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Dispelling Myths

Facts for Developing an Appropriate Education Policy
in Immigrant Nations

Dr Kay M. Losey and Dr Hermann Kurthen

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Dispelling Myths

Facts for Developing an Appropriate Education Policy in Immigrant Nations

Dr Kay M. Losey and Dr Hermann Kurthen

Introduction

There is an oft-expressed assumption in immigration nations such as the U.S. and Germany that with the recent increases in immigration there has been a decrease in the speed with which immigrants become proficient in the host language. We decided to put that assumption to the test with two large immigrant groups in two large immigrant nations: the Mexicans in the U.S. and Turks in Germany. There is a great concern in both these countries that immigrants assimilate as quickly as possible. Our overarching question was: to what extent is “linguistic assimilation” occurring among these groups in these countries and how are language policies impacting language assimilation and affecting the groups involved.

Using data from the 1989 German Socio-Economic Panel (GSOEP) and the 1989/90 Latino National Political Survey (LNPS), our study analyses the language use and proficiency of people of Turkish descent in Germany and Mexican descent in the U.S. For the purposes of this paper, we are particularly interested in how rates of language proficiency and language use change by generation, age of entry, and length of stay in the host country. And we are interested not only in the immigrants’ proficiency and use of the new target language—German or English—we are also interested in the proficiency and use of their mother tongue—Turkish or Spanish—as well. Because of the history of the U.S. as a nation of immigrants, it is common belief that Mexicans will more readily adapt in the U.S. than former “guestworker” Turks in Germany, a country which has only slowly and recently accepted the reality of immigration (Brubaker, 1989; Martin 1996).

We found that both of these immigrant groups learn the language of the host country at very impressive rates. Of surprise and concern, however, is how rapidly these groups are losing their mother tongues once they are in the host country.

In an attempt to understand this phenomenon, our paper will examine:

- First, the issue of subtractive bilingualism in the U.S. and Germany;
- second, the current language policies in the U.S. and Germany;
- third, our findings re: language proficiency and language use of the two groups; and
- fourth, language policy recommendations.

In our examination of these issues, we discovered that despite different immigrant histories and language policies, both countries are subtractive bilingual environments with assimilationist policies.

Additive vs. Subtractive Bilingualism

What do we mean by a “subtractive” bilingual environment? Individual and societal bilingualism can be categorized as either “additive” or “subtractive.” An additive situation exists when the second language does not “negatively affect” the “cognitive and social abilities acquired in the first language” but instead “the two linguistic and cultural entities involved ... combine in a complementary and enriching fashion” (Baetens Beardsmore, 1982, p.19). Additive situations occur when the society in which the individual lives “attributes positive values to both languages and considers the acquisition of a second language as an extra tool for thought and communication” (Baetens Beardsmore, 1982, p.19).

A subtractive situation exists when the second language is “acquired at the expense of aptitudes already acquired in the first language” and where there is “competition” between the two linguistic and cultural systems (Baetens Beardsmore, 1982, p. 19). This situation is often found where “ethnolinguistic minorities are present and is most easily brought about when schooling, coupled with upward social mobility, is conducted in a language different from that spoken in the home environment” (Baetens Beardsmore, 1982, p.20). An assimilationist society usually develops subtractive bilingualism.

Situations of subtractive bilingualism at the societal level often lead to loss of the mother tongue or language loss for individuals and eventually language shift among the group. For the individual, the situation can have serious cognitive and/or psycho-social ramifications.

Existing Evidence of Language Shift in the U.S. and Germany

Fishman (1989) claims that in the North American context, immigrant languages usually are lost by the third generation. Studies of Spanish language use in the U.S. and of Asian language and Spanish language groups in Florida and California indicate, in fact, that second generation children in the U.S. are fully fluent in English and in danger of losing their mother tongue (See Portes & Hao,1998; Portes & Schaufliker, 1996; Valdes, 2000).

