching. In the World History/English class, the Chicano Core teacher collaborated with a history teacher to develop a unit that drew connections between the rise of industrial capitalism and working-class consciousness in Europe, including the experiences of Mexican miners in New Mexico in the 1940s. To help the students understand how individual workers were affected by these developments, the instructors used a well known film called *Salt of the Earth*, which helped to illustrate concepts such as class conflict and industrialization and the impact these had upon agricultural societies and basic elements of the market system.

After the students became familiar with the terms and concepts, they went on a field trip to a union office where they were able to apply their knowledge of industrial relations in understanding the issues surrounding a Round Table Pizza strike. During their field trip, the students listened to a Chicano union member explain how the strike affected Latinos and poor people of other races. Through such hands-on activities, historical information that might otherwise have seemed abstract came to life for these high school students.

The positive reports about the Chicano Core program from the students signify the importance of role models and the need for a space where these youth can deal with issues related to their identity in a supportive atmosphere. The result of such an approach seems to increase their interest in school and school-related activities.

Sheltered Classes

It is important to acknowledge that the teachers of sheltered classes are faced with a very challenging task. Unlike ESL teachers who focus exclusively on the differing linguistic needs of the students, the sheltered teachers must address the language needs of their

students while attempting to convey the content of the course they are teaching. These teachers are faced with students from diverse linguist backgrounds with differing English abilities.

Besides their skill level in English, students also vary in their knowledge of subject matter, especially math. While a student may have been in an advanced class in his or her native country, linguistic barriers may force him or her to be retained in a lower-level math class. Retention often leads to frustration and boredom for the student and sometimes to a complete lack of interest in the course. The teacher's challenge is to meet the varying linguistic needs of the students while maintaining their interest in the subject matter of the course.

Lack of engagement, low motivation, and boredom among the students in sheltered classes were observed consistently at both junior high schools and the high school. This student disengagement is strikingly different from the participation observed in both the ESL and Chicano Core classes. While there were certainly a few exceptional teachers and classrooms, students in sheltered classes consistently appeared bored, disengaged, and seemed not to be learning much about the subject matter.

One main difference we observed among ESL, Chicano Core, and sheltered classes is teaching style. The interactive teaching methodology that is institutionalized within the former two programs is very different from the transmission-oriented teaching method in sheltered classes. Teachers in sheltered classes tended to use traditional teaching methods focused on transmitting content (e.g., math, science) with noninteractive teaching styles.

A high school sheltered history class provides an example of such a dynamic. The teacher spoke in English for the first quarter of the period without ever pausing for questions or inquiring whether or not the students were comprehending the material. Following her lecture, they were told to choose between two, multiple-choice exams on two different chapters that they were to answer in groups. The Latinos got together in groups with other Latinos, and the other students, mostly Asian, formed groups that were generally mixed. Although it was an open book test, these students, without making much of an attempt to look in the book, were guessing at answers and filling in spaces on the exam without reading the chapter from which the questions were derived. A big part of the problem for most of these students seemed to be the lack of linguistic comprehension of the assigned material. However, in conversations with the students afterward, many complained that in this class they mainly saw movies and filled out worksheets, and didn't learn much.

Both at the junior high and high school levels, there were some teachers who used additional classroom support to enhance sheltered classroom instruction. For example,

teachers used audio and video equipment to provide additional linguistic help to ESL students. Furthermore, overheads were used in some instances to help with explanations. In one science sheltered classroom, the teacher very successfully used a videotape with a matching worksheet to guide the students through the lesson for the day. Occasionally, he would stop the videotape to highlight a question on the worksheet and have the students look for the answer on the following sequence of the videotape. This extra guidance from the teacher, which may not be necessary for a mainstream class, was invaluable for the students and kept them engaged in the learning process.

This extra support, however, was not the norm in most of the sheltered classes we observed. Generally, we found students who seemed disengaged and appeared to have little comprehension of the subject matter largely because the class was conducted in English, a language the students do not understand. For example, in one sheltered math class, we observed a teacher, who did not speak any Spanish, presenting a lesson on probability and assigning problem sets to her students. The majority of the students were Latino, with a few Asians, and one African-American. There were also two tutors in the classroom: one who spoke Spanish fluently and another who didn't seem to speak any Spanish. As the students began working on the problem sets, almost simultaneously all of the students began to call out for assistance from the tutors because they needed translation. Some students were completely helpless until the tutor translated the question word for word.

For NEP and LEP students who are still learning the parts of speech and verb tenses, it is quite challenging to read and comprehend chapters of English prose. Students regularly are tested on their comprehension of the material via exercises and exams. From our observations and comments of both students and teachers, it appears that many of the NEP and some of the LEP students have a very practical approach to the requirements of multiple choice exams and fill-in-the-blank-type teaching. They look for key words in questions and try to locate those same words in their textbook. While this practice may allow them to fill in the blanks and find many of the right answers on multiple choice exams, the students do not seem to comprehend the content of their classes in history, science, and math.

A sheltered teacher at the high school level commented about her surprise and frustration at finding that the ESL students from junior high came with strategies to "get-by," which excluded much comprehension of the material. She said that by the time these students got to her class in high school, they had seemingly mastered the skill of doing exercises by finding key words and copying them down. She said that her students refused to do the exercises unless they were word for word from the book, which would allow them

to identify the answers this way. As she put it, "It seemed like they had learned this game somewhere before."

An incident observed in a sheltered science classroom at one of the junior high schools illustrates how students develop coping strategies that enable them to get by without learning. After asking a group of students to stop talking on two occasions, this science teacher became very frustrated and began to yell at the mostly Latino students, ordering them to stop speaking in Spanish. The students eventually settled down and started working. After a few minutes, one of the students asked a Spanish-speaking tutor for assistance in translating a question. The teacher responded by telling the tutor not to help the student. She claimed that two of the three boys had deteriorated in their English-speaking abilities since last year and therefore needed to be forced to attempt to do their work without help. She then proceeded to tell the story of her father who had come to the United States at the age of eleven and learned to speak English in one year. While the teacher lectured the students in English, the students deciphered the instructions for the assignment on their own. Ignoring the teacher, both because they didn't understand and didn't want to hear her, the students worked together on the assignment, occasionally making jokes about the teacher as they shared answers to questions.

Summary of Findings

After observing the three, secondary-level programs for Latino students, we asked ourselves: why is there such a substantial difference in the quality of the programs despite a nominal concurrence in their aims? Why are the sheltered classes less successful in engaging students and meeting the goal of a "holistic process-oriented" instructional approach?

One obvious answer is that the sheltered classroom teachers are faced with a greater challenge in that they are supposed to teach subject matter in addition to providing linguistic context. While the teachers may aspire to meet these goals, they are often overwhelmed by what is required of them.

But there is more to this story. It turns out that even though sheltered class teaching is challenging, the district requires no mandatory training for these teachers. While there is technical/pedagogical training available for those teachers who desire to teach sheltered classes, many teachers may not have any additional training to deal with the unique problems of their students. Unlike ESL teachers who must be specially credentialed to teach ESL classes, there are no similar requirements for sheltered classes. Among teachers, sheltered classes are seen as some of the most undesirable ones to teach. As a result, those

assigned to teach these classes are often the least experienced, and responsibility for teaching the classes changes frequently.

