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# A Look into the Latino Experience: The Process of Identity Formation for Latinos in the United States

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Running Head: LATINO IDENTITY FORMATION

**CLAREMONT MCKENNA COLLEGE**

**A Look into the Latino Experience: The Process of Identity Formation for Latinos  
in the United States**

SUBMITTED TO

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AND

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BY

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for

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A Look into the Latino Experience:  
The Process of Identity Formation for Latinos in the United States

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I would like to dedicate this paper to my parents. Without their endless love and support throughout my life and educational career, I would not be the young woman I am today. Thank you to my Ferreira, Marmolejo, and Saldaña family, Alex, and Joe, for being my #1 Cheerleaders. Thank you, Professor Raymond Buriel, Professor Gilda Ochoa, Dean Maria Torres, Chicano Latino Student Affairs, The Preuss School UCSD, and Dolores Villaseñor for inspiring me to learn more about my culture and explore my ethnic identity. My college experience has prepared me to enter society as a proud fourth generation Latina and first generation to graduate from college. May the movement toward educational opportunity and equality spread like wildfire.

### Abstract

This paper examines the educational acculturation experience of Latinos in the United States (U.S.) and the processes of identity formation. Through the historical Latino experience in the early 20th century, we can see the remaining influences of historical inequality (e.g. exploitation of labor, de jure segregation) through negative perceptions of Latinos. Negative stereotypes and incorrect assumptions presented in society (e.g. media, educational system, and justice system) perpetuate inferiority in comparison to White Americans. In the context of a school environment, Latino children begin to realize they are different. When non-native English speakers enter the classroom, immediate differences in language, cultural values, and peer interactions impact identity development and negatively influence self-perceptions. The Two-Way Immersion (TWI) approach to teaching will allow Latinos to develop their ethnic identity without interference from the dominant American culture through an integrative language approach of English and Spanish instruction. These are the beginning steps for creating stronger ethnic identity, biculturalism, and potential method to reverse institutionalized discrimination through education.

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### **An Overview of the Latino Population in the United States**

This paper examines the historical roots of the Latino struggle with discrimination and adapting to the U.S. Unlike White Americans, Latinos encounter obstacles of engaging in varying degrees of assimilation, acculturation, and the development of biculturalism across generations. Latinos presently encounter discrimination and stereotypes that affect their self-image, identity, ultimately impacting their psychological well-being and connection to their native culture. By examining the evolution of models that illustrate assimilation, acculturation, and biculturalism, critical stages for ethnic identity formation are identified. These stages emphasize the importance of the influences educational experiences have on development. The Two Way Immersion program is one proposal can assist the adjustment process into the U.S. for Latino students will alleviate the pressures and negative experiences that accompany adaptation into American culture.

It is particularly important that our current education system is reformed in order to accommodate our growing multicultural nation. The United States is coined a “melting pot” comprised of people from all over the world. Ethnic minority groups like African Americans, Asian Americans, and Hispanics account for over 30% of the U.S. population with one out of every nine Americans being foreign born (Jacoby, 2004). Over the past decades, the Latino population in the U.S. has significantly increased, making them the largest and fastest ethnic minority group in the nation (Jacoby, 2004). According to the U.S. Census, there was a 15 million of 43% increase of those who identified as Hispanic and or Latino from 2000 to 2010 (“The Hispanic Population,” 2011). The term “Hispanic or Latino” includes over twenty diverse subgroups from different Northern, Southern, and Central American regions such as Mexico, Cuba, Guatemala, and Ecuador (“The

Hispanic Population,” 2011). Each of these groups has a unique cultural history, language, and customs. However, they also share a number of commonalities, including similar struggles with migration, acculturating, and stereotypical assumptions that all Latinos are all the same.

### **Differences and Misconceptions of Latino Cultural Values in Relation to American Culture**

A unifying characteristic of Latino culture are their values. The disconnection between Latino and American cultural values can foster a misunderstanding of Latinos. Euro American culture is very individualistic and personal goal driven (Ayon & Aisenberg, 2010). Latino culture is just the opposite and tend to be collectivists. Energy is focused on family well-being rather than on individual opportunities (Ayon & Aisenberg, 2010). During the acculturation process, newly arrived first generation immigrants are required to navigate through American lifestyle while simultaneously maintaining their cultural value and language from their host country. For Latinos, values are critical aspects that help form Latino identity. They are interconnected with ethnicity that has been shaped by influences of family members (Ontai-Gzebik & Raffaelli, 2004). Constructs like familismo, personalismo, and respeto are at the core of what Latino culture embodies and considers important.

Familismo, is representative of the tight connections, loyalty, cooperation, and support between family members, extended family and even friends (Ayon & Aisenberg, 2010). Secondly, personalismo is valuable for establishing meaningful interpersonal relationships by emphasizing the quality of listening, and creating a good rapport with others (Ayon & Aisenberg, 2010). Finally, respeto, translated in English to “respect”,

acknowledges a hierarchical divide of adolescents and adults based on through showing respect to those who are older in age, authority status, socioeconomic position, and displaying obedience towards them (Atkinson, Morten, & Sue, 1993). In contrast to American culture, Latinos prize age and life experience, and traditionally seek out advice from older Latinos for their wisdom. On the contrary, American culture attributes wisdom to individuals who are well educated in their area of expertise. Later, these Latino values will be examined when discussing school performance and misinterpreted actions and behavior in the classroom.

### **The Foundations of Inferiority: A Historical Perspective of Understanding the Creation of False Images of Latinos in the U.S.**

Historically, Euro-American influence has spurred the creation of imposed stereotypes that have molded an inaccurate identity of Latinos in a negative light over time. During the Spanish conquest over Mexico in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, indigenous people were seen as “impure” (Buriel, 1984, p.5). Buriel states “a racial caste system prevented dark skinned Indians and Mestizos from rising to positions of power and authority” (Buriel, 1984, p.5). Simply based on the phenotype of the population, darker skinned people were at a placed at a disadvantage and suppressed from any mobility to advance or obtain equal status. They were confined to an identity that was forced upon them because of their dark skin. This same frame of mind was adapted by the first American colonists over African slaves by owning them as property and for labor. “European colonizers used their white race as moral license to oppress” since their lighter skin was a mark of superiority (Buriel, 1984, p.5). The theme of domination and suppression sadly has transformed and evolved into modern day acts of discrimination and associations

between being dark skinned against the Latino population in the United States today. It was not just apparent in slavery, but also in migrant laborers.

Latinos became a source of labor for the U.S. since the mid-19th century for their contributions to the railroad, mining, and agricultural industries (Gonzales, 1990). In particular, the agricultural economy of the Southwest in the early 1900's was in high demand for labor that comprised of a majority of Mexican immigrants (Gutiérrez, n.d.). Numbers from Italian, Japanese, Korean, and Greek workers significantly declined and were replaced with Mexican workers as a cheap and abundant source of labor from the bordering country, Mexico. For example from 1909 to 1929, Greek railroad workers decreased from 7,635 to 767 and reflected an opposite trend in comparison to Mexican laborers (Gonzalez, 1990, p. 19). In those same years, the number of Mexican workers increased from 5,972 to 22,842 who made up 59.5% of the people working on the railroad lines (Gonzalez, 1990, p. 19). Employers paid Mexican laborers a lower wage since their circumstances caused them to accept any sort of pay amount to send back to their families. Discrepancies ranged from 75 cents to a dollar compared to the pay of Anglo Americans (Gonzalez, 1990, p. 19).

