Creating Bicultural Identities: The Role of School-based Bilingual Paraprofessionals in Contemporary Immigrant Accommodation (Two Kansas Case Studies)

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CREATING BICULTURAL IDENTITIES: THE ROLE OF SCHOOL-BASED BILINGUAL PARAPROFESSIONALS IN CONTEMPORARY IMMIGRANT ACCOMMODATION
(TWO KANSAS CASE STUDIES)

by

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B.A. Brown University, 1991

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Chairperson

Committee Members

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Abstract

This study locates the professional and informal practices of school-based bilingual paraprofessionals (paras) in the context of the larger social phenomena of acculturation, cultural brokerage, and identity construction. It demonstrates how the paras in two Kansas communities transform an assimilationist mandate into something quite different, the promotion of bicultural identities, as part of a process called "additive biculturalism". Additive biculturalism incorporates Weiss's characterization of paras as cultural brokers (1994), but expands on it significantly. As the first part of additive biculturalism, bilingual paras model and promote bicultural identities among the limited-English-proficient (LEP) students and parents they work with. As the second part of additive biculturalism, the paras struggle to remove the hierarchic inequality between Anglo and Latino identities so that being bicultural can be a stable and viable status, rather than a transitional, low-status one. The paras can only succeed in promoting two identities if they make both of those identities separately attractive. To support this assertion requires clarification of definitions of cultural brokerage and assimilation (within the context of acculturation) and a review of theories of multiple identity and cultural hierarchies.

KEY WORDS: Paraprofessionals (bilingual), acculturation, assimilation, immigrant education, school-community relations, Latinos, Midwest U.S.
This thesis is dedicated to Susan, my mother, and my father,
all of whom maintained the faith that I would at last complete it,
and to Gui and Miguel, two particularly inspiring paras and wonderful people.
Preface

Telling the stories of bilingual paras' actions and circumstances is important to delineate their roles in our schools and communities. The stories here are of six bilingual paras whom I observed, the LEP families with whom they interacted daily, and the multilingual larger communities of which they were part.

Telling their stories and telling it the way I do reveals my own views about the primacy of equity, which were shaped by my educational background—in Latin American studies, education, and cultural anthropology—and my personal and professional experience. I lived for two years in one of the communities where I conducted my research. There I worked as the coordinator and teacher of a bilingual parent literacy program for Mexican immigrant parents. Like the paras' role, that job required me to go between cultures and levels of power as I worked with LEP parents on their literacy skills in Spanish and English. I worked with those parents to understand better the local school system in which their children were enrolled and the larger systems we were all part of.

Two of the authors I cite most frequently here (Grey 1991; Spener 1988) wrote about immigrant education with an ardent and angry undertone to their pieces. It is my intent to emulate their model, though I think I can end this piece more optimistically. While they were savaging the *de facto* creation of a marginalized underclass through misguided or inadequate immigrant education programs, I am writing about members of a particular job niche who are attempting to convert that system and create more positive outcomes for everyone (immigrant and otherwise) in the communities they work in.

The small sample size means that securing perfect anonymity in this report is nearly impossible. I have had to choose between hiding the identities of the communities I worked in, which would have led to important compromises in
situating the paras in the specific circumstances in which they work, or having those familiar with my research know who I am talking about. Feeling that it is the lesser compromise, I have chosen the latter course. The paras and others in the schools and communities surveyed will almost assuredly recognize themselves and some of their companions. Nonetheless, except when quoted by name in another source (e.g., the Great Bend Tribune), there is an effort here to maintain confidentiality. The paras are not mentioned by name, nor are the schools where they work.¹

¹ All the formal field research was conducted with the permission of those who were observed. All the research conducted was consistent with the American Anthropological Association’s statement on ethics (1971, amended 1990). All six of the paras have had or will have a chance to comment on the data and the preliminary findings before any attempt is made to publish them. (In the case of the Kansas City, Kansas paras, they had a chance to review and accept an earlier work (Hamann 1992) based on the portion of research about them that is presented here. They have not seen this draft.)
Acknowledgements

This thesis was created through a long and sometimes inspiring and sometimes painful process, but one which ultimately was quite rewarding. The six paras I observed deserve thanks for allowing me to intrude into their lives and scrutinize their practices. Other school personnel in Great Bend and Kansas City, Kansas were also kind and brave to let me into the schools they work in. This thesis is frequently critical of the way limited-English-proficient (LEP) students are inadequately served in Kansas schools and communities, but that is a structural criticism of unequal distribution of opportunity not a criticism of any of the individuals with whom I was in contact.

I owe special appreciation to Akira Yamamoto, the chair of my thesis committee, for his patient review of draft after draft of this document and for his willingness to be my proxy with other members of my committee during the many months I was in Philadelphia, a thousand miles away from Lawrence. I want to thank each of the other members of my committee, Jane Gibson for pointing me to helpful sources and providing needed encouragement both in person and by e-mail, Mary Lynn Hamilton, for her enthusiasm about my topic and her vouching for its significance, Don Stull, for his brutal but thorough criticism which forced me to push for a higher standard, and Jack Hofman, who served as an interested fifth reader even though this topic was not in his major field of interest.

My friend Ken Erickson, who used to coordinate bilingual and ESL activities for the Kansas State Board of Education, pushed me to write on this topic, introduced me to principals and paras in Great Bend, arranged for me to be paid for the Kansas City, Kansas portion of this study, and acted as a conversation partner and sixth reader of this thesis. For all that and more, I thank him. He, like those mentioned in
the Dedication, continued to believe in the worthwhileness of this topic, and he maintained faith in my ability to finish this thesis, in the process providing crucial encouragement.
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"Education is a mirror held against the face of a people. Nations may put on blustering shows of strength to conceal public weakness, erect grand façades to conceal shabby backyards, and profess peace while secretly arming for conquest, but how they take care of their children tells unerringly who they are."
—George Z.F. Bereday (1964:5)

"[The educational system is] functional or dysfunctional to society at any instance to the degree it prepares student attitudes appropriate to the needs of the unequal social order."
—Ira Shor (1986:168)
They functioned as conduits through which information flowed between worlds in collision, translating more than just words and bringing comprehensibility to otherwise meaningless static.

—Frances Kartunnen (1994:xii)
(describing Doña Malinche, Sarah Winnemucca, Charles Eastman, Doña Luz Jiménez, and other famous translators/interpreters)

I. Introduction

Bilingual paraprofessionals (paras2) are given scant attention in current social science research. This is a major oversight because paras are significant players in the acculturation process of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students and their parents in the United States. There are 2.3 to 3.5 million LEP students in this country (Aleman 1993:3) and several million more LEP adults. So what paras do in schools and communities is important to a lot of people.

After considering theories of acculturation, assimilation, marginality, cultural brokerage, multiple identity, and additive and folk bilingualism, this thesis shows how six Kansas paras working in two school districts are agents of 'additive biculturalism', which is my adaptation of the idea of additive bilingualism (Snow 1992). As primary activities within this process, the paras model bicultural identities and promote biculturalism among their student charges.

Bilingual paras work with native English-speaking school personnel and with LEP students and parents in hundreds of school buildings across the country. The bilingual paras serve as interpreters, educators, advocates, informants (in the anthropological sense of the word, helping interested parties of one culture

2'Para' and 'bilingual para' are used interchangeably throughout the paper, the latter when I want to reiterate the paras' bilingualness. There are other kinds of paraprofessionals as noted in Chapter VI, but, for purposes here, the reader can assume that when I use 'para' or 'bilingual para' I am referring only to bilingual paraprofessionals, unless otherwise specified.
understand another), agents of change, and wage earners at their schools and in the larger communities in which they serve.

The paras are situated in circumstances that transcend the walls of their buildings, that extend beyond the edge of their school districts, and that fit into the macrosocial contexts of migration, acculturation, new identity creation, and demographic change. Their professional performance is defined by their individual experience and training, by local needs and customs, by regional economic and sociocultural circumstances, and by applicable local, state, and national laws. Paras are strategically positioned at the often unequal interfaces between school and community, between youth and adult, between LEP newcomer and established English-speaking resident, and between working-class laborer and certified professional.

In the central-Kansas town of Great Bend and in the city of Kansas City, Kansas (KCK), the two communities in which I observed bilingual paras, the local school districts are required by federal law to provide an adequate education for all students, including the significant number of LEP students they enroll. As part of this effort, in accordance with state laws, the schools use low-paid paras as links to LEP children and parents who live within their districts.

By their nature, schools are dynamic, politically charged places. In communities facing significant demographic change, this is even more the case. Since the turn of the century at least, schools have been seen by American educational policymakers as a principal means for acculturating immigrants (Kliebard 1987). Because the traditional pedagogic emphasis in this process has been on changing the immigrant students to fit the educational system, rather than adjusting the system to fit the needs of immigrants, that emphasis deserves the title 'assimilation' (Grey 1991; Spener 1988).
The hope of erasing at least some of the differences between LEP students and
the Anglo\textsuperscript{3} mainstream undergirds the articulated education policies of the Kansas
State Board of Education (KSBE) regarding LEP students. The state wants LEP
students to learn English quickly so they can participate exclusively in mainstream
classes (which puts the full onus of change on the LEP students, not on those in the
mainstream). Paras are one of the agents that the state law identifies to promote
such a change in LEP students.

To the extent that the paras I observed took on this mandate, they would be
agents of assimilation. However, as this thesis shows, the paras transformed this
assimilationist mandate into something quite different. Instead of acting out the
expectations of their job niche as defined by law, they converted it into an effort to
promote bicultural identity and to try to change the prevailing social order. This
double task often meant playing the role of a culture broker (Wolf 1956).

The paras functioned as bridges between two unequal worlds. Though not cer-
tified, many times the paras I observed acted as the most significant instructors for
LEP students in these schools. When asked by school personnel to explain certain
behaviors by LEP students and parents, or when they volunteered such information,
paras became the \textit{de facto} representatives of the interests of the language-minority
students and parents. The paras filled the deficit identified by Grey (1991) that
there were few adults in most schools that could empathize with LEP students.\textsuperscript{4}

\textsuperscript{3}Despite its messiness, the term "Anglo" is used throughout this document as a shorthand
for describing the dominant native English-speaking population of the United States and their
culture. A culturally based term seemed more accurate than a racially based one, like
"white," and regularly repeating the long list of ethnicities that have contributed to the
dominant cultural codes of the contemporary United States seemed both cumbersome and no
less controversial.

\textsuperscript{4}Grey was referring to secondary schools, using Garden City High School (also in Kansas)
as his model, but his point is equally pertinent for the elementary schools I visited. Other
than the paras, there were few bilingual adults in those schools and no one who even
partially shared a cultural background with the LEP students.
LEP students and parents used the bilingual paras to access people and services at the schools. Outside the school, in the Spanish-speaking community, the bilingual paras were accorded more prestige than they were generally accorded inside. This outside/inside dichotomy reflected, in part, the community power differentials between school professionals and their world versus the economically secondary world of LEP students and their families. The paras' functioning between entities of differing power is one way in which the paras match Eric Wolf's model of cultural brokers (1956). Weiss (1994) maintained that Wolf's model explains the action of paras.

Superficially at least, it is easy to see why the paras described here might fit the label "culture broker." The paras mediated between intentionally unequal worlds that, though constantly changing, were not necessarily converging. A Latino identity, separate from an Anglo identity, had existed and would likely continue to do so in the communities that I studied, though what those identities meant was regularly in flux. As brokers, the paras assisted members on both sides of the Anglo/LEP fissure to realize their various and separate ends.

The paras also did things that the broker model does not account for, like promoting Latino pride and teaching LEP students (and parents) how to speak English and how to negotiate the Anglo social structure. The broker model also does not account for the assimilationist forces present in the paras' environment, so it does not account for the paras' efforts to convert and transcend such forces.

The paras helped Latinos to function in the mainstream, but they also resisted the mainstream's efforts to reduce or erase LEP students' and parents' existing non-Anglo cultural identity. The paras promoted the creation of twin identities, one as part of the mainstream and one within a Latino framework. They were brokers, but they were more than that.
ORGANIZATION AND PERSPECTIVE: There are two goals here in the introduction: (1) to give an overview of paras' circumstances and actions; and (2) to propose that the bilingual paras' roles at school and in the larger community were part of an unarticulated goal to be agents of "additive biculturalism," a term which I fully define in Chapter II. As agents of additive biculturalism, paras took on and promoted both Anglo and Latino identities. That meant the paras' roles included but transcended the roles of brokers.

Chapter III starts from the macroscopic perspective of international migration and the national organization of labor and is consistently refined until I bring the focus down to the regional and state levels. My point is to describe the tangled social realities of the circumstances within which the paras operate. This is in line with Wolf's (1956) and Steward's (1950:107) admonition that to study individuals in complex societies requires an historical perspective and the recognition of local, regional, and national realities.

Chapters IV through VII describe my field study. The methodology section (Chapter IV) explains my strategies as a researcher, as well as my role as a teacher and consultant in both Great Bend and KCK. Chapter V continues the description of paras' circumstances at a more local level than Chapter III.

Chapters VI and VII are the qualitative documentation of the variety of roles paras played and the conditions in which they practiced. Chapter VI situates the paras in the schools of Great Bend and KCK, while Chapter VII describes the paras' roles apart from the context of the school environment. As a segue into the conclusion, Chapter VII introduces some of James Banks' ideas about multicultural education, which were enunciated in an interview with Ron Brandt (1994).

In the final chapter I review both theory and empirical observations to validate my claim that paras are best described as agents of additive biculturalism. I
conclude by suggesting new directions for study and by making some policy recom-
mendations about how paras' job circumstances should be enhanced or changed.
II. Culture brokers helping LEP Students: Pedagogical and anthropological models

The scholarly consideration of bilingual paras has been minimal. This is a little surprising for three reasons: (1) there has been a substantial amount of research on the acculturation of immigrants and language minorities in the United States; (2) abundant scholarly attention has been given to bilingual education; and (3) education researchers in the late 1960s and early 1970s created a modest body of research considering the various functions of teacher aides (Canady 1973; Johnson and Faunce 1973; Rookey 1969; Tanner and Tanner 1968; and Tanner and Tanner 1969). This paucity means that the theoretical grounding for this thesis needs to be drawn from sources that are not specifically about paras, with the important exception of Weiss (1994).

In his article on bicultural paraprofessionals working in an elementary school in California, Weiss (1994) claimed that paras are like the cultural brokers described by Wolf (1956). Weiss's findings are considered throughout this thesis, while Wolf's model is explained later in this chapter.

This chapter has two functions: (1) to create working definitions of assimilation, culture broker, and additive biculturalism, and (2) to situate those terms in the encompassing realm of acculturation. Within this discussion I define several secondary terms, like marginality, which clarify my definitions of the primary terms.

A. Acculturation, Assimilation, Reaction, Accommodation

This section defines how the terms acculturation, assimilation, reaction, and accommodation are used here. Gordon points out that some scholars do not differentiate the terms assimilation and acculturation (1964:65-66). Teske and Nelson
(1974) show that these terms are used variously and sometimes in contradictory ways by different authors. So, to avoid confusion, how the terms are used in this paper needs to be distinguished and clarified.

In 1936, at the behest of the Social Science Research Council, Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits presented a memorandum, or, more accurately, a taxonomy of acculturation. By their definition, 

Acculturation comprehends those phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous first-hand contact, with subsequent changes in the original cultural pattern of either or both groups. (1967:182) 

Clearly, as a place where immigrants and native-born peoples meet, schools where bilingual paras serve are one of the loci of acculturation. In the same piece, Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits defined assimilation as one possible phase of acculturation, where the acculturation ends with one culture mostly taking over the other culture with most or all of the dominated culture's previous heritage lost (1967:186).

Teske and Nelson (1974) and many others describe acculturation and assimilation differently. To Teske and Nelson acculturation and assimilation are distinct processes which can occur when different cultures meet (group to group) or individuals of different cultures meet. They do not nest one process within the other and they do not suggest a term for the general category of firsthand, sustained contact between cultures. The largest difference between Teske and Nelson's work and that of Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits, however, seems to be one of nomenclature. Both groups of authors have created taxonomies to describe the processes that can entail when different cultures come into contact. Which term they choose to designate for a particular circumstance is what varies, particularly how they define the word acculturation.
In this paper, acculturation is defined as an encompassing term to describe the range of processes that can occur when cultures come into contact, as per Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1967). Assimilation, further defined below, is one type of acculturation.

Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1967) definition of assimilation is similar to an earlier one proposed by the sociologists Robert Park and Ernest Burgess in 1921:

Assimilation is a process of interpenetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups, and, by sharing their experience and history, are incorporated with them in a common cultural life. (1970:360)

Noting this earlier definition is useful because it was produced in a context where immigration was defined as a "problem" (Park and Burgess 1970:359), as it often is today.

Grey (1991) and Spener (1988) both claim that assimilation is presently the dominant concept that undergirds the education policies for immigrant and other LEP students in the United States, as it was when the social efficiency advocates and social meliorists at the turn of the century first popularized the idea of using schools to remedy social problems (Kliebard 1987). The paras I observed were not assimilationists, but they did work in a job niche were they were expected to be.

Park and Burgess's (1970) reference point when they created their definition of assimilation was the United States of 1920, which was at the peak of a massive 40-year cycle of immigration; primitive cultures were the reference points of the anthropologists Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits (1967). Much of the present day educational structure dates back to the first 30 years of this century (Tyack 1974; Kliebard 1987), so the structural framework within which the paras
are working has a lot to do with the old idea that immigration was a problem and that assimilation would lead to its amelioration.

The persistence of this structure for schooling also supports using the term 'Anglo school culture' to describe the professional culture of schools. While several of the teachers and administrators who work with the paras would resist being called Anglo, they nonetheless are part of a little changed professional structure that was designed almost exclusively by Americans of northern European descent at the turn of the century.

According to Spener (1988), present and past popular demands for schools as agents of assimilation revolve around nativist fears and the insistence that LEP students learn English as soon as possible so they can be "Americanized." Once Americanized, formerly LEP students can allegedly take advantage of the economic and cultural opportunities of U.S. society. These ideas connect both to the myth of the "Melting pot," which equates Americanization with economic and social opportunity, and to the historic belief that public education is a great upward equalizer, giving children of low-status families the chance to surpass their parents' social status through achievement in school (Spener 1988:143).