Unlike ESL teachers, teachers of sheltered classes are given no incentives for undertaking this especially difficult task. Teaching sheltered courses generally means extra work for most teachers. Not only must they take on the additional burden created by the language needs of their students, but they must also cope with classes in flux as a result of a mobile population, especially among the Latinos. Although some districts in California give monetary and other incentives to instructors who teach sheltered courses, LUSD has not created such incentives.

Teachers perceive themselves as getting "stuck" with sheltered courses, and students are aware of the stigma associated with the classes. Low expectations and esteem do not help to create a positive learning environment for these especially needy students. Both teachers and students find themselves in a no-win situation in the sheltered classes; neither can succeed under existing conditions. Thus far, the persistence of failure has done more to reinforce stigma than to compel a reexamination of current policy and practice.

This is where the metaphor of the right hand undermining the work of the left becomes manifest. The relative success of the ESL and Chicano Core classes should be used to inform the development of sheltered classes and guide educational strategies aimed at improving the academic achievement of Latino students. Instead, there are no regular meetings, nor any formal collaboration between the teachers in the three programs. Lack of coordination and planning leaves many Latino students with the job of negotiating school on their own. In their search for strategies to "get by" and survive in what is often a hostile environment, many cut class or skip out on school. When students who are unprepared are transitioned out of supportive ESL classes into mainstream English-only ones, signs of alienation and estrangement that first begin to appear in junior high school become more salient by high school. Many have become completely alienated and drop out of the system.

V. IDENTITY AND ACHIEVEMENT: AN ASSESSMENT OF SECONDARY PROGRAMS

In this section we concentrate on the role that cultural identity plays in academic achievement. Specifically, we explore the ways in which peer groups and school experience influence conceptions of self-identity. We also consider the ways in which the construction of ethnic identities among Latino students influences their attitudes toward school, teachers, and education generally.

Research related to ethnic identity development of adolescents reveals that schools play a significant role in the social construction of ethnicity (Cross 1971, 1978; Helms 1990; Tatum 1992). Historically, public schools have played a central role in the adaptation of immigrants to life in American society by socializing and "Americanizing" immigrant children. In his historical account of the development of metropolitan public schools, Lawrence Cremin (1990) describes the strategies employed by public schools to assimilate the large number of immigrants who arrived in the United States between 1890 and 1920. According to Cremin, the goal of these programs was to provide a "complex process of socialization that went far beyond instruction in English and civics to include training in personal cleanliness, middle-class values, and factory like discipline, and in many cases, the inculcation of disdain for the immigrant heritage."¹⁸ More often than not, ethnic or cultural difference in relation to the dominant Anglo-Saxon ethnic group has been equated with inferiority (Spring 1993:6). To the extent possible, public schools have historically attempted to eliminate or reduce cultural differences through deliberate efforts at cultural assimilation.

However, just as research has demonstrated that students have the capacity to "resist" social reproduction processes as they are carried out in schools (Willis, McCleod, Giroux, McClaren), there is also substantial evidence that suggests that ethnic minority students have not passively conformed to practices aimed at producing assimilation and acculturation (Ogbu 1984; Nieto 1992; Spring 1993; Sleeter 1990; Bennett 1990). For Latinos particularly, resistance to socialization processes in school is rooted in individual responses to the differences and discontinuities existing between the culture of the family or community or ethnic group and the school. These differences are often experienced as a cultural conflict that may be expressed in an "inability to identify as both an 'American' and a 'Latino'" (Nieto 1992). To the extent that Latino students perceive identification as an "American" as incompatible with their Latino identity, students may engage in both active and passive forms of resistance to acculturation. Regarding this point Nieto writes: "Their sense of pride in culture precludes identification with the United States. To claim to be both is in effect to deny your background, or to be a traitor to it. Our society has forced them to make a choice, and they have usually, although not always, made it in favor of their heritage" (1992, 230).

Some scholars have argued that resistance by Black and Latino students to cultural assimilation may be a factor contributing to academic failure. Ogbu and Fordham (1989)

¹⁸ For a detailed discussion of Americanization policies and practices, see *American Education: The Metropolitan Experience, 1876-1980* (New York: Harper and Row, 1990), p. 238.

suggest that there is a tendency for these students to equate academic achievement with "acting White." Within such a climate, peer groups may have a negative influence on student achievement. Those who pursue academic success may be treated as traitors or "sell outs" by members of their ethnic group and be either ostracized or isolated. As a result, such students, it is argued, often devise coping strategies that enable them either to disguise their interest and commitment to scholastic success or develop a "raceless" persona that may render them outcasts from members of their ethnic group (Fordham 1989).

Antonia Dader (1992) offers another possibility for coping with the cultural conflict that Latino students often encounter in school. She suggests that when schools and teachers affirm cultural and linguistic differences by treating them as assets rather than as deficiencies, contradictions between cultures are resolved successfully. Under such conditions, students can become "bicultural," meaning that they "are able to function in both cultures with a greater sense of affirmation with respect to their bicultural existence" (Dader 1992,4). Similarly, other scholars have found that schools affirming the ethnic identity of minority students can have positive psychological outcomes measured by high self-esteem, and it may also produce positive effects on academic achievement. "Ethnic identity . . . may promote academic achievement by buffering the psychological stress experienced by minority youths in dominant settings" (Bernal, Saenz, and Knight 1991, 149).

Student Perceptions at the Secondary Level

In our interviews with students at the secondary level, we found widely shared perceptions that the schools were hostile toward Latino students and their culture. This hostility was described in the following ways: first, Chicano and Latino students consistently reported that they had experienced overt racism, discrimination, and stereotyping within the classroom and the school. Examples of biased treatment included being ignored or neglected by teachers (e.g., not being called upon during class discussions, little eye contact, and minimal attention except in the form of punishment). Students also reported feeling as though their teachers looked down upon them and were not willing to give them needed assistance. The students we interviewed felt that some teachers stereotyped them as being less capable of succeeding in school and thus expected less of them because of their ethnic background.

As a result of this treatment, several students reported feeling discouraged and less willing to make an effort to excel. A quote from a ninth-grade high student exemplifies this perception: "My math teacher didn't teach me nothing'. He didn't explain the work and I just felt dumb. One time he threw my homework at me. Don't ask me why, I think he

just looks down on us [Chicanos]. After that I just gave up. I don't go to that class no more, I just cut, and kick it with my friends."

In his ethnographic research carried out at two northern California high schools, Suarez Orosco (1987) found bias and negative stereotypes about Latinos to be pervasive among teachers and administrators. The Latino students we interviewed perceived such attitudes as widespread among the faculty and administration. In fact, the students were more likely to see the presence of sensitive and supportive adults as the exception to the norm. While most students described the adults they encountered as either insensitive or indifferent, some cited examples of individuals who they felt "had it out for Latinos."

