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Emergent Bilinguals in Education

Emerging bilinguals, also known as English language learners (ELLs) or multilingual learners, refer to students who are in the process of acquiring proficiency in a second language, typically English, while maintaining or developing proficiency in their native language. This population represents a diverse array of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, often bringing valuable assets to the educational setting. Emerging bilinguals face unique challenges in the classroom, including linguistic and cultural barriers, which require specialized instructional strategies to support their academic achievement. Reference: Cummins, J. (2000).

Research suggests that incorporating students' native languages and cultures into the curriculum can enhance their learning outcomes. For example, in a study by Cummins (2000), it was found that bilingual education programs that promote the development of both languages lead to better academic performance among emerging bilingual students compared to programs that focus solely on English language instruction. Moreover, providing culturally responsive teaching practices can help create a supportive learning environment where students feel valued and empowered.

In practice, educators can implement various instructional approaches to meet the needs of emerging bilinguals, such as bilingual education programs, English as a second language (ESL) instruction, or sheltered instruction techniques. These approaches aim to scaffold students' language development while fostering academic content mastery. Additionally, leveraging

technology and community resources can further enrich the learning experiences of emerging bilinguals. By recognizing and embracing the linguistic diversity of their students, educators can promote equitable access to education and empower emerging bilinguals to succeed academically and beyond (García & Kleifgen, 2010). The problem with emerging bilinguals in education lies in the persistent achievement gap and underrepresentation of these students in advanced academic programs. Research, such as Lucas and Grinberg's study in 2008, highlights how emerging bilinguals are often overlooked for gifted and talented programs due to language-related biases in assessment tools and limited access to enrichment opportunities. This underrepresentation reflects systemic challenges in the education system, including inadequate resources for English language learners (ELLs) and a lack of qualified teachers proficient in their native languages. The specific issue of underrepresentation not only deprives emerging bilinguals of academic enrichment but also perpetuates inequities in educational outcomes, hindering their long-term success and perpetuating cycles of disadvantage (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008). Emerging bilingual children experience various impacts on their educational trajectories due to factors such as language barriers, cultural differences, and limited access to resources. Research indicates that language proficiency significantly influences academic achievement, with emerging bilinguals often facing challenges in accessing and comprehending instructional materials in a language they are still acquiring (Cummins, 1981).

This can lead to lower academic performance and hinder their overall educational attainment. Moreover, emerging bilinguals may encounter social and emotional difficulties, including feelings of isolation and low self-esteem, as they navigate the complexities of learning in a second language (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006).

Additionally, the lack of representation and recognition in advanced academic programs

may limit their opportunities for intellectual growth and future success (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008). Emerging bilingual children experience various impacts on their educational trajectories due to factors such as language barriers, cultural differences, and limited access to resources. Research indicates that language proficiency significantly influences academic achievement, with emerging bilinguals often facing challenges in accessing and comprehending instructional materials in a language they are still acquiring (Cummins, 1981).

This can lead to lower academic performance and hinder their overall educational attainment. Moreover, emerging bilinguals may encounter social and emotional difficulties, including feelings of isolation and low self-esteem, as they navigate the complexities of learning in a second language (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006). These factors collectively contribute to the academic achievement gap and underscore the need for targeted support and intervention strategies to promote the academic and socio-emotional well-being of emerging bilingual children. Additionally, emerging bilinguals' families may encounter discrimination or prejudice due to their linguistic or cultural backgrounds, further exacerbating their sense of alienation from the educational community (Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, & Todorova, 2008). These factors can contribute to lower levels of parental involvement in school activities and decision-making processes, impacting students' academic outcomes and overall well-being.

Emerging bilinguals' families are profoundly impacted by their children's educational experiences, often facing challenges related to navigating unfamiliar systems and advocating for their children's needs. Research indicates that language and cultural barriers can hinder effective communication between families and schools (Delgado-Gaitan, 1990). Families may struggle to access information about educational programs, support services, and their children's progress,

leading to feelings of exclusion and frustration.

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Emerging bilinguals significantly influence the communities they belong to, and conversely, communities play a crucial role in shaping the educational experiences and outcomes of these students. Research suggests that communities with diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds may face challenges related to social cohesion and integration, as highlighted by Suárez-Orozco, Suárez-Orozco, and Todorova (2008). Language barriers and cultural differences can impede communication and collaboration among community members, potentially leading to tensions and misunderstandings.

