



REL Pacific Ask A REL Response

College and Career Readiness

November 2019

Question:

What is the relationship between college and career readiness and language preservation?

Response:

Following an established REL Pacific research protocol, we conducted a web-based search for resources related to identifying the connections, if any, to college and career readiness and language preservation (see Methods section for search terms and resource selection criteria). We focused our search on studies in the Pacific and other indigenous contexts for greater relevancy to our partners in the Pacific region; however, we included studies with more generalizable findings due to the limited amount of research available in these contexts. We also broadened our search to include research on heritage languages, as studies in this field overlap with language preservation research and efforts.

References are listed in alphabetical order, not necessarily in order of relevance. Descriptions of the resources are quoted directly from the publication abstracts. We have not evaluated the quality of references and the resources provided in this response. We offer them only for your reference. Also, our search included the most commonly used research resources, but they are not comprehensive and other relevant references and resources may exist.

Research References

Agirdag, O. (2014). The literal cost of language assimilation for the children of immigration: The effects of bilingualism on labor market outcomes. In Callahan, R. M. & Gándara, P.C. (Eds.). *The Bilingual Advantage: Language, Literacy, and the Labor Market*. (pp. 160–181). Clevedon, Bristol: Multilingual Matters. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED581559>.

From the abstract: “The Bilingual Advantage draws together researchers from education, economics, sociology, anthropology and linguistics to examine the economic and employment benefits of bilingualism in the US labor market, countering past research that shows no such benefits exist. Collectively, the authors draw on novel methodological approaches and new data to examine the economics of bilingualism for the new generation of bilinguals entering a digital-age globalized workforce. The authors also pay considerable attention to how to best capture measures of bilingualism and biliteracy, given the constraints of most existing datasets. Contents include: Section I: Bilingualism in the US Labor Market: (1) Contextualizing Bilingualism in the Labor Market: New Destinations, Established Enclaves and the Information Age (Rebecca M. Callahan and Patricia C. Gándara); (2) Benefits of Bilingualism: In the Eye of the Beholder? (Reynaldo F. Macías); (3) Exploring Bilingualism, Literacy, Employability and Income Levels among Latinos in the United States (Sarah Catherine K. Moore, Molly Fee, Jongyeon Ee, Terrence G. Wiley and M. Beatriz Arias); Section II: Are There Really Economic Benefits to Bilingualism in the Labor Market?: (4) Labor Market Differences Between Bilingual and Monolingual Hispanics (Joseph P. Robinson-Cimpian); (5) The Occupational Location of Spanish-English Bilinguals in the New Information Economy: The Health and Criminal Justice Sector in the US Borderlands with Mexico (Amado Alarcón, Antonio Di Paolo, Josiah Heyman and María Cristina Morales); (6) Returns to Spanish--English Bilingualism in the New Information Economy: The Health and Criminal Justice Sectors in the Texas Border and Dallas-Tarrant Counties (Amado Alarcón, Antonio Di Paolo, Josiah Heyman and María Cristina Morales); (7) The Literal Cost of Language Assimilation for the Children of Immigration: The Effects of Bilingualism on Labor Market Outcomes (Orhan Agirdag); (8) English Plus: Exploring the Socioeconomic Benefits of Bilingualism in Southern California (Rubén G. Rumbaut); Section III: Employment, Educational Attainment and Bilingualism: (9) Bilinguals in the United States and College Enrollment (Lucrecia Santibañez and Maria Estela Zárata); (10) Employer Preferences: Do Bilingual Applicants and Employees Experience an Advantage? (Diana A. Porras, Jongyeon Ee and Patricia Gándara); Section IV: Policy Options: Fostering Bilingualism in the Market Place: (11) The International Baccalaureate: A College Preparatory Pathway for Heritage Language Speakers and Immigrant Youth (Ursula Aldana and Anysia Mayer); and (12) Looking Toward the Future: Opportunities in a Shifting Linguistic Landscape (Patricia C. Gándara and Rebecca M. Callahan).”

Eunjee, J. & Brutt-Griffler, J. (2018). Language as a bridge to higher education: A large-scale empirical study of heritage language proficiency on language minority students' academic success. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 40(4), 322–337. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1210096>.