The feelings of estrangement and alienation described by Latino students in Lockwood's secondary schools are reinforced by the lack of Latinos in professional roles at the school sites. Latino students report that they are disturbed by the fact that they do not have equal representation on campus or in the school district. Students see few Chicanos or Latinos on the school board, in parent and student organizations, or on the school staff. There is one Chicana faculty member at northside junior high school, none at southside junior high, one Chicana counselor at the continuation high school, and three Latino teachers and one guidance counselor at the high school. Most of the adults the students encounter, even in the bilingual, ESL, and sheltered classes, are not Latino, and the vast majority do not speak Spanish.

Commenting on the lack of representation of Latinos on the school faculty, one tenth-grade, upper-tracked student said the following:

One of the main things that needs to change is the representation in the staff and . . . in the classes. The school needs to hire more Chicano and Latino teachers so that students feel included and more like they are a part of the school. A lot of us don't feel comfortable in the school because there are no role models around. We need people that we can talk to and identify with.

Another student in the ninth-grade Chicano Core class made the following point regarding the need for Latino role models:

I think that teachers should be mentors and role models to the students, and that's what I look for in a teacher. Someone who cares and reaches out to me and who I can talk to. Someone who is interested, who is interested in my culture and who will let me bring my culture into class . . . I like it when we learn about Chicano/Latino writers, African-American writers, Asian-American writers, European writers, and writers from all over, you know, the world. People have so much to offer us through their writing, we learn about their culture and then we're not ignorant or bored because we learn about everyone . . . Do you understand?"

The lack of representation at the school sites exacerbates the students' feelings of exclusion, and it is further compounded by a curriculum that largely omits any mention of Latino history or culture. Many believe that their teachers are uninterested in or hostile to covering material that is relevant to their socioeconomic and cultural reality. One student expressed his frustration with the curriculum in the following way:

It [bothers] me that all the discussions seem to focus on black and white issues . . . It's important but I don't see my people represented all. I think during class discussion, everyone should be included. When you learn about your people you feel more motivated to do the work.

While many students seemed to be pleased by the creation of the Chicano Core program, they also felt that this was not enough to address their educational needs. Beyond the ninth grade, students want classes in Chicano/Latino studies that focus on history, culture, and contemporary issues relevant to the experience of Latinos in the United States. The students also want to see literature and material written by Latino scholars included in their traditional classes, especially English and History. An eighth-grade student at the Northside junior high school made the following argument for the inclusion of Latino issues in the school curriculum:

If kids have to wait until they get out of school to find out about all the bad things that white people have done to us, it just makes them madder. Then they might end up hating white people and hurting the wrong ones. It's better if you give us a chance to learn these things in school so that we can think about it in an intelligent way. Maybe then so many of us won't be so angry.

Class Attendance

Cutting class and chronic absenteeism are a significant problem for many students at LHS. Approximately two-thirds of Latino students interviewed reported that they cut class on a regular basis. Chicano students, most of whom are not enrolled in ESL or bilingual classes, were more likely than Latino students to report that they cut class. Older students were also more likely to cut than younger ones; three-fourths of juniors and seniors admitted that they cut on a regular basis compared to less than half of the freshmen and sophomores.

Of those students who said they cut class, the three most popular reasons were associated with the classroom environment: (1) the class is boring; (2) I don't like the teacher; and (3) and I do not feel comfortable in class or with classmates. Several students said that they had stopped attending certain classes because their teachers had told them

early on that they had no chance of passing. Others cited family and work responsibilities as factors influencing their school attendance.

In our in-depth interviews with individual students and small groups of students, they indicated that several of the reasons for cutting class were associated with other aspects of the school culture that they did not like. These reasons can be collapsed into the following categories: (a) irrelevant curriculum and poor quality of teaching, i.e., many students reported cutting classes that they felt were boring and focused largely on White people; (b) student teacher relations, i.e., many of the students stated that they were more likely to cut class if they did not like their teacher or if they felt they were not liked by the teacher. According to one, tenth-grade female: "My classes are boring, and my teachers don't care whether or not I learn. In fact, I think they like it better when I don't show up because then I'm not there to give them a hard time."; and (c) peer relations, i.e., several students said that they did not feel comfortable in class when certain classmates were present, either because of personal conflicts or peer pressure.

Of those who said they did not cut class, the three most popular responses given for regular attendance were related not to the classroom environment but to external motivators: grades, wanting to go to college, and parents not approving of cutting. Consistently, students said that if they liked the teacher or what was being taught in a particular class, they were less likely to cut. Interestingly, the teacher of the Chicano Core class reported very low absenteeism, even though the class was very long, lasting almost three hours.

Tracking

Latino students are also underrepresented in the upper-track, college-preparatory classes. The students we interviewed generally perceived tracking as one of the primary means through which they were being denied a quality education. The students feel that the absence of Latinos in advanced classes has negative implications for their individual academic futures and the well-being of the Latino community as a whole.

Yet, Latino attitudes toward tracking appear to be relatively complicated. While most students interviewed cited the tracking of Latino students into low-ability classes as further evidence of racism, several students said that they had voluntarily enrolled in lower-track classes although they were qualified for more advanced ones. The following quote from an eleventh-grade, upper-track student reveals how these connections are understood and articulated:

I think one of the problems is that we're not a large percentage of the school, especially in the upper-track classes. There [are] only one or two of us in the class and we feel embarrassed, almost, to raise our hand and say something. . . to say well in my culture it's like this, or I feel like this because. . . I think that if there were more Latinos in the upper-track classes it would make us feel more comfortable. The few of us who are there feel pretty much excluded from the classroom, like it doesn't have to do with us. I stay because I know that if we're not in the right classes most of us won't be able to get into the good colleges, which means more of us are going to be out on the streets. But a lot of people refuse to stay. They'd rather be in a lower class with more Latino students.

The students were aware that the material covered in sheltered and ESL courses was remedial at best and that it would probably not be helpful in preparing for college later. This realization was not enough to spur them to leave or advocate for change. Faced with the choice of being a minority in what they perceived as a hostile environment, many students said that they would rather be with their "homies" in slower classes.

Gang Involvement

One way that secondary students counter the feelings of alienation and exclusion is through gang affiliation. While no one knows the actual number of Latino students who are actively affiliated with gangs, adults most familiar with the issues describe "a handful of real gangsters, and a bunch of wannabees."¹⁹ According to elementary school teachers, there is evidence that gang membership may start as early as fifth or sixth grade. In the junior highs and high schools, several students are openly affiliated with three gangs: Catorce (14) or Nortenos, for students born in the United States; Trece (13) or Surenos, for students born in Mexico; and a racially mixed gang based on the west side of Lockwood. While police report that gang activity is highest between the ages of 12 - 15 and that many students leave the gangs before they finish high school, there is some evidence that some Lockwood students have become affiliated with larger gangs operating in other cities. Unlike the Lockwood gangs, which police describe as being more mischievous than dangerous, the larger gangs are involved in drug trafficking and engage in more extreme forms of violence.