The earlier years of American history are marked with segregation and discrimination as mentioned above, and continued throughout the decades. Movement across borders between the U.S. and Mexico became fluid and a norm between the two countries, leaving Mexicans susceptible to exploitation for their labor. During the World War II era, the U.S. turned to Mexico again for workers to tend farms that American farmers abandoned in order to seek higher wages inside of the cities (Gonzales, 1990). "Braceros" or experienced Mexican Farm Workers were brought into the U.S. under

legislation passed in 1943 called The Emergency Farm Labor Agreement, more commonly known as the Bracero Program (Gutiérrez, n.d.). The U.S. and Mexico agreed to send laborers into the U.S. under the conditions that they would transport the Braceros, offer fair wages, and provide food and lodging (Gonzales, 1990). This temporary and frequent movement between the U.S. and Mexico attracted many to come to the United States, both legally and illegally. Workers who did not obtain formal documentation to work still were hired by Americans who were looking to avoid costs associated with formal labor contracts (Gutiérrez, n.d.). This accounts for the growing Mexican population that increased from 1.5 million in the 1940's to nearly 4 million by the 1960's towards the end of the Bracero Program in 1964 (Gratton & Gutmann, 2000).

The influx of immigrant workers also meant their families followed and faced the same unequal conditions. Since the 1890's Mexican children were denied access into the same educational environment as Anglo Americans (McWilliams, 1990). Because of differences in language, culture, and appearance, Anglo Americans viewed Mexicans as "lazy, shiftless, jealous, cowardly... backward and immoral" (McWilliams, 1990, p. 98). And the impression Mexicans had of the Americans was just as negative, "arrogant, overbearing, aggressive...rude...and dishonest" (McWilliams, 1990, p. 98). Mexicans were considered inferior, therefore, Americanization through education would be a solution to mold them into a population that spoke English, shared the same religion, dressed like the mainstream, and were trained for particular occupations (Gonzalez, 1990, p. 22).

Deliberate discrimination was fairly common. Instances of refusing services, physical abuse, hate crimes, and police raids culminating in violence. During de jure

segregation in schools, students were taught by the lowest experienced teachers who received fewer wages than teachers who taught Anglo-American students (Gonzalez, 1990, p. 23). In Texas, there were separate churches that posted signs “For Colored and Mexicans” (McWilliams, 1990, p. 243). In restrooms signs read “For Whites-Mexicans Keep Out” (McWilliams, 1990, p. 243). During the 1940’s injustice escalated through convictions of innocent people for crimes they were not guilty for. In the landmark story of “The Sleepy Lagoon”, 17 Mexicans were charged and arrested for murder based on crimes based on racial profiling their appearance and ethnicity (“Sleepy Lagoon Trial,” 2014). The supposed “Leader” was “handcuffed to a chair, was being beaten by the police... [finding] him barely conscious smeared in his own blood” while already in custody (McWilliams, 208). Mexicans were not protected by American laws and blamed as criminals. This segregation and unacceptance by the mainstream American culture was psychologically toxic and eventually led to anger for the unequal treatment they were experiencing.

Forms of retaliation such as walk outs and strikes were organized among the Latino workers. In 1933 where over 7,000 workers walked off of their berry, onion, and celery fields in Los Angeles in opposition to harsh working conditions and the inferior and unequal status they were treated in (McWilliams, 175). During the Civil Rights Era, Latinos continued to stand up against equality and reclaimed their identity and participate in the Chicano Movement (Gutiérrez, n.d.).

### **Modern Day Discrimination and False Perceptions of Latinos**

The presence of these inequalities whose origin is rooted decades ago still persist today

and create social stigma in the justice system, schools and the media. According to the US National Council on Crime and Delinquency, Hispanics were incarcerated at over 1.5 times the rate for Whites as of 2009 (Hartney & Vuong, 2009). This statistic sets the foundation for a social problem tied to the phenotypic differences for non-Europeans that contribute to the creation of stereotypes such as the ones mentioned above. They are continually perpetuated in the media and continue to shape the minds and perceptions of consumers.

In a study completed by Behm-Morawitz and Mastro (2005), prime time television during the 2002 season was analyzed for the types of depictions of ethnic groups and their frequency. Overall, the inclusion of Latino's in prime time television was not representative of the actual Latino demographic in the U.S. population. Of the 1,488 characters that were counted for this study only 58 were Latino. (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005). Significant findings include patterns of Latinos portrayed in lower job authority, less appropriately dressed compared to Whites and Blacks, lower work ethic, and less articulate speech (Mastro & Behm-Morawitz, 2005). The images that are portrayed of Latinos reinforce the dominant ideology about ethnicity and contribute to stereotypes of risky behaviors and young teen moms.

Appearances and images portrayed of what is considered ideal and beautiful by society may alter self-perceptions. In a study conducted at UCLA, phenotype, specifically skin color was studied in the ways it impacts wellness (Telzer & Garcia, 2009). It was found that immigrant Latina college students with darker skin color had lower levels of self-perception, self-esteem, and had a desire for lighter skin color to be more attractive (Telzer & Garcia, 2009). An interesting finding is that a way to "buffer" these effects is

with stronger ethnic-identity and racial socialization by increasing positive perceptions of them (Telzer & Garcia, 2009). The concept of skin color determining the treatment one receives or status in society is a discriminatory practice that has been carried throughout Mexican and American societies. Societal influence contributes to a stereotypes that places darker skinned people in an inferior role on the unsound basis of biology and genetics.

For Latinos who are not first or second generation, the media and school are the only outlets to understand their culture. What they are viewing is not an accurate depiction of what being a Latino means culturally, traditionally, or historically, causing the truth to become lost with each generation (Buriel & De Ment, 1997). Because third generation immigrants are far disconnected and distanced from tangible ties to their ancestral heritage, Mexican Americans develop an image of their ethnic group that is consistent with these media portrayals (Buriel & De Ment, 1997). They are found to be less successful in school than children of first generation immigrants (Buriel & De Ment, 1997). An explanation could be the internalization of false perceptions that have transformed into a self-fulfilling prophecy (Buriel & De Ment, 1997). Society causes Mexicans and other Latinos to believe that they are inferior and less cable of achievement can hinder their perception of themselves and how they identify with their culture.

To conclude, inaccurate portrayals produced by American society perpetuate false stereotypes based on appearance and related images. Skin color can culminate ideas of the type of achievement a student is able to reach, the job type, likelihood of engaging in risky behaviors. The historical beginnings of stereotypes continue into the present day and have shaped the minds of the masses.

### **Adapting to the United States: Achieving Identity Formation through Assimilation, Acculturation, and Biculturalism**

The developmental process for creating a sense of self, or self-concept, is a different experience for minority groups. Unlike White Americans, the Latino experience in the U.S. is unique from the position as a marginalized population. Developing identity is crucial because it has a direct influence on a person's sense of self in relation to inner beliefs and to others (Umaña-Taylor, Diversi, & Fine, 2002). A sense of self can be described as a complex system of beliefs which an individual holds about themselves with a corresponding value associated with it (Oxford Dictionary, 2014). As time progresses, the development of cognitive skills help the construction of self-concept merges prior ideas and understanding of the self with experiences (Phinney, Berry, Vedder, & Liebkind, 2006). In the Twenty Statements Test, the question "Who Am I?" is described through traits an individual identifies with that generate feelings linked with indicators that make up the self (e.g. gender, ethnicity, social status, moral worth, and the physical self) (Carpenter, 2008). Together, these shape identity.

