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*SUPPORTING FULL BILINGUALISM AMONG THE CHILDREN OF
IMMIGRANTS: IMPLICATIONS FOR JUSTICE AND SPIRITUALITY*
BY NICHOLAS BLOCK

Abstract

Children born to immigrants in the United States typically speak their parents' home language, but full bilingualism is not always the case, especially as children move into their teen years and become English dominant. Full bilingualism, however, seems to offer many benefits—cognitive, academic, economic, and advantages related to resiliency. Additionally, from a spiritual standpoint, full bilingualism seems advantageous due to the requisite that children be fully able to communicate as well as think deeply in the language of their parents if parents are to fulfill their biblical obligations of instructing their children spiritually. In this paper, the possible spiritual outcomes of full bilingualism were theorized based on the results of questionnaires completed by children and their parents in two-way Spanish dual language programs versus mainstream programs. From a justice perspective, the multiple advantages of full bilingualism pointed clearly to the need to support immigrant families by providing programs that promote thorough bilingual language development for their children.

Keywords: bilingualism, education, child rearing, justice, Spanish, immigrants, second generation

Author Note

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Immigrant parents in the United States often do not have the opportunity to learn to speak English with complete fluency, which can make meaningful conversation with their typically English-dominant children quite difficult. Although many people assume that second generation children, that is, the children of immigrant parents, speak their parents' language fluently, this is not always the case. Second generation children almost always have the necessary home language skills to communicate basic day-to-day concerns to their parents, but at least in the United States, they often become English-dominant by the time they are in intermediate school (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001), with little further home language development. In the third generation home language loss only accelerates: Only 42% of third generation Spanish speakers have been found to be minimally proficient in their parents' language (Zsembik & Llanes, 1996), and an even a smaller percentage (17%) have been found to be fluent (Rumbaut, Massey, & Bean, 2006).

Full bilingualism is not always a priority for families when choosing an academic program for their children in the United States, and where there are options to choose dual language versus monolingual English programs, parents often choose monolingual programs out of concern that their children develop strong English skills (Block, 2007). Other parents, though, would indeed like their children to fully develop their home language skills (Block, 2007). Without entering into debate on the academic and other social merits of dual language or bilingual programs, the aim in the present article is to discuss why immigrant parents have good reasons to seek to support the full bilingualism of their children, with implications for both the well being and spirituality of the family. To do so, this article will examine both quantitative and qualitative evidence from an empirical study on dual language versus mainstream programs among predominantly Latino students, most of whom were second generation students who began school as English learners.

In this article, "full bilingualism" refers to the ability to speak a language with the fluency necessary to communicate on most topics with adults, and to read and write at a level commensurate with peers in countries where the language is the home language. A fully bilingual individual in this sense could live in his or her family's country of origin and be able to integrate linguistically into daily society, whether at school or in the marketplace. Note that this does not require the elimination of all language accents.

The children of immigrants, often called second generation children, are largely classified as English learners when they enter school in the United States, and up to 80% in some places do not reclassify as English proficient by the time they reach the middle school years (Calderon, Slavin, & Sanchez, 2011). Therefore, in this article, the concern for the language development of second generation immigrant children is synonymous with a concern for students who enter school as English learners, and the terms will occasionally be used interchangeably. The focus here will then be on the children of immigrants/English learners who speak Spanish in their

homes, as this constitutes by far the greatest number of students in this category, near 80% at a national level, with no other language groups (Vietnamese, Filipino, Cantonese, and Hmong being among the largest) constituting more than 3% of the total (Calderon et al., 2011). In approaching the factors that related to issues of justice and spirituality for these students, it is helpful first of all to understand the academic options available to these students in many locations.

Kinds of Bilingual Programs

Bilingual programs in the United States tend to be either subtractive or additive. Subtractive programs, which teach bilingualism in the early years as a kind of bridge to English, have been found to be deficient for the purposes of achieving full bilingualism (TABE, 2006), and they have many other disadvantages as well (Valenzuela, 1999). Additive programs, also termed developmental bilingual programs, which seek to develop both a child's first and second language skills indefinitely, have been shown to have a more positive effect on children's home language development and also on their progress in English (Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002).