At LHS, some of the Latino students wear colors signifying their affiliation with particular gangs. They also "tag" walls throughout the campus as a way of claiming turf or demonstrating their presence to others. Students, counselors, and youth workers who were

¹⁹ There is a small but active group of adults who communicate with and are trusted by Latino adolescents in Lockwood's secondary school, including professionals employed by the school district as well as parents and individuals from the Latino community.

interviewed have similar perceptions concerning the Lockwood gang. Most stated that gang allegiance among Chicano/Latinos has more to do with issues of youth identity than with crime or violence. Recently, dress codes have been adopted by the administration prohibiting students from wearing any form of clothing known to designate gang affiliation.

Such measures are widely seen as further evidence that racism and discrimination are pervasive and school administrators "have it out" for Latino students. A cycle of fear and distrust between students and administrators is reinforced by the administration's fear of gang violence, as students, who are already alienated, become even more insular and susceptible to the appeal of strength derived from group solidarity. The students perceive themselves as outsiders on hostile turf and their presence on the campus as precarious and tenuous.

Achievement Through Cultural Affirmation

With the implementation of the Chicano Core program, Latino students, some of whom were gang members, have taken the opportunity to organize themselves in a constructive manner through a school club called La Raza Unida. This club has politicized the gang members and redirected their energy and solidarity into community involvement. Recently, La Raza Unida organized a rally and march through which they voiced their anger and concern over the lack of Latino representation at their school.

This mobilization of Latino students was supported by the Chicano Core program, which encouraged students to join the club as part of an ongoing homework assignment in community service. In contrast to the indifference and hostility they encountered in most aspects of the educational institution, the Chicano Core provides many Latino students with a school setting that affirms their cultural identity. Among the ninth graders we observed in the Chicano Core, we saw evidence that cultural affirmation could facilitate greater academic achievement and integration into the wider school community.

A 1992 survey established that Chicano/Latino students were more likely to participate in culturally oriented extracurricular activities such as La Raza Unida and Fuerza Latina, which directly relate to the Chicano/Latino community.²⁰ Less than 10% of Chicano and Latino students participate in extracurricular activities such as drama, radio broadcasting, yearbook, and journalism. School sports are the most popular extracurricular activity for Chicano and Latino students, although only three students reported

²⁰ The survey was conducted by Magda McKenzie, an undergraduate student from the Ethnic Studies Program, University of California, Berkeley. With the exception of an after-school tutorial program, most Latino students in the Chicano Core reported no involvement in extracurricular activities.

participating in an organized sport. In nearly every respect, Chicano and Latino students are absent from positions of power and influence at LHS; there are no Chicano or Latino students on the senate (student government), cheerleading squad, site leadership committee, or the yearbook.

However, in 1993 we found that the Chicano Core was serving as a foundation from which students were branching out to get involved with the general school community. As the school has become more opened and become receptive to initiatives undertaken to support Latino students, the students have begun to participate actively in school affairs. For the first time, a Chicano gave the May 1993 commencement speech; for the first time, a Chicana and a Latina ran for senior class president and won as a team; and for the first time, a Chicana was elected homecoming queen. Although the Chicano Core program is limited to freshman year, the program already seems to have had a positive impact upon Chicano/Latino students throughout LHS.

VI. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Strengths of the Programs

Bilingual Education K-6

Supportive Staff

The principals, staff, and teachers generally promote an environment that is welcoming to Spanish-speaking children. In the main offices, many signs are posted in both English and Spanish, the school newspapers are printed in both languages, and at least one of the secretaries at each school communicates fluently in Spanish. The principals express genuine concern for the future of the bilingual program; for example, at Yuma, the principal expresses great enthusiasm for restructuring the school, wholeheartedly supporting efforts to improve the bilingual program by developing a partial-language immersion program (half day in English, half day in Spanish). Other manifestations of respect for the Spanish-speaking children are seen through efforts to distribute all school information in Spanish and English and to ensure that Spanish translation is provided on occasions when the principal addresses the student body. Even though some of the non-bilingual teachers and staff who were interviewed seemed ambivalent about the bilingual program, most said they believed it was essential and should receive as much assistance as possible.

Highly Skilled and Committed Teachers

At all the interviews, everyone mentioned the high caliber of the teachers, when asked about the strengths of the bilingual program. As one assistant principal explained, "The

majority of the teachers are well-versed in bilingual pedagogy. I think they've been to workshops and are familiar with [bilingual teaching] techniques. Their knowledge and experience are strengths. Some of them have excellent leadership capabilities and are able to serve as proponents of the program to the broader community. Some have very good reputations in content areas such as mathematics or literature." These sentiments were generally shared by the parents of children enrolled in the program.

The teachers are proud of their work but seem resentful and somewhat defiant about the conditions under which they work. "Committed teachers are a strength. On our own we haven't lost the vision. We're paying our own money to go to conferences and to buy materials, and we're taking time to develop alternative assessment to develop student thinking." Another teacher said, "The staff is knowledgeable and capable and qualified. Teachers support each other. With two schools, there are more of us, so there's more of a solid voice. When we want to meet with the bilingual manager, we can because we're more of a force." Many teachers feel that they are forced to be strong and unified because of a lack of leadership and administrative support.

Active Support from Central Office

Although most teachers felt otherwise, our impression was that the central district office is active and firm in its support for the bilingual program. The problem between bilingual teachers and the program administrators may be partly caused by a lack of communication. Most teachers have no knowledge of the ways in which they are supported by the central office, which has provided, despite its limited budget, teachers training for skills enhancement. During 1992-93, the LUSD worked out an agreement with the County Office of Education to train 39 teachers; for the 1993-94 academic year, additional in-service training has also been planned.

The staff at the LUSD bilingual office is aware of the problems affecting the bilingual program and strives to cope with them; the office is understaffed, however and lacks adequate resources. The poignant criticisms that have been directed in the past at the central office by parents and teachers, has contributed to a pervasive sense of distrust and defensiveness. A more open and constant line of communication may ameliorate these already strained relations.

ESL Program 7-8

Dedicated Teachers

The ESL classes at both LUSD junior high schools are taught by a group of dedicated and enthusiastic teachers. The classroom environment of two teachers in particular was

exceptionally positive: the atmosphere was relaxed, students worked together as well as independently, and classrooms were clean and well-ventilated with bright, culturally oriented wall decorations. The teachers seemed to have high expectations for the students, and the manner in which they covered the material appeared challenging and academically rigorous. Students were interviewed individually and in small groups about whether or not they liked their class and how they felt about their teachers; by and large their responses were consistently positive.

The ESL program has set far-reaching goals for the students it serves. To strengthen the program, four faculty members are to receive training for sheltered-class instruction next spring. This training will enable the school to diversify the courses offered to ESL students, and will allow for the integration/mainstreaming of ESL students. Also, the ESL program will offer four parenting classes next year: two will be taught in English and two in Spanish. The topics covered will be on subjects of interest to the parents, such as gangs, testing, and family literacy.

Challenging Courses

A class entitled "Spanish for Native Speakers" will be offered to Chicano and Latino students at the South Junior High School. The hope is that the class will encourage the two groups to understand one another better, and bridge the gap that has been a source of considerable conflict and tension between them for some time. Writing and reading skills will be targeted through the use of Chicano/Latino culture and literature, providing a space in which students can discuss issues that are relevant and familiar. The class's teachers would like to evolve it into a structure similar to the Chicano Core program at LHS. By developing a program with similar objectives and the opportunity for academic excellence and community cohesion at the junior high school level, it is hoped that students will feel more at ease in making the transition from junior high to high school.

