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001. letter	To Ron K. Unz from Jaime A. Escalante (partial) (1 page)	10/10/97	P6/b(6)

COLLECTION:

Clinton Presidential Records
Domestic Policy Council
Michael Cohen (Subject Files)
OA/Box Number: 13362

FOLDER TITLE:

California [Ron K.] Unz Initiative - Bilingual Education [4]

2012-0160-S

ry1206

RESTRICTION CODES

Presidential Records Act - [44 U.S.C. 2204(a)]

Freedom of Information Act - [5 U.S.C. 552(b)]

- P1 National Security Classified Information [(a)(1) of the PRA]
- P2 Relating to the appointment to Federal office [(a)(2) of the PRA]
- P3 Release would violate a Federal statute [(a)(3) of the PRA]
- P4 Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential commercial or financial information [(a)(4) of the PRA]
- P5 Release would disclose confidential advice between the President and his advisors, or between such advisors [(a)(5) of the PRA]
- P6 Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(a)(6) of the PRA]

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PRM. Personal record misfile defined in accordance with 44 U.S.C. 2201(3).

RR. Document will be reviewed upon request.

- b(1) National security classified information [(b)(1) of the FOIA]
- b(2) Release would disclose internal personnel rules and practices of an agency [(b)(2) of the FOIA]
- b(3) Release would violate a Federal statute [(b)(3) of the FOIA]
- b(4) Release would disclose trade secrets or confidential or financial information [(b)(4) of the FOIA]
- b(6) Release would constitute a clearly unwarranted invasion of personal privacy [(b)(6) of the FOIA]
- b(7) Release would disclose information compiled for law enforcement purposes [(b)(7) of the FOIA]
- b(8) Release would disclose information concerning the regulation of financial institutions [(b)(8) of the FOIA]
- b(9) Release would disclose geological or geophysical information concerning wells [(b)(9) of the FOIA]

INITIATIVE MEASURE TO BE SUBMITTED DIRECTLY TO THE VOTERS

The Attorney General of California has prepared the following title and summary of the chief purposes and points of the proposed measure.

EDUCATION. PUBLIC SCHOOLS. ENGLISH AS REQUIRED LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION. INITIATIVE STATUTE. Requires all public school instruction be conducted in English. Requirement may be waived if parents or guardians show that child already knows English, or has special needs, or would learn English faster through alternate instructional technique. Provides initial short-term placement, not normally exceeding one year, in intensive sheltered English immersion programs for children not fluent in English. Appropriates \$50 million per year for ten years funding English instruction for individuals pledging to provide personal English tutoring to children in their community. Permits enforcement suits by parents and guardians. Summary of estimate by Legislative Analyst and Director of Finance of fiscal impact on state and local governments: Probably no change in total state spending on K-12 public education. Potential savings to local school districts on programs for students with limited English proficiency.

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC: THIS PETITION MAY BE CIRCULATED BY A PAID SIGNATURE GATHERER OR A VOLUNTEER. YOU HAVE THE RIGHT TO ASK.

All signers of this petition must be registered in _____ County.			This column for official use only			
SAMPLE	Print your Name	Abraham Lincoln	Residence Address Only	111 Independence St.		
	Your Signature As Registered To Vote	Abraham Lincoln	City	Freedom	Zip	90001
New Voter Affidavit #	1.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		
New Voter Affidavit #	2.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		
New Voter Affidavit #	3.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		
New Voter Affidavit #	4.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		
New Voter Affidavit #	5.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		
New Voter Affidavit #	6.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		
New Voter Affidavit #	7.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		
New Voter Affidavit #	8.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		
New Voter Affidavit #	9.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		
New Voter Affidavit #	10.	Print your Name	Residence Address Only			
		Your Signature As Registered To Vote	City	Zip		

DECLARATION OF CIRCULATOR (to be completed after above signatures have been obtained)

I, _____, am registered to vote in the County (or City and County) of _____.

My residence address is _____.

I circulated this section of the petition and saw each of the appended signatures being written. Each signature on this petition is, to the best of my information and belief, the genuine signature of the person whose name it purports to be. All signatures on this document

were obtained between the dates of _____ and _____.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct.

Executed on _____, 19____ at _____.

(Complete signature of circulator)

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To the Honorable Secretary of State:

We, the undersigned, registered, qualified voters of California, residents of afore-described County (or City and County), hereby propose amendments to the Educational Code of California and petition the Secretary of State to submit same to the voters of California for their adoption or rejection at the next succeeding general election or at any special statewide election held prior to the general election or otherwise provided by law. The proposed statutory amendments read as follows:

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION FOR IMMIGRANT CHILDREN INITIATIVE

SECTION 1. Chapter 3 (commencing with Section 300) is added to Part 1 of the Educational Code, to read:

CHAPTER 3. ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION FOR IMMIGRANT CHILDREN

ARTICLE 1. Findings and Declarations

300. The People of California find and declare as follows:

(a) WHEREAS the English language is the national public language of the United States of America and of the state of California, is spoken by the vast majority of California residents, and is also the leading world language for science, technology, and international business, thereby being the language of economic opportunity; and

(b) WHEREAS immigrant parents are eager to have their children acquire a good knowledge of English, thereby allowing them to fully participate in the American Dream of economic and social advancement; and

(c) WHEREAS the government and the public schools of California have a moral obligation and a constitutional duty to provide all of California's children, regardless of their ethnicity or national origins, with the skills necessary to become productive members of our society, and of these skills, literacy in the English language is among the most important; and

(d) WHEREAS the public schools of California currently do a poor job of educating immigrant children, wasting financial resources on costly experimental language programs whose failure over the past two decades is demonstrated by the current high drop-out rates and low English literacy levels of many immigrant children; and

(e) WHEREAS young immigrant children can easily acquire full fluency in a new language, such as English, if they are heavily exposed to that language in the classroom at an early age.

(f) THEREFORE it is resolved that: all children in California public schools shall be taught English as rapidly and effectively as possible.

ARTICLE 2. English Language Education

305. Subject to the exceptions provided in Article 3 (commencing with Section 310), all children in California public schools shall be taught English by being taught in English. In particular, this shall require that all children be placed in English language classrooms. Children who are English learners shall be educated through sheltered English immersion during a temporary transition period not normally intended to exceed one year. Local schools shall be permitted to place in the same classroom English learners of different ages but whose degree of English proficiency is similar. Local schools shall be encouraged to mix together in the same classroom English learners from different native-language groups but with the same degree of English fluency. Once English learners have acquired a good working knowledge of English, they shall be transferred to English language mainstream classrooms. As much as possible, current supplemental funding for English learners shall be maintained, subject to possible modification under Article 8 (commencing with Section 335) below.

306. The definitions of the terms used in this article and in Article 3 (commencing with Section 310) are as follows:

(a) "English learner" means a child who does not speak English or whose native language is not English and who is not currently able to perform ordinary classroom work in English, also known as a Limited English Proficiency or LEP child.

(b) "English language classroom" means a classroom in which the language of instruction used by the teaching personnel is overwhelmingly the English language, and in which such teaching personnel possess a good knowledge of the English language.

(c) "English language mainstream classroom" means a classroom in which the students either are native English language speakers or already have acquired reasonable fluency in English.

(d) "Sheltered English immersion" or "structured English immersion" means an English language acquisition process for young children in which nearly all classroom instruction is in English but with the curriculum and presentation designed for children who are learning the language.

(e) "Bilingual education/native language instruction" means a language acquisition process for students in which much or all instruction, textbooks, and teaching materials are in the child's native language.

ARTICLE 3. Parental Exceptions

310. The requirements of Section 305 may be waived with the prior written informed consent, to be provided annually, of the child's parents or legal guardian under the circumstances specified below and in Section 311. Such informed consent shall require that said parents or legal guardian personally visit the school to apply for the waiver and that they there be provided a full description of the educational materials to be used in the different educational program choices and all the educational opportunities available to the child. Under such parental waiver conditions, children may be transferred to classes where they are taught English and other subjects through bilingual education techniques or other generally recognized educational methodologies permitted by law. Individual schools in which 20 students or more of a given grade level receive a waiver shall be required to offer such a class; otherwise, they must allow the students to transfer to a public school in which such a class is offered.

311. The circumstances in which a parental exception waiver may be granted under Section 310 are as follows:

(a) Children who already know English: the child already possesses good English language skills, as measured by standardized tests of English vocabulary comprehension, reading, and writing, in which the child scores at or above the state average for his grade level or at or above the 5th grade average, whichever is lower; or

(b) Older children: the child is age 10 years or older, and it is the informed belief of the school principal and educational staff that an alternate course of educational study would be better suited to the child's rapid acquisition of basic English language skills; or

(c) Children with special needs: the child already has been placed for a period of not less than thirty days during that school year in an English language classroom and it is subsequently the informed belief of the school principal and educational staff that the child has such special physical, emotional, psychological, or educational needs that an alternate course of educational study would be better suited to the child's overall educational development. A written description of these special needs must be provided and any such decision is to be made subject to the examination and approval of the local school superintendent, under guidelines established by and subject to the review of the local Board of Education and ultimately the State Board of Education. The existence of such special needs shall not compel issuance of a waiver, and the parents shall be fully informed of their right to refuse to agree to a waiver.

ARTICLE 4. Community-Based English Tutoring

315. In furtherance of its constitutional and legal requirement to offer special language assistance to children coming from backgrounds of limited English proficiency, the state shall encourage family members and others to provide personal English language tutoring to such children, and support these efforts by raising the general level of English language knowledge in the community. Commencing with the fiscal year in which this initiative is enacted and for each of the nine fiscal years following thereafter, a sum of fifty million dollars (\$50,000,000) per year is hereby appropriated from the General Fund for the purpose of providing additional funding for free or subsidized programs of adult English language instruction to parents or other members of the community who pledge to provide personal English language tutoring to California school children with limited English proficiency.

316. Programs funded pursuant to this section shall be provided through schools or community organizations. Funding for these programs shall be administered by the Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, and shall be disbursed at the discretion of the local school boards, under reasonable guidelines established by, and subject to the review of, the State Board of Education.

ARTICLE 5. Legal Standing and Parental Enforcement

320. As detailed in Article 2 (commencing with Section 305) and Article 3 (commencing with Section 310), all California school children have the right to be provided with an English language public education. If a California school child has been denied the option of an English language instructional curriculum in public school, the child's parent or legal guardian shall have legal standing to sue for enforcement of the provisions of this statute, and if successful shall be awarded normal and customary attorney's fees and actual damages, but not punitive or consequential damages. Any school board member or other elected official or public school teacher or administrator who willfully and repeatedly refuses to implement the terms of this statute by providing such an English language educational option at an available public school to a California school child may be held personally liable for fees and actual damages by the child's parents or legal guardian.

ARTICLE 6. Severability

325. If any part or parts of this statute are found to be in conflict with federal law or the United States or the California State Constitution, the statute shall be implemented to the maximum extent that federal law, and the United States and the California State Constitution permit. Any provision held invalid shall be severed from the remaining portions of this statute.

ARTICLE 7. Operative Date

330. This initiative shall become operative for all school terms which begin more than sixty days following the date at which it becomes effective.

ARTICLE 8. Amendment.

335. The provisions of this act may be amended by a statute that becomes effective upon approval by the electorate or by a statute to further the act's purpose passed by a two-thirds vote of each house of the Legislature and signed by the Governor.

ARTICLE 9. Interpretation

340. Under circumstances in which portions of this statute are subject to conflicting interpretations, Section 300 shall be assumed to contain the governing intent of the statute.

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March 10, 1998

Bilingual Education Faces Major Test in California

By DON TERRY

LA HABRA, Calif. -- Rose Espinoza and Alice Callaghan spend much of their lives nurturing the American Dreams of poor and working class Latino immigrant children by tutoring them after school in English, math and faith in themselves and in their new country.

The two women have never met, but they agree that if the children they care about so deeply are to do better than working in a sweatshop, as many of their parents do, then the key is for them to learn how to read, write and speak English as quickly as possible. Still, when it comes to the best way for the public schools to teach those make or break lessons, Mrs. Espinoza and Ms. Callaghan are on opposite sides of a bitter debate.



Credit: Edward Carreon for The New York Times
 Alice Callaghan, an Episcopal priest who opposes California's bilingual education program, tutoring her Latino students.

Ms. Callaghan supports a California ballot initiative that could virtually wipe out bilingual education in the country's most populous and diverse state. Mrs. Espinoza opposes it.

It is called Proposition 227, or the English for the Children initiative, or simply the Unz initiative after its author and chief financial backer, Ron K. Unz, a Silicon Valley millionaire and conservative Republican who has no children or background in education and has never set foot in a bilingual education class. "I don't know if I'd really learn much," he said. But Unz, who is 36 and a former candidate for governor, said he has been interested in the issue for more than a decade and has come to an unwavering conclusion: "The system seems completely nuts. It's time for a change."

If 227 passes on June 2, as polls suggest that it will, the tremors will be felt far beyond California's borders. The battle here is being carefully watched by educators and politicians across the country. In essence, voters will decide whether to end an era of pedagogy first ushered into the state's school houses in 1967 when Gov. Ronald Reagan signed a bill eliminating the state's English-only instructional mandate and allowing bilingual

education. In its place, the Unz initiative calls for a one-year intensive English language course that many fear is a return to a past when children were sometimes punished for speaking Spanish, but others say is a return to sanity.

Supporters of 227 blame bilingual education for a variety of educational ills, including high dropout rates, although only 30 percent of the state's 1.4 million pupils with limited English proficiency are actually enrolled in bilingual classes. Largely because of a severe shortage of up to 20,000 bilingual teachers, the rest of the pupils -- 70 percent -- are enrolled in other language programs that emphasize English over the native tongue, the kind of method that the initiative would require for every child, with some tightly observed exceptions.

Mrs. Espinoza sees the initiative as a knee-jerk, simplistic and even a xenophobic response to a method that is flawed but proven, if implemented properly: teaching children English while at the same time keeping them up to date with their other studies in their native tongue, which is the heart of bilingual education.

"Proposition 227 will set back the clock," Mrs. Espinoza said. "It's not easy to learn English. To do it in one year well enough to keep up academically is ridiculous. They are playing with the lives and the futures of 1.4 million children. I'm going to do everything I can to defeat it."

But Ms. Callaghan, an Episcopalian priest, insists, "Bilingual education is a total failure." She led a boycott by 75 Latino families of a Los Angeles public school two years ago demanding that their children be put into mainstream classes. "The kids aren't learning English," she asserts. "Our kids want to be doctors and lawyers. They don't want to end up cleaning houses or selling tamales on the corner."

Like the gut-wrenching battles across the Golden State over immigration in 1994 and affirmative action last year, Proposition 227 is about much more than what is printed in the initiative. It is also about race, class, culture, shifting demographics, politics, control, fear and sometimes even education.

"This is really about adult agendas," said Genethia Hayes, executive director of the Los Angeles chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, "but it's going to impact children."

Every day in California, more than 1.4 million children -- about a quarter of the state's elementary and high school students -- walk into a classroom with only a limited ability to speak or understand English. No state has more children for whom English is a second language. In the schoolhouse halls and on the playgrounds, the tongues of the world can be heard, including Spanish, Korean, Chinese, Vietnamese, Russian, and Armenian.



Credit: Edward Carreon for The New York Times
Lizbeth Chaverris, 9, and Eduardo Garcia discussing their homework with their tutor, Rose Espinoza, at her garage-turned-classroom, Rosie's Garage, in La Habra, Calif.

The theory behind bilingual education is to teach core subjects, such as U.S. history and math, in the native tongue of the pupils so they do not fall behind, while gradually increasing the use of English. The goal is to have the student in all-English language classes within three to five years or sometimes longer.

In the 19th century, schools across the country often taught young immigrants in their native tongue and English. In Ohio, it was German and English. In Louisiana, it was French and English.

But proponents of 227 say that children are not learning English fast enough or well enough because they waste too much time being instructed in Spanish (80 percent of the children are Spanish speaking) or whatever language is spoken at home.

Opponents of the initiative say that 227 is a "one size fits all" approach that robs parents and local school districts of choice and the flexibility needed to educate such a diverse and vast population. "In a state that prides itself on local control, this initiative takes away local control," said Delaine Eastin, the state's superintendent of public instruction, who is on the long list of teachers, school administrators, labor unions, civil rights groups, scholars and parents who oppose 227.

Unz also has parents on his side, as well as Jaime Escalante, the East Los Angeles math teacher whose innovations in the classroom were told in the film "Stand and Deliver," and the state Republican Party, which endorsed the initiative over the strong objections of the party's leadership.

Unz argued that one year of intensive English training should be enough for most children to swim in the mainstream. "It's simple," he said. "Take little kids, put them in a class and teach them English."

A year may be enough time, if all Unz and his supporters want the children to learn is conversational or "playground English," said James Crawford, the former Washington editor of Education Week and an expert on bilingual education. Crawford said that a blizzard of studies show that it takes much longer for a student to learn "academic English," the ability to understand and express concepts more complicated than ordering a burger from a fast food restaurant.

Unz said he puts no credence in any of the research on either side of the debate.

"It's all garbage," he said.

A small forest has been chopped down in the last 30 years to study the merits and failures of bilingual education across the country, but many of the studies were highly politicized and fatally ill with bias, according to a committee of the National Research Council, which released a report last year on the dozens of efforts to determine the best way to teach English.

But Kenji Hakuta, a professor of education at Stanford University and the chairman of the committee, which included experts from among other institutions, the Center of Applied Linguistics, Harvard University and the University of Chicago, said that after sifting through all the paper, the

group found a slight but clear advantage in favor of bilingual education over English immersion methods like the one proposed in the Unz initiative. Hakuta added that no one method is the answer for 1.4 million children.

"Bilingual education is a valuable tool," he said. "If people really read what the Unz initiative proposes, I think support for it will erode, but not enough to defeat it."

Early opinion polls show widespread support, including among Latinos, for eliminating bilingual education. But Latino support seems to be shrinking with every new poll. In December, according to the statewide Field poll, the overall support was 69 percent in favor and 24 percent against. Among Latinos, it was 66 percent in favor to 30 percent opposed. In February, in a second Field poll, overall support was 66 percent in favor and 27 percent opposed. Among Latinos, it was 46 percent in favor and 45 percent against. State Sen. Richard Polanco, the head of the Legislature's Latino Caucus, said he expects most Latinos will vote against 227. "Everyone agrees that bilingual education can be improved," he said. "But the Unz initiative is a sledge hammer approach and it's wrong."

In the beginning of the fight over Proposition 187, the initiative that called for restricting access of undocumented immigrants and their children to various social and educational services, there was also higher than expected support in the polls among Latinos. But that support greatly eroded by election day because of what many perceived as the anti-immigrant tone of the campaign. Opponents of 227 are banking that history will repeat itself, although 187 was easily passed but has been tied up in court ever since.

"It's dump on Latino time again," said Antonia Hernandez, the executive director and general counsel of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund.

Although Unz admits that some of the initiative's supporters are no doubt anti-immigrant, he said that as the grandson of immigrants from Eastern Europe, he himself is not. Indeed, he never fails to remind people that he marched against Proposition 187.

"This is about education," he said, "and getting rid of a system that absolutely does not work."

At one time, Mrs. Espinoza might have agreed with Unz, but that was before she did something he has never done.

She went to visit a bilingual education class.

"I saw that the kids were raising their hands a lot because they understood more because a lot of the class was in Spanish," she said. "I can't imagine how hard it would be if it was all in English. The kids will learn English but it takes time."

Mrs. Espinoza started tutoring the children in her neighborhood in this small city 35 miles east of Los Angeles in 1991 to give them an alternative to gangs. She turned her two-car garage into a classroom with computers, books and banners congratulating the latest member of "Rosie's Garage" to

make the honor roll at the local public school.

Eduardo Garcia, 13, has been going to "Rosie's" almost from the beginning. He is in seventh grade in all-English language classes after spending three years in bilingual classes. He moved to the United States from Mexico with his mother when he was 11 months old and his family speaks Spanish at home, although his mother, Maura Garcia, 35, is taking English classes.

Mrs. Garcia said Eduardo is doing well in school, but his 9-year-old brother, Gabriel, is struggling because, she said, he has never been in bilingual classes.

"He speaks very well," Mrs. Garcia said of Gabriel, "but he has trouble with reading and writing."

Eduardo said bilingual education helped him succeed in school and he does not want to see Proposition 227 passed.

"I don't think that's really smart," he said. "After I got out of bilingual education, I could understand more. I want other kids to have what I had."

Hanging above his head was a banner: "Congratulations Eduardo Garcia Honor Roll 1st Quarter."



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- There are approximately 3.2 million limited English proficient (LEP) students in the United States.
- Around 73% of LEP students speak Spanish.
- The vast majority of programs for LEP students are funded through state and local funds. State legislation and policy vary considerably across the country in terms of requirements for special instructional services for LEP students. A 1993 survey reports that 25 of the 51 (49 percent) State Education Agencies (SEAs) reported that local education agencies in their states were required to provide particular types of services to LEP students. Of these 25 SEAs, 22 required special instruction in English language arts (English as a Second Language), while 17 also required instruction in content areas using the students' native language (bilingual education). Most States required these services to be provided to all LEP students; however, a few states reported that special services were required only if a minimum number of LEP students from a single language group were enrolled in a school (for example, 20 per school). Of the 26 SEAs which did not require local districts to provide special services, 16 reported that they encouraged or promoted particular services. Of these 16, 15 encouraged or promoted the use of ESL and 8 encouraged or promoted bilingual education.
- With regard to funding support for LEP services, a total of 22 States (43 percent) provided State funds designed specifically for the administration and/or provision of instructional services for LEP students.
- Department of Education funding for limited English proficient students flows through Title VII of ESEA. Part A of Title VII, the Bilingual Education Act assists State and local education agencies, institutions of higher education, and community based organizations to build their capacity to establish, implement, and sustain programs of instruction for limited English proficient youth and children. Title VII does not mandate the use of the native language although many programs use the students' native language to enhance learning while the students are learning English or to develop bilingual proficiency in English and the native language. All programs include English acquisition as a goal. The Bilingual Education Act is implemented through several discretionary programs funded at a total of \$199 million in FY 1998. The purpose of these programs is to educate limited English proficient students to the same rigorous standards expected of all students. These programs serve 1,192,000 students and approximately 2,000 teachers in training annually at current funding.

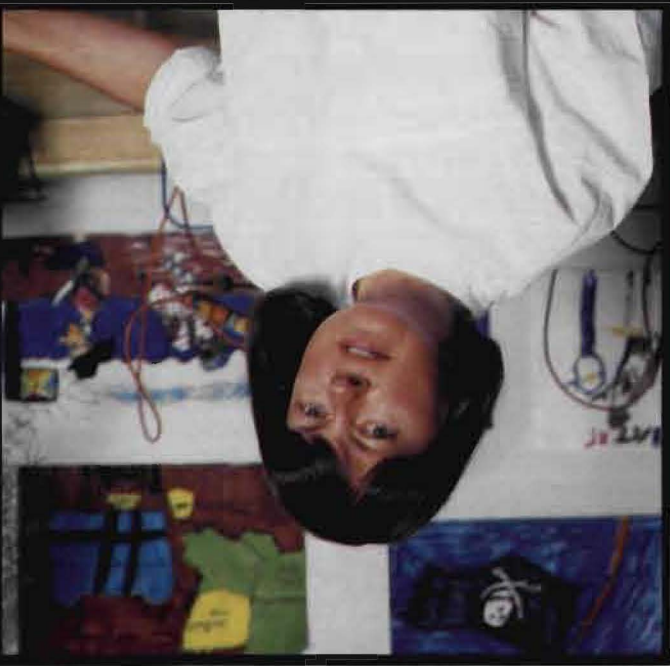
Part C of Title VII, the Emergency Immigrant Education Program, is a formula program that assists local education agencies that experience large increases in the number of immigrant children to provide them high quality instruction, transition into American society, and meet the same challenging standards expected of all children. The Emergency Immigrant Education Program is funded at \$150 million in FY 1998 and serves approximately 766,000 students.

English for the Children

A project of One Nation/One California, a 501(c)4 non-profit corporation



**PHOTOCOPY
PRESERVATION**



Alice Callaghan, Director of Las Familias del Pueblo
and long-time immigrant rights activist.

“Supporting the ‘English for the Children’ campaign is the only ‘politically-incorrect’ thing I’ve ever done in my life.”

- **NOT** cut special funding for children learning English.
- **NOT** completely ban all “bilingual education” programs.
- **NOT** violate any existing federal court decisions.

It will
• **NOT** throw children who can’t speak English into regular classes where they would have to “sink or swim”.

What “English for the Children” Won’t Do

- Require children to be taught English as soon as they start school.
- Provide “sheltered English immersion” classes to help non-English speaking students learn English.
- Allow parents to keep their children in “bilingual education” programs if it seems best for the child.
- Allocate \$50 million for ten years to fund adult English literacy programs for immigrants and non-immigrants alike who agree to help tutor children in English.

What “English for the Children” Will Do

- Learning a new language is easier the younger the age of the child.
- Learning a language is much easier if the child is immersed in that language.
- Immigrant children *already* know their native language; they need the public schools to teach them English.
- Children who leave school without knowing how to speak, read, and write English are injured for life economically and socially.

Common Sense About Learning English

Begun with the best of intentions twenty or thirty years ago, “bilingual education” has failed in actual practice. Unfortunately, the politicians and administrators involved with “bilingual education” have completely refused to admit this failure. Our “English for the Children” initiative will end this failed experiment, and safeguard California’s future by ensuring that all children learn to speak, read, and write English in California public schools. With your help, it is possible.



