THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDENTS AND INFLUENCING VARIABLES

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by
Gene V. Stephany
May 1984
THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDENTS AND INFLUENCING VARIABLES

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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ACHIEVEMENT IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDENTS AND INFLUENCING VARIABLES

An Abstract of a Dissertation by
Gene V. Stephany
May 1984
Drake University
Advisor: Dr. Charles Rowley

The problem. Early evaluation of the English as Second Language program for the Southeast Asian refugee population showed a range of achievement levels in English language acquisition. Sociocultural and psychological factors influencing the success in second language acquisition have been of concern to educators in providing appropriate programs.

Procedure. This study was undertaken to determine the degree that selected variables influenced second language learning in the Southeast Asian refugee population in Des Moines public schools. It is intended that this study will provide essential data for program development in the areas of proper assessment, placement, and curricula. A questionnaire to the parents identified: (1) number of years a parent attended school in his or her native country, (2) ability to read and write, (3) predominant language used in the home, and (4) amount of English spoken in the home. Correlational analysis, analysis of variance, and multiple regression analysis were used. The Bilingual Syntax Measure was used to determine achievement in English oral proficiency.

Findings. There was a positive relationship between level of second language acquisition and number of years parents attended school in their native country, parents' ability to read and write, length of time the student had been in school, and amount of English spoken in the home. Levels of achievement were also affected by ethnic group and predominant language spoken in the home.

Conclusions. It was concluded that achievement in second language acquisition was interrelated with several sociocultural and psychological factors: (1) number of years of parent education in native country, (2) parents' ability to read and write, (3) predominant language spoken in the home, (4) the time factor, (5) ethnic group, and (6) amount of English spoken in the home.

Recommendations. It is recommended that: (1) program objectives and curricula should take into account sociocultural and psychological factors that influence second language learning, (2) further study be conducted to determine if literacy efforts have a positive affect on second language acquisition, and (3) further study to determine if the same influencing variables affect the development of second language reading and writing skills.
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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

From 1975 to 1982, more than one-half million Indochinese (Southeast Asian) refugees\(^1\) came to the United States.\(^2\) The refugee population represents several ethnic groups of the Southeast Asian countries. The greatest numbers are from the following language groups: Laotian, Hmong, Thai Dam, Vietnamese, and Cambodian.

The first refugee arrivals in 1975-76 were Vietnamese and Thai Dam. Students from these groups were routinely enrolled in regular mainstream classes with a loosely structured tutorial program provided by English-speaking Southeast Asian adults. These students, having had formal English language education experiences in their respective countries of Vietnam and Laos, were immersed into local school programs and were not formally evaluated as members

\(^1\)There is a legitimate question as to whether some of the Southeast Asians are refugees, but because resolving that issue does not impinge upon their ESL needs, the popular term "refugee" is used herein.

of a special need group thereafter.¹

A "second wave" of refugees arrived in the United States during 1979-80. This influx followed congressional action at the recommendation of the administration, which believed that there were oppressive political and military events in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia. With a congressional mandate, the State Department and Department of Immigration and Naturalization Services expanded the limits of numbers of entrants into the United States. The government was responding to what was considered by the United Nations an emergency situation in the Southeast Asian countries because citizens of the three named countries were filling refugee camps in Thailand to an unmanageable capacity.² The "boat people" of Vietnam, Laotians, Hmong, and Cambodians comprised the second wave of refugee arrivals. They were, for the most part, socially, economically, and educationally less advantaged than the first arrivals. As refugee populations increased, the numbers of limited English-speaking students also swelled proportionately. These students had education histories ranging from some formal education experiences to pre-literate or non-literate levels, in other


²Personal interview with Marvin Weidner, Manager, Iowa Refugee Services Center, Des Moines, Iowa, April 22, 1983.
words, no formal education.\textsuperscript{1}

The Des Moines School District encountered unique challenges with the enrollment of the refugee children. Not only were there language differences and formal education gaps because of lengthy stays in refugee camps, but there were also great cultural differences affecting the educational processes. To address the educational needs of the population, English as Second Language (ESL) programs were developed. Resource language training and tutorial programs served to bring the students to a certain oral English proficiency level with a minimal basic skills exposure. Students were enrolled in courses requiring less reading, such as art, physical education, and music. As English proficiency improved, students were mainstreamed into content area courses.\textsuperscript{2} Initial program evaluation revealed achievement difficulties for some students in all areas, including second language acquisition and reading. Likewise, teachers observed learning behaviors ranging from ease in language acquisition and little difficulty with academic subjects to a pronounced slowness in second language acquisition and almost no or very little progress in academic areas.\textsuperscript{3} One question arose that seemed to reflect more on

\footnotesize

\textsuperscript{1}English as Second Language Program Evaluation, Des Moines Public Schools, 1982, p. 14.


\textsuperscript{3}ESL Program Evaluation, p. 15.
the students than on the program: why did some students
achieve within the curriculum goals and objectives and
others not achieve? Muriel Saville-Troike had observed in
her research concerning second language learning that one
must look further than the language difference to find a
cause for low scholastic achievement.\(^1\) The need for
examining the student's background as one way of answering
that question was underscored as recently as 1982 by Howard
H. Kleinman writing about ESL and Indochinese refugees.
Kleinman concluded:

The relevance of . . . external variables to
one's ability to learn, or more accurately, to
attend to learning, is so self-evident that it
scarcely merits mentioning except for the fact
that such influences have been given relatively
little attention in second language acquisition
research and teaching.\(^2\)

As the survey of the literature will make clear, there had
been theoretical attention to external variables in regard
to second language learning prior to 1982, but Kleinman
was apparently thinking in particular about the lack of such
research about Southeast Asians—precisely the problem
being faced in the local school district.

\(^1\) Muriel Saville-Troike, Foundations for Teaching

Rationale and Purpose of the Study

This study was undertaken because of the concern on the part of the Des Moines school district educators that limited English-speaking students be provided a quality ESL program. In addition to pragmatic questions about placement, assessment, and curriculum that are under constant review, one pupil-centered question needed to be answered. That question was: what variables influence the acquisition of a second language, English, for the Southeast Asian refugee population? It was intended that information answering that inquiry would provide essential data for program development in the school district, as well as being helpful to others who would learn from it.

Both a preliminary reading of the literature and this writer's own observations as an employee of the Des Moines school district's ESL program led to formulation of a primary research hypothesis. General concern about influencing variables was narrowed to a single question about the influence of previous parent education levels on the students' ability to achieve in second language learning. The concern about previous parent education levels is basically socio-linguistic in that both sociological and language acquisition factors are involved. In addition to the primary hypothesis dealing with previous levels of parent education, five supporting questions were developed which logically flowed from the first hypothesis. Some of
these turned out to be psycholinguistic.

The topics of research were approved by the Des Moines School District's Committee on Research and the Office of the Assistant Superintendent. See Appendix A. Encouragement was also given by the faculty of the Department of Education at Drake University.

As will be noted in the review of the literature, most of the theories about influencing variables related to ESL have been stated in such an abstract manner that it would be difficult, if not impossible, to measure them. One of the goals of this study, therefore, was to ask concrete questions which would provide statistically accurate answers as a way of measuring the influence of the variables to be considered.

Definitions

1. Achievement is defined as oral proficiency in English as determined by the Bilingual Syntax Measure.¹

2. Parent education level is defined as the range of abilities to read and write in any one language.²

3. For purposes of this study, Southeast Asian refugees are distinguished as Laotian, Thai Dam, Hmong, Vietnamese,


and Cambodian, according to the descriptions below.

**Ethnic Groups**

The following descriptions of the ethnic groups were established as a framework for understanding the five Southeast Asian communities which have settled in the Des Moines school district. The major areas from which refugees came are Laos, Vietnam, and Cambodia, three small countries located on the Southeast Asian peninsula. Laos and Cambodia have some commonality in that there is evidence of influence from India. Vietnam, however, was more directly influenced by China.\(^1\)

**The Lao**

There are three major ethnic groups (the Lao, the Thai Dam, and the Hmong or Meo) within Laos itself. For various reasons, most of them political and some geographic, the groups have merged in many areas, especially in a common language, Laotian. It is common for each of these groups to speak Lao, and those members who read and write can do so in Laotian.

The Lao comprise the largest of the three groups, politically and culturally.\(^2\) The Lao typically are rural

---


people. There are some large urban areas, however, such as Vientianne, which provide a setting for other cultural influences to prevail. The rural lifestyle centers on small rice farming which produces little more than enough for a family with the small surplus to be used for trade in the market place.

Buddhism has been a strong influence in Lao culture. In the United States, many of the Buddhist ritual practices are maintained for their social value.\(^1\) Second wave refugees (1979-81) from Laos are not as likely to be former government employees or employees of United States activities in Laos as were the first arrivals (1975-76); the second wave refugees are not French-speaking as were the first arrivals.\(^2\)

The Hmong

Of the several ethnic groups from Laos, the Hmong were the largest minority to leave as a result of the armed conflicts. Unlike the Lao who farmed in permanent areas, the Hmong practice a "slash-and-burn" agriculture. They, therefore, moved when an area was no longer fertile.\(^3\) The Hmong men provided a guerrilla-like defense of Laos against the

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\(^1\) Murphy, p. 6.

\(^2\) Ibid., p. 9.

\(^3\) Harmon, p. 7.
Communists. As new arrivals to the United States, the Hmong adults had little education and almost no marketable skills. The teenage children may have had some formal education and might be able to read and write Lao. Because of the time spent in the refugee camps, the younger children were lacking formal education.

The Hmong language was an oral language until just a little more than a generation ago, when Christian missionaries in Laos began to write and teach the Hmong language using Roman alphabetical characters. The political and armed conflicts interfered with this educational initiative. As a result of the uprooting situations in the mountain areas of Laos where the Hmong lived, large numbers migrated into or near the urban centers which were safer at the time. There the Hmong people were more exposed to the predominating Laotian language and schools. Many adults and children, therefore, became bilingual in Hmong and Lao, only to have the refugee camp experience interrupt this advantage, especially for the younger children.

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1 Murphy, p. 9.

2 ESL Program Evaluation, p. 12.

3 Personal interview with Toua Yang, Hmong educator (Des Moines Public Schools), November 7, 1982.
The Thai Dam

The Thai Dam (Black Thai) people are another of the several ethnic groups in Laos. As an ethnic group they have their origin as one of several small tribes located immediately north of North Vietnam. Within the last twenty-five years through geographic annexations and political changes, the Thai Dam have been forced into affiliation with North Vietnam and then with Laos and Thailand. For some of the people, because of the war in Laos, immigration to the United States was the only means of survival. This immigration has caused several obvious problems; among them are the education problems for adults and children alike. Because the current adult generation has lived in Laos, the language, both spoken and written, often is Laotian and not Thai Dam. Therefore, only the older generation can read and write Thai Dam. Recent literacy efforts on the part of the Thai Dam community placed emphasis on reviving both the spoken and written Thai Dam language.

The Vietnamese

Historical information about Vietnam and its people is plentiful. This is perhaps true because of the Vietnamese conflict in which the United States was involved until April 1975. A large number of refugees from that country (415,000 in 1980) entered the United States.\(^1\) Since smaller

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numbers of Vietnamese are represented in the local population, they comprise one of the smaller segments of this study.

Vietnam is an old country with a rich oriental history. Since the late 1800's, French political and cultural influences have been very strong. After Vietnam declared its independence from France and the French actually withdrew from the country, western influence continued, especially from the United States.¹

The Cambodians

Kampuchea, formerly Khmer and before that Cambodia, is a small country situated directly west of Vietnam and south of Laos. Recent history of this country is so saturated with war and massacre that it is almost inappropriate to speak of the state of education during that time. From 1975 through 1979 under the Khmer Rouge regime an estimated three million Cambodians lost their lives. Under the ultra-nationalist and Communist leadership of Pol Pot, the "contaminating people" such as all professionals, including teachers, were destroyed. The only way to live or survive was to work eighteen hours a day in the rice fields.²

¹Ibid.

The Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, defeated the U.S.-backed Lon Nol government in 1975. Pursuing Pol Pot's vision of a peasant nation modeled on the Khmer Empire, the victors forcibly emptied cities and towns and methodically executed the educated class, deemed tainted by non-Khmer influences. Brutal migrations and deadly work-camp conditions killed untold thousands from every stratum of life. Vietnam's invasion drove Pol Pot forces to border areas, and life has regained some normalcy for much of the population.¹

Current American relationships with Kampuchea are complicated by our alliance with China, which continues to back the Pol Pot Communists against the more moderate Vietnamese Communists.