Over time, dominant values and ideas of Americanization shift the perceptions of the self. In effect, generational differences within the Latino population cause changes to the level of cultural affiliation. Each generation will encounter different experiences that both strengthen and weaken identity development and well-being in areas of self-esteem, depression, ethnic pride, and academic achievement (Arbona & Jimenez, 2013; Bohon, Singer, & Santos, 1993; Smith & Silva, 2010; Torres, 1990). Through examining and defining processes of assimilation, acculturation, enculturation, and biculturalism, we can

understand the impact each have in the adaptation process and identity development for Latinos.

### **The Processes of Identity Development**

“Ethnic identity, a related but distinct dimension of self-concept and an aspect of the acculturation process, refers to a sense of belonging to an ethnic group, and those thoughts and behaviors that are due in part to ethnic group membership” (Phinney, 2003; Rhea & Thatcher, 2013). Through the process of ethnic identity formation, an individual is able to put their ethnicity into context relative to society and decide the role ethnicity will incorporate into their life (Ong, Fuller-Rowell, & Phinney, 2010; Phinney, 1993).

Since more Latinos are coming into the United States, the trend of Latinos born in the U.S. (i.e. second generation immigrants) are more likely to identify as American than foreign born Latinos (i.e. first generation immigrants) (Agius Vallejo, 2012). 61% of foreign born Latinos living in the U.S. identified with their country of origin (e.g. Mexican, Cuban, Salvadorian, etc.) and for Latinos born in the U.S. 38% identified with their country of origin (“Chapter 3: Identity”, 2013). This decrease in affiliation is influenced by acculturative processes, and in Agius Vallejo’s work (2012), both generation and environment were factors in affiliation. She found that middle class Latinos who grew up in different environments had different identity affiliations (Agius Vallejo, 2012). Mexican Americans who grew up in ethnic, low income communities in comparison to predominantly white neighborhoods, had a stronger ethnic identities (Agius Vallejo, 2012). The social context they were in preserved their ties to their native culture even if they were not first generation immigrants. Maintaining a connection with

cultural aspects such as language or cultural activities can be a source for contributing to a closer connection with ethnic identity (Kim, 1981).

Behaviors that individuals practice and beliefs they hold help in the formation of ethnic identity, but during this process, immigrants face two issues. “To what extent do immigrants or other non-dominant groups wish to have contact with (or avoid) people outside their group, and to what extent do they wish to maintain (or give up) their cultural attributes?” (Phinney, Berry, Vedder & Liebkind, 2006). These questions manifest themselves as adaptation processes called acculturation and assimilation.

Acculturation and assimilation can be described as processes that occur when two foreign cultures come into contact with one another (Buriel & De Ment, 1997; Torres, 1999). The influence of a dominant culture upon an inferior culture leads to shifts toward adapting or replacing the attitudes of the broader surroundings of, values, behaviors, identification with ethnic labels, and language used in American society (Buriel & De Ment, 1997; Knight, Bernal, Garza, & Cota, 1993; Quintana & Scull, 2009). Assimilation is an extreme version of acculturation, because instead of maintaining parts of native culture and adapting parts of the new culture, native culture is replaced with the host culture (Quintana & Scull, 2009; Stonequist, 1937). Latino immigrants are less likely to assimilate due to geographical proximity to the host country, language, continuous immigration, and discrimination (Buriel, 2013; Smith, 2003). There is less pressure to abandon their culture since their native language, Spanish, is still used by other immigrants, like their families or other people in their communities. Also, Spanish words in American society are familiar to them (Buriel, 2013). For example city names like San

Diego or street names like Plaza Bonita spur a psychological connection between immigrants and their native culture (Buriel, 2013).

Quintana and Scull (2009) described acculturation in terms of enculturation. The degree to which “culture of origin practices, language, and identification are maintained or passed from one generation to another” (Quintana & Scull, 2009, p. 82) was representative of the force originating from the family instead of influences from society. Acculturation involves forming new identity formations based on interactions and surroundings (Torres, 1999). Although, it can often times occur at the expense of giving up part of one’s native culture in order to fit the mold of American societal norms (Quintana & Scull, 2009). Finding a balance to navigate the processes of acculturation and enculturation can result in achieving a level of biculturalism that blends the two cultures (Torres, 1990). Depending on the experiences you have growing up, will heavily determine the comprehensive development of both cultures.

One of the most common instances illustrating these processes is language acquisition. English is vital for daily communication, obtaining employment and earning income (Padilla, 2008). These necessities require immigrants to formulate abilities to speak and understand English as a second language. With newer generations, English becomes the dominant language, making it difficult to use Spanish 100% of the time as a way to preserve identity and practice a form of culture. Children who reject the Spanish language completely can be described as demonstrating assimilation, since the native language is no longer spoken. Of 1,222 Latino adults surveyed in the U.S., 95% believe it is very important for future generations to be able to speak Spanish whereas 51% of Latinos born in the U.S. are English dominant and 38% are bilingual (Taylor, Lopez,

Martinez, & Velasco, 2012). Some interesting findings show that despite the loss of the Spanish language and disconnect with specific knowledge of Hispanic culture, a sense of cultural pride among later generations of Latinos still existed (Torres, 1999).

Speaking both the English and Spanish language is more accurately representative of acculturation. The ability to speak both languages has both benefits and consequences that can effect ethnic identity formation. Children who serve as interpreters or language brokers for their non-English speaking parents “translate, interpret, and mediate information for their parents or other adults” (Love & Buriel, 2007). In Tse’s (1995) research, she found positive effects for language brokering in first generation Latino students in high school. Feelings of ethnic pride, enjoyment of brokering, independence, and brokering as a way to increase their ability to learn and practice English, all have been positive outcomes of translating (Tse, 1995). Over 89% of the students translated for parents, 43% for teachers, and 34% for business people are contexts where Latinos have felt useful and given responsibility that was meaningful in conveying information to assist in bridging two foreign languages (Tse, 1995). Among other positive benefits are feelings of self-efficacy, biculturalism, and acculturation (Acoach & Webb, 2004; Love & Buriel, 2007) which can also contribute to identity formation and a development that maintains aspects of language in American and Latino culture.

Despite all of the positive outcomes mentioned above, negative effects can also result from language brokering. Pressures of completing the task may be embarrassing, cause acculturative stress, and burdensome (Kam & Lazarevic, 2013; Love & Buriel, 2007). Love and Buriel (2007) proposed that this discrepancy could account for differences in the ages of Latino’s who were tested. The benefits of language brokering

may not appear until adolescent years of high school due to a higher level development of biculturalism that may not be as apparent in younger children who are language brokers (Love and Buriel, 2007).

Another area that influences ethnic identity are experiences in school. In a study completed by Fuller-Rowell, Ong, and Phinney (2013), discrimination experienced by Latino college students in their first year led to changes in ethnic identity. Students who experienced or perceived instances of discrimination and possessed a weak national identity were positively associated with the development of ethnic identity commitment over the course of their college years (Fuller-Rowell, Ong & Phinney 2013). Because this group of students did not have a strong connection to American national identity, they experience a process of changes of how they ethnically identify. This “crisis” of identity formation will later be discussed in Phinney’s Stages of Ethnic Development.

