



## Center for Early Care and Education Research Dual Language Learners

# Social-Emotional Development in Dual Language Learners: Annotated Bibliographies from a Critical Review of the Research

Cervantes, C. A. (2002). Explanatory emotion talk in Mexican immigrant and Mexican American families. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences, 24*, 138-163.

This cross-sectional study examined mothers' use of emotional talk and emotional explanations with preschool-age children and compared this emotional talk and explanations in Mexican American dyads and Mexican Immigrant dyads. Participants included 48 mother-child pairs, half of which were in each group (Mexican American or Mexican Immigrant). Children averaged four years of age. Few differences were found between children in these two ethnic groups. Larger differences were found when comparing children by gender. Mexican American mothers used emotion labels more often than Mexican Immigrant mothers. Both groups used emotion explanations regularly, but Mexican Immigrant mothers used them slightly more.

Chang, F., Crawford, G., Early, D., Bryant, D., Howes, C., Burchinal, M., ... Pianta, R. (2007). Spanish-speaking children's social and language development in pre-kindergarten classrooms. *Early Education and Development, 18*, 243-269.

This article used longitudinal data from a subsample of Spanish-speaking preschool children from two large datasets to determine what language interactions Spanish-speaking children experience in their pre-k settings and how these interactions are related to the children's social and cognitive outcomes. Spanish in the classroom was related to positive teacher ratings of frustration tolerance, assertiveness, task orientation, peer social skills, and teacher closeness with the child. A higher proportion of English interactions in the classroom was associated with more conduct problems, learning problems, and less frustration tolerance. More Spanish teacher interactions were associated with a decline in Spanish-speaking children's likelihood of being bullied from fall to spring. The authors stressed that Spanish-speaking children benefit socially when Spanish is spoken in the classroom.

Crosnoe, R. (2005). Double disadvantage or signs of resilience? The elementary school contexts of children from Mexican immigrant families. *American Education Research Journal, 42*(2), 269-303.

This study examined whether the children of Mexican immigrants attend more disadvantaged schools and, if so, whether children are affected (in terms of math ability, mental health, and interpersonal functioning) by their enrollment in these types of schools. Kindergarten and first grade data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K) dataset revealed that children from Mexican immigrant families are more likely to attend problematic schools. Interpersonal functioning was generally lower in these schools; however, children of Mexican immigrant families had slightly better mental health than Whites, African-Americans, and other Latinos and were on-par with Asian Americans. Results revealed that children of Mexican immigrant families did not always have access to the same caliber schools as peers of other backgrounds and Mexican immigrant families attend these schools for more reasons than race and SES can capture.

Crosnoe, R. (2007). Early child care and the school readiness of children from Mexican immigrant families. *International Migration Review, 41*, 151-182.

This study examined the role of early child care in school readiness for children from Mexican immigrant families who are entering elementary school using a nationally representative sample of kindergarteners from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study - Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K). The study findings revealed that children from Mexican immigrant families enter elementary school slightly less school-ready in the academic domains and slightly more school-ready in a socio-emotional domain than their peers. The tendency for children from Mexican immigrant families to spend the year before elementary school in informal child care arrangements accounted for a small but significant por-

tion of these different levels of school readiness; however, the contribution of formal child care to academic school readiness was slightly smaller for these same children. However, parents' socioeconomic status was a better predictor of the children's outcomes of academic school readiness than early care status.

Dawson, B. A., & Williams, S. A. (2008). The impact of language status as an acculturative stressor on internalizing and externalizing behaviors among Latino/a children: A longitudinal analysis from school entry through third grade. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *37*, 399-411.

This study examined the relationship between limited English proficiency (LEP) status, and internalizing and externalizing behaviors among Latinos using data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten (ECLS-K). The sample consisted of the 2,840 children identified as Hispanic in the ECLS-K data set including Non-LEP (n=1,813) and LEP (n=815) children. Cross-sectional regression analyses confirmed a positive relationship between limited English proficiency and externalizing symptoms, particularly by the end of 3rd grade. Additionally, ratings of both internalizing and externalizing symptoms increased significantly between school entry and the end of 3rd grade but did not differ by LEP status. Therefore, English proficiency status at school entry did not explain internalizing and externalizing behaviors at the end of third grade. Other findings indicated that children in families living below the poverty threshold, children whose parents did not complete high school and children born in the US received higher ratings of internalizing symptoms at various time points in the models.