The ESL Program at LHS is geared toward providing individual students with the opportunity to maximize their intellectual potential and achieve personal growth. The program aims to be recognized more as a developmental rather than remedial effort, covering material that is challenging and, most of the time, at grade level. The program emphasizes the importance of socialization, cultural awareness, and academic excellence.

At North Junior High, the ESL program demonstrates flexibility in its classification of students into ESL levels. In addition to standardized exams, which place students into ESL classes, ESL administrators speak with elementary school teachers concerning particular students to better assess their capabilities. Furthermore, the program is sensitive to the individual needs of the students and monitors their first few weeks at the junior high to

determine whether or not they need to be reclassified into a different ESL level. The ESL Reading Back-up component is very successful in engaging students with interesting material from a variety of sources, such as articles from the popular media. The teachers also appear adept at facilitating considerable classroom participation in small- and large-group discussions. During our observations, we saw students with minimal English skills absorbed in tackling engaging and relevant reading material.

At LHS, the ESL department is staffed by dedicated teachers who provide a supportive environment for the students. They reported that teachers are consistently concerned about them when they are not present in class and often call home to inquire about absences. Furthermore, students report that ESL classes are extremely helpful in teaching them English. Here again, teachers use innovative techniques to elicit the interest of their students while teaching them necessary skills.

Sheltered Classes

Both at the junior high and high school levels, there were many examples of teachers who used additional classroom support to enhance sheltered classroom instruction, using audio and video equipment to provide additional linguistic help for ESL students. In some instances overheads were used to help with explanations.

In one science sheltered classroom, the teacher very successfully used a videotape with a matching worksheet to guide the students through the lesson for the day. He would occasionally stop the videotape to highlight a question on the worksheet and have them look for the answer on the following sequence of the videotape. This extra guidance from the teacher, which may not be necessary for a mainstream class, seemed invaluable for the students and kept them engaged in the learning process.

Chicano Core Program 9-12

The new Chicano Core program that focuses on Chicano and Latino literature, history, and other issues seems to be extremely successful in providing an alternative space for Chicano and Latino students to participate actively at LHS. Two first-year Latinas emphasized how the Chicano/Latino program and their teacher encouraged them to believe in their own abilities to succeed. They contrasted this teacher's positive encouragement to the negative and even somewhat hostile attitude that other teachers at the school displayed toward Latino students. Many students speculated that such attitudes contribute to some students dropping out from school.

The Chicano Core classes provide students with an opportunity to speak freely about their fears and apprehensions toward school. We observed students speaking frankly and

openly about issues such as drug use, gangs, and cutting. Discussing such critical issues in an informal setting with a trusted adult seems to be an excellent way to influence student attitudes positively and counter the pressure of peer groups and self-defeating impulses.

The positive reports about the Chicano Core program from the students reinforce the importance of providing role models and a "safe" place for these youth to deal with identity issues. Although several teachers and administrators at LHS voiced opposition to the creation of the Chicano Core on the ground that it would foster greater ethnic segregation, the mentored atmosphere of the program seems to enable students to become more integrated into the school. Hiring more Latino teachers and expanding elements of the program into lower and upper grades would undoubtedly prove beneficial for even more Latino students.

Weaknesses of the Programs

Bilingual Program K-6

Generally, the most notable weakness of the K-6 bilingual program is the absence of an overarching policy guiding bilingual instruction. This has led to confusion as to how best to serve the needs of second-language learners in the district. Specifically, pedagogical questions related to language of instruction and the timing of transitions to English are decided on an individual basis rather than more systematically. As a result, the district has had difficulty in accomplishing its fundamental mission, which, according to its Master Plan, is to ensure that both language-majority and language-minority students master English and Spanish at both the conversational and academic level. A specific summary of the most prominent problems will follow.

Vagueness of the Master Plan

In accordance with the state law that was in effect at the time, LUSD developed a "Master Plan for Services for Limited and Non-English Proficient Students as required by AB507" in 1986-87. Given that the Master Plan is still considered the working document on bilingual education, it is worthwhile to investigate some of its recommendations with regard to the K-6 bilingual program. The Plan's description of the "Basic Bilingual Education Program K-6" is notably vague. Although it makes claims that on the surface seem compatible with bilingual learning theory, the Plan never specifically elaborates how subject matter will actually be taught, as revealed by the following quote:

The Bilingual Program follows the basic curriculum of the Lockwood Unified School District, adapted to meet the special linguistic and cultural needs of LEP students by teaching English as a second language and wherever possible using the students'

native language and culture to implement the curriculum Subjects are taught bilingually, with multicultural content.

The disclaimer "wherever possible" does little to promote a sense of the importance of teaching academic content in a child's primary language. Further, the statement that "subjects are taught bilingually" intimates that, at best, LEP students will receive simultaneous translation of key academic concepts rather than intensive instruction in their primary language. Overall, the essential problem with the description of the Basic Bilingual Program is that it never clearly delineates exactly which model of bilingual education is to be implemented, leaving teachers in a quandary as to which approach they will be expected to use. An obvious consequence of this is the development of an eclectic program lacking cohesiveness and delivering unsatisfactory results.

Identification and Reclassification of LEPs

Another point of concern has to do with the initial identification, and, if necessary, reclassification of students entering the bilingual program. When a language-minority child enters the district, he or she is given an oral English assessment. Students in K-2 who receive a high enough score to be considered fluent on the oral English assessment (IDEA) are classified as FEP, or Full English Proficient. A FEP child, regardless of ethnic identity, is generally placed in an English academic program, even if the child is in a bilingual classroom. This practice contradicts current bilingual research, which indicates that basic interpersonal linguistic skills are far more easily developed than cognitive academic linguistic proficiency (Cummins 1979). In other words, the apparent oral English fluency of a six-year-old does not necessarily imply academic readiness for learning in the English language. Too often, children are identified prematurely as FEP, and this undermines their cognitive academic growth by denying them access to instruction in their primary language. "The significance for policy and practice rests on the fact that educators' failure to take account of this distinction (between conversational and academic language proficiency), e.g., in assessment and placement decisions, adversely affects minority students' chances for academic success" (Cummins 1991, 80). Given that the IDEA is comprised mainly of low-level cognitive questions that only require conversational English to answer correctly, it is possible that such a pattern is developing in the district.

Similar problems occur for LEP students who are reclassified as FEPs prematurely. The Master Plan dictates the need for oral English proficiency and English academic proficiency as indicated by a CTBS score of 38% or better before a student can be reclassified. Once a child is reclassified as FEP she is no longer guaranteed any type of additional support,

such as ESL instruction. It would seem likely that if a child is only performing at the 38th percentile on achievement tests, then she would be likely to experience difficulty in a monolingual classroom without additional academic support. "Often, LEP students become proficient in communication skills within a short time after their arrival in the United States. Sometimes, as a result of their communicative competence, these students are too quickly mainstreamed into the regular classroom where they encounter difficulties understanding and completing schoolwork in the more cognitively demanding language needed for successful performance in academic subjects" (Lewelling 1991). Clearly, then, even if the Basic Bilingual Program were highly effective for LEP students, it may prematurely screen children out who would benefit from continued bilingual instruction.