In contrast, stronger national identity was negatively associated with changes in ethnic identity (Fuller-Rowell, Ong & Phinney 2013). If students are comfortable and acculturated to their surroundings and experience discrimination, they will not experience the same interpretation as a Latino with weaker national identity (Fuller-Rowell, Ong & Phinney 2013). Strong ethnic identity commitment provides a protective barrier against instances of discrimination and stereotypes that Latinos may encounter (Phinney, 1990). An alternative explanation can be provoked by the influence of in-group members, in this case fellow college students and staff, on beliefs (Brown, 2000). In-group members want to be accepted by people who commonly identify with a group, in this case fellow college students. Under the conditions of experienced or perceived discrimination, they feel the urgency to make changes in their ethnic identity to fit the in-group belief (Brown, 2000).

If a Latino student is a first generation student, they may not be fully acculturated into American culture as much as a second or third generation Latino student. Foreign born Latinos were observed to have less positive increases in ethnic identity across the college years (Fuller-Rowell, Ong & Phinney 2013). Alternatively, the findings for those students with strong national identity shows that ethnic identity can be maintained in the presence of a majority American society with a dominant American national identity.

Looking back towards the foundations of segregation and inferior treatment of minority groups that was discussed earlier, long term impacts of differences in equality still prevail. In Bohon, Singer, and Santos' (1993) study of two subject groups, Mexican Americans and Whites, self-reported their perception of academic achievement on a 5 point scale. The White students rated themselves as above the average, while Mexican Americans rated themselves as average (Bohon, Singer, & Santos, 1993). This illustrates the mindset and perception of their lower level abilities of themselves, promoting a self-fulfilling prophecy of unequal ability due to ethnic and racial differences. This evidence of negatively adapting to false stereotypes are so ingrained into our cognition that it is thought of as a fact. Just like in the Doll Test in the 1950's whose results remain consistent in similar studies executed decades later (Cameron, Alvarez, Ruble & Fuligni, 2001).

### **The Evolution of Models Illustrating the Processes of Assimilation, Acculturation, and Ethnic Identity Formation**

Many models have been proposed to illustrate the stages of adapting to a host culture and have evolved with research. Beginning with Stonequist's (1937) unidirectional model, the lifecycle of an immigrant was described in a 3 stage process

that proposed assimilation as a resolution to identity conflict. This unidirectional model was limited and only applicable to Euro Americans (Buriel & De Ment 1997; Phinney, Horenczyk, Liebkind & Vedder, 2001). The static model evolved into the development of a more inclusive bidirectional model that takes cultural identification and adaptation into account. Torres' Bicultural Orientation Model (Torres, 1999) describes four different ethnic orientations specific to the level of cultural identification and adaptation for Hispanics. But in Phinney's (1993) Three-Stage Model for Ethnic Identity Formation a step by step approach to the development process applies to all ethnic minorities and is the most current (Phinney, 1993). By reviewing each of these models it reveals the internal process and factors that contribute to deciding how to frame personal identity.

One of the first models to illustrate the life cycle of an immigrant was through Stonequist's unidirectional model developed in the 1930's. This linear model was a continuum that had three stages an immigrant would experience. A variety of changing attitudes towards the host culture began with positive feelings in the first stage (Stonequist, 1937). The second stage involved acculturative stress (i.e. stress that varies in nature and degrees depending on social context) and a conscious encounter of conflict (Gonzales, Fabrett & Knight, 2009). And finally, the last stage was an immigrant's response to the conflict experienced that resulted in three alternative resolutions.

The first option was nationalism, placed on the far left hand side of the continuum that offered a solution of preserving native culture and rejecting the mainstream to raise the collective status of the ethnic group through strengthening identity affiliation (Buriel & De Ment, 1990 & Stonequist, 1937). Intermediation was the second option that was placed in the middle to display a marginal state that combines two cultures together.

Finally, the third option was assimilation, placed on the far right to display the replacement of native culture with the mainstream culture (Buriel & De Ment, 1990 & Stonequist, 1937).

Out of the three options, Stonequist believed that assimilation was the best option to be categorized in because it brought complete conflict resolution by eliminating the inferior, or native culture, therefore the immigrants could become part of the mainstream society (Buriel & De Ment, 1990 & Stonequist, 1937). If the immigrant chose a nationalistic approach to solve their conflict, it would further alienate them from being receptive of the new culture and more barriers would be created. It would limit potential opportunities for personal growth and also limit the benefits of learning a new culture. Stonequist believed that this in between section on the middle of the spectrum would marginalize the immigrant and prolong conflict (Buriel & De Ment, 1990 & Stonequist, 1937).

Stonequist's model was primarily used to represent sociocultural change for European American immigrants and was not applicable across cultures (Buriel & De Ment, 1990). The rapid assimilation process was easier for Euro Americans because of similar phenotype for lighter skin color and who were descendants of earlier immigrants from the same origin (Buriel & De Ment, 1990). Latinos do not have this advantage since the majority population is not physically similar. For Euro Americans, the movement from the left side of the spectrum to the right side of the spectrum is achieved over a period of two generations (Buriel & De Ment, 1990). A newer model that is sensitive to different cultural experiences is outlined in the Bidirectional Model of Sociocultural Change and Torres' Bicultural Orientation Model.

Biculturalism is defined as a synthesis of two different languages and cultures that result in a newly shaped third culture (Torres, 1999). Newly immigrated Latinos face the challenge of balancing, navigating, navigate, and living in a dual society of Latino culture in the home environment and American culture outside of the home. The brokering experience involves more cognitive, linguistic, and social abilities, thus speeds up the acculturation process for first and second generation Mexican American children (Love & Buriel, 2007, Torres, 1999). These generations will be prone to creating a bicultural identity due to their dual role of being a broker for language and culture while third generation Mexican Americans do not have to experience this responsibility. Ideally, achieving biculturalism is an indicator that a Latino possesses characteristics and understanding of American and Latino culture (Buriel & De Ment, 1997, Torres, 1999).

The Bidirectional Model of Sociocultural Change is also a bidirectional model that crosses Euro American and Mexican American cultural identification to create four quadrants representing acculturative adaptation styles (Buriel & De Ment, 1990). Euro American cultural identification runs vertically with low cultural identification at 1 and high cultural identification at 5 (Buriel & De Ment, 1990). Horizontally is the same for Mexican American cultural identification, which crosses the Euro American line at the number 3 at the origin of the quadrants. The four possibilities are Euro American Orientation where there are high associations with Euro American culture, Marginal American that indicates a deculturated form of ancestral culture and Euro American society, a Bicultural Orientation where there is an adoption of language, values, and social competencies of both Mexican and Euro American culture, and finally Mexican Orientation that describes most recent immigrants and the elderly population (Buriel &

De Ment, 1997). Placement on this matrix is contingent upon personal experiences and identification choice.