The 'Melting Pot' myth and the policy recommendations of fearful nativists both ignore the American economy's demand for a marginal, or "secondary," labor force (Piore 1979) and the reality that many voluntary immigrants are compartmentalized by their host society into low-caste status which effectively blocks their social mobility (Ogbu 1978; Spener 1988). These ideas are further discussed in Chapter III.

Spener argues that immersion in English language programs is not synonymous with Americanization. To use his caustic terminology:
The United States offers immigrants an ambiguous social contract. It reads, more or less, as follows: "In order to participate in a non-marginal way in the U.S. economy, you must become an American by giving up your loyalty to your home country and language, and you must learn the language of the American elite. In order to become an American, you must meet certain standards. This country is in the process of raising its standards because, unfortunately, there are already too many Americans. If you aren't allowed to become an American, there's still plenty of room for you in this country — at the bottom. (1988:145-146)

Spener's allusion to room at the bottom, assimilation without Americanization, suggests that the concept of assimilation can be subdivided to refer to specific social spheres. Gordon's (1964) seven-part assimilation taxonomy clarifies what Spener is suggesting.

Gordon argued that assimilation occurs along seven dimensions, with full assimilation being marked by assimilation in all seven (1964:71). He defined cultural/behavioral assimilation as occurring when an incoming group adopts the cultural practices (including language) and values of the host society. Structural assimilation occurs when members of the new group are welcomed into all the cliques, clubs, and institutions of the host society, such that their representation in each social strata is indistinguishable from the host society's representation in the same. "Indissolubly connected" (Gordon 1964:80) to structural assimilation is marital assimilation, which refers to whether the new group and host group are intermarrying. Spener's (1988) 'Americanization' is equivalent to structural assimilation in the United States.

Identificational assimilation, Gordon's fourth type, occurs when newcomers identify themselves as part of the host society. Attitude receptional assimilation

---

5"Acculturation" is another term Gordon used for cultural/behavioral assimilation, but in this paper I am defining acculturation as an umbrella term—as per Redfield, Linton, and Herskovitz (1967)—which encompasses assimilation, reaction, accommodation and a host of other terms. So, when necessary for clarification, I have substituted 'cultural assimilation' in places where Gordon used the term 'acculturation'.
occurs when the host society no longer is prejudiced against the newcomers. Behavioral receptional assimilation occurs when the host society no longer discriminates against the newcomers. And civic assimilation marks when there are no longer conflicts of values or power between the host and incoming group.

Though Gordon differentiated seven assimilation types, he found that two of them seemed to be most significant—cultural assimilation and structural assimilation. Those are the two types that I will be most concerned with in this paper. According to Gordon, cultural assimilation could occur in conjunction with or completely separate from other kinds of assimilation (1964:77). He also noted that once structural assimilation occurred, all other types of assimilation "naturally followed" (1964:81), an idea that I will later contest. Using Gordon's taxonomy, Spener's (1988) "assimilation without Americanization" refers to cultural assimilation without structural assimilation.

Mark Grey summarizes an important component of each of the definitions of assimilation that I have considered so far: "Assimilation . . . is a one-way process in which the outsider is expected to change in order to become part of the dominant culture" (Grey 1991:80). By emphasizing the processual nature of assimilation and its unilateral orientation, Grey's definition echoes Teske and Nelson's (1974) and that of the Social Science Research Council's Seminar on Acculturation of 1953, which declared, "Assimilation implies an essentially unilateral approximation of one culture in the direction of the other, albeit a changing or ongoing other" (Barnett et al. 1954:988). Grey's definition captures the essence of how I am using the term assimilation in this paper, while Gordon's distinction between structural and cultural assimilation remains integral.

Park and Burgess's definition of assimilation (1970:360) is also useful because it distinguished between "assimilation" and "accommodation." They
described accommodation as "The process of adjustment, that is, an organization of social relations and attitudes to prevent or to reduce conflict, to control competition, and to maintain a basis of security in the social order for persons and groups of divergent interests and types to carry on together their varied life-activities" (1970:360). Like assimilation, accommodation refers to an acculturative process, albeit a different one.

Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits's taxonomy does not have an exact match for accommodation. Their notion of 'adaptation' (1967:186) suggests a settled amalgam of two formerly distinct cultures, which ignores the 'in-process' nature of accommodation. 'Reaction' comes closer, adding the concept of oppression, which is left out of Park and Burgess's definition. Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits define 'reaction' as occasions where because of oppression, or because of the unforeseen results of the acceptance of foreign traits, contra-acculturative movements arise; these maintaining their psychological force (a) as compensations for an opposed or assumed inferiority, or (b) through the prestige which a return to older pre-acculturative conditions may bring to those participating in such a movement. (1967:186)

I will return to this notion of reaction at the end of this chapter to compare it with the idea of 'additive biculturalism'.

B. Marginality and the Culture Broker Model

Mark Grey felt that concept of marginality was useful for describing the intent of some ESL programs at Garden City High School (KS) as well as the social circumstances of many of the people he observed in that community (1991:76-77). Borrowing from him, I conclude that, as promoters of additive biculturalism, paras are confronting their own marginality and the marginality of their LEP students.
The term marginality helps with the description of paras' activities and circumstances.

Immigrants were first considered marginal people by Park in his essay "Human Migration and Marginal Man" (1928). In The Marginal Man (1961, original 1937), which was dedicated to Park, Stonequist developed the notion more fully. He described marginal people as those positioned between two or more cultures, and, because of that duality, not fully part of either. He further claimed that such amalgam identities if reproduced could ultimately emerge as new cultural identities (1961:220).

Though he noted that marginal identity was frequently a consequence of the mixing of two unequal cultural identities, Stonequist did not automatically equate marginality with subordinate social status. Some recent scholarship, however, does. 'Structural marginality', according to Billson, "refers to the political, social, and economic powerlessness of certain disenfranchised and/or disadvantaged segments within societies" (1988:185). Structural marginality represents a cross-fertilization of traditional notions of marginality with ideas of oppression and exploitation (Billson 1988:185). Mark Grey (1991) includes this notion of marginality in his claim that ESL programs often produce marginality.

Structural marginality can usefully describe paras' place within the school, LEP students in relation to the curriculum, and LEP residents in relation to the community and larger society. Typically, at school a para is not fully on the 'inside'; witness their consistent relegation to corridors, supply rooms, and converted closets as the architectural proof of their marginal status within a school's professional structures. Though it is not a term they use, structural marginality characterizes the secondary economic sector that Piore (1979), Broadway (1994), and Spener (1988) separately allude to, which is discussed in Chapter III.
Because of their emphasis on loci between groups, Stonequist's and Billson's notions of marginality naturally segue into a description of cultural brokerage. Figure 1 summarizes Wolf's (1956) culture broker model.

Wolf created the model as a mechanism to describe certain individuals that he regularly encountered in his extensive fieldwork in Mexico. They were: "Individuals who are able to operate both in terms of community-oriented and nation-oriented expectations...[Such people] become the economic and political 'brokers' of nation-community relations, a function which carries its own rewards" (1956:1072).

Figure 1: The Culture Broker (derived from Wolf 1956)

- Brokers are at the junction between local systems and the larger whole.
- Brokers serve as bridges between individuals of low hierarchical status whose priority is to stabilize or improve their life chances in their local world and higher-status, nation-oriented individuals who operate primarily in terms of the complex cultural forms standardized as national institutions (e.g., schools) but whose success is dependent on the size and strength of their local following.
- Brokers are familiar with the modus operandi of individuals in both groups that they mediate between.
- Brokers negotiate the inherent conflicts between their two constituencies without ever fully remedying them because to do so would eliminate the need for their own role.
- Brokers serve as buffers between groups which allows the tension between groups to persist.
- Brokers' positions are created as the result of historical circumstances, both local and national circumstances.
- Broker's positions require that there be a dependence by the local group on the larger system.

Transferring a model used to describe Mexican circumstances in the 1950s to circumstances in the American Midwest in the 1990s has its intrinsic perils, but the model's general orientation, that there is an anthropological relevance to "focusing our attention on the relationships between different groups operating on
different levels of society rather than on any of its isolated segments" (Wolf 1956:1074), is pertinent to the case of paras in Great Bend and KCK. It is also relevant to review Wolf's model here because Weiss (1994) used it as the centerpiece of his description of bicultural paras as brokers.

Strictly interpreted, it is difficult to apply Wolf's model to paras, or really to anybody, because one can always come up with an exception. But if one follows the precedence of other scholars, a loosely defined broker model can be applied to people in a number of circumstances. Kartunnen (1994) called historical figures like Sacajawea and Sarah Winnemucca brokers, though they were forced into their mediating role, which violates Wolf’s assumption that certain people choose to be brokers. Weiss's paras (1994) also did not meet all of Wolf's criteria because they were not actively attempting to preserve their broker role between specific individuals, but he called them brokers. In the same spirit, the paras I describe in the subsequent chapters can be called brokers, though I ultimately move beyond that label, not because it is inaccurate, but because it is incomplete.

C. The Concept of Multiple Membership

As with the brokers in Wolf's model (1956) and the marginal man described by Stonequist (1961), the bilingual paras have stakes in at least two distinct cultural domains. Hackenberg's (1993:14) definition of multiple identity/multiple group membership helps us understand the relevance of this dual membership in ways more explicit than the broker or marginal man models.

I coined the concept of multiple membership (Hackenberg 1985) to describe the increasing plurality of subjects of our inquiry who strategize about group membership rather than accept a categorical designation that conveys lifetime identity. Identity has become a variable to be assumed and manipulated and exchanged over time.
To illustrate how the idea of multiple membership plays out in practice, consider the example of the one Anglo para in my study. This para, who learned Spanish on mission trips in Guatemala, might presently consider himself a Kansan, evangelist, well-traveled local, interpreter, musician/singer, American, Christian, friend of Latinos, educator, and/or family man. While it is true that his social identity will partly be a product of societal forces that he cannot control, it is also true that he does have some power to represent himself within the parameters of one or several of the above identities. In other words, he has multiple memberships in different groups and he can change his identity by manipulating which of those group memberships he wants to use to represent himself.

This idea gets more nuanced and useful if we combine it with McFee's (1968) notion of concurrent identities of the same type. In "The 150% Man," McFee showed that biculturalism need not be a transitional status, which was the perspective of many of the scientists addressing this topic in the 1950s and 1960s (Voget 1950, 1951, 1952; Bruner 1956a, 1956b; Spindler 1955; and Downs 1966). These authors stated or implied that becoming more acculturated to some culture type somehow implied an equivalent subtraction in the amount of adherence to a previous culture type (which is in line with the definitions of assimilation already described). Using the Blackfeet of Montana as his example, McFee claimed that some people clearly gained new identities without shedding their old ones. They were adept at functioning in more than one cultural sphere in an ongoing way.

Jumping back, the categories I used in the Anglo para example are each qualitatively different. Kansan is a geographical identity, as is American, but the field of reference (state vs. nation) is changed, while Christian is a religious identity, educator is a professional one, and so forth. Using McFee's archetype of the
"150% Man," however, stable intracategory combinations can be described. For instance, a person can be Kansan and Missourian, or Latino and Anglicized.

My point for reviewing Hackenberg and McFee is to establish that in anthropological theory there are descriptions of individuals who have multiple, parallel, stable identities that they can manipulate. Stable bicultural identities are possible. A person can have distinct social identities within the same social category. Bicultural individuals can choose to follow the rules of one identity, the other, or both, according to a particular circumstance. This is the cultural equivalent of the sociolinguistic notion of code switching. Paras can manipulate multiple identities and they can promote the acquisition of multiple identities among the students and LEP parents they work with.

Hackenberg suggested that to study such behavior:

We need to reverse our field of vision. We need to research the structure of alternative strategies through which single individuals manipulate and participate in multiple systems of behavior, claiming different identities, advancing different arguments, asserting that there are several realities. We need to acquire a deeper understanding of the individual in order to know which identity, and which argument is advanced for which purpose, and in interaction with which others. (1993:15)

The concept of multiple membership is central to the explanation of how paras model bicultural identities. Indirectly, it also makes it possible for the paras to believe in the viability of promoting biculturalism in others.

Multiple membership provides an alternative to the notion of marginality, replacing being between two cultures (Stonequist 1961) with the idea of being of or in two cultures. Multiple membership also suggests that one can be culturally assimilated into a new group without the automatic loss of one's former cultural identity as traditional theories of assimilation require. Similarly, multiple membership provides an alternative to the idea of adaptation (Redfield, Linton, and
Herskovits 1967:186), suggesting that multicultural identity cannot always be described as an amalgam. None of the terms in the acculturation taxonomy of Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits, adequately incorporates the idea of multiple membership, but the idea is central to the next section.

D. ESL versus Bilingual Education: Finding a Motive for the Promotion of Biculturalism

Consideration of the debate about bilingual versus ESL education provides a heuristic for outlining and characterizing some of the various para practices. The first part of this section briefly reviews this debate for just that purpose. The second half of this section connects points from earlier in the chapter with consideration of the bilingual versus ESL debate to set up my definition of additive biculturalism.

David Ramirez (1991) led an eight-year, nine school district, longitudinal study that compared three types of English instruction programs for LEP students: (1) English-immersion programs, (2) early-exit bilingual programs, and (3) late-exit bilingual programs. In the first type, all instruction was in English. Often

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6Because they are used variably in the literature, I want to clarify how I am using the terms 'bilingual', 'ESL', and 'immersion'. Following the definitions of the General Accounting Office (1994:24-25), bilingual refers to two teaching formats, transitional and developmental, which include native language instruction along with English language instruction. Developmental bilingualism is bilingual instruction at each grade level, while transitional bilingual education (TBE) uses native language instruction only until the student has reached a predetermined threshold of English proficiency. Those programs for LEP students that only use English language in instruction are ESL or immersion programs. ESL typically refers to special language classes for LEP students only in which the instruction is all in English and in which there are often a range of native languages represented in the student body. Immersion refers to mainstream classroom activities which are modified (simpler language, frequent use of visuals) to be more comprehensible to LEP students. Often an in-class assistant will help the main instructor in immersion models. See Aleman (1993) for more discussion.
instructors were working with a cross section of LEP students, representing a number of first languages.

In the second type, early interactions with the LEP student were bilingual with the emphasis on using the student's native language to assist the student's acquisition of English as rapidly as possible. This second model was the transitional bilingual education (TBE) model that Spener (1988) used as his main frame of reference (and criticism). In that model, as soon as the student's English-proficiency reached a predetermined level, that student was mainstreamed, regardless of his/her other academic experience or accomplishment.

This contrasts with late-exit bilingual programs, the third model, where all curricular material for the grade-level was presented in both languages. This model corresponds with developmental bilingualism described by the General Accounting Office (1994:24). In late-exit bilingual programs there's a triple emphasis on learning English, gaining native-language literacy skills, and mastering curriculum content. Instruction in English proceeds more slowly in this model because that is not the only goal. The intent is to make sure students are not behind their grade-level peers in mastery of curriculum content.

These first two models (and ESL) are assimilationist because they locate long-term change entirely on one side, not asking the school system to be restructured in any enduring way. Though TBE temporarily uses native language instruction, neither it nor English immersion recognize or promote any intrinsic value of native language advancement or retention. These programs' single criterion for graduation is acquisition of the host society's language. Without modification, pull-out ESL models are similarly assimilationist.

Ramirez (1991) found that, in the long-term, students in the late-exit program had developed the best aptitude for acquiring English and that, in other
areas like math, they were ahead of similar formerly LEP students who had gone through different programs. In other words, the late-exit students were best equipped to learn. This squares with the findings of Hakuta (1986) and Ovando and Collier (1985). Of the three groups, the late-exit LEP students were the only ones to catch up with the achievement norms of first-language English speakers in their age- and grade-level cohort. One way to reconceptualize these findings is that, when the teaching model was at least partly bilingual and bicultural, LEP students were not disadvantaged.

The official district models the Kansas paras were supposed to follow resembled an amalgam of Ramirez's first two models—English immersion and TBE—which suggests that graduates of such programs would be behind grade level and marginalized, as Mark Grey found (1991). However, it follows from Ramirez that, to the extent the paras were able to approximate the third model, by working bilingually without a constant singular emphasis on English acquisition, the more pedagogically effective their instruction would be for their students.

The more comprehension assistance offered by paras in Spanish, and the more that paras' instruction focuses on something other than just language, the greater the potential educational value it will have for the LEP student. This conclusion seems more important if one adds Snow's findings (1992:17) that show that there is an interdependence between performance on first- and second-language tasks and that patterns of second-language skills often reflect conditions of acquisition.

Snow's work can be applied to the larger sociolinguistic environment rather than just the specific instructional interaction between a para and a LEP student. Snow (1992:18) and others have distinguished between the 'folk bilingualism' of immigrants, who by necessity acquire a second language (to some degree) from the
dominant culture they are newly surrounded by, and the 'additive bilingualism' of the elite who choose to pick up a second language through formal study or travel.

In the folk bilingualism model there are clear hierarchies of power and status separating the two languages, with the immigrant's original tongue at the low end. In that model, both the immigrant speakers who use the low-status language and the native-speakers who use the high-status tongue denigrate the daily use of the low-status language. In such a system, immigrant students' ability to retain and develop their native tongue is retarded, and it is not uncommon for a tension to develop between children and parents as the children are frustrated by their parents' stumblings in the adopted tongue.\(^7\) I witnessed both this parent-child tension and the simultaneous dependence on Spanish and denigration of Spanish by LEP residents in KCK when I was a bilingual literacy teacher there.

Snow's additive bilingual model, in contrast, does not have a power dynamic or subtractive quality to it. It describes the way acquisition of a foreign language is encouraged and realized among middle and upper-middle classes in the United States. Second language acquisition is seen as a useful talent or a mark of scholarly accomplishment, but it does not imply a loss of ability in one's first language.

Comparing folk bilingualism to additive bilingualism, one can see that folk bilingualism describes a cultural assimilation circumstance where second language acquisition is matched with first language loss. Additive bilingualism is more akin to the multiple membership model where ability to use a second language enhances or does not influence first language ability. Comparing the folk and additive models also

\(^7\)The pervasive existence of a language hierarchy between Spanish and English that resembles the 'folk bilingualism' model may explain why Veltman (1988) found that Spanish-speaking immigrants to the United States were learning English and forgetting Spanish faster than any other previous immigrant group had shed their native language.
shows that the specifics of the language learning process are secondary to the social meaning of knowing or not knowing a particular language or dialect.

Moll (1992) and some like-minded scholars (Garcia and Otheguy 1987) reject the importance of focusing on bilingual language development per se in the evaluation of the learning of LEP students. To them language acquisition is at best a means for a student to accomplish what is important (i.e., gaining reasoning skills or mastering content).