In Germany, among the first and 1.5 generation of "guestworkers," language shift is occurring, but it is comparatively slower than in the U.S. (Gries, 1999). Where Turkish is maintained, often in “ethnic enclaves,” it is maintained through informal use, not through formal instruction. As a result, high levels of literacy in the mother tongue are not achieved (Pfaff, 1991). In other words, although children are maintaining dominance in Turkish, there is some doubt if they are developing the type of language proficiency in their mother tongue that is needed for the more advanced academic work in any language.

Cognitive Effects of a Subtractive Context

Rapid language loss and language shift can have both cognitive and psycho-social effects on individuals. The cognitive benefits of bilingualism in an additive environment have been well-documented. Bilingualism in a supportive environment promotes general intellectual development, divergent and creative thinking, metalinguistic awareness, and sensitivity to feedback cues and non-verbal communication (Cummins, 2000, p. 182; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, p. 244). These benefits are particularly evident when high levels of academic language

proficiency have been attained in both languages. If academic language proficiency is not developed in both languages, however, then bilinguals may not reap these benefits, and the result may affect their schooling outcomes (Cummins, 2000). This latter phenomenon is a byproduct of a "subtractive language learning" environment and "subtractive language spread" (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, p.72).

Cummins (2000) argues that for success in school contexts, student language proficiency must advance beyond the conversational, often "context-embedded," register to the frequently "context-reduced," and more cognitively demanding, academic register (pp. 68-69). Surface fluency in a second language can come in one or two years, but academic proficiency in another language can take four to seven years (Ramirez, 1992). Because of this difference, non-native speakers are often assumed to have greater competency in a new language than they actually do. As a result of errant language assessment, bilingual students who are competent in context-embedded situations may be seen as no longer needing or benefiting from instruction in the mother-tongue. But as noted earlier, academic language proficiency in the first language will not only transfer to the second language, it will also provide access to the cognitive benefits an additive environment can provide.

Existing Evidence of Cognitive Consequences in the U.S. and Germany

The negative cognitive consequences of the subtractive U.S. and German environments are evident in the research. Studies of bilingualism and code-switching among immigrant school children in Germany found that immigrants lacked proficiency in both German and Turkish to the extent necessary for academic success among the second or third generation (Aytemiz, 1990; Meyer-Ingwersen et al. 1977, Pfaff, 1999, Sar 1993). Research is only now beginning to look at bilingualism and language shift of Turkish adolescents and young adults (Auer, 2002; Kallmeyer/Keim, 2002; Keim, 2000).

A comparison of the academic language proficiency and conversational language abilities of Turkish returnees who had learned German in Germany and Turkish natives who studied German as a foreign language found that while the returnees were far advanced of the control group in their conversational abilities, they were nearly at the same level in terms of the academic language proficiency. In other words, their years in Germany in German-only classrooms had done nothing to increase their academic language proficiency beyond what they would have gained from years studying German as a foreign language in Turkey. According to this researchers, this outcome is probably because academic language proficiency had not been developed in the mother tongue (Daller & Grotjahn, 1999).

In the U.S., a study of Limited English Proficient (LEP), Full-English Proficient(FEP), and mother-tongue English Mexican Americans shows the importance of developing full bilinguals. The study found that Full-English Proficient, mother-tongue Spanish students were the most likely to stay in school and finish in a timely manner, even more likely than Latino native speakers of English. The researchers concluded that the advantages of developing academic language proficiency in both languages are both social and cognitive in nature (Rumberger & Larson, 1998).

Psychological Effects of a Subtractive Context

A variety of negative psychological effects have been found to accompany the learning of a second language in a subtractive environment. First of all, the situation can lead to difficulties with identity formation and what has been called "anomie." Anomie is "a feeling of personal disorientation, anxiety, and social isolation" resulting a conflict between loyalties and aspirations of the home language and culture and those of the outside culture (Baetens Beardsmore, 1981, p. 126). Subtractive bilingualism can also lead to low self-esteem, low self-confidence and stress. These symptoms are often the result of negative experiences in the schools, or what Skutnabb-Kangas (1981) has called "symbolic violence" (p. 313). Attending school in a subtractive bilingual situation usually means that the language and culture of the student is subtly or not so subtly denigrated and students are under stress to perform as well as native speakers.