**Educational Systems**

It is from a war-ravaged setting that the Southeast Asian refugees have arrived in the United States. The condition of educational systems during the war and, therefore, immediately prior to the refugees' arrival in this country, was in a state of confusion, according to information gathered from the students in this study. A brief sketch of educational systems, however, provides a framework for understanding.

**Laos**

Public education in Laos can be traced back to the early 1900's when schools were established by the French. The French, the Vietnamese, and especially Buddhist monks

¹Pan-Asian Child Rearing Practices, p. 598.
were the instructors in the schools. For a long while educators adhered primarily to a study of basic Buddhist morality and only additionally to reading, writing, and mathematics. It was only recently that both sexes were included in the educational process, and that the function of teaching was carried out by lay persons and not just the monks.\(^1\)

Education followed the French system: six years of elementary education divided into two segments of lower and upper; seven years of secondary. Upper secondary, also called lycee, was often preparatory for college. However, by the 1970's there were still only a few thousand students at the college level.\(^2\)

**Vietnam**

The Vietnamese place a high value on education, focusing on the virtues of knowledge and wisdom. Partially because of western influence, a European system of education was practiced in the country. It is noteworthy to point out that in the Vietnamese culture, adults, including teachers, are highly respected. Education has been one of the most reliable ways the Vietnamese have been able to raise their socio-economic status.\(^3\)

\(^1\)Harmon, p. 18. \(^2\)Ibid. \(^3\)Pan-Asian Child Rearing Practices, p. 93.
Cambodia

The program and methods of education in Cambodia do not differ significantly from those in other Southeast Asian countries.\(^1\) As in the other Southeast Asian countries, armed conflicts have interfered with the normal education processes in Cambodia.

**Instrumentation and Design**

Two instruments were created specifically for this study, one to determine parent education level, the other to determine the amount of English spoken in the home. The data gathering instrument to determine parent education level was designed by the researcher and three members of the Southeast Asian communities who had been involved with formal education either in their native country or in the United States or both. The instrument was developed in letter form and translated into the four languages of Laotian, Hmong, Vietnamese, and Cambodian. It was designed to assess not only the number of years a person (parent) attended school but also whether the person could read and write his/her native language. Questions were asked to assess the range of ability levels of reading and writing in the person's native or first language or any one language.

Finally, a question was asked to determine what language was used predominantly in the home.

The second survey form was used to determine only the amount of English used in the home. A stratified sample of the student population by geographic area of schools in Des Moines was used for determining the amount of English spoken in the home. (See Appendix C.) The survey was completed by the student with the help of the ESL teacher. The instrument for obtaining student data was designed by the researcher in conjunction with personnel from the Des Moines school district's Evaluation Department.

Hypotheses Tested

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among Southeast Asian students and the number of years parents attended school in their native country.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among Southeast Asian students and the ability of parents to read and write in any one language.

Hypothesis 3: The level of achievement in second language acquisition among Southeast Asian students differs by ethnic group membership.

Hypothesis 4: The level of achievement in second language acquisition among Southeast Asian students differs by the predominant language spoken in the home.

Hypothesis 5: There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among Southeast Asian students and the length of time a Southeast Asian student has spent in Des Moines schools.
Hypothesis 6: There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among Southeast Asian students and the amount of English spoken in the home.

Sequence of Hypotheses

The rationale for the ordering of the hypotheses is that concern for parent education levels is basic. The following four hypotheses deal with a progression of variables related to parent education. Briefly those variables are: ability of parents to read and write in any one language; ethnic group of parent and student; predominant family language; length of time a student has been in the Des Moines schools. Hypothesis 6 was placed last in the sequence because a separate instrument and also separate data were used for testing the hypothesis.

Review of Related Literature

Literature related to second language acquisition and influencing variables typically focuses on socio-psychological variables. The hypotheses of this research relate especially to the sociocultural variables influencing second language learning. The variable of foremost concern is the sociocultural variable of previous parent education levels. In relation to the purpose of this study it should be noted that literature relating to parent education levels of Southeast Asian parents as an influencing factor is non-existent. The review concentrates, therefore, on certain socio-psychological variables that have a close
relationship with the concerns stated in the six hypotheses: namely, social factors such as acculturation and assimilation; affective factors such as motivation and ethnic identity; and socio-psychological factors such as age, duration of instruction, and amount of native language interference.

Limitations

1. This study was limited to the Southeast Asian refugee population represented in Des Moines, Iowa. The data were collected in the 1981-82 school term. Students in grades two through ten who were in ESL/bilingual education programs during that one year were included in the study, as also were their parents. Persons of Southeast Asian nationality who served as guardians were considered as parents. One parent per home was asked to complete the parent survey.

2. Because of language barriers and cultural bias in the available tests, intelligence tests were not administered to determine whether or not mental capacity was a factor in second language acquisition of these Southeast Asian groups. However, literature that examined other limited English-speaking groups and intelligence testing was reviewed for its generalizable significance.
Assumptions

1. For purposes of this study, literacy or conversely, illiteracy, was not inferred to be synonymous with years of education. The terms used in this study such as number of years of education, education level, and literacy are, of course, related by definition and connotation. Current discussions, however, have broadened the definition of literacy. Kenneth Levine stated: "people without access to printed material relevant to their information needs, as well as those lacking rudimentary reading and writing skills, now count as illiterate."¹ Literacy has, therefore, taken on a much more functional definition and is not necessarily synonymous with number of years of education.

2. Years in school in the Southeast Asian countries included in this study were considered equivalent as a measure of education level with years of school in the United States.

3. It was assumed that those respondents who could not read and/or write in their native language had someone who could read and write in the language complete the parent survey form.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of Related Literature

Introduction

Much has been written about teaching and learning English as a second language. Almost nothing has been written about Southeast Asians learning English as a second language. H. H. Kleinmann called attention to the fact that the abundance of literature about learning English as a second language does not include two particular variables relevant to the Southeast Asians: their particular experiences in their homelands and their experiences as refugees.¹

To help place the review of literature specifically in the context of the Southeast Asian population, the following observations by two authors are cited. They summarize the condition of education at the end of the United States' involvement in at least one of the Southeast Asian countries and note the adverse living conditions the refugees had endured. R. E. Harmon's report is valuable for its concise summary of the condition of education at the time of the political upheaval in Laos:

¹Kleinmann, p. 3.
By 1976, the formal system of education in Laos extended from elementary through university levels. However, it is important to understand that access to education was limited at every level. A study of literacy in Laos was conducted in 1968, with literacy defined as a fourth grade reading level. The study found that of the males aged 15-45, fifty to sixty percent were literate; of the females aged 14-35, twenty-five percent were literate. Among 14-24 year olds, 75% of males and 29% of the females were literate. Literacy rates were slightly higher in urban areas than in rural areas for both men and women, as reflected in these percentages: urban males 31%, urban females 13%; and rural males 31%, rural females 10% literacy. This low level of literacy, coupled with the fact that English as a second language was not a required (or even optional) subject in most Lao schools, will have great significance for American educators.¹

H. H. Kleinmann observed the following about refugee conditions and their relevance to ESL programs:

external variables affecting one's ability to learn, especially in the case of immigrants or refugees, might include employment status, vocational opportunities, and general economic well-being. The relevance of such external variables to one's ability to learn, or more accurately, to attend to learning, is so self-evident that it scarcely merits mentioning except for the fact that such influences have been given relatively little attention in second language acquisition research and teaching. Perhaps the reason for this is that language specialists consider these influences to be out of their control and prefer to concentrate on more manageable problem areas. While they are sympathetic, teachers do not have the time or the professional expertise to deal with these problems adequately. The absence of a strategy to address the problem leaves the ESL program wanting, even in the presence of a seemingly flawless internal design. External influences inevitably penetrate the language problem,

¹Harmon, p. 18.
adversely affecting its impact. Since many of these external influences imply social service needs of second language learners, a systematic procedure for integrating them with the language program is essential for smooth program operation.¹

Variables in ESL Literature

The literature related to acquiring English as a second language focuses largely on the notion of differentiating variables which affect the learning situation. An extensive effort to define the full range of such variables is available in a taxonomy prepared by John Schumann,² summarized in Table 1. Schumann's taxonomy does not include all possible variables—including those to be studied in this dissertation project.

Schumann's rationale for producing such a taxonomy is to highlight acculturation, which he claims to be the major factor in teaching ESL. Acculturation factors are at the heart of the present study also, although at first glance there seems to be little connection between the variables in Schumann's taxonomy and those which are to be examined in the six hypotheses of this study. Table 2 lists the six factors of this study. Table 3 attempts to introduce a

¹Kleinmann, p. 240.

Table 1
Taxonomy of Factors Influencing Second-Language Acquisition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Factors</th>
<th>Dominance; Nondominance; Subordination; Assimilation; Acculturation; Preservation; Enclosure; Cohesiveness; Size; Congruence; Attitude; Intended Length of Residence in TL Area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affective Factors</td>
<td>Language Shock; Cultural Shock; Motivation; Ego-permeability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personality Factors</td>
<td>Tolerance for Ambiguity; Sensitivity to Rejection; Introversion/Extroversion; Self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Factors</td>
<td>Cognitive Development; Cognitive Processes: imitation, analogy, generalization, rote memorization; Cognitive Style: field dependence, category width, cognitive interference, monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological Factors</td>
<td>Lateralization; Transfer; Infrasystems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aptitude Factors</td>
<td>Modern Language Aptitude; IQ; Stereophony</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Factors</td>
<td>Nesting Patterns; Transition Anxiety; Reaction to Teaching Methods; Choice of Learning Strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Input Factors</td>
<td>Frequency; Salience; Complexity; Type of Interlocutor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instructional Factors</td>
<td>Goals; Teacher; Method; Text; Duration; Intensity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2
Variables Specific to This Study

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Number of Years Parent Attended School in Native Country</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Parent Ability to Read and Write in Any One Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Months in Des Moines Schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Ethnic Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Native Language Spoken in the Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Amount of English Spoken in the Home</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3

Variables Influencing Second Language Learning Included in This Research Project and/or in the Review of Literature

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables Researched in This Project</th>
<th>Are these variables found in Schumann's taxonomy?</th>
<th>Are these variables found in the writings of other authors?</th>
<th>Are these variables included in the review of literature for this project?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Years parent attended school in native country</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Parent ability to read and write in any one language</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Months in school</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Ethnic group</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes: Ervin-Tripp</td>
<td>Yes: Ervin-Tripp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Native language spoken in the home</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes: Krashen</td>
<td>Yes: Krashen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. English spoken in the home</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
rationale for using Schumann's taxonomy in connection with the six hypotheses of this study and the selected variables reviewed in the literature section. The table illustrates that the variables chosen for the study are unique in that they involved a population and raised questions that have not been adequately addressed in research or the literature. The modest list of variables studied in the literature review is included for their value of being associated with the basic areas of sociocultural and affective variables influencing second language learning. Within the scope of this study, it is the researcher's best judgment that those variables chosen for the literature review are quite adequate for understanding the kinds of variables which influence second language learning. It is also intended that an understanding of these selected variables reviewed in the literature will be helpful for insights into the questions of this study. The list of variables reviewed in the literature is not exhaustive but is inclusive of several of the sociocultural and affective variables common to second language learning.

Table 4 is a list of variables included in the review of literature in this project. The list of variables reviewed in the literature does not coincide in any great degree with either the list of variables provided by Schumann or the list of this researcher's variables. Why draw attention to a taxonomy such as the one provided by Schumann? Why select an apparent random list of variables from the literature
Table 4

Variables Reported in the Literature Review of this Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Sociocultural Variables:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cultural Adaptation and Identity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Role of Language in Culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Social Class as a Variable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>B. Psychological Factors as Variables:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Intelligence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Attitude and Motivation: The Integrative Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Self-esteem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Effects of Immigration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Introversion and Extroversion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Aggression</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>C. Variables Which are Both Sociocultural and Psychological</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Disadvantaged Child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Language Dominance in the Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Socialization of the Student</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
for review? The questions are not facetious. The use of Schumann's taxonomy illustrates a range of possible influencing variables. The selection of a few variables for the literature review provides a focus for at least two major categories of variables: sociocultural and psychological/affective. A third category picks up four variables that are more easily and appropriately connected with the South-east Asian population and the ages of the subjects of this study: age, the disadvantaged child, language dominance in the home, and socialization of the student. The four variables exhibit combined elements of both the psychological and the sociocultural factors. For example, Ervin-Tripp treats age both as a sociocultural and a psychological variable. The subject of the deprived child and language learning is treated by L. Feagans and D. C. Farran from the sociocultural and behavioral point of view. These three authors will be cited in detail later. Language dominance and socialization also cross lines of sociocultural and psychological influences. A separate category has, therefore, been set up for treatment of the final four variables.