Gloria Matta Tuchman with the kids of Las Familias del Pueblo involved in the Latino Boycott against “bilingual education”

“Bilingual Education has failed a whole generation of Hispanic children”

Gloria Matta Tuchman, Co-Chair of the “English for the Children” campaign and a 1st grade English immersion teacher, 99% of whose students become fluent in English each year.

English
for the **Children**

English for the Children
212 E. 6th Street
Los Angeles, CA 90014

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E-Mail: info@OneNation.org
Web: www.OneNation.org

Paid for by the
English for the Children Committee ID#970631

We Need Your Help to End “bilingual education” in California by June 1998

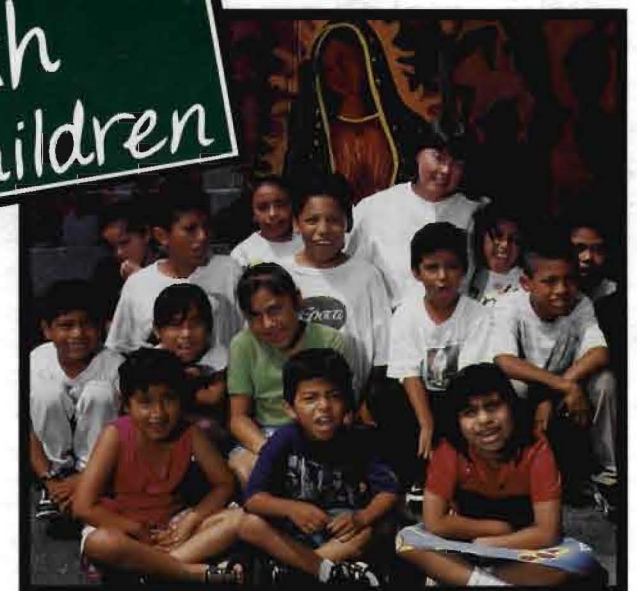
Despite its clear failure, “bilingual education” has been in place for twenty-five years, provides salaries and perks for many thousands of program administrators, and has the long-time support of powerful Sacramento politicians. We can’t stop it without your help. Please. . .

- Volunteer to gather signatures for our initiative
- Put up yard signs and bumper stickers to show your support
- Spread the word to your friends and neighbors
- Make financial contributions to our campaign
- Write our headquarters or call toll free **1-888-778-6439**

“I want my children to learn English so they won’t have the problems which I’ve had”

Lenin Lopez, Los Angeles garment worker, explaining his participation in the historic Latino Boycott against “bilingual education.”

English
for the **Children**



Alice Callaghan and the kids of the anti-bilingual boycott.

Important Questions and Answers

Q: What is "bilingual education"?

Although "bilingual education" may mean many things in theory, in the overwhelming majority of California schools, "bilingual education" in actual practice means monolingual, native-language instruction, with English being introduced to children only in later grades.

Q: What is "sheltered English immersion"?

Under this learning technique, youngsters not fluent in English are placed in a separate classroom in which a teacher teaches them English over a period of several months. Once they have become fluent in English, they are moved into regular classes. Studies have shown that "sheltered immersion" is the most effective means for young children to learn another language.

Q: Why do we need to change the system?

Our current system of immigrant education in California is a dismal failure. Over 1.3 million California public school children—23% of the total—are now classified as not proficient in English. Over the past decade, the number of these mostly Latino immigrant children has more than doubled.

California's future depends on these children becoming fluent and literate in English. This is the goal of the current system, which is centered on use of "bilingual education." But each year only about 5% of school children classified as not proficient in English are found to have gained proficiency in English—the current system of language education has an annual failure rate of 95%.

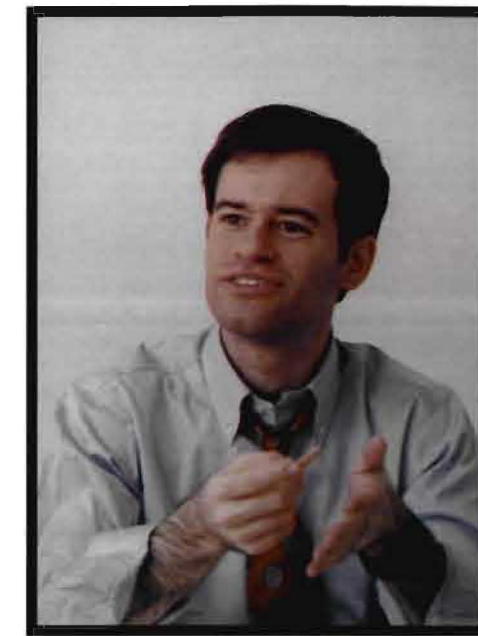
Q: What do most Latinos think about "bilingual education"?

The overwhelming majority of immigrant parents and Latinos in general dislike "bilingual education" because they feel it holds their children back. The recent LA Times survey of Latino residents in

Orange County showed 83% opposition to the methods of "bilingual education." Another national survey reached similar conclusions, showing that Latinos overwhelmingly rate learning English as the top educational goal for their children, and by 4-1 favor their children learning English as soon as they start school.

Q: Is this an "anti-immigrant" or "anti-Latino" initiative?

Absolutely not. Silicon Valley Software Entrepreneur Ron Unz, Chairman of the initiative campaign, has a long pro-immigrant track record, and was a leading opponent of Proposition 187 and anti-immigrant legislation in Congress. Co-Chair Gloria Matta Tuchman is a Mexican-American school teacher who teaches English to limited-English children in Santa Ana. Campaign Advisor Alice Callaghan, who assisted the Latino Boycott against "bilingual education" which inspired the initiative, is a committed immigrant rights activist. The initiative also provides extra funding to help adults, both immigrant and native-born alike, learn to read and write English. Our bipartisan campaign is supported by Democrats and Republicans, liberals and conservatives, immigrants and the native-born.



"Some issues are liberal vs. conservative. Some issues are Democrat vs. Republican. This issue is basic common sense."

Ron Unz, Chairman of the "English for the Children" initiative campaign.

Q: Won't the State Legislature in Sacramento fix the problem without an initiative?

No. California politicians have been completely deadlocked on this issue. The legislation requiring "bilingual education" expired ten years ago, but political pressure and statutory interpretations have kept the system alive and growing during this period, with annual spending exceeding \$300 million per year. Dozens of bills marginally changing the system have been proposed over these years, but none have become law.

Q: Shouldn't parents be given a choice?

Absolutely. Our initiative allows them a choice. In a state as large as California, there may be some "bilingual education" programs which actually work well. Under our initiative, parents can place or keep their children in a "bilingual education" program if they can provide some indication that such a program will actually help their child learn English and benefit their child's overall education.

Q: Will this initiative be tied up in court like others have been?

No. There is no federal or constitutional basis for "bilingual education." The legal foundation for "bilingual education" is the unanimous 1974 Supreme Court decision *Lau v. Nichols*, which required schools to provide some special assistance to children who do not speak English. However, *Lau* never specified the type of assistance, and never mandated "bilingual education." In 1978, the 9th Circuit Appellate Court, covering California, clarified *Lau* through the *Guadalupe v. Tempe* decision, ruling that "bilingual education" was not required by federal law. The only basis for "bilingual education" in California is a mixture of state law and administrative decisions, which would be superseded by our initiative. Our initiative is in absolute accordance with all federal court rulings; when it passes, it will be implemented at the beginning of the following school year.

Los Angeles Times

Bilingual Schooling Is Failing, Parents Say

By AMY PYLE
TIMES EDUCATION WRITER

Las Familias del Pueblo is holding its first parent meeting in 13 years of providing after-school care to the children of garment workers. Attendance is standing room only. The subject that has drawn so many to the storefront after a grueling day in the nearby factories: bilingual education, is it working for our children? The gut feeling of these parents is: No, it is not. The debate over bilingual education rages in the academy, it also erupts in venues closer to home. And there, the sentiments do not always jibe with research. Last night, one father stood from his chair to demand that the school stop bilingual education. "I want our kids to learn Spanish so they can understand the world," Lenin Lopez said in Spanish. "I want them to learn English so they can understand the world," he said in English.

80 Students Stay Out of School in Latino Boycott
■ Protest: Parents seek more English-language classes at Ninth Street elementary campus.
By AMY PYLE
TIMES EDUCATION WRITER
Abigail Ramirez was one of more than 80 children kept out of downtown's Ninth Street School by Latino parents Tuesday in protest against bilingual education, and she was worried because she wants to do right by her work. "I want a break from this," she said. "I want a break from this."

English for the Children

The leadership of the "English for the Children" initiative campaign includes:

Jaime A. Escalante, Honorary Chairman. One of America's most nationally renowned public school teachers, Jaime A. Escalante is a Latin-American immigrant who arrived in the U.S. at 32 without knowledge of English. After spending several years in menial jobs while learning English, he began a professional career and eventually became a high school math teacher at Garfield H.S. in Latino East LA. There, he began an extraordinarily successful Advanced Placement Calculus course, proving that large numbers of Latino kids from immigrant and working-class backgrounds could perform college-level mathematics while in high school. These achievements were chronicled in the 1987 Edward James Olmos film *Stand and Deliver*, which brought him international recognition. While at Garfield H.S., he had succeeded in eliminating the school's "bilingual education" programs, which he believed handicapped Latino students. In October 1997, he agreed to join the "English for the Children" campaign as Honorary Chairman.

Ron K. Unz, Chairman. A theoretical physicist by training, Mr. Unz serves as president and CEO of Wall Street Analytics, Inc., a Palo Alto-based financial services software company which he co-founded in 1987. Mr. Unz holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from Harvard University, Cambridge University, and Stanford University, and is a past first-place winner of the American Westinghouse Science Talent Search. He has long been deeply interested in public policy issues, and serves on the advisory boards of the Center for Equal Opportunity and the Reason Foundation. His writings on issues of immigration, ethnicity, and social policy have appeared in the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Los Angeles Times*, *Policy Review*, *Reason*, and various other publications. In 1994, he received 34% of the vote in a Republican primary challenge to incumbent Governor Pete Wilson of California.

Gloria Matta Tuchman, Co-Chair. An elementary school teacher in Santa Ana, Ms. Tuchman has specialized for over thirty years in teaching limited-English students. A past member of MALDEF and U.S. English, she has served on numerous state and national commissions on educational reform, and twice was elected president of her local school board. As a Mexican-American child from Texas, she was a central plaintiff in a desegregation lawsuit under which her rural town was forced to open its public facilities to children of all ethnic backgrounds. Her step-father later served as National President of LULAC (the League of United Latin American Citizens), and she herself was honored as LULAC Woman of the Year in 1988.

Fernando Vega, Regional Honorary Chairman. A long-time leader of Latino Democrats in the San Francisco Peninsula area, Fernando Vega is a past member of the Redwood City Board of Education and City Council. In 1992, he was chosen by the Clinton-Gore campaign to lead their regional drive among Latino voters in the Peninsula, turning out 18,000 Latino voters, which contributed significantly to the Democratic victory that year. While on the Redwood City Board of Education, he helped to establish "bilingual education" programs in the local schools, but later decided that the programs were a failure, and turned against them in the 1980s. After years of struggling against local "bilingual" programs, he joined the "English for the Children" campaign as a Regional Honorary Chairman in August 1997.

The
English for the Children
Campaign

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OCTOBER 15, 1997

PR #7

CONTACT: SHERI ANNIS

(213) 627-2913

Famed East LA Teacher Jaime Escalante Joins “English for the Children” Campaign as Honorary Chairman

Sacramento, CA---Nationally renowned school teacher Jaime Escalante, whose successes were depicted in the 1987 film *Stand and Deliver* starring Edward James Olmos, has joined California’s “English for the Children” campaign as Honorary Chairman.

Mr. Escalante, an immigrant from Latin America, gained national prominence by proving that large numbers of immigrant and working-class Latino public high school students from the East Los Angeles *barrio* could pass college-level Advanced Placement Calculus examinations. Mr. Escalante is a long-standing critic of “bilingual education.”

Prior to beginning his Calculus AP class at Garfield H.S., Mr. Escalante had worked to eliminate the school’s “bilingual education” classes, which he felt were holding students back academically. He believes that his successful struggle against native-language instruction was an important contributing factor to the overall academic success of his AP students, and believes children should be taught English as early as possible. “It seems a real tragedy that in many cases our public schools are not teaching English to five- or six-year-old immigrant children, who are at an age when they can so easily learn the language.”

Campaign Chairman Ron Unz regards Jaime Escalante’s new role in the campaign as a “potential breakthrough” in gaining the public endorsement of Latino opinion-leaders. “All the polls show that most Latino parents dislike “bilingual education” and want their children to be taught English in schools. But even though many Latino leaders privately feel the same way, they’re reluctant to attack such a “sacred cow.” Now that we have the strong public support of the most famous Latino educator in America, other Latino leaders should find it easier to voice their true feelings. After all, if kids from the *barrio* are smart enough to learn Calculus, they’re smart enough to learn English.”

In a related note, the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA), California’s largest teachers’ union local, has now scheduled a membership referendum on endorsing the “English for the Children” initiative for the week of November 24th.

English for the Children

212 E. 6th St., Los Angeles, CA 90014 Tel: 213-627-0005 Fax: 213-627-0050

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Jaime A. Escalante

P6(b)(6)

[0017]

October 10, 1997

Mr. Ron K. Unz

English for the Children

P6(b)(6)

Dear Ron:

I am glad to give my strong support to your initiative to provide California's immigrant children with an English-language education in the public schools, and to serve as Honorary Chairman of your campaign.

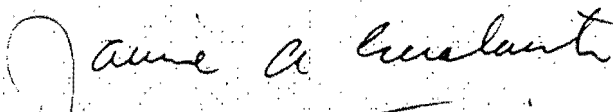
My views on this important educational issue are based on personal experience. As an immigrant from Latin America who arrived to the U.S. at 32 not knowing English, I struggled for several years in menial jobs until I could learn enough English to begin a professional career in this country. I know how difficult it is for an adult to learn a new language, and how important English is to economic advancement in America. It seems a real tragedy that in many cases our public schools are not teaching English to five- or six-year-old immigrant children, who are at an age when they could so easily learn the language.

I also believe that the bilingual education programs found in many California schools are a very poor substitute for English-language instruction. At Garfield H.S. in East LA, where I began my successful Calculus Advanced Placement program, I also worked hard to eliminate most of the school's bilingual education classes, which I felt were holding students back in their academic studies. I feel that my efforts against these misguided programs were an important contribution to the success of my Garfield students.

Although some California politicians seem to support bilingual education for various reasons, my own experiences as a teacher leads me to believe that these programs are a negative factor for most immigrant children, who instead should be taught English while they are young. I also think that most adult immigrants are eager to learn English, and that California would benefit if they were taught English as well.

Thanks for your efforts on this important project.

Sincerely,


Jaime A. Escalante



The Sacramento Bee

Star Latino teacher joins bilingual foes

By Phil Garcia
Bee Deputy Capitol Bureau Chief

The nation's most celebrated Latino educator has joined forces with organizers of a proposed ballot initiative that would all but eliminate bilingual education in California schools.

Hiram Johnson High School mathematics teacher Jaime Escalante, whose success with Latino public high schoolers from

East Los Angeles was depicted in the 1988 film "Stand and Deliver," has joined the campaign as honorary chairman, the group announced Wednesday.

The proposed initiative would require that all California public school instruction be conducted in English, allowing exceptions in limited circumstances when parents request it. It has yet to qualify for the

Please see BILINGUAL, page A13

Bilingual: 84 percent of Latino voters back proposal, poll finds

Continued from page A1

June primary ballot but already has become the subject of much political debate.

Escalante said his support for the measure stems from his own experience as an immigrant who struggled in menial jobs until he learned enough English to pursue a career. He believes that bilingual education programs "are a negative factor for most immigrant children," as he wrote earlier this month in accepting the honorary post.

"From my experience, working at Garfield High (in Los Angeles) and over here at Johnson High, I notice that the kids who are not proficient in English always sit in the back of the room," Escalante said Wednesday.

"They don't want to be involved or participate because they haven't mastered the language," he said. "It creates a complex of inferiority in the classroom, naturally. It's great to have a bilingual teacher to motivate the kids to participate in the class, but unfortunately we don't have that."

Ron Unz, the wealthy Silicon Valley businessman and former California GOP gubernatorial

candidate who is behind the proposed measure, called Escalante's support "a tremendous boost" to his campaign.

"Having the most prominent Latino educator serving as honorary chairman really just allows more of these Latino public figures to voice their true feelings on the issue," Unz said.

Backing up his claims, Unz pointed to a Los Angeles Times poll published Wednesday that showed 84 percent of all California Latino voters supporting the proposed initiative.

The Times poll also found that 80 percent of white voters – and an equal percentage of all California voters – support the proposed measure, which its backers call "English for the Children."

Jorge Duran of Redwood City is one Latino parent who said he supports the proposed measure – and didn't need Escalante's endorsement to decide.

He said he and his wife finally succeeded in getting their two girls, now age 9 and 7, out of a local school that spent maybe "20 minutes" in English language instruction. For now, they have them, along with a son in kinder-

garten, in a school that splits instruction evenly between Spanish and English. But they want more English instruction.

"There were neighborhood children who came from Mexico and they knew more English than my own children, who were born in this country," Duran said in explaining his support for the Unz measure. "... I want my children to have a better future, that they learn English so they can fight for their rights and be somebody in life."

Ray Muñoz, who teaches a "newcomer" class for seventh- and eighth-graders at Martin Luther King Junior High School, said parents who say they support the initiative may not yet fully understand the proposal, which he considers "extreme" in its approach.

Muñoz, who said he was "shocked" that Escalante had endorsed the measure, said his own experience and research have shown him that students who speak, read and write their primary language well first are the ones who will learn English rapidly.

"I know his heart's in the right place, but he is really making a big mistake by endorsing that," he



Jaime Escalante

His success teaching mathematics to Latino public high schoolers was dramatized in the film "Stand and Deliver."

said. "The research shows if you take primary language away from kids, those kids that really need it are going to take longer to learn English."

Republican political consultant Sal Russo said that whether the battle on this measure is over before it really begins – as the polls suggest – depends on how the campaign is waged.

"The campaign has to be that we want that opportunity to realize the American dream extended to all children. If that's the purpose of the campaign, I think it'll do quite well."

Escalante downplayed any high-profile role he might play as honorary chairman by saying he's "really too old to learn the politics," and plans to stay in the classroom and out of any future television ads.

"First of all, to be a politician you have to lie. I don't think I'm going to be able to do that," Escalante said. "In the classroom, you can be honest with kids."

San Francisco Chronicle

THE VOICE OF THE WEST

FRIDAY, JANUARY 30, 1998

OPEN FORUM

Bilingualism Works — But Bilingual Education Doesn't

By Ron K. Unz

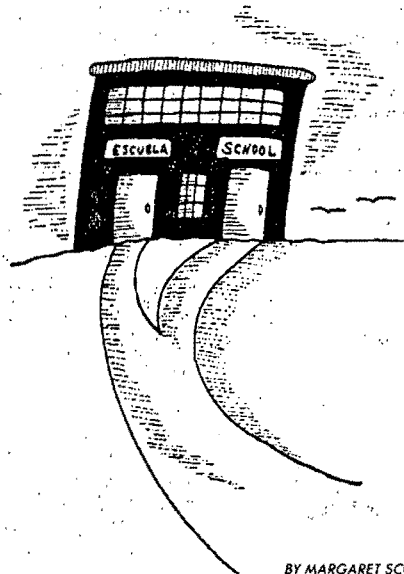
AS EACH NEW microchip and fiber-optic cable shrinks our world, more and more Americans recognize the practical importance of bilingualism. Entrepreneurs or employees fluent in Chinese, Japanese or Spanish as well as in English have a distinct edge.

While other languages are of growing world importance, English ranks in a class by itself. Although English is not and never has been America's official national language, over the past 20 years it has rapidly become the entire world's unofficial international language, utterly dominating the spheres of science, technology and international business. Fluency in Spanish may be a significant advantage, but lack of literacy in English is an almost fatal disadvantage in our global economy. For this reason, the better public and private schools in Europe, Asia and Latin America all provide English instruction as early as possible.

However, many of America's own public schools have stopped teaching English to young children from non-English-speaking backgrounds. Influenced by avant-garde pedagogy and multiculturalist ideology, educational administrators have adopted a system of bilingual education that is usually "bilingual" in name only.

Too often, young immigrant children are taught little or no English — in Los Angeles, only 30 minutes a day, according to the school district's long-standing master plan for bilingual education. This is based on the ridiculous notion that too much English too early will damage a child's self-esteem and learning ability. Hundreds of thousands of these American schoolchildren spend years being taught grammar, reading, writing and all other academic subjects in their "native" language — almost always Spanish — while receiving just tiny doses of instruction in English, taught as a foreign language.

The results of such an approach to English instruction are predictably dismal. Of the 1.3 million California schoolchildren — a quarter of our state's total public school enrollment — who begin each year without knowing English, only about 5 percent learn the language



by year's end.

Defenders of the status quo argue away these devastating statistics by claiming that 5-year-olds normally require about seven years to learn a new language and actually have more difficulty learning second languages than teenagers or adults; these are academic dogmas with no basis in reality.

On the other hand, the dreadful flaws in the current classification methodology are kept well hidden. In California, children from immigrant or Latino backgrounds are categorized as not knowing English if they merely score below average on English tests, meaning that unknown numbers of children whose first and only language is English spend their elementary school years trapped in Spanish-only "bilingual" programs.

The real dynamic driving this bizarre system is special government funding. School districts get extra dollars for each child who doesn't know English. This generates the worst sort of perverse incentive, in which administrators are re-

warded for not teaching English to young children or pretending that the kids haven't learned the language; schools are annually penalized for each child who becomes fluent in English.

Under such a scheme, the widespread educational fiction that young children require seven years to learn English suddenly becomes understandable as an enabling myth. And although no one has been able to properly document the total amount of supplemental spending on children who are limited in English, the annual total for California certainly exceeds \$400 million and probably exceeds \$1 billion.

Polls have consistently shown 80 percent to 85 percent dislike for bilingual education among its supposed beneficiaries. Indeed, the flaws have long been well-known to the system's primary victims — Latino immigrants and their children. In recent years, parents have protested such programs, most notably the 1996 Latino boycott at Los Angeles' Ninth Street Elementary School, which directly inspired our "English for the Children" initiative campaign. Jaime Escalante, the nationally-renowned Latino calculus teacher and longtime foe of "bilingual education" has joined our initiative campaign as an honorary chairman.

Our initiative, which has now gathered some 800,000 signatures and qualified for the June 1998 ballot, would end bilingual education in California by making it truly voluntary. Parents could still have their children placed or kept in a bilingual program by seeking a waiver, and those programs that do survive our initiative by attracting genuine parental support are probably worth preserving.

This way, all of California's immigrant schoolchildren finally will be granted the right to be taught English, the universal language of advancement and opportunity. Only by ending our failed system of bilingual education can we foster the true growth of bilingualism, and the unity and prosperity of our multiethnic society.

Ron K. Unz, a Silicon Valley high-technology entrepreneur, is the chairman of the "English for the Children" Initiative Campaign.

The
English for the Children

Campaign

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SEPTEMBER 28, 1997

PR #5

CONTACT: SHERI ANNIS

(213) 627-0005

Overcoming Leadership Opposition, California Republican Party Endorses “English for the Children” Initiative

Anaheim, CA---Overcoming strong opposition from senior leaders, the rank-and-file members of the California Republican Party voted overwhelmingly on Sunday at their semi-annual convention to endorse the June 1998 “English for the Children” initiative, which would largely end “bilingual education” programs in California public schools. Opposition to “bilingual education” has been part of state and national Republican Party platforms for two decades.

Republican Chairman Michael Schroeder and other party leaders had opened the convention on Friday vowing to prevent a party endorsement of the initiative, arguing that the ballot measure would further alienate Latino voters angry at the party’s past support for Prop. 187. Shortly thereafter, before most delegates had arrived, a newly created committee hand-picked by Chairman Schroeder voted 3-1 to block the endorsement resolution sponsored by Assemblyman Tom McClintock (R-Northridge).

But once the full membership arrived, the political tide began to turn as the caucus of all 58 of California’s Republican County Chairman voted unanimously to endorse the initiative. Then on Saturday morning, the party Resolutions Committee overturned the previous committee ruling by a 15-6 vote and revived the endorsement resolution, which subsequently passed overwhelmingly by voice vote of the full Republican Party membership on Sunday morning.

Ron Unz, Chairman of the “English for the Children” campaign and an outspoken opponent of Prop. 187, suggested that the Republican Party leadership misunderstood the desires of ordinary Latinos: “Nearly all Latino parents are very eager to have their children taught English when they go to school, which our initiative will finally allow. Ensuring that all young children are sent to school and taught English should be the most uncontroversial law imaginable. We’re also hoping to gain the endorsements of the Democratic, Reform, Libertarian, and Green parties as well.”

Aside from Republican Chairman Schroeder, Attorney General Dan Lungren, the likely Republican Gubernatorial nominee, and Republican Assembly Leader Bill Leonard had also indicated their opposition to the initiative. Gov. Pete Wilson had remained neutral.

English for the Children is a project of One Nation/One California

212 E. 6th St., Los Angeles, CA 90014 Tel: 213-627-0005 Fax: 213-627-0050

Web: <http://www.OneNation.org> E-Mail: info@OneNation.org

English for the Children

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San Francisco Chronicle

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA'S LARGEST NEWSPAPER

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 9, 1997

Big Majorities In Poll Support Bilingual Limit

Shorter transitions advocated for pupils learning English

By Robert B. Gunnison
and Nanette Asimov
Chronicle Staff Writers

Sacramento

A proposed ballot initiative to dramatically shrink California's bilingual education program enjoys wide support among voters of all parties and ethnic groups, a new Field Poll reports.

Among the 71 percent of voters who said they were aware of the initiative, 51 percent said they would vote yes, 18 percent no and 4 percent said they did not know.