Existing Evidence of Psychological Consequences in the U.S. and Germany

The negative psychological effects of the subtractive environment in the U.S. is well-documented. Rapid language shift, such as that in the U.S., has been found to lead to "dissonant acculturation" among immigrant children, which includes "the rupture of family ties and children's abandonment of ethnic community" and "limited bilingualism or English monolingualism among children" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, p. 52). Because the second generation is not fluent in the mother tongue and their parents may not yet have learned English, "fluent communication across generations ceases, opening the way for affective separation and weakening of parental authority" (Portes & Rumbaut, 2001, p. 127).

In Germany, the loss of connection to the family and the feeling that they lack a "cultural home" has led Turkish children to suffer from identity problems and isolation (Onder, 1996). They may exhibit signs of aggression, autism, depression, and lack of concentration. Children sometimes leave home because they cannot live by their parents' rules any longer as they attempt to become more and more a part of the German culture.

Current Language Policies in the U.S. and Germany

Given what we know about the importance of context for the success or failure of bilingualism, how might current language policies be adding to the language shift and its negative consequences?

Language Policies affecting Mexicans in the U.S.

In the U.S., assimilation has always been the goal of linguistic policies and it continues to be so to this day. Even the Federal Bilingual Education Act, when it was in effect, was designed only to provide equal educational opportunity, not to support native languages (Wiese & Garcia, 1998, p.4). In addition, at present, 23 of 50 states in the U.S. have declared English the only "official language" of their states. And four different bills are proposed in Congress with the end goal of making English the official language of the U.S. as a nation.

State and local governments have much control over the details of implementation of educational programs in the U.S. In the state of California, where the majority of people of Mexican descent live in the U.S., English was the sole medium of public instruction from 1855 until 1966, when its first bilingual programs were started (See Losey, 1997, for a detailed review of this history). Even these programs, however, were primarily transitional. The goal was always to get students speaking English as soon as possible, not to maintain or develop the mother-tongue.

The beginning of a backlash against transitional bilingual education came in 1998, with the passage of California state ballot Proposition 227. This law put all limited English proficient students into English-only classrooms, except those that had a parental waiver. Then, in 2002 the U.S. Congress repealed the Federal Bilingual Education Act with the “No Child Left Behind” Act.

Language Policies affecting Turks in Germany

In Germany, Turks and Germans alike considered the Turkish migration to be of a temporary nature only. When Germany (West) approved the use of mother-tongue education in 1964, it was to the extent that it would provide equal educational opportunities to foreigners. It was to help with the “social integration of pupils” while they were in Germany (Gogolin & Reich, 2001, p. 201). The federal bureau of education gave individual states much freedom in creating and implementing policies but most fit into one of the two descriptions below and either had an assimilative or exclusive effect:

1. All instruction was in Turkish only, with teachers from Turkey and with a Turkish curriculum, allowing for a quick return to Turkey. This approach left students completely unable to attend higher education in Germany or unprepared to participate in skilled labor in Germany.
2. All instruction was in German only, with little consideration of a student's language situation. Some states added Turkish language instruction as optional after school. Some had very modest "German as a Second Language" programs available.

One of the most promising plans provided shelter in the form of additional classes in Turkish that increased as the students received more exposure to German. But when conservatives regained power in the *Land* in 1999, Hesse's School Act became one of the most conservative in the country – rivaling Prop. 227 in California. Now it simply reads: “Immigrant language teaching is abolished” (Gogolin & Reich, 2001, p. 211).

Most recently, the German Bundestag and Bundesrat (lower and upper houses of parliament) approved a plan similar to that presented in the so-called "Suessmuth Report" of the Independent Commission on Migration to Germany (2001), although it has not been implemented because of resistance by conservative forces. In the report, policies are designed specifically to “integrate”, rather than “assimilate”, and it recognizes that immigrants “want to live in Germany without having to give up their cultural identity (p. 196). The plan points out, however, that “having a good command of German is an essential prerequisite for integration” (p. 197). But, ultimately, the recommendations for school language policies are not that different from what is in place now in Germany:

German is the primary language of instruction with German as a Second Language classes as part of the regular course of study and mother-tongue classes taught after school.

