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Dual Language Learners in Monolingual Taught Classrooms

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Abstract

Research confirmed that the number of students that would be classified as "English as a Second Language Student" has continued to increase in early childhood classrooms (Lewis, Sandilos, Hammer, Sawyer, & Méndez, 2016). Research findings indicated educator demographics have not had the same rate of change (Harrison & Lakin, 2018). Monolingual teachers needed to be equipped and have enough training to teach in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms (Sawyer et al., 2016). This capstone analyzed and synthesized qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method studies that addressed ways to best support dual language learners (DLL) in monolingual classrooms. Several research studies provided evidence on the use of literacy rich classrooms, focused on peer interaction, increased DLL vocabulary, and culturally relevant pedagogy implementation. The research indicated teachers' beliefs and language and literacy practice can be improved with support of ongoing professional development (Ramírez, López, & Ferron, 2018). Educators provided with time to reflect and adequate training would positively support DLLs academic success (Sawyer, et al., 2016).

Keywords: early childhood, dual language learners, English learner, monolingual

Chapter One: Introduction

Mathews (2019) reported 20% of people speak two or more languages in the United States. Anderson (2010) reported almost 7,000 languages are spoken in the world. A teacher would never be able to speak all the languages represented within a classroom. However, a teacher is obligated to foster learning and teach English literacy skills all children would need to succeed in education, no matter the student's primary language. This capstone explored dual language learners' (DLLs) development by reflecting and learning best practices around vocabulary instruction, social learning, and culturally relevant pedagogy. Research conveyed teacher beliefs can influence instruction, which in turn affects relationships and success DLLs may have in the classroom ((Ramírez et al., 2018).

Scope

Educators recognized current demographics and the student population have evolved to include many DLLs who entered classrooms speaking more than one language (Raikes et al., 2019). However, Harrison and Laskin (2018) indicated a majority of educators have not changed in demographics. Most educators remained predominantly Caucasian, with 18% reported as being minority, which includes African American or Latino educators with a degree in teaching (Harrison & Lakin, 2018). The literature review examined qualitative and quantitative studies that provided insight into how monolingual educators can support student learning of DLLs in early childhood settings. The literature research focused on synthesizing and analyzing topics related to supporting DLLs in the role of social learning, language and literacy, culturally responsive pedagogy, family involvement, and teacher beliefs, practices, and roles in the classroom.

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Importance in Education

Baker (2018) suggested classrooms in the United States changed in student demographics over several recent years to include many DLLs. Baker (2018) revealed "Nationally, one third of all young children are DLLs" (p.115). Schools in the United States have become more diverse therefore; it has become more important that educators know how to best support DLLs language and literacy skills (Raikes et al., 2019). Baker (2018) established research exists and continues to be pursued in the area of equipping teachers with intentional teaching strategies that work for DLLs. Research supported English learners (EL) vocabulary and communication skills would expand if positive and supportive peer and teacher interactions occurred (Dominguez & Trawick, 2018). Baker (2018) reinforced the need to establish an environment that included guided play and rich literacy to support DLLs' social and cognitive development.

Classrooms that implemented cultural and linguistic teaching pedagogy have been shown to meet the needs of students with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds (Farinde-Wu, Glover, & Williams, 2017). Culturally relevant pedagogy used social classroom interactions to ensure all students' learning needs were met (Durden et al., 2014). Research found when educators implemented authentic experiences to help students connect home culture and language to school, students would thrive (Durden, Escalante & Blitch, 2015). Farinde-Wu et al. (2017) suggested implementing culturally relevant pedagogy to begin to diminish the achievement gap because of the benefits it could have on student academic successes. Baker (2018) found the importance of creating inclusive classroom environments would in turn foster positive relationships, connect academic concepts to authentic experiences, and value all students' self-worth and contribution. Students benefited educationally when teachers reflected

on personal biases and beliefs of other cultures and pursued an understanding of the cultures represented in a classroom (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017).

Research revealed home language and literacy experience can positively affect an EL's language abilities (Lewis et al., 2016). Lewis et al. (2016) research indicated no matter the language, a child's home language interactions influence language development. Lewis et al. (2016) suggested a child's home language experience can support vocabulary and oral comprehension based on the amount of the language used within the home setting. Teachers need to be equipped with tools to work with children and families that support a culturally linguistic connection between home and school to foster DLL language development (Sheridan, Knoche, Kupzyk, Edwards and Marvin, 2011).

The research findings demonstrated teacher characteristics and beliefs play a major role when working with DLLs (Ramírez et al., 2018). Ramírez et al. (2018) described teacher characteristics in terms of training received, years of teaching in the field of education, and cultural beliefs. Beliefs shaped teachers' practice and understanding of DLLs in the classroom (Harrison & Lakin, 2018). Professional development positively influenced teacher practices and beliefs needed to continue the conversation on how to be an effective teacher in a changing world (Ramírez et al., 2018). Through the examination of research studied, the essential question becomes, "How can monolingual educators implement intentional teaching strategies in diverse dual language environments that foster literacy skills in early childhood settings?"

Connection to Essential Question

The program essential question from Concordia St. Paul read, In light of what is known about how children learn, how shall professional educators best teach learners who speak a first language other than English? Educators sought intentional ways to help support ELs in learning.

This can be accomplished by implementing intentional teaching strategies, including culturally responsive teaching techniques, vocabulary development, play based learning, family involvement, and teachers' reflective practice and beliefs around ELs learning. Through analyzed research teachers can gain an understanding of intentional teaching practices through the analysis of qualitative and quantitative studies that guide effective instruction as well as ongoing professional development to reflect on beliefs and practices for DLL instruction.

Definitions

The terms presented in this paper provide the reader with context and understanding of the research being presented. The definitions included dual language learner, English learner, and monolingual. The terms highlighted will be connected to the research conducted in the Chapter Two literature review.

