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## Beliefs, concerns, and methods of parents raising children bilingually: A study of Hispanic Iowa mothers attempting to maintain heritage language in their children

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**BELIEFS, CONCERNS, AND METHODS OF PARENTS RAISING CHILDREN  
BILINGUALLY: A STUDY OF HISPANIC IOWA MOTHERS ATTEMPTING TO  
MAINTAIN HERITAGE LANGUAGE IN THEIR CHILDREN**

A Thesis

Submitted

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Designation

University Honors

Briana Vera

University of Northern Iowa

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## **Introduction**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of my thesis was to discover more about parents who are raising their children to be English-Spanish bilingual, particularly their beliefs, concerns, and methods regarding this issue. I focused specifically on mothers in Iowa whose native language was Spanish and who had at least one child in the household between the ages of four and sixteen. A point of interest I focused on were the beliefs, concerns, and methods these mothers have and use to maintain their children's heritage language (Spanish) as the community language (English) becomes more prominent in their children's lives. This information is important for speech-language pathologists because the Hispanic population is constantly rising and in turn, the number of Hispanic clients is rising as well. Speech-language pathologists' (SLP) understanding of Hispanic parent views regarding their children's bilingualism is necessary for SLPs to be able to effectively assist, guide, and communicate with these parents in a manner that is culturally sensitive and aware of their specific concerns.

### **Research Questions to be Answered**

The research questions in this study focused on Hispanic mothers in Iowa whose native language is Spanish, who are raising their children bilingually (English-Spanish), and where there is at least one child in the household between the ages of four and sixteen. The primary research question was:

A) What beliefs and concerns do these mothers have about raising their children bilingually, and what methods/strategies do they use to ensure and maintain their children's active use of Spanish?

Additional questions to support the primary research question were:

- B) Why are they choosing to try to maintain their children's Spanish?
- C) What sources, if any, do they consult for support or information regarding their children's bilingual language development and their role in it?

An additional question to tie the findings together is:

- D) How can SLPs use the findings to the above questions to better assist this population?

### **Definitions**

The following words are used throughout the thesis, so it may be helpful to read their definitions before continuing or refer back to this section as needed when these words appear in the text. All these definitions come from Piller (2001).

Majority Language: Language that is dominant in the community. (It is also known as the community language).

Majority Bilingualism: Bilingualism of the dominant group (e.g., Anglo-Americans who learn Spanish as a second language).

Minority Language: Language that is not dominant in the community.

Minority Bilingualism: Bilingualism of minorities in a community (e.g., Hispanics in the U.S.).

Elite Bilinguals: Middle-class international couples, expatriates, and academics who raise their children in a non-native language.

### **Hypothesis**

Because not much research has been done in this area of study that has focused solely on Hispanic mothers, and it has not focused on Iowa, I thought some of the results would be different from the results that studies had yielded in the past. I thought parents' methods to raise their children bilingually, along with what sources they go to for support and information, might be different. I thought that because Iowa does not have as high of a concentration of Spanish-

speaking Hispanics as do a lot of the states that have been studied (California, Texas), there would be less reliance on the community as a way of parents promoting their children's Spanish development or maintenance.

In addition, I thought that unlike many of the common reasons majority or elite bilinguals have for wanting to raise bilingual children, Spanish-speaking Hispanic mothers would have different reasons for raising their children bilingually. I expected these reasons to be similar to the reasons of other Hispanic Spanish-speaking parents in other studies. Like those Spanish-speaking Hispanic parents in other studies, I thought a strong desire to maintain their native language and familial ties would be the biggest reasons for trying to maintain their children's heritage language. I thought these parents would be more concerned about heritage language loss as a reason to raise their children bilingually, whereas majority and elite bilinguals are concerned with increased intelligence and opportunities as a reason for raising their children bilingually.

### **Literature Review**

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Hispanics make up 16% of the U.S. population, which makes them the largest ethnic or race minority in the U.S. (2009). Of these, 76% who are five-years-old and older speak Spanish in their homes. Furthermore, 12% of U.S. residents speak Spanish at home, and only half of those speak English 'very well.' With this growing number of Spanish speakers in the United States, the importance of understanding their cultures and language practices is ever-increasing, and speech-language pathologists need to be able to serve these populations more and more.

The results from a survey done by the American Speech and Hearing Association (ASHA) in 2001 showed that approximately 13% of SLPs' caseloads are made up of individuals

from Hispanic backgrounds (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2002). That, combined with the fact that 22% of SLPs have not received training regarding working with culturally and linguistically diverse populations (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003), is an indicator that greater understanding of these population through more research and training is necessary to be able to provide more effective and culturally-appropriate services. As stated by Kummerer, Lopez-Reyna, and Hughes, “The delivery of speech and language services to children from language-minority backgrounds has been described as a crisis and of critical concern to the profession that ASHA represents” (2007, p. 272).