These recommendations, if eventually implemented, will serve a strong assimilationist end. Interestingly, the German Commissioner of the Federal Government for Foreigner Affairs, has disseminated materials stating that learning German first is not the appropriate approach for teaching German to immigrants, but that the promotion of *both* languages is necessary. They state that the goal is not to create a fictitious German monoculturalism and monolingualism, but multilingualism. These ideals, however, are not borne out in policies enacted in the federal states or recommended by the German parliament.

Empirical Findings

The assimilationist policies and practices described above are evident in the language use and proficiencies of the Turks in Germany and the Mexicans in the U.S. Our study reveals the extent to which immigrants have mastered the host language and to what extent they have maintained their mother-tongue. It considers not only the rates of language proficiency and use, but also the change by generation, age of entry, and length of stay in the host country.

Differences in Language Proficiency of Mexicans in U.S. by Generation

Table 1
Language Proficiency Of Mexicans In The U.S. By Generation 1989

Mexican origin or ancestry	Don't know Spanish	Are much better in English	Are better in English	Are no different in either language	Are better in Spanish	Are much better in Spanish	Don't know English
Generation (age 17-65 in 1989)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
4.0 U.S. born (N=123)	14.4	30.6	30.6	22.5	1.8	0	0
3.0 U.S. born (N=156)	9.9	38.5	32.4	18.1	.5	.5	0
2.0 U.S. born (N=153)	.7	26.2	24.8	34.0	5.0	8.6	.7
1.5 foreign born (N=93) entry <1989 age 1-10	1.0	14.6	24.0	43.8	8.3	8.3	0

1.0 foreign born (N=634) entry <1989 age 11+	0	10.4	6.1	9.3	23.1	30.6	20.5
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Source: PSID/Latino National Political Survey (1989/90). Respondent self-evaluation question: Considering your abilities in understanding/speaking/reading and writing English which of these statements best describes your abilities in Spanish?

The generational analysis of language use among Mexicans reveals that with very few minor exceptions, the more recent the generation, the less proficient in the language of the host country. Generations 4, 3, 2, and 1.5 are all very proficient in English, even to the extent that some members of Generation 3 and 4 are unable to speak the language of their forefathers.

Of interest and concern among the third and fourth generation is evidence of complete language shift from mother tongue to host country language (14.4% and 9.9%, respectively, do not know Spanish).

Differences in Language Proficiency of Turks in Germany by Generation

Table 2
Language Proficiency Of Turks In Germany By Generation In 1989

Turkish origin or ancestry	Don't know language of origin	Are much better in German	Are better in German	Are no different in either language	Are better in language of origin	Are much better in language of origin	Don't know German
Generation (age 17-65 in 1989)	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
2.0 German born (N=63)*	.9	19.6	32.3	38.7	4.8	3.6	0
1.5 foreign born (N=143) entry <1989 age 1-10	4.7	8.6	12.3	36.2	33.1	5.2	0
1.0 foreign born (N=372) entry <1989 age 11+	.5	0	4.5	21.8	24.5	41.2	7.4

* This percentage includes Turks and non-Turkish migrants as well.

Source: GSOEP (1989). Question: Variable constructed from four variables that ask immigrant respondents to self-evaluate their proficiency in speaking and writing of German as well as of their language of origin.

Because the Turkish 2.0 generation subsample is too small to be reliable (N=12), we have substituted the larger group of "guestworkers" immigrant groups for the second Generation comparisons. While the second generation is quite proficient in German – 91.5% of second generation "guestworkers" feel that they are at least as proficient in German as they are in the language of their home countries if not

better – only 61.8% of the 1.5 generation of Turks in Germany state that they are as proficient in German as they are in Turkish, if not better. The 1.0 generation is least proficient in German at only 26.8% stating that they are as good or better in German than they are in Turkish.