Garcia and Otheguy (1987) used language acquisition frameworks to organize their ethnographic analysis of Cuban-American private schools in Dade County, Florida, only to find that such models were insufficient to understand both the teachers' intentions and the actual practice. Garcia and Otheguy described some of their findings as follows:

These issues [of language acquisition] are not relevant at all to the people we interviewed. These community educators were only concerned about the best possible way of educating their own children. None of the schools focused solely on bilingualism or monolingualism as a goal. In fact, there was remarkably little interest in language questions. (1987:90, emphasis in original)

Once we see that language education policy is significant not so much because of the language acquisition process per se, but rather because of the social significance of knowing or not knowing various languages, we can then see how folk bilingualism describes a mid-point in an assimilative process that transcends issues of language. Folk bilingualism describes the language end of being assimilated at the bottom. Folk biculturalism would include both language and cultural assimilation though not necessarily structural assimilation (Gordon 1964). Billson would call this structural 'marginalization'. I call it 'folk biculturalism', because that reminds us of the folk bilingualism model which was our point of entée.
'Additive biculturalism' then would describe a process where acquisition of a new language and cultural literacy does not come at the expense of losing one's original identity. Additive biculturalism excludes Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits's (1967) notion of reaction because it excludes the existence of inequality and oppression between cultures.

Successfully realized, additive biculturalism transcends the marginality of being between two cultures (one is, instead, part of two cultures). To insert some terminology of the 1953 Social Science Research Council, additive biculturalism includes stable membership by an individual in more than one group in a society that can be characterized as having achieved stabilized pluralism. Stabilized pluralism refers to the arrested fusion of cultures, a halt to continued acculturation, while separate traits and characteristics still co-exist in the social environment (Barnett et al. 1954:990).

By definition, additive biculturalism removes the loss of cultural identity as a salient factor in the structural marginalization noted by Billson (1988). In this sense, it challenges Gordon's assertion that structural assimilation automatically includes cultural assimilation, unless one converts Gordon's definition of cultural assimilation to exclude the loss of original culture (which is a rather large leap). If additive biculturalism exists in the paras' social environment, then neither identity as an Anglo, identity as a Latino, nor the double identity of being bicultural, should be significant for predicting a person's place in the social order.

Figure 2 graphically summarizes this chapter, showing how additive biculturalism, assimilation, cultural brokerage, reaction, and amalgamation conceptually fit within the encompassing concept of acculturation.
Figure 2: Locating various concepts within the domain of acculturation

Note that I use the term amalgamation as a more descriptive substitute for Redfield, Linton, and Herskovits’s notion of adaptation. More importantly, note that I have shown structural assimilation as overlapping with additive biculturalism and partly outside the realm of assimilation. I did this to highlight my belief, which contradicts what Gordon (1964) claims is possible—that the paras seek structural assimilation for themselves and their LEP students without the implied loss of cultural identity assumed in Gordon’s definition of cultural assimilation. I have overlapped the culture brokerage bubble with the additive bilingualism bubble to represent that the two are not inconsistent with each other. I overlapped the reaction bubble with the additive bilingualism bubble to remind us that the paras adhere to additive biculturalism partly to resist the oppression implicit in the meeting of two socially unequal culture identities. I equate folk biculturalism with cultural assimilation and nest folk bilingualism within that double-named category. Similarly, I nest additive bilingualism within additive biculturalism.
III. The Frameworks Within Which the Paras Operate

Communities which form parts of a complex society can thus be viewed no longer as self-contained and integrated systems in their own right. It is more appropriate to view them as the local termini of a web of group relations which extend through intermediate levels from the level of a community to that of a nation. . . . Forced to understand the community in terms of forces impinging on it from the outside, we have also found it necessary to gain a better understanding of national-level institutions.

—Eric Wolf (1956: 1065)

We must be aware that a web of group relationships implies a historical dimension. Group relationships involve conflict and accommodation, integration and disintegration, processes which take place over time.

—Eric Wolf (1956: 1066)

Accurate consideration of the paras' roles requires attention to the social circumstances within which the paras function. Those circumstances have international, national, regional, state, and local dimensions, each of which have historic origins. To describe the paras' role as agents of additive biculturalism, forces me to situate the paras in historically informed sociocultural and economic contexts. That is the goal of this chapter.

The two communities in which I conducted my fieldwork—Great Bend and Kansas City, Kansas (KCK)—can be looked at from a number of perspectives. Both places are changing as the result of a substantial influx of Spanish-speaking LEP immigrants. In that capacity, both communities reflect the international play of push and pull phenomena that direct the movement and relocation of millions of people. Great Bend and KCK are within the territorial boundaries of the United States and, as such, are subject to federal law and to nationwide social forces. Both communities are part of the Midwest, a region which has been Anglo-dominated for more than one hundred years, and which hosts economies that have long revolved around agriculture, food processing, transportation, and relatively low-wage manufacturing. Both communities are in the state of Kansas and are thus subject to the same state laws and to statewide formats of political and educational organization.
Thus both are subject to the state's policy for LEP students to ultimately be mainstreamed and to the state's willingness to provide extra funding for support of specialized education efforts for LEP students.

There are, of course, differences between Great Bend and KCK. So even though what the paras actually do in each place is similar, particularly within the schools, one should still acknowledge that there are relevant, circumstantial differences at a local level. The para roles were created by local districts, albeit within state and federal parameters, in response to local needs, local wants, local resources, and local demographics. The bilingual paras' roles cannot be seen apart from all these circumstances, so those circumstances are described as concisely as possible in the following sections.

A. The Macroscopic Forces of Attraction and Mobility

The paras' environment both in and out of school is shaped by the play of economic forces that draw LEP immigrants to those communities. The assimilationist forces that the paras counter and convert are a product of the U.S. economy's socially mediated demand for an 'expendable' labor sector.

A primary role for immigrants in modern, post-industrial countries is to serve as a buffer between the domestic population, specifically the native-born working class, and the effects of periodic downturns in the economy. (Spener 1988:138)

To adequately situate the paras strategies and actions requires some explanation of the changing demographics and persisting hierarchies in the places they serve. Such an explanation includes the macro-socioeconomic forces that shape migration and the treatment of laborers and their families. This section identifies several such forces and outlines their interaction.
Both Great Bend and KCK, as well as several other Kansas communities, are host to what Tienda and Fielding (1987) called "Mexican-typed" jobs, where workers of Mexican origin are disproportionately overrepresented (suggesting labor recruiting networks). In such jobs, wages are lower than in comparable types of work, where Mexican-origin laborers are underrepresented (Tienda and Lii 1987).

Another component of these Mexican-typed jobs is that they tend to offer better job protection for Mexican-origin workers during times of economic difficulty than do jobs where Mexicans are underrepresented, though, that said, Mexican-typed jobs still have a high turnover. Cornelius' (1989:4) observation that, "[Immigrant labor] can be brought on board quickly when needed in periods of peak product or service demand and disposed of just as easily when demand slackens," also seems to be true of these jobs.

Tienda, Fielding, Lii, and Cornelius are all describing the manifestations for people of Mexican origin of the economic model described by dual system theory (Piore 1979). Dual system theory posits that the U.S. economy can by divided into two sectors, the primary sector and the secondary sector. In the primary sector, jobs are salaried and stable, and an employee's educational status correlates with the rank and compensation of his/her job position. Because capitalist economies are inherently cyclic, the primary sector has created an expendable, lower-wage secondary sector which can be expanded in boom times and reduced during busts. This protects the primary sector from all but the sharpest fluctuations.

Those who accept work in the secondary sector usually do so either because it provides a useful wage while they derive their primary identity from some other source or activity (e.g., student or housewife) or, despite the sector's flaws, because it still promises economic opportunities better than other ones available to them. This latter instance is common for those who emigrate from places without fully
mature market economies (e.g., Mexico), where the choice is between working for subsistence or migrating to a place where wage labor is available.

It should be noted that there are some flaws with dual system theory. It's division between primary and secondary is too neat to fully reflect reality. Portes (1985) has described the Cuban enclave economy of Miami as fitting in neither the primary or secondary category, so he describes enclave economies as a third category. Wolf's (1956) culture brokers fit between the primary and secondary sectors; so they too are not adequately described by the dual system model. Nonetheless, dual system theory remains a convenient shorthand for speaking in general terms about most of the economy. Such a shorthand is particularly useful when my point is not to get bogged down in a nuanced description of the immigrant economy, but rather to speak of economic factors as salient background to the thrust of the thesis.

I use the model here because it emphasizes the economic vulnerability most LEP laborers confront as well as how their educational attainment levels are not salient predictors of job quality or security. I think the term secondary economic sector more accurately conveys the abundance of low security job opportunities, then does a term like marginal, which implies not normal. The primary sector description serves equally well to describe the job security and connection between position and educational attainment that marks the professional world of the school.

Historically, in the United States, secondary-sector jobs have been filled by women, youth, African Americans and rural and foreign immigrants. Because gains of the Civil Rights era have raised the expectations of many women and African-Americans, the number of available workers from traditional sources, other than foreign immigrants, has become limited. So the secondary economy continues to pull workers from other countries.
As long as their expectations are low, dropouts and those otherwise underserved by the U.S. education system are also potential secondary-sector employees. Spener (1988) alleges that the dominant education models for LEP students (i.e., English-immersion, ESL, and TBE) intentionally 'prepare' them for jobs in the secondary economy by leaving them incompletely proficient in both English and their native tongues and behind their grade level in other content areas. Spener says that if there are too many applicants for primary-sector jobs, the educational standard for acceptance into those categories must be raised for adequate winnowing of numbers.

The two providers of secondary-sector Mexican-type jobs that fit Tienda and Fielding's model (1987) in Great Bend are the Great Bend Packing Company and a cleaning company that contracts with the packing plant to clean that facility during the early morning third shift. Spanish-speaking residents in KCK are over-represented in envelope and flashlight assembly jobs, tortilla factories, and custodial work in office buildings in Johnson County, Kansas, and Kansas City, Missouri. High turnover in all these jobs is characteristic of secondary-sector employment (Piore 1979); it is also a logical outcome of the temporary (often repetitive) migrations of Mexicans who are seeking to accumulate capital that is unavailable to them in Mexico's limited-access, immature market (Stark 1991).

The turnover in jobs as well as the intentional temporariness of many migrations makes many immigrants highly mobile. This subjects the schools where the workers' children are enrolled to the consequences of the frequent arrival and departure of LEP students and the chaos that implies for attempts to offer planned comprehensive educational services (General Accounting Office 1994). For paras and other instructors in the building, the challenge of educating students who are already 'at-risk' (because of their LEP-status and, frequently,
their poverty) is compounded by the fact that the students arrive as strangers who have a mixture of educational experiences that may not articulate with the curriculum of their new school. The one-to-one contact and the shared language between the paras and students uniquely situates the paras to respond to the above challenges.

An additional observation by Tienda (1989:110) about Mexican migration patterns in the United States is also relevant to the cases of Great Bend and KCK. Tienda notes that economic factors, such as lack of access to property and capital in sending communities (in Mexico) and labor recruiting practices in host countries, often activate migrant streams. Within a generation, however, those factors' causal power declines in significance in relation to social forces that perpetuate the influx and more occasional departure of immigrants. Factors like reunification of families grow in importance.

Measuring along this chart of migration-stream maturity, clearly Mexican immigration to KCK has gone on longer than to Great Bend, and it is more embedded and thus less vulnerable to significant alteration. KCK has attracted enough Mexican immigrants for long enough that the migrant stream of LEP Mexicans into that community should be described as self-perpetuating. Great Bend is likely to continue to attract immigrants as long as the pork-processing plant remains as a significant source of secondary sector jobs—jobs which do not attract many local workers (Piore 1979; Broadway 1994).

This means schools in both Great Bend and KCK can continue to anticipate the arrival of more LEP, Spanish-speaking students. In Great Bend, the immigrant-receiving schools' demographics will be more vulnerable to the vagaries of the local economy, particularly the continued functioning of the Great Bend Packing Company.
B. The National Political Context: The Debate About Immigrant Education

The international play of migration-inducing factors has a disproportionate impact on a few social institutions in the receiving country. Schools are one such institution. Not surprisingly then, the domestic debates about immigration policy are quite often domestic debates about the cost of immigrant education, the appropriateness of immigrant students' access to schooling, and the preferable pedagogical strategies for immigrant students (particularly if they are LEP). While migration decisions may be responses to complex social and economic factors, the consequences of such decisions are often played out at schools in the presence of bilingual paras.

In 1990, President Bush signed Executive Order 12729, "Educational Excellence for Hispanic-Americans." While 'LEP', 'immigrant', and 'Hispanic-American' are overlapping rather than synonymous terms, the recommendations of Section 4 of that order are relevant to this thesis. That section advocates for the removal of barriers to Hispanic-American educational success, notably LEP-status. "Particular emphasis shall be given to: enhancing parental involvement; promoting early childhood education; removing barriers to success in education and work, particularly limited proficiency in the English language" (Bush 1990:39389). In other words, while briefly embracing several strategies, the report insisted on some form of linguistic acculturation.

Looking at the category-by-category specifications and funding totals in the Emergency Immigrant Education Act allocations and the larger Title VII Bilingual Education Act allocations (Aleman 1993), one can see that the school-based acculturation of immigrant students that is federally funded has become increasingly assimilationist. This is so because only one side of the LEP-student/Anglo-school interface is being asked to change—the LEP student side. The Title VII allocations, excepting perhaps the family literacy funding, is all for TBE, ESL, or English-
immersion pedagogies. The models include no contingency for native language
development or preservation and no mechanism to support an LEP student's native
culture.

The present national discussion of public education for immigrant students
(documented and undocumented) is loud and contentious. Florida recently sued the
federal government to cover $1.5 billion for the cost of serving immigrants.
Seventy percent of that claimed estimated cost was for education (Diegmueller

Some California voters, supported by Governor Pete Wilson, placed a "Save
Our State" ballot initiative on the November 1994 ballot which was to deny illegal
immigrants access to public schools and other institutions (Harp 1994:18). That
initiative, which has been approved but not yet implemented because of legal appeals,
directly challenges the 1982 Plyer vs. Doe Supreme Court decision. According to
the court's decision, because of the equal protection clause of the 14th Amendment,
school personnel cannot question students about their legal status nor deny services
to any student they know lacks documentation. If California's challenge is successful,
then school personnel, including paras, would be responsible for identifying
undocumented students, reporting them to the Immigration and Naturalization
Service (INS), and denying them services.

Efforts to enforce the laws that protect the rights of immigrant students have
grown at the same time the popular resistance to immigrant education has also
grown. Under the direction of Norma V. Cantu, a former lawyer for the Mexican
American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), the Department of Educa-
tion's Office of Civil Rights (OCR) is investigating a record number of school
districts concerning possible failure to offer intelligible instruction to LEP
(including many immigrant) students as required by Title VI of the 1964 Civil
Rights Act (Schnaiberg 1994b:17). The standards to which Ms. Cantu wants districts held were outlined in the 1974 *Lau vs. Nichols* Supreme Court decision, which declared that LEP students had the same right to meaningful education as any other students.

Ms. Cantu's efforts show that it would be misleading to claim that only anti-immigrant and assimilationist voices are involved in the school policy debates about immigrants. The National Coalition of Advocates for Students (1988) vociferously insists that schools be responsive to immigrant student needs. In general, practically all advocates of multicultural education recognize a need for curriculum and instruction to respond to the heritages, learning styles, and experiences of immigrant students, but these voices are contrarian and not well represented in much recent policy.

Figure 3 provides some sense of the number of non-native English speakers in the country, including those who are LEP and of school age.

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<th>1990 U.S. Census Data—Nationwide presence of LEP residents and students</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>230,445,777</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31,844,979</td>
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<tr>
<td>13,982,502</td>
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<tr>
<td>2,388,243</td>
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<td>15,216,298</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3,596,267</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7,716,795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,150,203</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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*Because it is more often the politically preferred term, 'Latino' is used throughout this document in lieu of 'Hispanic', 'Hispanic-American', 'Chicano', or any other term. An exception is made in direct quotations or when referring to a specific document which uses different terminology.*
The effort to deny undocumented immigrant students access to schooling is part of a larger popular distaste for providing all immigrant students more than rudimentary school opportunities. Such services that are federally supported (and many that are state funded) tend to be assimilationist in perspective, though, as noted by Spener (1988) and Cummins (1993), the assimilation that is offered tends not to include structural assimilation. The primary consequence is marginalization between two cultures (and often between languages) or 'assimilation at the bottom'.

C. The Political and Educational Response in Kansas to the Immigration of LEP Students

Perhaps because the present immigrant influx into Kansas does not threaten the majority status of the Anglo population, the debate about immigrant education in the state has been more muted. In the last two years, Kansas has created one of the best-funded education programs for LEP students in the country, though it too is assimilation-oriented. In addition to the $3,600 per enrolled student that districts automatically get from the state, they get an additional 20 percent ($740) allowance for each student identified as LEP and enrolled in an appropriate bilingual or ESL program.

According to the formula for special ESL/bilingual funding, which is based on full-time-equivalency (FTE), the greater the amount of specialized instruction a LEP student receives, the larger the portion of the $740/student that the district becomes eligible for—e.g., a district that offers LEP students 30 minutes of special
instruction per week will receive less per student than a district which offers two hours.9

The local response to the new funding formula has varied. Many districts in southeast Kansas continue to insist that they have no LEP students despite Census Bureau and anecdotal evidence to the contrary (Hamann 1993). On the other hand urban districts, meatpacking towns, and some rural western Kansas communities have responded enthusiastically to the funding opportunity. (See Map 5: Kansas Districts with State-funded LEP Programs, on p. 47.) Some districts are eligible for nearly a million dollars of additional aid. Both the muted responses and the enthusiastic ones seem to have occurred without much public debate.

The new formula stipulates that the special instruction for LEP students must be from a qualified instructor. In section 72-9501.(f) of Kansas' Article 95 - Bilingual Education law, a qualified instructor is defined as:

a person employed by a school district for its bilingual education program10 who is: (1) a teacher qualified to instruct LEP pupils as determined by standards established by the state board and who is so certified and endorsed by the state board; or (2) a paraprofessional qualified to assist certificated teachers in the instruction of LEP pupils as determined by standards established by the state board and who is so approved by the state board.