Support strengthened after voters were read a summary of the measure, which is expected to officially qualify for the June ballot in the coming weeks. Sixty-nine percent said they would vote yes, 24 percent no, and 7 percent were undecided.

The measure was backed by 62 percent of Democrats and 76 percent of Republicans; 71 percent of white non-Hispanics, 66 percent of Latinos, 71 percent of African Americans and 55 percent of people of Asian descent and other backgrounds.

Mark DiCamillo, associate director of the poll, said the antipathy for bilingual education is so strong among voters that it overrides particular concerns with the details contained in the measure, which is sponsored by electronics millionaire Ron Unz.

"The concept of teaching kids

in English is a very broad concept that is supported in our society," DiCamillo said. "It touches a very strong nerve in public opinion."

But DiCamillo said the poll's findings may expose a vulnerability. "The quarrel may be with the particulars," DiCamillo said, noting that there is little consensus among voters about how to replace the existing bilingual program.

For example, the survey shows that voters are at odds with parts of the so-called English for the Children measure, especially a requirement that a strictly limited bilingual program be imposed statewide. Fifty-five percent of those polled said they preferred that rules be determined by local school districts, not the state.

DiCamillo also noted wide disparities when voters were asked how long children should receive bilingual instruction.

California's 20-year-old bilingual education law requires that pupils with limited or no English ability be taught in their native language until they are proficient in English, as long as seven years in some cases.

The Unz initiative would impose a "sheltered English immersion" not to last longer than one year.

The poll reported that a quarter of voters thought one year was the appropriate time to learn English, while nearly equal numbers said the instruction should take two or three years.

FIELD POLL/Bilingual education

INITIATIVE

■ After being read a summary of the proposed initiative requiring English as required language of instruction in the public schools, registered voters stated their opinions:

Voter	Would vote YES	Would vote NO	Undecided
Statewide	69%	24	7
Democrats	62%	28	10
Republicans	76%	20	4
Other political affiliations	71%	24	5
White (non-Hispanic)	71%	22	7
Latino	66%	30	4
Black/African American*	71%	22	7
Asian/other*	55%	35	10

* small sample sizes

IMPLEMENTATION

■ Should decisions about how school bilingual education programs are implemented be made on a statewide basis or locally by each school board? (asked of registered voters)

Voter	Locally	Statewide	Undecided
Statewide	55%	40	5
Democrats	51%	42	7
Republicans	58%	37	5
Other political affiliations	55%	40	5
White (non-Hispanic)	53%	42	5
Latino	61%	36	3
Black/African American*	48%	43	9
Asian/other*	65%	24	11

* small sample sizes

The poll was conducted November 12-23 by the Field Institute. Results are from a telephone survey of 696 randomly selected registered voters in California, including 334 Democrats, 271 Republicans, 91 with other political affiliations; 502 whites (non-Hispanic), 101 Latinos, 44 Black/African Americans and 49 Asians/other. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3.6 percentage points.

Chronicle Graphic

Both foes and supporters of the proposed initiative claimed the poll results supported their own views.

"I'm pleased by the numbers," said Sherri Annis, spokeswoman for the initiative campaign. "Most of the population wants children to be taught English as soon as possible."

But opponents said the Field numbers show that as voters become more familiar with the details of the initiative, support declines. They also cited an earlier poll by the Los Angeles Times, which showed 80 percent support in October.

"We're making progress," said Kelly Hayes-Raitt, a consultant hired by bilingual education supporters, including the California Teachers Association and the Association of School Administrators.

She added that the seemingly contradictory results over local control vs. support of a statewide mandate suggests that voters may not yet know that teachers and school board members would be held legally liable for failing to teach in the manner prescribed under the initiative, which would become part of the state Education Code.

"Once voters realize that the initiative is out of step with their values, then they'll defeat this initiative in June."

The telephone survey was conducted November 12 to 23 among 696 registered voters. The Field Institute said that among such a group, the sampling error would be plus or minus 3.6 percentage points and that results from subgroups could have larger sampling errors.

The New York Times

A15

FRIDAY, AUGUST 15, 1997

Desperate to Learn English

By Alice Callaghan

Juana and Florencio left the poverty of their rural Mexican village in 1985 and came to Los Angeles to work in the garment district's sweatshops. In 1996, they pulled their three children — all born in Los Angeles — out of school for nearly two weeks until the school agreed to let them take classes in English rather than Spanish.

Seventy other poor immigrant families joined this school boycott in February 1996, insisting that their children be allowed out of the city's bilingual program, which would not teach English to children from Spanish-speaking homes until they learned how to read and write in Spanish. In the end, the parents prevailed.

Yet, throughout California and elsewhere in the country, many Hispanic parents are worried that bilingual education programs are keeping their children from learning English.

These children live in Spanish-speaking homes, play in Spanish-speaking neighborhoods and study in Spanish-speaking classrooms. With

Alice Callaghan, an Episcopal priest, is director of the Las Familias del Pueblo community center.

little exposure to English in the primary grades, few successfully learn it later.

This is why many Latino parents are backing a California ballot initiative that would end bilingual education for most children in the state. The measure will be put to a vote in June if enough signatures are gathered to put it on the ballot.

School administrators, Latino politicians and other advocates of bilin-

Latino immigrants fight bilingual education.

gual education have denounced the measure. Though they acknowledge the failings of the system, they insist they can fix it with time.

Yet after 25 years, bilingual education has few defenders among Latino parents. In a Los Angeles Times poll this year, 83 percent of Latino parents in Orange County said they wanted their children to be taught in English as soon as they started school. Only 17 percent of those surveyed said they favored having their children taught in their native language.

One reason bilingual education is

so entrenched is money. Bilingual teachers in Los Angeles are paid extra, up to \$5,000 a year; schools and school districts receive hundreds of dollars for each child who is designated as having limited proficiency in English. About \$400 million in state and Federal money supports bilingual educational programs in California. Because such money is not readily relinquished, students languish in Spanish-language classes.

Moreover, there are not enough bilingual teachers. In Los Angeles, the shortfall has been so severe that the city has granted emergency credentials to people whose only claim to a classroom lecturer is their ability to speak Spanish.

Latino parents know that placing their children in English-language classes will not cure the many problems plaguing California schools, where the Latino dropout rate is 40 percent and Latino students have consistently low achievement test scores. Unless these students can learn in English, future school reform efforts will not help them.

Most parents who participated in the school boycott last year labor in garment district sweatshops. Others wait on tables, clean downtown offices or sell fruit or tamales on street corners. All struggle on average monthly incomes of \$800.

Education is their only hope for a better future for their children. The first step is learning English. □

The Failure of Bilingual Education

Introduction by Linda Chavez
Edited by Jorge Amselle

Center for Equal Opportunity, 1995

Is Bilingual Education an Effective Educational Tool?

by Christine Rossell

Bilingual education has been a controversial issue throughout the United States since its inception in the mid-1960s. Its most common form is called transitional bilingual education (TBE). In transitional bilingual education, the student is taught to read and write in the native tongue, with subject matter also taught in the native tongue. The second language (English) is initially taught for only a small portion of the day. As the child progresses in English, the amount of instructional time in the native tongue is reduced and English increased, until the student is proficient enough in English to join the regular classroom.

At the heart of the controversy over this pedagogical technique are three questions: (1) Should limited-English-proficient (LEP) children receive, because of their language barrier, special, self-contained instruction that keeps them out of the regular classroom? (2) Should LEP children be taught to read and write in their native tongue? (3) Should time be taken out of the regular instructional day to teach LEP children about the culture of their ancestors' countries? Although the public may disagree about the answers to these questions, federal and state policy makers have, since 1968, come down squarely on the affirmative side. Federal and state governments have provided millions of dollars to fund programs that teach LEP children in their native tongue and culture.

It is thus important to know whether TBE is the best method for teaching LEP children. In order to assess the educational effectiveness of

transitional bilingual education, however, we must compare it to other educational programs for LEP children. There are four basic alternatives for instructing LEP children. The first of these is *submersion* or "sink-or-swim." In this model, the LEP child is placed in a regular English classroom with English monolingual children and given no more-special help than any child with educational problems.

A second technique is *English as a Second Language* (ESL) instruction, which consists of regular classroom instruction for most of the day combined with a special pull-out program of English language instruction for one or two periods a day, or in some districts two or three periods a week, and participation in the regular classroom for the rest of the time.

A third instructional technique is *structured immersion*, where instruction is in the language being learned (in this country, English) in a self-contained classroom of LEP children. The second language used in these programs is always geared to the children's language proficiency at each stage so that it is comprehensible, and the student thus learns the second language and subject matter content simultaneously.

The fourth instructional technique, *transitional bilingual education* (TBE), is described above. The rationale underlying TBE differs depending on the age of the child. For very young children, it is that learning to read in the native tongue first is a necessary condition for optimal reading ability in the second language. For all children, it is argued that learning a second language takes time, and children should not lose ground in other subjects particularly math, during that time period.

The majority of elementary school programs have as their goal exiting a student after three years. But these programs also allow students to stay in the program longer than three years if they are judged to be below par in English language skills. Indeed, many children stay in a bilingual program throughout their elementary school career (see Rossell and Baker, 1988; Ramirez, 1991; Rossell, 1992). Transitional bilingual education is less common once a child reaches the grade where departmentalization occurs (different subjects taught by different teachers). Because teachers have to be certified in both a subject matter and in a foreign language to teach in a bilingual program in junior high and high school, few school districts are able to staff bilingual programs at these grade levels. Thus the typical

LEP child enters a regular English program in junior high school. It is only in the large school districts with large numbers of LEP students of a single language group that native-tongue instruction in one or more subjects might occur at the secondary level.

At least *nominally*, TBE appears to be the dominant special language instructional program in the U.S. The American Legislative Exchange Council and U.S. English (1994) recently reported 60 percent of the state and locally funded programs for LEP children were *labeled* bilingual education in 1991-92. I use the words "nominally" and "labeled" in a deliberate sense, however, because it is quite clear from visiting classrooms and reading evaluation reports that virtually the only children receiving native-tongue instruction in the U.S. according to the theory—learning to read and write in the native tongue and learning subject matter in the native tongue—are *Hispanic* children. This is because often only Hispanic children are a large enough group to have enough students speaking one language to fill a classroom *and* to have a teacher who is fluent in their native tongue.¹

The bilingual education programs for Asian, African, and European students are not truly bilingual education. Asian, African, and European students in so-called bilingual education programs learn to read and write in *English*, exactly the opposite of the theory, and receive little native-tongue instruction beyond learning the alphabet and a few words or phrases. Thus, claims for the success of Asians in bilingual education programs cannot be taken at face value. Asian and African bilingual education programs are generally closer to what is called structured immersion (that is, instruction in English in a self-contained classroom of LEP students), even though for political, legal, or funding reasons they may be described as "bilingual education." The European bilingual education programs (e.g. Russian, Portuguese, Hebrew, Polish, etc.) stray even further afield from the theory. Many of them are simply regular classroom instruction with ESL pull-out support if needed. This lack of consistency in the treatment only complicates the issue of evaluating and analyzing the effects of bilingual education programs.

The research evidence presented here is the result of a collaboration with Keith Baker in updating our earlier reviews of the research on bilin-

gual education—Baker and de Kanter (1981, 1983) and Rossell and Ross (1986).² The total number of studies and books we have read now numbers above 500, of which 300 are program evaluations, in the sense that their purpose is to evaluate the effectiveness of TBE or some other second language acquisition technique. Reviewing the research was a frustrating and arduous task since most of it consists of local evaluations that do not even come close to meeting scientific standards, even when they are conducted by outside consulting firms that are supposedly hired for their methodological expertise. Unfortunately, the fact that an article is published in an academic journal does not guarantee it is scientific. Approximately 11 percent of the methodologically unacceptable studies were published in academic journals. It thus appears that millions of dollars are wasted each year on unscientific, descriptive evaluations of local school district bilingual education programs.

Methodologically Acceptable Studies

We found 72 out of 300 program evaluations—about one-fourth of the total—to be methodologically acceptable. Methodologically acceptable studies generally had the following characteristics:

1. They were true experiments in which students were randomly assigned to treatment and control groups.
2. They had non-random assignment that either matched students in the treatment and comparison groups on factors that influence achievement or statistically controlled for them.
3. They included a comparison group of LEP students of the same ethnicity and similar language background.
4. Outcome measures were in English using NCEs, raw scores, scale scores, percentiles, etc., but not grade equivalents.
5. Additional educational treatments were either nonexistent or controlled for.

Findings

Table 1 shows the effect of transitional bilingual education—compared to (1) “submersion,” i.e., doing nothing, (2) ESL, (3) structured immersion, and (4) maintenance (long-term) bilingual education—on second language (usually English) reading, language, and mathematics as demonstrated by the 72 methodologically acceptable studies—all of them of Spanish bilingual education programs and students. Table 1 also shows the effect of structured immersion compared to ESL pull-out.³ Studies are repeated in more than one category of outcome if they had different outcomes at different grade levels or for different cohorts—that is, a group of students in the same grade. Those not in the table are excluded because they did not assess alternative second-language learning programs or they did not meet the methodological criteria.

The percentages in Table 1 indicate the percentage of studies showing a program to be better than the alternative it is compared to, the percentage showing no difference, and the percentage showing the program to be worse than the alternative it is compared to. This is repeated for each achievement outcome—reading, language, and math. The total number of studies assessing the particular achievement outcome for each category of comparisons are shown below the percentages.

TBE v. Submersion. Table 1 indicates that for second language *reading*,⁴ 22 percent of the studies show transitional bilingual education to be superior, 33 percent show it to be inferior, and 45 percent show it to be no different from submersion—that is, doing nothing. Altogether, 78 percent of the studies show TBE to be no different from or worse than the supposedly discredited submersion technique.

In a standardized achievement test of *language*, a test of a student’s understanding of grammatical rules, transitional bilingual education does even worse than it does in reading. Seven percent of the studies show transitional bilingual education to be superior, 64 percent show it to be inferior, and 29 percent show it to be no different from submersion—doing nothing. Altogether, 93 percent of the studies show TBE to be no different from or worse than doing nothing at all.⁵

These more negative findings for language than for reading suggest

Table 1

Percent of Methodologically Acceptable Studies* Demonstrating Program Effectiveness by Achievement Test Outcome

	READING**	LANGUAGE	MATH
TBE v. Submersion (Do Nothing)			
TBE Better	22%	7%	9%
No Difference	45%	29%	56%
TBE Worse	33%	64%	35%
Total N	60	14	34
TBE v. ESL			
TBE Better	0%	0%	25%
No Difference	71%	67%	50%
TBE Worse	29%	33%	25%
Total N	7	3	4
TBE v. Submersion/ESL			
TBE Better	19%	6%	11%
No Difference	48%	35%	55%
TBE Worse	33%	59%	34%
Total N	67	17	38
TBE v. Structured Immersion			
TBE Better	0%	0%	0%
No Difference	17%	100%	63%
TBE Worse	83%	0%	38%
Total N	12	1	8
Structured Immersion v. ESL			
Immersion Better	100%	0%	0%
No Difference	0%	0%	0%
Total N	3	0	0
TBE v. Maint. BE			
TBE Better	100%	0%	0%
Total N	1	0	0

* Studies are listed in more than one category if there were different effects for different grade or cohorts.

** Oral English achievement for preschool programs.

that a child is less dependent on school for many of the skills learned in reading—decoding, vocabulary, and understanding concepts—than they are for grammar. The fine rules of grammar, it appears, are learned mostly in school, and because they are more complex, they are more influenced by school time on task. Thus, these results suggest there is a risk that bilingual education students will incur a deficit in English grammar rules because they have spent less time on them than have LEP children in an all-English environment.

In *math*, 9 percent of the studies show TBE to be superior, 35 percent show it to be inferior, and 56 percent show it to be no different from submersion. Altogether, 91 percent of the studies show it to be no different or worse than the supposedly discredited submersion technique in developing math proficiency.

TBE v. ESL. Although many so-called submersion situations probably have an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) program where the students are pulled out of the regular classroom and taught English in small groups for a period a day or a few times a week, it is generally not specified in the evaluations. Nevertheless, we suspect that many of the studies classified above as submersion may in fact include an ESL pull-out component. In seven studies, transitional bilingual education is specifically compared to reading achievement in the regular classroom with ESL pull-out. None of these studies shows TBE to be better than ESL pull-out in reading. Five studies (71 percent) show no difference between transitional bilingual education and ESL in reading, and two studies (29 percent) show TBE to be worse than ESL. Of the three studies that examined language achievement, none showed TBE to be superior, two showed no difference between TBE and ESL, and one showed TBE to be worse. Of the four studies that examined math, one showed TBE to be superior, two showed no difference, and one showed TBE to be worse.

TBE v. Submersion/ESL. Because we suspect that many, if not most, of the so-called submersion alternatives had an ESL component, we also show in Table 1 the outcomes for a category (the third from the top) that combines submersion and ESL studies. Because of the small number of studies that specifically examine ESL pullout, there is virtually no difference in the findings: 81 percent of the studies show TBE to be no dif-

ferent from or worse than submersion/ESL in reading, 94 percent show TBE to be no different from or worse than submersion/ESL in language, and 89 percent show TBE to be no different from or worse than submersion/ESL in math.

TBE v. Structured Immersion. Table 1 also compares TBE to structured immersion, the fourth category from the top. Most of these studies come from the Canadian immersion programs, which come in several carefully documented types—early immersion (late bilingual), delayed immersion (early bilingual), dual immersion, and so forth. In many cases, we had to “translate” the programs into U.S. terminology. Twelve studies had reading outcomes, one study had language outcomes, and eight studies had math outcomes. No study showed TBE to be superior to structured immersion in reading, language, or math. In reading, 83 percent of the studies showed TBE to be worse than structured immersion, and 17 percent showed no difference. In language, the one study showed no difference. In math, five studies showed no difference, and three studies showed TBE to be worse than immersion.

Structured Immersion v. ESL. There were also three studies that compared structured immersion to ESL specifically. These studies all showed structured immersion to be superior to ESL in reading.

TBE v. Maintenance Bilingual Education. The final category in Table 1 compares transitional bilingual education to maintenance bilingual education, which continues native-tongue instruction after a child has become fluent in English. This study showed transitional bilingual education produced significantly higher English reading achievement than maintenance bilingual education.⁶ In other words, more English time on task (TBE) produces higher English language achievement than less time on task (maintenance bilingual education).

Conclusions

The results shown in Table 1 suggest that the ideal program for second language learners is “structured immersion” where instruction is in English at a level the students can understand in a self-contained classroom consisting entirely of LEP students. While it may be helpful if a

teacher knows his or her students’ native tongue, it is probably best for the students if the teacher is not *fluent* in it because, human nature being what it is, the more proficient a teacher is in a language, the more time he or she will spend teaching in it. Thus, contrary to the theory and current practice, I suspect that the better teachers of LEP children will be those who are more comfortable in English than their students’ native tongue.

Nevertheless, it cannot be emphasized enough that the research clearly shows, as with all other educational interventions, that the intervention itself is only one of many important factors explaining achievement. Indeed, the most important factors in a child’s acquisition of English and other subjects are the child’s family characteristics, his or her intelligence, the characteristics of his or her classmates, and the intelligence and talent of his or her teacher. For most students, at least in an educational system in which all programs ultimately provide substantial amounts of English, the exact percentage of each language has, on average, explained only a small portion of the variance in achievement. Even in the worst cases, I am struck by how small the differences in academic achievement are—a maximum of about 15 points—between programs with very different amounts of English instruction. For any single student, however, there could be serious consequences to having little English instruction. As Table 1 indicates, substantially more studies show a harm from TBE, compared to all-English instruction, than show a benefit, and this disparity increases when the all-English program is structured immersion. Thus, the risk of academic deficiency in English is greater for TBE than for all-English instruction.

Nevertheless, transitional bilingual education as actually implemented is typically not a disaster, despite its potential to be so. The facilitation theory justifying bilingual education states that students must be taught to read and write in their native tongue until they reach proficiency in the native tongue (called the threshold effect) in order to achieve the highest level of cognitive development and English language achievement. This theory if blindly followed could result in a child never transitioning out of the native tongue and never learning English. Yet students in TBE do learn English and master content areas in English, although they may be behind their LEP schoolmates who are taught completely in English.

I suspect that the major reason why TBE is not more harmful is that many bilingual education teachers are subverting the theory. Rather than waiting until their students are proficient in reading and writing in their native tongue as the theory advocates, they transition their students fairly quickly into English. Unfortunately, this cannot be said for all of them. Some teachers are ardent believers of the theories they have been taught, and their students are in TBE and native-tongue instruction for the entire time they are in school. As a result, my policy recommendation is for all-English instruction for LEP children, preferably structured immersion, although the period of being in a self-contained classroom must be of a very short duration, a year or less. The research evidence suggests that all-English instruction holds the least risk and usually has the greatest benefit for limited-English-proficient children.

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Endnotes

- ¹ Moreover, only the Spanish language teachers have non-native speakers fluent in the language. Because we share a border with a Spanish speaking country, there is ample opportunity for non-Hispanics to learn Spanish. In addition, Spanish is an easier language to learn for English speaking people than are any of the Asian or African languages. Thus, the non-Spanish bilingual programs have a much smaller teacher labor pool to draw from since virtually the only people who speak Cantonese, Khmer, Vietnamese, Cape Verdean, Haitian Creole, etc., are native speakers, almost all of them immigrants.
- ² This collaboration has produced a 1995 book *Bilingual Education Reform in Massachusetts*, published by Pioneer Institute in Boston, Mass.
- ³ All of the studies in Table 1 appear in complete citation form in Rossell and Baker (1996).
- ⁴ We included oral progress in preschool or kindergarten in this category since a reading test for these grades is obviously inappropriate.
- ⁵ Neither Baker and de Kanter (1981, 1983) nor Rossell and Ross (1986) examined language since at that time there were too few studies that examined this outcome.
- ⁶ Ramirez et al., 1991 also examined maintenance bilingual education (late-exit bilingual education), but unfortunately did not directly compare it to transitional bilingual education (contrary to media reports and his own conclusions). Although his graphs appeared to show that the students in late-exit bilingual education were doing worse than the students in transitional bilingual education, no statistical analysis was performed to verify that.

The
English for the Children
Campaign

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPTEMBER 11, 1997
PR #4

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Federal Judge Rules Against "Bilingual" Requirement, Paving the Way for June 1998 Statewide Initiative Vote

Sacramento, CA---Federal District Judge William B. Shubb Wednesday lifted a state court injunction blocking the Orange Unified School District's move toward English immersion classes. The ruling effectively ends "bilingual education" programs for the 29,000 students in Orange. Shubb's 17-page decision stated that any federal legal challenge against replacing "bilingual" programs with English immersion had "a low probability of success."

According to Ron Unz, Chairman of "English for the Children," Judge Shubb's ruling confirms both the lack of any federal basis for native-language instruction programs and the solid legal foundation of his proposed initiative. "Bilingual education is based on state law, and our initiative will change that state law. Children in the District of Orange will now be allowed to learn English when they enter public schools, but 99% of California schoolchildren are still trapped in districts where "bilingual education" is mandatory, and our initiative is their only hope of rescue. Our initiative will become law on the day it wins at the polls." The "English for the Children" initiative has now reached the 350,000 signature half-way point in its drive to qualify for the June 1998 ballot.

The previous day, a vote of the State Assembly effectively killed SB 6, the Alpert-Firestone measure, which would have provided increased flexibility in "bilingual education" programs. This represented the tenth consecutive year that the California Legislature had deadlocked over attempts to modify or reform "bilingual education." The education of California schoolchildren not fluent in English is currently governed by the Chacon-Moscone law, which requires native-language instruction for all English learners, with limited exceptions. Although the law expired in 1987, it has never been replaced and therefore remains in effect.

Unz suggests that the bizarre nature of this government program underscores the need to allow a direct vote of the California's citizens on the issue. "Today, nearly a quarter of all California schoolchildren are legally prevented from learning English when they enter school because of a state law which expired before most of them were even born. This is a perfect example of the Alice-in-Wonderland mess which only our initiative can clean up."

English for the Children is a project of One Nation/One California

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Federal Basis for "Bilingual Education" in California Schools

The constitutional basis for "bilingual education" programs in America ultimately derives from *Lau v. Nichols*, which was unanimously decided by the U.S. Supreme Court in 1974. This decision held that the placing of non-English-speaking children in regular public school classrooms violated the equal protection provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, and that special assistance must be provided to such students to compensate them for their language difficulties. However, the Court did not specify the precise form which such special assistance should take, and in particular did not require that "bilingual education" or native-language instruction be provided.

In 1978, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals (whose jurisdiction includes California) decided *Guadalupe v. Tempe*, clarifying the issue of language assistance raised by *Lau v. Nichols*. In this decision, the Appellate Court explicitly and emphatically held that "bilingual education" was not required under the U.S. Constitution or the 1964 Civil Rights Act and that providing extra English language assistance to students was a perfectly adequate means of satisfying the requirements of *Lau v. Nichols*.

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Guadalupe v. Tempe

587 F.2d 1022

GUADALUPE ORGANIZATION, INCORPORATED, a Non-Profit Arizona Corporation, on behalf of its members and the Community of Guadalupe, et al.,
Plaintiffs- Appellants,

v.

TEMPE ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 3 et al., Defendants-Appellees.

No. 76-2029.

United States Court of Appeals, Ninth Circuit.

Dec. 18, 1978.