Dual Language Learner (DLL). This term refers to a person learning a first language as well as learning a second language simultaneously (Garcia, 2021).

English learner (EL). This term refers to a person who comes from a home that does not speak English as a first language but is learning English (Harrison & Lakin, 2018).

Monolingual. This term refers to a person speaking only one language (Ramírez et al., 2018).

Conclusion

Ramírez et al. (2018) discovered in Head Start classrooms in the United States monolingual peers were ahead of DLL peers in pre-academic skills entering preschool. Monolingual educators in early childhood education can serve DLLs and support literacy and language development. The topics researched and analyzed provide early childhood educators

with the tools needed to support DLL education. The role of social learning, language and

literacy, culturally relevant pedagogy, family involvement, and beliefs, practices and roles of a

teacher will be further discussed in Chapter Two. The research highlighted can be a guide for

teachers to reflect and implement successful instructional practices with DLLs (Durden et al.,

2014).

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

The research examined ways in which a teacher supported dual language learner's (DLL) learning success in classrooms primarily taught by monolingual educators. The research focused on five areas: the role of social learning, language and literacy development, culturally relevant pedagogy, family involvement, and teacher beliefs and practices. All research reviewed reflected the understanding of the research question, "How can monolingual educators implement intentional teaching strategies in diverse dual language environments that foster literacy skills in early childhood settings?"

Role of Social Learning

Dominguez and Trawick (2018) discovered preschoolers interacting and communicating through play with peers can positively affect a child's social and emotional development. Play is employed as a natural way in which children explore, experience, and learn about the world around them (Samuelsson, 2020). Early childhood educators implemented play as a guide to develop language and social emotional skills (Dominguez & Trawick, 2018). When play is supported in classrooms, learning can occur with teacher and peer interactions (Dominguez & Trawick, 2018).

Play

In a qualitative study, Dominguez and Trawick (2018) focused on the social aspect of play that occurred for very low English proficiency DLL in an only English-speaking classroom. The data observed and compared was the interactions of four DLL and four English only speaking peers (Dominguez & Trawick, 2018). The teacher participants were all English speaking, except for one who spoke fluent Spanish. However, all staff did learn some words in students' home languages to help support and guide DLLs. This study sought to find what social

behaviors were exhibited when DLLs interacted with peers and teachers and the behaviors that

differ from the English only speaking peers (Dominguez & Trawick, 2018). In order to seek the

answers to these questions, Dominguez and Trawick (2018) used video recordings of each child

and then coded the social interactions with a modified version of Rubin's (1989) *Play*

Observation Scale. Dominguez and Trawicks (2018) research yielded DLLs with low English

proficiency had very limited interactions when attempting to play and converse with other

students, compared to the English-speaking peers. The discussion reviewed DLL's lack of

language as a result and not because English-speaking peers rejected them. Another finding

revealed DLLs relied heavily on adults to support play and facilitate social interactions

(Dominguez & Trawick, 2018).

Dominguez and Trawicks (2018) research emphasized teachers played an essential role in

facilitating positive peer interactions with DLLs. Teachers promoted positive peer connection

and conversation when DLLs trusted a teacher to support play and give DLLs words to

communicate a plan with peers (Dominguez & Trawick, 2018). Further research identified

specific scaffolding techniques would help promote social interactions of DLLs in classrooms

where English was only spoken.

Baker (2018) offered an example of qualitative research focused on teachers' beliefs and

practices within a classroom related to establishing an environment where DLLs would thrive in

a classroom predominantly instructed in English. Baker (2018) enlisted participants that included

directors, teachers, family members, and children from six exemplary preschool classrooms in

Massachusetts. The classrooms studied were Head Start, public pre-K, and private

university-affiliated preschool programs (Baker, 2018). Most of the teachers in the study were

bilingual. Baker (2018) interviewed teachers, conducted classroom observations, videos

recordings, and classroom samples to collect and analyze the two research questions being investigated. The research sought to find how best practice across different program settings influenced DLLs (Baker, 2018.).

Baker's (2018) research provided specific suggestions for effectively teaching DLLs in a classroom setting. Exemplary teachers implemented DLL support for development of DLLs learning through beliefs and instructional practice (Baker, 2018). Some of these practices included asset-based thinking about bilingualism, family as a resource, valuing the student's home language, and guided play (Baker, 2018). Baker's (2018) research supported guided play as an effective instruction practice for DLLs. Guided play can be described as a teacher using play to facilitate students' learning (Baker, 2018). Dominguez and Trawick (2018) confirmed a teacher can positively use play to model play and language skills for children. However, cautioned educators when childrens play is over directed, this can impede peer interaction skills (Dominguez & Trawick's, 2018). The implications suggested are clear, learning through play when practiced effectively supports young DLLs in development (Baker, 2018). Baker (2018) proposed inquiry-based curriculum and observational assessments benefited DLLs learning. Baker (2018) reflected on research limitations. One major flaw suggested the over generalization to other contexts and populations (Baker, 2018). Further studies suggested research be done across other programs and within different areas to cross reference and make sure findings hold strong in other contexts.

Peer Interaction

Garcia (2021) examined social learning through the lens of peers affecting DLL English and Spanish receptive vocabulary development. Garcia's (2021) research, "draws on interactionist and social input theories of language development, which posit that language

learning occurs through interactions with social environments" (p.181). In this mixed methods

study, Garcia (2021) examined monolingual English peers' vocabulary in relationship to

low-income DLLs' receptive development of English and Spanish vocabulary of Head Start

classrooms in the United States. Garcia (2021) employed family questionnaires and measured the

English receptive vocabulary with the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - 4th Edition. Garcia

(2021) focused on two groups in this study: low income, Latino DLLs who spoke Spanish in the

home and a peer group that had well founded English language vocabulary scores. The study was

conducted over one school year. With 654 participants, results showed DLL children who were

exposed to peers with higher average English receptive vocabulary scored higher in receptive

English skills (Garcia, 2021). However, when little to no Spanish was used within the classroom

with peers or adults, the Spanish speaking students' receptive scores decreased in Spanish at the

end of the year (Garcia, 2021). The results yielded further investigation into whether using a

balance of English and Spanish would result in a more receptive English and Spanish increase.