Sociocultural Variables Influencing Second Language Learning

Cultural Adaptation and Identity as a Variable

There is a need to look at the special nature of the cultural adaptation, or sometimes referred to as cultural
identity, in the refugee population. For, as Saville-Troike maintains, there is an obvious and close tie between language and culture so that in learning a first language children are also learning a culture. Learning a second language involves learning a second culture.\(^1\) The relationship between language development and cultural influences is appropriately studied under the umbrella of sociolinguistics.

Some researchers define sociolinguistics in relation to cultural identity. For example, S. Ervin-Tripp and C. Mitchell-Kernan defined sociolinguistics as a term used to refer to differences in linguistic structures of socially defined groups.\(^2\) J. J. Gumperz offered a definition that is equally salient: "Sociolinguistics is the study of verbal behavior in terms of the social characteristics of speakers, their cultural backgrounds, and the ecological properties of the environment in which they interact."\(^3\) These formal definitions will serve as a focus for the observations concerning the influencing variables of adaptation and identity. They share a concern for the socially defined group and

\(^{1}\)Saville-Troike, p. 45.


verbal behaviors in the environment.

An additional aspect of sociolinguistics is emphasized by H. C. Trivedi who observed that learning a second language means changing the learner's behavior and injecting a new way of life and new values of life into already settled behavior patterns. In second language learning, two languages and, therefore, two cultures come in contact.¹

These authors agree that the multiplicity of influences on second language learning for the student refugee population is compounded by the pressures of adapting to a new culture. Current research in the area of sociolinguistics is intended to yield insight into the questions and problems surrounding the influence of cultural adaptation on second language acquisition. This takes the form of studying sociolinguistic variables.

Trivedi pointed to the variable of cultural identity as an influencing factor in second language learning. He stated: "You cannot learn a new language unless you have a sympathetic understanding of the cultural setting of that language," and quoting a Sanskrit verse: "As you speak so will you reveal not only the culture of your family but of your ancestors and of your race."²

¹H. C. Trivedi, "Culture in Language Learning," English Language Teaching Journal, 23 (1968), 93.

²Ibid., p. 94.
A significant amount of research by Wallace E. Lambert, McGill University, has provided data which can be applied to the Southeast Asian population adapting to a western culture. Research by Lambert suggested there may exist a cultural variable which accounts for associational responses.\(^1\) As enculturation takes place, more and more second language responses are attributed to the adaptation and identity variable. Lambert's research addressed the questions of what processes are involved in first and in second language learning. He concluded that language behaviors of the child are continuously modified by the influences of adaptation and enculturation.\(^2\)

A somewhat incidental finding in Lambert's study further supports the adaptation and identity variable. It was found that language learning in two separate cultures, as is the case for most Southeast Asian refugees, increases the independence of semantic and syntactic structures. To know syntax in one language may not help to learn syntax in another language. In other words, if cultural adaptation and identity do not occur, the development of a second language is impaired because of previous cultural entrenchment.\(^3\)

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\(^2\)Ibid.

\(^3\)Ibid., p. 60.
Researchers, therefore, recognize that language is more than a purely linguistic system, more than a relation of sound and meaning. The social and cultural aspects of language are receiving deeper consideration in reference to social behavior. B. Blount and M. Sanches argued that language is fundamentally social behavior and that linguistic features are now considered primarily in terms of their social and cultural aspects.¹ Trivedi described language as a mode of human behavior and culture as patterned behavior and suggested that language is a vital part of culture. He stated further that learning a second language would mean changing the learner's behavior and injecting a new way of life and new values of living into an already settled behavior pattern. "Thus, second-language learning involves the process of transferring cultural patterns of the source language to the target language."² This opinion is also stated by Blount and Sanches through their research among class differentiated dialects, concluding that language is never context (culturally) free.³ The recognition that language is social behavior and that social meaning becomes deeply engrained


²Trivedi, p. 92.

³Blount and Sanches, n.p.
supports Trivedi's contention that learning a second language means learning a new way of life.

In her classic study, T. Skutnabb-Kangas stated that a distinctive culture is intimately tied to the minority's own tradition and that ethnic identity is closely connected to language.¹

Role of Language in Culture as a Variable

Another concern of second language learning in the context of social and cultural variables is the question of whether the role of language is the same in every culture. The research of this paper will not focus on resolving the question. However, the matter is addressed here to illustrate yet another influencing variable in second language acquisition. Blount and Sanches emphasized that speech habits functionally vary in their adaptation to particular social and natural environments and that there are ways in which some languages are evolutionarily more advanced than others.² A case in point is the Hmong language which did not exist in written form until a little more than a generation ago.³ It is not clear what constitutes evidence as to the ways in


² Blount and Sanches, p. 7.

³ Toua Yang, personal interview.
which some languages are more evolutionarily advanced than others, Blount and Sanches argued, but it does seem clear that languages are subject to social pressures and that selection in response to those pressures occurs during language development; hence, evolutionary advancement.¹

The example of the Hmong language, which was unwritten until recently, serves to illustrate the converse of the evolutionary process to which Blount and Sanches referred. With the absence of social pressures and sociocultural complexity such as economic and political issues, for example, a language may not develop the complex vocabulary which conveys those realities.² To learn a second language which does reflect a sociocultural complexity carries with it the difficulty of learning a new role of language and not just a new language. Saville-Troike stated:

Language is a key component of culture. It is the primary medium for transmitting culture, making the process of language learning in children in part a process of enculturation. Children learning their native language are learning their own culture; learning a second language also involves learning a second culture to varying degrees, which may have very profound psychological and social consequences for both children and adults.³

¹ Blount and Sanches, p. 8.
² Ibid.
³ Saville-Troike, p. 45.
N. A. McQuown represented a case for the prime importance of the role of language in a cultural system. Language constitutes the focal area for all investigation of culture. Further, he maintained that to learn another language without learning the role of language in the society and culture of the community where the language is spoken has little to recommend it.¹

Support for the close tie between the role of language and culture is also offered by H. Hoijer whose 1974 article described the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis. The hypothesis maintains that no two languages are ever sufficiently similar to be considered as representing the same social reality. The worlds in which different societies live are distinct from one another and are not the same environments with different labels.² When those worlds are as distinct culturally as East and West, the concerns of influencing social variables and second language learning are even more acute. Hoijer's commentary on the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis supports the concept that language functions not simply as a device for reporting experience, but also, and more importantly, as a way of defining experience for its speakers. Hoijer further


stated that to the extent languages and cultures differ markedly from each other, so do significant barriers exist to cross-cultural communication and understanding,\(^1\) a conclusion that provides insight into the role of language in culture and second language learning.

**Social Class as a Variable:**

**Basil Bernstein's Research**

One of the foremost researchers in the area of socio-cultural influences in learning and achievement is Basil Bernstein. His work is specifically concerned with social class and its influence on learning behaviors, establishing whether there is a correlation between subclass and achievement.\(^2\) Bernstein's work and conclusions will have limited application for the population of this study.

Bernstein begins with the premise that language is seen as an integrating phenomenon, as the major source through which a culture is transmitted. He observed that social structure and social relations generate distinct linguistic forms or codes and "... these codes essentially transmit the culture and so condition behavior."\(^3\)

Bernstein continued to propose that the general patterns

\(^1\)Ibid., p. 122.


\(^3\)Ibid., p. 121.
of a child's speech are comprised of critical sets of choices, preferences for some alternatives, which develop and stabilized through time. Eventually, these patterns come to play an important role in various intellectual and social behaviors of the child. The roles, or codes as he calls them, exist within the social structure and become more and more entrenched. Communication becomes controlled by conditions of the environment because only certain meanings are conveyed through language. A kind of "which comes first" situation occurs because behaviors become subordinate to a linguistic code and the linguistic code in turn controls the social behaviors.\(^1\) Bernstein noted that different languages entail different world views,\(^2\) a viewpoint previously cited that is supported by Trivedi\(^3\) and Lambert.\(^4\)

Bernstein acknowledged that people who speak different languages may be said to live in different worlds of reality

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\(^1\)Ibid.


\(^3\)Trivedi, p. 97.

in the sense that the languages they speak affect to a considerable degree both their sensory perceptions and their habitual modes of thought. He wrote:

The social structure becomes the substratum of a child's experience so that every time the child listens or speaks the social structure of which he is a part is reinforced, in him and his social identity is constrained.¹

Bernstein observed that context is a major control upon syntactic and lexical selection. He concluded that children who are culturally different tend to have more difficulty in school because the so-called "context" or culture in which coding takes place is itself restricted.²

The populations for Bernstein's research were working-class and middle-class families, generally described in terms of education levels and jobs or careers. The working-class family structure is less formally organized than that of the middle-class family in relation to the development of the child. Although the authority within the working-class family is more explicit, the values which it expresses do not give rise to the carefully ordered world of the middle-class family.³ "Thus between the school and community of the working-class child there may exist a cultural

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¹ Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, p. 124.
³ Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, p. 32.
discontinuity based upon two radically different systems of communication."¹ In other words, the child learns speech (codes) which regulates verbal acts both for home and for school. Thereby the child operates within two social structures. Bernstein's conclusion can be summarized, in part, by his suggestion that role models of child control and rearing practices associated with social class encourage different sociolinguistic abilities. The lower the social class, the less linguistic ability.² Even though the Southeast Asian family structure and culture do not coincide closely with Bernstein's populations, there is value in his conclusion in that language development is closely related to sociocultural setting resulting in cultural identity and distinct codes for communicating.

The three sociocultural variables of adaptation/identity, role of language in culture, and social class have been presented to offer a sketch of the kinds of social influences that operate in the process of second language learning.


²Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, p. 307.
Psychological Factors as Variables Influencing Second Language Learning

The research literature dealing with second language acquisition, whether it be in the areas of linguistics, social psychology or the other social sciences, has for the most part dealt with sociocultural variables. There are also influencing variables that deal not so much with social adaptation but rather with intellectual and affective factors. A comment by the well-known associate of Piaget, Barbel Inhelder, as cited by M. Pratelli-Palmareni, indicates the need for exploring areas other than sociolinguistic ones which influence language development: "All the resources of the child's environment cannot of themselves explain the spontaneous creativity inherent in the formation of . . . language and thought. . . ." \(^1\) This section of literature review is concerned with such factors.

Intelligence as a Variable

Lambert and his associates studied several variables influencing second language learning. One of them was intelligence. Research as reported by Lambert and Peal has value in that the intelligence variable was specifically controlled in their study, thereby allowing the possibility of isolating the data and conclusions. Their studies on

bilingualism conducted in Montreal with ten-year-old children in six French schools concluded that bilinguals, French and English, performed better than monolinguals on verbal and nonverbal intelligence tests.\(^1\) A study conducted earlier (1951) by Jones and Steward, as cited by Lambert and Peal, concluded that bilingual and monolingual groups differed little in nonverbal intelligence tests and that monolingual groups were usually superior to bilingual groups in verbal tests. Lambert and Peal give as a reason for the subsequent reversal in their findings the fact that the bilingual youngster has had wider experiences in two cultures resulting in advantages which monolingual children do not enjoy.\(^2\)

Studies dating from the 1920's up through the 1960's, however, reported varied conclusions. Some concluded that bilingualism has a detrimental effect on intellectual functioning. Other investigations, as Lambert reported, have found little or no influence of bilingualism on intelligence.\(^3\) The research of Skutnabb-Kangas with Finnish children in Sweden found that children given no instruction in their mother tongue gradually lost competence in Finnish without gaining full native-level competence in Swedish,

\(^1\) Lambert, *Language, Psychology and Culture*, p. 132.

\(^2\) Ibid.

\(^3\) Ibid., p. 61.
producing a "subtractive bilingualism" or a semilingualism which hampered students' academic achievement. Skutnabb-Kangas hypothesized that depriving students who come from a socially subordinated culture of instruction in their native language may interfere with their cognitive development.¹ Research by Bernstein also relating to social class and achievement has been cited earlier.² The conclusions of both Skutnabb-Kangas and Lambert and Peal may not be easily inferred to the Southeast Asian refugee situation, especially since their dual cultural experiences are not simultaneous and further because the cultural experiences are so vastly separate in basic world views. Also, the cultural experience of the Southeast Asian can almost be negated since the younger children did not directly experience what westerners might consider pure culture because the war simply made living a matter of survival with little or no time for education and enrichment.