Elementary school children of Mexican-American or Yaqui Indian origin brought civil rights action against elementary school district to compel district to provide non-English speaking students with bilingual-bicultural education. The United States District Court for the District of Arizona, Walter Early Craig, Chief Judge, entered judgment for school district, and plaintiffs appealed. The Court of Appeals, Sneed, Circuit Judge, held that: (1) elementary school district fulfilled its equal protection duty to children of Mexican-American and Yaqui Indian origin when it adopted measures to cure existing language deficiencies of non-English speaking students; equal protection clause imposed no duty upon district to provide bilingual-bicultural education to non-English speaking students; (2) school district was not required under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to provide non-English speaking students with a bilingual-bicultural education program staffed with bilingual instructors, and (3) where school district adopted measures to cure existing language deficiencies of non-English speaking students, Equal Educational Opportunity Act of 1974 did not require district to provide non-English speaking students with bilingual-bicultural education programs staffed with bilingual instructors.

Affirmed.

[1] CONSTITUTIONAL LAW k213(2)
92k213(2)

Action of elementary school district in choosing to provide a course of education other than bilingual and bicultural constituted "state action" for purposes of equal protection analysis of non-English speaking school children's Fourteenth Amendment claim against school district. U.S.C.A.Const. Amend. 14. See publication Words and Phrases for other judicial constructions and definitions.

[2] CONSTITUTIONAL LAW k85
92k85

Education is not a fundamental right; differences in treatment of students in educational process, which differences in themselves do not violate specific constitutional guarantees, do not violate Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause if such differences are rationally related to legitimate state interests. U.S.C.A.Const. Amend. 14.

[2] CONSTITUTIONAL LAW k242.2(5.1)
92k242.2(5.1)
Formerly 92k242.2(5)

Education is not a fundamental right; differences in treatment of students in educational process, which differences in themselves do not violate specific constitutional guarantees, do not violate Fourteenth Amendment's equal protection clause if such differences are rationally related to legitimate state interests. U.S.C.A.Const. Amend. 14.

The English for the Children

Campaign

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

AUGUST 5, 1997

PR #3

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Latino Leader of Clinton-Gore Campaign Joins Anti-Bilingual Initiative Drive

Redwood City, CA—Fernando Vega, a long-time leader of Latino Democrats in the San Francisco Peninsula area, today will endorse California's "English for the Children" initiative drive against "bilingual education," and join the campaign as Honorary Chairman for the Peninsula. Mr. Vega, a past City Councilman and School Board Member, had been recruited by the Clinton-Gore campaign in 1992 to lead the regional drive among Latino voters in the Peninsula area. His appointment will be announced Tuesday August 5th at 10:30am outside Hoover Elementary School, a school at which several of his own grandchildren had been placed in non-English "bilingual" programs against the wishes of their own parents.

During the 1970s Mr. Vega played a central role in establishing "bilingual education" programs at Hoover and other schools in his district, but in recent years concluded that the system is a failure and should be ended. "There is no shame in admitting that you once supported a program which you now see doesn't work in practice," declared Mr. Vega, "What is shameful is that so many politicians continue to support a program which they realize does not work and is hurting the education of millions of young children."

"Mr. Vega's public statements reflect the private sentiments of many, many other Latino political leaders," suggested Ron Unz, Chairman of the "English for the Children" campaign, "but most are unwilling to take a stand on an issue perceived as too controversial." Mr. Vega added "I hope that more Latinos and more Democrats will now do what they believe to be right and go public with their views on this bipartisan initiative of such importance to the future of California's Latino population."

The initiative, planned for the June 1998 ballot, would immediately move California's 1.3 million non-English proficient students from the native-language system of "bilingual education" mandated by current state law into an intensive program of "sheltered English immersion". "Bilingual education" would remain an option which parents could specifically request for their children. The initiative also allocates \$50 million per year for ten years to fund adult English literacy programs. Supporters and opponents both agree that the measure would essentially end "bilingual education" in California, and probably spark a move to do the same nationwide.

English for the Children is a project of One Nation/One California

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English for the Children
A Project of One Nation/One California

To my fellow Californians,

As a committed lifelong Democrat, I have always been proud to be a member of the party which cares about the lives and families of the ordinary working people of our country. As an American of Hispanic ancestry, I was especially proud in 1992, when the Clinton-Gore Campaign asked me to lead their election drive among Hispanics on the Peninsula. The 18,000 Hispanic voters which I helped turn out contributed to Bill Clinton's victory in California, and allowed my party to regain the White House after many years of Republican rule.

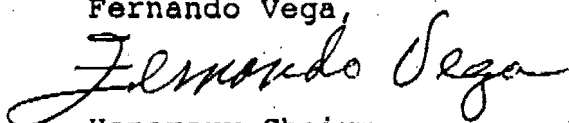
Now, as a Hispanic and as a Democrat, I am very proud to serve as Honorary Chairman of the Peninsula's "English for the Children" initiative campaign against "bilingual education."

I think that I am something of an expert on "bilingual education." All my life, I have fought hard for the equal rights of Hispanic children to receive a good education in the public schools. I fought for better educational programs while I was a private citizen, while I was on the Redwood City school board, and while I was on the Redwood City Council. I helped create our local "bilingual education" program because I believed that it would be best for Hispanic children. But now, after many years of trying, it is obvious that bilingual education just doesn't work and we must end it.

There is no shame in admitting that you once supported a program which you now see doesn't work in practice. What is shameful is that so many politicians and other officials continue to support such a program year after year, even after they see that it has failed to work and that it is harmful to the future of the young children who are in it. Unless young children are taught to read and write English in our schools, they cannot do well in our society, and children who are in "bilingual" programs just don't learn to read and write well.

I hope that all Democrats and Republicans in California who care about the education of young children will join me in helping to end these programs which do so much harm.

Fernando Vega,



Honorary Chairman

END

San Mateo County Times

SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA

WEDNESDAY: September 10, 1997

The Peninsula's Hometown Newspaper

Unlikely ally in English-only clash

Vega mounts campaign to make changes in education system

By Kim Vo
STAFF WRITER

REDWOOD CITY — Fernando Vega likes to tell tales. About the time he secured college prep classes for his oldest son, or fought for bilingual education in local schools or worked to raise the standing of the Latino community.

Then he tells you he screwed up.

Not on all the battles, but certainly on the bilingual education front. He was simply wrong, Vega says now.

"I saw it as a tool to get to the means. It didn't work," Vega said. "Let's try something else. Let's re-examine it."

A Latino Democrat who *habla español muy*



GEORGE WOLF—Staff

Fernando Vega, a former Redwood City school board member and an early advocate of bilingual education, has joined the campaign to eliminate most bilingual classes.

bien, Vega is an unlikely proponent of English for

Please see **Vega**, A-11

Vega: Parent fought for son

Continued from A-1

the Children, a state ballot initiative sponsored by Palo Alto entrepreneur and Republican Ron Unz.

The initiative calls for teaching all children — regardless of their native tongue — in English.

Parents would have to specially request their children be placed in bilingual classes, a flip-flop of the current system, Unz said.

Vega serves as honorary chair of the Peninsula district for Unz's campaign. A green slate with "English for the Children" written in chalk sits on his dirt yard in Redwood City. Another sign rests on his white station wagon.

He distributes pamphlets and gathers some of the 430,000 signatures the initiative will need to qualify for next June's ballot.

He fields phone calls. Lots of phone calls, not just from interested residents but from local newspapers, the Associated Press and the Boston Globe.

"I'm 73," Vega said. "If I pass this (ballot initiative) it is the biggest gift I give to Latino kids."

Kids lured Vega into the political arena from the start. His oldest son, Oscar, signed up for high school physics, algebra and government in 1964.

He was given general math, wood working and ceramics, Vega said.

Incensed, Vega spoke with the Sequoia High School counselor who assigned Oscar the classes. He was told that college preparatory classes had limited enrollment and since Oscar, a Latino, couldn't afford college it was best to prepare him for a blue-collar life.

Vega fought until his son was allowed into the advanced academic classes and Oscar went on to college. Fernando earned a reputation as a Latino advocate and was eventually appointed to the Redwood City school board in 1969.

During that same time parents rallied to have a bilingual expert for the district's growing Latino population.

"One teacher said, 'They're very nice kids. I want to teach them, but I can't. I don't speak Spanish,'" Vega said.

Vega sided with the parents who argued schools should hire teachers who speak Spanish and English. Nearly two decades later, Vega says it was a mistake.

Children aren't learning English rapidly enough, he said, and that means low-paying jobs in their future.

Nearly 1.4 million California students have only limited proficiency in English, according to the state department of education figures. Each year, only about 6 percent of them, a little more than 89,000, become fluent in English.

The statistics are only slightly better in San Mateo County, where 8 percent of the 19,069 students with limited English skills, about 1,480 students, become fluent each year, according to state figures from March 1997.

Critics like Vega say those figures mean bilingual education has a 92 percent failure rate.

But others argue that throwing all students into classes taught exclusively in English is not the answer.

Students who arrive in America when they're older are often frustrated because they can't even learn math or science until they master English, said Gloria Siguenza, the county's coordinator for support services for English learners.

"Kids who don't speak English, or very little, they're sitting in the classroom and doing nothing. They're lucky to come out of high school and get a job," Siguenza said.

While she agreed that some bilingual programs needed to be reformed, Siguenza believes Unz's proposal to place everyone in English-only classes is oversimplified.

The Importance of Learning English

A National Survey
of Hispanic Parents

Commissioned by
Center for Equal Opportunity

Conducted by
Market Development Inc.

Analysis by
Diversified Research Inc.



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**EMBARGOED UNTIL
SEPTEMBER 5, 1999**

Introduction

by Linda Chavez

President, Center for Equal Opportunity

One of the biggest challenges schools now face is educating a large and growing population of children who cannot speak English. The Department of Education estimates that some 2.4 million children, nearly three-quarters of whom are Hispanic, have limited proficiency in English. For more than two decades, federal policy has encouraged programs to teach these children in their native language for some or most of their academic subjects. According to a recent study by the American Legislative Exchange Council, 60 percent of state and locally funded programs for students with limited English proficiency are bilingual education programs, which use the child's native language for at least part of the instruction.¹ Indeed, many prominent bilingual education advocates claim that learning to read first in the native tongue is necessary to develop optimal reading ability in the second language.² In practice, this often means that limited-English-proficient children will be kept in bilingual education programs for years. One recent study of New York City schools found that only about half of children who entered bilingual programs in kindergarten graduated into regular classes within three years, and only 22 percent of children who began such programs in second grade did so.³

Most methodologically sound studies of bilingual education, however, show that teaching a child in his or her native language is largely ineffective. The most comprehensive analysis of the academic literature on this subject, conducted by Christine Rossell and Keith Baker, shows that native language instruction is no better than, or actually worse than, doing nothing at all for limited-English-proficient children. In place of bilingual education, Rossell recommends, "all-English instruction holds the least risk and usually the greatest benefit for limited-English-proficient children."⁴

But beyond the debate over the efficacy of bilingual education is the question of what parents of limited-English-proficient children really want for their own children. This question has been largely ignored in the research on bilingual education. As a practical matter, this issue primarily concerns Hispanic parents, who make up the overwhelming majority of children in bilingual programs. To date, only two national surveys of parents of limited-English-proficient children have been undertaken: a study by the Educational Testing Service for the U.S. Department of Education in 1988; and an opinion poll of Hispanics on a variety of public policy topics, "The Latino National Political Survey," in 1992.⁵ The former showed that the overwhelming majority of Hispanic parents—78 percent of Mexican Americans and 82 percent of Cubans—opposed teaching their children in Spanish if it

meant less time for teaching English. Although the Latino National Political Survey showed strong support for bilingual education, less than 10 percent of respondents thought that the purpose of bilingual education was to maintain Spanish language and culture.⁶

The Center for Equal Opportunity commissioned the following survey of Hispanic parents in an effort to discern what they want their children to learn in school. The survey was conducted by Market Development Inc., a California-based polling firm that specializes in the Hispanic market. Survey results were analyzed by Diversified Research Inc., a national survey research firm based in New York.

The Center for Equal Opportunity is a non-partisan research institution, which studies the issues of race, ethnicity, and assimilation. This survey is part of an ongoing project on bilingual education.

¹ American Legislative Exchange Council Foundation and U.S. English, "Bilingual Education in the United States 1991-1992; Special Supplement; The Report Card on American Education," (Washington, D.C.: 1994)

² See Stephen Krashen and Douglas Biber, *On Course: Bilingual Education in California* (Sacramento: California Association for Bilingual Education, 1988); and Kenji Hakuta, *Mirror of Language: The Debate on Bilingualism* (New York: Basic Books, 1986).

³ New York City Board of Education, "Educational Progress of Students in Bilingual and English as a Second Language Programs: A Longitudinal Study, 1990-1994."

⁴ Christine H. Rossell and Keith Baker, *Bilingual Education in Massachusetts: The Emperor Has No Clothes*, (Boston: Pioneer Institute, 1996).

⁵ Joan Baratz-Snowden, et al., "Parent Preference Study," (Princeton, N.J.: Educational Testing Service, 1988); Rudolfo O. de la Garza, et al., *Latino Voices: Mexican, Puerto Rican, and Cuban Perspectives on American Politics* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1992).

⁶ Baratz-Snowden, 54; de la Garza, 99.

Executive Summary

by Michael LaVelle
President, Diversified Research Inc.

This analysis summarizes the results of a survey of Hispanic parents of school-age children, conducted by Market Development Inc., on behalf of the Center for Equal Opportunity, during July-August 1996. The purpose of the survey was to document the experience of Hispanic parents with school programs designed for children needing help with English, and to ascertain Hispanic parents' attitudes regarding the goals and practices of such programs. Because Hispanics account for the majority of the clientele of U.S. school programs for children needing help with English, the present study should be of more than academic interest. In fact, the results of the survey have clear and important implications from a social policy planning viewpoint.

Methodology

In all, 600 interviews were completed with Hispanic parents, each with one or more children currently in school (first grade through high school). Respondent selection occurred within five metropolitan areas in which Hispanics are relatively heavily concentrated, viz., Los Angeles, New York, Miami, San Antonio, and Houston. Questionnaires were administered via telephone, by professionally trained, bilingual interviewers calling from a central data collection facility located in San Diego, Calif. The results of a survey of 600 randomly selected respondents is statistically accurate to within plus or minus 4 percent at the 95 percent confidence level. This means that 95 times out of 100, the results will fall within a range of plus or minus 4 percentage points of the results one would obtain from interviewing the entire population from which the sample was drawn.

In addition to the substantive questions related to the goals and practices of school programs for children needing help with English, survey respondents were also asked a series of socio-demographic background questions. This allows the sample to be segmented for analysis purposes. For example, variations in responses can be systematically analyzed for patterns of similarity or difference based on age, gender, educational level, ethnicity, geographical region, length of time in the U.S., language spoken, etc.

Summary of Results

Respondents were read, in random order, a list of five educational goals and asked to rank them by indicating which they considered to be most important, which second most important, etc. The five educational goals, listed in order of importance, as ranked by Hispanic parents, are as follows:

	Percentage of Hispanic Parents Ranking Each Goal:	
	Most Important	Second Most Important
Learning to read, write, and speak English	51.0%	18.8%
Learning academic subjects like math, history, science	23.3%	30.7%
Learning to read, write, and speak Spanish	11.0%	25.5%
Learning about Hispanic culture	4.3%	8.5%
Learning extras like music, arts, and sports	3.7%	8.8%

As the table shows, the majority of Hispanic parents (51%) considered *learning to read, write, and speak English* to be most important among the five educational goals presented. Learning English was judged to be much more important than *learning other academic subjects, including math, history, and science* (23.3%). This, in and of itself, attests to the importance Hispanic parents place on learning English. Perhaps most telling, however, is the relative importance of learning English versus learning Spanish. Only 11 percent of all respondents designated *learning to read, write, and speak Spanish* as the most important goal, distantly followed by only 4.3 percent who think the top priority should be *learning about Hispanic culture*.

The greater priority placed on learning English versus learning Spanish occurred consistently across all major subgroupings of the sample population. All were more likely to rank learning English as a more important goal than learning Spanish: respondents in all five metropolitan areas, regardless of ethnic background; regardless of educational level; regardless of whether they currently, formerly, or never have had a child in a language program. Females were slightly more likely to prefer English than were males.

Since all interviewers were bilingual, respondents had the option of being interviewed in either English or Spanish. Interestingly, those interviewed in Spanish were actually more likely to rank learning English as most important (52.2%) than those interviewed in English (45.1%). This does not mean however that those interviewed in English were more likely to think that learning Spanish should be the top priority. In fact, only 4.9 percent of those interviewed in English ranked learning Spanish as the most important goal. Those interviewed in English were found to be relatively likely to place great importance on *learning other academic subjects like math, history, and science* (44.1 percent of those interviewed in English ranked this as the most important goal).

The relatively higher rankings attached to learning English versus learning Spanish provide strong evidence regarding the educational priorities of Hispanic parents. Another question on the survey addressed the issue not in terms of which is more important, but rather which should come first. The exact wording follows:

In your opinion, should children of Hispanic background, living in the United States, be taught to read and write Spanish before they are taught English, or should they be taught English as soon as possible?

	Percent
Spanish before English	16.7%
English as soon as possible	63.0%
Same time (volunteered)	17.3%
Not sure	3.0%

Once again, the results are clear-cut. Hispanic parents are decisively more likely to prefer that their children be taught English as soon as possible, rather than postponing English instruction while they are being taught Spanish. Although there are variations in intensity, the pattern is broad-based with all subgroupings of the sample in agreement on this issue. For example, among those interviewed in English, 81.4 percent favor teaching English as soon as possible. Among those interviewed in Spanish, a smaller but still significant majority (59.2%) choose this option (only 18.3 percent of those interviewed in Spanish would prefer that children learn Spanish first).

Intensity on this issue varies directly with educational level. The higher the educational level of the respondent, the more likely it is that he or she will prefer that English be taught as soon as possible. A similar pattern prevails with respect to the length of time respondents have lived in the United States. The longer they have been here, the more likely they are to favor English being taught as soon as possible. Cuban-Hispanics are especially adamant on this issue (70 percent want English as soon as possible).

A final question addressed the issue of how language instruction should interface with academic course instruction. The question was:

In general, which of the following comes closest to your opinion?	Percent
1. My child should be taught his/her academic courses in Spanish, even if it means he/she will spend less time learning English	12.2%
2. My child should be taught his/her academic courses in English, because he/she will spend more time learning English	81.3%
3. Unsure	6.5%

The overwhelming majority of Hispanic parents want their children's academic courses to be taught in English. This is true among all subcategories of the sample. Groups whose members are relatively most likely to insist on English include Cubans, in general, those in the United States the longest and those with the highest levels of education. Most interestingly, 82 percent of those with a child currently in a school program for children needing help with English would prefer that their children be taught in English.

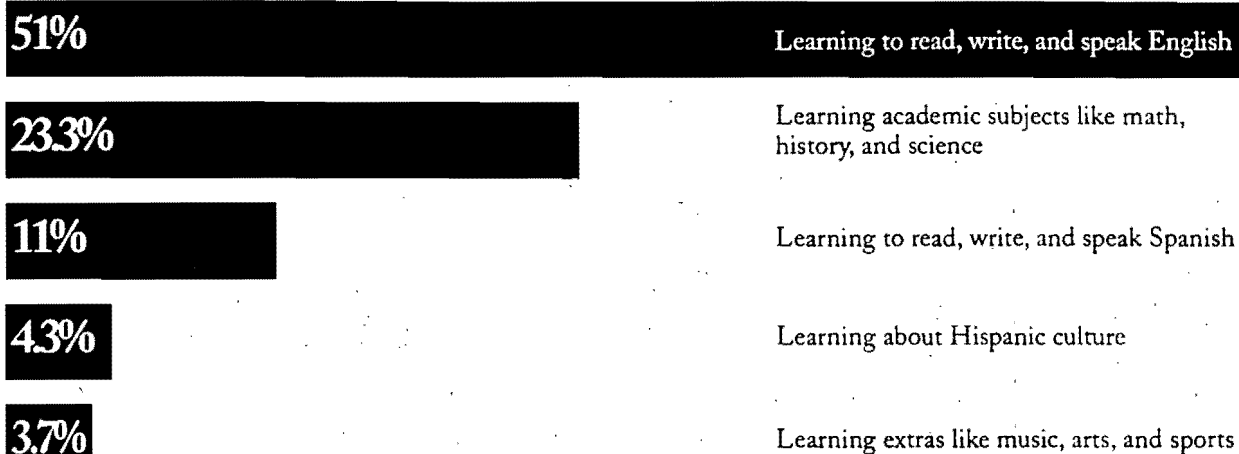
In summary, this survey of Hispanic parents unequivocally shows that Hispanic parents place a higher priority on their children learning English over learning Spanish; that they want their children to learn English first, that is, before they are taught to read, write and speak Spanish. They want to reinforce their children's English skills and their children to be taught their academic courses in English rather than in Spanish. Furthermore, these findings are broad-based—all subgroupings of the sample population share these opinions.

This having been said, the findings of this survey do not in any way suggest that Hispanic parents do not want their children to learn Spanish. It only addresses the perceived relative importance of English versus Spanish, with English being considered the more important life skill for Hispanic children living in the United States.

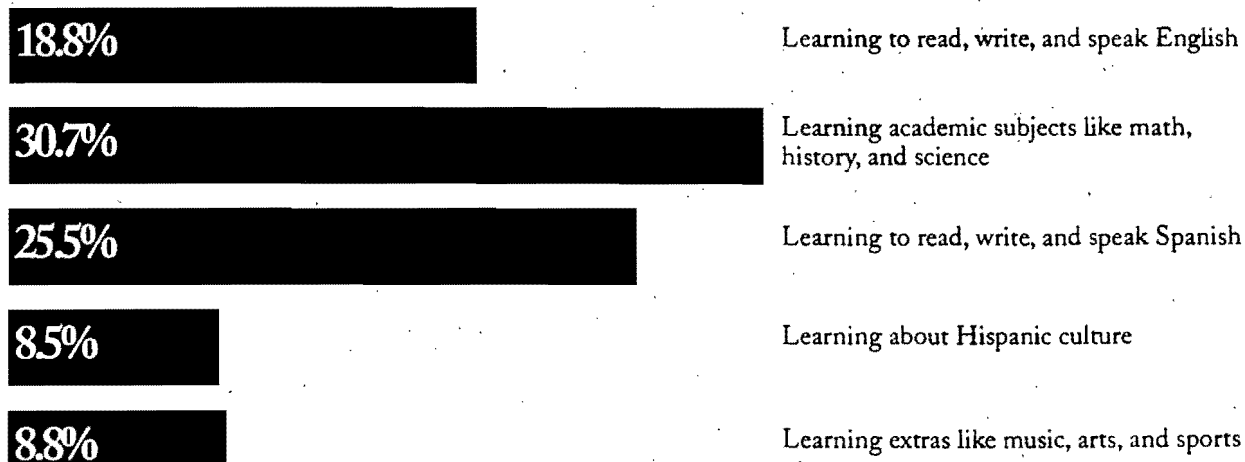
The implications of these findings from a social policy planning viewpoint should be obvious. Hispanic parents may want their children to learn Spanish language skills, and to learn about Spanish culture, but they certainly do not want this to occur at the expense of learning to read, write, and speak English or before they learn these skills. School programs that provide Hispanic children with help in English should be designed with the findings of this study in mind.

What Do Hispanic Parents Think Is Most Important?

Percentage Of Hispanic Parents Ranking Each Goal:
Most Important

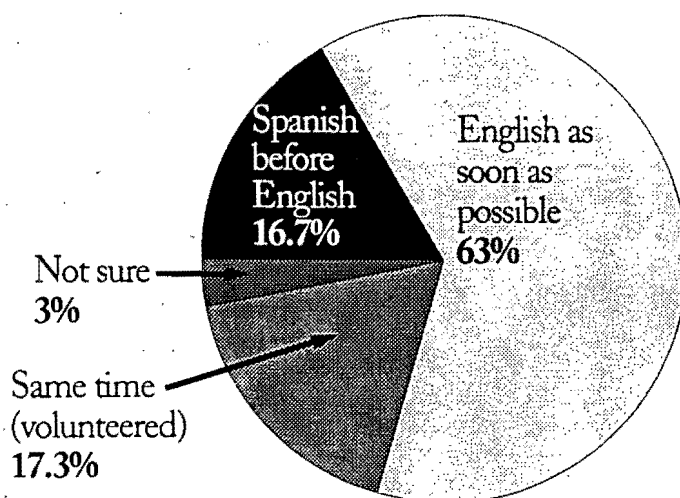


Second Most Important



How Soon Should Hispanic Children Be Taught English?

In your opinion, should children of Hispanic background, living in the United States, be taught to read and write Spanish before they are taught English, or should they be taught English as soon as possible?



Percentage of parents who think Hispanic children should be taught English as soon as possible:

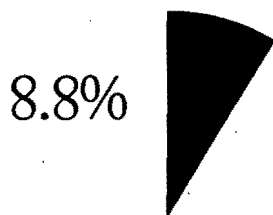


Interviewed in English

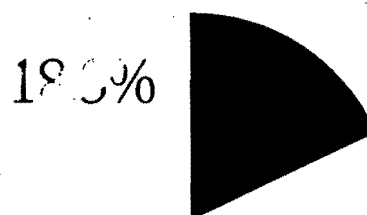


Interviewed in Spanish

Percentage of parents who think Hispanic children should be taught to read and write Spanish before they are taught English:



Interviewed in English



Interviewed in Spanish

Should Academic Courses Be Taught in English or Spanish?