Proficiency in Host Language and its Use in the U.S and Germany

Table 3

Proficiency In Host Language And Its Use In The U.S. And Germany As % Of All In 1989

	Turkish origin or ancestry	Mexican origin or ancestry
Generation as of 1989	%	%
4.0 age 17-65	N/A	97.3% of N=120
3.0 age 17-65	N/A	92.9% of N=154
2.0 born in host country <1950 age 40-65	N/A	80.3% of N=239
2.0 born in host country 1950-73 age 17-39	80.7% of N=14*	90.2% of N=462
1.5 foreign born, entry 1950-1973 at age 1-10, age 17-49	47.9% of N=35	71.0% of N=68
1.5 foreign born, entry 1974-1989 at age 1-10, age 17-25	57.5% of N=23	52.4% of N=17
1.0 foreign born, entry 1950-1973 at age 11+, age 27-65	8.2% of N=19	15.6% of N=196
1.0 foreign born, entry 1974-1989 at age 11+, age 28-65	23.6% of N=87	2.6% of N=391

* This percentage includes Turks and non-Turkish migrants as well.

Sources: GSOEP (1989/1996) and PSID/Latino National Political Survey (1989/90).

Note: Turks: Proficiency in German (=don't know language of origin & are much better in German & are better in German & are no different in either language) AND language spoken most of the time (=mostly German & both about the same). Mexicans: Proficiency in English (=don't know Spanish & are much better in English & are better in English & are no different in either language) AND language use at home (=only English & more English than Spanish & both languages equally). The German question about the language spoken "most of the time" was retroactively added from the 1996 GSOEP survey because it was not available in 1989.

In Table 3 we first look at how much host language proficiency coincides with language usage. Although the questions regarding language use were not identical for Germans ("language use") and Mexicans ("language home use"), our comparison of Mexican and Turkish language proficiency and language use shows the expected pattern across all three generations: namely, the more recent the generation, the less proficient in the language of the host country and the higher the use of the country of origin. Overall, the findings indicate immigrants have quite high proficiency and use of the host language, increasing rapidly with generations

in the host country, although it seems to be shifting more rapidly for Mexicans. There have not been sufficient Turkish immigrant generations to know for certain how rapid their shift will be.

Language Use by Mexicans at Home By Generation

Table 4

Language Use Of Mexicans At Home By Generation In The U.S. In 1989

Mexican origin or ancestry	Only English	More English than Spanish	Both languages equally	More Spanish than English	Only Spanish
Generation (age 17-65 in 1989)					
4.0 U.S. born (N=123)	32.5	41.2	24.6	1.8	0
3.0 U.S. born (N=156)	35.0	37.7	21.9	4.9	.5
2.0 U.S. born (N=153)	13.8	23.4	40.0	18.6	4.1
1.5 foreign born (N=93) entry <1989 age 1-10	13.0	25.0	30.0	21.0	11.0
1.0 foreign born (N=634) entry <1989 age 11+	1.4	3.4	8.4	27.3	59.6

Source: PSID/Latino National Political Survey (1989/90). Respondent self-evaluation question: What language do you usually speak and use at home?

A comparison of the home language use of Mexican immigrants by generation reveals that the more recent the generation, the more Spanish is used in the home.

The increase in English only usage in homes of Mexican ancestry Americans over the generations is evidence of Spanish language shift to English in the longstanding Mexican American community.

Language Use by Turks by Generation

Table 5

Language Use Of Turks By Generation In Germany In 1996

Turkish origin or ancestry	Mostly German	Both about the same	Mostly Turkish
Generation (age 17-65 in 1989)			
2.0 German born (N=4)	69.7	30.3	0
1.5 foreign born (N=60) entry <1989 age 1-10	29.0	51.1	19.9
1.0 foreign born (N=121) entry <1989 age 11+	24.9	45.8	29.4

Source: GSOEP (1996). Respondent self-evaluation question: What language do you speak most of the time? (Question was not asked in 1989)

The German panel data in 1989 did not have a home-language-use question, however, in the 1996 identical panel respondents were asked about what language they used most often: German, the language of origin or both languages equally. An evaluation by generation shows the expected relationship between language use and length of residence. Interestingly, the shift at the 2.0 and the relative dominance at the 1.5 and 2.0 levels for the Turks is not as strong as it is for Mexicans.