In other words, LEP students can be taught by certified and endorsed teachers or by paras who are (nominally or strictly) under a certified instructor's supervision. In Great Bend and KCK, the paras served under the principal (who in each case was a certified instructor), not under a classroom teacher.

---

9Note that the state law makes no distinction between bilingual education and ESL education. There are differences between the two, however, which is why KSBE recognizes separate teacher endorsements in the two categories.
10"Bilingual education program" here refers to any kind of special program for LEP students, be it truly bilingual or some form of English-immersion.
In section 72-9504 of the new law, the function of the Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE) as an overseeing agent is defined. Part (a) charges the board to, "Prescribe and adopt criteria and procedures for assessment and identification of limited English proficient pupils including identification of the specific educational deficiencies of such pupils" (emphasis added).

What deficiencies means is somewhat clarified in the law's next section. Part (b) of section 72-9504 asks KSBE to,

establish standards and criteria for procedures, activities and services to be provided in a program to develop the English language skills and to reduce the educational deficiencies of limited English proficient pupils including entry and exit procedures based on English language proficiency" (emphasis added).

This section confirms the deficit model orientation of the previous section and it explicitly seeks to measure success according to the dominant group's language.

This law is assimilationist in that it specifies change for one side (the LEP student) and it measures success according only to the criteria of gained proficiency in that dominant culture's language. While there may be space in the law to allow 'qualified instructors' to lead a range of classroom practices, what the law actually specifies is assimilationist. The same law that identifies paras as qualified instructors of LEP students intends such instructors to be agents of assimilation.

The history of KSBE-approved teacher certification programs also hints at an assimilationist perspective (which may be changing) at KSBE and at several of the state's universities. Three Kansas universities offer ESL endorsements—Fort Hays State University, Emporia State University, and the University of Kansas. Additionally, Emporia State University offers training and endorsement for bilingual education, though, as of February 1995, this program had yet to produce any graduates. The primary difference between the two kinds of endorsement is that a bilingual endorsement requires coursework in a second language. As of the summer
of 1994, the University of Kansas, MacPherson College, and Wichita State University had applications pending with the state to get permission to offer bilingual education endorsements, while Kansas State University, Wichita State University, and MacPherson College had similar applications pending for ESL endorsement programs.
IV. Field Methodology

According to Kathryn Borman (1992:28), the task of the community-situated ethnographer of education is "to analyze the tensions and/or harmonies between educational institutions and community values." I chose to study paras because they, perhaps better than anyone else in the school building, were positioned almost exactly between the Spanish-speaking community and the school community (which in many ways reflected the larger, dominant, Anglo community).

I formally observed six bilingual paras in three schools in two communities on a total of 20 occasions. Those observations were supplemented by interactions I had with the paras outside of school and several years of living in one of the same multilingual communities as the paras. While the number of paras observed and formal time doing fieldwork are small, the next chapters demonstrate that they are enough to challenge the sufficiency of Weiss' (1994) characterization of paras as culture brokers and they are enough to support tentative generalizations about the activities and roles of bilingual paras. Despite differing work environments and personalities, there were commonalities in the paras' strategies, practices, and agendas.

While reiterating my faith in my findings, I must also report that this study does not have the methodological fluidity of a more conventional research effort. It is an amalgam of connected miniature research efforts, which for reasons of timing and budget were individually limited. Much of my best access to information occurred under the valid guise of doing something else (e.g., being a TA for a course in Great Bend). One result of this research history is that it is not always possible here to keep the telling cohesive.
Good ethnographic research is multi-layered, combining evidence from a variety of sources and thus compensating for the intrinsic weaknesses of any particular research strategy. I observed and interacted with paras, including shadowing them, and subsequently reflected on those observations in my fieldnotes. I used audiotapes to record classroom discussions and formal interviews, and I gathered a number of site documents from both school districts (USD 428—Great Bend, and USD 500—KCK), from my students in a KCK bilingual literacy class, from participants in an applied linguistics class in Great Bend, from AHaRA, which is a fledging Latino community agency in Great Bend that I helped establish, and from the Kansas State Board of Education (KSBE). As the rest of this chapter will show, some of my research was only minimally intrusive, like my review of site documents, while in other cases my presence clearly biased the behavior I observed or the answers I received.

This thesis is a product both of formal field research in Great Bend and KCK and of information gathered while working on other projects in those two communities. The shadowing literally involved following six different paras around throughout their daily routines, trying to see what they saw and trying to document what they did. (For other examples of shadowing, see Sizer (1984, 1990) and Olson (1994).) Most of this was conducted in schools, but it also included accompanying the paras on a few home visits. The shadowing activity was complemented by several arranged interviews with paras and other school personnel, by the gathering of site documents, and by the transcription of audio tapes of class meetings in Great Bend for an applied linguistics course which enrolled one para, plus the building principal, a Kindergarten teacher, and a high school ESL instructor whose husband served on the AHaRA board.
I observed all the paras who were working in Great Bend during the time of my study and I observed the two KCK paras who were working in the elementary schools in the neighborhood where the bilingual literacy program that I was leading was based. Observing these two KCK paras had the double dividend of providing insight into the para experience and allowing me to become more familiar with the schools which hosted the children of the adults in my bilingual parent literacy program. The KCK paras I observed were typical in the sense that they were bilingual in Spanish and English and thus best positioned to serve the largely Spanish-speaking LEP student population in KCK and their language proficiency was like the majority of the KCK paras (four of six at the time).

I worked three times on a contract basis with KSBE, first as an ethnographer in KCK (Hamann 1992), then as the final evaluator of the state's use of a three-year Title VII State Education Agency (SEA) Bilingual Education Grant (Hamann 1993), and finally as an instructional assistant for a staff development program in 1994. For the Title VII evaluation, I reviewed 1990 census data and made a site visit to Chanute, Kansas, in the southeastern part of the state, to investigate the discrepancy between that district's number of identified LEP students and the number of language minority youth counted by the census.

For each of these three projects I accompanied the KSBE program specialist who was charged with enforcing compliance with ESL/bilingual education guidelines on his visits with superintendents, principals, and instructors. I was witness to the interaction between the state government and local school districts as they pertained to the affairs of LEP students and their educators. I also learned what kinds of data relevant to this report were available through various channels at the state level.

My formal research efforts were complemented by other experiences I had in each community. For the latter I engaged in after-the-fact notetaking on my
interactions with paras and other members of the school and language minority communities in situations where my primary purpose was not research for this thesis (e.g., when I was teaching the LEP adults in my bilingual parent literacy program in KCK). As a participant in various community activities that included the paras, I developed some intuition about how the paras, other school personnel, and members of the Spanish-speaking community functioned and thought. This intuition served as a check for my formal analysis; if a preliminary conclusion felt 'wrong', I would reconsider my analysis, looking for oversights.

Rather than organize the description of my research methodology according to whether I gathered data through formal research methods or as a consequence of other activities in the community, it seemed more consistent to outline my involvement in each community with the community's name as the heading, including how I functioned there as an ethnographer and in other capacities.

A. Great Bend/AHORA

Between September 1993 and June 1994, I visited Great Bend 12 times. The duration of the visits ranged from half-a-day to a week. The total tally of days 'onsite' was 22, 11 of which included activity observing four different paras at their school and the rest of which included working with or just seeing the paras apart from the school environment. (Each visit to Great Bend included at least one meeting with at least one para.) I also made dozens of phone calls and communicated by mail and fax on several occasions with several people. Approximately half of that activity was explicitly related to this study, while the other half had to do with proposal-writing on behalf of AHORA, participation in AHORA-sponsored activities, and coordinating the logistics of the class I taught there.
During the spring of 1994, I was the discussion leader for a group of educators from Great Bend for a class called 'Language Assessment for the Limited English Proficient Students in Kansas Public Schools.' This applied linguistics course was taught collaboratively by KSBE, the University of Kansas, and Fort Hays (KS) State University as part of the state's Title VII/Chapter 1 program improvement effort. Three of the four students in the discussion section worked at the Great Bend elementary school, which hosted the bulk of the district's immigrant student population. One of these three students was a bilingual para, another was the building principal, and the third was a Kindergarten teacher. Except for one meeting in Dodge City, all the discussion sessions met at their elementary school. I have transcripts of each of these classes, as well as a copy of the group's final project, which was a school-district-supported survey of home literacy practices (in English and/or Spanish) of parents of LEP students (Giner et al. 1994).

Complementing my research at the elementary school, I also spent two days observing the ESL instructor at Great Bend High School. Through her I met a number of the older LEP students and interacted with them outside the classroom. I was in Great Bend long enough to recognize various patterns of behavior, though there are some research limitations in this study caused by the relative brevity of my total time there. The paras in Great Bend functioned similarly to the paras I knew and observed in KCK and in ways comparable to the paras described by Weiss (1994).

B. Kansas City, Kansas/Harvest America

I conducted the explicitly ethnographic research of KCK paras in 1992, under a 100-hour contract between Harvest America (my full-time employer at the time) and KSBE. It involved nine visits totaling 25 hours of direct observation of two bilingual paras, as well as interviews with the paras' coordinator at the district
level and the collection of several site documents. My research was conducted with the official permission of the USD 500 school district, but it should be noted that it was requested and funded by an entity with legal oversight over the district (i.e., KSBE). The district itself did not seek my services.

From 1991 to 1993 I also worked as the coordinator and lead instructor of an experimental bilingual parent literacy program\(^{11}\) for Harvest America, a Latino-oriented social services agency. In the capacity as an instructor, away from USD 500 personnel and facilities, I often talked with Spanish-speaking parents about their children’s schools and education. Naturally, we talked frequently about the paras and certified teachers who worked with their children. I consider such conversation an integral component of my informal fieldwork in the community.

In one of the schools where I observed a para, I also volunteered as a tutor/mentor to an Anglo third grader and an Anglo fifth grader in a program that the bilingual para and her principal had initiated. Thus, I visited the school roughly three times a month, for an hour per visit, from March 1992 until July 1993. While the purpose of those visits was not formally part of my research, the visits did provide an ongoing means to become familiar with the school environment in which one of the paras worked. During those visits, on several occasions the para sought me out to update me on one of her projects or just to chat.

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\(^{11}\)The literacy program was a test of the National Council of La Raza’s (NCLR’s) Family Reading Curriculum aimed at helping non-literate, LEP, Spanish-speaking parents develop literacy skills in English and Spanish. Family Reading was one of six NCLR models that were part of its Project EXCEL (Excellence in Community Educational Leadership) program. The point of Project EXCEL was to help Latinos succeed in school while maintaining or cultivating a healthy respect for one’s Latino identity (Orum 1991). The Project EXCEL agenda matched the agenda of the bilingual paras in many ways.
V. The Research Sites

Mark Grey (1991) wondered how extendible his findings from Garden City High School were to other schools and other communities. I asked the same question about the two environments where I studied. I found that though there are important differences between Great Bend and KCK as communities, what goes on in their school buildings is quite similar. The point of this chapter is to summarize the social and historical realities that shaped the specific environments that the paras I observed worked in. By describing where and why there are LEP Latinos in various parts of Kansas, the first section also hints at where else in the state the findings of this thesis may be applicable.

A. Two Kansas Realities: The Sociodemographic and Historical Contexts of Anglo vs. Latino

The point of this section is to show where and under what context bilingual paras mediate between the Anglo school culture and the low-income Spanish-speakers in several parts of Kansas. The following Census information shows the number of Hispanic Kansans and the number of LEP Kansans, including the number who are of school age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 4</th>
<th>1990 U.S. Census Data—LEP residents and Hispanic residents of Kansas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,477,574</td>
<td>Total population of Kansas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90,289</td>
<td>Of Hispanic origin (21.7% of Kansas Hispanics were foreign born)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74,773</td>
<td>Of Mexican origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14,919</td>
<td>Mexico-born Kansas population (2X more than any other country)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18,206</td>
<td>Hispanics age 5 to 17 enrolled in school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,289,615</td>
<td>Kansans age 5 and over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>62,059</td>
<td>Age 5 and over that speak Spanish at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23,574</td>
<td>Age 5 and over speak Spanish but do not speak English 'very well'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

53.7% of Kansas Hispanics speak a language other than English at home.
Kansas is predominantly Anglo; in the 1990 census 90.1 percent of the state described itself as 'white' (Helyar 1991). In urban areas like Topeka, Kansas City, and Wichita and in a few other places, there is also a significant African-American population, but the differences between white and black are not that relevant for the activities of the bilingual paras, so they are ignored here.

Though approximately half of the Latinos in Kansas are not LEP or Spanish-dominant, it is pertinent to note the total number of Latinos in Kansas because Latino identity is a significant variable that guides some para actions. As Figure 4 showed, 3.6 percent of the Kansas' population identified themselves as Hispanic in the 1990 Census (90,289 people). Thirty-nine of the state's 110 counties have 250 or more Hispanics; seventeen have more than 1,000; five have more than 7,000 (Finney, Johnson, Sedgwick, Shawnee, and Wyandotte). People of Mexican origin form the vast majority of the state's Hispanic population.

Spanish-speakers form the largest group of non-English speakers in the state. The 1990 census revealed that 62,059 Kansans speak Spanish at home. That number and the other tallies in Figure 4 are likely undercounts because they exclude children under five, they do not include the last five years of immigration (since 1990), and because many recently immigrated Latinos are highly mobile and/or without proper papers and thus would have intentionally or unwittingly missed the census bureau officer charged with counting them. Also limited English proficiency was self-reported rather than formally assessed, so its accuracy is questionable.

Map 5 shows all the school districts in Kansas. The districts that have LEP students and intend to use paras to teach them in 1994-95 are shaded. USD 428 (Great Bend) and USD 500 (KCK), are blackened. All of the Kansas districts that sought extra state funding for teaching LEP students plan to do so with the assistance of paras, though not all of those paras are bilingual or bicultural.
Map 5: Kansas School Districts with State-funded LEP Programs in 1994-1995
(according to records at Kansas State Board of Education)
Figure 6: Estimated number of LEP students and instructional personnel (K-12) to serve them by Kansas school district. (1)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School district</th>
<th>District #</th>
<th>Estimated number of LEP students for 1994-1995</th>
<th>Intended number of paraprofessionals (2)</th>
<th>Number of FTE ESL/bilingual endorsed certified teachers (3)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wichita</td>
<td>#259</td>
<td>1612</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>31.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KCK</td>
<td>#500</td>
<td>1300</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garden City</td>
<td>#457</td>
<td>900</td>
<td>49.5</td>
<td>60.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal</td>
<td>#480</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emporia</td>
<td>#253</td>
<td>456</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dodge City</td>
<td>#443</td>
<td>444</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shawnee Mission</td>
<td>#512</td>
<td>364</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>28.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topeka</td>
<td>#501</td>
<td>170</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUmet Plains</td>
<td>#483</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lawrence</td>
<td>#497</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stanton Co.</td>
<td>#452</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olathe</td>
<td>#233</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leavenworth</td>
<td>#453</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great Bend</td>
<td>#428</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ulysses</td>
<td>#214</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sublette</td>
<td>#374</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salina</td>
<td>#305</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blue Valley</td>
<td>#229</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derby</td>
<td>#260</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junction City</td>
<td>#475</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leoti</td>
<td>#467</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hugoton</td>
<td>#210</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winfield</td>
<td>#465</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rolla</td>
<td>#217</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satanta</td>
<td>#507</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goodland</td>
<td>#352</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hays</td>
<td>#489</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lakin</td>
<td>#215</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Turner</td>
<td>#202</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elkhart</td>
<td>#218</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MacPherson</td>
<td>#418</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Scott Co.</td>
<td>#466</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

N/A = Information not on file.

(1) According to plans filed with the KSBE in June of 1994.

(2) Districts seem to have used different interpretations of what this meant as they filled out their applications for state funding for services for LEP students. For instance, some districts marked half or a third of a paraprofessional to be used at a specific school because the position was part time or because a single para was serving in several buildings. Other districts used only whole numbers for each building giving them an apparently exaggerated total when the intended number of paras is really lower. Also, unlike the bilingual paras described in this thesis, not all of the paras that will serve in Kansas in 1994-95 are bilingual. In several cases, monolingual regular or special ed instructional aides are going to work one-on-one with an LEP student. Such a strategy is eligible for state funding, though the benefits would most likely not match the benefits for LEP students who receive assistance from bilingual, bicultural paras.

(3) As per state guidelines, this figure includes both endorsed teachers and teachers who have a continuing education plan for endorsement on file with the state.
Figure 6 names all the districts that sought state funding in 1994-95 to pay paras to assist with LEP students. The districts involved are listed in declining order of estimated number of LEP students for the 1994-95 school year. The numbers represent projections made during the spring of 1994 and submitted to KSBE.

The demographically significant Mexican influence on modern Kansas and thus on Kansas schooling began in the early part of this century when several thousand of those dislocated by the economic changes of the Porfiriato and the violence of the Mexican Revolution arrived in the state. Those immigrants found work in the urban meatpacking industry, along the railroads (particularly as track maintenance workers), and in factories. In KCK they settled in many of the neighborhoods to which subsequent Latino immigrants continue to come.

During this century, there has also been a substantial seasonal agricultural migration of Latinos into Kansas (mostly from Mexico and Texas). They came (and some continue to come) to pick sugar beets, strawberries, and apples, and to 'rogue' (to weed) and to provide other forms of agricultural labor. Many of those migrants have 'settled out' and now are permanent residents or citizens of Kansas. The significance of these agricultural migrations has varied as the history of Kansas agriculture has varied. Many of the community agencies that serve Spanish-speaking Kansans, like Harvest America, were first set up to respond to the particular needs of these agricultural migrants. Also many school districts' ESL and bilingual programs were set up to serve migrant farmworkers. Historically, these programs have been funded with state and federal monies rather than with local taxes.

New Latino immigrants do similar work as their predecessors with four significant changes that effect their settlement patterns. (1) The railroad jobs are mostly gone, so the historic correspondence between the geographic location of
Latinos and the existence of a rail line is becoming less significant. It has not disappeared, however. Based on an informal survey of LEP adult literacy students in KCK, riding freight trains continues to be a route into the state. (2) Technology change and the tapping of the Ogallala aquifer, permitting the growth of irrigated crops, has ended sugar beet cultivation in western Kansas, so there is less migrant agricultural work there (Broadway 1994). (3) Most significantly, meatpacking has relocated from major urban areas, like KCK, to smaller communities like Garden City (Broadway 1994; Stull, et al. 1990; Stull, Broadway, and Erickson 1992), Liberal, and Great Bend. And (4) new immigrants are finding new types of secondary-sector economic jobs (e.g., flash-light and envelope assembly).