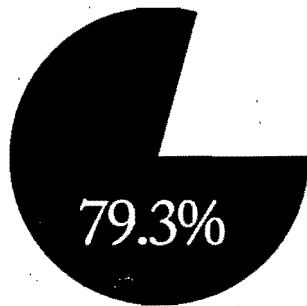
Percentage who prefer English:

Percentage who prefer Spanish:



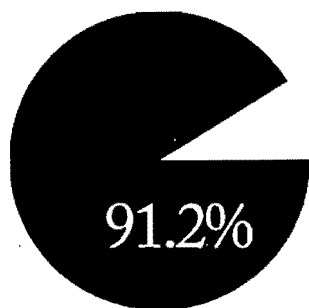
12.2%

All Hispanic Parents



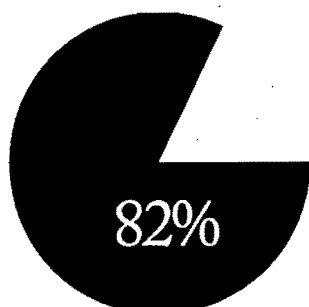
13.3%

Interviewed in Spanish



6.9%

Interviewed in English



12%

Currently with children in program for those who need help in English

Questionnaire

Question 1. How many school-age (first grade through high school) children do you have, who are living at home?

One	38.7%	(232)
Two	36.5%	(219)
Three	17.2%	(103)
Four or more	7.7%	(46)
Total responses		(600)

Question 2. Would you prefer that this interview be conducted in English or Spanish?

English	17.0%	(102)
Spanish	83.0%	(498)
Total responses		(600)

Question 3. Is your child (are any of your children) currently in, or ever been in, a program in school for children who need help with English?

Currently in	8.3%	(50)
In past/not now	7.2%	(43)
Never been in	81.5%	(489)
Don't know	3.0%	(18)
Total responses		(600)

Question 4. Was your child (were any of your children) ever asked to be in such a program?

Yes	12.0%	(61)
No	80.1%	(406)
Don't know	7.9%	(40)
Total responses		(507)

Question 5. In what grade is your oldest child who is currently in such a program?

First	10.0%	(5)
Second	12.0%	(6)
Third	8.0%	(4)
Fourth	8.0%	(4)
Fifth	10.0%	(5)
Sixth	10.0%	(5)
Seventh	8.0%	(4)
Eighth	4.0%	(2)
Ninth	8.0%	(4)
Tenth	16.0%	(8)
Eleventh	2.0%	(1)
Twelfth	2.0%	(1)
Refused to answer	2.0%	(1)
Total response		(50)

Question 6. How many years ago was your child last in such a program?

One	37.2%	(16)
Two	11.6%	(5)
Three	9.3%	(4)
Four	9.3%	(4)
Five	9.3%	(4)
Six or more	18.6%	(8)
Don't know/refused to answer	4.7%	(2)
Total responses		(43)

Question 7. How many years has your child been in (was your child in) the program?

One	30.1%	(28)
Two	22.6%	(21)
Three	21.5%	(20)
Four	9.7%	(9)
Five	5.4%	(5)
Six or more	4.3%	(4)
Refused to answer	6.5%	(6)
Total responses		(93)

Question 8. Was your child in the program a boy or a girl?

Boy	52.7%	(49)
Girl	47.3%	(44)
Total responses		(93)

Question 9. Was your child in the program born in the United States?

Yes	45.2%	(42)
No	54.8%	(51)
Total responses		(93)

Question 10. At what age did your child come to the United States?

One	13.7%	(7)
Two	3.9%	(2)
Three	11.8%	(6)
Four	2.0%	(1)
Five	2.0%	(1)
Six	11.8%	(6)
Seven	9.8%	(5)
Eight	5.9%	(3)
Nine	7.8%	(4)
Ten	3.9%	(2)
Eleven	2.0%	(1)
Twelve	3.9%	(2)
Thirteen	7.8%	(4)
Fourteen	5.9%	(3)
Fifteen	5.9%	(3)
Sixteen	2.0%	(1)
Total responses		(51)

Question 11. When your child first entered the program, did he or she speak English?

Yes	12.9%	(12)
No	79.6%	(74)
Some	7.5%	(7)
Total responses		(93)

Question 12. While in the program, how many of your child's lessons were taught in Spanish? Would you say most of the lessons were in Spanish, about half the lessons were in Spanish, only a small part of the lessons were in Spanish, or none of the lessons were in Spanish?

Most in Spanish	26.9%	(25)
About half	29.0%	(27)
Small part	22.6%	(21)
No Spanish	9.7%	(9)
Don't know/refused	11.8%	(11)
Total responses		(93)

Question 13. Please rank the following things children might learn in school in order of importance:

"learning to read, write, and speak English"

(1) Most	51.0%	(306)
(2) Second	18.8%	(113)
(3) Third	7.0 %	(42)
(4) Fourth	6.0%	(36)
(5) Least	9.2%	(55)
Don't know/refused to answer	8.0%	(48)
Total responses		(600)

"learning to read, write, and speak Spanish"

(1) Most	11.0%	(66)
(2) Second	25.5%	(153)
(3) Third	21.8%	(131)
(4) Fourth	16.8%	(101)
(5) Least	15.7%	(94)
Don't know/refused to answer	9.2%	(55)
Total responses		(600)

"learning academic subjects, like math, history, science"

(1) Most	23.3%	(140)
(2) Second	30.7%	(184)
(3) Third	25.0%	(150)
(4) Fourth	10.0%	(60)
(5) Least	3.2%	(19)
Don't know/refused to answer	7.8%	(47)
Total responses		(600)

"learning about Hispanic culture"

(1) Most	4.3%	(26)
(2) Second	8.5%	(51)
(3) Third	19.7%	(118)
(4) Fourth	36.8%	(221)
(5) Least	22.2%	(133)
Don't know/refused to answer	8.5%	(51)
Total responses		(600)

"learning extras like music, art, and sports"

(1) Most	3.7%	(22)
(2) Second	8.8%	(53)
(3) Third	18.5%	(111)
(4) Fourth	21.2%	(127)
(5) Least	39.8%	(239)
Don't know/refused to answer	8.0%	(48)
Total responses		(600)

Question 14. In your opinion, should children of Hispanic background, living in the United States, be taught to read and write Spanish before they are taught English, or should they be taught English as soon as possible?

Spanish before English	16.7%	(100)
English soon/possible	63.0%	(378)
Same time	17.3%	(104)
Don't know/refused to answer	3.0%	(18)
Total responses		(600)

Question 15. In general, which of the following comes closest to your opinion?

1. My child should be taught his/her academic courses in Spanish, even if it means he/she will spend less time learning English

2. My child should be taught his/her academic courses in English, because he/she will spend more time learning English

Spanish	12.2%	(73)
English	81.3%	(488)
Don't know/refused to answer	6.5%	(39)
Total responses		(600)

Question 16. How many years of formal education have you had?

Some grade school	10.3%	(62)
Finish grade school	12.5%	(75)
Some high school	22.8%	(137)
Finish high school	21.8%	(131)
Commerical/tech	3.5%	(21)
Some college	11.8%	(71)
Finished college	12.5%	(75)
Graduate studies	3.0%	(18)
No school	1.0%	(6)
Refused to answer	0.7%	(4)
Total responses		(600)

Question 17. What is your age?

18-25	3.5%	(21)
26-40	57.5%	(345)
41-54	31.5%	(189)
55-64	4.2%	(25)
65 or older	1.3%	(8)
Refused to answer	2.0%	(12)
Total responses		(600)

Question 18. What is your origin of descent?

United States	11.0%	(66)
Mexico	47.8%	(287)
Cuba	8.3%	(50)
Puerto Rico	6.8%	(41)
Dominican Republic	4.2%	(25)
Spain	0.8%	(5)
Other Central America	10.5%	(63)
South America	9.3%	(56)
Other	0.3%	(2)
Refused to answer	0.8%	(5)
Total responses		(600)

Question 19. How many years have you lived in the United States?

10 years or less	24.2%	(145)
11-20 years	31.3%	(188)
More than 20	22.2%	(133)
All my life	20.5%	(123)
Refused to answer	1.8%	(11)
Total responses		(600)

Question 20. Gender:

Male	31.7%	(190)
Female	68.3%	(410)
Total responses		(600)

Question 21. How well did respondent speak English?
(Interviewers' evaluation of language skills)

Very well	27.2%	(163)
Well	20.7%	(124)
Not well	35.5%	(213)
Not at all	16.7%	(100)
Total responses		(600)

Question 22. Marker

Los Angeles	(120)
Miami	(120)
New York	(120)
San Antonio	(120)
Houston	(120)
Total responses	(600)

Facts about the 1998 California "English for the Children" Initiative

(1) *Immigrant education is a complete failure in California.* Some 1.4 million California public school children---a quarter of the total---are now classified as not proficient in English. Over the past decade, the number of these mostly Latino immigrant children has more than doubled. California's future depends on these children becoming fluent and literate in English, and this is the official goal of the current system, centered on use of native language instruction, with English being introduced to children only in later grades (so-called "bilingual education"). Yet each year only about 5% of school children not proficient in English are found to have gained proficiency in English. Thus, **the California's current system of language education has an annual failure rate of 95%.**

(2) *Latino parents want their children to learn English.* Several state and national polls by the *LA Times*, Field, and other organizations have repeatedly shown that Latinos overwhelmingly support having their children taught English as soon as they enter school; the statewide *Times* poll from October showed 84% Latino support for an all-English curriculum. Adult immigrants are also eager to learn English (English courses are the top advertiser on Spanish language TV).

(3) *Anti-bilingualism has become linked with anti-immigrant sentiments.* There is a strong perception that many opponents of "bilingual education" are using the issue as a cover for anti-Latino and anti-immigrant views. Unfortunately, this is often true. On the other side, private polling indicates that anger at "bilingual education" is a leading cause of anti-immigrant sentiment among California Anglos. Having individuals with strong pro-immigrant credentials lead the move away from "bilingual education" would help to decouple these two issues.

(4) *California state politics is completely gridlocked on this issue.* The legislation requiring "bilingual education" expired ten years ago, but political pressure and statutory interpretations have kept the system alive and growing during this period, with annual spending exceeding \$300 million per year. Dozens of bills marginally changing the system have been proposed over these years, but none have become law. Given this history, it seems likely that the legislature will permit this failed policy to continue indefinitely.

(5) *An initiative would break the impasse and change policy at a stroke.* There is no significant basis in federal or state constitutional law for requiring "bilingual education". An initiative statute redirecting schools toward English language immersion for immigrant children would have immediate and sweeping effect. Such a ballot measure should be overwhelmingly popular, and pass quite easily. A positive, pro-immigrant campaign should win a strong majority of immigrant/Latino voters themselves, lending strong legitimacy to the results.

(6) *Immigrant children and others would become fluent and literate in English.* Research indicates that sheltered immersion for young immigrant children is the most rapid and efficient means of language acquisition, and it is the standard throughout the world. Within months to a year, the overwhelming majority of these young children would become fluent in English and could be transferred into a mainstream classroom, giving them the same educational opportunities as all other school children. This would have a tremendously positive impact on the future of California society. Also, some of the \$400 million to \$2 billion in annual savings would be used to provide \$50 million to local school districts to fund adult English literacy programs for all Californians.

"English for the Children"

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January 1998

BILINGUAL BARRIO

**Why Latino parents
are rebelling
against "bilingual
education"**

By Glenn Garvin

ROCK-HARD REGULATION

**A family business
nightmare**

By Brian Doherty

DRIVING US CRAZY

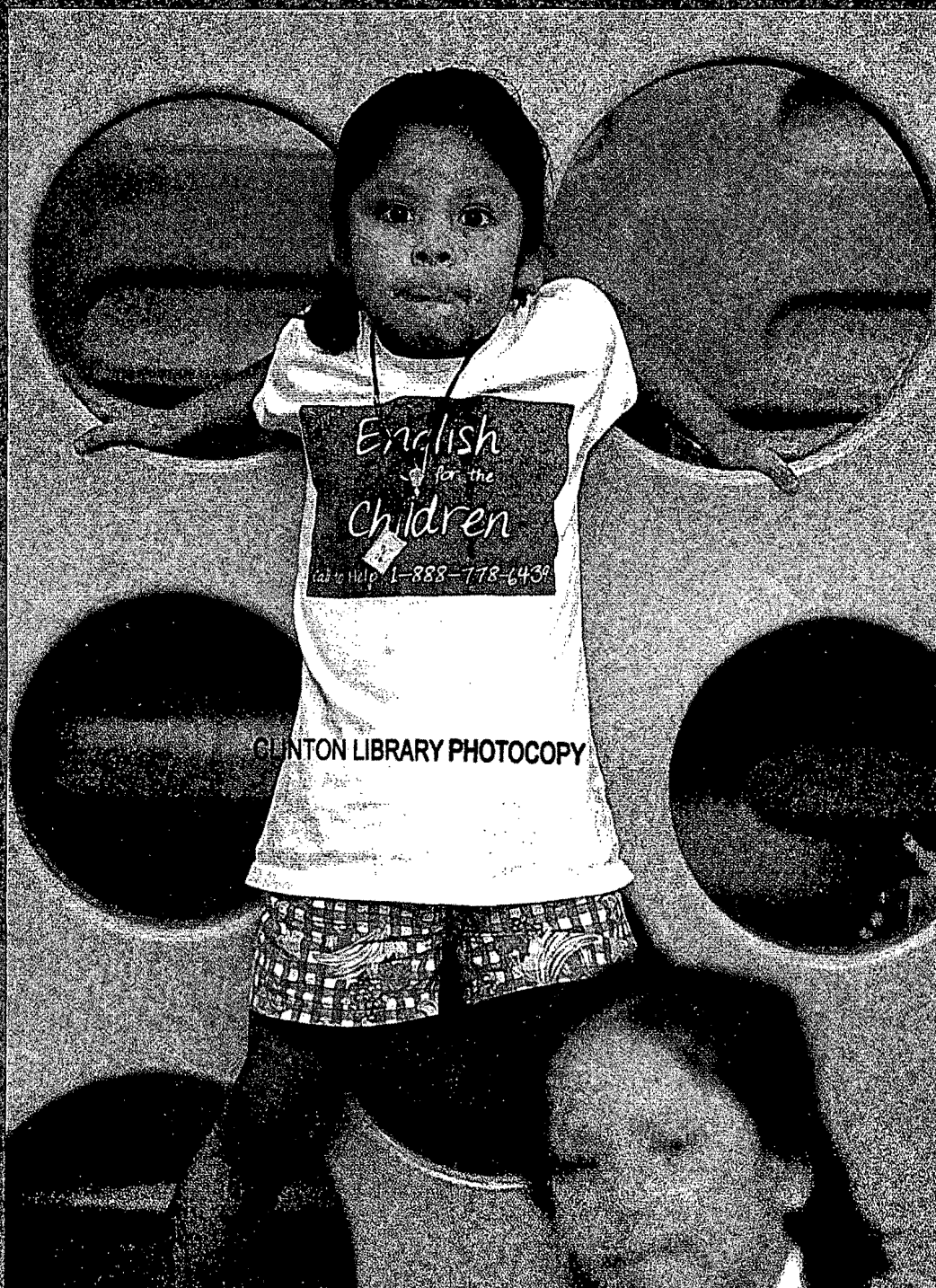
**Steven Hayward on the
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JAPAN'S UNNATURAL DISASTER

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AL SHANKER'S DUBIOUS LEGACY

**Richard C. Seder on
Myron Lieberman's
*The Teacher Unions***



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Los Angeles Times

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15, 1997

THE TIMES POLL

Bilingual Education Gets Little Support

■ Latinos, even more than whites, favor dismantling the program. Californians also back assault weapons ban and don't want unions' political activity restricted.

By MARK Z. BARABAK
TIMES POLITICAL WRITER

Opponents of bilingual education enjoy overwhelming support in a brewing ballot fight that has sparked early skirmishing in the 1998 campaign, with strong backing among California voters of all races, ethnicities and political persuasions.

A proposed measure to virtually dismantle California's system of bilingual public education garnered huge support among the state's electorate, with 80% in favor and 18% against, according to a new Los Angeles Times poll.

Support was in the 75% to 80% range virtually across the board, among all races, income levels and age groups. Latinos voters surveyed favored the initiative by a slightly higher margin—84% to 16%—than whites, at 80% to 18%.

Even two-thirds of self-described liberals supported the proposed initiative, aimed at the June 1998 ballot.

The Times survey offered the first independent sounding of public opinions on a wide range of social and public policy issues that could face California voters when they go to the polls next year.

Among its other findings:

- A proposed measure aimed at curbing the influence of organized labor by restricting the political use of union dues was opposed by nearly 2 to 1. Those not in unions were only slightly less opposed than union members.

- Californians evidently look

Please see POLL, A20

Continued from A1

forward to their expanded choices under the state's new "open primary" law, which allows them to vote next June for whichever candidate they prefer, regardless of party. Only a minuscule percent-

THE TIMES POLL

age said they intended to use the opportunity to make political mischief.

- Californians strongly support the state's ban on assault weapons, though most question its effectiveness. Such doubts notwithstanding, an overwhelming majority would like to see the ban strengthened.

- Californians strongly support legalized abortion during the first three months of pregnancy. At the same time, however, a large majority believe parental consent should be required for girls under 18.

The poll surveyed 1,396 adults statewide Oct. 4-7. The margin of sampling error is plus or minus 3 percentage points.

Much of the early attention surrounding the 1998 campaign has focused on the proposed bilingual education initiative. The measure, pushed by Silicon Valley businessman Ron Unz and Orange County schoolteacher Gloria Matta Tuchman, promotes English-only in-

How the Poll Was Conducted

The Times Poll contacted 1,396 adults, including 1,092 registered voters, statewide by telephone Oct. 4-7. Telephone numbers were chosen from a list of all exchanges in the state. Random-digit dialing techniques were used so that listed and non-listed numbers could be contacted. The sample was weighted slightly to conform with census figures for sex, race, age, education, region and registration. The margin of sampling error for all adults and registered voters is plus or minus 3 percentage points; for certain subgroups, the error margin may be somewhat higher. Poll results also can be affected by other factors, such as question wording and the order in which questions are presented.

struction for California's 1.3 million students with limited English skills.

Some Latino political activists have criticized the proposal and the negative reaction has, in turn, made some Republican leaders skittish about associating the party with the so-called Unz initiative, for fear of a backlash.

But the GOP rank and file was solidly behind the measure, with 89% support. Seventy-three percent of Democrats backed the initiative.

"The immigrant community has long viewed education as a way up the socioeconomic ladder," said Susan Pinkus, director of the Times Poll. But, she continued, "a lot will depend on how the campaign for the Unz initiative is waged and how the Latino community responds."

As a case in point, she noted the polling history of Proposition

187, the 1994 anti-illegal immigration initiative. A Times poll conducted in September 1994 found that Latinos supported Proposition 187, 52% to 42%.

However, sentiment toward the initiative had turned decidedly negative by election day, after a campaign that many Latinos perceived as scapegoating their community. Although Proposition 187 won statewide approval by a handy margin, exit interviews conducted at polling places found that 77% of Latinos ended up voting against the measure.

"The Unz initiative starts out a lot less controversial," Pinkus said. "The campaign to follow will determine if it stays that way."

English-Only Support



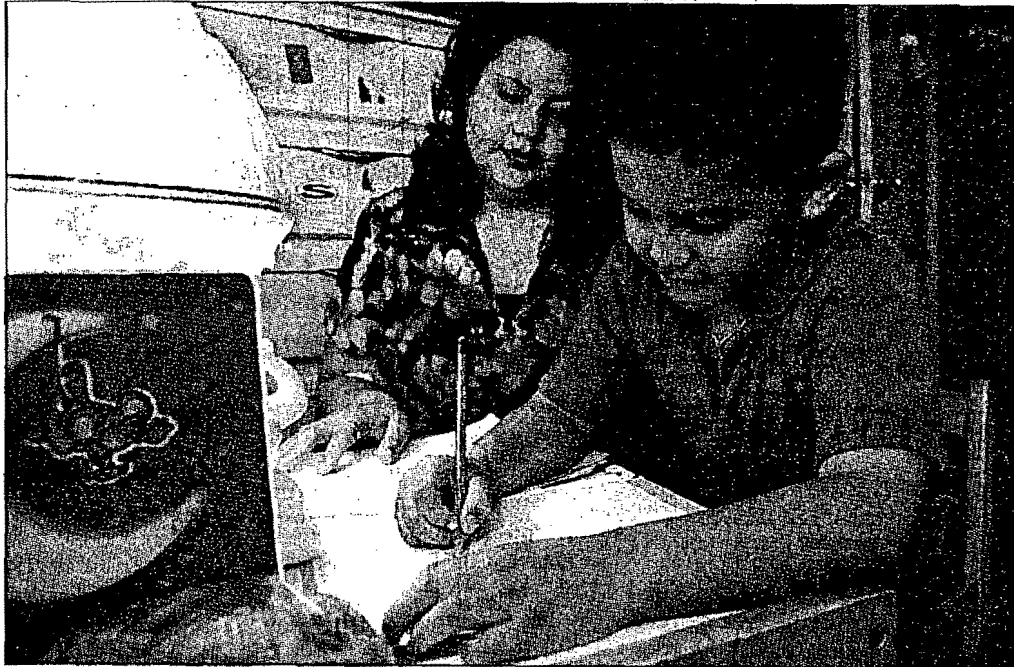
Percentage of each group supporting a proposed initiative to have all public school instruction conducted in English, and to place students not fluent in English in a short-term English immersion program.

All voters	80%
Whites	80%
Latinos	84%

Source: Los Angeles Times Poll

Boston Sunday Globe

SUNDAY, AUGUST 31, 1997



GLOBE PHOTO / PETER STONE

Ericka Velasquez watches her son Tony, who is in a bilingual class, do homework.

In California, a fight for English

Latinos, others blame bilingual education for illiteracy

By Lynda Gorov
GLOBE STAFF

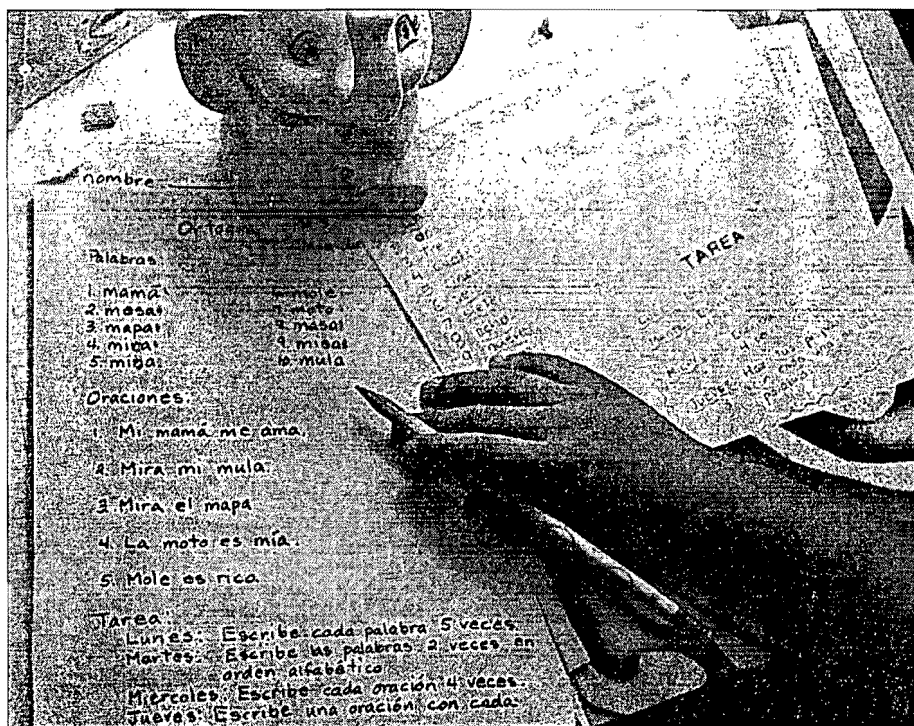
LOS ANGELES - Tony Velasquez doesn't much like school these days. The homework confuses him, and his mother says he doesn't always know what language he is supposed to be reading, writing, and studying.

Tony, 7, is fluent in English and Spanish. But when second grade started Aug. 12, he was assigned to a class for Spanish speakers at

his elementary school for the second year in a row - both times against his parents' wishes.

"We watch English television. We read English newspapers. I buy him comic books in English, and all the books I take out from the library for him are in English," said Ericka Velasquez, who like her son was born in the United States. "If he has trouble reading, they should deal with that in English. I'm his parent, and I know what's best for him."

BILINGUAL, Page A12



GLOBE PHOTOS / PETER STONE

The homework, at left, for Tony Velasquez, a second-grader at Zela Davis Elementary School in California, is mostly in Spanish. At right, his mother, Ericka, helps him but says Tony, who was born in the United States, should be learning in English.

In Calif., a fight for English in classrooms

■ BILINGUAL
Continued from Page A1

Twenty-five years after Mexican-Americans fought for Spanish in the classroom, an unlikely coalition of Latinos, leftists, and conservatives wants to do away with "bilingual" instruction unless parents specifically request it for their children. Their statewide initiative, called English for the Children, is slated for next June's ballot, and it promises another heated political debate among Californians.

An angry Velasquez recently signed on. Opponents call the initiative another anti-immigrant effort, sold on a premise that no one rebuts: All schoolchildren should become proficient in English. Conceding that many of California's bilingual programs are failing youngsters, they say the courses should be reformed, not eradicated.

"It is easier to do away with it than to fix it," said Theresa Bustillos, vice president of legal programs at the Mexican-American Defense and Educational Fund. "It's an extreme version of sink or swim."

Supporters of the measure counter that children must be immersed in English if they hope to succeed in the United States. They blame bilingual education for the 50 percent dropout rate among Hispanic children in California, and say that even those students who earn high school diplomas are too often illiterate in English. The initiative proposes one year of English immersion before students are mainstreamed.

"Parents do not want their children working in sweatshops or cleaning downtown office buildings when they grow up," said Alice Callaghan, an Episcopal priest and director of the Las Familias del Pueblo community center. "They want them to get into Harvard and Stanford, and that won't happen unless they are truly fluent and literate in English."