With the multiplicity of complicating factors such as definitions of pure bilingualism, monolingualism, intelligence, and difficulties with controlled testing and research in areas such as socio-economic status, age grouping, national and religious sympathies, it is apparent from the literature that a clear measure of the variable of

¹Skutnabb-Kangas, p. 1.

²Bernstein, Class, Codes and Control, p. 119.
intelligence and second language learning for the Southeast Asian population of this study is not available at this time.

**Attitude and Motivation as Variables**

**The Integrative Variable**

**Gardner and Lambert's Research**

Some of the most extensive research in second language learning has been done by W. E. Lambert and R. C. Gardner at McGill University in Montreal. Their research is especially significant for this study since they have addressed the area of psychological factors as influences on behaviors and on second language learning.¹

The authors, Gardner and Lambert, advanced a theory of second language learning that maintains the successful learner of a second language must be psychologically prepared to adopt various aspects of behavior which characterize members of another linguistic-culture group.² Gardner and Lambert suggested that motivation to learn a second language is related to one's integrative orientation. That is, the student wishes to learn more about the second culture because he or she is interested in being accepted as a member of that culture. Their study was conducted


²Ibid.
among English-speaking students learning French. In Des Moines, however, Southeast Asian students appear to be faced both with a strong native culture in the home, with little or no English spoken (see Table 18, Chapter Four), and with the pressures of a school setting where acculturation processes surround the student daily.

Gardner and Lambert conducted additional research to determine how some people, given the same opportunities, could learn a second or foreign language so easily and so well while others find it almost impossible. They suggested that motivation to learn a second language is related to one's integrative orientation. The student wishes to learn more about the second culture because he or she is interested in being accepted as a member of that culture. Further, second language learning is motivated by a basic desire to be like valued people in one's environment. This study does not attempt to correlate second language learning and attitudes or motivation levels of Southeast Asian students. The implications of Gardner and Lambert's theory, however, are supportive of the premise that the length of time a Southeast Asian student has spent in the new culture has an effect upon his or her level of proficiency in English (see Table 18, Chapter Four).

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1Ibid., p. 132.  
2Ibid., p. 61.  
Gardner and Lambert maintained that second language learning is dependent upon essentially the same type of motivation that is necessary for a child to learn a first language. They argue that if an individual learning a second language adopts certain behavior patterns which are characteristic of another cultural group, this will at least partly determine success in learning a new language. They concluded that a strong motivation to learn a second language follows from a desire to be accepted as a member of a new linguistic community.\(^1\) J. Schumann supported this conclusion by observing that the degree to which the second language learner acculturates is the degree to which that individual will be successful in learning the second language. He cited research done with a group of immigrant workers in Germany (the Heidelbert Project, 1976) which offered substantial evidence that acculturation was the major causal factor in second language learning.\(^2\)

Gardner and Lambert's research reaffirmed that high ratings in achievement in learning French as a second language are due not only to linguistic aptitude but also to an attitudinal and motivational factor. They reported


that maximum prediction of success in second language acquisition comes from the intensity of motivation to learn a second language.¹

An earlier study by Gardner (1968) surveyed attitudes of parents toward their children's second language learning. Parents with positive attitudes toward other language communities more actively encouraged their children to learn a second language.² This research attempted to correlate second language learning and attitudes and/or motivation levels of students and parents. The implications of Gardner and Lambert's theory are that the attitudes students' parents have toward the culture can help one predict achievement of second language acquisition.³

To summarize, the research of Gardner and Lambert was concerned not only with parental attitudes but also with the role of attitude and motivation, the so-called integrative attitude, on the part of the child who is a second language learner. Their study had its inception with Miller and Dollard's (1941) study in which the factors of motivation, perception, responding, and reinforcement were found


²ESL Program Evaluation, p. 13.

to be essential components of learning in general. Gardner and Lambert's areas of investigation extended these factors to include second language learning aptitude, intelligence, attitudinal disposition and motivation.¹

Additional Affective Variables

As a corollary to Gardner and Lambert's conclusion, Krashen hypothesized that in addition to the affective variable of motivation, there is a need for low-level anxiety, self-confidence and self-esteem.² J. Pesner and F. Auld of the University of Windsor, Ontario (and H. D. Brown, University of Michigan) have done studies subsequent to Gardner and Lambert's research regarding self-esteem and bilingualism. While Gardner and Lambert focused on motivation and attitude of learners and their environment, Pesner and Auld concentrated on the effects of learning a second language.³ If one experiences positive effects, the stronger is the motivation to maintain proficiency in the second language; "... when one achieves something that one believes to be

¹Ibid., p. 133.


valuable and worth aspiring to, one's self-esteem is enhanced."¹ A possible limitation to the application of their study for a Southeast Asian population is that the subjects for their research were high school students from middle class families.

Pesner and Auld have relied upon Gardner and Lambert's distinguishing features of motivation in second language learning, those of "instrumental" and "integrative" motivation. That is to say, instrumentally motivated individuals learn a second language for its practical use while integrative motivation reflects a personal interest in the new cultural group.² Cem Alptekin observed that some immigrants are in a target culture as a result of their decision to settle there. Their original motivation is integrative and will tend to remain so "unless they confront what they perceive to be cultural insensitivity from their new environment."³ Unfortunately, as H. H. Kleinmann pointed out, immigration is an inherently stressful life event. Added to all other variables influencing second language learning is the anxiety and frustration brought about by the interruption of routine living. An individual's "role system" and

¹Ibid., p. 341. ²Ibid., p. 340.

social identity are disturbed. The intensity of stress when immigration is involuntary, as with the refugees, is even more severe.¹

H. D. Brown, University of Michigan, provided helpful discussion in the area of affective variables as influences in second language learning. He lists three general categories of the affective domain: (a) egocentric factors, (b) social factors, and (c) cognitive style. Supporting Gardner and Lambert's research (1959 and 1972), Brown called attention to the role of self-esteem and success in second language learning. Even the instrumentally motivated person needs to identify with the new culture of the second language group if the individual is to become proficient in the second language. Brown stated that a person diligently strives for those things that build self-esteem; hence, success results when one is motivated to learn a second language.² Brown includes the so-called social factors with affective variables rather than with the umbrella category of "culture-conflict." He does this from a belief that the social factors deal with the affective aspects of human relationships. Three such variables are listed: empathy, introversion/extroversion, and aggression. Brown

¹Kleinmann, p. 240.

reviewed language as one of the primary areas of empathizing. According to tests Brown administered, a high degree of empathy was predictive of success in second language learning.¹

In addition, however, Brown stated that the areas of introversion/extroversion were not as yet thoroughly researched, nor was the area of aggression. He cautioned that because a second language learner may appear introverted, one should not draw the conclusion that this person is not a potential second language learner, nor that such a person would necessarily be any less proficient than an extroverted personality.

Finally, Brown called for research in the area of aggression and second language learning, pointing out that this affective variable might enhance success in second language acquisition.² This could well be a major factor in Western perceptions of Southeast Asians, because they are often seen as introverted. This perception is erroneous. The observed shyness of many Southeast Asian students is cultural rather than personal. A nonaggressive behavior and posture of listening and receiving are considered appropriate classroom behaviors for the Southeast Asian student.³ This point is also substantiated by

¹Ibid., p. 235. ²Ibid., p. 238.
³Toua Yang, personal interview.
research conducted by Hymes (1978), Stodolsky and Lesser (1967), Casden and Legget (1978): "Cultural differences exist not only in cognitive information processing habits but also in the interactional contexts in which people prefer to learn and demonstrate when they have learned from some kind of performance."¹ Saville-Troike stated that children who "learn to learn" in one culture and then must learn in the modes of another, experience some confusion and dislocation in the process; hence, a non-aggressive posture is more often than not observed.²

These affective variables of self-esteem, introversion/extroversion, and aggression have been discussed briefly to highlight their presence and to indicate that research in these areas has not been extensive and needs to continue.

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Sociocultural/Psychological Variables Influencing Second Language Learning

Some of the variables influencing second language learning appear more clearly to be of a sociocultural nature and others of a psychological nature. Still other variables researched by experts are viewed as having characteristics of both areas. Among them are age, being a disadvantaged


²Saville-Troike, p. 58.
child, language dominance in the home, and socialization.

**Age as a Variable**

One such variable is analyzed by S. Ervin-Tripp in her discussion of age. She labels this a sociocultural variable in the context of acculturation, yet she asks two basic questions that connect with the biological and psychological realms. The two questions are: (1) whether there is a biologically based critical period (age) for language acquisition, and (2) whether second language learning involves different processes than does first language learning. Her research points out that age fourteen marked a point of decline in ability to learn a foreign language. In part, this is attributed to "... a lessened ability to acquire those aspects of second language skills which are most dependent on identification with the speakers of the language."¹

Leslie A. Hart's work on how the brain functions at different ages provides a basis for assessing capacities for language learning. He stated that: "a child has a deep, genetically transmitted tendency toward speech; that large, rather well-defined areas of the cerebrum are allocated to

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language." According to McLaughlin, however, this is not to reinforce a belief concerning the so-called biologically based critical period for language acquisition. In fact, he maintains that memory heuristics improve with age, making it possible to retain input longer and to discover meaning. Krashen, Long, and Scarella have also presented evidence to counter the popular belief that younger children learn a second language more quickly than their older counterparts. Their study provided evidence in support of the following generalizations:

(1) Adults proceed through early states of syntactic and morphological development faster than children (where time and exposure are held constant).

(2) Older children acquire faster than younger children (again, in early stages of morphological and syntactic development where time and exposure are held constant).

(3) Acquirers who begin natural exposure to second languages during childhood generally achieve higher second language proficiency than those beginning as adults.

The comments of B. McLaughlin refute the commonly held belief that young children learn a second language more

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quickly than adults would accomplish the same task. He cites the research of Lenneberg (1967) which sought to establish the position that brain functions after puberty would not support further linguistic development, therefore supporting an opinion that second language is best learned at an early age. McLaughlin's report states that such a theory is unsubstantiated. Controlled studies to which he refers (Fodor, Bever, and Gerrett, 1974), comparing younger children with older children, generally indicate that older children perform better. "The results of experimental research comparing young children with adults learning a second language invariably show that older groups do better."

McLaughlin's conclusion is that the evidence points to older children doing better on almost all aspects of language acquisition than do younger children; and, that little interference occurs from the first language in the process of second language learning for older children. Ervin-Tripp concludes that older children learn a second language faster. This also supports Krashen's contention regarding rate of second language learning and age. Krashen's

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1 McLaughlin, p. 455.

2 Ibid.

3 Susan Ervin-Tripp, "Is Second Language Learning Like the First?" TESOL Quarterly, 8, No. 2 (June 1974), 126.

summary of the age factor attributes the fast rate of acquisition to production strategies that older learners have that young acquirers do not have. While children also show occasional first language interference, adults appear to be more able to use the first language "syntax" as a strategy and are better able to use the conscious grammar to bring their sentences into conformity with second language patterns. There is truly an ongoing debate among researchers and second language experts concerning the time in life that a second language is best learned. While no definitive conclusions appear to have been reached at this time, the issue of age certainly has relevance for this study since the subjects of the study were Southeast Asian children from the age of seven through seventeen.

Ervin-Tripp theorized, however, that second language learning for a child will reflect many of the same processes of development as used in first language development. In first language development, the child strains, filters, and reorganizes what he is exposed to and, subsequently, second language learning will be handled by the mental processes already available.


2Ervin-Tripp, Language Acquisition and Communication Choice, p. 3.
The question of whether second language acquisition involves different processes than that of first language learning is also addressed by McLaughlin. According to his report, the subject of a differing process for children and adults is debatable.\(^1\) One argument states that there is a difference because learned rules and habits of a first language will interfere with second language learning. The other side of the debate argues that the process is essentially the same and may differ only accidentally, such as where the language is learned.

As already stated in references to Trivedi\(^2\) and Blount and Sanches,\(^3\) a person learning a second language within that environment will not truly learn the language unless at the same time the culture is assimilated, which is an advantage for a child. Ervin-Tripp adds the need to focus on the functions of the language. That is, the importance of the function of language is more significant in the learning of a second language than previously realized, no matter at what age. Function of language within a culture is the important feature of learning the language. Reference to the role of language in a society has already been cited.\(^4\)

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\(^1\)McLaughlin, p. 441.