Two-way dual language programs, such as the study whose results will be shared in this article, are a kind of developmental, additive program. One kind of two-way dual language program is a 90:10 dual language program, where all students -- a mix of initial ELs and mainstream students -- receive instruction in Spanish 90% of the time in kindergarten, with only 10% of instruction in English. As students progress toward sixth grade the amount of time students are in English increase until half the coursework was in English and half in the target language. Immersion programs such as these that provide a greater proportion of time in the target language, rather than parity from the beginning in the two languages (which would be the case with 50:50 programs) provide a stronger foundation for full bilingualism.

A more common kind of bilingual program, called a transitional bilingual program, offers primary language support for just the first several years of schooling. It has some value in easing initially Spanish speaking students into English, but as a subtractive program that does not aim for full bilingualism, it lacks many of the advantages of two-way immersion programs (TABE, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 1997, 2002).

Full Bilingualism and Justice: A Biblical Perspective Regarding Benefits

Because concerns for justice and compassion are central to a biblical worldview, whenever possible it is important to provide what is needed for children of immigrants and their families, who often suffer great needs both before and after immigrating. If it is clear that full bilingualism offers a series of advantages and that school districts can provide this kind of language development without great cost or disruptions to other programs, the provision of that service truly becomes an issue of care and kindness – and even of justice. As stated in

James 4:17 states, “Anyone who knows what he ought to do and doesn’t do it sins (NIV).” It becomes a societal sin of omission, then, when research shows that certain educational approaches are beneficial, and yet they are not provided. In addition to what the research says, it simply makes sense that supporting students’ ability to speak multiple languages would be an important service to them, as specified in the *California World Language Content Standards for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*.

There are other approaches that one can take when considering a biblical perspective on meeting the needs of immigrant families. For example, the Old Testament contains frequent exhortations to act compassionately toward foreigners (Lev. 19:34, Dt. 10:19); indeed providing opportunities for Spanish-speaking children of immigrants to gain the advantages described above demonstrates compassion for them and their families. In addition, these programs, which reach out and involve families in their home language, provide a compassionate “soft landing” for immigrants so that they and their children can more easily integrate into schools.

Cognitive Benefits for Students

One issue to clarify is the misconception, common for many years, that knowing a non-English language inhibits the development of intelligence and as a result, academic performance. The research carried out by Peal and Lambert (1962) marked the beginning of a long path to dispel that misconception. Working in the context of language concerns in Canada, these researchers found that, contrary to the dominant view at the time but still not eliminated today, bilingual individuals outperformed monolinguals on both verbal and non-verbal measures of intelligence. The (erroneous) idea that the human brain has only a limited amount of space for language development and that such space must be reserved for the mainstream language simply has never been demonstrated to be true, and in fact, common experience is that learning one language facilitates the learning of subsequent languages.

Cummins (1981), a major theorist and researcher regarding second language development, theorized that continued development of the primary language up through advanced academic levels allows students to reach the threshold necessary for students to attain the cognitive associated with bilingualism. These cognitive benefits have not been proven to offer advantages in general cognitive domains (such as intelligence), but evidence is much stronger for advantages in specific domains such as metacognition, and especially for tasks that require mental flexibility and creativity (Ricciardelli, 1993). Some of these cognitive advantages, including ones that entail increased attention and focus, and ignoring of misleading information (Bialystok, 2005), are relevant to the development of mathematical concepts. Ensuring that students receive the cognitive benefits of bilingualism, then, is one important reason for primary language instruction in schools to progress past basic literacy skills.

Academic Benefits

The academic advantages of full bilingualism, an extension of the cognitive ones just mentioned, have been discussed since the Civil Rights era of the 1960s, but only until recent decades have these been firmly established in the research literature. Four major research reviews, several using meta-analytical techniques, including those of Willig (1985), Ramirez (1992), Rolstad, Mahoney, & Glass (2005), and Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian (2006), as well as the Thomas and Collier (1997, 2002) longitudinal studies, have demonstrated that programs that provide extended development of the primary language result in the greatest academic achievement for ELs *in English*. The National Literacy Panel Report (August & Shanahan, 2006) also clearly supported primary language reading instruction for academic achievement in English, without going so far as stating that longer periods of primary language study are increasingly beneficial.