The experience of third generation Mexican Americans, is more removed from the experiences of first and second generation Mexican Americans, one way being the third generation growing up without parental links to Mexico (Buriel & De Ment, 1997). No figure in the household is a firsthand source from Mexico, so the perception and understanding of being Mexican is not shaped by the family, but shaped by the biased views shown in the media and in schools and associate their ethnicity with negative things like violence or illiteracy (Buriel & De Ment, 1997). External family values, like achievement, intellectual orientation, and recreational orientation change with each generation and are more prone to be influenced by stereotypes (Rueschenberg & Buriel, 1989).

Similarly, to the bidirectional model is Torres' Bicultural Orientation Model. It is unique because it is very close in format to the previous model, but instead intersects ethnic identity and acculturation (Torres, 1999). The vertical y-axis represents ethnic identity, with low ethnic identity on the bottom and high ethnic identity at the top (Torres, 1999). On the horizontal x-axis is level of acculturation from low to high levels. The four possibilities for bicultural orientation are specific for Hispanic and Anglo American biculturalism. The Anglo Orientation is located on the bottom right quadrant describing a person who is highly acculturated to American society, and possesses a low ethnic identity. This makes them Anglo dominant or as Stonequist would refer to as Americanized (Torres, 1999, Stonequist, 1937).

But in the case that a person has a low level of acculturation and a high level of ethnic identity is considered to have a Hispanic Orientation (Torres, 1999). A person in this quadrant would be similar to Mexican Orientation for the Bidirectional Model of Sociocultural Change and most likely first generation (Buriel & De Ment, 1990; Torres, 1999). A Marginal Orientation neither has high levels of acculturation or ethnic identity, therefore cannot navigate through either of the cultures comfortably (Buriel & De Ment, 1990; Torres, 1999). Biculturalism is achieved when there are high levels of acculturation and ethnic identity (Torres, 1999). In this scenario, the person would be competent in both cultures and comfortable with language and the values just as in the previous model mentioned (Buriel & De Ment, 1990; Torres, 1999).

In Torres' (1990) study for validating this model, he found that 74% of the Hispanic students that fell into a Bicultural Orientation were second and third generation students. The same percentage of students who self-identified as Anglo American, fell into the Anglo Oriented category based on the evaluation measures distributed for the study (Torres, 1999). The remaining 26% who did not self-identify as Anglo American identified as bicultural (Torres, 1999). Based on the conclusions of the study, the theoretical framework for the model is comprehensive and applicable because it can detect individual differences about culture and ethnic minorities (Torres, 1999).

Other models included ethnic identity development to overcome identity crisis (Marcia, 1966). Ethnic identity development is a complex process that refers to the exploration of ethnic background, understanding the meaning of personal ethnicity, and becoming comfortable with personal ethnicity through the development of positive perceptions of a culture (Umana-Taylor, Yazedjian & Bamaca Gomez, 2004). This

process is considered the center of ethnic socialization and cultural adaptation process for acculturation and enculturation (Knight, Bernal, Garza, Cota & Ocampo, 1993). The beginning stages of developing ethnic identity during childhood and adolescent years can offer positive outcomes of higher self-esteem and positive feelings about one's culture thus providing a shield against discrimination and stereotypes (Phinney, 1990, Quintana & Scull, 2009). Since this process occurs during youth ages possible experiences of discrimination and confronting negative stereotypes may arise during their long day at school where some students may not be sensitive to racial differences (Umaña-Taylor, Diversi & Fine, 2002).

In Phinney's chapter "A Three Stage Model of Ethnic Identity Development in Adolescence", she explores the process of how adolescents learn to identify and label themselves in their ethnic group and how those ethnic groups are defined in the modern day (Phinney, 1993). In Stage 1, the Unexamined Ethnic Identity, she explains that identity is not something you think about, you simply accept it for what it is (Phinney, 1993). The first exposure of information adolescents receive about their identity is from their parent or guardian, but once they get older in age, they are able to analyze situations and form opinions of their own identity based on what they experience in the outside world. One of the leading theories that can explain the steps of this process is Erikson's Ego Identity Formation that is initiated by an "identity crisis".

Erickson theorized The Eight Stages to Ego Development to understand and guide ego development that assists to "adapt constructively to challenges presented by their surroundings" (Ryckman, 2013, p. 124). Each stage in Erickson's theory contained a crisis, also explained as a critical period or turning point, which can lead to progression

or regression in development (Ryckman, 2013). Active efforts to resolve and overcome crisis helps strengthen identity, but failing to overcome the crisis leads to weakening identity (Ryckman, 2013).

Feelings of inferiority develop during Stage 4, The Latency Stage. During the Latency Stage from ages 6-12 marks a critical time for learning skills and making things that can be referred to as industry. If projects do not come out as planned or the child fails at a task, they will develop feelings of inferiority and inadequacy (Ryckman, 2013). In a situation where a non-native English speaker is asked to read in front of the class and stumbles on a word, their error will create feelings of inferiority, thus weakening identity (Ryckman, 2013, Phinney, 1990). This can be considered a stage a “crisis” as mentioned above. A method to positively address this situation would be to try harder and keep reading. Due to cultural value differences, the student may not continue reading since they are not individualistic oriented and do not want to have all the attention from the classroom, but would maybe prefer group reading out loud. Their hesitation may be misperceived as laziness or no engagement, then in reality the students motivation are out of respect for others.

Stage 5 of Erickson’s theory is Adolescence occurring from ages 13 years old to 19 years old (Ryckman, 2013). The ego crises encountered during this stage are identity and role confusion during an exploration phase called moratorium (Ryckman, 2013). This stage is important to combine perceptions of the self that stem from family, school, church, outside activities, and peer groups (Ryckman, 2013). Stage 2 of Phinney’s model is related to this particular stage of his theory. The Ethnic Identity Search/Moratorium Stage occurs when one begins to question and explore identity (Phinney, 1993). The

exploration process is usually provoked by dissonance, accounts of discrimination, hearing ethnic slurs, becoming aware of issues by speaking with others and learning information through reading (Phinney, 1990).

This stage is the exploration stage that can open one's eyes to the possibilities of how they identify and where they see themselves in the future. During this time, the adolescent has the opportunity to reflect on their abilities, strengths, and interests to work towards identity achievement that will then solidify itself into the definition of their personal identity (Phinney, 1993). When this experience is not solidified and they have a loose interpretation of what their role is, and may be confused about their identity and weighed down by negativity (Phinney, 1993).

In Grecas' research, he found that out of 335 participants, 37% of migrants and 32.5% of Latinos living in America, reported their ethnic-self label a Mexican and the second most popular was Mexican American (Buriel, 1984). Over two thirds of Mexican Americans, Black, and Asian Americans rated ethnicity as an important aspect to their identity in contrast to white students who rated it less than 25% and also rated ethnicity equally as important as religion and more important than political affiliation (Phinney, 1993). Reaching this point where one comfortable and strongly believes in choosing an ethnic identity exemplifies Stage 3 of A Three Stage Model of Ethnic Identity Formation, Ethnic Identity Achievement. At this final stage a person "accepts" and "internalizes" their ethnic identity which occurs more often when they are older during the college years opposed to high school (Phinney, 1993, p. 71).

Different aspects of existing ethnic identity models used for minority groups can be extracted and applied to Phinney's Three Stage Model of Ethnic Identity Formation.