Balanced Bilingualism

Table 6
Percent Balanced Bilinguals In The U.S. And Germany In 1989

	Turkish origin or ancestry	Mexican origin or ancestry
Generation as of 1989	Percent	Percent
4.0 age 17-65	N/A	6.4% of N=120
3.0 age 17-65	N/A	12.0% of N=154
2.0 born in host country <1950 age 40-65	N/A	16.3% of N=239
2.0 born in host country 1950-73 age 17-39	13.6 of N=14*	8.5% of N=462
1.5 foreign born, entry 1950-1973 at age 1-10, age 17-49	23.5% of N=35	18.8% of N=68
1.5 foreign born, entry 1974-1989 at age 1-10, age 17-25	22.2% of N=23	28.6% of N=17
1.0 foreign born, entry 1950-1973 at age 11+, age 27-65	2.0% of N=19	5.2% of N=196
1.0 foreign born, entry 1974-1989 at age 11+, age 28-65	7.8% of N=87	0.5% of N=391

* This percentage includes Turks and non-Turkish migrants as well.

Sources: GSOEP (1989/1996) and PSID/Latino National Political Survey (1989/90). Note: Included were only respondents who--in regard to proficiency said they "were not different" and use both languages "equally" (GSOEP 1996) or speak and use them at home "equally" (Latino National Political Survey).

Bilingual proficiency is difficult to measure. Our definition only includes persons who self-reported to be "equally" proficient in both languages and "equally" using them (at home). The disadvantage of this measure is that it does not provide information about the degree of "equal fluency." Nevertheless, we found that the percentage of our "equal bilinguals" category rapidly increases from the first to the 1.5 generation, then declines with the following generation(s). In other words, the ability to use both languages equally well is a very transitory one in these two immigrant populations. This chart provides more evidence of the issue of language dominance, which leads to language loss and shift.

Language Policy Recommendations

In making language policy recommendations, recognition and understanding of context is of the utmost importance. Is the society monolingual or multilingual? Do the mother tongue and host country language have the same prestige in society or are they perceived differently? What are the stated and unstated goals of the policy? These are just a few of the important factors to consider. Skutnabb-Kangas (1981, p. 127) has developed a useful chart for understanding the linguistic and social ramifications of various language policies in which she distinguishes the medium of instruction, the target group, class and program type, societal goal, and the linguistic aim (mono- or bilingualism). According to this chart (see Appendix), both the U.S. and Germany are basically monolingual societies. English and German are the prestige languages, respectively. It is through them that the rewards of the society are doled out and there is little or no reward from the society for the use of either Spanish or Turkish, respectively. In some contexts, their use even may be detrimental.

If Germany does sincerely want to support the mother tongue and well as the host country language, then it needs to greatly alter its existing and planned programs for children and adults.

If the U.S. has no interest in the mother tongue and only wishes for development of host country language as soon as possible, it must realize that to attain a high level of host country language proficiency, the development of mother tongue is necessary. For a healthy development of the individual, maintaining the mother tongue and culture while learning a new language and culture provides stability, support, comfort, and continuity during a stressful time in their life.

While our analysis of language retention and use among the two groups indicates that Turks may be retaining their mother tongue at a slightly higher rate than Mexicans, it is not through any overt policy intention on the part of Germany. Instead, it seems to have been an unintended consequence of “foreigner schools” taught in German with only foreign students attending and “national schools” taught exclusively in Turkish. Furthermore, self-report data on relative proficiency and use of the two languages does not address absolute ability level in each language. As Pfaff (1991) notes, the Turkish students she studied were more reliant on Turkish because they had many more interactions with Turks, but these interactions were at home, in context-embedded, informal contexts. In such an environment, Turkish students did not receive formal instruction in Turkish and did not develop the ‘academic Turkish’ that would transfer to German and bring scholastic and cognitive benefits.