De Feyter, J. J., & Winsler, A. (2009). The early developmental competencies and school readiness of low-income immigrant children: Influences of generation, race/ethnicity, and national origins. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *24*, 411-431.

This article examined school readiness among low-income four-year-old children enrolled in subsidized childcare programs to examine whether they displayed differences across race/ethnicity/generation. Using data from the longitudinal Miami School Readiness Project, the researchers compared first-generation, second-generation, and non-immigrant four-year-old children enrolled in either community-based childcare programs receiving subsidies or public programs. The results indicated that generation was a strong predictor of Latino children's socio-emotional protective factors and behavior issues. First-generation immigrant children had significantly higher socio-emotional protective factor strengths than did second-generation immigrants or non-immigrant children. Within the Latino ethnicity, first generation immigrant children had the greatest socio-emotional skills and non-immigrants had the most behavior problems. The study indicated no significant differences in socio-emotional skills or behavior based upon region or country of origin.

Farver, J. M., Xu, Y., Eppe, S., Lonigan, C. J. (2006). Home environments and young Latino children's school readiness. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *21*, 196-212.

This study examined the effect of the home environment on the school readiness of Latino children. The home environment was measured by mothers' perceived parenting stress and parents' literacy involvement, in addition to demographic factors. Children and mothers were recruited from a Head Start classroom in a primarily Latino, low-income neighborhood in Los Angeles, California. Parents' literacy involvement in the home and at the Head Start center was positively related to the child's social functioning. Additionally, a parent's report of the child's literacy interest served as a mediator between parent literacy involvement and the child's social functioning. Other aspects of home environment (including family size, SES, parental education, etc.) potentially restricted children's overall development, but this was not directly examined in the paper. The links between oral language and social functioning were consistent with other literature and support the idea that social functioning skills are related to the ability to learn language and literacy skills.

Galindo, C., & Fuller, B. (2010). The social competence of Latino kindergarteners and growth in mathematical understanding. *Developmental Psychology*, *46*(3), 579-592.

This study examined social competencies of Latino children and how these competencies affect mathematical and cognitive outcomes using a subsample of 3,640 Latino children from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study – Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K) study. Results revealed small disparities in social competencies between Latino and White children. Differences were found in social competencies within only Latino children when looking at regions of origin. Cuban and South American children were rated the highest on the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS), which measures social-emotional competencies. South American children scored the closest to White children, while Puerto Rican children scored significantly lower than White children. The same was true for Mexican children. Immigration status appeared to affect the differences in social competence between Latinos and Whites, whereas socio-economic status did not. Latino children with higher scores on social competence showed larger gains in math than those with lower scores (at baseline).

Han, W. (2010a). Bilingualism and socioemotional well-being. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 32, 720-731.

This study examined the socio-emotional trajectories of Latino children from kindergarten to fifth grade, especially as they relate to language proficiency. Using longitudinal data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K), the outcomes of non-Hispanic White children were compared to the outcomes of their peers of Latin American backgrounds. Growth curve analyses revealed that most Latino children who spoke a language other than English were doing as well or better on socio-emotional measures than their White English-monolingual peers, even though they were had lower SES and were more likely to attend schools with fewer resources and more poor and minority students. Results suggested that being bilingual allows children to communicate with teachers and peers as well as with their families, creating good relationships with all of the groups. Schools can influence child outcomes by providing ESL programming.

Han, W. (2010b). The forgotten treasure: Bilingualism and Asian children's emotional and behavioral health. *American Public Health Association*, 100(5), 831-838.

This study explored the ways in which being a bilingual child contributes to the emotional well-being and developmental trajectory of Asian children in addition to how being bilingual can be used to promote success in school. Children that had family roots in Asian regions (as first-, second-, third-, or later generation immigrants) were compared to children who were non-Hispanic Whites born in the United States using longitudinal data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K). The most positive developmental behavioral outcomes were exhibited by Asian bilingual children. This may be attributed to the fact that these children do not struggle with English in school and also have cultural resources from their family life.