For African American ethnic identity formation, The Cross Model includes 5 steps of Pre-encounter, Encounter, Immersion-emersion, Internalization, and Internalization-commitment (Cross, 1978). In Kim's proposal for Asian American identity formation, she also identified 5 stages she called Ethnic Awareness, White Identification, Awakening to Social Political Consciousness, and Incorporation (Kim, 1981). And lastly, Atkinson, Morten, and Sue's 5 Stages include Conformity, Dissonance, Resistance and Immersion, Introspection, and Synergetic Articulation and Awareness (Atkinson, Morten & Sue 1979).

For example, during Phinney's first stage, Unexamined Ethnic Identity, similar processes occur in Asian Americans and African Americans. During the Ethnic Awareness stage, Kim found that all subjects she interviewed were aware of their Japanese descent since the young age of 3 or 4 years old (Kim, 1981). Close family relations and engagement in ethnic activities defined being Japanese, but upon entering school, they realized being Japanese led to the being made fun of and being called derogatory ethnic slurs (Kim, 1981). This led to the second stage, White Identification.

During the White Identification phase, the minority group realizes they are different from the White society but none of the interviewees knew why they were being treated differently (Kim, 1981). Eventually, this led them to identify more with White Americans and "see themselves through the eyes of White society" leading them to accept the values and attitudes of the majority culture, both positive and negative (Kim, 1981, p. 129; Phinney, 1993). For African Americans, this was the same experience in the Pre-counter stage of accepting the majority view of one's culture "dominated by Euro-American determinants" (Cross, 1978, p. 17; Phinney, 2003). In all instances,

ethnicity is not explored, but rather the dominant cultures' view is imposed and internalized by the minority culture.

This is much like the experience Latinos face primarily in school. They believe they are underachievers and are unintelligent. By believing negative stereotypes made about a ethnicity or gender, on abilities of one's group they identify with is giving into stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995). For example when White students and African American students were told they were being tested on intellectual ability, African American did significantly worse. But when presented with a test that did not include the wording indicative of measuring intelligence or ability, African American performance increased and was to the level of White students' performance (Steele & Aronson, 1995). Feelings of inferiority, pressure, and anxiety hinder performance that originates because of negative beliefs of themselves and stereotypes of their ethnic group (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

There are a variety of factors that contribute to the development of identity in relation to ethnicity, mainly the process of adapting to the U.S. culture. Whether it is through assimilation or acculturation, each generation of Latinos will experience a stage in their adolescent life where they will explore their identity (Ryckman, 2013). As mentioned in the previous section, the historical creation of unequal treatment and perceptions of Latino culture continue to hinder the development of ethnic identity and performance in school (Acoach & Webb, 2004; Love & Buriel, 2007; Steele & Aronson, 1995; Umana-Taylor, Yazedjian & Bamaca Gomez, 2004; Tse, 2005). If it is through discrimination, acculturation, or negative perception of the self, Latinos are not fully able to develop a strong identity that is free from stigma. Now that the importance of ethnic

identity has been discussed, we will next examine how the U.S. has implemented legislation involving Latinos and minorities in education.

### **Examining Education Inequality: A Proposal to Promote Identity Formation Through Two Way Immersion**

To address cultural loss and create opportunities that allow ethnic identity to form in an environment free from stigma and stereotypes, wide spread change in the education system is a proposed solution. Focusing on education as a way to combat and mend false perceptions of Latinos is an ideal place to initiate this type of effort since education is a socializing institution that nearly every child in the United States participates in. The Two Way Immersion approach to teaching will foster a collective group that will work together and immerse themselves in a multicultural classroom. It will allow students from both cultures to engage in a cultural exchange with language being a unifying force instead of one that separate students. Ideally, over time the implementation will create a color blind and ethnic blind society where eventually, Latinos and Americans can both create a stronger sense of biculturalism. By reviewing the progression of education in the United States from a legislative perspective, it is time for our Nation to move towards a more culturally inclusive experience for students.

### **Court Cases and Legislation Promoting the Inclusion and Exclusion of Minority Populations in Education**

Since the 1950's, national and state governments have created legislation toward a more inclusive educational environment by allowing the intermixing of races through same race schools. Before this, the separate but equal statute was practiced in schools across the nation. School segregation involving Mexican children was first ruled on in

Lemon Grove, California in 1931(Alvarez, 1986). 75 Mexican students were removed from the White students at Lemon Grove Grammar School and were required to be taught off campus. This separation based on ethnicity was only seen as unacceptable and unlawful for the wrong reasons (Alvarez, 1986). The students were segregated from the White students and were required to be taught in an alleged school, but in reality was a barn. Mexican families knew this treatment was unjust and stuck together and showed their disagreement by not sending their children to school, unless they were allowed back at Lemon Grove Grammar School (Alvarez, 1986).

In *Roberto Alvarez vs. the Board of Trustees of the Lemon Grove School District* it was illegal to segregate Mexicans because they were considered Whites and did not fall under the race Negro, Oriental, or Indian, therefore they could not be segregated (Alvarez, 1986). The ruling was in favor of the Mexican students because they were being deprived of interaction with Whites and being exposed to the English language. It is clear that the ruling was not intended to promote equality, but rather a necessity to Americanize Mexican students. But in the landmark case, *Brown v. Board of Education* in 1954, the ruling was made for the correct reasons and intended to eliminate school segregation for being inherently unequal and a violation of the 14th Amendment (“History of Brown v. Board of Education”, n.d.). The ramifications of racial segregation have ingrained an inferiority complex in minorities like African Americans and Latinos that still remains today.

For example, in the famous Doll Test conducted by Clark and Clark (1947), children were presented with dolls representing two races, a white doll and a colored doll. The 250 subjects ages 3 to 7 years old were asked questions that coded for racial

preference and racial self-identity (Clark & Clark, 1947). When asked to give the experimenter the white doll, 94% of the participants pointed correctly to the white doll, indicating their ability to recognize racial differences. At such a young age the African American participants knew they were not equal to Whites. Among other questions asked which is the bad doll, which is the nice doll, and which one looks most like them (Clark & Clark, 1947). Two thirds of participants associated the white doll as the nicer and more preferable compared to the 59% who chose the “bad” doll as the colored one (Clark & Clark, 1947). This mindset and perspective is supported through similar tests, just as the one mentioned with stereotype threat (Steele & Aronson, 1995).

Decades later, initiatives to promote the inclusion of minority races continued, but not without backlash. During the 1960’s the nation moved in a positive direction during the War on Poverty with the passage of The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 (“Title VII—Bilingual Education Program,” n.d.). It allocated funds to states aimed to fund quality primary and secondary education for all students. Specifically, Section VII titled “Bilingual Education Programs” recognized the limited English ability non-native English speakers were facing in school. This amendment sought to fund programs to address language barriers to facilitate effective learning and bilingual education (“Title VII—Bilingual Education Program,” n.d.).

These positive legislative strides were later countered by the movement against bilingual education and preserving the use of the English language. California was just one of many states in the 1990’s that passed legislation to minimize the support of bilingual education (“Proposition 227,” 1998). Despite the cognitive and social benefits of being bilingual, the attacks against it have reinforced the idea that English is superior

to their native language (Ochoa, 2007). The passage of California Proposition 227, English for The Children, in 1998 required all instruction in English and only temporarily offering support to non-Spanish speakers who were not separated by grade or ability and placed in the same program (“Proposition 227,” 1998; “Rebuttal to Argument in Favor of Proposition 227”, 1998). Non native English speakers were not supported in their education and were forced to go through schooling with no assistance, thus limiting their full grasp of the English language.