Given the facts about bilingualism in both the German and U.S. contexts, we recommend policies that will put both nations on paths toward equality, empowerment, and high levels of bilingualism, unlike the current policies in both countries.

Recommendations re: Children

Following the recommendations of Skutnabb-Kangas (1981), Turkish children in Germany and Mexican children in the U.S., children should be taught (see Type 4 on Appendix):

- in a “language shelter, mother tongue maintenance” program;

- in their mother tongue for at least the first several years of school, possibly throughout school;
- with students of the same language background;
- the majority language in effective second language classes with opportunities to interact with native speakers of German/English;
- in schools that show full respect for their language and culture and that treat the immigrants like “equals”;
- in schools in which the mother-tongue is also taught to the majority children and is given “prestige” as much as possible; and
- in schools with faculty who respect the language and culture of all students.

In addition to Skutnabb-Kangas’ description, Cummins (1986) discusses the need for such schools to provide for:

- collaboration with family and community;
- student-centered and interactive classroom pedagogy; and
- student assessment that is designed to advocate for students rather than to legitimise.

Recommendations re: Adults

With regard to adults, our data indicate that it is first generation adolescents and adults who are least proficient in the language of their host countries. Given these findings, the attention assimilationists pay only to school-age instruction misses the point. Generation 1.5 is learning the host language almost as quickly as Generation 2.0. The group that is furthest behind in the acquisition of the host country language is Generation 1.0, or immigrants aged 11+. And this group is the most likely to need the language for survival and work as soon as possible and they have the least amount of time available to attend schools. Yet as adults they will gain much from learning a second language in a school-like environment, particularly if they are literate in their mother tongue. Two key issues for this group are (1) incentives to attend classes, and (2) appropriate instruction.

Modest attempts to create adult language initiatives for immigrants have been tried but have not led to large-scale host country literacy among the 1.0 immigrant generation. Research has shown that “in the absence of economic incentives, government compulsion to acquire a second language does not induce second language acquisition but increases the incentives for return migration or leads to cultural and labor market segmentation” (De Voretz & Werner, 1999, p. 4). The cost of taking time from work, plus the cost of tuition and effort to study must be weighed against the income of individuals. For unskilled workers it will likely never “pay” to attend school extensively unless there are subsidies—both in terms of time and money.

Research has shown that adult literacy programs are often taught by faculty poorly prepared to work with culturally and linguistically different adults and rarely run long-enough for significant gains to occur. And curricula often are not designed with the specific needs of this population in mind, but may be more appropriate for immigrant children or native speakers (Kalman & Losey Fraser, 1992).

Given these concerns, we propose the following recommendations regarding adult host language education. Generation 1.0 immigrants need to become fluent in the prestige language as soon as possible in order to improve their chances of

finding skilled labor in their host country. In recognition of their urgent needs, new adult immigrants should be taught:

- by credentialed second language teachers, familiar with or from the home culture to reduce anxiety and cultural distance and to increase motivation (not volunteers or GED instructors);
- by teachers who have received training in teaching adults (not just children); and
- with curricula that are appropriate and motivating to *adult* second language learners.

Furthermore, adult programs need to provide incentives, given what we know about the forces working against attendance. Possible incentives include:

- workplace- or union-sponsored programs that occur in the workplace and provide pay for attendance;
- government-sponsored programs in neighborhoods during the day and evening; and
- family literacy classes that allow all levels and ages to attend at the same location at the same time.

But perhaps there is no true desire in Germany or in the U.S. to have high levels of host country literacy among immigrants, which may explain why poorly conceived assimilationist “subtractive” submersion programs are recommended and funded. The economic need is greatest for immigrants at the unskilled level, positions that native citizens do not want. Furthermore, there is a lack of funding for those representing the interests of immigrants. If change is to occur, it is imperative that the myths about bilingualism are dispelled and that the facts necessary for appropriate language policies are publicized. Language researchers must become more active and outspoken if change for the better is to happen.

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Bionotes

Dr Kurthen teaches in the Department of Sociology at Stony Brook University.

Dr Losey teaches Writing and Rhetoric in the Department of English at Stony Brook University.