Because of the economic opportunities they present to LEP immigrants, newly opened meatpacking plants have quickly rewritten the demographics of several Kansas communities as well as those of many small towns in nearby states (Broadway 1994). Great Bend's transformation from having virtually no LEP Spanish-speakers ten years ago to having almost a thousand now is being repeated in chicken-processing towns, eggpacking towns, beefpacking towns, and pork-processing towns across Nebraska, Kansas, Oklahoma, Missouri, Iowa, and Arkansas. One immigrant explained he could earn eight times more money as a

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12Formal definitions of who is and who is not a migrant get a little sketchy because various people and government agencies use the term in different ways. According to the U.S. Department of Education, anyone who has moved in the last five years because of agriculturally related work (including meatpacking and other types of food processing) is considered a migrant. Schools that serve such an individual are eligible for special federal funds. However, most other federal agencies include only those who work in the fields (and their children) as migrants. Further, if a migrant has been 'settled out' for a year or more, such an individual is no longer officially considered a migrant. (From an interview with Amanda Johnson, former Director of the Migrant Farmworker Project of Legal Aid of Western Missouri.)

13In an excellent piece on change in Rogers, Arkansas, in Education Week, Lynn Schnaiberg (1994a) described some of the consequences for that town's schools caused by the opening of a poultry-processing plant nearby which had attracted a number of LEP laborers. Namely, the district has recently scrambled to find bilingual paras who can mediate
meatpacker in the Midwest than if he stayed in Mexicali (Mexico) working as a shoe repairman (Kamen 1992).

Schnaiberg (1994a) calls this influx of LEP speakers into rural communities 'Immigration's final frontier'. Map 5 (p. 47) and Figure 6 (p. 48) show where in Kansas the most significant impacts of this influx are occurring. One can infer from the map the ongoing relative preponderance of low-wage, piecework, and manufacturing jobs (e.g., flashlight assembly) in Midwestern cities continue to draw LEP immigrants to several Midwestern urban centers including KCK and Wichita.

B. Great Bend

Like many towns across the heartland, Great Bend, Kansas, is rapidly changing. Two hours west of Wichita, the county seat of Barton County has lost roughly a tenth of its population since the oil economy went bust more than ten years ago. In contrast to the dominant trend, LEP Latinos have been arriving in large numbers to work at a recently expanded pork-processing facility and the cleaning company which services it. With an average of 400 meatpacking and related job opportunities as the primary draw (Thacker 1994a), newcomers also explain their arrival in Great Bend as a way to get away from the economic misery of Mexico and California and from the street violence of Los Angeles and Chicago. Several dozen LEP Latino migrant farmworkers also stay in Great Bend during the summer.

The 1990 Census tallies for Great Bend (Figure 7) show a sizable LEP population, but they were quite likely a significant undercount because many of the Latinos in Great Bend are quite transient and thus elusive to Census workers. According to one of the paras, it is not uncommon for Great Bend Latinos to work at

between students and teachers. The Arkansas state university system has also been caught off-guard without any in-state capacity for bilingual or even ESL teacher certification.
the pork-processing plant part of the year, particularly when consumer demand leads to extra hours and job opportunities, but otherwise be gone to Garden City, Kansas, to Los Angeles, or to Mexico.

Figure 7
1990 U.S. Census Data—LEP and Hispanic residents of Great Bend, Kansas

| 15,427 | Total population in Great Bend |
| 651    | Hispanic population in Great Bend (4.2% of total) |
| 614    | Hispanic population of Mexican-origin |
| 14,252 | Total population age 5 or more |
| 366    | Age 5 or more, speak Spanish at home |
| 203    | Age 5 or more, speak Spanish at home, do not speak English well |

A home language survey conducted by the bilingual paras of Great Bend's school district—USD 428—at the beginning of the 1993-94 school year, which was mandated and designed by the KSBE, counted 189 students enrolled in USD 428 who spoke a language other than English at home. For 175 of those students, Spanish was their home language, with 111 of those Spanish-speakers identifying themselves as LEP or completely non-proficient in English. Indirectly, the school district's tallies of LEP students suggest that additional LEP adults (parents, older siblings, relatives, and others) live in the community. Though the following paragraphs use data from the original August 1993 survey, an October 29, 1993 update of that data counted 208 students in USD 428 programs who spoke Spanish at home, representing 96 different families.

The home language survey forms were written in both English and Spanish. About half of the responses suggested that the parents had limited literacy skills in Spanish, while most answers showed limited English proficiency. This was evidenced by the poor spelling and scrawled nature of answers, as well as some display of misunderstanding of the questions. Sometimes the handwriting of one of the paras on
the survey indicated that parents being questioned did not respond in writing without direct assistance.

The school district's survey also showed that 120 of the students from Spanish-speaking homes were concentrated at a single elementary school. Twelve more children from Spanish-language households were scattered at three other elementary schools, while there were 20 at the middle school and 24 at the high school. Door-to-door recruiting visits by bilingual paras for the migrant education program revealed that the community contains about 50 LEP youths (up to age 21) who have not completed high school.

Because elementary school enrollment is based on address, the overwhelming concentration of Spanish-speaking students at one school reveals the corresponding concentration of a Spanish-speaking community in the trailer parks and low-cost housing on the southeast edge of town. Latinos are new enough to Great Bend that, with a few important exceptions, including all three Latino paras, they have not yet made it into any of Great Bend's middle-income neighborhoods.

Two community meetings sponsored by newly created AHORA in the fall of 1993 brought out about 140 Spanish-speaking adults (Peak 1993). The meetings included information about AHORA, and presentations by representatives of the Parents as Teachers Program (which has no bilingual staff) and Head Start. The planning in those two meetings also led to the first public celebration of the Posada in Great Bend, which climaxed with a party at the elementary school which hosts most of Great Bend's Spanish-speaking students (Thacker 1993).

The growing Mexican influence in Great Bend was celebrated for the first time in at least two other ways during the 1993-94 school year: (1) the creation of a Mexican folkloric dance troupe, consisting mainly of students in the high school ESL program, and (2) the double celebration at the downtown courthouse park of
Cinco de Mayo. The first celebration was on the 5th of May, a Thursday. There was also a larger party on Saturday.

The Great Bend Public Library, which has been under a budget freeze since 1989, functions as an indicator of the newness of the LEP influx, as well as the tough economic conditions that confront much of the town. An October 1993 review of the card catalogue and the stacks, plus an interview with the library's director, found that of its 80,000 volume collection, only 26 books are in Spanish. Don Quijote is one. Twenty-two others are English language works of fiction, which have been translated (e.g., Moby Dick). While two books explain how to obtain U.S. citizenship and one volume is about car repair, none of the library's adult basic reader books targets LEP readers. Though it is hard to project what kind of new materials might have been purchased, obviously the budget freeze has greatly hampered the library's ability to expand its collection and be responsive to newcomers.

If Great Bend institutions were surprised by the influx of Spanish-speaking students, several of the Anglo school district personnel have since rallied to try to gain an understanding of the new arrivals and to develop appropriate action plans for effective instruction. Such staff are particularly responsive to paras' efforts to create a bridge between cultures. As yet, those educators seem to be the exceptions in the district.

In a letter of support for AHORA's proposed Title VII family English literacy program (AHORA, Inc. 1993), the principal of the school most affected by the immigrant influx stated,

I can say from first-hand experience that opportunities for literacy education in Spanish and English have been lacking in this community and are desperately needed. Many of our [LEP] school parents want and need assistance with their oral and written English skills because, as it stands, they cannot easily communicate with their children's teachers nor oftentimes can they help their children with homework.
He added, "I am familiar with the research that says it is difficult to become literate in a second language before gaining mastery in one's native language, so I commend your efforts to teach Spanish literacy skills as well." A letter from the district superintendent echoed these thoughts. It should be noted, however, that none of the district's programs to date for LEP students are more than informally bilingual, nor are there plans to change that.

C. Kansas City, Kansas

People from Mexico have been immigrating into KCK for a century. According to the 1990 Census, there were 10,997 Hispanics in Wyandotte County, the vast majority within KCK's city limits, which contain 92.5 percent of the county's residents. The 1990 total represents an official increase of more than 3,000 Latinos since 1980, despite an overall population decline of 10,342 (-6.0%) in Wyandotte County. In other words, the local Latino population is growing quickly, while the total population in the county is in decline. More 1990 Census numbers are shown in the following figure, but, as with Great Bend, they should be viewed as undercounts.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 8</th>
<th>1990 U.S. Census Data—LEP and Hispanic residents of Kansas City, Kansas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>149,768</td>
<td>Total population of KCK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,335</td>
<td>Hispanic population in KCK (6.9% of total)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9,324</td>
<td>Hispanic population of Mexican origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6,985</td>
<td>Population age 5 and over that speaks Spanish at home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,554</td>
<td>Spanish-speakers, age 5 and over, that do not speak English 'very well'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of LEP, Spanish-speaking students enrolled at the time of the KCK portion of this study (1991-92) was hard to calculate because the official tally was changed several times that year, not only as a response to comings and goings of
students, but, far more significantly, in response to changes in the district's surveying effort. That is to say, as political pressure for identification of LEP students grew, and there was an impending OCR investigation looming as well as an effort to acquire Title VII funds\textsuperscript{14}, a better survey of the students was conducted and more LEP students were 'found' by USD 500 personnel. The October 1991 tally was 404, but by the time I had finished my KCK research in May 1992, the total had grown past 700. More than 70 percent of KCK's LEP students were native Spanish-speakers (Hamann 1992).

In 1994, with the additional incentive of substantial funding from the state, USD 500 counted a many more LEP students in its district. As Figure 6 (p. 48) showed, for the 1994-1995 school year, USD 500 projected to enroll 1300 identified LEP students. With 5,170 hours of specialized instruction per week for those students, USD 500 requested $620,400 from the state for the 1994-95 school year to cover the additional costs of responding to the specialized needs of the LEP population. Using numbers filed with the KSBE in September 1993, 74.1 percent of the LEP students in USD 500 were Spanish-speakers (808 of 1090). Presumably, in the 1994-95 school year three quarters of district LEP population was also Spanish-speaking, while Hmong and Laotian-speakers made up most of the remainder.

The 1991-92 USD 500 paras worked in nine of the 35 elementary schools. Each of these schools with bilingual paras was located in inner-city KCK or in the

\textsuperscript{14}This effort to obtain Title VII funds was successful, but it is worth noting that USD 500 applied for and received funding for a 'Special Alternative Instruction Program', a format which rejects bilingual instruction normally because there are too many students representing too many languages. Given that 75% of USD 500's LEP students speak Spanish, however, assimilationist motives may better explain why the district applied for the type of funding that it did.
low-income communities of Argentine, Rosedale, and Armourdale along the Kansas River. These neighborhoods are home to the majority of LEP residents in KCK.

In 1992, none of the other 26 elementary schools offered formal ESL or bilingual services, by paraprofessionals or certified instructors, though there were indications that there was some need. A USD 500 survey (1987) and census data from 1990 suggested that there were LEP 5 to 17 year-olds living in the geographic draw areas of several schools that provided no special services, but USD 500's practice of trying to identify such students had lapsed after 1987 and was only begun again in 1991-92. In that year, the number of officially identified LEP students in USD 500 rose from 404 to more than 700 (Hamann 1992:4).

According to plans filed in the spring of 1994 with KSBE, USD 500 estimated that it would have 930 LEP students at the elementary school level in 1994-95. The district planned to deploy paras in 21 different elementary schools with LEP populations ranging from five students to 200. The district also submitted records of completed ESL endorsements or plans for obtaining such endorsements for more than 100 of its certified instructors. As significantly, because of the state's new bilingual/ESL funding formula, USD 500 expects to receive $620,400 in extra state aid for programming for its identified LEP students. Identifying and serving LEP students has become a priority in USD 500 simultaneous with the threat of an Office of Civil Rights lawsuit and the possibility of substantial state funding.

A number of social service organizations in KCK, apart from the USD 500 schools, try to answer to the varying needs of this sizable Spanish-speaking population. Among them are the Spanish-speaking Office, run by a Mexican-origin Church of the Nazarene minister, which offers career counseling and a Spanish-language Alcoholics Anonymous program. El Centro, which is an affiliate of the National Council of La Raza, the United Way, and the local Catholic archdiocese, runs
a bilingual pre-school, a senior center, a job referral service, various forms of emergency assistance, and an after-school tutorial program for Spanish-speaking LEP students which is partly staffed by bilingual high school students.

The local office of Harvest America provides immigration assistance, including legal referral, emergency food and clothing support, and intermittent bilingual outreach programs focusing on nutrition education, HIV/AIDS prevention education, and bilingual family literacy classes. The Argentine branch of the KCK Public Library has 4,000 books and videos in Spanish and is permanently staffed by at least one bilingual person. Though not directed only at LEP Latinos, the Center for Urban Teacher Education (CUTE), the Kansas City Kansas Community College, and Donnelly College offer a range of variably accessible ESL and bilingual education classes for adults.

In KCK, unlike Great Bend, there are a range of people other than the bilingual paras at the school who can mediate between the Spanish-speaking population and the majority, though the paras are still the primary ones who would perform this function at school. Also, unlike in Great Bend, KCK Latinos, and others acting on their behalf, have spent more time trying to identify the needs and priorities of the local Latino population.

The 1987 Greater Kansas City Hispanic Needs Assessment: Residential Survey (Ruiz et al. 1988), which was organized by the National Council of La Raza, El Centro, Harvest America, and a number of service agencies in Kansas City, Missouri, polled a 'scientifically' selected group of KCK Latinos. Ninety-two percent of the polled KCK Latinos identified 'poor education' as a 'very important' or 'somewhat

15'Scientifically' is the term taken from the report itself. It refers to the fact that instead of using a large random sampling of the Latino population, the surveyors chose a demographically representative smaller sample to survey. It is unclear what specific criteria were used for determining the representativeness of the sample.
important' reason for high local Latino unemployment, while 82 percent made the same claim for limited proficiency in English (Ruiz et al. 1988:33).

Attempting to explain the high local Latino dropout rate (for which no reliable tallies exist), 78 percent of KCK Latinos thought too few bilingual teachers was 'very important' or 'somewhat important' and 78 percent thought 'too few Hispanic teachers' was 'very important' or 'somewhat important'. Eighty percent thought inadequate teacher training for working with multicultural and low-income students were also important contributors to the dropout rate (Ruiz et al. 1988:28-30).

Dozens of studies correlate negative elementary school experience with students' later decisions to drop out (Miller et al. 1988), which begs the question: Were the bilingual paras capable of providing the bilingual teaching and multicultural support that community residents seemed to deem as necessary? To even partially answer that question requires an examination of paras' daily practices.
VI. The Bicultural Reality of the Bilingual Para at School

Language minority students' educational progress is strongly influenced by the extent to which individual educators become advocates for the promotion of students' linguistic talents, actively encourage community participation in developing students' academic and cultural resources, and implement pedagogical approaches that succeed in liberating students from instructional dependence [i.e., liberation from the one directional depositing of information from teacher to student that Freire calls the 'banking model' of teaching].

—Jim Cummins (1993:116)

Though following the above recommendations may seem a difficult and daunting task, bilingual paras are ideally situated to do just that. Indeed, in the three schools studied, the paras often seemed to be the school employees who were closest to enacting these goals in practice. They were advocates for the promotion of the students' talents, active leaders in encouraging community participation in developing students' academic and cultural resources, and pedagogical innovators using multiple strategies to promote students' scholastic competence and success. Nevertheless, there were some limitations to what they could do and what they knew to do.

This chapter is divided into four parts, starting with a profile of the bilingual paras in KCK during the 1991-1992 school year and those in Great Bend in 1993-1994. This section (A) includes biographies, plus deployment, instructions, and training experience in each district. The next three sections describe paras' activities in three contexts: (B) practice related to students, (C) school-related practice with members of the Spanish-speaking community (e.g., interaction with parents), and (D) practice within the professional environment of the school. The experience of the paras apart from school is the topic of the following chapter.

Figure 9 outlines the position of bilingual paras between the Spanish-speaking community and the Anglo community as represented by the schools.
This chapter demonstrates the number and variety of ways that paras can use their own bicultural and bilingual status to mediate between parents, students, and school personnel, which are practically unrealizable by persons who are not so situated. It is not meant to imply, however, that all paras were equally capable of doing all the things described here. Personality, disposition, school environment, experience, gender, and opportunity all were or may have been factors in each para’s individual practice, but as I offer a general profile of the para role, those individualized distinctions are generally left aside.

A. The paras in profile

THE SIX PARAS SURVEYED: Five of the six paras surveyed were Latino and one was Anglo, though use of such ethnic markers should be done cautiously. The Latino paras were distinct from the majority of local Latinos because of either their bilingual
abilities, their level of formal education (which was still less than most of the teachers and administrators at school), or their neighborhood of residence. An Anglo so heavily involved in the Latino community was also an aberration.

One of the six paras had served for more than five years, all the others had less than two years experience, including two who had held their position for less than four months. Two of the paras left their positions while this study was going on, one for maternity leave, the other out of a need to find work with higher pay. This high turnover rate hints that bilingual paras may not have believed that they had the same power as Wolf's culture brokers (1956), who (in different circumstances) struggled relentlessly to maintain their position between national elites and rural peasants. Similar power was not available in the space between the LEP community and the local schools.

In neither Great Bend nor in KCK did I hear of paras ever being fired. In Weiss's California-based study (1994) paras were dismissed as part of budget cutbacks. Because the Kansas paras' job niche is mandated by state law and because their wages make them less expensive than the other 'qualified instructors' described in the state law, the Kansas paras are insulated from budget-cut job elimination.

Four of the six paras were married women with children; two were married men, one with several children. All but one of the paras' spouses were employed. All five of the Latino paras spoke Spanish as their first language, though two had been educated exclusively in the United States. The sixth was an Anglo man who learned Spanish as an adult while working as a missionary for the Assembly of God Church in Guatemala. Looking at external factors rather than self-perception, all six were structurally marginal people. Each of the Latino paras spoke Spanish as a first tongue, which the folk bilingualism model (Snow 1992) explains as a lower status language. And the evangelism of the sixth para set him apart from the mainstream.
The only U.S. educational experience for two of the paras was adult ESL classes and continuing education courses that the district had paid for after their hiring. Three of the paras had bachelor's or associate degrees from U.S. colleges, two had degrees from Mexican universities, and one had only a high school diploma. All four of the paras in Great Bend had at least some college training, while only one of the six paras employed in KCK in 1992 did.