Garcia (2021) studied the correlation between teachers' instructional practices and

speculated the results based on Garcia's (2021) current research as well as previous research

conducted. One hypothesis included, if teachers have students with higher English vocabulary, a

teacher utilizes more English, instead of including some Spanish language support on a daily

basis. Garcia (2021) concluded, when teachers have students with higher English vocabulary, the

teacher is more likely to increase the level of English instruction, which in turn would give DLLs

an opportunity to hear higher-level vocabulary. Garcia (2020) wanted future studies conducted to

consider looking at the proportions of DLLs in relation to a student being in the at-risk

population category. The limitations encountered in this study were observational factors that

could not be used. Also, generalization could not be ensured of other DLLs in Head Start because analytical data was missing in the study (Garcia, 2021).

Schmerse (2021) conducted a quantitative study in Germany related to the effect peers in the classroom have on children's German vocabulary growth when German was not the child's primary language. This study was part of a German longitudinal study called BIK-3-10 (Schmerse, 2021). The research was conducted over three years. It began in preschool and followed students through grade one. There were 547 randomly selected students from 97 preschools from the area of Bavaria and Hesse in Germany (Schmerse, 2021). Children were randomly selected and assessed from one classroom of each of the preschools. Over 80% of the parents were born in Germany, and over 20% conveyed not being a native German speaker (Schmerse, 2021).

Schmerse (2021) measured data that included students' vocabulary skills, language exposure, home learning environment, socioeconomic status, peers' vocabulary skills, classroom quality, and child-teacher ratio. Each area of study used a specific assessment tool that gave a numerical rating to analyze data together. Schmerse (2021) used The Peabody Picture Vocabulary test, home language rating scale, a semi standardized picture book task, the International Socio-Economic Index of occupational status, and the early childhood environment rating scale-revised edition to measure each area of data collected.

The implications of this study indicated DLL vocabulary skill levels varied across classrooms (Schmerse, 2021). However, Schmerse (2021) discovered DLLs benefited from classrooms with peers who showed higher levels of German vocabulary skills. DLLs improved vocabulary at a faster rate and the difference in skills narrowed when compared with monolingual peers. Garcia (2021) and Schmerse's (2021) research resulted in the same

conclusion around peer interactions in the majority language spoken. Schmerse (2021) also indicated DLLs in classrooms with lower German language skills did not acquire language skills at the same rate as the group with higher level language peers. Schmerse (2021) noted peer interaction outdid the effects of the home learning environment, socioeconomic status, and entering preschool at varying times had on students' language development. Another finding that emerged was quality classrooms were linked to the higher peer level skills of the classroom (Schmerse, 2021). Finally, Schmerse (2021) found DLLs faced disparities of socioeconomics that may have impacted the findings based on accessing high quality programing.

There were four limitations considered in Schmerse's (2021) research. First, possible bias interpretation of the data may be construed based on a person's interpretation of peer interaction or significance of classroom quality. Second, the home learning environment data was measured based on the exposure students had within the home. Third, the vocabulary measurement was only tested in the majority language. Finally, gaining more classroom data would have helped indicate how peer interactions were structured and the frequency in which they occurred (Schmerse, 2021).

The research studies analyzed for this paper indicated different aspects of social learning and the effects on DLL students in a positive way. Garcia (2021) and Schmerse (2021) came to the same conclusion. When DLLs are surrounded by strong high level language peers in the majority language, DLLs language positively increases (Garcia, 2021; Schmerse (2021). Based on the studies presented, the teacher's role along with high level language peers in the classroom helped further DLL development socially as well as in language acquisition.

Language and Literacy

Sawyer et al. (2016) uncovered evidence to support high quality preschool programs, build early language and literacy skills. Sawyer et al. (2016) gave examples of high-quality language and literacy practices and strategies that can be used in the classroom. These included teachers helped students make connections between home language and English, supported the use of a child's home language in the classroom, engaged in conversation with open ended questions, modeled rich vocabulary, used shared read-alouds that focused on vocabulary and comprehension, facilitated writing opportunities formal and informal, offered linguistic supports such as home language books in the classroom or key vocabulary in home language, and used pictures, props, gesture to promote language acquisition. The research found instructional strategies were successful in supporting the home language of Spanish (Sawyer et al., 2016).

Ramírez et al. (2018) revealed similar research around the effective use of literacy instructional strategies implemented in early childhood classrooms. Instructional change was sustained in classroom practice when teachers were provided with guided and applicable instructional strategies through professional development (Ramírez et al., 2018). Some strategies highlighted were the teacher's ability to select books and reading materials as well as the methods of planning literacy curriculum (Ramírez et al., 2018).

Sawyer et al. (2016) used a mixed methods study that examined teachers' use of linguistically responsive practices among teachers with Spanish speaking students to support language and literacy development. It considered factors related to teachers' beliefs that influence instructional practices (Sawyer et al., 2016). Sawyer, et al. (2016) research included 72 federally funded, low-income classrooms in urban areas of two states located in the northeast and

southeast. 62 teachers participated with varying levels of degrees and teaching experience. Almost half were Hispanic teachers, and the rest were white, black or another race. An average of half of the classroom students were Spanish speaking DLLs. The research measured data with teacher questionnaires. The prompts included asking teachers about personal beliefs surrounding languages other than English spoken in the home, the use of culturally responsive materials, and needs of DLLs within the classroom (Sawyer et al., 2016). Additionally, the Early Language and Literacy Classroom Observation - DLL (ELLCO -DLL) was used to collect information about the classroom literacy environment, observation and literacy activity rating scale in teachers' classrooms (Sawyer, et al., 2016).