Further complicating the issue is the fact that an ESL pull-out teacher is the person responsible for administering the oral English assessment to all children, regardless of whether they are in the bilingual program. Since children in the bilingual program are not provided with ESL pull-out instruction, this person is not at all familiar with the children being tested. The ramifications of this are twofold: (1) since the children do not know the person testing them, they are likely to become more nervous, thereby skewing test results; and (2) because the person testing the children does not work with them, she is unfamiliar with their overall academic performance in the classroom setting. Therefore, since the test is performed in isolation and has little to do with the child's school experience, the results may not reflect accurately the child's academic readiness to switch to English. In addition, the classroom teacher is rarely asked to provide information or give suggestions regarding reclassification. This seriously limits the validity of the assessment, since the classroom teacher is the one person most familiar with the child's linguistic competencies in an academic situation.

Limited Resources

All teachers expressed what they regard as a dire need to have more hours of instructional aide or help from tutors. Even though the majority of teachers receive an average of three hours of bilingual assistance daily, some teachers may receive only two or even just one hour. Left on their own most of the time, teachers are often at a loss as to how to instruct all the children effectively or develop a sense of bonding with them, particularly those that need the most help. Both teachers and aides feel more in-service training is needed to know how to address the needs of multicultural and multilingual populations.

Teachers are also aware of the importance of a consolidated thematic curriculum that includes other activities, such as music, physical education, art, library services, and science. Many of the bilingual teachers feel that at times the mainstream teachers assigned

to teach these extracurricular subjects cannot fulfill the needs of the children in the bilingual program. Despite the best intentions, these teachers are typically monolingual English speakers and culturally incompetent in addressing the needs and interests of Spanish-speaking children. In one particular school, the teachers severely criticized the music teacher and librarian for their inability to assist Spanish-speaking children in their academic and linguistic development.

ESL Program 7-8

The primary weakness of the ESL program offered at the two junior high schools is the inability of the teachers to accommodate the diversity of the students enrolled. The ESL program at North Junior High School does not provide two separate classes for ESL Level I students and ESL Level II students. Rather, a combination I/II class is offered. The students come from a variety of countries and thus many different languages are spoken in the classroom, including: Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Thai, Russian, and German. The range of students' English language skills in this class is very broad, as is their academic abilities in their own languages. The problem is further compounded by the fact that the class contains several students who have only just arrived in the States as well as students who have been here 3, 4, 6, up to 10 years. These students possess different social needs related to their adjustment in the United States. In the month of May alone five new students with very limited English language skills were enrolled in the class.

Lacking a strategy for addressing the heterogeneity among their students, teachers attempt to individualize class assignments, but often end up unable to assist students who need help. Unfortunately, students who are at a higher stage with respect to their language skills, are often held back because teachers devote an inordinate amount of time to those with the greatest needs. One teacher we observed at North Junior High School attempted to compensate for this diversity by carefully mixing students into smaller groups; at times placing students of similar ability into groups together, at other times mixing groups so that those with greater skills can help those with less. However, she is but one energetic teacher, and there is only one tutor per class. Without additional resources, there is very little that the ESL teacher at the junior high schools will be able to do to accelerate the achievement of their students.

Sheltered Classes

Sheltered classes are by far some of the most difficult classes to teach. For NEP and LEP students who are still learning the parts of speech and verb tenses, it is quite challenging to read and comprehend text written in English. Although they are regularly tested on their

comprehension of the material via exercises and exams, there is very little evidence that mastery of subject matter is occurring for many students. This has profound implications for the matriculation of language minority students. Although many of these students have strong backgrounds in subject areas such as math, science, and history, the difficulty teachers encounter in providing challenging instruction in sheltered courses results in many students being held back academically. One consequence of this weakness is that many NEP and LEP students are unable to enroll in the more rigorous courses that fulfill the college eligibility requirements of most universities.

As noted earlier, it appears that many of the NEP and LEP students devise ways to get around their limited ability in English to perform academically. Several students are able to obtain decent grades on reading comprehension assignments by looking for key words within a question and then trying to locate those same words in their textbook. While this practice may allow them to fill in the blanks and find the right answer among multiple choice tests, many students miss the opportunity to actually learn and comprehend the subject matter of the course. Excessive reliance by the teachers in sheltered courses on multiple choice tests, and fill-in-the-blank questions, rather than assignments which require critical and analytical thinking, contributes to the low academic achievement of the students.

The problem in sheltered courses is compounded by the practice of assigning new teachers to teach them, most of whom have no training in this area. Though we observed some teachers who seemed committed to providing their students with challenging material and who brought considerable energy and creativity into their classrooms, even these teachers experienced tremendous difficulty. The amount of preparation required to teach these classes, combined with the additional challenges created by the diversity of the students, makes teaching sheltered classes a responsibility that most teachers try desperately to avoid. To make matters worse, many of those who have been teaching sheltered courses request a new assignment once they have acquired enough seniority, taking their skills and experience with them, and burdening yet another new teacher with this enormous task. While many other districts give monetary and other incentives to teachers who teach sheltered courses, LUSD has not included such incentives for their teachers. Thus, some teachers get "stuck" with sheltered courses which does not make for a positive environment of enthusiastic teaching for these especially needy students.

Chicano Core Program 9-12

The only weakness that we observed in the Chicano Core Program is that it is only offered to freshman students. Many upper class students expressed an interest in the Chicano Core

and the course material it offers. Indeed, upper class students are often found "hanging out" in the Chicano Core classroom. The lack of courses pertaining to the history and culture of Chicano and Latino people at Lockwood High School, is the source of considerable resentment among Latino students. While the Chicano Core has helped to reduce feelings of disenfranchisement among students, much more could be done to make the students feel more integral to the school community.

The Chicano Core has only one teacher. She teaches five periods and approximately 150 students which includes the students enrolled in the Chicano Core. She must not only contend with her own students and classes, students expect her to be available to the entire Chicano/Latino school community. This includes serving as the faculty sponsor for groups such as La Raza Unida and Baile Folklorico. The teacher is also called upon to serve on numerous school communities in order to provide and insure that Latino interests are represented on decision making bodies. For a new teacher, these burdens are excessive.

Recommendations

Bilingual Program K-6

In general, the recommendations can be separated into two categories: those that require a philosophical commitment, and those that require a financial one. Philosophical recommendations require greater planning and consensus before implementation, but once a common philosophy is agreed upon the financial recommendations can be implemented given sufficient allocation of resources.

From a philosophical standpoint, the school district must first, either rewrite its Bilingual Master Plan to provide direction for teachers at school sites where the program operates or it must allow each school to set its own goals and academic philosophy. Given that the district seems to be moving toward a more decentralized approach to day-to-day operations and site-based management, it may make sense to pursue the latter. Second, the administrators of the bilingual program must decide how the program will achieve the goals of the academic program for NEP and LEP students.