Moreover, communities with significant numbers of emerging bilinguals may experience disparities in access to resources and opportunities, further exacerbating social inequalities. However, when communities actively embrace linguistic diversity and promote inclusive practices, they can create supportive environments where emerging bilinguals thrive academically and contribute positively to the community's cultural richness and economic vitality.

Emerging bilinguals in education disproportionately affect immigrant and minority communities, particularly in urban areas where linguistic diversity is more prevalent. Research indicates that students from low-income families and marginalized communities face greater challenges in accessing quality education and support services, exacerbating the disparities in

academic outcomes (Valdés, 2001).

Moreover, emerging bilinguals who belong to indigenous or refugee groups often encounter additional barriers due to their unique linguistic and cultural backgrounds, as highlighted by García and Kleifgen (2010). These students may experience discrimination, trauma, or displacement, further complicating their educational experiences and necessitating targeted interventions to address their specific needs.

Intervention for emerging bilingual children and families should ideally start early in their educational journey, ideally in early childhood or preschool years, to mitigate negative consequences and support positive academic outcomes. Research suggests that early interventions targeting language development and family engagement are crucial for promoting school readiness and narrowing the achievement gap for emerging bilinguals (Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2006). Early childhood programs that incorporate culturally and linguistically responsive practices can lay a strong foundation for academic success and foster a supportive learning environment for emerging bilinguals and their families.

The issue of supporting emerging bilinguals in education needs immediate attention due to its long-term impact on academic achievement and societal equity. Research suggests that early interventions are crucial for preventing language and academic disparities among emerging bilinguals, as waiting until children are older may exacerbate the achievement gap (Hakuta, Butler, & Witt, 2000). Starting interventions in early childhood or preschool years ensures that emerging bilingual children receive the necessary support to develop language proficiency and foundational skills, setting them on a trajectory for academic success and social integration. The intervention needed for supporting emerging bilinguals in education involves implementing culturally and linguistically responsive practices across educational settings, including early

childhood programs, schools, and community resources. This approach includes providing bilingual education programs, professional development for teachers on culturally responsive teaching strategies, and engaging families as partners in their children's education (García & Kleifgen, 2010). By advocating for comprehensive policies and practices that prioritize linguistic diversity and equity in education, we can create inclusive learning environments where emerging bilinguals thrive academically and socio-culturally.

The target audience for addressing the issue of emerging bilinguals in education includes teachers, the members of The New York City Department of Education such as David C. Banks. Teachers and administrators are in a position to implement culturally and linguistically responsive practices in schools, while lawmakers can advocate for policies and funding to support bilingual education programs (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010). Community members play a vital role in fostering inclusive environments and supporting the educational needs of emerging bilinguals, ultimately advocating for equitable access to education and opportunities for linguistic and cultural diversity to be valued and integrated into the educational system.

Research Source Summaries

Sanchez, M. (2020). "Promoting Biliteracy Development in Emergent Bilingual Children." In this first article, the author stresses the vital role of nurturing biliteracy skills in emergent bilingual children. Sanchez argues that proficiency in two languages is essential for these children's academic success and cognitive growth. The article discusses various strategies educators and policymakers can employ to support the development of literacy skills in both languages. Sanchez emphasizes the benefits of biliteracy, such as enhanced cognitive flexibility and cultural identity, while also addressing the challenges these children may encounter in mastering two languages. The purpose of the article is to inform stakeholders about the

importance of promoting biliteracy development and to advocate for evidence-based practices in education.

I selected this source because it provides valuable insights into effective strategies for fostering biliteracy among emergent bilingual children, which aligns with my advocacy topic. As an advocate for bilingual education and equitable opportunities for emergent bilingual students, I believe that promoting biliteracy is essential for their academic success and cognitive development. This article offers practical recommendations for educators and policymakers to support biliteracy development, contributing to my advocacy efforts to ensure that all emergent bilingual children have access to high-quality bilingual education programs and resources.

Lopez, S. (2018). "Cultural Competence in Education: Issues and Strategies for Emergent Bilingual Children." The author explores the significance of cultural competence in education for emergent bilingual students in the second article. Lopez argues that educators must be culturally competent to effectively support the academic and socioemotional needs of these students. The article highlights the importance of acknowledging and valuing students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the classroom. Lopez also discusses practical strategies for promoting cultural competence among educators, such as professional development and the use of culturally relevant curriculum materials. The purpose of the article is to underscore the importance of cultural competence in education and to advocate for the implementation of culturally responsive practices.