Several studies have discussed the benefit of primary language instruction in terms of effect sizes. Goldenberg (2008), in a helpful primer to the August and Shanahan document (2006), described the effect size of primary language development in bilingual programs to be between .35 to .4, translating to about 12 to 15 points on standardized tests after two to three years of primary language instruction, an effect that he described as “not huge, but it’s not trivial either” (p. 16). Bernhardt (2003) spoke of “profound support” that the primary language offers second language literacy, mentioning a contribution of 20% (with the only other contributing factor known to be knowledge of the second language, at 30%). Almost all of these researchers provided the caveat that students need from four to seven years to fully experience native-levels of literacy in English. Lindholm-Leary (2001), and more recently, Lindholm-Leary and Block (2010), have established that initial English learners in specifically two-way dual language programs perform better than their peers in mainstream English programs.

One study, that of Rosell and Baker (1996), countered earlier research findings on the advantages of primary language literacy instruction, but the methodology and conclusion of that study have been challenged (Greene, 1997). In any case, Rosell and Baker’s main concern was the rapid development of English reading ability (which they persuasively affirmed can occur more effectively in English immersion settings), and what they perceived to have been unfounded claims by overenthusiastic proponents of bilingual education. Nonetheless, they recognized the potential beneficial long-term social outcomes of full bilingualism.

Benefits Related to Resiliency

One kind of benefit that is often overlooked is that which contributes to a young person’s resiliency. Werner and Smith (1992) defined resiliency as a characteristic of children and youth that allows them to develop in a healthy manner despite difficult circumstances. Rather than being the trait of a few exceptional human beings, it is something that all children can develop

if their deepest needs are met (Benard, 2004). Children develop resiliency when they experience relationships of caring and connection with adults, when they are surrounded by high expectations (mediated through inter-generational guidance), and when they have opportunities to participate actively and contribute in their social contexts (Bernard, 2004). It seems to be a great concern, then, that Benson (1997) found that only a small number of non-white youth sustain inter-generational relationships. One can but wonder, based on data presented earlier in this paper, if those of Latino background in particular are limited due to language constraints.

The perceived benefit of full bilingualism for the development of intergenerational relationships was noted earlier in this article (Block, 2012). Significantly, Benard (2004) found that children with stronger home language skills have higher resiliency. While Benard did not specify the mechanism through which primary language skills provide resiliency, it seems reasonable that skills of full bilingualism would enable a student to experience other factors that contribute to resiliency, such as having access to experiencing caring and loving relationships with adults who often are not proficient in the mainstream language, as well as having greater opportunities to contribute to their social context that students who do not have these language skills cannot enjoy. Moreover, it would seem that full bilingualism would facilitate the development of other characteristics, often considered in the category of “cultural competence,” understood here as the ability of a person to move between dominant and non-dominant cultures. Such competence, which by its very nature must depend on highly developed bilingualism, has been associated with school success and even lowered substance abuse among youth (Delpit, 1995; Eccles & Gootman, 2002; Gandara, 1995; Oetting, 1993).

Economic Benefits

When Spanish-speaking immigrant parents were asked why they chose dual language programs over mainstream English ones, they often referred to the economic benefit of full bilingualism (Block, 2007). Of course, parental intention does not necessarily translate to fact in their child’s lives, but it seems self-evident in this case that speaking, reading, and writing a language at advanced levels can only offer increased opportunities to generate income and share with the family. Caution is in order, however, as research has not yet clearly shown this benefit to be true. Fry and Lowell (2003), using data from the 1992 National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), analyzed the impact of bilingualism on wages and actually found no statistically significant advantages when holding the variable of education level constant. (Bilinguals indeed had higher educational levels.) This finding, although only a single study using relatively old data and focusing on immigrants rather than second generation bilinguals, precludes assigning undue importance to any possible economic advantage. It is worth noting that Fry and Lowell’s (2003) analysis seems to have attributed some advantage to a higher level of bilingualism; moreover, the authors did not address the fact that bilinguals in any case achieve higher wages,

but in the case of the NALS data, only through the mechanism of higher educational attainment. Perhaps educational attainment itself was an artifact of the cognitive and academic advantages of bilingualism discussed earlier.