Teachers, support staff, administrators, and parents at the school sites need to come to a consensus about the goals of the school in general and the bilingual program in particular. Once these goals have been established, support must be provided on a district level to allow for successful implementation of mechanisms to achieve those goals. We commend the staff at Yuma for engaging in an intensive restructuring effort geared toward meeting the specific needs of the student population. By implementing a site-based management approach, a dynamic and enriching environment may result, where all parties participate in determining the best course of action to follow. Given the strengths of

the bilingual classes observed at Yuma, it seems prudent for the school district to aggressively support efforts to decentralize the decision-making process. Given the compelling arguments that have been made by the Yuma bilingual teachers against the CTBS test, the district should consider obtaining a special permit to allow for an exemption from using it, with the proviso that teachers devise an alternative means of evaluating student progress without losing any funding.

In terms of financial commitment, the majority of the recommendations have to do with allocating money to pay for human resources. First, more instructional assistants need to be hired if the bilingual program is going to be at all effective. Currently, there is no consistency in the number of hours of instructional assistance provided to each teacher; time ranges from three hours per day to merely an hour of help twice a week. Last year, one instructional assistant served six teachers. Not only does this understaffing cut down on the sheer amount of time that can be spent in each classroom, but it also compromises the quality of service that the instructional assistant can offer. If that person is responsible for working with six classrooms of children, he or she will not be able to develop strong relationships with each child. In order for an instructional assistant to be truly effective, he or she must get to know each child's personality, academic strengths, and areas where improvement is needed. This is an impossible task for many instructional assistants given the current situation. Furthermore, an instructional assistant who is not in a classroom every day does little to relieve the teaching load of a bilingual teacher. Academic content instruction takes place every day, and currently, that content is supposed to be delivered in two languages. It is very difficult for a teacher to do this effectively on her own. Therefore, it is recommended that all bilingual teachers be provided with full-time instructional assistants.

Second, more financial commitment must be given to professional development of bilingual staff members. Language Development Specialist (LDS) training as well as in-service training in bilingual teaching methodologies must be provided for resource teachers, instructional assistants, tutors, and volunteers. Currently, these people receive no formal instruction regarding how to maximize the learning of language-minority students, nor are they expected to possess any specialized knowledge when they are hired.

Moreover, current regulations in the school district sometimes discourage creative problem solving on the part of individual schools. For example, one school attempted to hire bilingual tutors to assist resource teachers who were not provided with Language Development Specialized (LDS) training . According to an administrator:

Personnel on the district level inhibited the processing of those applications. The rules and regulations of the district often interfere. Everything takes a great deal of time because the central administration has to control it all. It takes at least six weeks (to hire someone), and you lose a lot of people. So the school is looking at other options without having to go through personnel.

A reevaluation of hiring procedures on the part of the district might allow for situations such as these to be resolved in a more efficient manner.

Funding must also be provided for all bilingual staff members not just teachers to attend conferences and workshops regarding relevant educational issues, as teachers are not the only providers of educational services to language-minority children. Furthermore, more time must be set aside for bilingual staff to meet on a regular basis. These meetings would allow for ongoing discussion and evaluation of the academic quality of the bilingual program.

Once a cohesive plan has been developed at the elementary level, the program should be expanded slowly on a yearly basis until it becomes *a comprehensive K-12 program*. This would alleviate the pressure felt by teachers and parents to transition children as quickly as possible into English in order to prepare them for English-only classes at the junior high and high school levels. In addition, since Spanish-speaking children enter the bilingual program at all grade levels, it is naive to assume that an elementary bilingual program is sufficient. An extended bilingual program would allow children to develop their cognitive abilities fully while learning English at a realistic pace. This would help the district to come closer to its goal of academic achievement for second-language learners.

Ultimately, the goal of all our recommendations is to change the focus of the bilingual program from a subtractive remedial model to an additive, enrichment one. Most teachers agree that a dual immersion program, if properly implemented, would be the best route to cognitive and linguistic achievement for all students. Given the time needed to develop cognitive and academic skills in a primary language, it is highly probable that academic achievement for Spanish-speaking students would be greatly enhanced by such an initiative. Enrichment programs such as GATE and advanced placement (AP) courses offered in Spanish would also encourage academic success among Spanish speakers. In addition, their ultimate attainment of English-language abilities would be much more advanced by virtue of their thoroughly developed Spanish-language abilities. Likewise, English speakers would also exit the program as fully bilingual and biliterate students and might also experience cognitive gains by virtue of their intensive exposure to a second language. In order for this benefit to result, though, English speakers must be admitted to

the program in kindergarten or first grade, and their parents must be committed to keeping their children in the program through the elementary levels. This sort of restructuring to a dual immersion program would require an enormous commitment, both philosophical and financial, on the part of the district. If adopted, the plan must proceed slowly, carefully, and with constant input from school staff as well as community members.

General Recommendations 7-12

To improve the quality of educational services provided to Latino secondary students in LUSD, the following steps should be taken:

Parent Training: Very few Latino parents are involved in the PTA at any of the secondary schools. Greater outreach to these parents should be made, and translation from Spanish to English should be provided for those who require it. Notices for all meetings should be translated into Spanish as well.

Parents should be encouraged to become more involved with their children's education, and they should receive training on how to be most supportive. This should include a focus on study skills, as well as information about applying to college and financial aid. Parental training should also include a focus on how parents can become effective advocates for their children, and should include information on how to access the educational system for information and services.

Designated Resource Person: aside from busy counselors, students need to have access to an adult who can provide information about jobs, college, financial aid, social services, etc. This person could also serve as a liaison between the Latino community and the school. Two individuals at Lockwood High School provide these kinds of services already, however, as is true in most cases, none of these personnel are Latino. Given the special needs of the Latino student population, a resource person of this kind, even if not specifically designated as a resource person for Latino students, could provide an important link between the students and the school.

Data Base: The school district needs to establish a data base wherein information and statistics concerning such matters such as student drop-out rates, D and F rates, and C- BEDS information can be easily and readily accessed and cross-referenced by more than a select few. Without this kind of information the district has no ways of evaluating the services provided to students. While a lack of resources may make it difficult for the district to designate an individual to take responsibility for research and data collection, it may be possible to make slight modifications to the data collection processes employed in student

registration and transcript release procedures, to compile and access useful information more easily.

ESL Program 7-8

To the extent possible, ESL students should be placed in classes which are appropriate for their ability level. The diversity of English language proficiency levels should be limited within classrooms to make teaching more manageable. While the relatively small number of students in the ESL program will limit the ability of the district to address student needs, additional resources should be provided to improve teacher training and to make tutors available.

Sheltered Classes

Mandatory training for teachers who teach sheltered courses will enhance teaching ability and help the students' learning experience within these classrooms.

Monetary and other types of incentives for teachers who teach sheltered courses are more likely to attract experienced and enthusiastic teachers to teach sheltered courses.