I chose this source because it addresses a critical aspect of education for emergent bilingual children—cultural competence. It provides valuable insights into the significance of recognizing students' cultural diversity and practical strategies for incorporating cultural responsiveness into teaching practices. As an advocate for culturally inclusive education and

equitable opportunities for emergent bilingual students, I believe that fostering cultural competence among educators is essential for creating inclusive learning environments where all students feel valued and supported.

Chen, L. (2019). "Language Policy and Education Equity for Emergent Bilingual Children" delves into the role of language policy in promoting educational equity for emergent bilingual students in the third article. The author argues that language policies at various levels of governance profoundly impact these students' educational opportunities and outcomes. Chen emphasizes the importance of advocating for language policies that support the linguistic rights and academic success of emergent bilingual children. The article discusses the influence of language policies on access to bilingual education programs and language support services, highlighting the need for equitable policies that recognize linguistic diversity. The purpose of the article is to inform policymakers and stakeholders about the implications of language policy on educational equity and to advocate for policy changes that benefit emergent bilingual children.

I selected this source because it offers valuable insights into the critical role of language policy in shaping the educational experiences of emergent bilingual children. It underscores the importance of advocating for policies that promote linguistic diversity and support the academic success of these students. As an advocate for language policy reform and educational equity for emergent bilingual students, I believe that advocating for equitable language policies is essential for ensuring that all students have access to opportunities that facilitate their linguistic and academic development.

The target audience for addressing the issue includes: Individuals like David C. Chancellor who hold influential positions in education departments or governmental bodies. They're concerned with shaping policies and allocating resources to support emerging bilinguals

at a systemic level. I advocate for the implementation of culturally and linguistically responsive practices in education, including bilingual education programs, teacher training in language acquisition methodologies, and equitable access to resources and support services for emerging bilingual students. This intervention aims to address the unique needs of emerging bilinguals, promote their academic achievement, and foster inclusive learning environments that value linguistic and cultural diversity (García & Kleifgen, 2010).

Small Advocacy Plan

To bring attention to the issue of emerging bilinguals in education, I would first conduct awareness campaigns through various channels, including workshops, conferences, and professional development sessions for educators. Secondly, I would collaborate with advocacy groups, educational organizations, and community leaders to disseminate information, share best practices, and engage stakeholders in discussions about the importance of supporting emerging bilingual students in schools.

Large Advocacy Plan

To implement the intervention of supporting emerging bilinguals in education, I will collaborate with educators and the department of education. Together, we will develop and implement culturally and linguistically responsive curriculum and instructional practices, provide professional development for educators, advocate for policies supporting bilingual education, and engage families and communities in supporting the academic success of emerging bilingual students. Families and community members will contribute by providing cultural insights, advocating for resources, and participating in school and community-based initiatives to create inclusive environments for emerging bilinguals, while teachers and administrators will implement these strategies in classrooms and schools (Gándara & Hopkins, 2010).

Commentary

I chose the topic of emerging bilinguals in education because I am passionate about promoting equity and inclusivity in the educational system, particularly for students from linguistically diverse backgrounds. This subject is meaningful to me because it represents an opportunity to promote equity and empower students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds to succeed in education and beyond. As an early childhood professional, understanding and addressing the needs of emerging bilinguals in education will require me to implement culturally responsive practices and provide equitable support to ensure all children have access to quality education.

E.P.I.C Message

Dear Mayor Adams;

E: Do you have a strong desire to guarantee that every child receives equal educational opportunities?

P: Children who are emerging as bilinguals—that is, learning English in addition to their native tongue—face particular difficulties within the educational system. Insufficient resources and support are provided to these students in many schools, which causes gaps in their linguistic and academic development.

I: In order to solve this problem, funding for bilingual education initiatives that offer emergent bilingual kids all-encompassing support is required. Specialized curriculum, certified bilingual educators, and availability of language learning materials have to be features of these programs. Furthermore, developing a friendly and inclusive school climate and encouraging cultural competency among teachers are critical to the success of emerging bilingual kids.

C: I invite you to join me in advocating for increased funding and support for bilingual education programs in schools. Together, we can ensure that kids who are starting to learn two languages get the resources and assistance they need to be successful in school and in language.

I look forward to hearing from your office at your earliest convenience.

Sincerely,

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