After starting their work as bilingual paras, with the encouragement and financial support of USD 428, two of the Great Bend paras enrolled in continuing education courses relevant to their practices. This was the only example during my study in which I heard of paras receiving university-accredited training that related to their jobs, but as the new state funding formula for ESL/bilingual education continues to take effect, it is likely that more districts will put together development plans for their paras. According to records on file with KSBE, in 1993-94 and in 1994-95 several KCK paras were taking continuing education courses from the University of Kansas at USD 500’s expense (though USD 500 had received the necessary money from the state).

In my observation, the educational status of each para correlated with his/her assertiveness and self-confidence. It seems plausible that in a work environment where nearly all their colleagues had bachelor degrees and graduate level experience the lesser-schooled paras would be structurally marginalized. This would be consistent with the Piore's observation (1979) that in the primary economic sector (where labor is secure), educational attainment correlates with job status. The more assertive paras were the ones with more schooling.

THE PARAS IN GREAT BEND: In Great Bend, in 1993-94 bilingual paras worked at only one elementary school, which, according to an August 1993 school district
home-language survey, housed 124 of the 139 LEP students who attended elementary school in the district. While the same survey showed that there was a scattering of LEP students at three of the seven other elementary schools, those students received no special services, except during occasional visits by one of the paras.

In May 1994, there were three bilingual paras working at the elementary school with the large LEP population. (Another para that I observed and interviewed left her job there in December 1993, though she stayed on in Great Bend.) Two paras worked primarily as pull-out tutors with individuals and small groups, while the third had been promoted to designated home visitor, translator of written documents, and leader of special projects. That para was given particular authority and autonomy. To increase his hours and thus his earnings, this third para was also used by the principal in non-language related capacities, such as recess monitor.

These special duties and increased wages were a direct result of the power of the building principal who doubled as USD 428’s district coordinator of migrant and bilingual services. The principal had additional needs beyond the ESL program and had some funds to allow the particular para to also work outside of the ESL program.

Unlike the other two, but like the para who had left in December, the 'promoted' para had received formal training in applied linguistics in courses organized by the KSBE and Fort Hays State University and paid for by KSBE’s federal Title VII money. That was the only formal training for paras that I was aware of in Great Bend.

Because district and building monitoring of the paras was the responsibility of the same person—the on-site school principal—control of the paras was more informal than in KCK. Another difference from KCK was the presence of several ESL certified teachers in the building as well as some teachers who were seeking such certification.
The principal and the teachers essentially told the paras what forms of assistance were needed, and the paras were then expected to provide it. Typically, the paras assisted instruction by pulling LEP students out of their regular classes for individual or small-group tutorials according to an arranged schedule. Except at the kindergarten level where most instructional assistance was conducted in the kindergarten classroom, the tutorials were held in a workroom and supply space for teachers (which meant teachers regularly came and left the room during tutorials).

Feedback from the paras to the principal was generally frequent, though it varied according to the level of deference or assertiveness the para displayed (more assertive paras gave the principal more feedback.) Relations between paras and teachers were rather hit or miss, though always cordial when I was a witness. Like in KCK, there was an implicit professional hierarchy and some muffled debate about the appropriate method of teaching LEP students. One of the Great Bend paras complained to me that one teacher was particularly condescending and difficult.

Paras in Great Bend were recruited by word of mouth. When I finished my Great Bend field observation in May 1994, the principal, with the ‘promoted’ para’s assistance, was conducting a survey of the education levels and English proficiency of Latino parents within the school’s catchment area. The survey was conducted to identify potential paras.

Unlike the USD 500 document reproduced later as Figure 10, no formally articulated guidelines directed paras’ practice in Great Bend. Paras were informally expected to conduct all instruction according to an ESL format, i.e., in a pull-out

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16 This task showed the principal’s recognition of the importance of the present paras’ familiarity with the Spanish-speaking community and his recognition of the paras’ capacity to gather information from its members. The familiarity between the Great Bend paras and the local Latino community is akin to that which the bicultural English-speaking paras in Weiss’s study (1994) had with the low-income community their school served.
model with English as the language of instruction. This expectation was adhered to with greater or lesser diligence depending upon a para's style and satisfaction with the effectiveness of an ESL exercise. In other words, the Great Bend paras varied in their willingness to ignore expectations and use Spanish as part of their instructional strategy.

THE PARAS IN KCK: In USD 500, in April 1992, there were six on-site service providers to offer special instruction for all of the identified LEP elementary school students in the district. All were paras, paid $7.50 an hour, and contracted to work only during the school year, which meant for 9 to 11 months depending on which school(s) the para worked in. (One school was experimenting with a 'year-round' schedule.) Three of the KCK paras were in their first year. One was a fifteen-year veteran.

All of the observed paras were bilingual; one was trilingual. Four, including the two I observed, were Mexican-Americans who spoke Spanish and English; a fifth spoke English and Laotian, while the sixth spoke English, Vietnamese and Laotian. All were women. USD 500's Supervisor of Foreign Language and ESL characterized the 1991-92 group of paras as the best the district had ever had (Hamann 1992).

In 1991-92, before the new state funding apparatus was put in operation and before the district had won a three-year Title VII Special Alternative Instruction grant, the activities of each USD 500 bilingual para were coordinated by the teachers and principal at each school and by the Supervisor of Foreign Language and ESL. The occupant of that last position was the only central administrator directly concerned with services for LEP students, and that was only half his job description. The formal job title of each para was 'Instructional Aide', a title the bilingual paras shared with non-ESL educational aides.
A three-page handout, reproduced as Figure 10, detailed what activities "Instructional Aides" were officially permitted or forbidden to do (USD 500 1992). The activities of the bilingual paras were not delineated *per se* in the job description. The guidelines were created for the four delineated kinds of paras (Early Childhood Program Aide, Regular Classroom Aide (elementary or secondary), Special Education Aide, Special Projects Aide). Nonetheless, the guidelines were directed at the bilingual paras.

The two bilingual paras that I observed in KCK were not explicitly aware of these guidelines, though their coordinator said that they had reviewed them when they were hired. This lack of awareness may have been why the bilingual paras sometimes violated or ignored these standards (probably unwittingly). It was also true that sometimes the violations were in direct response to the instruction of a certified teacher (who also may have been unaware of the guidelines).

That the paras were generally unfamiliar with the guidelines that were supposed to direct their practice is not surprising given the orientation and training program in place at the time. In 1992, the bilingual paras in USD 500 were hired by the director of classified personnel, who hired all non-certified personnel in the district, including custodians, secretaries, and paras. The supervisor of foreign language/ESL and the principals from the particular schools could make requests with regard to language background of the prospective aide and other special conditions, but they had no direct input into the actual hiring decision.

The district's training strategy for bilingual paras in the year of my survey was minimal. It has since been expanded. The paras' formal training consisted of: a half-day inservice in August with the district's few certified ESL staff, another half-day inservice in November, two or three other meetings after school between 4:15
and 5:15 PM, and alleged notification about relevant workshops that might interest them (but no funding to assist their attendance).

To show how the paras were officially viewed at a district level in 1991-92, the guidelines are reproduced here as Figure 10. That it was generally unknown to the paras and not adhered to by them is instructive because it reveals a gap between district policy and school practices and the administration's functional apathy to the activities of paras and their LEP student charges. That the administration was apathetic is further supported by the existence of the Office of Civil Rights investigation. The apathy from above may explain why the paras could operate as autonomously as they did.

In his California study, Weiss (1994) felt paras' autonomy was an integral component of their effectiveness. Such autonomy would also be a prerequisite for my hypothesis that the paras were promoters of bicultural identities. If there had been more district-level oversight, the paras would have had to more closely approximate the agents of assimilation role for which their job was created.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceptable Duties and Responsibilities*</th>
<th>Unacceptable Duties and Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1) Assist in organizing field trips.</td>
<td>1) Shall not be solely responsible for a classroom or professional service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Read aloud or listen to children read.</td>
<td>2) Shall not be responsible for the diagnostic and programming functions of the classroom.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Assist students in performing activities that have been initiated by the teacher.</td>
<td>3) Shall not be responsible for preparing lesson plans and initiating original concept instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Hand out papers and collect paper work.</td>
<td>4) Shall not grade subjective or essay tests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Assist with supplementary work for advanced pupils.</td>
<td>5) Shall not be responsible for assigning grades to a student.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Provide special help such as drilling with flash cards, spelling, and play activities.</td>
<td>6) Shall not be used as a substitute for certified teacher unless he/she possesses the appropriate substitute teacher's certificate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Assist in preparing instructional materials.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Reinforce learning with small groups.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The degree of specificity and the tone of 'Acceptable Duties' #9-#12 shows that KCK paras were not afforded much institutional respect at the district administration level. They were to be micro-managed. That the bilingual paras were expected to adhere to guidelines not even created for them reiterates that point.

The appropriateness of the USD 500 guidelines can be further called into question by juxtaposing that list with Cummins' (1993) four standards for LEP students achieving success contained in Figure 11. I mention Cummins' list not only because it points to appropriate pedagogical strategies but, more importantly for the
thesis of this study, because Cummins' success indicators illuminate from a service-to-student perspective why the paras may pursue their agenda of being agents of additive biculturalism, including the process of reducing hierarchical difference between the societal value accorded to the different identities.

According to Cummins, incorporating an LEP student's native culture and language into the educational program and getting the community involved at school are important routes for LEP student success. Such practices are also consistent with the promotion of bicultural identity by making students' retention of their culture of origin more viable.

**Figure 11**: Cummins' Success Indicators for LEP Students (with clarifying notes) (1993:106)

Cummins' Four Criteria of LEP Students' School Success (a)(b)
- LEP students' language and culture are incorporated into the school program.
- The LEP community's participation is encouraged as an integral component of their children's education.
- The pedagogy promotes intrinsic motivation on the part of the students to use language actively in order to generate their own knowledge.
- Professionals involved in assessment become advocates for minority students rather than legitimizing the location of the 'problem' in the student.

(a) These are not yes/no categories; rather they function on a continuum. The more fully they are realized the more successful the LEP student is likely to be. (b) Though his research is almost exclusively with LEP students, Cummins asserts that his findings are relevant to any minority group in a school. While I have no reason to take exception to his claim, to avoid tangents about alternative English dialects and to avoid reader confusion about the term 'minor-ity' versus the term 'LEP', in accordance with the topic of this paper, I have changed Cummins' terminology back to 'LEP'.

To more accurately compare Cummins' list to the USD guidelines, one should convert his recommendations for student outcomes into recommendations for instructors' practices. In other words, one should look at how paras and other educators can create an environment that incorporates Cummins' criteria for LEP students' school success. In practice, the paras in KCK (and the paras in Great Bend)
followed guidelines that can be more closely derived from Cummins than from the USD 500 guidelines. Before the full-fledged discussion of paras' practice, it is worth noting here that the paras sometimes adjusted or ignored formal district policy, and did so in ways that typically were compatible with meeting the criteria of the above list. To put that another way, the paras sometimes converted the untenable instructions of the district into more appropriate practices.

One way to conceive of such efforts is that the paras in some circumstances resisted their assignment to subject themselves and their students to the assumptions of the dominant culture's model, which singularly emphasized the rapid acquisition of English (state law) through rote activities (specified in district policy). The very marginality of both LEP students and the bilingual paras, in the eyes of the district, meant that their educational activity was peripheral and little scrutinized. Ironically, this gave the paras the autonomy, which Weiss (1994) found so important, to contest their own marginality, as well as that of their students, their students' parents, and Latinos generally.

B. Para practice with students

Often workers in non-profit organizations will labor for long hours with little financial compensation because of their deep commitment to the work at hand. The bilingual paras, working for public schools, share much of the mindset of their community agency counterparts. They are dedicated to their tasks and tolerant of various slights because they believe in the primacy of assisting LEP students. This dedication to student needs is regularly manifested in para practice.

INSTRUCTIONAL ACTIVITIES: Teachers often asked the paras to lead students in various drills, such as 'Hooked on Phonics' cassettes, vocabulary flash cards, and phonics-
oriented computer games. The 1992 USD 500 guidelines specifically recommended that 'instructional aides' help with drill activity (USD 500 1992). It was also the case that, sometimes on their own initiative, paras would lead drill activity. In some of those instances, such efforts may have been reflective of the paras' own learning experiences in Mexico or Colombia (where elementary school classrooms are larger and drill activity is common) or of repeating behaviors recommended by teachers even when not specifically asked.

When paras led such drill activities, they were approximating the 'banking model' (Freire 1989) alluded to by Cummins at the beginning of this chapter. Because of its one-directional depositing of information, such a pedagogy, if it achieves its ends, is strongly assimilative. The drill activity itself offers little space for the student to question the activity and little space for the student to reflectively try to connect the new knowledge to his or her existing knowledge base or identity.

However, because the LEP students were comfortable with the paras, because the students and paras could communicate in the student's first language, and because the one-on-one and small group instructional formats favored it, LEP students subverted the banking nature of the drill models by asking questions. In this way, not only were students positioned to connect their new learning to what they already knew, but the paras were able to unspectacularly modify an assimilationist pedagogy.

Though the paras had little formal training, I watched them employ a range of teaching strategies beyond drillwork which also resisted the assimilationist nature of their job niche. This number of teaching styles and the personal attention deployed by the paras gave struggling students a better chance of understanding a lesson or having their confusion immediately addressed. One para explained: "Each child needs different things. You have to be on top of that."
The willingness to employ a range of teaching strategies varied by para. In one ten-minute span, I witnessed a para jump from native language assistance for a student filling in worksheets on counting to the use of Total Physical Response (TPR)\textsuperscript{17} to the bilingual explanation of a color chart on the wall where the student's eyes had wandered. I also observed an inverse correlation between the number of instructional strategies used and the degree to which the student's work had been directly designed and orchestrated by the classroom teacher (instead of by the para). In other words, if a para was specifically instructed by a teacher to use 'Hooked on Phonics' that was what the para did, but if the directions were less specific then the para was more likely to freelance and use and discard strategies in specific reaction to the student(s) responsiveness.

Typically, the more autonomy the para had for a given interaction, the more that activity resembled additive biculturalism. While the activities initiated by the paras promoted the students' mastery of necessary skills to negotiate the dominant culture, they also validated who the student was.

When they had a choice, LEP students appeared more disposed to seek answers from a para than from their certified instructor. For instance, during a computer activity in a special Chapter 1 workshop room, LEP students always took their questions to the para, while the non-LEP kids asked questions of whichever adult was nearest.

Marginalized students' preference for seeking help from paras was also noted by Weiss (1994:340-341). He suggested that students felt a greater linguistic and cultural link with the paras, and that they were also nurtured by paras in ways that certified instructors were often unable or reluctant to do. In Weiss's observation,

\textsuperscript{17}TPR is a strategy to correlate body movements with learning and then to later use the movements as mnemonics.
teachers preferred to maintain an 'academic reputation' (which meant approxi-
mating a lecturer as opposed to a hand-holder) and they had the real need to control
their classrooms. Both of those factors were not salient to paras but restricted the
strategies available to a teacher to respond to a specific student and the amount of
time available at any given moment to do so.

The LEP students' preference for taking questions to the paras may have also
represented a subconscious resistance to the assimilationist teaching of the certified
instructor. I say this without intending any criticism of teachers by labeling their
instruction assimilationist. With little knowledge about the LEP students' language,
experience, or culture, and with curriculums which did not account for LEP
students' heritage, it is hard to see how most teachers' practices could be anything
but assimilative.

In practically all the para and student interactions I observed, the bilingual
para knew the LEP student's native language and shared a cultural familiarity. In
those circumstances, the paras were in an advantaged position to diagnose a student's
learning difficulty in a particular situation.

For example, in a one-on-one ESL drill using picture flash cards with
English vocabulary words on the backside, a student got confused by two pictures, one
of a stick of butter and the other of a wedge of cheese. The student said both were
cheese. After all, the butter did resemble a rectangle of jack cheese with which a
student of Mexican background was assuredly familiar. Understanding the source of
the error, a misleading flashcard, the para was able to explain in Spanish that the
picture was supposed to be of 'manteca' (butter), but that the student was equally
correct to have identified it as jack cheese.

Though paras employ a range of instructional strategies under a range of
conditions, one can label the sum of their instructional strategies as consistent with
the promotion of additive biculturalism. In their use of Spanish and their
affirmation of a student’s self-worth, they promote the validity of the Latino
identity. In their teaching of English (particularly English exclusive of native-
language support) and their voluntary and directed use of flash cards and programs
like ‘Hooked on Phonics’, the paras are teaching the ways and codes of the dominant
culture. For an appropriately explicative theory, both of these tendencies need to be
accounted for.

ADVOCACY/SUPPORT: The paraprofessionals play an important role as in-school
advocates and supporters for students, particularly LEP children, who frequently
turn to the paras when they need assistance. This advocacy is manifested by the
paras nonjudgmental interest in and response to students’ concerns and needs and in
their related representation of students’ interests to others at the school. Much of
the advocacy/support is quiet and unobtrusive; for example, listening to a student’s
complaint or providing an adult-supervised space where the student feels
comfortable.

To give some examples of ‘quiet advocacy/support’, in one instance, a para
promised ‘to check into things’ as a favor to a mainstreamed former student who was
worried about the well-being of another student. In another instance, a para calmly
gave some worksheets to an LEP student who had just been sent to her because he had
been acting up in class. In another instance, a para helped a struggling LEP student
by transcribing the student’s classroom assignment into Spanish, helping him
complete it faster, and then helping to transcribe the answers back into English so
that he could avoid his teacher’s ire. Yet another time, a para took three lethargic
first-graders on an emergency visit to the lunchroom at 10:15AM, when she
discovered that none of the three had eaten since the day before.
Weiss (1994) argues that the paras' advocate role is perhaps more important than their pedagogic one because the students need support confronting the foreign, middle-class culture embodied by the administrators and teachers at the school. Mark Grey (1991) noted that there are often few people in a school who are familiar with LEP students' general circumstances. The LEP students in Great Bend and KCK needed an in-school adult who understood them. The paras were positioned to be advocates for LEP students because of their generally empathetic understanding of the students, which was enhanced by interacting with the LEP students in such intense ways that they could learn many of a child's individual wants and habits.

Consider the following vignette from my fieldnotes.