In 1984, ASHA released a position statement titled, ‘Clinical Management of Communicatively Handicapped Minority Language Populations,’ and it outlined the special needs of those who speak a minority language, and certain competencies that SLPs must possess in order to effectively serve these populations. Competencies vary depending on whether the client is bilingual English proficient, limited English proficient, or limited in both languages. An ASHA survey in 1982 showed that 77% of SLPs “indicated a need for more knowledge and skill to serve bilingual populations.” One of the suggestions the position statement made for SLPs to better serve linguistically diverse populations was to promote that topic within professional education. In following that suggestion, this thesis will promote the topic of minority language populations, specifically Spanish.

There are three important suggestions that Hispanic mothers have for SLPs that they think would improve their children’s therapy. These are that clinicians should be able to speak Spanish or provide an interpreter in order to help the parent to understand, clinicians should provide the mothers with information about the therapy process and include them in therapy routines, and that similar therapies should be used with Hispanic families as are used with

European American families (Kummerer et al., 2007). However, it took encouragement over time for the mothers to make suggestions, which could be due to a characteristic of their culture called “respeto,” or respect for authority figures (Kummerer et al., 2007; Rodriguez & Olswang, 2002).

### **Hispanic Culture**

In order to understand language beliefs in a certain cultural group, one must have a good grasp on that culture as a whole. There are many definitions of culture, but Ferraro (1992) provides a definition describing it as “everything that people have, think, and do as members of a society.” (p. 18). When working with different cultural groups, it is important to note that while there are many differences across cultures, there are also many differences within cultures, and one should be careful not to assume the same things of everyone within a culture (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2002; Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003).

Some key characteristics of Hispanic culture include familism and allocentrism, which stress the importance of family and the group as opposed to the individual; interdependence, which emphasizes the group and dependence on each other; clearly defined gender roles, which are traditional in nature; simpatia, which places an importance on being agreeable and avoiding conflict; respeto, which is respect for authority figures; tradition; and spirituality (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2002).

An important factor in Hispanics’ views on development depends on their level of acculturation, where more acculturated individuals viewed it as a dynamic process with many determinants, and less acculturated individuals viewed it as having few determinants (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2002). Determinants refer to the factors or elements that influence something, in this case, development. A study done by Rodriguez & Olswang found that eight out of ten

Mexican-American mothers attributed their child's language impairments to extrinsic factors such as God and lack of a stimulating home environment, whereas six out of ten Anglo-American mothers attributed their child's language impairments to intrinsic factors such as medical condition and family history (2003). This is just one example of differences in beliefs between Hispanics (specifically Mexican-Americans), and Anglo-Americans.

In terms of education, Hispanic mothers' views were more strongly traditional and authoritarian than those of Anglo-American mothers. These beliefs included the notions that the "school has the main responsibility for educating children, that parents should not question the teacher's educational methods, and that obedience is important to teach children" (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003, p. 458). The Hispanic mothers also did not believe that they should serve a role in their children's education (Rodriguez & Olswang, 2003). These beliefs all relate back to "respeto" and their belief in respect for authority (Kummerer et al., 2007; Rodriguez & Olswang, 2002).

### **Bilingualism**

Several types of bilingualism and ways in which it is acquired exist. As is explained by Garau and Vidal (2001), balanced or active bilingualism is when an individual is able to fluently speak both languages and uses them actively, and receptive or passive bilingualism is when an individual is fluent in one language but is only able to understand the other. There are several degrees of bilingualism, however, and it is best to think of it as a continuum (Garau & Vidal, 2001).

Bilingual language learners can also acquire both languages in different ways. These ways are simultaneously and sequentially (Piller, 2001; King & Fogle, 2006). Simultaneous bilingualism is when a child grows up learning two languages at the same time (Piller, 2001;



King & Fogle, 2006), and sequential bilingualism is when one language, such as heritage language is learned, and exposure to the other language does not occur until at least two years of age (Piller, 2001).

The majority of the research on bilingualism has focused on majority bilinguals and “elite” bilinguals, who make a very conscious effort and commitment to raising bilingual children. These types of bilinguals typically research and have a plan for how they will raise their children to be bilingual (Piller, 2001). Most of the following information has been obtained through previous research of majority and elite bilinguals, and is typically referring to these types of bilinguals, unless otherwise specified.

Many different methods of raising a child bilingually exist. The most prominent in the literature are One Person-One Language (OPOL) and One Language-One Environment, (OLOE) which is also described as Minority Language at Home (Piller, 2001; King & Fogle, 2006). OPOL is a method in which one parent speaks only the majority/community language to the child, and one parent speaks only the minority language to the child; however, this method has not proven to work consistently well, and it often results in passive bilingualism (Piller, 2001; Garau & Vidal, 2001; King & Fogle, 2006; DeHouwer, 2007; Dopke, 1998; Yamamoto, 1995). One Language-One Environment is a method in which both parents speak only the minority language of the community to their child; this method has shown to be effective in raising children to be actively bilingual (Piller, 2001; King & Fogle, 2006; DeHouwer, 2007). The difference between majority and minority bilinguals’ use of this method is that majority bilinguals make a conscious effort to implement OLOE in their home, whereas minority bilinguals typically implement it by default (Piller, 2001; DeHouwer, 2007).

