Leveraging DL Parent's Knowledge: Parents as Partners in Waiting

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Research Question

• In what ways do parents understand dual language programs and their implications?

Abstract

This study explored the perspectives on dual language programs of parents of bilingual children. A survey was conducted to answer the following research question: In what ways do parents understand dual language programs and their implications? An open-ended survey was utilized as data collection via a Hispanic/ bilingual community center in the Midwest. Survey results provided insights into parental understandings about dual language. Among key findings of the research were the following: (a) 56% percent of the candidate children grew up learning 2 languages, (b) most of these children were introduced to a second language at the age of 3, and (c) over half of those surveyed consider their family bicultural. The level of parental involvement and understanding of a dual language program and how bilingual education works is critical to the effectiveness of an Early Childhood Dual Language Program in order to build a connection between a child and the parent as well as building a confidence in bilingual students to develop languages successfully.

Methods

• A survey was conducted in a center in the Midwest that is developing a Dual Language program.
• The survey was through paper form and it provided information on the perspective of a parent who wants to enroll their child in a dual language program.
• The survey was for parents of students in this program prior to the program starting.
• This survey included questions regarding:
  ➢ Knowledge of Dual Language Education
  ➢ Parent's perception of child
  ➢ Child's Language
  ➢ Culture and Identity
  ➢ Fundamentals of knowledge

Hypothesis

Parents do not have a clear understanding of what Dual Language programs are but know that they are good for their child's future.

Results

Goals for Children

Average age second language was introduced: 3

Conclusion

Involvement of parents is essential in a child’s education. For a bilingual student to be successful we, as parents, need to be educated in what dual language is and how it works. The learning does not stop when school ends it continues at home and through other life experiences. It is essential to know there is a difference between bilingual and monolingual learning. Through this survey done by parents we were able to see that Dual language is not thoroughly understood by parents. Therefore, we as parents, need to educate ourselves on dual language and become partners.