Agirdag (2013), the only other investigator to analyze large databases to evaluate the possibility of economic advantages of bilingualism, found quite different results from those of Fry and Lowell (2003) on the issue of possible economic benefits of bilingualism. Looking at more recent information from different databases, and focusing on second rather than first generation immigrants, this researcher found statistically significant advantages for full (what they call balanced) bilinguals, even when holding educational attainment constant in the case of one of the data sets. This investigator clarified that there was both a direct economic advantage of bilingualism (or cost of assimilation, from a different point of view) as well as an indirect one that works through academic achievement. The economic effect is in the range of \$2100-\$3300 annually. One limitation in this study, though, was that the databases that this researcher used offered information for early career only – through age 24. Obviously more studies in this area of economic benefits could provide corroborating evidence.

Advantages for Initially English-Proficient Students

It should be noted that although this article has focused on the advantages of full bilingualism in the case of the initially Spanish-speaking children of immigrants to the U.S., almost all of the advantages discussed in this section would apply equally to initially English-speaking children. These students typically have English-speaking parents and thus do not face some of the obstacles that children of immigrants who become weak in their parents language face. Nevertheless, the research has shown that they accrue advantages that are not insignificant, such as positive affect toward other students, including those different from themselves (Cazabon, Lambert, & Hall, 1993; Cazabon, Nicoladis, & Lambert, 1998), and biculturalism (Lindholm-Leary, 2001). In the case of initially English-speaking Latino students in particular, more recent research has demonstrated advantages as more positive attitudes toward Spanish-speaking extended family members, in addition to gains in some measures of biculturalism (Block, 2012). From a justice perspective, then, dual language programs provide more ideally for the needs of these students who, similar to their initially Spanish-speaking peers, have traditionally not fared as well as white students in school (Llagas & Snyder, 2003).

Legal Perspectives, Varied Ethical Approaches, and Bilingualism

Every legal requirement does not imply moral concerns, but parallel with *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), which banned “separate but equal” academic arrangements for African-American students, *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) – the equivalent legal precedent for English learners – certainly did provide a moral mandate (Gandara, Moran, & Garcia, 2004). This latter decision of the Supreme Court, one in which the justices similarly agreed without a single dissenter,

banned the “sink or swim” approach for the English learners. The Lau decision did not require bilingual education, but it did require that action be taken on the part of English learners to provide them with full access to the curriculum. Bilingual education was indeed provided in many places, but typically it was a subtractive transitional bilingual education that did not support full bilingualism. In *Castañeda v. Pickard* (1981), the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals determined that policy for English learners must be based on sound theory, include adequate training for teachers, and include program quality evaluation. Despite these laws, there has been great resistance to providing services based on sound and consistent empirical research support (Gandara et al., 2004; Crawford, 2004). One must wonder whether this is nothing less than a moral failure on the part of the U.S. educational system.

There are different ethical approaches to clarify the moral foundation for doing what is best for the children of immigrants and their families. A virtue ethic approach would consider that the human virtue of humility, defined by Roberts (2007) as a perception of all other human beings as one’s equal, guide our collective actions toward seeking the good of our immigrant neighbors. Certainly the virtue of compassion, defined by Roberts as “the construal of a suffering or deficient person as a cherished fellow” (p. 179), would also guide us in a similar direction. Alternatively, deontological ethics, particularly within a theistic perspective, remind us that our service to immigrant families is not just an expression of our virtues but rather emerges from our obligation to these families – one rooted firmly in divine commands. A deontological approach that takes divine commands seriously has the advantage of giving obligations a personal character to a greater degree (with our service not just to other humans but to God himself) and can have a transformational impact on our lives (Evans, 2013). Finally, an approach to this matter based on Natural Law Ethics would underscore “the goods” associated with supporting growth of bilingualism – especially the good of fostering human relationships and community (Murphy, 2001).

Spiritual Implications of Questionnaire Data on Dual Language Programs

The following discussion is based on a study that investigated 92 initial English learners (grades five through seven) and their parents in three schools with both dual language and mainstream programs (Block, 2012). The study did not examine issues of spirituality per se, but implications for spirituality – especially in the context of family relationships – were extrapolated based on the data from the study.

In the study, the three schools studied were located in two different school districts of southern California, and the initial English learners (ELs) were distributed almost evenly between the two programs. These students are referred to here as “initial English learners” because all began school as English learners, but teachers had reclassified many as English proficient by grades five to seven. The study also included initially English proficient and initial

English only students.