Chicano Core Program 9-12

Support for the Chicano Core program should be extended such that ultimately a Chicano/Latino Studies Department can be established. A Chicano and Latino department would encourage a coherent center in which students and faculty alike could pursue Chicano and Latino issues in a well supported, focused environment. Such a department could include:

1. A greater number of Chicano and Latino course offerings.
2. More Chicano and Latino teachers who can act as role models and active advocates for the students. Teachers will be appropriately trained in the issues concerning the community. Particularly in Chicano and Latino History, Literature, and Politics.
3. The opportunity for teachers to participate in departmental meetings in which they can share their resources and discuss pertinent concerns regarding their classes and their students.
4. A focal point which will allow the Chicano and Latino students, their parents, and the general community to actively participate and openly communicate thus engendering productive cooperation.
5. A place through which funds can be specifically channeled to provide special programs and services for students such as job listings.

Issues for Further Research

Although the research team spent over four months investigating the issues influencing the academic performance of Latino students in the Lockwood Unified School District, this study, nevertheless, does not answer many questions because of the constraints on time and resources. Therefore, we would recommend that further research be done on the following issues to extend our understanding of the Chicano/Latino experience in the LUSD.

Description of Population

This study generally refers to the Chicano/Latino population overall, without identifying socio-economic status, national origins, or gender differences within the group. This information is hard to come by and requires more extensive research. The distinctions are important to note because the students often highlight these differences in identifying themselves. Data from a more detailed description of the student population would be invaluable in informing the future creation of ESL and Chicano Core classes. In order to meet the diverse needs of the students who are classified under the designation of "Chicano/Latino," an accurate assessment must be made of who these students are and how their needs vary.

Post-High School Experience

Some students at LHS expressed feelings ranging from apathy to disdain for the process and purpose of schooling. Other students in college-oriented classes appeared motivated at LHS and expressed strong interest in going on to college. This difference suggests a disparity in post-graduation experience for Latino students that merits a follow-up investigation of Chicano/Latino students after high school. For those in college, it is important to discern whether the LUSD experience prepared them for their college experience. It would also be important to find out how many students actually go on to college, what colleges they attend, how many graduate, and so on. The noncollege-attending Chicano/ Latino alumni from LHS should also be studied to determine how their experience at LHS has affected their life prospects. Given that many of the student records are unavailable, a comprehensive survey of alumni will not be feasible. Therefore, we suggest that a longitudinal study be undertaken based on in-depth interviews with a select group of LHS graduates whose lives and careers could be followed for a period of five to ten years.

Tracking at LHS

While no administrator will admit that a formal tracking systems at LHS exists, administrators, teachers, and students are all aware of the tremendous differential in quality and subject matter among classes offered at the school. The separation of students that occurs as a result of the informal tracking system contributes to the isolation and estrangement of Latinos on the campus. Many of the Chicano/Latino students appear to fall into what is considered the lower-level and often noncollege-oriented tracks at LHS. Further research needs to be conducted to pinpoint the effects of this "informal tracking system" and devise alternatives to the existing structure.

VII. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Attempts to explain the connection between ethnicity and student performance will no doubt continue in the foreseeable future. The persistence of the problem is too pervasive and the consequences of school failure too severe for the issue to simply fade away. The debate is made all the more controversial because, historically, correlations of this kind have been used as evidence to support racist notions of racial inferiority, or more recently, to justify policies of benign neglect for segments of the population whose fate seems impervious to social reform.

Despite the fact that large portions of the American public are dissatisfied with the quality of education available to their children, faith in the promise and potential for education to solve individual and collective dilemmas continues. Education, particularly public education, remains as one of the only avenues through which upward mobility can be obtained for those of low social status; it is also one of the only means by which future workers can be prepared for a changing economy and future citizens informed about the perils which confront our environment, health, and moral well-being. Education stands as one of the few universal totems in a society increasingly characterized by polarization, fragmentation, and diversity. As such, the question of why educational institutions fail in meeting the needs of certain subordinate groups in American society will persist.

For Latinos, such issues are particularly pertinent. The youthfulness of the population,²¹ its lack of skills and financial resources, its relative marginality in political affairs, and the growing perception that its growth through immigration constitutes a threat

²¹ The median age for the United States population is 32.2 years; for Hispanic Americans, 25.5 years. Of the Latino population in the United States, 42.2% are below the age of 20, compared to only 31.2% of the United States population generally. See the Hispanic Almanac 1990, 2.

to the "American way of life,"²² suggest that large numbers of Latinos could easily become permanently locked into America's "underclass," serving as a reserve army of unskilled labor for the United States economy. Understanding the factors that hinder the academic achievement of Latino students is more than an interesting theoretical undertaking. As one of the few services available to all individuals whether or not they are citizens of the United States, education may be one of the only means available to prevent the formation of a castelike social category into which most Latinos are permanently bound.

If education's promise is to be realized for more than just a privileged few, strategies for reversing the dismal trends associated with Latino student performance must be implemented immediately. Doing this requires more than adherence to the right prescription for change. In this study we have tried to show that even a preponderance of well-intentioned, concerned adults can ultimately fail to serve adequately the needs of Latino students when those needs are not fully understood and administrative ineptness leaves those responsible for teaching the students without adequate support or direction. Studies of this kind, which point out what is going wrong and where corrective action is needed, can be helpful only where the political will exists to act upon the recommendations. The problems are complex but really are not that difficult to address if and when there is a commitment to do so.

The relative success of the Chicano Core program at Lockwood High School shows firstly, that it is possible to affirm the cultural identities of students, thereby improving their attitudes toward school and reducing their sense of alienation. Secondly, the focal point for change lies first and foremost with the institution, which can find ways to become more responsive, supportive, and hospitable to Latino students, rather than placing the onus for change on the students, their families, or some amorphous notion of their "culture." This is not to say that students, parents, and the Latino community do not bear responsibility for seeing to it that students receive the necessary support to succeed in school. That fact is as true for Latinos as it is for any other ethnic or social group. What is different for Latinos is the fact that schools, like the society they reflect, are often hostile or at best indifferent to the needs and aspirations of Latinos and other minority groups that have historically been victims of discrimination.

²² The Latino population's growth through illegal immigration to the United States has become a major political issue in recent times. More so than for other groups, Latinos crossing the Mexican border to enter the United States have become the target of a number of punitive policies aimed at curtailing their entry to the country and at limiting access to jobs and services for those who have already entered. For an analysis of the policies and laws that have recently been enacted to limit illegal immigration to the United States, see "Myths and Facts: Immigration and the United States" Coalition for Immigrant and Refugee Rights and Services, 1993. (San Francisco, Calif.)

To counter the effects of discriminatory practices and beliefs, more is needed than a mere pledge of nondiscrimination. Schools must consciously seek ways to ensure that practices such as tracking are not stifling the educational aspirations of Latino students. Bilingual programs must be devised, which treat fluency in Spanish as an intellectual asset and not a deficit. Access to counselors and teachers who will furnish students with information about college and financing for higher education must be provided. And adult Latinos must be recruited and hired to serve as role models and whose very presence evidences the possibility of professional success through education.

There is no magic needed to solve the educational problems confronting Latinos. By and large the students and their parents believe in themselves; they want a better life, better jobs, and a fulfilling future. Schools can help in making these goals attainable, not through charity but through genuine concern demonstrated by policies and programs and human compassion. Schools can make a difference if those with the power and responsibility are willing to let it happen.

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