\(^2\)Trivedi, p. 92.

\(^3\)Blount and Sanches, p. 3.

\(^4\)Ibid., p. 8.
Following Ervin-Tripp's viewpoint, age is not as important as function in the process of learning a second language. That is why, she maintains, less emphasis should be given to drill and practice, replacing the theory that practice makes perfect, and more time should be given to focusing on the function of the second language.¹

The Disadvantaged Child and Second Language Learning

Other researchers have pursued the sociological and psychological factors of the environment of the child as an influence on second language learning. L. Feagans and C. C. Farran asked whether "advantaged children may succeed in school because their parents are helping them to understand why they should go to school and why they should conform to teachers' expectations."² Southeast Asian refugee parents may be at a disadvantage in a western society's school system reflecting Feagans' and Farran's contention. This is likely since the Southeast Asian parent is not used to the same kinds of parental involvement expected of American families. For example, in Laos the prevailing attitude is that the teacher is among the most respected persons because


education is so highly valued.¹

Feagans and Farran cited "in press" research that investigates the behaviors of poverty mothers in relation to the same behaviors in middle-class mothers. Binet test scores differed by only one point from the children of poor mothers now showing middle-class behaviors. This kind of data might suggest, they propose, a research process, which is experimental in nature, to examine the influence of a range of variables and second language learning. These two researchers suggested that comparison groups are a possible strategy to identifying factors within one group that theoretically appear to be causal and to look for their presence in the other group, thereby linking the outcomes.²

Ervin-Tripp cited the Lambert studies, which have been reported earlier in this study, to support the contention that environmental and social factors affect the language development process. She referred to the segment of Lambert's study in which English-speaking Canadian kindergarten students were immersed into a classroom setting where French was the only medium of instruction. The monolingual English-speaking students "in an astonishingly short time" were achieving in language and other subject areas equally to French students.³


²Feagans and Farran, p. 23.

³Ervin-Tripp, Language Acquisition and Communication Choice, p. 92.
Ervin-Tripp argued, however, that this kind of phenomenon immediately raises the question of why the same kind of quick assimilation and achievement does not also take place among Chicanos in California schools. Her belief attributes the differences between the English-speaking Canadian children and Chicano children to social circumstances.¹ Recent educational research done by the United States Department of Education supports this same opinion. For Hispanic students with a Spanish language background, proficiency in English is strongly related to socio-economic status, place of birth, and whether the mother spent all of her life in the United States.²

The Canadian students, English-speaking in a French environment, have very little or no sense of inferiority or disadvantage in school. Their social group has power in the community. Their language is heard widely in every setting of society.³ The situations for many Chicano children and likewise for many Southeast Asian refugee children is quite different. For example, except in a very few areas Southeast Asian students are among the

¹Ibid.


³Ervin-Tripp, Language Acquisition and Communication Choice, p. 93.
smallest of minority groups. While no research conclusions have been ventured, the opinion of Ervin-Tripp in regard to disadvantaged children lends support to the conditions of most of the Southeast Asian refugees in Des Moines. At the time of this study 78 percent of the refugee population was receiving some welfare assistance.¹

Michael Stubbs conducted extensive research similar to Bernstein's approach with so-called "deprived" segments of society.² While neither researcher studied second language acquisition, their work in language development has relevance to second language learning. As Ervin-Tripp noted, second language learning reflects many of the same processes of development as used in first language development.³ Stubbs' deprivation theory sets out to relate children's language, social class, and educational success. The premises of his theory have wider relevance not only to general educational success but also to language acquisition as it relates to one culturally deprived only in the sense that he or she is a foreign child not yet exposed to and assimilated

¹Racial Make-up of School Enrollment (Des Moines Public Schools, 1982), p. 1.


³Ervin-Tripp, Language Acquisition and Communication Choice, p. 95.
into the new culture. As Stubbs himself mentions: "Deprivation is taken to refer to cultural or linguistic deprivation."\(^1\) Stubbs' discussion of the deprivation theory tends to support Bernstein's conclusion, especially since Stubbs theorizes that children who are deprived, in whatever area, will be less successful in school simply because we expect them to do poorly.

The debate over deprivation and its relation to achievement may linger and as Stubbs says, "go full circle." In its extreme, as Stubbs maintains, the deprivation theorist claims that children who fail at school are typically either exposed to an inferior variety of language, or not exposed to enough language, or exposed to a social or family background which is impoverished in some way. In relation to the Southeast Asian population, it must be stated that deprivation can refer to the absence of exposure to the culture and language of the second culture. As M. Saville-Troike states: "Where a group . . . has recently immigrated, there may be an identification of certain cultural traits with a particular ethnic group, but this is, historically speaking, accidental and transitory."\(^2\) While it is hoped this condition is indeed transitory, consideration for the lack of exposure to a second language and culture is a

\(^1\)Stubbs, p. 143.

\(^2\)Saville-Troike, p. 61.
deprivation and, therefore, a negative influence on second language learning.

Language Dominance in the Home as a Variable

Closely related to the concepts of the disadvantaged child is the area of the second language learner's home language. Recent studies have been conducted concerning the influence of the home environment by Krashen, especially the variable of language dominance in the home. His research found a significant relationship between test performance and extent to which the target language was used in the home.\(^1\) While his research was conducted among young adult ESL students, the findings have significance for the South-east Asian population in which the target language (English) is not often used in the home environment (see Table 17, Chapter Four).

Research illustrating achievement of students from homes in which English was not often spoken has recently been published. The data for this study was drawn from 1979-80 studies. The document issued by the Education Commission of the States reports that on the average, students of other-than-English-dominant homes performed below English language students.\(^2\) "It appears that it is the

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\(^1\) Krashen, Long, and Scarella, p. 573.

\(^2\) National Assessment of Educational Progress (Denver, CO: Educational Commission of the States, 1982).
association of bi- or multilingualism with a host of other socio-economic, cultural and demographic factors that determines the degree to which being from an 'other language' home will be an educational disadvantage.\textsuperscript{1} The reports suggest that the language dominance is not the only contributor to poor academic performance but is definitely a factor. That is to say, home environment, including language dominance, is a variable in second language learning that must be accounted for.

**Socialization as a Variable**

A final variable which is treated by authors from a sociocultural and psychological viewpoint is the factor of socialization. Jenny Cook-Cumperz in *Child Discourse* presents an argument that language learning is a social experience. Her research was done with children in first or native language settings and not with second language learners. However, is not the same social experience necessary for the second language learner? Cook-Gumperz states that both the strategies for acquiring syntactic knowledge and the child's development of semantic categories depend upon an awareness of social relationships. Cook-Gumperz's suggestion that school-language socialization allows children to have experiences of how to interact with

\textsuperscript{1}Ibid., p. 11.
new people and situations provides a plus in what otherwise would be a long list of variables hampering second language acquisition.\(^1\) The social nature of linguistic expression is also supported by Marian Blank. Her research illustrates that, for people who are fluent in language, rapid shifts across sentences go almost unnoticed, while the context may still be coherent. The reason for coherence, however, is not based on anything that is said but rather on what is not said. Speaking (and reading) involve thoughts that are linked so as to create a coherent set of ideas. Even the simplest of conversation exchanges, therefore, demands a high level of "implicit" connectedness. "Students who have not attained mastery of verbal-verbal exchanges do not possess the skills by which to connect the seemingly endless variety of situations they could confront."\(^2\) Blank's research is especially applicable to the population of this study since the oriental cultures of the various ethnic groups must confront the hurdles of the implicit meanings of western thought patterns and western systems of verbalizing. Only 6 percent of the students from across the country were Asian in the Blank study, and therefore, the report cautions

\(^1\)Ervin-Tripp and Mitchell-Kernan, eds., Child Discourse, p. 106.

that results from this small number of respondents should not be taken definitively.¹

Summary

The review of literature has focused on three major areas: (1) the sociocultural variables influencing second language learning, (2) psychological and affective factors as variables, and (3) four other variables which are a combination of both sociocultural and psychological factors and which can also be associated with the specific conditions of the Southeast Asian population. Reasons for the choice of variables for discussion were presented at the beginning of the chapter.

¹Ibid., p. 1.
CHAPTER THREE
Methodology

The Instruments

A questionnaire was designed to identify: (1) the number of years a parent of the Southeast Asian student attended school in his/her native country, (2) the parent's ability to read and write in any one language, and (3) the language predominantly used in the home. A sample questionnaire can be found in Appendix D.

A question on the survey asked for number of years a person (parent) attended school in his/her native country. Systems of education in Southeast Asia and in the United States have several of the same features in that the elementary and secondary programs offer similar curricula and are organized by grade levels.¹ Level of education and range of abilities to read and write were determined by inquiring about the number of years in school in the native country and reading and writing abilities in any one language.

Survey questions assessing abilities to read and write provided four categories of responses ranging from (1) no

¹Murphy, p. 24.
ability to read and/or write to (4) ability to read and/or write very well. Items that would reflect the ability to read and write at certain levels were suggested by the Southeast Asian educators who assisted in developing the questionnaire. An average reader is labeled as one who could read a newspaper. Someone who can read very well would also probably be able to read a foreign language.¹

A second questionnaire was developed to assess the amount of English spoken in the home. See Appendix C. This questionnaire was not presented to the parents directly in order to keep the original questionnaire from becoming overloaded with a diversity of questions. Instead, the questions determining amount of English spoken in the home were asked of a stratified sample of students according to geographic areas of the district. The sample of one hundred was taken from the population included for the parent survey.

**Measures of Achievement**

The Bilingual Syntax Measure I & II is an oral test relying on the natural speech of students as the basis for assessing their level of syntactical and structural proficiency in English. Bilingual Syntax Measure level

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¹Personal interview with Bounlieng Phommasouvanh, Center for Educational Experimentation, Development and Evaluation, Univ. of Iowa, Iowa City, Jan. 1982.
designations can be used to classify students according to federal,¹ ESEA Title VII,² and Lau regulations:

Lau v. Nichols, 94 S.Ct. 786 (1974). This case was filed in San Francisco on March 24, 1970, on behalf of 1,800 Chinese speaking children who argued that the San Francisco school district's failure to provide instruction in their primary language was a violation of the Fourteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and of Section 601 of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 which bans discrimination "on the grounds of race, color, or national origin."

On January 21, 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court held that a school district's failure to provide special assistance to students who do not speak English denies them a meaningful opportunity to participate in the public educational program and, thus, violates regulations and guidelines of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. The Court held that: "there is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education." The Court did not specify a particular remedy, but did rule that the school district must provide special treatment for children of limited English speaking ability or face the loss of all federal funds.³

Frequent reference to these levels in the presentation of data section of this study necessitates the following narrative descriptions of the six possible proficiency levels as determined by the BSM test.

¹Murphy, p. 10.


³Educating Iowa's Limited English Speaking Students (Des Moines, IA: Department of Public Instruction, 1979), p. 2.
I. No English. Students are able to understand little or no English and are not able to speak it at all.

II. English comprehension only (receptive language level). Students are able to produce some common English words and phrases spontaneously and repeat short sentences or questions. They usually can make themselves understood.

III. Survival English. Students are able to speak some English but they omit nouns or verbs replacing them with gestures or words from their native language. They make errors in the use of articles, verb endings and pronouns.

IV. Intermediate English. Students can adequately communicate their ideas in English. They usually control syntactic structures that include plurals, articles, pronouns and some verb endings.

V. Proficient English I. Students demonstrate a fairly high degree of proficiency in English. They control most of the basic grammatical structures in English. Their speech is comparable to that of native English speakers.

VI. Proficient English II. Students have mastered a broad range of standard syntactic structures. Only certain non-standard forms are used in speaking.\(^1\)

**Population**

The population for this study was confined to the Southeast Asian communities in Des Moines, Iowa. The kindergarten through grade twelve population was 1,350. Of this number approximately 850 received English as a second language instruction during the 1981-82 school year. The difference between these figures means that 500 students

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\(^{1}\) Burt, Dulay, and Hernandez, p. 9.
had completed an ESL program with adequate proficiency scores. Of the 850 students in the ESL program that year, 558 were in grades two through ten and were the subjects of this study.