After questionnaires were gathered from both parents and children and studied via statistical analysis using SPSS 15, the researcher found that parents of students in dual language classes, where the students had received consistent instruction in their parents language, indicated that their children since their first years of schooling had grown closer to Spanish speaking relatives (presumably including the parents themselves) at a statistically significant level ($p=0.47$) when compared to the responses of parents in mainstream English classes. This was in answer to the question, ““Since starting elementary school, how much closer has your child grown in his/her relationships with relatives who speak mostly Spanish?”” scored on a scale from 1 to 4. Additionally, the students themselves in dual language programs expressed more positive attitudes toward their Spanish-speaking relatives than the students in mainstream programs, also at statistically significant levels ($p=0.03$). This was in answer to the question, “Do you like to speak with relatives if you have to speak mostly in Spanish?” (Block, 2012).

Although this piece focuses on initially Spanish-dominant children of immigrants, the same study also included an analysis of initially English-dominant Latino students who served as English role models in the dual language programs. A comparison of the responses of initially parents of English-proficient students in dual programs with those of parents of initially English-proficient students in mainstream English programs showed an even a starker contrast than in the case of the parents of the initial Spanish speakers, with the students in the dual programs apparently much more interested in relating with their Spanish-speaking relatives ($p \leq 01$). The initially English-proficient students themselves also showed much more openness to speaking with Spanish-speaking relatives. The results of the study for both initially Spanish and English speaking students have been further discussed elsewhere in greater detail (Block, 2012).

In a different facet of the same study, parents were asked via a questionnaire to describe “an example or two of ways that your child’s educational program (two-way dual language or regular) has benefited your child” (Block, 2012). One of the most common theme among responses of dual language students -- second only to the development of full bilingualism -- was that children in these programs were better able to communicate with Spanish-speaking family members. On the other hand, parents of ELs in mainstream English programs mentioned only the advantages of learning English (Block, 2012).

The concern among parents in the mainstream parents that their children learn English (presumably instead of Spanish), as it turns out, seemed unfounded. As will be discussed below, additional research, both as part of this study and elsewhere, has found rather counter-intuitively that the students who have cultivated their Spanish in the dual language programs performed better on tests in English than their peers in mainstream English classes (Lindholm-Leary & Block, 2010). In the meantime some of the ELs in all English began to lose their

Spanish fluency. Parents of ELs in dual language programs expressed sentiments such as this:

Mi esposo y yo hablamos español y mis hijos más inglés. Cuando los inscribí para este programa supe que los beneficiaría. Ahora compartimos y disfrutamos muchos momentos felices porque ellos entienden más español.

My husband and I speak Spanish and my children more English. When I registered them in this program I found out that it would benefit them. Now we share and enjoy many happy moments because they understand more Spanish. (Block, 2007, p. 131)

On the other hand, a parent of an initial EL student in all English stated the following (similarly to several other responses) in answer to the question, “Describe any ways that your child’s educational program has affected his/her relationships with others in the family grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc.”:

No puede comunicarse mucho con la familia porque no habla mucho español. El habla más inglés que español porque todos los años de escuela los ha hecho en inglés.

He can’t communicate much with the family because he does not speak much Spanish. He speaks more English than Spanish because he has done every year of school in English. (Block, 2007, p. 131).

Some Implications for Spirituality in Immigrant Families

Most family communication is not necessarily deep and spiritual in nature, but at least in Jewish or Christian contexts there is a biblical mandate for it to be so. Such deep and meaningful communication requires that children – and especially adolescents – need to be able to speak and understand the language that their parents speak at an advanced level. One passage in the Hebrew Scriptures in particular, Dt 6:6-7, exhorts parents to speak to children about topics other than mere transitory concerns: “These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up” (New International Version). This commandment, given in the context of the mandate to love God with all of one’s heart, soul, and strength (Deuteronomy 6:5), instructed the Hebrews -- presumably as the first step in loving their God -- to make all of God’s commandments part of their own lives and part of the lives of their children through the medium of conversation. A superficial reading of this passage might seem to indicate that one could fulfill the command by speaking on four different occasions with one’s children, but the Hebrew grammatical structure implies speaking at every place within and outside of the home, and at every time between morning and evening. In other words, it means that a parent is to speak about God’s commands everywhere and all of the time. While trying to apply this rigidly is not necessarily good hermeneutics, this passage certainly requires parent and child to have a solid foundation

in the same language; to speak about God’s commands in a way that will impress them on children requires that children share in a deep understanding of the language.