Sawyer et al. (2016) found the monolingual teachers rendered low in linguistically responsive practices in classroom instruction of DLLs, with bilingual teachers only being slightly higher. Sawyer et al. (2016) noted implementing best practice to support students linguistically in language and literacy skills does not mean just being able to speak the language, but extends to intentional instructional support. Another aspect of research findings that surfaced was the relationships teachers expressed about beliefs and practices in classrooms. While some educators may speak to best practice the application was not always evident in classroom methods (Sawyer et al., 2016). The research indicated a need for teacher preparation as well as the importance of ongoing professional development for teachers in the field. It is important to note, monolingual and bilingual teachers may have different needs for professional development and would be important to differentiate instruction of language and literacy practices that would be relevant and applicable for educators immediately (Sawyer et al., 2016).

The limitations in this study may indicate a social bias when teachers took the language and culture survey. This can happen when teachers want to respond in a way that makes one

appear ethical (Sawyer et al., 2016). Finally, researchers only saw a small part of the day for a one-time observation in the ELLCO-DLL. More observations over several months would have revealed a better picture of linguistic practice.

Mendez, Crais, Castro, and Kainz (2015) gave an example of quantitative research to support vocabulary. Mendez, et al., (2015) "examined the role of language of vocabulary instruction in promoting English vocabulary in preschool Latino dual language learners (DLLs)" (p.93). Mendez, et al., (2015) used an experimental study in which families were recruited during a preschool meeting from two different Head Start programs in North Carolina. The hypothesis was readers engaging in the culturally and linguistically responsive (CLR) vocabulary approach for Latino dual language learners would be more beneficial. All participants in the study were randomly assigned to either the CLR or English culturally responsive (ECR), but the researchers had a specific criterion for qualifying for the research based on language skills (Mendez, et al., 2015). The number of participants were broken down by age and gender across a number of Head Start classrooms. Mendez et al. (2015) utilized a survey to collect insight into where a child was born, predominant language spoken in the home, and percentage of students for when they were beginning to acquire English language skills.

Mendez et al. (2015) conducted the Receptive One Word Picture Vocabulary Test before and after instruction to measure growth of English and Spanish vocabulary of students. Mendez et al. (2015) developed two criterion researcher measures as well as used two standardized measures that were language specific for both. This translated to clear data describing which method of instruction had a positive effect on student vocabulary. Each group was given vocabulary instruction outside of the classroom (Mendez, et al., 2015). The results revealed students in the CLR group, which supported instruction in both languages, Spanish and English,

yielded higher post test scores than the ECR group in which instruction was only given in

English (Mendez, et al., 2015). Baker's (2018) research found an exemplary instructional

practice was to support DLL use of home language even while being in an English only

classroom. Teachers promoted home languages represented in the classroom with labeling signs

for the different centers and incorporating routines and songs that involved different home

languages (Baker, 2018). Jacoby and Lesaux (2019) also referenced prior research conducted

using a child first language was advantageous for early literacy advancements in language and

vocabulary skills. While Baker's (2019) research offered home language support for DLLs in the

classroom, it would not be adequate to fully support DLLs literacy development.

Mendez et. al. (2015) had strong research and evidence, but limitations were evident. The

significant limitation in this study was the small number of participants. This "limits the

generalization of the results to the larger population of low-income preschool Latino DLLs"

(Mendez, et. al., 2015, p. 102). Another limitation was that children were studied outside of the

classroom and not in the context of the classroom instructional setting (Mendez, et. al., 2015).

Thus, limited the comparison of other research due to the delivery of instruction.

Hinderman and Wasik (2015) provided research that supported students succeeding

academically in reading and communicating with others when strong vocabulary development

was supported. Hinderman and Wasik (2015) conducted a quantitative study that examined

Spanish speaking DLLs vocabulary growth in Spanish as well as English. The Family and Child

Experiences Survey (FACES) data was used to develop questions to investigate. A family

qualified if Spanish was spoken in the home (Hinderman & Wassik, 2015). Hinderman and

Wassik (2015) selected Head Start programs. A total of 3315 students and families as well as 416

teachers participated in the research.

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Hinderman and Wassik (2015) conducted receptive vocabulary assessment in the fall and the spring with students, both in English and Spanish. The assessments included the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test -4 (PPVT) and the Test de Vocabulario en Imagines Peabody (TVIP). Other research measures included quality of classroom instructional language that was conducted by observing a classroom and completing the Instructional support domain of the Classroom Assessment Scoring System (CLASS) (Hinderman & Wassik, 2015). This measured the overall language instructional quality provided by the teacher. Each teacher measured the frequency of vocabulary instruction through a set of questions on a rating scale. Classroom adult to child ratio as well as the use of Spanish and English were measured in the data collection (Hinderman & Wassik, 2015).

Hinderman and Wassik (2015), research revealed most students spoke Spanish or a mix of English and Spanish in the home setting and had limited access at school, whether that be accessing from teachers or peers in the classroom. Most students made acceptable gains in English vocabulary skills. Children also made gains in Spanish vocabulary however, at a limited capacity and rate (Hinderman & Wassik, 2015). Classroom instruction revealed, students with low English vocabulary skills benefited from teachers who used high quality language instruction when explaining ideas and activating student prior knowledge, more so than when a teacher focused on word meaning (Hinderman & Wassik, 2015). Research confirmed DLLs benefited from both peers and teachers who exhibited high quality language skills and instruction (Hinderman & Wassik, 2015, Schmerse, 2021).