Three years later, President George W. Bush reauthorized The Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 2001, known as the No Child Left Behind Act (“No Child Left Behind Act,” n.d.). This effort was directed toward filling the achievement gap between student performances that would be evaluated through standardized testing. Disadvantaged students would reach academic proficiency, and all students would reach or exceed state standards in reading and math by 2014 (“No Child Left Behind Act”). The U.S. has been and currently remains far from achieving the goals outlined in this act and the ones before it. The current conditions within the classroom curriculum have remained fairly similar since the 1800’s (Gonzales, 1990). Old pedagogy is ineffective, which is apparent with the failure of multiple legislative efforts made to help all students reach the same achievement and proficiency (Rose, 2004).

### **Inequality in the Classroom**

Approximately 84% of all teachers in the United States identify as White non-Hispanic, leaving the chances of a minority student being taught by a teacher they can identify with racially is extremely low (“Percentage Distribution of School Teachers,” 2007). Because of this unfamiliarity the student may feel uncomfortable in the classroom

and feel like an outsider. One example that Ochoa mentions in her book “Learning from Latino Teachers”, is the representation of Latinos in Advanced Placement classes. There was a significant difference between the amount of Latino Student and Whites who were enrolled in honors or AP classes (Ochoa, 2007). Specifically at Grant High School, only 5% of the Latino population were taking AP courses while the remainder are in non-college preparatory classes (Ochoa, 2007). At this school Latinos make up about 40% of the student body, in which 96% make up the students in the non-college-preparatory English class (Ochoa, 2007).

Because Latino students are tracked into these classes, they are ultimately being pushed out of the possibilities and opportunities of receiving a college education since they are not academically prepared (Ochoa, 2007). This disproportionate amount deprives students of equal opportunity which can affect their level of perceived acceptance or rejection into the majority population. Instances like this are institutionalized racism perpetuate stereotypes of Latinos as unintelligent or lazy, but in reality most of them are tracked into lower level classes based on school officials perceptions of them (Gonzalez, 1990, Ochoa, 2007). These trends are also reinforced with classroom materials (Hogben & Waterman, 1997).

Representation of different cultures inside textbooks contains a disproportionate amount of ethnic minorities to white males (Hogben & Waterman, 1997). In 28 psychology textbooks that were examined, 22 were written by male authors, and from the 4 textbooks that were written by females, more pictorial and written content regarding diversity issues appeared (e.g. racism/prejudice, minority group members, sexual orientation, AIDS, age, gender issues, multicultural/global issues) (Hogben & Waterman,

1997). Hogan and Waterman (1997) found that Latinos were significantly underrepresented and Asians were overrepresented. The same result was found within a study of Chemistry textbooks where only 10% of the featured photos depicted a person of color (King & Domin, 2007). Inside the classroom, students who are not a part of the majority culture may not be able to identify with what they are reading. Materials used in the classroom are tools for transmitting societal values and influence a student's perception of American culture that may contribute to their acculturation process (Ndura, 2004).

Familiarity and identification with a person of the same ethnic group can offer support and engagement in education (Ochoa, 2007). When Chicano literature was taught in a class with Latino and White students, Latino students connected with the literature on some level and they felt like they were part of a classroom community (Vasquez, 2005). This also allowed some students to develop senses of ethnic identity (Vasquez, 2005). Based in the interview transcripts, the students seem to be going through some of the Stages in Phinney's Model (Phinney, 1993). The class itself was the Moratorium Stage of exploration. Latino students experienced sentiments of empowerment and identification. It was also an equally enriching experience for non-Latinos. The non-Latinos felt they were more racially aware (Vasquez, 2005). If there was more inclusion of multicultural literature in schools, students of all ethnic backgrounds could take something positive away.

One way that colleges approach integrating a cultural or ethnic connection in education is through resources centers and sponsor mentor programs. A sample of at risk Latino students were identified after completing a survey and provided with a mentor of

similar ethnicity and offered them mentee support. Both meet with each other on a monthly basis for meetings, but communicated between meetings (Phinney, Torres, Campos & Kim, 2011). Their progress over the semester in academic achievement, grade point average, and sense of belonging was analyzed (Phinney, Torres, Campos & Kim, 2011). In comparison to the control group of at-risk Latino students from the same college, the students with mentors had an increase in academic motivation, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging (Phinney, Torres, Campos & Kim, 2011).

While in contrast, the students who did not have a mentor experienced a decrease in support and academic motivation (Phinney, Torres, Campos & Kim, 2011). Even though both students with and without mentors had a decrease in grade point average, the psychological, emotional and motivational benefits are positive contributions to the self (Phinney, Torres Campos & Kim, 2011). An explanation for the decrease in grade point average could be accounted for it being the students' first year of college perhaps expected given that it is the first year of college and is a large transition (Phinney, Torres Campos & Kim, 2011).

### **Programs for Learning the English Language**

The traditional teaching pedagogy of unidirectional teaching is outdated and ineffective. A one way transfer of information does not promote an interactive and stimulating learning environment for any student to exceed in. This banking model treats students as "empty receptacles" to deposit knowledge (Ochoa, 2007). It is vital for this type of teaching method to be abolished in order to create a healthier classroom and a more interactive learning experience that is sensitive to the students' needs.

It is especially difficult for non-native English speakers to thrive in this type of setting. Since school is a socializing institution, nonnative English speakers are faced with either “sinking or swimming” forcing them to adapt to an unfamiliar environment and to quickly learn English (Valvedere, 2006). These students not only have the task of learning the new language, but also have to make sense of the material presented in class. Immediately they are at a disadvantage and are not at the same level as their English speaking classmates. Feelings of inferiority, insecurity, and low self-concept develop which has shown to impact academic achievement (Ochoa, 2007, p. 30). From these examples reviewed in the previous section, there are notable advantages to incorporating culturally oriented activities and support to student of ethnic backgrounds and language abilities.

Traditional programs that attempt to mend the language gap between English and Spanish language learners are popular and numerous. The current and most widely used solution is placing these students in English as a Second Language Program, or ESL. Although it offers specialized attention to learning English, students miss out on material that is being taught in the regular classroom, setting them back further in understanding content. ESL Pull-out programs are typically implemented in elementary schools, where students are taken out of class for separate instruction (“English Learner Education Program”, 2011, Rennie, 1993). In California, 72% of English language learners are at the elementary school level (“Facts About English Learners”, 2014). As mentioned in the previous section with unexplored ethnic identity and Erickson’s theory of Ego Development, pulling students out of class can reinforce negative feelings for minority

groups because they are being separated from the majority group (Cross, 1978; Kim, 1981; Phinney 1993).

In middle schools, ESL class periods are designated as a full course for credit (Rennie, 1993). The issue of separating students is still present, and in this type of program, it may also hinder the students' opportunity to participate in other courses or elective courses if scheduling conflicts. If a student is prevented from participating a club, sport, or other extracurricular activity, because they are enrolled in a separate course during the school day, it poses the possibility of hindering self-esteem levels (Erkut, 2002; Kort-Butler & Hagewen, 2011). Participation in these types of activities, like sports, are related to increased levels of self-esteem in adolescents (Erkut, 2002; Kort-Butler & Hagewen, 2011). Despite these setbacks, ESL has been a commonly used program to serve English learners. Over 84.7% of English language learners in California speak Spanish, and English language learners from Spanish, Vietnamese, Cantonese, and Mandarin backgrounds represent 21.6% of students enrolled throughout school districts in California ("Facts About English Learners", 2014).