Parents or guardians of the 558 students were surveyed to determine adult education levels and abilities to read and write in any one language. A total of 483 questionnaires were sent with the assistance of ESL teachers. Some families had more than one child included in the survey samples. See Appendix D. One parent per household was asked to complete the questionnaire and return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope which accompanied the survey sent home with the child from school. Three hundred ninety-one (82.6 percent) responses were received. Of the one hundred students surveyed for use of English in the home, eighty-one (81 percent) responses were received. The parent or guardian-recipients of the questionnaire were for the most part members of the "second wave" refugees mentioned in Chapter One of this study.

Analysis

Three types of statistical analyses were applied to the data: correlational analysis, analysis of variance, and multiple regression analysis. Correlations were used to

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1ESL Program Evaluation, p. 15.
express in mathematical terms the degree of relationship between two variables. A principal advantage of the correlational approach is that it allowed the measure of a great number of variables and the degree of their interrelationships simultaneously. The correlational technique is valuable in that it specifies the degree to which the different variables concerned are related that cannot be gained with other research designs.¹

The second type of statistical analysis applied to the data was analysis of variance. This technique is useful when comparing more than two means. The purpose of analysis of variance for this study was to determine whether any of the language groups differed greatly from any other on a selected variable. If the analysis of variance yields a significant $F$ ratio (the ratio of between groups variance to within groups variance), then a determination can be made concerning which group means differed greatly from one another.²

Regression analysis was used to analyze the data. This technique allowed for the predictability of the dependent variable of student achievement or progress in oral English


²Ibid., p. 308.
proficiency in relation to the criterion variables.¹

Hypothesis One was examined by an analysis of variance test. This analysis provided for a comparison of the mean values of the reported number of years parents attended school in their native country and the number of Bilingual Syntax Measure levels advanced by their children in one school year. The relationship of the mean square within the cells (groups) and the mean square between cells allowed for the comparison of mean values and eventual tenability of the hypothesis.

A Pearson-Product moment correlational study (r), (zero level correlation) was an appropriate statistic for studying or examining the relationship between the rate of second language acquisition for the student and the number of years of parent education in the native country. The correlation illustrates a relation between the time (rate of second language acquisition) it takes a student to advance from level I to level V on the Bilingual Syntax Measure with the number of years a parent attended school in his/her native country.

The hypothesis stating that there will be a relationship between rate of second language acquisition and parent abilities to read and write was also tested by the zero

level correlation. The correlational statistic permits simultaneous measurements of several variables and their interrelationships. This correlational statistic was chosen to compare the rate of language acquisition from a beginning point to a second point using the variable of months in school in relation to parent abilities to read and write. This measure allows for the rate of language acquisition to be considered rather than using scores of a pre- and post-testing situation in which the error factors are compounded.

A stepwise multiple regression analysis was selected for this hypothesis in order to determine the predictability of student achievement in oral English proficiency, in relation to other influencing variables.

The Third Hypothesis listed sought to determine a difference in rate of second language acquisition by ethnic group. Analysis of variance checked the average rates of learning for the different ethnic groups and aided in determining if there was a difference in rate of second language acquisition between ethnic groups. The analysis of variance provided a determination concerning whether or not the group means differed significantly from one another.

Hypothesis Four was tested by the analysis of variance statistic which checked the rates of learning English as a second language by the predominant language spoken in the home to determine if there was a difference in rate and predominance of language spoken in the home.
The Fifth Hypothesis was tested by the product moment correlation statistic. This test was suitable because two time-measures were involved: the rate of language acquisition and the time a student had been in school in Des Moines. The correlational technique provided a procedure for quantifying the nature of the relationships between two "time" variables.

Hypothesis Six was tested by the analysis of variance to determine whether a significant difference existed between groups speaking varying amounts of English in their homes and the rate of achievement in oral proficiency. As with the other analysis of variance tests, mean differences were observed in relation to the "F" value to determine the tenability of the hypothesis.

Finally, a stepwise multiple regression was applied to the sixth hypothesis to determine predictability of oral achievement in relation to the amount of English spoken in the home, after controlling for the variable of length of time enrolled in the Des Moines schools.

All of the statistical tests in this study provided a value which could occur by chance less than 5 percent of the time, the alpha level of .05, and were the basis for accepting or rejecting a hypothesis.
CHAPTER FOUR
Presentation of Data

The following is a presentation of data obtained from the two questionnaires and the testing instrument described in Chapter Three. Included in this chapter is the analysis of the data.

Descriptive Data

Data were gathered from the 399 students of responding parents who comprised the population for the study. Frequency counts by ethnic group are displayed in Table 5. The largest concentrations were from the Laotian, Hmong and Thai Dam groups, all of which originated from the country of Laos with smaller numbers of students from Cambodia and Vietnam. Those who identified themselves as Chinese were from Vietnam or Laos. Four classified themselves as "Other," indicating a mixture of the primary groups.

Native language and language spoken in the home corresponded highly, as Table 6 illustrates. English was listed as the primary language spoken at home by only seven students. Three indicated "Other," listing a mixture of the primary groups such as Laotian and Chinese or Hmong and Laotian. Information contained in Tables 10 and 11 expands
### Table 5

**Ethnic Groups of Southeast Asian Students Enrolled in Des Moines Schools**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Laotian</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodian</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai Dam</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>399</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 6

**Native Language and Language Spoken in the Home by Families of Southeast Asian Students***

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Native Language</th>
<th>Language Spoken in Home</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laotian</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodian</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai Dam</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>395</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*See Appendix B for questionnaire requesting family background data.
upon that of Table 6 by allowing for a comparison of language spoken in the home, the range of number of months students have been in Des Moines schools, and the amount of English spoken in the home. The dominance of the native language as the language spoken in the home held true even though the range of length of time the student was in school was as high as forty-one months.

Table 7 reveals the number of years the responding parents attended school in their native country. For a sample of the parents' questionnaire, see Appendix D. Of 399 respondents, 119, or 30 percent, had never attended school. Twenty years of schooling was reported by two parents. Concentrations occurred at the six- and twelve-year levels with 13 percent and 9 percent respectively. Twenty-four parents, 6 percent, had spent time in school beyond twelve years. One hundred fifty-seven, 39 percent, reported up to six years of education in their native country. An average of about five years of schooling was reported.

Another concern was the ability of parents to read in any one language. The greatest number of parents responding reported a reading ability between "A little" and "Average" as shown in Table 8. Thirteen percent reported a reading ability of "very well" while 22 percent reported no reading ability. See Appendix B for questionnaire requesting family background data.
Table 7

Number of Years Parents of Southeast Asian Students Attended School in Native Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Years of School</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
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<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mean: 4.9  
Median: 3.97
Table 8

Ability of Southeast Asian Parents to Read in Any One Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. None</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A little</td>
<td>108</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Average</td>
<td>146</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Very well</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing Values</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{x} = 2.5 \]

Table 9 shows the range of abilities of the responding parents to write in any one language. Even though the mean values of abilities to read and write are the same, questions regarding the skills of reading and writing were asked separately. A comparison of information about reading ability in Table 8 and writing ability in Table 9 shows that 25 percent of the parents reported an "average" ability in writing while 37 percent reported an "average" ability in reading. Thirteen percent read "very well" while 23 percent wrote "very well."
Table 9

Ability of Southeast Asian Parents to Write in Any One Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ability</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. None</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. A little</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Average</td>
<td>101</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Very well</td>
<td>93</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing Values</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>399</td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{X} = 2.5 \]

Table 10 shows that eighty-one responses from a sample of one hundred provided information about the amount of English spoken in the home at the time of the research. A mean value of 2.6 indicates that a "Few words each day" to "Some English each day" were used. Nine students reported using "No English." Ten students reported using "English most of the time." (See Appendix C for a sample survey form requesting amount of English spoken in the home.) Details of the reasons for a separate sample were explained in Chapter One.

Table 11 is a representation of the number of students enrolled in nine-month school terms. A mean of 17.8 months in Des Moines schools was recorded. Months of attendance ranged from a minimum of four to a maximum of forty-five.
Table 10

Amount of English Spoken in the Homes of Southeast Asian Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. No English</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Few words each day</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Some English each day</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. English most of the time</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>81</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ \bar{X} = 2.6 \]

Table 11

Length of Time Southeast Asian Students were Enrolled in Des Moines Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>0 - 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>167</td>
<td>10 - 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87</td>
<td>19 - 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>28 - 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>37 - 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total:</strong> 392</td>
<td><strong>Mean:</strong> 17.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 12 depicts the comparison of ethnic groups with rate of second language acquisition predicated on tested oral proficiency. Levels of achievement in oral proficiency were determined by the Bilingual Syntax Measure (BSM).
Twelve of the 147 Laotian students did not advance any levels while twenty-one of the same group advanced four levels. Eight of twenty-one or 38 percent of the Vietnamese students advanced four levels. All ethnic Chinese students advanced at least three levels, and three Chinese students advanced a full five levels in one school year. The mean levels advanced for all students was 2.21. Thirty students, 7.7 percent, did not advance any levels during their first school year. Four students advanced a full five levels while 174, 44 percent, advanced two full levels of tested oral proficiency.

The Relationship Between English Language Achievement and Influencing Variables

The data obtained from the sample of Southeast Asian parents and students were tested using the multiple regression, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, and analysis of variance. Hypotheses were rejected at the .05 level. The tests mentioned above were used to identify the interrelationships and the effects of the independent variables on the achievement of tested oral proficiency in English. The independent variables were: number of years parents attended school in their native country, ability of parents to read in any one language, ability of parents to write in any one language, language spoken in the home, ethnic group, amount of English spoken in the home, and
Table 12
Bilingual Syntax Measure Levels Advanced (Time Frame) by Ethnic Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>BSM* Levels Advanced in One School Year</th>
<th>Row Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laotian</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodian</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai Dam</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column Total</td>
<td>N =</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Percentage Advanced | 7.7 | 14.1 | 44.0 | 18.8 | 14.4 | 1.0 | 100% |

Mean = 2.21
*Bilingual Syntax Measure: Test of oral proficiency
months a student had been enrolled in the Des Moines schools. Figure 1 presents a schematic view of those variables.

Table 13 illustrates the intercorrelation for continuous variables used in this research.

The data for this study were analyzed to test the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between level of second language acquisition among Southeast Asian students and number of years their parents attended school in their native country.

Table 14 shows the results of the analysis of variance test applied to the independent variable in Hypothesis One. A mean value of 2.09 was recorded for students with parents who reported no schooling. This value is slightly more than the levels advanced for students of parents who reported one to five years of schooling. Students whose parents reported six to twelve years of education progressed on the average of 2.35 BSM levels in one school year. The highest mean was found among students whose parents reported thirteen to twenty years of schooling ($\bar{X} = 3.04$). Students whose parents attended more than twelve years of school could therefore be expected to advance more levels on the BSM test of oral proficiency in English than students whose parents had less schooling.
Figure 1

Variables Influencing Second Language Acquisition of Southeast Asian Students
Table 13

Intercorrelations of Predictor Variables*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Language in the Home</th>
<th>Years of Schooling of Parents</th>
<th>Parent Ability to Read</th>
<th>Parent Ability to Write</th>
<th>Months in Des Moines Schools</th>
<th>BSM Levels Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Language in the Home</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Years of Schooling of Parents</td>
<td>-.062</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Parent Reading Ability</td>
<td>.051</td>
<td>.783</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Parent Writing Ability</td>
<td>-.023</td>
<td>.806</td>
<td>.940</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Months in Des Moines Schools</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.048</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.033</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. BSM Levels Advanced</td>
<td>.150</td>
<td>.222</td>
<td>.234</td>
<td>.202</td>
<td>.181</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*The variable of "Amount of English spoken in the home" is not shown in this matrix because of the separate N. See Table 18. The variable of "Ethnic Group" is not included because the data is not continuous.
Table 14

Bilingual Syntax Measure Levels Advanced by Years Parents Attended School in Native Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N</th>
<th>Number of Years Parents Attended School in Native Country</th>
<th>Mean Levels Advanced</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>117</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104</td>
<td>1-5</td>
<td>1.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>148</td>
<td>6-12</td>
<td>2.35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>13-20</td>
<td>3.04</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total: 393  
Grand Mean: 2.20

\[ F = 3.257 \ (p<.001, \ df \ 3,389) \]

Further analysis was done using the Pearson product-moment correlation. The correlation coefficient between the number of levels advanced on the BSM during one school year and number of years parents attended school in their native country was \( r = .22 \ (p<.001) \). This indicates that the relationship between the two variables was statistically significant in the desired direction, but was not strong in terms of educational significance. The hypothesis was retained as stated.

Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among Southeast Asian students and the ability of parents to read and write in any one language.

The correlation coefficient between the number of levels students advanced on the Bilingual Syntax Measure
during one school year and the ability of parents to read and/or write in any one language were $r = .23$ and $r = .20$, respectively. Each was significant beyond the .001 level.

Further analysis was completed using a stepwise multiple regression and associated partial correlations. Results of the multiple regression test showed that months in the Des Moines schools correlated highest with the number of levels advanced on the Bilingual Syntax Measure. Ability of parents to read and write in any one language was correlated with number of BSM levels a student advanced after accounting for the number of months a student attended Des Moines schools. The partial correlation between BSM levels advanced and the ability of parents to read after adjusting for months in school was $r = .24$. Corresponding with this, the partial correlation between BSM levels advanced and the ability of parents to write after adjusting for months in school was $r = .22$. This indicates that parental literacy, as defined by a parent's ability to read and write in any one language, was moderately predictive of the rate at which their children learned English. See Tables 8 and 9 for illustrations of parents' ability to read and write in any one language. The hypothesis was retained as stated.

Hypothesis 3: The level of achievement in second language acquisition among the Southeast Asian students differs by ethnic group membership.

To determine if the level of second language learning differed by ethnic group, an analysis of variance test was
used. The test allowed a comparison of how rapidly the second language was learned by the six ethnic groups involved in the study. Table 15 shows that there was a difference in the level of achievement in second language proficiency by ethnic group. Chinese students advanced on the average of 3.16 BSM levels per school year. Hmong students advanced on the average of 1.83 levels. A comparison of Tables 15 and 16 shows that the Vietnamese and Chinese groups attended school more years than did the Hmong and Thai Dam groups. Because cell sizes were too small in some instances and too uneven with other groups, it was not possible in this research to address the question of whether students would achieve at the same rate if parents of different ethnic groups had attended school the same number of years.

Table 16 also illustrates the number of years parents from each ethnic group attended school. Years of education were grouped into four divisions. Vietnamese and Chinese groups attended school the highest number of years with 58 percent and 70 percent having attended from seven to twenty years of school. The Hmong and Thai Dam groups attended the fewest number of years; 16.8 percent of Hmong parents and 39.7 percent of Thai Dam parents had not attended school. The hypothesis was retained as stated.
Table 15
Bilingual Syntax Measure Levels Advanced in One School Year by Southeast Asian Ethnic Groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lao</td>
<td>147</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodian</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai Dam</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average number of BSM levels Advanced in One School Year

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Average Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lao</td>
<td>2.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hmong</td>
<td>1.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vietnamese</td>
<td>2.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>3.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambodian</td>
<td>2.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Thai Dam</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ F = 8.999 \quad (p < .001, \quad df = 5,383) \]
Table 16

Years of School Attended by Parent and Ethnic Group in Native Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of years of School Attendance</th>
<th>Lao</th>
<th>Hmong</th>
<th>Vietnamese</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Cambodian</th>
<th>Thai Dam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>16.8%</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>27.3%</td>
<td>39.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 6</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>37.6%</td>
<td>42.3%</td>
<td>40.9%</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>59.1%</td>
<td>37.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 12</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>35.6%</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
<td>36.4%</td>
<td>60.0%</td>
<td>4.5%</td>
<td>23.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 - 20</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.1%</td>
<td></td>
<td>22.7%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hypothesis 4: The level of achievement in second language acquisition among the Southeast Asian students differs by the predominant language spoken in the home.

As shown earlier in Table 6, only 2 percent of the families surveyed consistently spoke a language in their homes other than that of their ethnic group. It was originally presumed that English would be a more predominant language in the home. As Table 6 indicated, however, this was not in evidence.

Table 17 demonstrates the cell means and significance of the F statistic for this Hypothesis. The analysis shows that the relationships among ethnic group, native language, and the language spoken in the home on the one hand and BSM levels advanced on the other were essentially the same because of the close relationship between the first three variables. Chinese students advanced 3.14 BSM levels while the Hmong students advanced an average of 1.85 levels in the same period of time. The hypothesis was retained as stated.

Hypothesis 5: There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among the Southeast Asian students and the length of time they spent in Des Moines schools.

The time factor, measured by months in Des Moines schools, correlated highest ($r = .56, p<.001$) with the number of BSM levels advanced in one school year. This means that the longer a student was enrolled in the Des Moines schools, the higher was his or her achievement in the area of oral English. Months in the total education
Table 17

Bilingual Syntax Measure Levels Advanced by Predominant Language in the Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lao</th>
<th>Hmong</th>
<th>Vietnamese</th>
<th>Chinese</th>
<th>Cambodian</th>
<th>Thai Dam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average number of BSM levels advanced in one school year:

- Lao: 2.11
- Hmong: 1.85
- Vietnamese: 2.75
- Chinese: 3.14
- Cambodian: 1.95
- Thai Dam: 2.59

F=8.900 (p<.001, df=5,379)
program was the single best predictor of tested proficiency in English. Table 18 illustrates the number of months students were enrolled in Des Moines schools and BSM levels advanced in one school year. This hypothesis was retained as stated.

Reference is made in Chapter Five to data relating to minutes of ESL instruction as a predictor of oral proficiency in second language learning. The data were not used in this study, however, because it was found that months in school, or months in the ESL program, provided more predictive value than did minutes of instruction.\(^1\)

The time factor for the study was one school year. That is, achievement of oral proficiency was measured at the beginning of the school year and again near the end. Therefore, the number of levels advanced on the BSM was the determining factor of achievement of oral proficiency.

Hypothesis 6: There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among the Southeast Asian students and the amount of English spoken in the home.

Eighty-one cases were analyzed for this hypothesis. As explained in Chapter One, a stratified sample using student responses was employed for gathering data on the amount of English spoken in the home.

Table 19 shows the average number of BSM levels

\(^1\)ESL Program Evaluation, p. 22.
Table 18

Bilingual Syntax Measure Levels Advanced and Number of Months Enrolled in Des Moines Schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Months in Des Moines Schools</th>
<th>BSM Levels Advanced</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 18</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 - 27</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28 - 45</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total N =</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>173</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>14.0</td>
<td>44.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

r = .56
Table 19

Bilingual Syntax Measure Levels Advanced in One School Year by Amount of English Spoken in the Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Amount of English Spoken in the Home</th>
<th>No English (N=9)</th>
<th>Few Words (N=28)</th>
<th>Some English (N=34)</th>
<th>English Most of the Time (N=10)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average BSM Levels</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advanced in One School Year</td>
<td>1.56</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>3.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total N=81; Grand Mean = 2.56; F = 4.958 (p<.001, df=3,77)
advanced was 3.20 for those parents reporting that English was spoken "Most of the time" in the home. A mean advance from 1.56 for those speaking "No English" to 2.36 for a "Few words" and 2.79 for "Some English" was recorded. Further analysis using a stepwise multiple regression, after controlling for the amount of time enrolled in the Des Moines schools and parents' ability to read and write, showed that the amount of English spoken in the home was a meaningful and predictable influencing variable in second language acquisition. The hypothesis was retained as stated.
CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Purpose

The primary purpose of this study was to examine the degree of influence certain factors had on second language learning in a population of Southeast Asian students in the Des Moines schools. Of chief concern was the relationship between achievement in oral English proficiency and parent education levels as measured by the years of schooling in their native country and the ability to read and write in any one language. It was evident from various statistical tests applied to the data that the variables perceived to influence second language learning correlated with the numbers of BSM levels students advanced.

Procedure

The data were obtained by using questionnaires and available school district student records. Four hundred eighty-three questionnaires were sent to the parents of 558 Southeast Asian students enrolled in grades two through ten in the Des Moines public schools. Some parents had more than one child enrolled in the schools. Three hundred ninety-nine responses were received for an 82.6 percent
return. A stratified sample of one hundred students was used for obtaining information concerning the amount of English spoken in the home. Eighty-one responses were received.

The data were statistically treated to determine if there were significant interrelationships between the dependent and criterion variables and whether significant degrees of differences existed among the levels of English as a second language achievement and (1) the number of years parents attended school, (2) ability of parents to read and write in any one language, (3) the various ethnic groups, (4) the predominant language spoken in the home, and (5) the amount of English spoken in the home. The data were treated by using the following tests: (1) analysis of variance, (2) product-moment correlations, and (3) stepwise multiple regression. The point of accepting the hypotheses was set at alpha .05.

Results

The findings concerning the hypotheses are as follows:

1. There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among the Southeast Asian students and the number of years parents attended school in their native country. The students whose parents attended thirteen to twenty years of school in their native country advanced more than three levels of tested English proficiency in one school year. Students whose parents attended school
in their native country from one to five years could be expected to acquire a second language at a rate of two tested BSM levels per school year. There was little difference in the levels advanced on the BSM test for those students whose parents reported no schooling and one to five years of schooling.

2. There is a positive relationship between the levels of second language acquisition among the Southeast Asian students and the ability of parents to read and write in any one language. The simple correlation between the number of tested oral proficiency levels advanced and the parents' ability to read and write was statistically significant, but not strong. However, the correlation was slightly higher using a stepwise multiple regression and associated partial correlations. Results showed that after accounting for the time factor, measured by months in Des Moines schools, the ability of parents to read and write in their own language was a moderate indicator of the number of BSM levels advanced for their children.

3. There is a difference in the number of levels advanced on the BSM among Southeast Asian students by ethnic groups. Chinese students advanced at a faster rate than other ethnic groups, followed by Vietnamese students. Hmong and Cambodian students were found to advance the least number of levels on the BSM test. Thai Dam and Lao students advanced slightly less than Vietnamese students.
4. There is a difference in the level of second language acquisition among the Southeast Asian students by predominant language spoken in the home. There was a close relationship between native language and predominant language spoken in the home. This did not have a significant effect on the rate of second language learning. The analysis of variance test, however, showed that the rate of second language learning was influenced along ethnic lines which corresponded to predominant language used in the home. In homes where Chinese was the predominant language, for example, a student could be expected to advance slightly more than three levels of tested oral English proficiency. Hmong students could be expected to advance a little more than one and a half levels.

5. There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among the Southeast Asian students and the length of time the student attended the Des Moines schools. The variable of time-factor was measured by the number of months a student had been enrolled in the Des Moines schools. In a separate study conducted in conjunction with the Des Moines school district's evaluation programs, months in the total education program was the single best predictor of tested proficiency in oral English. It was more predictive than amount of ESL instruction as measured by minutes of ESL instruction per week. The time factor could include a number of influences. For
example, the longer the students have been enrolled in the schools, the more ESL instruction they have received and more importantly, according to the study, the more total academic experiences they have had. The Des Moines study also found that the longer students had been enrolled, the more interpersonal experiences they had in and around school: experiences such as socializing before and after school, playing during recess, extra-curricular activities, and traveling to and from school. Likewise, the longer a student had been enrolled, the more cultural experiences he or she had.¹

6. There is a positive relationship between the level of second language acquisition among the Southeast Asian students and amount of English spoken in the home. Students of families who spoke English "Most of the time" advanced on the average of one to two full levels more of tested oral proficiency than did those students whose families spoke "Some English" or "No English." This variable was found to have a high degree of predictive value for second language growth especially when tested with a stepwise multiple regression, controlling for amount of time spent in school.

¹ESL Program Evaluation, p. 23.
Conclusions

Certain interrelationships and differences did exist as pointed out in the results. The following conclusions are, therefore, drawn from the study:

1. Achievement in learning English as a second language for Southeast Asian students was interrelated with the number of years their parents attended school in their native country.

2. A positive relationship also existed between the number of levels advanced in tested oral proficiency in English and the ability of the Southeast Asian parents to read and/or write in any one language.

3. Achievement in second language learning differed by Southeast Asian ethnic groups.

4. Predominant language spoken in the Southeast Asian home correlated with the level of tested oral proficiency in English as a second language. This relationship corresponded with the level of second language learning and ethnic groups as well as with the factor of native language spoken in the home.

5. The time factor as measured by number of months in the total education program was found to be the most significant influencing variable in second language learning for the study population.

6. The amount of English spoken in the home had a major effect on the level of tested oral proficiency in
second language acquisition for the Southeast Asian students.

Recommendations

1. Educators and others responsible for second language learning should develop program objectives and curricula taking into account the factors of parental education levels and abilities of parents to read and write in any one language.