The New Testament equivalent of this ancient mandate concerning the spiritual aspect of child rearing is to “bring them up in the nurture and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4). Engaged conversation here is certainly implied, as nurturing instruction would seem to be that which contains “give and take.” If Jesus’ relationship with his disciples is at all a model of such instruction, the use of metaphors and references to ancient texts is part of this process. Again, this level of communication assumes that children have a thorough command of their parents’ language. The disciples often misunderstood their Lord even when speaking the same language as one adult to another. Programs such as dual language programs that support deep language growth -- in addition to the advantages that will be outlined below – make possible the kind of communication that is required for parents to fulfill their spiritual role in child rearing, and for children to share deeply with their non-English dominant parents.

There is an additional spiritual perspective that is important to consider here. Over 2400 years ago the prophet Malachi announced that a subsequent prophet, who we now know to have been John the Baptist, would come to “turn the hearts of the fathers to their children and the hearts of the children to their fathers” (Mal 4:6). It seems clear that such “heart turning” assumes that parents and their children speak a common language well enough to engage in deep and meaningful conversation. In light of this, the educational endeavor of providing full bilingualism becomes all the more important although “heart turning,” of course, is something that only God can do.

Spirituality and Cognitive Development

The approach in this article thus far has been on the implications of bilingualism within a context where biblical principles and knowledge are prioritized. It should be noted that theorists who are concerned with cognitive and spiritual development have designed models that when compared demonstrate the relationship between these two domains. Love (2002), who compared these different models concluded regarding cognitive and spiritual development, that “it is hard to imagine a situation where they would be significantly divergent in an individual” (p. 369) . Due to the fact that there is evidence that bilingualism is associated with cognitive advantages (Bialystok, 2005), one could see that bilingualism, through the medium of cognitive development, supports spiritual development in a way that those who do not necessarily recognize a biblical perspective can accept.

Conclusion

The benefits of full bilingualism, including cognitive and academic advantages as well as those related to resiliency, and possibly even economic and spiritual advantages, together create a moral imperative to provide second generation students, who come to school with

both English and a non-English language in formation, with opportunities to develop full bilingualism. Evidence for these advantages is substantial, although in the case of spiritual advantages, little research has been done and the data examined in this study do not provide direct evidence that such bilingualism among children and adolescents in itself contributes to their spiritual growth. However, for parents to fulfill their biblical mandate of impressing God's word on their children's hearts, for them to be able to bring their children up in the "nurture and instruction of the Lord," and for them to be able to interact with their children as Jesus did with his disciples, parents need the foundation of strong language skills for their children in the language that they have common with them. Due to the fact that many adult immigrants do not have the possibility of developing their English fully—while their children are becoming English dominant (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Rumbaut, Massey, & Bean, 2006; Zsembik & LLanes, 1996)—it would seem that Christian institutions should be supportive of public schools' efforts to provide dual language programs and should encourage parents to allow their children to enroll in them whenever possible.

In the case of spiritual advantages, this paper discussed the implications for spiritual instruction in immigrant families of a study done specifically on dual language students versus mainstream students in Latino dominant schools where Spanish was the target language alongside English (Block, 2012). Although much less common, there are two-way immersion schools in many other languages in the U.S. (CAL, 2016); there is no reason why the issues discussed in the paper would not generalize to other language communities. Studying the family dynamics of children in those programs utilizing non-Spanish target languages, however, would help confirm the inferences made in this study about the spiritual advantages of full bilingualism.

Further studies, especially qualitative in nature, examining the lives of immigrant Christian Latino families and focusing especially on young adolescents as they become English dominant, would help researchers and anyone interested in spiritual development to understand the way that interactions between adult immigrants and their U.S.-born children actually occur. Such studies could possibly corroborate the theory suggested in this paper that predicts that older children and adolescents who are truly fluent in their parents' language have more robust interactions around the Scriptures with their parents than do students who speak their parents' language less fluently.

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