Callaghan and the Mexican families she works with unintentionally helped launch the

movement last year when they insisted their children be taught in English and pulled them out of classes when the school refused. Two weeks later, they prevailed.

The boycott, in an impoverished part of Los Angeles, caught the attention of Ron Unz, a Silicon Valley multimillionaire who says he has long believed that bilingual education hampers English literacy. Unz wrote the initiative and has put \$100,000 into the cause — money spent in part on collecting the 433,000 signatures necessary to get the measure on the ballot.

Despite Unz's strong Republican ties, few party leaders have publicly joined in the fight against bilingual education. He says they fear alienating a fast-growing base of voters even further. Neither have Hispanic politicians. But Unz says many have privately told him they consider the programs misguided.

"My goal is to have this pass overwhelmingly with the votes of all the different ethnic groups, native born and immigrants," said Unz, who opposed the anti-illegal-immigrant Proposition 187.

Added Gloria Matta Tuchman, a veteran Santa Ana teacher of Mexican descent who has won awards for teaching in English and who has become the campaign's public face: "This is not about English only. This is about English literacy. It's time we do this, and it's what the parents want."

Not all parents. While a Los Angeles Times poll showed that 83 percent of Hispanic parents in Orange County favor English instruction from the outset, for instance, hun-

dreds of parents protested when the Orange Unified School District decided to end bilingual education this school year. In response to their lawsuit, a judge issued a restraining order that has forced the district to continue bilingual education even though Superintendent Robert French said most of his bilingual teachers have already left for other jobs.

Educators around the state are monitoring Orange Unified's challenge to native-language instruction for students not fluent in English. With about 1.3 million schoolchildren attending bilingual classes — 23 percent of the total — California spends more than \$320 million a year on programs for them.

"It's important to understand that Orange's bilingual program, like all bilingual programs, is voluntary," said Peter Roos, codirector of Multicultural Education, Training and Advocacy Inc. and one of the lead lawyers in the lawsuit. "What they've done is remove the choice of these parents."

Roos is right. Parents can request that their children be taught in English, although many say their requests are ignored. English for the Children would in effect reverse that policy: Parents would have to ask for bilingual instruction.

In the meantime, some parents worry that their children are languishing in bilingual classes, which they say are not the same as English-as-a-second-language instruction because they emphasize Spanish. Initiative supporters cite statistics showing that just 5 percent of students in bilingual programs are

found to be proficient in English each year — a 95 percent failure rate. Opponents, however, call those figures misleading because they include students enrolled in ESL classes and students just entering bilingual programs.

"We're dealing with poor children who have no books at home, public libraries that are near the bottom in the country, and school libraries that are the worst in the country," said Stephen Krashen, a professor of curriculum and teaching at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles who is a proponent of bilingual education. "If algebra weren't working well, would we do away with it?"

Gabriel Medel, first vice chairman of the Los Angeles Unified School District's Bilingual Advisory Committee, said the issue is teaching children to learn, regardless of the language they are taught in. Both his sons received bilingual instruction, one for more than four years, the other for three.

"For us, the primary purpose is for them to learn English," Medel said. "But at the same time they are learning English, no matter how long it takes, they need to be learning the academics, too."

But Fernando Vega, who helped bring bilingual instruction to Redwood City in northern California in the early 1970s, has come to believe that English is more essential than any other language. He said his grandson, raised in an English-speaking home, was assigned to bilingual classes because his elementary school offered none in English. The only options were to transfer to a school outside the neighborhood or enroll in private school.

"It's not even bilingual education. It's Spanish immersion," Vega said. "It's an affront to tell us our children can't learn English. And there's nothing more immigrant-bashing than denying an education to these kids generation after generation."

'This is not about English only. This is about English literacy. It's time we do this, and it's what the parents want.'

GLORIA MATTA TUCHMAN,
Teacher in Santa Ana

The Economist

AUGUST 30TH - SEPTEMBER 5TH 1997

16

Bilingual education

Separate and unequal

LOS ANGELES

IN 1994 it was benefits for illegal immigrants. Two years later it was positive discrimination for racial minorities; a ban on this has just got past its final legal hurdles. Next year it will almost certainly be bilingual education, the system by which Latino children (and sometimes those of other races) are taught, at least in the early years, in their own language rather than English. Every election year Californians get a chance to tell their rulers what is on their minds, thanks to the system of citizen-inspired ballots; and what is on their minds, quite simply, is race.

So far, these ballot-inspired debates have proved disappointingly predictable. Is there any chance that bilingual education will be any better? Not at first sight. The man behind the campaign to scrap it is a Republican multi-millionaire, Ron Unz, and the usual ethnic activists are already lining up to impugn his motives. Theresa Bustillos, of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Education Fund, dubs this the third in a row of anti-Latino measures.

Look a little closer, however, and the politics becomes more interesting. Mr Unz, who made his money in software, is a libertarian rather than a Buchananite, with an impeccable record on race relations; he

was one of the most outspoken opponents of Proposition 187, which denied benefits to illegal immigrants. The co-chairman of his campaign, Gloria Matta Tuchman, is a Mexican-American teacher. The drive to gather the 433,000 signatures needed to put the measure on the ballot is being organised by Progressive Campaigns Inc, a left-leaning organisation that has previously lent its support to the minimum wage and the medical use of marijuana. As for the Republican Party, it is so terrified of further accusations of immigrant-bashing that it is refusing to touch the subject.

Mr Unz says that he first got interested in the subject in 1996, when he read accounts of a boycott of a school in LA's garment district organised by parents who were furious that their children were not learning any English. Last year a poll by the Center for Equal Opportunity, a think tank based in Washington, DC, found that 81% of Latino parents prefer their children to learn English as soon as possible. Most Latinos realise that English literacy is the

key to upward mobility—providers of English courses are the top advertisers on Spanish-language television—and worry that bilingual education is nothing more than a poverty trap. No wonder that Latino political leaders do not list defending bilingual education among their top five priorities.

Nonetheless, it is a vast industry in California. About 1.3m children—almost a quarter of California's school population—attend bilingual classes at a cost of more than \$300m a year. The schools have a huge financial incentive for maintaining the system. Bilingual teachers are paid up to



A world in two languages

\$5,000 a year extra; and schools that provide bilingual teaching are eligible for a slice of federal and state grants.

Mr Unz regards bilingual education as the "single most bizarre and unsuccessful government programme in California today." He argues that only about 5% of children who enter the bilingual stream graduate into English-speaking classes each year—for all practical purposes bilingual is in fact monolingual education—and that huge numbers of children leave school unable to read or write in the official language of their adopted country. He also points out that the legislation sanctioning this gigantic programme expired a decade ago.

His objections to the programme run deeper, however. The American tradition has always been one of assimilation, he argues; now, thanks to the bilingual education movement, schools are deliberately leaving children imprisoned in the *barrio*.

Mr Unz's ballot measure argues that the state should stop teaching non-English-speaking children in their native language, unless their parents specifically ask for it, and should instead give them a year of "sheltered English immersion"—with teachers using simple English—before putting them into mainstream classrooms. It also calls for an extra \$50m a year for the next ten years for adult literacy, an idea that has infuriated the nativist right.

Mr Unz's campaign has a good chance of success. Most Americans—including most immigrants—instinctively feel that the main job of schools is to ensure that children are proficient in the language of their adopted country. The majority of teachers, usually bastions of conservatism, are unhappy with bilingual education. Many blacks resent the fact that bilingual education diverts resources from their own children; hence the fruitless attempt to get

"ebonics" classified as a distinct language.

Even bilingual education's supporters admit that the current system is a mess. The California legislature has been trying to do something about it for years, but has been paralysed by infighting. Every year children from ethnic minorities are railroaded into bilingual classes even if they speak English at home. The shortage of bilingual teachers is so severe in places such as Los Angeles that emergency teachers are being recruited whose only credentials are their ability to speak a language other than English. Latino schoolchildren—the programme's main clients—have the lowest test scores of any ethnic group in the state, and the highest school drop-out rate. "The trouble with bilingual education is that it's expensive and it doesn't work," says Joel Kotkin of Pepperdine University. "Apart from that, it's fine."

Cause Without Rebels

Anti-bilingual ed initiative of Ron Unz draws neither praise nor fire

BY GREGORY RODRIGUEZ

When "English for the Children" first surfaced, this proposed ballot initiative against bilingual education looked like the logical political descendant of California's recent campaigns against undocumented immigrants and affirmative action. Bilingual education would be the latest target for the state's disproportionately large and cranky Anglo electorate. Presumably, much of the white electorate, led by conservatives and anti-immigrant activists, would line up to support the initiative, while liberals and Latinos would amass forces on the other side.

But so far, an entirely different political dynamic has emerged, according to political consultants and senior officials from both major parties. Neither the Latino political leadership nor that of the state Republican Party wants anything to do with this initiative. Many Republicans are reluctant to be identified with an issue that could expose them to further charges of being immigrant bashers or anti-Latino. The Latino political establishment, on the other hand, is reluctant to defend bilingual education, a program whose success many privately question. Nor do some want to con-

demn openly an initiative sponsored by Ron Unz, one of the rare Republicans who have stood strong with immigrants in the past.

The proposed initiative, which proponents hope to place on the June 1998 primary ballot, would require limited-English-speaking students to be taught in English unless their parents request otherwise. English learners would then have no more

than one year of "sheltered English" instruction — where teachers use simple, accessible language — before being moved into a regular classroom. The ballot proposition also calls for adding \$50 million a year for 10 years to pay for more adult English-literacy classes.

Plainly, this initiative has a born constituency among the conservative supporters of propositions 187 and 209. As for Latinos, initial public-opinion polls are not necessarily adverse. A *Los Angeles Times* poll of Latinos in Orange County indicated that a majority of immigrant parents support English immersion. Behind the scenes, initiative sponsor Unz is engineering a statewide poll that he hopes will yield similar results.

Yet despite the initiative's broad potential voter base, the state GOP is so far keeping its distance. Although Republicans

SEE BILINGUAL, PAGE 16



Unz: Main man for English

BILINGUAL from page 10

made a tremendous run on the back of Proposition 187, they tripped on the short coattails of Proposition 209, and some leaders question the political benefit of what could become the third racially divisive initiative in as many election years. The party is still reeling from the punishment delivered by Latino voters in last November's general elections.

State Republican Party chairman Michael Schroeder, for one, has publicly distanced the party from the initiative. "The Democrats will certainly run out there and say this is just another example of [Repub-

lican] Hispanic bashing," Schroeder said in a June interview with the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. "It's not true. It's not a party-sponsored initiative." Speaking with the *Weekly*, Schroeder was more circumspect. He said he has "instructed Hispanic groups within the GOP to study the matter and come back with a recommendation."

This is a notably cautious response from a politico not known to shrink from two-fisted partisan politics: Schroeder is Bob Dornan's personal lawyer in his battle to invalidate the narrow electoral victory of Loretta Sanchez in a working- and middle-class Orange County congressional district.

His lukewarm disposition toward the Unz initiative may derive in part from the

funding bilingual education is not even among the top five cutting-edge issues facing Latinos, according to a recent survey of the city's Latino leadership by the Center for the Study of Los Angeles at Loyola Marymount University. Political scientist Fernando Guerra, who conducted the as-yet-unreleased survey, said the issue has been declining in importance on the Latino political agenda.

And unquestioning support for bilingual education also has eroded in other areas of traditional support. A referendum that would have undermined the policy of bonus pay for teachers with bilingual training received surprisingly strong support in June among the membership of United Teachers-Los Angeles (UTLA). Even though the mass of UTLA's executive leadership urged a vote against the referendum, some 43 percent supported it anyway. The measure would have directed the union "to use all personnel and resources necessary to eliminate all state-mandated bilingual requirements for teacher credentials, teacher certificates and for teacher in-service training,"

In the Legislature, state Senator Richard Polanco, the chair of the state Latino Legislative Caucus, reportedly has no plans to mount an organized challenge to the initiative. Another key player, state Assembly Majority Leader Antonio Villaraigosa (D-Los Angeles), by contrast, has said he would strongly oppose the initiative, calling it a vehicle to bring out Republican voters. "I think the Unz initiative is the third installment in the Republican trilogy of polarizing initiatives," said Villaraigosa in a recent interview. "We will fight it."

But other than such rhetoric, there are no signs that he or any other elected official will marshal opposing forces. Thus far,

the California Association of Bilingual Educators has reportedly tried without success to get the Latino political leadership to put its weight behind an opposition campaign.

The political no man's land into which this initiative has descended is strangely reflective of its sponsor, iconoclast Ron Unz, the physicist-cum-software-designer millionaire who impertinently challenged Governor Pete Wilson in the 1994 Republican primary.

Unz, who describes himself as both a Ronald Reagan Republican and a libertarian conservative, does not include immigrant bashing in his portfolio. To the contrary, he recently compared the Federation of Americans for Immigration Reform (FAIR), the nation's most prominent conservative immigration-reform group, to the 1920s Ku Klux Klan. And while Wilson was riding the anti-immigrant wave of Proposition 187 to an electoral landslide, Unz had the audacity to appear as a featured speaker at a 70,000-person-strong pro-immigrant rally in October 1994. Unz repeatedly predicted that 187, if enacted, would be the worst moral disaster in California since the internment of Japanese-Americans during World War II. Unz also claims to have persuaded prominent national Republicans William Bennett and Jack Kemp to publicly oppose 187.

One year later, he derisively referred to Democratic California Senator Dianne Feinstein as "Big Sister" after she proposed a national identity card.

Such pro-immigrant bona fides have so far inoculated Unz from any serious charge of Latino bashing by liberals since the initiative was officially announced in May. Unz opted for a voter initiative, he said in an in-

terview, because he has neither the patience nor the time to pursue the "slow" route. In recent sessions, proposed reform of bilingual education has gridlocked at the hands of competing special interests.

In pushing his initiative, Unz seems more interested in getting Latino Democratic support for his measure than in courting his own party. Unz has chosen a Latina bilingual teacher to be his co-chair on the initiative, and only last week received an endorsement from a prominent Bay Area Latino Democratic politico. "It's important to keep this as a stand-alone issue," said Unz. "I want this to be a bipartisan initiative." Ultimately, some activists may hold their peace because their organizations

could receive portions of the \$50 million allotment for adult language instruction.

In the meantime, Bok Pon, the Chinese-born vice chairman of the state GOP in Northern California, is among those lobbying party leader Schroeder to let Republican delegates decide whether to support the initiative at their next convention in September. "A majority of delegates will support the measure," Pon predicted in an interview. If the initiative fails to qualify for the ballot prior to this gathering, the issue may be tabled until the party's next convention in February.

The flaccid reaction to date on both sides of the aisle doesn't ensure that the ballot measure won't become divisive. By na-

ture, voter initiatives are the electoral process least amenable to political compromise. "English for the Children" could still become the instrument by which an overwhelmingly Anglo electorate asserts its displeasure with the state's Latino-bound demographic metamorphosis.

Republican strategist Allan Hoffenblum foresees politicization from the other side. "I'm sure there are plenty of left-wing Latinos who would love to turn this into a racial issue," he said. Indeed, it wouldn't take much for wary Latino voters — no matter how they feel about bilingual education — to feel browbeaten if the initiative's campaign takes on even the slightest racial tinge. **LA**

OPINION

Bilingual initiative

Measure deserves full and fair portrayal in the media

There's no question that Ron Unz's proposed "English for the Children" initiative — if it gets enough signatures to appear on the June ballot, as appears likely — would radically change the way non-English-speaking students in California public schools learn to speak this country's common language. As with any radical change in public policy, the initiative will need an informed debate and an educated electorate to get the full airing it deserves — ingredients too often missing from the California initiative process. What's troubling is that, even at this early stage, English for the Children is already being "bumper-stickerized" — described in sound-bite terms that don't portray it accurately. To varying degrees, the news media — print, radio and television — have been too often guilty of describing the measure as one that would "end" or "eliminate" bilingual education. Occasionally, the initiative's aim is more accurately portrayed as one that would "limit" or "dismantle" existing bilingual programs; even so, seldom does a story or news report go on to detail the measure's fine print, which is key to any understanding of what it proposes.

In full, the initiative calls for public-school children who fail English proficiency exams to be educated during a one-year transition period in "sheltered English immersion," a program conducted mostly in English but geared toward students who are still learning the language. It could include some use of the native language and, if individual schools chose, assistance from bilingual aides. Federal courts have ruled that sheltered immersion is an acceptable program for public-school students in need of help learning English.

More important, however, is that roughly a third of the initiative's language is devoted to "exceptions" in which parents, legal guardians or school principals could choose to place non-English-speaking children in classes taught totally or partially in their native tongue, which is the practice favored by the Department of Education today. It would require schools to present parents with full descriptions of the educational materials and approaches to be used in mainstream English, sheltered English immersion and native-language instruction courses, and then let them make a decision about what would best suit their child. It would also give principals and superintendents latitude to determine whether a non-English-speaking student needs more intensive help than she or he would get in a sheltered immersion program.

People can argue — they already are — over whether parents who don't speak English well themselves will be able to understand or be willing to seek out the options available to them under the initiative. That argument and others — whether one year of sheltered immersion would be enough for most children, for example or whether the initiative process is the right venue for the setting of complex public policy — will be well worth having as the initiative comes before voters.

But the debate over whether such a change is warranted ought to at least be aided and informed by a media that provide an accurate description of what the initiative proposes. Even with full and fair portrayal in the media, the conversation about English for the Children will likely degenerate to the bumper-sticker phase soon enough.

Los Angeles Times

B2

WEDNESDAY, JULY 9, 1997

Campaign Targets Bilingual Education

■ Former gubernatorial candidate Ron Unz and teacher Gloria Matta Tuchman unveil petition drive for 1998 initiative.

By AMY PYLE
TIMES EDUCATION WRITER

A campaign to end bilingual education in California was being launched inside a skid row day-care center Tuesday morning, but the phalanx of television cameras did not interrupt Jose Negrete's construction of an intricate Lego pirate cove.

As former gubernatorial candidate Ron Unz and English-only teacher Gloria Matta Tuchman described their quest for a spring 1998 statewide initiative—which was cleared last week by the state attorney general, enabling a signature drive to begin today—the 10-year-old sorted through a peg-legged pirate, a skeleton, a treasure chest and, of course, the plank.

Although Jose was oblivious to the speechmaking, he was actually an inspiration for the initiative, as one of 80 Spanish-speaking children held out of Ninth Street School by their parents last year after administrators refused to move them into all-English classes.

The Times' coverage of the two-week boycott piqued the interest of software entrepreneur Unz, who decided to renew his fight against bilingual education. "Our initiative ensures that the parents get their wish," Unz said.

Jose's role in what could become a historic moment in California educational history began in February 1995,



IRIS SCHNEIDER / Los Angeles Times

Teacher Gloria Matta Tuchman, left, with children at day-care center.

when he was a third-grader in a bilingual class, taught mostly in Spanish. Thanks to the boycott, by September he was attending a fourth-grade class taught entirely in English.

"At first, I didn't understand what the teacher was telling me," he said in clear but accented English.

Was it scary? "Yes. Then I started learning, little by little."

The value of English is crystal clear to Jose. "When you get big, if you go to work and they talk to you in English and you don't understand them, they can fire you."

Now, a quarter of California's public school students are eligible for bilingual classes. Nearly half the Los Angeles Unified School District students are eligible.

annually into regular classes. "That's a 95% failure rate," he said.

Bilingual advocates, poised to battle the measure, say Unz has misinterpreted the data. The 5% "transition rate" is based on all bilingual education students, most of whom are only beginning a three- to seven-year transition to all-English classes.

The impact on bilingual students could be devastating, said Joseph Jaramillo, staff attorney for the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund. "It would send many California schools into crisis because they would be stripped of the very tools necessary to bring children into the mainstream."

MALDEF is watching the initiative carefully, Jaramillo said, because of its potential for tapping into the same immigrant-bashing that helped pass Proposition 187.

But Republican Unz, who opposed bilingual education when he ran against Gov. Pete Wilson in the primary in 1994, said he wants to avoid becoming another magnet for anti-immigrant rage. He notes that he campaigned against Proposition 187 and that some conservatives already have distanced themselves from his initiative because it would add \$50 million a year to programs that teach English to adults interested in becoming English tutors.

Unz sought out Matta Tuchman to lend classroom reality to his campaign. Matta Tuchman has long opposed bilingual education and teaches an English immersion first-grade class in Santa Ana.

She has challenged bilingual education for decades but had virtually sworn off spending time on the cause until she received Unz's phone call. "After a while you feel like a broken record," she said. "Isn't anybody listening?"

Jill Stewart

Bilingual Bunk

Even the politically correct are lining up behind a ballot initiative to torpedo the state's expensive and failing bilingual education program

Alice Callaghan wonders just how odd times are, when a committed leftist and bilingual Episcopalian nun who's dedicated her life to helping Latino children on Skid Row can wake up one day to find unmistakable pangs of political incorrectness tugging at her soul.

A frank and serious person, not really given to giggling, Alice actually giggles wickedly as she admits, "This is the first politically incorrect thing I have ever done in my life."

Callaghan is referring to her public support—announced two weeks ago at the Las Familias del Pueblo children's center she runs on Skid Row—for a political initiative slated for next June's ballot known as the English for the Children measure.

Sponsored by an unlikely mix of Latinos, conservatives, and leftists, and authored by Silicon Valley multimillionaire Ron Unz, the English for Children initiative already promises to spawn the hottest political debate of the year in California.

The measure would wipe out the state's failing, \$320-million-a-year "bilingual" instructional program for immigrant schoolchildren, replacing it with intensive English instruction. Under the measure, immigrant parents could insist upon traditional "bilingual" education for their kids only by asking for a waiver. In addition, the measure would create free classes for immigrant adults in English—as long as they agreed to later tutor kids in their communities in English.

"I just can't tell you the admiration I have for Ron Unz," says Callaghan, arching her brow and nearly whispering, "He's a conservative Republican, did you know?"

Told of this praise, Unz responds with a guffaw. "Well, gosh, I couldn't do this without Alice."

The affable Unz is the computer egghead who tried to wrest the Republican gubernatorial nomination away from Pete Wilson in 1994 and managed to get 35 percent of the vote. Though officially a conservative, his politics are rather eclectic. He strongly opposed the anti-illegal immigration Prop. 187, for example, and managed to persuade former Republican vice presidential candidate Jack Kemp to publicly denounce it.

Officially co-sponsoring the English for the Children initiative with Unz is award-winning Mexican-American educator Gloria Matta Tuchman, a first-grade teacher in Santa Ana who has spent 20 years using immersion English to teach Latino immigrant kids. Although education bureaucrats openly disdain Tuchman's incredibly successful curriculum, it is impressive indeed. Every school year Tuchman produces yet another crop of first-graders who are fully literate readers and writers of English.

Tuchman's results are a stunning achievement in California, where bilingual teach-

ers—who heavily emphasize Spanish over English—have a success rate of just 6 percent in moving immigrant children from Spanish to English each school year. Tuchman, by contrast, graduates 99 percent of her kids from Spanish to English each year.

"My school really supports me wonderfully," says Tuchman, "but the Santa Ana school board wishes I would just—f—tpp!—disappear. They cannot accept that bilingual is a failure."

Education bureaucrats in every California city hold those same nonsensical views about bilingual efforts, and that's why Alice Callaghan was driven to act. Last year the Latino grade-school children she cares for at Las Familias del Pueblo were forced into Spanish classes at their downtown-area school—even after their angry immigrant parents insisted on English.

So Callaghan and 200 immigrant parents staged a boycott and kept the children home from school to protest the forced teaching of Spanish. Their battle attracted the help of Mayor Richard Riordan and a pro bono attorney, and the school was finally publicly embarrassed into offering the children classes in English.

Unz, who decided to launch his initiative after reading about the bizarre battle to get English classes for immigrant kids in Los Angeles, says he "never got over seeing the story in the L.A. Times, and when I visited Alice I found out the situation was far worse than the Times portrayed. It was the most Alice-in-Wonderland public policy I had ever encountered."

Rather than help the parents get their kids into English classes, the principal at Ninth Street Elementary School had trumped up a phony curriculum to prove that the children were learning "English" practically all day—if you counted recess, silent homeroom, and the lunch hour. Since then, Callaghan has probed further and discovered that many L.A. children in fourth and fifth grades—products of years of "bilingual"—are completely illiterate in English reading and writing.

"You want to see one of L.A. Unified's big bilingual success stories?" Callaghan asks me. She pulls out a classroom paper, written by one of "her kids"—a little guy going to sixth grade next year. After six years of "bilingual education," the boy wrote the following English assignment for his teacher at Ninth Street:

I my parens per mi in dis shoel en I so I feel essayrin too old in the shoel my border a veri can grier das mony putni gire and I sisairin aliro sceer.

Says Callaghan: "This boy has actually been judged by the district to be a successful word decoder. A good reader. He's tran-

sitioning out of bilingual. Big success! Good Lord."

As Unz and Matta Tuchman both note, one of the most bizarre aspects of the bilingual education movement, spawned by angry Chicano-rights activists 30 years ago and ensconced in grade-schools in California by legislation 10 years ago, is the continuing belief that it "works."

"Publicly, a lot of the Latino leadership and union people say it does work, but in private a lot of them, with whom I have met, have deep, deep doubts," says Unz. "But nobody wants to get caught in the middle on this thing, so they haven't spoken up."

That timidity is already changing with the emergence this month of Unz's statewide measure. Los Angeles school board member David Tokofsky—a bilingual educator who has long fought for the rights of Latino school kids—calls the measure "very, very moderate and sensible-sounding." And privately, Unz says, some leading Latino activists who fought hard for bilingual education 10 years ago have told him, "We know bilingual education is dysfunctional."

In fact, bilingual education in California is

officials of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, routinely claim that "research" proves that bilingual education helps kids.