A para was insistent that twins she worked with had some kind of learning disorder. Simply, these two students were not making progress like other LEP students. Their ability to retain lessons from week to week seemed unusually limited. With the assistance of the principal, a learning specialist was called in, the twins underwent a battery of tests, and it was determined that they were indeed learning disabled (LD) as well as LEP. The para was relieved that it was not a flaw in her teaching method that was causing the students' struggles. While the twins' school did not have a long list of special resources that it could apply to their case, their LD designation meant teachers would treat these students more patiently and that the para could feel more comfortable working with them in their native language to help them make sense of the rest of their day. The para also took an extra initiative and sent bilingual learning tapes home to the twins' parents, so the twins' learning could be reinforced at home.

Cummins wrote that, "historically, assessment has played a role of legitimizing the disabling of minority students" (1993:112). If that is the general case then this instance was exceptional. Though the para did find some cognitive problems with the twins, she also was in a position to communicate directly with their parents and to send learning resources home with the students, thereby circumventing the disabling nature of a 'typical' learning disability diagnosis. In this case, the para's assessment was informal, non-interventionist, and intuitive. She felt there was a problem and she made sure the resolution of it served her students' interests.
Weiss (1994) links the para's advocacy role with the promotion of students' self-esteem and then notes that self-esteem and academic success often intertwine. The students' enhanced self-esteem comes from feeling individually cared for and looked after by an adult in the school. By its nature, advocacy confronts marginality, insisting that disadvantaged students deserve attention and support, which is consistent with additive biculturalism.

C. Para interaction with parents and other members of the Spanish-speaking community through the course of their work at school

This section considers how paras interacted with LEP parents and other adult LEP community members when such interactions were the result of the para performing school-related work. Within the school building, paras were called on to welcome and help LEP parents and other LEP parties. This was particularly the case when the para spoke the LEP adults' native language and thus could serve as a translator. Parents who came to visit the school would often ask for the para to help them explain a particular need. As often, school administrators would request paras to set aside whatever they were doing and come to the office to serve as an emergency translator. That is to say, both parties wanted the para to be present.

Parents relied on the paras as information sources and as means to communicate with other people at the school. Many of the parents in my KCK family literacy program could name the para at their child's school, but not the child's official teacher or the school principal. The schools, in turn, relied on the paras to communicate with the LEP parents.

Each school's reliance was demonstrated by the frequent requests that paras conduct home visits and that paras create Spanish-language translations of various
school forms and announcements, which in turn could be sent along to LEP, Spanish-literate parents. It is in this role that paras were most explicitly culture brokers.

Some of this mediation was spontaneous and some was planned. To give a 'planned' example, from the moment an afternoon orientation for parents of incoming kindergarten students was conceived, the para's role was included in the agenda. At the meeting, the para introduced herself in English and Spanish, described her function in English and Spanish, and translated into Spanish the words of the principal, the counselor, and the certified teachers who were present. In other instances, when a Spanish-speaking LEP parent showed up unannounced, the paras assumed a translator/mediator role spontaneously.

The word choice 'translator/mediator' is carefully considered in this instance, with the 'translator' referring to 'more than words' (Kartunnen 1994) and 'mediator' echoing Weiss' finding (1994:342) that the paras were positioned to edit and transform the messages they were supposed to communicate from one side to the other. Such translating/mediating was in evidence when a para was dispatched by a principal to conduct a home visit to find out why a thirteen-year-old girl had not been attending school.

In that instance, the principal's concern was that the girl was required by law to be in school, but she was not coming. Instead of repeating that message verbatim at the trailer where the girl lived, however, the para said to the girl's father that people at school wanted only to know why the girl was not there. The distinction was that the para did not start the conversation by acting as a 'hooky cop' or by otherwise judging the girl's absence or her father's failure to insist that she be at school, though that was how the principal had started the earlier conversation with the para.
The para's approach gave the father the space to explain that he had not yet found work and that he had kept his daughter at home because he wanted her assistance for his job search. While the girl was not fluent or fully literate in English, the father hinted that she was more capable than him father in each of these domains so he needed her help. The father also said that if he was unable to find work he and his family would need to relocate so he could look somewhere else. If the family needed to move in the next week or two, what would be the point of enrolling the daughter in school?

The para's response to the father was sympathetic. The para and the father chatted for three or four minutes about the difficulty of finding work. Later the para told the principal that the girl's father was looking for work and that the family was considering relocating. While this answer did not respond to the principal's original concern, it did serve to set the problem aside, at least temporarily, perhaps because of the way the para had presented it. The para had explained the family's predicament in a straightforward way which fit the principal's framework of logical, unavoidable reasons for a student to temporarily not be in school. The para had shifted the debate from a question of legal concern to one of economic hardship.

In that instance, the para was acting as a culture broker, mediating between groups, avoiding conflict, rephrasing the problem of one side in a way that was intelligible to the other, solving the impasse but not necessarily the problem. The para had concurred with both of the differing characterizations of the problem, but, in terms of the solution produced, the para had supported the weaker side—that of the Spanish-speaking father.

This ability to empathize with both sides but support the hierarchically inferior one is central to the paras' function as agents equalizing the difference in value that society applies to differing cultural identities. This is consistent with
being an agent of additive biculturalism. The paras' abilities to act as intermediaries between LEP parents and school personnel appear more important after one considers Cummins' observation that LEP parents are typically excluded from more traditional school-to-parent (and vice versa) communication networks.

Although lip service is paid to community involvement through Parental Advisory Committees in many education programs, these committees are frequently manipulated through misinformation and intimidation. The result is that parents from dominated groups retain their powerless status, and their internalized inferiority is reinforced. Children's school failure can then [misleadingly] be attributed to the combined effects of parental illiteracy and lack of interest in their children's education. (Cummins 1993:109)

One should note Cummins' mention of the complexity and potential cyclic nature of the message exchange between groups of differing power.

When paras protected LEP parents from judgmental inquiries through rephrasing, or when they 'spun' the information that the principal heard, they were actively, if incrementally, changing the dynamics of power relations between Anglo and LEP by helping the lower-status position to prevail. In the home-visit case above, the para's manipulations of the power dynamic appear consistent with the goal of creating the possibility of stable bicultural identities where the hierarchical difference between the two identities is reduced.

**D. The paras relations with school professionals**

Under the most recent official guidelines, KSBE expects a hierarchical relationship between bilingual paras and certified instructional staff, with paras occupying the lower echelon, regardless of their actual expertise. According to the text of the state's memo on Bilingual Funding Guidelines, which paraphrased the new state law and which was sent to each district in the state, "Para-professionals must
be supervised by an ESL or Bilingual-endorsed teacher or a teacher with an endorsement plan on file" (KSBE 1993:3).

The less interactive a para was with a specific teacher the more likely that relation remained hierarchical giving dominance to the teacher. That hierarchy existed regardless of whether the particular instructor involved had any formal supervisory charge for that para.

When para and instructors interacted more frequently, particularly when such interaction occasioned the certified instructor to see a para act adeptly (e.g., as a translator or co-researcher for a continuing education class), the hierarchy disappeared or was momentarily reversed, the instructor bowing to the functional authority of the para's expertise. The latter was the case with the relations in Great Bend between the instructors and paras who participated in the applied linguistics seminar on alternative assessment strategies.

THE PARA AS SUBORDINATE: The paras I studied were always located in tiny, borrowed, or frequently traveled places within the schools (e.g., at the end of a corridor or in a teachers' lounge). The school administration seemed to make paras a low priority for being given good, quiet spaces in which to tutor students, though it is hard to know whether that was because LEP students were a low priority, paras were a low priority, some combination thereof, or for some other reason.

Only two of the six paras I surveyed had a desk, one in a space that led to other offices and one in a partitioned space in a building's main corridor. That second space was the only one large enough to permit the para to use it for tutoring. The structural marginalization explicit in the accommodations given (and not given) to paras was paralleled by the paras' significantly lower wages, and by the absence of any
benefits like health insurance. In such an environment, the paras' subordination to the certified professionals was implicit.

Sometimes certified instructors were quite explicit about their sense that they were knowledgeable professionals and that the paras were not. In one case, two teachers practically refused to talk to a para despite the fact that their subject area expertise had significant pertinence to the para's educational tasks. Several of the paras were afraid to approach some of the teachers.

By law, certified instructors were supposed to supervise the paras. In practice, that meant that paras frequently received instructions from certified classroom teachers about what to teach during pull-out sessions and how to teach it, while the principals provided the formal supervision. The certified staff assigned the task; the paras performed it. Such practice reinforced the hierarchical differentiation between paras and certified instructors and it reduced the ability of paras to be autonomous and innovative, characteristics that Weiss (1994) celebrated as integral to paras' school-site usefulness. (Nonetheless, the para position can still be characterized as more autonomous than most school positions that involve teaching.)

This subordination led to different reactions among the paras. One worked around it by occasionally lunching with her principal, thus feeling that her ideas were respected within the building. Two of the paras resisted it, feeling some bitterness and disrespect from teachers. The other three never shared such complaints with me.

Because it was one of the things they complained about, and because they subsequently left, the existence of this hierarchy seems to me to have been a contributing reason to the departure of the two paras who left during my study. That they did so suggests that the para position does not contain enough perquisites to hold most people for very long, which differentiates paras from one component of Wolf's
culture broker model (1956). This hierarchy could have motivated the paras' implicit quest to resolve the imbalance between cultural identities of Latinos (five of the six paras) and Anglos (most of the teachers and administrators) which would be consistent with their effort to promote equal bicultural identities.

Paras' demonstrations of expertise heightened their status in the witnessing eyes of instructors and administrators, but only to a degree. The para who was enrolled in the applied linguistics class I helped teach was regularly complimented by his certified classmates as helpful, insightful, and skilled. They lamented that the limited money available to pay him was insufficient to his needs and that he would be departing imminently. To those who had heard him think aloud and watched him operate (i.e., his graduate course classmates) his status was higher than that of the other bilingual paras they knew less well. Para status could clearly fluctuate. On the other hand, none of those celebrating this para's skills significantly questioned the school's distribution of resources to see if a way could be developed for him to stay. In other words, certified instructors were willing to commend a para, but not to the extent that the official professional hierarchy of the school was called into question.

THE NECESSARY EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION: Though Part C was about paras and parents, the example in that section of the para finding out why an LEP girl was not attending school has relevance in this category too. In that case, the para reported his findings back to the building principal. In line with Weiss (1994), the para was representing a community reality to a professional at the school. Such communication about local realities happened more informally too, when, for instance, in the teachers' lounge at lunch, a para updated teachers about a fight at the local high school prom. What was significant was that the paras were helping the classroom
teachers and administrators gain awareness of the circumstances in which the students lived and from where they came—information that could assist those certified instructors.

The differences between Great Bend and KCK are relevant here, but smaller than one might expect. In KCK many of the teachers did not live within the school district boundaries so the paras were conveying community information to teachers and administrators who were geographically not part of the community. This added an additional dimension to information already crossing cultural, linguistic, and class lines. Great Bend, as a smaller community, was more accommodating of community-wide gossip, and perhaps it had fewer structural obstacles impeding communication networks. However, as the residential segregation of the LEP community there suggests (concentrating most LEP primary school students at one of eight potentially available facilities), there still were formidable barriers between Great Bend’s LEP, low-income community and the certified staff at the elementary school which the paras were positioned to transcend.

PARAS AS SEMI-NATIVE ETHNOGRAPHERS: One inescapable fact about the paras was that their job position was created by English-speaking school administrators rather than by the paras themselves or by members of the LEP community, even if the latter two groups did contribute to how the position was fulfilled in practice. Though I call them bilingual paras and assert the bi-directional nature of their mediation, the para positions described here were typically referred to by administrators as ESL paras. Their official purpose was to help LEP students assimilate into the dominant group in the school so they could achieve success in mainstream classrooms.

To conduct their official missions, the paras had to regularly be in contact with school professionals. Not surprisingly, this communication often led to
requests on the part of the certified teachers and administrators for information on particular LEP students or for information on Latino practices generally. Within the school, this converted the paras into spokespersons for the LEP community. While sometimes this role meant paras were like the informants in classical cultural anthropology studies, as often it meant that paras were like applied anthropologists themselves, trying to explain (to representatives of a different culture) a culture that they are familiar with, involved with changing, and a part of.

Some of the paras work that I witnessed even resembled formal ethnography. I offer two examples: (1) At the beginning of the 1993-1994 school year, paras, in cooperation with the principal and a coordinator at KSBE, prepared a questionnaire about home language use that was sent home with students. Paras compiled all the returned questionnaires, and, in the cases where questionnaires were not returned, the paras visited the homes to meet parents and conduct short interviews. (2) In the spring of 1994, a para was the primary researcher and author of a formal study investigating low-participation rates by LEP students in reading incentive programs. This project included home visits to survey LEP parents about their attitudes toward reading as well as to look for indications of literacy activity at the home (e.g., books or magazines on a table or shelf). The second study was used internally by school district policy makers (to build support for the acquisition of Spanish language library books among other things) and it earned its authors (Giner et al. 1994) three hours of graduate credit for applied linguistics from Fort Hays State University.

The 'para as applied anthropologist' idea can fruitfully be developed further. Perhaps one of the most significant types of persistence-producing applied anthropology is accommodation. Accommodation can occur when the anthropologist serves as an interface between two cultural systems such as the community and service-providing or development-stimulating organization. (van Willigen 1981:161)
The paras functioned as interfaces between a community (Spanish-speakers) and a service-providing organization (the school). They helped the Spanish-speaking community accommodate the demands of the dominant English-speaking society without necessarily promoting assimilation, at least not in its complete sense (despite their official school charge).

The paras' activity changed the climate and pedagogical strategies of the school to improve its responsiveness to the cultural norms embraced by Spanish-speaking students and their families. Through the data gathering and mediation of the paras, school personnel were made more responsive to the needs of Spanish-speaking students and more respectful of such students' circumstances and heritage. The paras were changing the acculturative process of schooling away from assimilation to a model more in line with additive biculturalism.

CO-LEARNERS AND THE PARA AS EXPERT: Going beyond the ideas of informant and amateur anthropologist, the paras were relied upon because of their obvious expertise. The most noteworthy example was a para's demonstration of the significance of his political contacts in Mexico when he was able to secure a major book donation from the Mexican Secretaría de Educación Pública for his elementary school. The para's school had just identified the lack of Spanish reading materials as a primary obstacle to increasing LEP parent inter-action with the schools and with their children as students at home. On that occasion, the front page of the Great Bend Tribune glowed with the headline: "Gift from Mexico will benefit Hispanic reading program at Riley" (Smith 1994). The accompanying picture (Riggs 1994) showed three people smiling and holding a few of the 120 Spanish-language children's books that had just arrived from the central office in Mexico City.
In KCK, a para found that the lack of male adult role models in several (LEP and non-LEP) male students' homes was a plausible cause of some of their struggles at school. So with the active encouragement of the principal and some others brought in to help, the para started a mentoring program for male students. The program brought in men (like me) who lived in the surrounding community to be the mentors.

These examples illustrate how paras were in position to bring the community into the school and vice versa. In so doing, they narrowed the gap of understanding between the school and community. They helped the school norm become more welcoming and responsive to LEP adults while supporting the value of the LEP community’s non-Anglo identity, which was consistent with the effort to increase the viability of a functioning bicultural community.
VII. The Paras in the Larger Community

In September 1993, five individuals were gathered in the living room of one of the bilingual paras in Great Bend, Kansas. Along with the owner of the home were another bilingual aide, a distressed LEP mother, the KSBE's program officer for bilingual and ESL education, and me. The distressed mother had come to the para's house to complain about the abusive treatment her daughter was receiving from a teacher at school. Apparently, the woman's daughter had been repeatedly instructed to wash her face and arms because they were not 'white enough'. The presence of the second para and the two outsiders was inconsequential to the woman. She had come to see the first para because she did not know with whom else to share her anger and confusion. At that time, the paras and the rest of us offered only support and empathetic outrage, but, later that night, after the woman left, we decided to create a community-based organization, subsequently called AHORA ('Ahora' means 'now' in Spanish.), which would represent the needs and rights of LEP Latinos to the larger community of Great Bend. Two of AHORA's three founding members were bilingual paras; I was the third (AHORA 1994).

Away from the school environment, at least some of the bilingual paras continued their involvement with cultural-identity issues. The paras continued to act as active promoters of a double or bicultural identity, though doing so was somewhat complicated. Given the inequity between Anglo society and the Spanish-speaking community, more of the paras' activity was directed at promoting a positive Latino identity than a positive Anglo one, but the active promotion of one was not done at the expense of the other. That is, the paras explicitly recognized a need and value for keeping the identities complementary rather than in conflict. At a personal level, there was sometimes an element of pragmatism to this because several of the paras were involved in bicultural marriages.

This chapter documents some of what the paras did away from school. It is meant to illustrate the complementary nature of their roles in school and beyond, highlighting the consistency between the two and suggesting that the paras' professional functions and their personal voluntarism very much intertwined. The paras' challenge was to equip LEP students and other members of the LEP community with the means to succeed in the larger Anglo community, while ensuring that such
success did not double as a rejection of Latino heritage. The task was complicated, not surprisingly, and it included removing the public stigma attached to being a Spanish speaker and a Latino.

A. AHORA, Letter Writing, and KKFI

In the early 1990s there were two radio stations in Kansas City with any Spanish-language programming; both stations were public, one university-based, and one, KKFI, was known as ‘community radio’. KKFI’s Spanish-programming had a strong Mexican slant and a grassroots feel. One of the KCK paras volunteered there as a disc jockey and program coordinator. In that capacity she once invited several of my LEP literacy students and me to be interviewed and to describe our literacy program. That interview, which was conducted in Spanish, was typical of the programming she arranged; it was a chance to inform the Spanish-speaking, LEP community of a learning opportunity. As a single event the interview did not mean much, but in the context of this thesis, it demonstrates a para using her free time to provide help, ideas, and support to the Spanish-speaking community.

On another occasion, a para wrote a five-paragraph letter to the editor of the local newspaper protesting the bias of an anti-immigrant piece written by a syndicated columnist. The letter clarified why its author was proud of his Mexican heritage and argued against the stereotypes of immigrants in the offending piece.

The vignette at the beginning of this chapter tells of the moment of creation of a community organization—AHORA—which, in the subsequent year played a significant role in publicizing the Latino presence in Great Bend and called some attention to the Latino community’s needs. The organization’s initial accomplishments included organizing public celebrations of two Mexican cultural festivals (La Posada and Cinco de Mayo); helping to initiate the creation of a folkloric dance troupe made up of
Latino high school students by finding funding to pay for costumes; holding two bilingual community meetings to offer residents a chance to voice their wants, worries, and needs; and getting several Anglo community leaders to write letters of support for a Title VII bilingual family literacy funding proposal (AHORA 1993).