Different programs like Bilingual models incorporate the native language in conjunction with using English for instruction (Rennie, 1993). One limitation to this framework is that a majority of the students should share the same native language (Rennie, 1993). Early-exit and Late-exit programs aim to use both English and the native language to transition into predominately using English for speaking and reading comprehension. In Early-exit, relying on the native language is phased out quicker than in Late-exit where 40% or more of their instruction is in their native language (Rennie, 1993). With Two-Way bilingual programs, instruction is executed in both English and in

a second language allowing for development of native language skills in addition to acquiring a second language. Two ways of alternating languages is by day of the week or by time during the day (i.e. morning versus afternoon) (Rennie, 1993).

Ironically, the same school district involved in the first court ruling on in school segregation is currently in the process of joining the movement of bilingual education. The Lemon Grove School District is one of the supporters of bilingual programs and has implemented this curriculum into one of their elementary schools. Since the 2009-2010 school year, Mt. Vernon Elementary School is the first in the district to begin a Dual Immersion Program to foster bilingualism, biliteracy, and cross cultural competencies through English and Spanish curriculum ("Dual Immersion Academy," n.d.). Their 50:50 approach promotes instruction 50% in English and 50% in Spanish beginning at the kindergarten level until 4<sup>th</sup> grade ("Dual Immersion Academy", n.d.). Goals to extend the program through 6<sup>th</sup> grade were projected to be reached during the 2013-2014 school year.

These types of programs seem to be the most beneficial because they offer a gradual transition of using a native language in combination with English. But, English based programs also exist. Content-based programs do not focus on using native language, and rather use English revolving more around visual instruction using gestures and visual aids to reinforce content over language ("English Learner Education Program," 2011, Rennie, 1993). A second type of English program is Structured Immersion that only uses English but instructors are familiar with the native language of their students ensured through credentials in bilingual education or ESL teaching

("English Learner Education Program," 2011, Rennie, 1993). But the most effective form is Two Way Immersion.

### **The Future of Education Through Two Way Immersion**

A variety of legislation has been proposed, enacted, and failed to support the needs of students in public education. The future of education that embraces change is through Two-Way Immersion (TWI). In 2002, the number of TWI programs reached 266, with 251 being Spanish and English, and the remaining 15 for Chinese, Korean, French, and Navajo languages and are still growing (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, 2003). This new approach to teaching eliminates a number of factors that negatively impact the ethnic identity formation processes for Latino student and other minority groups. TWI has the potential to change the perspective and create a colorblind and ethnic blind society that accepts other cultures and not seeing one inferior to another through the inclusion of two languages and cultures. This is one of the major benefits, although there are others.

In our growing world, markets are growing internationally and it would be beneficial for students to develop fluency in a second language to prepare them for real world situations (Howard & Christian, 2002). Additionally, the rapidly growing Latino population that does not speak or understand English fluently, therefore the need for English as a Second Language classes can be eliminated in exchange for TWI that benefits both students instead of leaving the nonnative English speakers behind.

The mechanism behind TWI outlines the main goals and criteria to produce effective results (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2001). A study of 142 students who were enrolled in TWI possessed positive views of their high school career and were less likely

to drop out. Even more astounding are their positive views of college (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2001). The experiences Latino and American students had being involved in TWI from elementary school to high school changed them for the better and equipped them with the fluency, proficiency, and confidence to believe they can achieve higher education and get a better job (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2001). Over 74% of high school students agreed that learning two languages made them smarter and 92% thought it helped them do better in school (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2001).

One of the key features of TWI is the 50/50 approach of integrating an equal number of native English speakers and equal number of native speakers of another language to maintain a balance so they can learn firsthand about a racially, linguistically, and socioeconomically different culture than their own (Howard & Christian, 2002; Rennie, 2003). Other critical features of TWI instruction is developing proficiency in native language as well as a second language which requires TWI instruction to take place for the duration of 4-6 years (Howard & Christian, 2002). In the classroom, all subjects are taught in both languages with an uneven ratio for the amounts of each language that progressively change the longer time goes on. English should be used at least 10% of the time and the Spanish language at a minimum of 50% of the time (Howard & Christian, 2002).

These timelines and time slots were derived from a number of longitudinal and short term studies. In one study by Thomas and Collier (1997) studied 70,000 English language learners in five different districts that were enrolled in a form of bilingual or dual immersion education (Thomas & Collier, 1997). They include ESL pullout where the student is physically taken out of class to learn in another room, ESL content,

transitional bilingual education, one-way developmental bilingual education where a majority of the students speak the same nonnative English language, and two-way developmental bilingual education or two-way immersion with equal amount of native and nonnative English speakers (Thomas & Collier, 1997). Some of the significant findings show that the performance gap was filled after 4-7 years between nonnative English speakers and native English speakers to perform just as well for testing scores (Bohon, Singer, & Santos, 1993). Out of the variety of options to address of acquiring English, the Two-Way Immersion produced the most long term success and above grade level proficiency (Bohon, Singer, & Santos, 1993). The implementation of Two-Way Immersion does not only address the problem of bridging the achievement gap and successfully understanding a new language, but it works to integrate a minority and majority culture together.

If TWI is implemented, the future of students' well-being and acceptance into society will decrease negative perceptions of Latino students because they will be at the same level and ability. They will come into the classroom with strengths in their native language whether that is in English, Spanish, or another language. Differences will be made to enhance a color and ethnic blindness to people who do not fit into their group. Benefits to both native and non-native speakers of English and Spanish will engage in a different type of socialization process, thus increasing cognitive, social, and developmental advantages (Bohon, Singer, & Santos, 1993; Vasquez, 2005).

### **The Future of Latinos in the United States**

By the year 2060, the Latino Population is expected to represent nearly 30% of the U.S. total population ("International Migration," 2013). Latinos currently account for

approximately 17% of the U.S. population, therefore the expansion of Latinos highlights the need and importance to take action towards educational reform (“International Migration,” 2013). By proposing the TWI approach that breaks away from traditional pedagogy, our multicultural notion will move toward providing equal opportunity and treatment for all students.

Since the American education system began in the 1800’s, the Latino population and other minority populations have been disadvantaged in receiving equal opportunity and inclusion within society. From slavery and migrant labor to school segregation, these historical truths have shaped our current societal views. Negative media portrayals, incarceration, and limited opportunity to a quality education, are the byproducts of living in a society that functions with stereotypes and inequality. TWI style of education, will give marginalized populations an untainted educational experience where they are not limited by language or judged by their ethnicity. Through TWI such as becoming proficient or higher in two languages, provides aids both native and nonnative English speakers in achieving positive outcomes.

More importantly, this educational approach works to create a color and ethnic blind mindset due to the immersion and cultural exchange with different ethnic groups in the classroom. In these conditions, Latino students will be able to acculturate into American society, rather than assimilate. Latinos are not able to preserve their cultural values and not forced to give up their language to meet the demands of traditional education style. Therefore, they can now have the opportunity to develop a stronger ethnic identity, higher self-esteem, and higher academic achievement. Our nation will

move towards equality and prosperity that is appropriate for our current times of the rapidly changing demographics in the United States.

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