The limitation of this research was the vocabulary test given to measure receptive vocabulary were not normed as well as only focused on one aspect of language development (Hinderman & Wassik, 2015). Multiple parts of language such as expressive and grammar could

reveal more about a child's whole language development. Finally, Hinderman and Wassik (2015) research cannot be generalized to other contexts because of the limited context of students only being focused on Spanish speaking DLL.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Farinde-Wu et al. (2017) conducted a qualitative research study that examined award-winning teachers' approaches to teaching and instruction using culturally responsive teaching. Farinde-Wu et al. (2017) described an award-winning teacher as someone who received an award for best teaching in the school or district. Over a school year, the research was conducted in an urban school district, primarily representing students of color in the southeastern part of the United States (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). Participants included seven teachers, mostly African American and one white teacher, three of whom were male (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). Data was collected through one-on-one interviews lasting 60-90 minutes over seven different sessions (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017).

Farinde-Wu et al. (2017) research established the award-winning teachers shared a commonality of implementing teaching strategies. The four teaching strategies included RACCE (respect, act immediately, communicate, celebrate and encourage students), community, "student first" learning, and multicultural content (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). Each strategy promoted culturally responsive teaching, which in turn further advanced student growth and achievement (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). However, Farinde-Wu et al. (2017) suggested each class would vary in linguistic and cultural sets of students. Thus, urged readers to seek to understand the culture within the one being taught. Implementing culturally relevant teaching strategies will encourage students to be actively involved in learning (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017).

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Farinde-Wu et al. (2017) recommended, "culturally responsive teaching practices and strategies are central to the personal growth and academic success of students'" (p. 294). This took the form of the education system retaining a diverse set of educators, creating authentic curriculum experiences, accepting all students as important, maintaining high expectations, and having a student-centered focus (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). Ramírez et al. (2018) also suggested culturally competent teachers who have respect and value culture motivate students to use English while supporting the use of the home language each student brings to the classroom. The study limited itself with the small sample size of teachers.

Finally, another promising line of research would be conducted by Durden et al. (2014). Durden et al. (2014) used ethnographic, qualitative study revealing teachers' perspectives on beliefs when engaging in culturally relevant pedagogy. This study took place in a Midwest childcare program called, Kids Play and represented a diverse cultural and linguistic population. Kids Play was supported by a university and used university students to support the staffing (Durden et al., 2014). During the one-year research study, 88 participants were involved (Durden et al., 2014). The participants included children, parents, teachers, directors, and teachers in training (Durden et al., 2014). Most of the participants involved were white females. Several surveys, interviews and observations were conducted. The surveys revealed information about teachers' beliefs and attitudes (Durden et al., 2014). The classroom observations focused on collecting data on the environment, interactions among staff and students, and culturally relevant teaching strategies (Durden et al., 2014). All observations and interviews were then coded to look for common patterns in the research (Durden et al., 2014).

Durden et al. (2014) revealed teachers used curriculum, environment, and instructional approaches for culturally relevant teaching. Durden et al., (2014) found teachers believed in the

Reggio Emilia approach when using curriculum. The Reggio Emilia approach supported

children's active exploration and investigation of specific child interests (Durden et al., 2014).

The teacher's role was to support the exploration of this child centered approach (Durden et al.,

2014). Teachers also used the classroom environment to support culturally relevant teaching

using diverse book collections, toys and pictures throughout the room (Durden et al., 2014).

However, Durden et al. (2014) found that teachers and students did not engage often with the

environmental opportunities presented. Finally, teachers used instructional approaches to

increase cultural awareness (Durden et al., 2014). Teachers encouraged students to use home

languages to communicate, and sought out community members to help provide experiences to

reflect the cultures represented in the classroom (Durden et al., 2014). Baker (2018) reinforced

the use of a child's home language in the classroom as an exemplary practice to support DLLs.

The study conducted by Durden's et al., (2014) implicated the importance of teacher

reflection, in order for teachers to meet the needs of a diverse student population. Time and

support are necessary for teachers to reflect on personal own beliefs around culture in order to

support the growing cultural and linguistically diverse classroom (Durden et al., 2014). Thus,

teacher training and ongoing professional support are needed to equip teachers with the strategies

necessary to support DLL in the classroom (Durden et al., 2014).

Family Involvement

Family involvement is supported in research to have a positive effect in a preschool

child's development (Zhang, 2015). Zhang (2015) conducted research to uncover 'meaningful'

types of parent involvement versus 'meaningless' involvement. In a qualitative study, Zhang

(2015) instituted the Grounded Theory Method (GTM), which meant data collected, shaped its

own theory around the topic of parent involvement. Eleven teachers and twelve parents were

interviewed across three different education settings in New Zealand, ranging from private early childhood childcare centers to public Kindergartens. After each interview, Zhang (2015) used Glaser's three stages of coding method to analyze data collected. Themes emerged from the research. These themes include, parent, teacher, child driven dynamics, activity involvement in relation to home learning, parent teacher conferences, volunteering in the educational center, and the impact of the involvement in relationship to the child, parent and teacher (Zhang, 2015).

Zhang (2015) found parent involvement needed to be focused on supporting the child. If parents and teachers can answer yes with certainty to the questions "is it desirable?, is it practical?, is it effectual?...then the involvement practice is meaningful" (Zhang, 2015, p.117). Parent involvement can look many ways for families based on culture (Zhang, 2015). Zhang (2015) discovered educators provided meaningful activities to parents with regard for the child's interest. The implications of this study helped educators understand how to provide meaningful involvement that would in turn support a child's development in all areas (Zhang, 2015). However, further study needed to be conducted to understand how parents and teachers approach establishing a collaborative relationship to support a child (Zhang, 2015).