2. The variables of predominant language spoken in the home and ethnic group factors present influences on second language learning. This should cause program developers to pursue varied need assessment techniques and subsequent approaches to meet the multiple levels of needs of special populations.

3. Consideration must be given to the time factor in relation to second language learning. Time should be examined in relation to total education program and not only in terms of the number of minutes of instruction each day.

4. Program developers and others responsible for second language learning should determine how much English is spoken in the home of the student, and use this information for program writing and for student placement purposes.

5. This study raised questions related to the basic research areas of this paper. Two questions that should be
examined are: Have the efforts toward adult literacy both in the native language and in English since the refugees' arrival in the United States influenced student second language learning? Does the range of the same influencing variables affect the development of reading and writing skills in a second language? The questions posed require further research into the area of factors influencing second language learning.

6. It is recommended that an advocate for the total education program of the ESL population continue to be provided by the school district. While the study showed that language acquisition is closely related to amount of time spent in school, the need for continued educational assistance is evidenced by the close relationship between language learning achievement and the implications of intense ethnic and cultural affiliation.
BIBLIOGRAPHY
BIBLIOGRAPHY

Books


106


Periodicals


Other Sources


Educating Iowa's Limited English Speaking Students. Des Moines, IA: Department of Public Instruction, 1979.


APPENDIX A

APPROVAL FOR SEARCH IN DES MOINES SCHOOL DISTRICT
February 16, 1982

Mr. Gene Stephany
1800 Grand Avenue
Des Moines, Iowa 50307

Dear Mr. Stephany:

The K-12 Research Committee has recommended approval of your study, The Relationship Between Achievement, Specifically Second Language Acquisition, of Southeast Asian Students and Parent Literacy. I have reviewed the committee's recommendation and approve of the study being conducted.

If I can be of further assistance, please call.

Sincerely,

James E. Bowman
Assistant Superintendent
for Instruction

JEB:rt

cc: Elementary Department
Secondary Department
APPENDIX B

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

STUDENT PROFILE
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENT PROFILE

Background Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Column</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1-6) 1. Student's ID number: ____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Name: ____________________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7-8) 3. Place of birth: ________________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(9-14) 4. Birth Date: Month ___ Day ___ Year ___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15-16) 5. Age: ______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(17) 6. Sex: M ___ F ___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(20-22) 7. Current school attending: Bldg. # ______ School: ____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(23-24) 8. How long at this school? (months) ______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(25-26) 9. Grade at current school: ____________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Other schools attended in Des Moines:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bldg. #</th>
<th>School</th>
<th>From (mo. &amp; yr.)</th>
<th>To (mo. &amp; yr.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A. _____</td>
<td>______</td>
<td>__________</td>
<td>__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. _____</td>
<td>______</td>
<td>__________</td>
<td>__________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. _____</td>
<td>______</td>
<td>__________</td>
<td>__________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(36) Mobility (circle one): 1 2 3

(skip 11)

(48) 11. Present ESL level (I to V): __________

(49) At what ESL level did student begin? ____________________________

(50) 12. Native language: ____________________________

(51) 13. Language spoken at home: ____________________________

(52) 14. Ethnic group: ____________________________

(53-56) 15. Date entered U.S.: Month _____ Year ______

(57-60) 16. Date entered school in Des Moines: Month _____ Year ______

(61-62) Grade level entered: ____________________________

(63-66) 17. (Answer only if student attended other school(s) in U.S. prior to moving to Des Moines.)
Date entered school in U.S.: Month _____ Year ______

(67-69) Location: ____________________________

(70) 18. Did the student receive English instruction in refugee/resettlement camp?
Yes ___ No ___

(71-72) How many months? __________

(73-74) 19. Years of schooling in native country: ____________________________

20. Was there an extended gap in school attendance between native country and Des Moines?
Yes ___ No ___

(75) If yes, approximately how long? (months) __________

(76-77)
21. Ability to read native language. Language (check one):
   Cambodian     Among     Lao     Vietnamese

   (Circle appropriate number or numbers)
   Cannot read     Some reading     Reads well

   Beginning      1     2     3     4     5
   Intermediate   1     2     3     4     5
   Advanced       1     2     3     4     5

22. Does student receive ESL instruction? Yes     No

23. Excluding special education students, does student receive other special instruction program? Yes     No

24. Check how much difficulty you feel the student has:
   1. Seldom     2. Sometimes     3. Most of the time

   a. Understanding what the teacher says in English
   b. Reading in English
   c. Speaking in English

25. Teacher rating: In your judgment how has this student progressed in learning English over the past year?
   1. Has not made normal progress for his/her age and grade level.
   2. Has made normal progress.
   3. Has made better than average progress.

26. What were the student's grades for the first semester (or most recent grade period) of the present school year?

   Course     Letter Grade

27. How many times was the student absent during first semester of the present school year?
ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE
Test Information Sheet

Student's name ____________________________

School ________________________________

Bilingual Syntax Measure Results

(128) 28. Test used
1. BSM 1 _______ (Grades K-2)
2. BSM 11 _______ (Grades 3-12)

Date administered __________________________

(129) 29. Present BSM Level (circle one)
1   2   3   4   5   6

Reading Results

Grades K-6

(130-131) 30. Beginning SARI Level: September, 1981 ________

(132-133) 31. Completed SARI Level: May, 1982 ________

(134-135) 32. Number of Levels advanced ________

Houghton Mifflin Reading Series

Grades 7-8

(136) 33. Beginning Level: September, 1981
      (check one)
      1. Medley
      2. Keystone
      3. Impressl
      4. Encore
      5. Accents

(137) 34. Completed Level: May, 1982
      (check one)
      1. Medley
      2. Keystone
      3. Impressl
      4. Encore
      5. Accents

(138) 35. Number of Levels advanced ________
English As A Second Language
Student Profile 1981-82

NAME: ____________________________

ID NUMBER: _______________________

SCHOOL: __________________________

GRADE: ____________________________

COLUMN

(139-143) 36. Final grade 1981-82 in English/Language/Language Arts/Literature
ENG _____

(144-148) 37. Final grade 1981-82 in Reading
RDG _____

(149-153) 38. Final grade 1981-82 in Math/Algebra/Geometry
MAT _____

(154-158) 39. Final grade 1981-82 in Science/Health/Chemistry/Physics
SCI _____

(159-163) 40. Final grade 1981-82 in Social Studies/Geography/World History/
U.S. History/Government
SSC _____

(164-168) 41. Final grade 1981-82 in Art/Music
A/M _____

(169-170) 42. How many times was the student absent during second semester?

_______

(171-173) 43. How many times was the student absent during the total year, 1981-82?

_______
APPENDIX C

SURVEY FORM: AMOUNT OF ENGLISH SPOKEN IN THE HOME
SURVEY FORM: AMOUNT OF ENGLISH SPOKEN IN
THE HOME

Name:______________________________

Grade:____________

Ethnic Group:______________________

How much English does your family speak at home? This includes you and everyone living in your home.

Check only one:

____ No English at home

____ Only a few words each day at home

____ English some of the time at home

____ English most of the time at home

____ English all of the time at home
APPENDIX D

PARENTAL SURVEY FORM IN FOUR LANGUAGES
March, 1982

Dear Parents of ____________________:

I work with the Des Moines Public Schools. I am conducting a survey of Southeast Asian students and parents. Your help will be much appreciated.

The purpose of the survey deals with family education and student achievement. This will help us in planning our instructional program.

Will you please answer the following questions in English.

1. What is your native language?

2. What language do you speak with your children?

3. In your native country, how many years did you attend school?

4. Do you read in your native language? (Check one answer only.)
   ____ No
   ____ A Little (basic book)
   ____ Average (newspaper)
   ____ Very Well (foreign language)

5. Do you write in your native language? (Check one answer only.)
   ____ No
   ____ A Little
   ____ Average
   ____ Very Well

Please return this letter to me in the stamped envelope which is enclosed. The completion of this survey is voluntary.

Thank you.

Gene V. Stephany
MARCH, 1982

Laotian
.................niam thiab txiv hmov tshua.

Kuv ua hauj lwm nrog tsev qhia ntawv dawb (luam) Des Moines. Kuv tau sar daim ntawv no tuaj nooj tsoom niam txiv uas muaj tub ntxhais kawm ntawv tuaj Es XAIS tuaj. Thov ua nej tsaug ntau ntau aus nej pab teb cov lus noog nram no.

Kev noog zaum no yog hais txog kev kawm ntaub ntaw ntawm nej tsev neeg thiabyam tw uas nej cov me nyuam tau ua tiav. Yam no yog yuav cov los pab rau kev nhiax txoj ke qhia.

Thov nej pab teb cov lus noog nram no.

1. Koj yam lus yog lus dab tsi?

2. Koj nrog koj cov me tub me nyuam tham lus dab tsi?

3. Koj kawm ntawv tau pes tsawg xyoo nyob nej teb chaws?

4. Koj puas nyeem tau koj yam lus?
   (kos ib kab xwb)
   ------- Tsis tau
   ------- Tau mi ntsis (phau xyaum nyeem)
   ------- Tau ib nrab (ntawv xov xwm)
   ------- Tau zoo heev (lwm yam lus)

5. Koj puas sau tau koj yam lus?
   (kos ib kab xwb)
   ------- Tsis tau
   ------- Tau ib nrab
   ------- Tau mi ntsis
   ------- Tau zoo heev

Thov muab tsab ntawv no xa nrog lub hnab uas nyob hauv tsab ntawv xa tuaj xa rov los rau kuv. Kev noog zaum no yog ua dawb xwb

Ua tsaug

Gene V. Stephany

Hmong
Tháng 3, 1982

Kính gửi phu-huynh của em:

Tôi làm cho trường công lập ở Des Moines. Tôi là người đứng đầu giúp đỡ cho học sinh A- Châu và phu-huynh. Sự giúp đỡ của phu-huynh tôi xin phiền nhờ.

Dĩ nhiên quan set giáo dục gia đình và học sinh hoàn thành. Việc này sẽ giúp chúng tôi đốc ra chương trình giáo dục.

 Xin vui lòng trả lời những câu hỏi dưới đây bàn: Anh- vân.

1. Nhà huynh chính của phu-huynh?

2. Phu-huynh dùng ngôn ngữ nào nói với con em?

3. Quốc gia của phu-huynh, phu-huynh đã học đến mức nào?

4. Phu-huynh có đọc được ngôn ngữ chính của mình?
   (Xin vui lòng chỉ heter một mà thôi)
   Không
   Định
   Trung bình (bảo chí)
   Giỏi (ngôn ngữ phu)

5. Phu-huynh có viết được ngôn ngữ của mình?
   (Xin vui lòng chỉ heter một mà thôi)
   Không
   Định
   Trung bình
   Giỏi

Xin vui lòng trả lời đây và với bảo thọ ở ngoại có dân tem, Hoàn trả lại với sự tinh nguyện.

Cam ơn

Gene V. Seaphany

Vietnamese
ការប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីឌីជីថលនេះ:

げるូវរបៀបដែលនេះរួមបញ្ចូលការប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីសម្រួលការសិក្សាជីវិតនេះ ឬឬវិធីសាស្ត្រផ្សេងៗក្នុងការរុក្ចារប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍។

កុម្មុយនិកភាពគ្នាមានការប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីដឹងច្រប់អំពីការសិក្សាជីវិតនេះ ឬឬសរសេរការប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីបង្កើតការសិក្សាជីវិតនេះ។

ថ្មីប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីសម្រួលការសិក្សាជីវិតនេះ។

- តើអ្នកប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីសម្រួលមេដឹកនាំជីវិតអ្នកបានទេ?

- តើអ្នកប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីសម្រួលការប្រកបដោយសេចក្តីល្បីទៀតទេ?

- តើអ្នកប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីសម្រួលការប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីសម្រួលការប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីការសិក្សាជីវិតអ្នកបានទេ?

(គឿនអនាគតការសិក្សា:)

- ឈឺ
- ដំបូង (គឿនអនាគត)
- ជីវិត (គឿនអនាគត)
- ចុង (គឿនអនាគត)
- សួរ (គឿនអនាគត) គឿនអនាគត គឿនអនាគត

- តើអ្នកប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីសម្រួលការប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីសម្រួលការប្រការសព្វឱ៉ាន់ការណ៍ដើម្បីការសិក្សាជីវិតអ្នកបានទេ?

(គឿនអនាគតការសិក្សា:)

- ឈឺ
- ដំបូង

Gene V. Stephany

Cambodian