From the abstract: “In a nation where monolingualism predominates, heritage language (HL) has been downplayed as less important in educational contexts in the U.S. Disproportionately little attention has been given to the role of HL in language minority (LM) students' attendance to postsecondary education (PSE) (cf. Brutt-Griffler, Janina, and Manka Varghese, eds. 2004. *Bilingualism and Language Pedagogy*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters Press). To address this void, this study investigates whether LM high school students' HL proficiency and use have influence on high school completion and college attendance. To further identify whether these relationships differ by cross-linguistic similarities between HL and English, comparisons are made between Asian and Latinx LM students. We analyse a nationally representative large-scale longitudinal dataset (NELS) using the programming language R. The results from logistic regressions underscore the distinctive role of HL on LM students' high school completion and differentiated effects of HL on PSE pathways. Among our findings, we show that for Latinx students, HL literacy proficiency was a positive predictor of their four-year college attendance; whereas, for Asian students, HL use at home was a positive predictor. The positive effects were observed after controlling for their individual and family background. The study supports the argument that continued use of HL and HL literacy hold the key to enhancing academic attainment.”

Kanno, Y. & Cromley, J. G. (2015). English language learners' pathways to four-year colleges. *Teachers College Record*, 117(12), 1–44. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1080059>.

From the abstract: “Background/Context: English language learners (ELLs) are the fastest growing segment of the K–12 student population in the United States, yet they encounter substantial problems entering higher education. The gap between ELLs and non-ELLs is particularly acute for four-year college access. Research has been largely silent on ELLs' college advancement, and we know little about what inhibits ELLs' college access. Purpose: To examine the process of ELLs' college planning in order to determine which stages of college planning present difficulties to ELLs and why. College planning is conceptualized as consisting of five milestones: (a) aspiring to college, (b) acquiring college qualifications, (c) graduating from high school, (d) applying to college, and (e) enrolling in college. Research Design: Secondary data analysis of the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002. Only students who participated in all of the first three waves (2002, 2004, and 2006) of data collection were included (N = 12,450). Students were divided into three language background groups: (a) ELLs, (b) English-proficient linguistic minority students (EPs), and (c) native speakers of English (NSs). We first compared the college-access patterns of the three language groups. We then mapped out each group's pathways through the milestones. Finally, we conducted multigroup analyses to examine whether and to what extent a different set of predictors shape the groups' college pathways. Findings/Results: It is the early stages of college planning (aspirations and college qualifications stages) that are particularly challenging to ELLs, such that the majority of ELLs never reach the later milestone of applying to a four-year college. Predictors known to matter significantly for the general population's college access are not all significant for ELLs. Conclusions/Recommendations: In order to enable more ELLs to reach four-year colleges, we should make a targeted effort to support them in the early stages of college planning. Racial/ethnic minority ELLs are particularly vulnerable and need more support. We also need to invest more effort into identifying the factors and conditions that specifically influence ELLs' college planning.”

Lindholm-Leary, K., & Borsato, G. (2006). Academic achievement. In F. Genesee, K. Lindholm-Leary, W. Saunders, and D. Christian (Eds.) *Educating English language learners*, (pp. 176–222). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Retrieved from <https://psycnet.apa.org/record/2006-02863-005>.

From the abstract: “Academic achievement broadly refers to the communicative, mathematical, science, social science, and thinking skills and competencies that enable a student to succeed in school and society. In this chapter, academic achievement in English language learners (ELLs) refers to content-area achievement as measured in English, mathematics, science, or social studies; it does not cover the content areas of English language arts, foreign language or other humanities, or cognition. The corpus of research reviewed in this chapter is summarized in terms of the following themes: (1) Program Issues, (2) Language Influences on Academic Achievement, (3) Instructional Issues, (4) Family and Learner Background Factors, and (5) Assessment Issues.”