Sheridan et al. (2011) presented a mixed method study using The Getting Ready intervention framework to study the effectiveness parent involvement had on children's language and literacy development. The Getting Ready intervention was individualized based on each family and not a predetermined set of lessons, but focused on collaboration with teacher and family (Sheridan et al., 2011). The program focused on how teachers supported families' understanding of child development and preschool learning outcomes. Teachers guided families to be responsive by letting the child take the lead while supporting the child's interest while guiding learning (Sheridan et al., 2011). Sheridan et al. (2011) looked at the effects the model

had on language and literacy development, as well as how family and child variables diminish

the outcomes related to language and literacy through the Getting Ready intervention program.

Sheridan et al. (2011) used Head Start classrooms in the Midwest to conduct research

over a two-year time period. The participants included 217 children, 211 parents, and 29

teachers. Families and children who met criteria were asked to participate. All participants were

split into two groups; A control group and a treatment group (Sheridan et al., 2011).

Measurement tools collected and analyzed teacher and child assessment data. The Teacher

Rating of Oral Language (TROLL) and Literacy and the Preschool Language Scale -Fourth

Edition (PLS-4) were used to collect data (Sheridan et al., 2011). Teachers were trained on how

to implement The Getting Ready framework. As part of the program, teachers conducted home

visits four times per year (Sheridan et al., 2011). Teachers and families worked together to

discuss, brainstorm, and provide information to work collaboratively on a child's development

(Sheridan et al., 2011).

Sheridan et al., (2011) discovered, The Getting Ready intervention resulted in substantial

gains overtime. While the control group also made gains, the treatment group in, The Getting

Ready program made significant gains in oral language, reading, and writing. Specifically,

children in the treatment group continued to make gains even when the Head Start program was

not in session during the summer months (Sheridan et al., 2011). Within the research, Sheridan et

al. (2011) found some children entered the program and did not speak English, benefited and

experienced gains in oral language. Another finding supported previous research surrounding

family health and low education (Sheridan et al., 2011). Children in The Getting Ready group

made less growth compared to other peers in the group in expressive language skills if a parent

had significant health issues or a parent with less than a high school diploma (Sheridan et al., 2011).

The limitations of the research are evident in this study. First, it is unknown what family or teacher variables were changed based on implementing this program as a means to understanding the effects of the intervention. Secondly, the aspect of cultural relevance has not been studied yet. Third, the study did not extend into Kindergarten or beyond and could not show the effects on elementary grades. Finally, the percentage of children that completed the full two-year program was limited due to family factors (Sheridan et al., 2011).

Previous research showed the notion that a child's early vocabulary skills impacted later reading and academic achievement (Lewis et al., 2016). Lewis et al. (2016) conducted research that explored the relationship of DLL Spanish and English vocabulary and oral language when home language and literacy skills were supported in the home. Lewis et al., (2016) recruited 93 Head Start students and mothers in which most of the children were exposed to both Spanish and English prior to beginning school. Most children in the study were born in the United States and would be eligible for Kindergarten the following school year (Lewis et al., 2016). However, many of the children's mothers were born outside the United States and almost a quarter of the mothers were first generation living in the country (Lewis et al.,2016).

Lewis et al. (2016) used vocabulary and oral language assessments to collect data on students. The Bateria III Wood-cock-Munoz and Woodcock-Johnson III tests measured vocabulary and Spanish and English Oral comprehension tests measured oral language. Finally, Home Activities Questionnaires were given to families at the beginning of the year using a five-point scale to rate a variety of specific literacy practices mothers used with the child in the home

(Lewis et al., 2016). Some examples included reading a book, practicing letters, colors, shapes, and more. (Lewis et al.,2016).

The research sought to explore how literacy experiences in the home affected DLL Spanish and English vocabulary and oral language abilities (Lewis et al., 2016). Lewis et al. (2016) found positive impacts related to Spanish and English home language literacy use. First, when Spanish was supported in the home, children's Spanish expressive vocabulary increased. Thus, suggesting supported home languages spoken in the home by students is important to increase vocabulary as well as oral language (Lewis et al., 2016). There is also a direct link to DLL's Spanish vocabulary and oral language development when home literacy was present in the home, specifically with the use of mother-child read alouds (Lewis et al., 2016). In previous studies, monolingual preschoolers benefited from mother-child reading experiences, thus the research concluded that it is also beneficial for DLL (Lewis et al., 2016). Lewis et al. (2016), research revealed that many of the DLL in the research group spoke more English than Spanish. Children's English use was predictive of English vocabulary skills. Lewis et al. (2016) also noted DLL's language and literacy development will increase based on being exposed to native English speakers of the language. Home literacy experiences related to English in the home played a small role in a DLL vocabulary development. However, DLLs benefited from child storytelling with the use of out of context oral language experiences (Lewis et al., 2016). In short, the literature pertaining to supporting Spanish DLL language abilities at home, strongly suggested a positive outcome that would directly affect the development of a child's English abilities (Lewis et al., 2016).

Limitations are present in Lewis et al. (2016) research. First, language data was not collected during home literacy events, thus resulting in a lack of research on the impact of

language associated with the home literacy activities and the language used in the experience. Second, the research only considered the language exposure and experiences provided by the mother, but other family or friends may also directly affect language and literacy experiences of a child (Lewis et al., 2016). Finally, DLLs in the group exhibited stronger English skills than Spanish, thus narrowing the findings to reflect a small group of DLLs.