Luchtel, M., Hughes, K., Luze, G., Bruna, K. R., & Peterson, C. (2010). A comparison of teacher-rated classroom conduct, social skills, and teacher-child relationship quality between preschool English learners and preschool English speakers. *NHSA Dialog: A Research-to-Practice Journal for the Early Intervention Field*, 13(2), 92-111.

This study explored the effect of home language and classroom language on teacher-rated teacher-child relationship quality, classroom conduct and social skills. Data for this study were from the Early Head Start Research and Evaluation Project. The sample consisted of pre-K students who either spoke English or Spanish (English Language Learners – ELs) in the home. Results indicated that Spanish-speaking children were rated by their teachers as having fewer classroom behavior issues than their English-speaking peers and better teacher-child relationships. EL children were rated with higher closeness, less conflict and less dependency in their relationships with teachers than English-speaking children. When ethnic subgroup analyses were done, regardless of home language, Hispanic children, as compared to White and Black children, scored lower on behavioral issues and higher on social skills. The teacher-child relationship quality was also rated higher for Hispanic children than children from other racial/ethnic backgrounds. Note, only 2/3 of the Hispanic population spoke Spanish at home.

Rumberger, R. W., & Tran, L. (2006). *Preschool Participation and the Cognitive and Social Development of Language Minority Students*. Technical Report. Los Angeles, CRESST, UCLA.

This study explored the relationship between participation in preschool and the cognitive and social development of language minority students. This study used data from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study-Kindergarten Cohort (ECLS-K 1998-99 cohort). Children were grouped based on their participation in preschool (Head Start, Non-Head Start, No preschool) and language background (non-language minority, and language minority). The overall difference in social skills between non-language minority and language minority students, and between students who attended Head Start the year before kindergarten and students who did not attend preschool, was small. Language minority students who attended preschool were more likely to have externalizing problem behaviors, except students from Spanish-dominant homes who attended Head Start were less likely to exhibit problem behaviors in Kindergarten. In 3rd grade, learning behaviors were similar among language groups except that other-language-dominant students had learning behaviors that were higher than non-language-minority students. Other-language-dominant students reported lower levels of favorable peer relations than non-language minority students. Spanish-dominant language minority students were twice as likely as non-language minority students to report often feeling sad, lonely, or anxious.

Vaughan Van Hecke, A., Mundy, P. C., Francoise, C., Block, J. J., Delgado, C. E. F., Parlade, ... Pomares, Y. B. (2007). Infant joint attention, temperament, and social competence in preschool children. *Child Development*, 78(1), 53-69.

This article investigated the development of infant joint attention in relation to individual differences as well as behavior outcomes and how they relate to social outcomes. The longitudinal study used a sample of 52 infants with varying levels of Spanish exposure in their homes.

The researchers found that children who received better social and behavioral competence scores (at 30 months) were generally those infants that testers noted as either pointing or showing gestures more or more often following the testers' gaze/pointing (at 12 months). Additionally, these same infants who pointed/showed more often (at 12 months) received higher Social Competence scores (at 30 months). The study adds to the already established body of research exhibiting the significant relationship between individual differences regarding early joint attention skills and eventual social outcomes.

## About CECER-DLL

CECER-DLL is a national center that is building capacity for research with dual language learners (DLLs) ages birth through five years. CECER-DLL aims to improve the state of knowledge and measurement in early childhood research on DLLs, identify and advance research on best practices for early care and education programming, and develop and disseminate products to improve research on DLLs. CECER-DLL is a cooperative agreement between the Frank Porter Graham (FPG) Child Development Institute at The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the Office of Planning, Research, & Evaluation (OPRE) in the Administration for Children & Families (ACF), in collaboration with the Office of Head Start and the Office of Child Care.

## Suggested citation

Center for Early Care and Education Research—Dual Language Learners (CECER-DLL; 2011). *Social-Emotional development in dual language learners: Annotated bibliographies from a critical review of the research*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina, FPG Child Development Institute, Author.

This annotated bibliography summarizes studies included in a critical review of the literature sponsored by CECER-DLL conducted by a research team consisting of Tamara Halle, Jessica Vick Whittaker, Marlene Zepeda, Laura Rothenberg, Rachel Anderson, Julia Wesel, Virginia Buisse, and Dina Castro. The work was supported by a cooperative agreement funded by the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Permission to copy, disseminate, or otherwise use information from this document for educational purposes is granted, provided that appropriate credit is given.

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