In truth, Krashen—whom I and many others see as one of the most foolish Ivory Tower types pushing destructive theories upon minority children in California—derives his beliefs not from real research but from his own gut feelings and musings. There is almost no legitimate research on bilingual education using true, controlled studies, peer review, and accepted scientific methodology. What scant *real* research does exist suggests, in fact, that children in bilingual programs don't benefit from the method.

The best longitudinal, real-life study of bilingual education is, of course, the 330,000 or so kids in L.A. currently stuck in "bilingual" classes. Most of these children, the vast majority of whom are Mexican-American, are for their early years limited to just one-half hour of formal English instruction per eight-hour day—a scheme promoted heavily by Krashen, who created the current plan for Los Angeles and much of California, and spends his time traveling the state

explaining how great his scheme is.

With California's bilingual program built upon the views of a windbag like Krashen, it's little wonder that Latino children are the first major immigrant group in the state incapable of reading or writing English much better than their foreign-born parents.

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a widely respected test that includes essay and multiple-choice questions, Latino children in every other state in the nation learn to read English *faster and better* than they do in California. In fact, California's Latino kids even lag behind Latino kids in Louisiana, Alabama, and Guam. And, the

NAEP results showed, in states where English gets the big emphasis, Latino kids are vastly better off.

"What a surprise," says Callaghan ruefully. "The earlier you teach English to grade-school children, the more and better English they learn. How *can* this be?"

Unz, I dare say, is also catching on to the problem. He says Krashen patiently explained to him in a phone conversation that, contrary to popular belief, *adults* pick up foreign languages more easily than do children. And that, claimed Krashen, is why English should be withheld from immigrant kids until they're well into their Spanish!

What Krashen says must be true, and the rest of us must all be wrong. After all, he's got the research to prove it. ☐



creating so many kids illiterate in English that some educators now blame it for the record-high 50 percent dropout rates among Latino children—a problem that bilingual education was supposed to fix. Even worse, Latino kids in California are now so far behind in English reading and writing skills that they place dead last among Latino kids in nationwide tests.

Despite such heaps of outrageous real-life evidence, California's leading bilingual education/whole language guru, USC Professor Stephen Krashen, has persuaded LAUSD and other California districts to believe that "research" favors bilingual education—with a heavy emphasis on Spanish over English. Political leaders, from Los Angeles board members Jeff Horton and Vicky Castro to

English Not Taught Here

By HAL NETKIN

For decades, bilingual education has been praised as a godsend for schoolchildren who are not proficient in English. In California, 1.3 million public school children, 23% of the total, fit that description; over the past decade the number has more than doubled. California's future depends on these children becoming fluent in English. Yet each year only 5% of the state's public school students not previously proficient in English are found to have gained English proficiency.

I had my own taste of bilingual education in 1989, when I began renting part of my home to a Mexican family. The youngest of the five children, Ulises, was then in the second grade at Valerio Elementary School in the Los Angeles community of Van Nuys. The school branded him a slow learner, which puzzled me, since Ulises seemed to show above-average intelligence at times. What's more, Ulises spoke English better than he did Spanish. Since both of Ulises' parents worked away from home and I worked out of the house we shared, I agreed to be listed as a contact for times when teacher-parent communications were necessary.

Segregating Latinos

One day I received a call from the school's bilingual coordinator, a teacher whose job it was to sign up children for bilingual classes. She told me that Ulises was not ready for transition to English-only classes, and she asked for my approval for him to continue in a bilingual

in front of the group on the left, which read from books in English; a Spanish-speaking teaching assistant stood in front of the group on the right, which read from books in Spanish. As the primary teacher instructed in English, the assistant translated the lessons into Spanish. At times, the groups were instructed separately.

I was outraged. Why don't Armenian, Vietnamese, Haitian, Chinese and all other children whose "native" language is not English need bilingual education? The message to the Latino children was clear: that they are inferior in intelligence to other ethnic groups. I refused to approve

A grass-roots campaign called English for the Children has been circulating a petition that would let California's voters curtail bilingual education in the state's public schools.

bilingual education for Ulises, and he went on to become a perfectly normal student without it.

Many people believe that "bilingual education" entails learning two languages. Instead, as it's practiced in most U.S. public school systems, it would be more accurately called "primary language" education. The theory is that if students are taught all subjects in their native language at first, they will learn English better and faster in the long run. Bilingual education advocates will also tell you that even if students in bilingual education are not gaining in English, they are gaining in self-esteem, which will give them the confidence they need to catch up later. These claims, of course, are absurd. The students will gain whatever added "self-esteem" they need when they develop proficiency in English—the language in which their peers are learning, and the language that they'll need to succeed in the U.S.

It's no surprise that most Latino parents are opposed to bilingual education as soon as they find out what it is. Indeed, 83% of Latino respondents to a Los Angeles Times poll last month said they oppose bilingual education. One of the first things parents grasp is that bilingual education is not English-as-a-second-language instruction. ESL students' native languages vary, but they all learn English together. ESL teachers are not required to be bilingual, because ESL is taught not by translation but by immersion in English. My wife, Ines, knew very little English when she emigrated from Mexico in 1989. After two years of ESL classes at night, however, she became fluent.

When asked why, if ESL is so successful with adults, it isn't used with children, most ESL teachers simply repeat the dogma of bilingual education. The Los Angeles Unified School District, for instance, says that bilingual students who first master Spanish, then make a transition to English, do at least as well academically in the long run as most of their English-only counterparts. Yet there is no research suggesting this conclusion.

What research does indicate is that too many Latino students end up not speaking either Spanish or English well. Scores on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills show that California fourth-graders who move to English-only classes from Spanish instruction are hopelessly unable to perform well in English. The state's Latino students have consistently scored the lowest of any ethnic group on the Scholastic Assessment Test, and have the highest dropout rate, 40%. Figures from California's Department of Education show that while the number of the state's public school students in bilingual programs (or certified eligible for those programs) more than doubled from 1981 to 1993, the percentage of these making it into English-only classes dropped by more than half (see chart).

Why do California's bilingual educators persist? Perhaps the most powerful reason is money. Bilingual education is a \$500 million-a-year industry in California alone. The size of budgets designated for bilingual education depends on how many students are enrolled in the program, giving educators at all levels a big incentive to sign up ever more students for bilingual programs.

End the Boondoggle

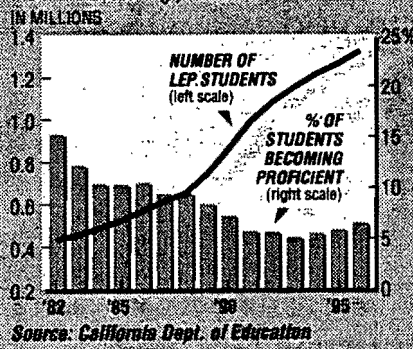
Where will it end? A grass-roots campaign called English for the Children has been circulating a petition that would let California's voters curtail bilingual education in the state's public schools. If the petition receives the signatures of 433,000 registered California voters by Nov. 13, the state will hold a referendum in June 1998 on the group's proposed initiative, which would require that all public school instruction be conducted in English. Exceptions would be made for students who are already proficient in English, and for those whose parents can demonstrate that bilingual education would help them learn English better.

A decade ago, 80% of the Los Angeles teachers' union voted against bilingual education—teachers presumably realize that it wastes money the schools could be spending elsewhere. It's time that parents of bilingual students have the chance to end this boondoggle and get their children on the road to English proficiency, the quickest path to success American-style.

Mr. Netkin is a partner in NPS Associates, a Los Angeles executive search firm.

The Bilingual Trap

More California public school students are being designated as limited English proficient (eligible for bilingual education) but fewer of them are becoming proficient.



class in the next grade. But Ulises' English was better than his Spanish. I responded. She insisted, however, that he would do better in the bilingual class. To settle the matter, she invited me to observe the bilingual class to see "how beneficial it is."

I spent half a day in the class. Here's how it worked: A group of Anglo, Asian, Armenian and other children labeled "English-proficient" sat on the left side of the class, while an all-Latino group of "native-Spanish-speaking" children sat on the right. An English-speaking teacher stood

Los Angeles Times

SUNDAY, JULY 6, 1997

THE STATE

A Bilingual-Education Initiative as a Prop. 187 in Disguise?

By Ruben Navarrette Jr.

SANGER, CALIF.

Bilingual education is back in the news. The Orange Unified School Board has voted unanimously to seek permission from the state to terminate its bilingual education program and replace it with English immersion. Ruben Zacarias, superintendent of the L.A. Unified School District, wants to limit the number of years a student remains on a bilingual track. And new polling data suggest that a majority of Latino parents, notably in Orange County, are worried that their children will become mired in bilingual education; they strongly believe in early English proficiency. Come June 1998, all California may be pulled into the bilingual fray if the English Language Education for Immigrant Children Initiative qualifies for the ballot.

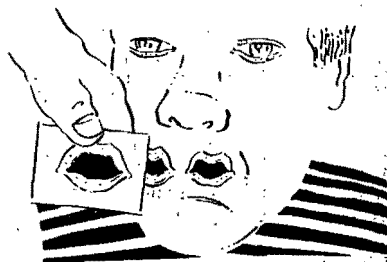
At first glance, the measure appears to be the latest embodiment of the sort of anti-immigrant and anti-Latino prejudice enshrined in Proposition 187. But that oversimplification may mischaracterize the proposed initiative as harmful, when it may be helpful.

The initiative would require that all students be placed in English-language classrooms; provide students classified as "English learners" (limited English proficient in current parlance) with a one-year transition period of "sheltered immersion," in which instruction is in Eng-

lish but the curriculum and presentation are designed for non-English speakers; allow students' parents, under certain conditions, to opt for bilingual education, and annually appropriate \$50 million for English-language instruction classes for parents who pledge to provide students with "English language tutoring."

The initiative, sponsored by former gubernatorial candidate Ron Unz and teacher Gloria Matta Tuchman, is based on a number of suppositions. One, that bilingual education has failed. Two, that school bureaucracies addicted to the additional funding provided for bilingual students ignore complaints of parents who want their children taught in English. And, finally, since schools have shirked their "moral obligation" to leave students with the skills necessary to be successful, including English proficiency, more power should be returned to parents.

The English for the Children initiative will no doubt run afoul of extremists on both right and left. Cultural purists, nativists and those resentful of financing bilingual education in California will balk at either the prospect of paying an additional \$50 million to teach English to parents or the idea of allowing those parents to opt for bilingual education. The pro-bilingual crowd, on the other hand, will bristle at the idea of putting all children in English-language classrooms and will, on the heels of Propositions 187 and 209, decry the initiative as the third assault in as many elections on Califor-



CHARLES SADLER / for The Times

nia's growing Latino population.

One wild card in all this will be younger Mexican Americans. They opposed Proposition 187 because it blocked access to education. They were conflicted over Proposition 209 because it seemed to both limit opportunity and reward merit. On bilingual education, how will they line up? For the MTV generation, at ease with English, there are no historical scars, no romantic connection to bilingual education as rectifier of linguistic wrongs, no hang-ups over "the way it used to be" in public schools, no hostility toward English and no reluctance to scrutinize the motivations of interest groups. Within a generation that struggles with Spanish and answers its Mexican *abuelita's* questions in English, it may prove difficult to whip up hysteria over an end to government-subsidized bilingualism.

Along the way, these young, more open-minded Mexican Americans may be

joined by immigrant parents. Early last year, at the Ninth Street School in downtown Los Angeles, where nine of 10 students do not speak English and where only 1% of students master enough English to test out of the bilingual program, dozens of parents, calling themselves Las Familias del Pueblo, revolted against bilingual education, demanding that the school eliminate it and re-emphasize learning English. School officials dismissed their wishes.

A few months later, a survey of 600 Latino parents, by the Washington-based Center for Equal Opportunity, found that 81.3% preferred that their children's courses be taught in English, while only 12.2% chose Spanish. Those figures are consistent with a 1988 Department of Education study, which revealed that 78% of Mexican parents opposed teaching language-minority children in a non-English language if "it meant less time teaching them English." They also mesh with more recent findings in a Los Angeles Times poll, which found that 83% of Latino parents in Orange County favor English-language instruction as soon as their children begin school, while only 17% support native-language instruction.

Presented with such figures, school officials and defenders of bilingual education have, up to now, held their ground, contending that parents are "uninformed" and "misguided" and asserting that schools know how best to educate

their children.

This old refrain hearkens back to 1968, at the height of the modern Chicano Movement. That was also the year that Congress pushed through the Bilingual Education Act—and sparked 30 years of intermittent debate. It was also the year when thousands of Mexican American students, protesting what they considered to be an inferior education designed by mostly white school officials, walked out of five high schools in the L.A. Unified School District. At school board meetings, the students' parents rose and spoke in support of their children. The school officials' response: They knew better.

That story is a poignant reminder of just how far those who profess to advocate for Latinos have, in 30 years, strayed from their own ideals. Today, advocacy groups, in circling the wagons to preserve besieged programs like bilingual education, no longer ask themselves tough questions about whether such programs are worth preserving in the first place. As a result, Latino parents who have taken a stand against bilingual education have stood alone, at odds with the very groups that are supposed to be their champions.

Meanwhile, the national education system claims, from the beginning, to have used bilingual education to give non-English-speaking students a voice. How ironic that now, in ignoring growing opposition to the program, that same system should deny a voice to their parents. □

Ruben Navarrette Jr. is author of a "Darker Shade of Crimson" (Bantam).

Bilingual Schooling Is Failing, Parents Say

The Los Angeles Times, 1/16/96, p. B1.

By AMY PYLE
TIMES EDUCATION WRITER

Las Familias del Pueblo is holding its first parent meeting in 13 years of providing after-school care to the children of garment workers.

Attendance is standing room only.

The subject that has drawn so many to the storefront center after a grueling day in the nearby factories: Bilingual education, is it working for our children?

And the gut feeling of these parents is: No, it is not.

While the debate over bilingual education rages in the halls of academia, it also erupts in venues closer to home and heart. And there, the sentiments do not always jibe with the latest research.

On this night, one father stood from his chair to articulate the quandary.

"A lot of us want our kids to learn Spanish so they can write to their grandpas or whatever," Lenin Lopez said in Spanish. "But I want my children to learn English so they won't have the problems that I've had."

The audience of more than 60 parents applauded.

Their children go to Ninth Street School, a Los Angeles Unified campus near downtown's skid row, where nine in 10 students do not speak English. Last year only six students, about 1%, mastered enough English to test out of the school's special bilingual classes.

Ninth Street's principal, Eleanor Vargas Page, considers the dissatisfaction voiced by the Las Familias parents ill-informed.

The school retooled its bilingual program just last year, Vargas Page said, infusing it with more English sooner.

Please see BILINGUAL, B10

Continued from B1

than ever before. Those changes were a response, she said, to parent concerns as well as a districtwide push to speed the transfer of bilingual program students into the educational mainstream.

English reading now begins in fourth grade and next year Vargas Page hopes to start it in third grade. She gives worried parents a program schedule showing that their children spend most of the school day in English classes, though she concedes that homeroom and recess are counted in the English category.

And, she tells them, teachers report that students are flourishing.

"We know children are already acquiring English as a second language sooner . . . but anyone who wants to see statistics right now, I can't give them that," Vargas Page said. "The reality is, we won't see how well our children gain until five years into the program."

Such a promise of future rewards does not mollify the parents at Las Familias.

They consider English fluency the key to unlock the handcuffs of poverty, a key they themselves will probably never possess.

By crossing the border into the United States, they thought that they had secured that benefit for their offspring. But watching their children continue to struggle in English, year after year, has made them lose faith in the American education system.

They file their children past a visitor to prove their point.

"Say something in English," one mother prods her 9-year-old son.

"Animaniacs," the fourth-grader says, smiling. Can he write in English? He asks to have the question repeated, then answers, "No." Read? "A little."

These parents maintain that the elementary school has been unwilling to heed their requests for all-English instruction. Vargas Page said she has simply tried to explain the theories behind the existing program.

Programs such as Ninth Street's are based on research that favors giving immigrant students a strong base in their native language before immersing them in English. Although some other studies have advocated faster immersion in English, the most recent national study suggests that keeping students in native-language classes for at least five years gives them a better foundation for future academic success.

Beyond theory, Vargas Page cites the practical difficulties of separating some students for alternative programs in English on her 460-pupil campus.

"We don't have enough students to fill up [English immersion] classes at each grade level," Vargas Page said. "I might have to have four grade levels in one room."

Leading the parents' cause is Sister Alice Callahan, who founded Las Familias as part of her mission to help the poor and homeless.

She is heartened by the fact that Ninth Street School is part of the district's LEARN reform program, which aims to give teachers, parents and community leaders voices in campus administration.

Judy Burton, the district's top LEARN administrator, said she will meet with parents, administrators and Callahan later this month to try to determine if adjustments to the school's bilingual program are needed.

Under the district's current bilingual education plan, parents have the right to request English immersion classes for their children, Burton acknowledged, but school representatives also have the duty to explain why they think their approach is better.

"There's a dilemma when you have two different opinions of what the best approach is and they are such strong opinions," Burton said.

And though bilingual research findings are being cited by both sides, Los Angeles Unified has no data of its own on which teaching approach has worked best.

The district's high student transiency rate and its inadequate computer system make it impossible to track individual students or even groups of students to validate either the native-language classes that the school offers or the English immersion approach that Cal-

lahan and her parent group favor.

So Callahan relies on personal observation, and the broken English that she hears among the immigrant children in her charge.

Over the years, she has become increasingly alarmed because the Ninth Street students who spend afternoons at her center do all their homework in Spanish, she said.

They pick up spoken English from other children and television. But without formal instruction in reading or writing English, Callahan fears that they have no way of developing good grammar or a broad vocabulary, or preparing for middle school or college entrance exams.

"What we know is the bilingual system was intended to help children learn another language, and maybe it works in some places," Callahan said. "But we know our children are not learning to read and write in English. . . . And poor kids don't have the luxury of catching up later on."

Standing quietly in a corner as Callahan speaks is Moises Negrete, 16, who comes to Las Familias most afternoons for tutoring. He has attended Los Angeles Unified schools since kindergarten, including several years in the Ninth Street bilingual program. He lobbied his way into a magnet high school and now is fighting not to flunk out.

"I can read, but I can't understand what I am reading," he said, looking at his feet. "They never showed me the vocabulary I need now."

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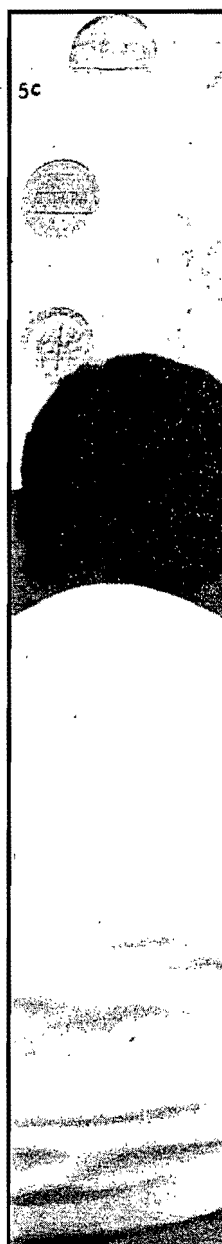
**First grade teacher
Gloria Tuchman
believes bilingual
education has
failed thousands
of California
children. That's
why she is leading
a statewide
campaign to
ban it from
the schools.**

Her 1st grade students don't know it, but Gloria Matta Tuchman is a living legend at Taft Elementary School in Santa Ana, California. "She is our resident saint, you know," remarks the school's receptionist. Her colleagues speak of her in reverent tones. "We're really supporting Gloria," says fellow 1st grade teacher Jean Gross, "because the way she teaches is the only way. It's the way we all teach here."

Largely because of Tuchman's efforts, students at Taft who are not proficient in English—about half of the school's 1,080 enrollment—are immersed in the language from the time they enter kindergarten. The method is called "sheltered English immersion," and it's a radical departure from the bilingual approach required—with some exceptions—by the state of California.

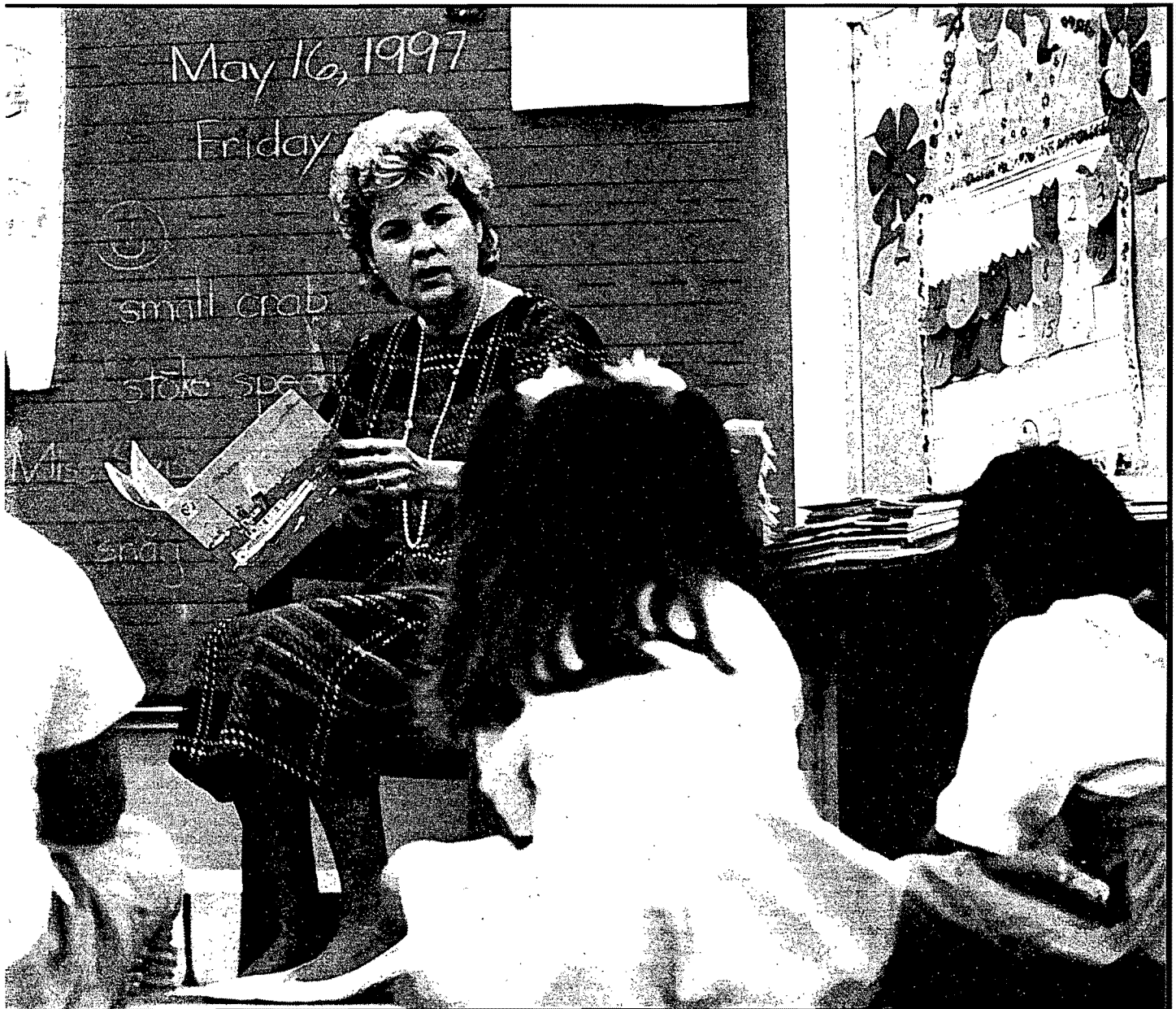
In bilingual classes, students are taught core subjects in their primary language—in California, that's predominantly Spanish—as they simultaneously learn to read and write in English. Ideally, by 4th grade the students are fluent in the language and can successfully make the transition to English-only classes.

But Tuchman is convinced that children are like sponges and that they are fully capable of learning English in one year. "The earlier a child learns a



oken Here

By David Hill



Gloria Matta Tuchman: "The earlier a child learns a new language, the better."

ORANGE COUNTY REGISTER

**Renowned
math teacher
Jaime Escalante
has signed
on to the
initiative—
an endorsement
that could
attract other
Hispanic
leaders to
the crusade.**

new language, the better," she says. Tuchman has been using the immersion method for years to teach English to her mostly Spanish-speaking students. And not even a tough-talking administrator could persuade her to do otherwise.

In 1985, Taft's principal told Tuchman she had to start teaching bilingual education classes—or else. "We're out of sync with the rest of the district," she recalls him saying. "We are not getting the funds that we should, and we are getting more limited-English-speaking students."

But Tuchman and three of her colleagues balked. "The children are learning English," Tuchman told him, "and our test scores reflect that we're doing well."

The principal, she remembers, "got all ruffled and said, 'It's the law. And lady, if you don't like the law, then you can change it.'"

It was, Tuchman says, the defining moment in her life.

She and her three colleagues were charged with insubordination, but when parents at the school rallied behind them, the principal backed down, and parents persuaded district officials to allow the immersion program to continue. Tuchman took her story to the press, and an anti-bilingual activist was born.

Twelve years later, the principal is long gone. Taft Elementary is celebrated for its English-immersion program, and Gloria Matta Tuchman has become one of the most outspoken opponents of bilingual education in California. She's been called "the poster teacher for the



Joan Baca, principal at George Washington Elementary, says bilingual education is working for her students.

English-first movement in California"—and a whole lot worse.

"Bilingual education deserves an 'F' for failure to teach English," she says, repeating one of her mantras. "It is one of California's most devastating, scattershot, fiscally bloated, and ill-advised failures."