Teacher Beliefs, Practices and Role

Ramírez et al. (2018) research found when a child is exposed to high quality language and an environment that values and supports all of a child's languages spoken, a child will develop strong language skills. Teacher beliefs and practices played a significant role when working with DLL. Ramírez et al. (2018) argued, "teachers' beliefs and practices are formed by their underlying values, which can affect the pedagogical decisions they use and make in the classroom, consequently affecting classroom interactions and performance of DLLs" (p. 86). Ramírez et al. (2018) presented a quantitative study that examined characteristics of a teacher and the effects on DLLs language, literacy and math development. The characteristics were defined as cultural competency, number of years working with DLLs, and teacher training. The researchers gathered 217 DLL from Head Start programs, all of whom one parent spoke Spanish in the home. Teachers represented in this study were all females representing many racial and ethnic groups with a majority being Caucasian (Ramírez et al., 2018). Teachers were required to attend 15 or more hours of professional development within a year and were able to choose based on class need or teacher interest. Children's academic growth was measured with three different assessments for vocabulary and oral language (Ramírez et al., 2018). Teachers participated in a demographic survey and standardized language and culture questionnaire. This is a longitudinal study based on data collected over two academic years.

At the conclusion of the study, Ramírez et al. (2018) found teacher characteristics impacted the growth of students' language, literacy, and math development. All characteristics played a part, but the most significant characteristic that helped DLLs academic growth was teacher professional development (Ramírez et al., 2018). Ongoing professional development indicated teachers could incorporate instruction into daily teaching practices that would support DLLs academic learning in a positive way (Ramírez et al., 2018). Sawyer et al. (2016) and Jacoby and Lesaux (2019) also cited evidence for ongoing teacher professional development in order to support teachers with best instructional practice to serve DLL in the classroom.

A few limitations were considered using the Ramírez et al. (2018) study. The study failed to collect baseline data at the beginning of the year when measuring assessment data. Also, teacher reported data was mentioned as a limitation. Individuals may seek to say what others want to hear or what makes practice and belief sound better (Ramírez et al., 2018). Finally, Ramírez et al. (2018) suggested the lack of valid and reliable bilingual assessments required further research in order to yield the best results.

Jacoby and Lesaux (2019) found similar general beliefs about teachers. Jacoby and Lesaux (2019) stated, "prior studies in this area demonstrate that teacher beliefs can differ depending on the teachers' prior experiences working with this population of learners, as well as on the amount and extent of their professional training related to this work" (p. 122). Jacoby and Lesaux (2019) noted when teachers acquire new knowledge and understanding of instruction teacher beliefs can change (Jacoby & Lesaux, 2019).

Jacoby and Lesaux (2019) conducted a study with 20 Head Start teachers, all female, 60% monolingual English speakers and 4% bilingual English/Spanish speaking of 20 classrooms of students enrolled as a majority of Latino DLLs. Through a single open-ended teacher

interview, researchers gathered information related to investigating teacher beliefs about

everyday teaching experiences and instructional strategies used specifically to engage DLLs

(Jacoby & Lesaux, 2019). When completing the interview, the written dialogues were coded and

reviewed for patterns in the findings. Jacoby and Lesaux (2019) found three beliefs of teachers

emerged. Social emotional development was essential, using the Spanish language to support

DLLs learning was pivotal and English language acquisition occurs naturally by being in an all

English environment (Jacoby & Lesaux, 2019).

Jacoby and Lesaux's (2019) study drew on previous research that social emotional and

academic learning coincide. While this study gave insight into teacher beliefs about the

importance of social emotional development and home language, specifically Spanish used in the

classroom, it failed to investigate the use of teacher instructional practices related with DLL

children (Jacoby & Lesaux, 2019). Also, the research uncovered teachers within the study

believed learning a second language comes in a natural fashion (Jacoby & Lesaux, 2019). More

training on second language acquisition would be appropriate to further support teachers'

knowledge about DLL learning as well as empowering others to support this agency.

Harrison and Lakin's (2017) research suggested teachers currently teaching the cultural

and linguistic makeup of a classroom in today's world, are different from the education system

many teachers grew up in. A teacher's own cultural experiences shape instructional teaching

strategies and pedagogy (Harrison & Lakin, 2017). However, this was challenged in the diverse

classrooms with a need to respond to culturally relevant teaching strategies for not only some,

but all students (Harrison & Lakin, 2017). Harrison and Lakin (2017) conducted a quantitative

study in which undergraduate course instructors were asked to survey and give an implicit

Association Test to undergraduate education majors. There were 116 preservice teachers with

little to no training in working with a diverse group of students. A majority of participants were female and monolingual English-speaking students from a southeastern university. The Implicit Association test was meant to measure implicit attitudes of pre-service teachers and any underlying factors (Harrison & Lakin, 2017).

Harrison and Lakin (2017) suggested in previous research a negative correlation with ELs. However, the research found preservice teachers had a positive attitude towards ELs. Research also pointed to teachers with understanding of language acquisition who had more accurate instructional beliefs and practices towards ELs (Harrison & Lakin, 2017). Harrison and Lakin (2017) recommended the importance of pre-service teacher training and the importance of education programs adopting classes that support the diverse and linguistic classroom settings. The limitations of Harrison and Lakin's (2017) research suggested reporting beliefs and attitudes can be biased because of the desire to show positive outward appearances. All three studies presented, deducted continual teacher education and training is needed to support DLL in the classroom. Ramírez et al. (2018), suggested ongoing professional development is necessary for teachers to effectively put into practice strategies they have learned. This would support understanding of professional development as well as intentional strategies teachers can put into practice (Jacoby & Lesaux, 2019).