Núñez, A., Rios-Aguilar, C., Kanno, Y., & Flores, S. M. (2016). English learners and their transition to postsecondary education. In Michael B. Paulsen (Ed.), *Higher education: Handbook of theory and research*, (pp. 41–90). Dordrecht, NL: Springer. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Yasuko_Kanno/publication/303207848_English_Learners_and_Their_Transition_to_Postsecondary_Education/links/5be07a89a6fdcc3a8dc15b38/English-Learners-and-Their-Transition-to-Postsecondary-Education.pdf.

From the abstract: “In this review, we aim to bridge the established scholarship on English Learners (ELs) in K–12 schooling with the comparatively emergent research in current higher education literature, to address how ELs navigate the transition from K–12 schooling to postsecondary education in the U.S. Our objectives are to: (1) advance terminology for describing these students in higher education, (2) provide an understanding of political and legal developments shaping their academic preparation in the K–12 system that have consequences for their success in higher education, (3) identify key themes in the literature on these students once they arrive in higher education, (4) highlight promising theoretical perspectives to guide future research, and (5) advance higher education policy and practice implications. Our primary findings are that precollege and college academic experiences, financial considerations, sociocultural experiences, and cultural and linguistic assets influence EL students’ transitions from high school to college. Based on these findings, we advance theoretical perspectives that emphasize: (1) addressing the multiple social and historical contexts that shape ELs’ educational trajectories, (2) taking into account the multiple social identities associated with EL status, (3) recognizing the resources that support these students (including the assets they bring to education), and (4) challenging deficit ways of framing EL students.”

Pewewardy, C. D. (1992). “*Practice into theory*” journey to the year 2000: *Culturally responsible pedagogy in action...The American Indian Magnet School*. Paper written for Native American Studies: The Academy and the Community Conference (May 14–16, 1992). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED355079>.

From the abstract: “Many American Indian youth confront a choice of forfeiting their cultural heritage in favor of academic achievement. The newly established American Indian Magnet School in St. Paul (Minnesota) addresses this issue by integrating American Indian methodology and ideology across all curriculum areas through effective teaching and sensitivity to learning styles of all students. The school serves 300 Indian and non-Indian students in Grades K–8, and uses cooperative teaching methods, whole language instruction, multicultural literature, and noncompetitive assessment methods. The school provided action research to rediscover the teaching and child-rearing practices of traditional Native peoples and to blend ‘practice into theory.’ This paper also discusses: (1) characteristics needed by teachers of Indian students; (2) elements of a teacher education curriculum that espouses a culturally responsible pedagogy for Indian children; (3) recommendations for classroom techniques; (4) the importance of language preservation programs; (5) the debate over the form of Native language instruction; (6) ‘cultural literacy’ and the literary canon versus multicultural education; (7) matching teaching and learning styles; (8) American Indian Studies programs; and (9) developing links between school and tribal community.”

Methods

Keywords and Search Strings

The following keywords and search strings were used to search the reference databases and other sources:

- “college and career readiness” and “language preservation”
- “development” and “bilingualism”
- “readiness” and “heritage language”
- “academic achievement” and “heritage language”
- “academic achievement” and “language preservation”

Databases and Resources

We searched ERIC, a free online library of over 1.6 million citations of education research sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences, for relevant resources. Additionally, we searched the academic databases JSTOR and Google Scholar.

Reference Search and Selection Criteria

REL Pacific searched ERIC and other academic journal databases for studies that were published in English-language peer-reviewed research journals within the last 20 years, with the exception of the Pewewardy (1992) article, because of its relevance to the topic. REL Pacific prioritized documents that are accessible online and publicly available, and prioritized references that provide practical information based on peer-reviewed research for the higher education leader who requested this Ask A REL.¹ Sources included in this document were last accessed in November 2019. Methodological priorities and considerations given to the following in the review and selection of the references:

- Study types: randomized control trials, quasi experiments, surveys, descriptive data analyses, and literature reviews.
- Target population, sample size, and study duration.
- Limitations and generalizability of the findings and conclusions.

¹ This memorandum is one in a series of quick-turnaround responses to specific questions posed by educational stakeholders in the Pacific Region (American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Hawai'i, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau), which is served by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL Pacific) at McREL International. This memorandum was prepared by REL Pacific under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Contract ED-IES-17-C-0010, administered by McREL International. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.