Not everyone agrees. Indeed, many educators argue that bilingual education, when properly implemented, is the best way to teach English to students who haven't learned the language at home. But a backlash against the approach has been brewing, particularly in California, where, according to state figures, 1.4 million students—25 percent of the state's public school enrollment—are considered not proficient in English. (Half of those students attend schools in Los Angeles County.) Bilingual critics cite statistics showing that, in California, only about 6 percent of limited-English-proficient students gain fluency in English each year. They also point out that Latino students have the lowest test scores of any ethnic group in the state and the highest dropout rate, a staggering 40 percent.

Supporters of the approach are quick to point out that less than half of California's Latino students are designated LEP and that not all LEP students are in bilingual classes. In fact, only 30 percent of the state's LEP students are enrolled in programs that use native-language instruction. It isn't fair, proponents say, to place all the blame on bilingual education.

The teaching method, however, has become an easy target, in part because even its supporters admit that it doesn't always work the way it's supposed to. "Most researchers agree that children who begin their studies in a language they understand can transfer their scholastic skills to their new language," a recent editorial in the *Los Angeles Times* noted. "Well-planned and -implemented bilingual education programs work. But the hodgepodge of approaches in California trap too many children far too long in classes taught in their primary language, mostly Spanish, before they move into mainstream English-only classes."

Last February, dozens of working-class Latino parents boycotted the Ninth Street Elementary School in downtown Los Angeles for two weeks because they wanted their children taught in English, not Spanish. The parents prevailed, and critics of bilingual education cited the boycott as a glaring example of how unpopular the approach had become, even among Latinos.

The boycott caught the attention of Ron Unz, a 36-year-old Silicon Valley millionaire who ran unsuccessfully for governor in 1994. Unz flew to Los Angeles to meet with some of the Ninth Street School parents. Inspired by their resolve, he decided to help bankroll a ballot initiative that would virtually eliminate bilingual education in California. The measure, dubbed "English for the Children," would require that all students in public schools be taught primarily in English unless their parents request otherwise. Sheltered English immersion would become the law of the land. Teachers, administrators, or school board members who refuse to offer students English-language instruction could be sued for damages.

Unz, a Republican, has already raised nearly \$500,000 for his campaign, including more than \$200,000 out of his own pocket. The California Republican Party endorsed the initiative at its September convention, but state GOP Chairman Michael Schroeder is lukewarm on the proposed measure. "The Democrats are going to use this to call us racists all over again," he told *U.S. News & World Report*. "It's the last thing we need right now." He added that the party "won't spend a dime" to support the initiative.

Last spring, Unz, a theoretical physicist by training and the owner of Wall Street Analytics Inc., a Palo Alto-based financial services software company, called Tuchman and asked for her help, but the 55-year-old teacher was hesitant to sign on. She had spent years trying to persuade legislators to do something about bilingual education to no avail. She told Unz, "I will not work on something that is not going anywhere. If this is going to be overturned in court, I don't want to waste my time."

But Unz convinced Tuchman that he meant business, and he told her that he wanted her input in drafting a final version of the initiative. Tuchman agreed, and she became co-chairwoman of the campaign. More recently, the renowned math teacher Jaime Escalante signed up as honorary chairman. Unz called Escalante's support a "potential breakthrough" in attracting other Latino opinion leaders to his crusade.

In November, Unz and Tuchman held a press conference in Los Angeles to announce that they had collected more than 700,000 signatures in support of the initiative. State election officials are now determining whether the campaign has enough valid signatures—433,269 are needed—to get the measure on the ballot next June, but observers say that is all but certain. Indeed, Unz is confident it will be voted into law. "I think the odds are very high that we'll win," he says.

If the polls are any indication, Unz may be right. According to a *Los Angeles Times* survey conducted in October, 80 percent of all California voters support the initiative. Surprisingly, that includes Latino voters, 84 percent of whom said they favor the measure. Supporters have used the poll to bolster their argument that bilingual education has very little support these days, even among the very people it was meant to serve.

But the campaign is just getting started. Critics have pointed out that Proposition 187—the 1994 initiative that cut benefits for illegal immigrants—was initially supported by a majority of Latino voters, but by Election Day 77 percent opposed it. A majority of voters approved the measure, now tied up in court, anyway. (Unz, incidentally, was a vocal opponent of 187, although he supported Proposition 209, an initiative approved in 1996 to ban race or gender from being a factor in state hiring or school admission.)

Tuchman, however, believes California voters will see the wisdom of "English for the Children."

"It's gonna go," she predicts. "There's no doubt in my mind. This isn't even a Republican and Democrat issue. It's people in general, and they're fed up with the program. I mean, something has to give after all these years."

Taft Elementary School sits in a quiet, middle-class neighborhood of one- and two-story tract houses. From the playground, you can hear the constant hum of cars on the busy San Diego Freeway, a few blocks away. Tuchman has spent virtually her entire teaching career at the K-5 school, which opened in 1972. "I'm one of the pillars," she says.

According to principal William Hart, about 65 percent of Taft's students are Latino, 17 percent are white, 12 percent are Asian, 4 percent are African-American, and 2 percent are Filipino and Pacific Islander. "There are 16 different languages spoken here," Hart says. Many students are the sons and daughters of recent immigrants, and they enter kindergarten not speaking a word of English.

From day one, the students are immersed in the language. But it is not, Hart insists, a "sink or swim" approach. Every teacher has either a Spanish- or Vietnamese-speaking assistant who can communicate with the children in their native language and the teachers often use drawings and sign language to convey meanings of words. That's why it's called "sheltered."

"There was a time when it was incredibly politically incorrect to think this way and to teach this way in this district," Hart says. "And there were some major battles fought in this office. But I think that people realize you can't argue with success." Last year, Hart says, the school had the highest test scores in the Santa Ana Unified School District. "The achievement scores were just beyond belief. And those scores included our LEP students." Now, there's a waiting list for parents who want to enroll their students in the immersion classes.

It's a Tuesday afternoon, and Tuchman is sitting in a comfortable armchair while her students—13 girls and three boys, all dressed in blue and white uniforms—sit cross-legged on the floor. With the exception of two Vietnamese students, all the children are Latino.

Tuchman, who has a relaxed, easygoing style with her students, takes out a book called *Witch, Witch, Come to My Party* and begins reading—in English. Every now and then, she pauses to emphasize certain sounds. "Witch" starts with what letter?" she asks. "W," several children answer in unison.

Most of the students are quite comfortable talking in English. But one girl, Lilianna, seems confused. Later, Tuchman explains that Lilianna just moved to California from Mexico and her English skills lag behind those of her classmates. Tuchman, who speaks Spanish, says she sometimes uses the girl's native language when talking with her.

Some students, it seems, prefer to speak Spanish with each other. "And that's fine," she says. "We let them do that. But the main language of communication is English. I don't have to use Spanish very often."

After she finishes reading the book, Tuchman switches to a different topic: money. She takes out a ruler and points to a poster showing the fronts and backs of U.S. coins: quarters, dimes, nickels, and pennies.

"How many quarters in a dollar?" she asks.

"Four," the students answer.

"Whose picture is on a dime?"

"Franklin Delano Roosevelt."

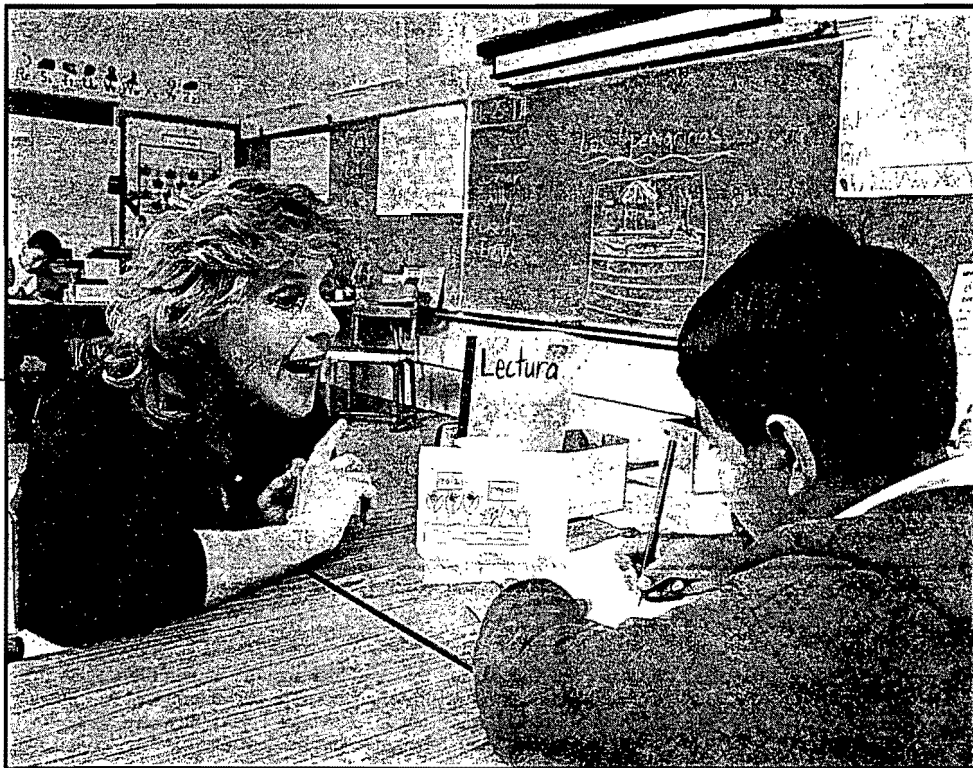
"Which president was he?"

After a pause, one boy offers the correct answer: "The 32nd president."

The exercise continues for 15 minutes or so, and then Tuchman asks her students to return to their desks and work on a writing assignment. She gives them each a worksheet with some letters and asks them to cut out the letters and paste them down on another sheet to spell certain two- and three-letter words: sam, man, pals, gab, mat, taps, for, on, hat, and are. Most of the students perform the task handily; others cannot spell the words without help from their teacher.

At 2:25 p.m., the students gather their coats and line up at the back of the windowless classroom. Tuchman leads them out of the building, where a group of parents are waiting to greet them.

Back in her empty classroom, Tuchman—who's wearing



George Washington teacher Susan Hale believes children learn best when they are taught in their native language.

black slacks, a white blouse, and a bright-red jacket—takes a seat at a small table and launches into a passion-filled attack on bilingual education. "These parents want their children to learn English," she says, "because they know that English is what the kids need to become successful." The problem with most bilingual education programs, she is convinced, is that the students *don't* learn English. "The primary goal of bilingual education is to teach English. And that's exactly what the program is lacking. It does not do that. In this state, it's a Spanish-maintenance program."

It's clear that Tuchman believes every word she says. But she's been a zealous foe of bilingual education for so long now that her remarks sound a bit rehearsed. Yes, she's a teacher, and a good one, too. (Her principal calls her "outstanding.") But she's very much a politician, speaking in polished sound bites and even distributing her own press kit, complete with a five-by-seven, black-and-white photograph of herself and a three-page autobiography that she's written, for some reason, in the third person. ("Gloria Matta Tuchman has fought tirelessly to eliminate mandated bilin-

STEVE GOLDSTEIN

gual education and to reaffirm the importance of teaching all students in English.")

Tuchman's strong views on the topic can be traced to her parents, Mexican Americans who spoke Spanish but who insisted that their six children—Tuchman is the oldest—learn English at an early age. "My father," she recalls, "used to say, 'The Anglos did us a favor by making us learn English. That's why we're successful. And we didn't forget our Spanish.'"

Tuchman was born in Pecos, Texas, where her father worked as a timekeeper for the railroad. The Matta family

cal arena. First, she ran for school board in the nearby Tustin Unified School District. She won and ended up serving two terms as school board president. Her primary focus, naturally, was bilingual education, and she was successful in leading the district away from primary-language instruction before voters turned her out in 1994.

That same year, she took her crusade statewide when she ran for state superintendent of public instruction, California's top education post. She promised to end the state's bilingual education policies, but she lost the race to Delaine Eastin, a Democrat and a member of the California Assembly. Among 12 candidates, Tuchman managed to place fifth, garnering 8 percent of the votes.

She didn't drop the issue, however. She put her energy into a bill, sponsored by state Senator Deirdre Alpert, a Democrat, and state Assemblyman Brooks Firestone, a Republican, that, in its initial form, would have replaced bilingual education with English-only instruction. But as the bill made its way through the legislature, compromises were made that Tuchman believed weakened it. She eventually withdrew her support and lobbied against the bill, which died in committee. "I am not going to have a bad bill go on the books again," she says. "I can't do that. I won't do that."

Critics have portrayed Tuchman as a self-hating Mexican American who dyes her hair blond and sometimes wears blue contact lenses. But she brushes off the attacks. "I don't care what you call me," she says. "I know that I'm right."

Her parents, she reminds people, were active in the Hispanic civil rights movement. Her father, Manuel Matta, was a member of the Arizona Civil Rights Commission. Her mother, Mary Lydia Garza, served as a top national official of the League of United Latin American Citizens, which is the oldest and largest Hispanic organization in the United States. Her late stepfather, George Garza, was LULAC's national president.

(Ironically, Tuchman was one of five Hispanic women honored by LULAC's Santa Ana chapter in 1987, in part because of her appointment by then-U.S. Secretary of Education William Bennett to the National Advisory and Coordinating Council for Bilingual Education. But LULAC has always supported bilingual education, and the organization opposes Tuchman's efforts to dismantle bilingual programs. "I was surprised when I won," admits Tuchman. "Now, I'm a thorn

in their side." Perhaps for that reason, she seems to take special pleasure in telling people about the honor.)

To Tuchman's way of thinking, her battle against bilingual education is also a matter of civil rights, and she has little patience with mainstream Hispanic organizations—such as LULAC or the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund—that have come out against the Unz initiative. Bilingual education, she believes, merely ghettoizes children who desperately need to join the mainstream culture.

The English for the Children initiative, Tuchman insists, will give Latino parents—like the ones who boycotted Ninth Street Elementary School—the right to demand that their children be taught in English. "This initiative," she says, "will empower them to make a choice."

But that's exactly what it won't do, critics of the measure say. They argue that by mandating a one-size-fits-all approach to the teaching of English, the initiative will actually put strict limits on parents of LEP students. Waivers, they say, would be difficult for parents to get, despite Unz's claims to the contrary.

"There are weak bilingual programs, to be sure," says James Crawford, author of *Bilingual Education: History, Politics, Theory, and Practice*. "But there are many successful programs, too. And now they're in jeopardy of being wiped out."

One such program is at George Washington Elementary



Tuchman: "I lived through discrimination. I know what real racism is."

was poor. Indeed, for the first four months of her life, young Gloria lived with her parents in a boxcar provided by the railroad company. In search of opportunity, the Mattas packed their belongings and headed west, first to California and then to Arizona. "One of my father's many jobs in trying to keep tortillas on the table," she says, "was working in the cotton fields for a dollar a day." Eventually, the growing family returned to Pecos. It was there that Tuchman experienced, as she puts it, "the indignities of racial discrimination."

One summer, she and her siblings were told they couldn't swim at the local pool because they were Mexican. Tuchman's mother hounded the pool operators until they relented, but the incident left its mark. And when Tuchman was about to enter the town's segregated junior high school, her parents decided it was time to get out of Pecos once and for all. They settled in Mesa, Arizona, where the family opened Matta's Restaurant, which is still going strong.

"I lived through discrimination," Tuchman once told a reporter for the *Orange County Register*. "I know what real racism is. It's ugly, and it has made me a stronger person."

Tuchman did well in school, and she eventually graduated from Arizona State University with a degree in elementary education. After working for several years in Phoenix, she and her husband, Terry Tuchman, also an educator, moved to Santa Ana. She began teaching at Taft Elementary in 1967 and has been there ever since. The Tuchmans have two grown children.

After her confrontation with the principal in 1985, Tuchman, a lifelong Republican, decided to enter the politi-

School, in Burbank, about an hour north of Santa Ana. Located in a blue-collar neighborhood just off the Golden State Freeway, the school serves 720 students, nearly half of them Latino. About 150 of the children are enrolled in a transitional bilingual program that starts in kindergarten and goes through 3rd grade. By 4th grade, the students are doing all their work in English.

"Bilingual education can work," argues principal Joan Baca, "if it's implemented correctly with the right components. First, it's the staffing. You have to have teachers who can teach in the primary language. At the same time, you need to have a component in English, where children are learning to speak the language but are not losing one to two years of cognitive learning skills. Most children cannot attain those two elements at the same time."

At George Washington, students in the bilingual classes are taught reading, writing, social studies, math, and science in Spanish. This takes place in the morning; after lunch, the students are mixed with English-speaking students for the rest of day, with instruction conducted in English. "As they move up through the program," says 1st grade teacher Susan Hale, "more of their core subject areas are moved into English."

This morning, in Room 19, Hale is sitting next to a blackboard while her students—dressed in red, white, and blue uniforms—sit on the floor in a small semicircle. The teacher has asked the children to think of words that describe *el verano*—summer. When they have enough words, Hale will help them compose a poem.

Hale writes on the board, "*El verano. ¿Cómo es?*"

The students shout out words in quick succession.

"Caluroso."

"Bonito."

"Divertido."

"Feliz."

"Bello."

"Verde."

"Fantástico."

Children learn best, Hale says during a recess break, when they are taught in their native language. "Otherwise," she says, "they'll be two or three years behind their peers. And they'll always be playing catch-up." Yes, she admits, the children want to learn English, and they pick it up fast. "But we have to give them time to develop skills that allow them to process the information." The immersion method, she believes, simply doesn't do that. "These children need to be mainstreamed," she says, sounding a lot like Gloria Tuchman. "They need to be a part of the majority culture. They need to become productive citizens somewhere down the road, in English. But this is the bridge that gets them there. And without the bridge, we're asking them to jump into 10 feet of water and telling them they have to swim."

Hale and her colleagues are worried about the proposed initiative and what it could mean for their program at George Washington. "No one would put their child into a Chinese-only classroom and expect them from kindergarten on to be successful if their child didn't speak Chinese," Hale says, "and yet that's what we may be asking of these children if the initiative passes."

"I think the unfortunate situation is that the public is not getting the information about bilingual programs that do work," says Eilene Marston, who teaches 4th and 5th grades at the school.

"I don't think the initiative process is the right place for setting school policy," adds principal Baca.

Of the 31 students in Miho Tyska's 4th grade classroom, all entered kindergarten speaking little or no English. Now, their conversation skills are good, but they still need work with reading and writing. "They gain confidence quickly," Tyska says. By the end of the school year, she adds, they will be doing just as well as the children who only speak English.

Nine-year-old Leticia Castillo has a mother from El Salvador and a father from Mexico. She wants to be a doctor or a teacher when she grows up. "I'm learning English," she says proudly. "I'm doing good. I still have to practice a little spelling some words. In my home, I speak a little English with my parents and a lot of Spanish so I won't forget. And with my brothers only in English."

She offers to read a report she wrote on the desert, which

her teacher has posted on the wall. Speaking in a clear, Spanish-accented voice, she says: "In the desert there are many things. In the desert the plants don't need much water. The cactus keeps water in its skin because it has thick skin. Animals in the desert come out during the night because it is not that hot and they listen better. It is so hot you can cook an egg on a rock. All the animals are adapted to the hotness. It is so hot and sandy that some plants grow after it rains. The next day it is dry again and the woodpeckers drink water from the cactus."

Baca wishes critics of bilingual education would come visit her school to see what a successful program looks like. Recently, she even wrote an open letter to the local newspaper, the *Burbank Leader*, inviting Ron Unz to come take a look. So far, he hasn't taken her up on the offer.

Not all bilingual education programs in the state of California, however, are like the one at George Washington Elementary School. Qualified bilingual teachers—even though they are paid up to \$5,000 more per year than regular teachers—are hard to come by, so many districts simply find ways to make do with whatever staffing they can get. "Only about a third of the classrooms referred to as bilingual are actually taught by a credentialed teacher," notes Alexander Sapiens, an assistant professor of bilingual education at San Jose State University. "Thus, many bilingual education programs have not succeeded because they were not adequately designed or implemented."

California legislators have made seven attempts in the last 10 years to overhaul the state's bilingual education regulations, which officially expired in 1987 but have been kept alive by the state department of education. Last year's bill, sponsored by state Senator Alpert and state Assemblyman Firestone, would have allowed districts to fashion whatever bilingual education approach they believe works best while at the same time requiring districts to measure the educational progress of California's 1.4 million LEP students, something that has not been done before. But in September, the bill was blocked by Democrats in the assembly. Ron Unz seized on the bill's failure to further his cause. "It looks like the initiative process is the best route to achieving a solution," he told a local reporter.

"There's a lack of accountability and consistency in California's bilingual programs," admits Laurie Olsen, executive director of California Tomorrow, an advocacy group that looks at immigration issues. "Does it need attention? Yes. But the Unz initiative doesn't do that."

Olsen is co-chairwoman of Citizens for an Educated America: No on Unz. Representing many of the state's education groups—including the California Teachers Association, the California Federation of Teachers, the Association of California School Administrators, and the California Association for Bilingual Education, among others—the coalition launched a counterattack against the initiative in November. At a press conference in Sacramento, Olsen called the proposed measure an "unreasonable and extreme experiment."

"This untested proposal," she said, "drafted by someone with no background in education, would impose a single, cookie-cutter approach upon all schools and teachers in this diverse state."

Olsen says the initiative can be defeated "once we get the message out to California voters." She's unconcerned by the results of the *Los Angeles Times* poll. "It's still way too early in the game," she says.

But Gloria Tuchman is so confident of the initiative's victory in June that she's already looking beyond California. "This is only the beginning," she says. "It's going to spread to other states. I know that. People all over the country are waiting to see what's going to happen in California."

The initiative, Tuchman says, is the last resort in her struggle to stamp out mandated bilingual education. The former school board member has grown wary of the legislative process; it's time for the people to call the shots.

"I will not trust the politicians in Sacramento to take care of the situation," she says. "I've given up on that. There are always compromises you have to make, and I won't do that at the expense of the children." ■

**'This is only the beginning,'
Tuchman says.
'It's going to spread to other states. I know that. People all over the country are waiting to see what's going to happen in California.'**

Falsehoods and Facts about “English for the Children”

America’s multi-billion-dollar bilingual education industry has grown desperate. Now that our disastrous thirty-year old experiment with Spanish-only so-called “bilingual education” is being exposed by the media, public support is evaporating and our “English for the Children” initiative threatens to put bilingual education out of business once and for all. With jobs and government funding at stake, the profiteers are running scared.

Their last-ditch response has been to try to *change the subject*. All their campaign materials advise their supporters to AVOID THE SUBJECT OF BILINGUAL EDUCATION AT ALL COSTS. Instead, they are attempting to spread ridiculous falsehoods and distortions about our initiative against bilingual education, hoping to raise doubts in the minds of voters. Fortunately, their falsehoods can’t stand up to the facts.

- **Falsehood:** Limited-English children of all ages will be forced into one class. 13-year-olds will be mixed together with 5-year-olds.

Fact: This is ridiculous. The initiative does say that schools will be permitted to mix together children of different grades (such as 7th and 8th) but this is no different than current law. Schools are already permitted to mix together different ages if necessary.

- **Falsehood:** Teachers can be sued for speaking another language.

Fact: This is a complete lie. Teachers may certainly speak other languages, though in English-language classes, the “overwhelming” language of instruction is English. Using a little of the child’s native language is certainly permitted in any classroom---initiative Co-Chair Gloria Matta Tuchman uses some Spanish in her own immersion classes, as does Honorary Chairman Jaime Escalante. Article 5 of the initiative does allow parents to sue elected officials or educators who “willfully and repeatedly” violate the law by refusing to allow children to be taught English. But teachers who violate the law can already be held liable under existing legal statutes.

- **Falsehood:** Our proposed system of “sheltered English immersion” is risky and untested.

Fact: Language research has shown that sheltered immersion is the most effective means to teach children another language. Co-Chair Gloria Matta Tuchman has been using sheltered English immersion for 15 years in her first-grade class with tremendous success, and her entire school has followed her approach. Every other nation uses some form of immersion to teach language to immigrant children; bilingual education is used nowhere else in the world. Immersion is tried-and-tested; bilingual education is an experiment which has failed.

- ***Falsehood:*** The initiative is a one-size-fits-all approach which violates local control of education.

Fact: There is no local control under the current system. With a few small exceptions, bilingual education is mandatory for all school districts in California. Our initiative provides a general framework for language-education in the state, requiring all schools to normally teach children English as soon as they enter, but within this general requirement, each school district can implement the proposal under its own local approach.

- ***Falsehood:*** School districts will have only 60 days to implement the initiative, which isn't enough time.

Fact: Our initiative will be voted on June 2, 1998 and will take effect at the beginning of the next school year in September. However, school districts have been well aware since early 1997 of our initiative and the strong likelihood of its passage. Responsible districts are already drafting contingency plans to implement "English for the Children" if it does pass. Irresponsible school districts, which stick their heads in the sand, may have to rush to implement our initiative after the June election.

- ***Falsehood:*** During the one-year English-immersion program, children won't be taught other subjects

Fact: Absolutely false. English-immersion programs are designed to teach regular academic subjects, but with an emphasis will be on teaching English as quickly as possible.

- ***Falsehood:*** We freeze the state into a policy which can't easily be changed later.

Fact: Like nearly every other initiative, our measure can only be changed by a 2/3rds vote of the state Legislature or another initiative. However, our current failed system of bilingual education has been set in stone for over *twenty years* and has been impossible to change except through our initiative.

- ***Falsehood:*** Normal children under 10 won't be able to get extra help with English.

Fact: Absolutely false. Besides providing sheltered English immersion programs to all children having trouble with English, our initiative also allows parents to apply for a waiver in their children require additional types of assistance with English.



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