Conclusion

The research explored evidence related to monolingual educators and how to support literacy skills of DLLs in early childhood settings. Research recommended DLL can be supported in a play environment that promotes peer interactions inside the classroom (Baker, 2018, Dominguez & Trawick, 2018). Teachers used intentional vocabulary and literacy instructional strategies to encourage language growth (Sawyer, et al., 2016). Finally, culturally

relevant pedagogy (CRP) was used to effectively support positive change for DLL (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). CRP promoted all children in the classroom to feel a sense of belonging and support surrounding linguistic and cultural identity (Durden et al., 2014). Monolingual educators could support DLL literacy development outside the classroom. First, involving parents in a child's language and literacy development in meaningful ways could support the academic achievement of a child (Sheridan et al., 2011). Finally, teachers' instructional approaches in relation to DLLs changed with ongoing professional development and individual teacher reflections (Harrison & Lakin, 2017). The next chapter looked to discuss the insights made in the literature review and look ahead on how research in the field can inform instruction in early childhood educational settings.

Chapter Three: Discussion/Application/Future Studies

Dual language learners (DLL) are increasingly growing and entering classrooms across

the country (Lewis et al., 2016). However, monolingual, Caucasian teachers remain a majority of

the educators in the field (Harrison & Lakin, 2018). Thus, it is imperative that all educators know

how to use best practice for literacy instruction to meet the needs of diverse, cultural, and

linguistic classrooms (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). This chapter provides an overview of effective

research to support DLLs in monolingual educators' classrooms and provide applications

applicable to environment, instruction, and beliefs and practices. Suggestions for future research

will also be discussed.

Discussion

The research demonstrates the need for monolingual classroom teachers to be responsive

to the current changing demographics of the classroom and needs of students (Farinde-Wu et al.,

2017). Research suggests, in order to reduce the achievement gap, and set DLLs up for

instructional success, teachers should understand best practices for teaching DLL language and

literacy (Raikes et al., 2019). DLL can be supported in the classroom environment when teachers

support guided play and peer interactions (Baker, 2018; Garcia, 2021). Research reveals DLL

who interact with other peers with strong English language skills, increase in English language

vocabulary (Garcia, 2021).

A teacher's cultural and linguistic background influences instructional practices in the

classroom based on previous experiences (Harrison & Lakin, 2017). For this reason, adopting

culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) and teaching strategies can influence a child's positive

language and literacy development and academic success (Durden et al., 2014). The research

establishes when culturally responsive teaching strategies are implemented and students are seen

as assets, students will engage in learning and increase in academic achievement (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). Implementing CRP will also encourage reflection on teacher beliefs and practices around instruction in the classroom (Durden et al., 2014).

Application

Research often identifies a wide achievement gap among many DLL in the classrooms around the country compared to monolingual peers (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017; Schmerse, 2021). It is important for student success that educators find ways to differentiate instruction for all types of learners. Research shows teachers receiving continued training to educate DLL has a positive impact on language, literacy and math skills (Ramírez et al., 2018). With this knowledge, providing adequate education for preservice teachers to engage in this work, before entering the classroom will provide support for diverse classrooms (Sawyer et al., 2016). Teachers' beliefs directly affect practice and instruction (Ramírez et al., 2018). Thus, ongoing professional development for those already in the field is vital. Research supports findings that when teachers are active participants in ongoing intensive professional development and reflection, teacher's instructional practices improve (Sawyer et al., 2016).

Each classroom in the United States represents a variety of cultures and languages. Often teachers find it difficult to integrate CRP into the classroom (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). However, in order for students to create meaningful connections between home and school, a teacher must implement CRP in instruction and assessment (Durden et al., 2014). This can have an effect on students overall academic achievement, including literacy skills (Sawyer et al., 2016).

Language development strongly correlates to the quality and amount a child receives (Raikes et al., 2019). Consequently, when early childhood programs and classrooms are being constructed the importance of high-quality teacher language and literacy as well as high level

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English vocabulary peers should be considered because of the positive impact it can have on DLL (Garcia, 2021).

Future Studies

Research indicates teacher beliefs have a direct correlation with classroom instructional practices (Ramírez et al., 2018). However, when given ongoing professional development can support positive outcomes with culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms (Ramírez et al., 2018). Sawyer et al. (2016) study reveals administrators' guidance may have directly influenced teacher practices. Thus, further research must look into the effects administrator support can have on early childhood programing models and teacher instructional practices (Sawyer et al., 2016).

Families and school are influential in a child's development (Sheridan, 2011). Sheridan (2011) found partnership models to be a successful way for family and teachers to share in decision making and goal setting related to a child's learning. However, more research around the process in which parents and teachers collaborate on problems solving around child concerns is needed (Sheridan, 2011). With insights into an effective collaborative process between teachers and parents, that will in turn benefit children's development (Sheridan, 2011).

Teacher's educational philosophies are directly reflected in teaching practices and influence student learning (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). Further research can reveal how teachers and early childhood programs can create partnerships within the home community to introduce teaching children about culture (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017). Furthermore, continuing to study best practices to support teachers in effectively using culturally relevant pedagogies within the classroom is needed (Farinde-Wu et al., 2017).

Conclusion

Classrooms in the United States continue to increase in the number of DLL (Raikes et al., 2019). While monolingual, Caucasian teachers remain heavily in the field of education it is vital to equip all teachers with best practice for supporting DLL academic achievement (Harrison & Lakin, 2018). Research suggests guided play has proven to be effective for DLL learning (Baker, 2018). Play ensues significance when students connect personal lives and interests with meaningful learning (Baker, 2018). Research continues to find that when teachers are given adequate training on how to work with DLL in the early childhood classroom settings, then areas of development will be positively impacted (Ramírez et al., 2018). Not only will training further yield positive outcomes, but teacher use of reflection of beliefs and the implementation of CRP will have a direct effect on students culturally and educationally (Durden et al., 2014). Teachers are responsible for reflection in the field. The research supports that educators focus on environment, instruction, cultural responsiveness, linguistics, reflection, and the child and family to provide success in a DLL educational journey.

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