In all but the last case, AHORA's efforts were given front page headlines in the local daily newspaper, *The Great Bend Tribune* (Thacker 1993, 1994b; Peak 1993; and Dueser 1994). The city's director of downtown redevelopment praised AHORA's *Cinco de Mayo* celebrations in a letter to the editor. In the case of the grant proposal, the school district superintendent, the principal at the paras' elementary school, and the director of the public library all wrote letters of support acknowledging the city's inadequate educational infrastructure for Spanish-speaking students and saluting an effort to do something about it. These public celebrations of Latino heritage and the Anglo community's recognition of local Latino needs were mostly a product of the two paras who founded AHORA and a third para who served as its president.

Through those activities, the paras and their fellow AHORA partners pressured the school district and the town to be more responsive to the needs of the Spanish-speaking community. District interest in seeking Title VII funding may be one consequence of that pressure. The district's 1993-94 funding of training for paras and teachers and of inservices may be another example. Though perhaps the correlation is coincidental, USD 428 had never paid for training for paras until AHORA was created.

**B. Multicultural Community Education**

Though I have chosen to distinguish the roles of the paras at AHORA and KKFI from their role at school, their purpose and success with each entity overlapped.
For instance, many of the successes of AHORA could be categorized as efforts at community education. AHORA helped get a folkloric dance troupe started, which performed publicly and in schools, and it led public celebrations of the Posada and the Cinco de Mayo. Through AHORA, the paras led a campaign to teach Great Bend about Mexican culture.

Historically many advocates of multicultural education have dismissed the celebration of ethnic holidays and the like as tokenism that fails to account for the structural exclusion of dominated groups within the hierarchical social strata (Brandt 1994). According to this perspective, by adding superficial celebrations of culture to the calendar, the energy that would push for substantive change is deflected.

Challenging this line of thinking, James Banks explained that the additive approach to multicultural education (i.e., the approach of adding holidays and so forth) is often a necessary first step in a process that ultimately leads to a transformative emphasis on multicultural education (Brandt 1994). In other words, the additive option may be the only option available at the initial stages for seeking multicultural inclusion. When the volume of inclusions introduced passes a certain threshold, it becomes part of a longer process that digs deeper and deeper into the schools' and the community's educational and social structure and becomes transformative.

AHORA was a new Latino organization in a community that has never had such an organization. At least for 1994, its very existence and each of its successes represented a change in the status quo. As the attempts to get funding for a bilingual family literacy program suggested and as the AHORA board's discussion of advocacy services related to health care and the Spanish-speaking community's relations to the police also suggested, AHORA had a longer-term agenda which aimed to remake the
social organization of Great Bend. In that sense AHORA and its para participants were agents of additive biculturalism seeking to create new cultural spaces in Great Bend where Anglo and Latino identities could both be celebrated and where being part of the town's Latino community did not automatically imply discrimination and limited socioeconomic opportunity.
VIII. Conclusion

This thesis started with an effort to situate the bilingual paras' job and practice in the larger sociocultural milieu, generating a complicated answer to the question for what reason do the paras' jobs exist. This conclusion starts at the same point. The economist Oded Stark (1991), the geographer Michael Broadway (1994), and the educator David Spener (1988) have each noted that the American economy actively seeks LEP immigrants, particularly Mexican immigrants, to fill volatile and hazardous job niches. In one interpretation, the paras' jobs are a cost-effective way of accommodating this influx.

Stark (1991) adds that there is an ample supply of immigrants, documented and undocumented, who are willing to fill the secondary sector job niches because those niches represent improved opportunity over the immigrants' present circumstances.

Thus international migration can enable households to exploit cultural and social discontinuity across international frontiers, capture this discontinuity, and transform international dissimilarities into a source of advantage. This consideration applies particularly to repetitive or temporary migration . . . (Stark 1991:147)

Time and schooling, however, complicate the neat arrangement explained above. As time passes, the potency of the immigrant's old frame of reference declines; this process happens faster when the immigrant is rapidly culturally assimilated. Language barriers impede such an assimilation, however. If the immigrant laborer is in an isolated job niche (e.g., a 'Mexican-type job'—Tienda and Fielding 1987) then such assimilation may never occur. This is not a natural outcome, however, for LEP children who, instead of being isolated at a Mexican-type job, are exposed to the complex influences of the school environment. And through the child the isolation of the whole LEP family is reduced.
The LEP child's place at school then becomes a primary locus for the host society to explain to LEP families where they should fit in the socioeconomic hierarchy. If the national and local economies need for most LEP families to remain in the secondary sector (even if they learn English) then somehow school should impart this message. This complicates the task of the school vis à vis the teaching of English and other topics. If new immigrants or their children learn and adopt the prevailing value system of the American middle class (i.e., they culturally assimilate—Gordon 1964) then they may not contentedly participate in the secondary sector any longer.

Spener (1988), relying significantly on Ogbu's (1978) notion of caste-like minorities, posits that school programs for LEP students can assimilate students and still meet the demands of a mostly bifurcated economy if they do not train LEP students adequately enough to leave the secondary sector, or if they teach LEP students to expect roles at the bottom. Spener says that the programs for LEP students generally teach them to expect less and accomplish less than their Anglo peers, to become caste-like minorities rather than voluntary minorities. Caste-like minorities expect less from school and are often suspicious of it (Ogbu 1978). By adopting or being taught such a status, immigrant students in effect disqualify themselves from participating in most parts of the primary economic sector because in that sector scholastic achievement correlates with job security and job status (Piore 1979).

Rarely, however, is such a strategy overt or even acknowledged by its creators or practitioners. Indeed, many would take offense at this characterization. The rhetoric of the melting pot and America as the land of individual opportunity, and the anecdotal reality of some individual immigrants achieving real socioeconomic success function to obscure it. But Grey (1991), Miller and colleagues (1988), and
others document how programs for LEP students either lead such students to graduate with marginal status or drop out with the same result.

It is at this paradoxical juncture of schools claiming to provide opportunity to all, yet serving the needs of a bifurcated economy, that the Kansas paras' job niche exists. The paras, who are less trained, less compensated, hierarchically marginal figures within the school building, are supposed to help LEP students rapidly acquire English language skills so they can survive and succeed in mainstream classrooms. Paras are supposed to help assimilate most LEP students to the bottom (i.e., what Gordon (1964) called cultural assimilation without structural assimilation).

According to Ramirez (1991), Ovando and Collier (1985), and Hakuta (1986), this is the likely outcome of the language curriculum that paras are supposed to help lead. This is the context within which the paras I observed operated, a context which is challenged by the idea of additive biculturalism and the related notion of multicultural education.

A. Beyond Brokerage: Promoting Additive Biculturalism

As Weiss (1994) claimed, Wolf's (1956) model of culture brokers does explain a significant portion of what the paras do. But just being brokers, providing the necessary mediation between groups that remain unequal, would also be consistent with the official expectations for the paras' job niche, and the paras resist the expectations of the job niche. Nevertheless, it makes sense to explain how the culture broker model does fit before trying to transcend it.

Referring back to Wolf's model (1956) as described in Figure 1 (p. 15), the paras were like brokers; they were present at the junction between local systems (e.g., the LEP community, the school catchment area, etc.) and the larger whole as
represented by state and national education policies as transmitted by their local agents (e.g., certified instructors).

The paras served as bridges between individuals of low hierarchical status whose priority was to stabilize or improve their life chances (e.g., the LEP parent who was using his daughter's assistance to find a job) and higher-status, nation-oriented individuals who operated primarily in terms of the complex cultural forms standardized as state or national institutions (e.g., truancy laws) but whose successes were dependent on the size and strength of their local following. (The principal's enforcement of truancy laws only mattered to the extent the target population was willing to adhere to them.)

The paras were familiar with the *modus operandi* of both the low-status individuals (e.g., the LEP parent) and the higher status individuals (e.g., the principal and the certified instructors) who they mediated between. The paras served as buffers between groups, and their positions existed because of both local and national historical circumstances. The paras' position existed also because the low-status group (the LEP community) was dependent on the larger system that created and controlled the secondary sector job niches that most LEP residents filled.

The paras met all but one of Wolf's conditions (1956), the exception being to negotiate but intentionally never fully remedy the conflicts between the two constituencies they mediated between. Though some of the conflicts the paras mediated were not resolved, this was not a product of the paras' intentions.

Characterizing the paras as brokers is misleading not because it is inaccurate but because it is incomplete. The broker model does not explain how or why the paras resist the hierarchical inequality between the Latino (and often LEP) identity and the Anglo one. The paras I observed were not consciously willing to assimilate their students to the socioeconomic bottom of American society. Nor was the paras'
teaching of English, a central component of their job, accounted for by the broker model. Looking at paras' instruction related to language starts to show us how the paras resisted their mandate.

Because bilingual paras were the primary actors at the interface between two hierarchically unequal languages—and this was true when they worked one-on-one with students, when they translated at meetings between school personnel and parents, and when they carried the English language commands of a school official to a Spanish-language home visit—they were witness to the school-reinforced inequality between the languages. The paras countered this inequality in small ways by shaping the language-related impressions generated by certain encounters.

In other words, paras were positioned to affect the level of stigmatization attached to the use of Spanish in various encounters. When paras used Spanish in a positive way, or promoted Latino identity in a positive way that included some kind of overt or subconscious linkage to Spanish, they started to change the environment for local LEP students' acquisition of English, moving it toward additive bilingualism and away from folk bilingualism (Snow 1992). In additive bilingualism, gain in one language does not imply loss in the other. There are logical parallels between such occurrences and the models of Hackenberg (1993) and McFee (1968), where identity gain does not imply identity loss.

When the paras were allowed to focus on what they felt was truly important, which, given their location and their autonomy, they often were, they emphasized something deeper than language, something for which language was, at best, a tool of access. They emphasized identity, self-conception, perspective, and the means one needed to negotiate one's environment (which is why, in its attempt to adequately situate the para, this study has looked at such a broad spectrum of local and macroscopic forces, events, and circumstances which shape identity).
The goal of most immigrant education programs is to promote the acquisition of English rather than bilingualism. That means that most of the programs for LEP students are English immersion, ESL, or, at most, TBE. Linguists say that any of these three formats is a recipe for falling behind grade level and internalizing low self-worth (Hakuta 1986; Ovando and Collier 1985). The paras needed to work around such programmatic barriers.

By promising that immigrant students deserve to be structurally integrated, the melting pot myth provides some cover for the paras conversion of their jobs' intended purpose. The paras' concern, subconscious or overt, seemed to be to help LEP students and LEP adults to negotiate their Anglo-dominated environments while not rejecting their previous identities as Mexicans or Latinos. The favored outcome, which the paras themselves obtained to some degree, was an additive ability to negotiate several varying cultural circumstances and realities, without internalizing a hierarchy of culture types leading to the stigmatization of skills and practices needed for specific environments. In other words, structural assimilation without full cultural assimilation.

Though he described the paras as brokers, Weiss recognized a key condition—professional autonomy—by which paras could do more than brokering.

[Paras] are not confined as are teachers. . . . [T]he sometimes strained, sometimes harmonious, but always cautious relationship with teachers, enables aides to subtly champion the views of the local community and to manipulate some of the realities of school life so that children and parents might profit from their exposure to an alien bureaucratic and educational system. The ambiguity inherent in the role of the [para], criticized by more "traditional" educators, should be considered an asset not a liability. (1994:343)

Given the opportunity to act independently, paras were positioned to meet the differing needs of the two groups that they knew well while challenging the hierarchical relationship between the two groups. Manipulating their own
identities, the paras used their autonomy to freelance during home visits, to convert the curriculum during their student tutorial sessions, and to direct particular information about Latino identity, LEP student needs, and low-income reality to persons at school and in the community who were hierarchically above them. This, however, begs the question: To what consequence?

B. Responding to Existing Scholarship and Asking New Questions

One question hinted at in the introduction of this chapter and left unanswered in the last section needs to be addressed here. How is it that the paras who were clearly trying to work on behalf of LEP students and their families could also be part of a process that marginalized or perpetuated the marginalization of so many of them? This leads to a second question; did intervention by the paras help LEP students and adults contest the marginalization of their position, which I have alleged was the primary purpose of the paras being agents of additive biculturalism?

The way my study was designed I could not consider whether the marginal status of the para in the school building or the actual activities of the para had a greater impact on the development of an LEP student's aspirations and sense of self. If an LEP student paid more attention to the fact that the educator specially designated to work with him/her worked in cramped, travelled spaces, deferred to the instructions of the less intelligible classroom teacher (less intelligible from the LEP student's perspective) and was otherwise shown to be of lower professional status, then that student indeed might internalize a sense that he or she deserved less. Such a message could also be transmitted in potent but muted form by other adults in the building. If the student internalized such a message, then that student would have been assimilated to the bottom, expecting second-tier status.
It seems as possible, however, that the paras were positive role models of biculturalness for the LEP students, that LEP students heard some of the paras' messages that they had and deserved an advocate, that being Latino should be a point of pride, and that it was worth working hard at school (in contrast to the alienation typical of a caste-like minority student—Ogbu 1978). The paras were given an honored place in LEP households when they visited. The paras were visibly hierarchically superior by virtue of being adults to the LEP students' Anglo peers. So there were mechanisms by which the LEP student could learn to respect the paras and perhaps seek to emulate them.

Mark Grey (1991) and Paul Gray (1993) further clarify the sides of debate about the significance of paras' job position for predicting the outcome of their efforts. Mark Grey worries about the meaning of the marginal status of ESL programs.

While all other teaching and counseling positions in school require certification, a lack of similar requirements for ESL faculty may work to bring the legitimacy of the program into question. This situation is compounded by a lack of official certification criteria of ESL instruction in many states. (Grey 1991:79)

On the other hand, Paul Gray, a correspondent for *Time* magazine, observed that the marginality of LEP programs gives them the autonomy to seek the most effective pedagogical methods for LEP students. In his view, programs for LEP students showcase the importance of classroom autonomy that has not yet penetrated into the teaching of other disciplines.

the initiative and experiments now being demanded of individual schools, teachers, and, administrators [because of the presence of LEP immigrant students] may spark a long needed rejuvenation in U.S. education. The dead hand of bureaucracy has not yet grasped the teaching of immigrants or clamped down on classroom innovations. For the moment, teachers of such children need not file proposed changes in lesson plans, in triplicate, to the board of ed offices and then wait six months to have them returned, stamped INSUFFICIENT INFORMATION. . . . [T]hey are dealing with immigrants as individuals, using different approaches to meet different abilities and expectations. (Gray 1993:71)
What the above paragraphs start to get at is: To what effect did the paras think and act? In other words, what were the community consequences of the paras acting as promoters of bicultural identities, including their effort to reduce the hierarchical differentiation between a Latino/Mexican identity and an Anglo one? To answer those questions would require using a longitudinal perspective and focusing on students and community members rather than just on the paras, which this study did not do. This study does describe what paras do and it does posit which variables the paras manipulate to achieve their ends. This study also describes some of the variables the paras cannot control (e.g., the attractive force of the secondary sector of the U.S. economy), which, nonetheless, put parameters on their jobs.

C. Changing Para Circumstances

Looking at some of the variables in play allows us to address some policy questions about how paras practice. How effective do we want paras to be? Are we willing to let paras realize their agenda of additive biculturalism? If so, how could we facilitate that? This raises issues of training, compensation, recruitment, and job circumstance. While it is true that none of these issues can be considered apart from the national ambivalence about the civic responsibility to welcome immigrants and to provide fair and responsive schooling for LEP students, how these issues are played out in a specific circumstance is determined locally.

Paras with more schooling and paras with school-district-sponsored training act more innovatively with their LEP students and they are more insistent on articulating the LEP community's various needs to school personnel and people outside the school. If that innovation and enhanced representation is seen as an asset by a district, then that district should give paras more training opportunities.
One could imagine, for example, a framework where the longer a para serves, the greater his or her skill levels are formally recognized and respected. Project PUEBLO at Northern Colorado University actually recruits bilingual paras into its teacher certification program, recognizing the value of the para population's field-based insights.

The compensation of the paras is a significant factor contributing to the marginality of the position and the turnover of the people who occupy it. Presuming that experience equals expertise and that being less marginal multiplies the effectiveness of paras' effort, then how the para position is compensated should also be reconsidered.

Salary structures reflect institutional assumptions about the value of various kinds of knowledge and practice. That paras tend to be at the bottom of school wage scales indicates the play of various attitudes about the quality and relevance of their work. Weiss (1994) noted that in his California study paras were viewed as expendable; after he finished his research the school he had worked at eliminated its para positions during an early part of its budget-cutting process.

In 1993, USD 500 administrators in KCK applied for a $354,707 Title VII-Transitional Bilingual Education Grant (USD 500, 1993), which would complement a $950,575 state and local match, to create a TBE program for K-5 students at Pearson Elementary School. The grant application sought $237,598 (which included $34,269 from the state) for first-year salaries and fringe benefits for 9.45 full-time-equivalent (FTE) employees. Four FTE positions were for bilingual aides (paras), that is 42.3 percent of the overall FTE tally. The paras total projected compensation equalled $50,261, or 21.2 percent of the total.

The paras acknowledged job responsibilities took up more than a page (USD 500, 1993: 40-41) and included, among many, (1) giving individualized and
small-group tutorials in English to LEP students of various language backgrounds; (2) assisting teachers with parent-involvement activities; (3) assisting with English-language and native-language assessment of students; and (4) serving as a school-based translator. Despite recognition of the complexity of the bilingual paras' role, when given the chance to seek as much or as little as it wanted to pay for capable bilingual paras, USD 500 administrators chose to ask only for $12,565 per para. It was willing to compensate the other positions at an average of $34,374 per FTE. It is not hard to see how such unequal compensation leads to marginalization.

Recruitment networks to attract competent paras are important. Great Bend's recent effort to identify potential paras likely will pay dividends in terms of the quality of the contribution that paras provide the Great Bend schools. But recruitment efforts, para retention, and para efficacy will all be compromised if the para position retains its low status and high turnover.

With the information I have presented here school districts and larger institutions of educational policy, like KSBE, have some delineated choices about how they want to use paras and to what end. The fate of thousands of LEP students and their families, as well as cherished notions like equal opportunity, are in the balance.
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