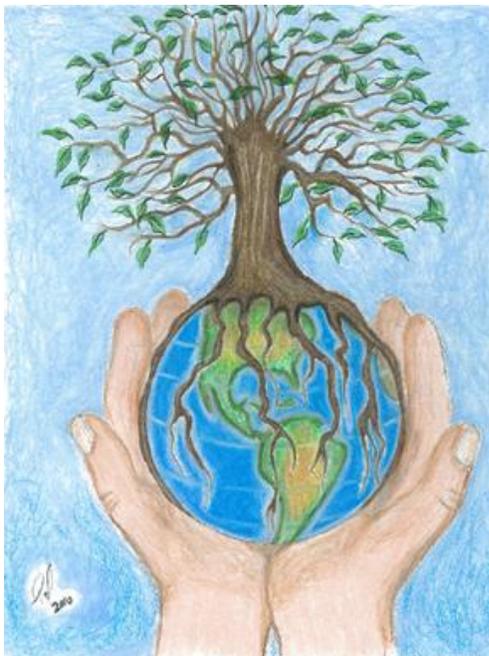


Multilingualism: A Cultural Renaissance
Stanley A Lucero, M.A. in Teaching 1974

We need to renew our efforts so that every American citizen can become multilingual in every aspect of the word. The more individuals that can speak more than two languages and understand the cultural variances between languages, the more we can become a country that avoids cultural and linguistic misunderstandings. Parents need to teach their children the importance of embracing and maintaining their own language and culture while learning additional languages. Always remember who you are and where you come from.

A few school district boards are taking the initiative in this area by declaring their intention that all students will have the opportunity to graduate with fluency in more than one language in addition to performing on grade level in content areas in both languages. Many school districts have embraced the dual language immersion and two-way immersion programs as a means to promote bilingualism, biculturalism, and grade level proficiencies.

Our goal should become that our graduating bilingual students will compete at the university level with native speakers of other languages in their own language. Our graduates need to enter the work force with the skills necessary to compete in the global work market and not just in the English-speaking work market.



Multilingualism = Multiculturalism

Monolingualism: Speaking only one language: able to speak only one language. Using only one language: written, spoken, or produced in only one language

Multilingualism: Speaking several languages: able to speak more than two languages fluently. Involving several languages: relating to the use of more than two languages

Cultural: Of specific culture: relating to a culture or civilization. Of arts: relating to the arts and intellectual activity

Renaissance: Rebirth: a rebirth or revival, e.g. of culture, skills or learning forgotten or previously ignored

SOURCE: Encarta Dictionary English (North America)

Escuela Normal de Los Angeles



"I expect that I am the last remaining alumnus of the old Spanish Escuela Normal de Los Angeles. I attended there in 1863 when I was eleven years of age, and was one of the youngest students in the school. I was in the school until 1865. The school closed just after I left. If any others of those students still are living [1936], they probably are ninety or more years of age.

The Principal of the old school was Sr. Juan Manuel Silvas, of Concepcion, Chile. The second in rank was Candido Fraijo of Spain, and the third was Francisco Escanillo from Andalucia, Spain. Understand, theirs was not a church school. It was a tuition school. They taught us French, Spanish, English, Italian, mathematics, and bookkeeping. Our parents paid three hundred dollars a year for our board, lodging, and instruction.

School was held where the southeast corner of Main and Castelar streets are now, three or four blocks east of the old church on the Plaza."

Quote by **Jose Jesus Lopez** in the book *SAGA OF RANCHO EL TEJON* by Frank Forest Latta. 1976: Bear State Books, Santa Cruz, page 10.

Related topics of interest

- A global society excludes monolingual individuals
- Interpreters try to convey your meanings but sometimes fail
- Opening doors to more than two worlds of language and culture
- Diversity of thinking and expression
- Language acquisition is a process that takes years to become proficient
- Adding languages & cultures to your skills [additive bilingualism]
- Brain research regarding bilingualism
- English Learners: potential multilingual citizens
- Two-Way Immersion programs produce proficient bilingual students who are also on grade level in two languages
- Levels of proficiency approaching native like fluency
- All American citizens should acquire proficient bilingualism

- School Boards at San Francisco USD and San Diego USD have declared their intent to provide opportunities for all of their graduating seniors to become bilingual



María Dolores Quintana

My great great grandmother lived most of her life in Peñasco, New Mexico [1846-ca 1920]. She spoke Spanish, Tiwa, Apache, and Cherokee.

Dolores and her daughter, Maria Ramona [my great grandmother] would go up to the montes of El Llano de San Juan Nepomuseno to visit with the Apaches.

Tips for families

- ✓ Dedicate family time to speak only in your second language
- ✓ Listen to radio, cds, movies, etc in your 2nd language 1-2 hours daily
- ✓ Start a bilingual picture file
- ✓ Become friends with someone who speaks the language you want to learn
- ✓ Silent period of 70-100 hours needed before speaking production
- ✓ You will need 1-2 years of constant exposure to a 2nd language to speak that language comfortably.

To learn a 2nd language

- ✓ Develop your home language
- ✓ Be proud of your own language and culture
- ✓ Use school and community library
- ✓ Make friends with bilingual & multilingual families
- ✓ Start collections of pictures by topics
- ✓ Talk with your children often in L2
- ✓ Visit community sites where your 2nd language is spoken
- ✓ Designate Spanish and English time for your home

Top strategies

- Be proud of your own language and culture
- Decide why you want to learn a new language and culture
- Have confidence that you can learn a new language and culture
- Focus on listening and speaking first
- Look for opportunities to immerse yourself in a new language and culture
- Be patient: you will need 2-7 years to master listening, speaking, reading, and writing

Benefits of Becoming Multilingual

- ✓ Enter the global society
- ✓ 1151 million people speak Mandarin
- ✓ 1000 million people speak English
- ✓ 500 million people speak Spanish
- ✓ You can become a member of several languages and cultures
- ✓ Improve your chances to get more jobs
- ✓ Speak directly to family members who speak other languages
- ✓ View the world through the eyes of other cultures
- ✓ Diversity of thinking and expression
- ✓ Increase your travel opportunities
- ✓ Participate in more cultural activities in your community

China going nuts for California pistachios



The Chinese call pistachios the "happy nut." But these days, it's California nut growers who are smiling. China has become the industry's fastest-growing export market, boosting its purchase of U.S. pistachios to \$109 million a year from \$5 million in 2004. And with more than 1.3 billion people, China could easily become the industry's biggest customer.

Quotes

"Additive bilingualism leads to many cognitive advantages, including greater flexibility in thinking and more varied problem-solving skills." (Collier & Thomas, 2009, pp. 39-40)

"In our research findings, the program with the highest long-term academic success is the two-way dual language education." (Collier & Thomas, 2009, p. 52)

"Students who receive at least five to six years of dual language schooling in the U.S. reach the 50th NCE/percentile in English by fifth to eighth grade and maintain that level of performance because they have not lost any years of schooling." (Collier & Thomas, 2009, p. 83)

Bibliography

Collier, V. P., & Thomas, W. P. (2009). *Educating English Learners For A Transformed World*. Albuquerque: Dual Language Education of New Mexico Fuente Press.