In addition to overall methods of raising children bilingually, there are many specific strategies that parents can use during discourse with their children to encourage bilingual development. Among these are the Minimal Grasp Strategy/Not Understanding Strategy, where a parent says they do not understand and prompts the child to adjust their speech; the Expressed Guess Strategy, where the parent clarifies the child's speech with a yes-no question that the child can answer; and the Repetition Strategy or the Translation Strategy, where the parent repeats what the child says, but in the other language (Garau & Vidal, 2001; Lanza, 1988; McTear, 1985; Dopke, 1992).

Many parents express concerns regarding raising children bilingually. The two most common parental concerns are that it will cause a language delay in their child, and that it will result in language confusion in their child (King & Fogle, 2006). However, according to DeHouwer (1999), and Petitto and Holowka (2002), no empirical evidence exists which links bilingual acquisition to language delay. There is also no evidence that suggests that language confusion is a result of bilingual acquisition (Lanza, 1992).

While some parents may have concerns, others have high expectations of benefits for raising their children bilingually. A common myth many people believe is that bilingualism results in "bigger, better brains," and improved all-around intelligence and academic performance (King & Fogle, 2006). While bilingualism may contribute to improved cognitive ability in certain areas such as metalinguistic awareness, it is not the sole factor in increased intelligence (Bialystok, 2001; King & Fogle, 2006). Another benefit that parents hope to impart on their children is the increased opportunities they will have in life, such as the ability to communicate and relate to more people around the world, and more job opportunities (Rodriguez, 2010; Bialystok, 2001; Yoshida, 2008).

Perhaps the most common expectation of parents raising bilingual children is that their children will achieve native-like proficiency in both languages (Piller, 2001). However, it is a fact that many children raised bilingually never reach that level of proficiency, and do not use both languages actively (Garau & Vidal, 2001; Yamamoto, 2001). According to Okita (2002), raising children bilingually only has a 75% success rate. Parents' high expectations of raising their children to be actively bilingual are often not met, and as a result, these parents often experience feelings of intense disappointment (Piller, 2001).

### **Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Families: Heritage Language**

Families of culturally diverse backgrounds, on the other hand, hope to maintain their family's heritage language and culture (Rodriguez, 2010; Bialystok, 2001; Yoshida, 2008). Reasons for wanting to maintain the heritage language are maintaining cultural identity and being able to communicate with family back in the home country (Alba, Logan, Lutz, & Stults, 2002; Fillmore, 2000; Rodriguez, 2010). Maintaining the heritage language is particularly important because according to Lambert, for most immigrant children today, English acquisition is a subtractive process, where learning English replaces Spanish skills (1977). Sometimes, parents may believe that their child could switch back to their heritage language when needed, but the fact is that most children who do not actively use a language in everyday context do not develop it (Fillmore, 2000). This occurs because as children get older, they begin to spend more time with English-speaking peers at school or daycare; a highly common result is that their motivation, time, and context to use the majority language increases, while motivation, time, and context to use the minority language decreases (Alba et al., 2002; Rodriguez, 2010). According to Fillmore, heritage language loss is a result of both internal and external factors on a child (2000). The internal factors include the desire for social inclusion, conformity, and the need to

communicate with others, while the external factors include socio-political forces working against language diversity (Fillmore, 2000).

This loss of the heritage language can be detrimental to culturally and linguistically diverse families in many ways. Oftentimes, parents and children grow apart and become emotionally distant due to their inability to connect and convey nuances that require knowledge of a native language (Fillmore, 2000). Parents can also lose their authority over the child, as children are less likely to listen to a language they no longer associate with (Fillmore, 2000). Furthermore, cultural identity is lost, along with the ability to communicate with family in the home country (Alba et al., 2002; Fillmore, 2000; Rodriguez, 2010).

### **Community Support**

As stated earlier, simply speaking the minority language in the home is not always enough to promote bilingualism, and other forms of support are crucial to its success (Fillmore, 2000; Rodriguez, 2010). Using San Antonio, Texas as an example, Bayley, Schechter, and Torres-Ayala identified five “salient” characteristics of communities that favor Spanish maintenance (1996). These characteristics were: concentration of Latinos or a Latino majority, a Latino community that maintains close ties with families in their home country, the two main ethnicities/cultures being Latinos and Anglos, being within easy distance of the home country (in this case, driving distance to Mexico), and not having adopted measures to make English its official language. Based on this information, community support is one of the most beneficial and important aspects of succeeding in maintaining a heritage language.

In order to investigate and delve deeper into the perspectives of Hispanic mothers on the topic of their children’s bilingualism, a research study was conducted. The main purpose of this study was to discover the beliefs, concerns, and methods of Hispanic mothers in Iowa trying

to raise their children bilingually, and how this information could help SLPs better assist this population.

## **Methodology**

### **Procedures**

A four-page questionnaire consisting of 17 items was created for this investigation. The survey items required participants to answer multiple choice, checklist, and open-ended questions regarding their thoughts and concerns about maintaining or developing their children's Spanish. The questionnaire was originally written in English (see Appendix A) by the investigator and then translated into Spanish (see Appendix B) by the investigator, who is bilingual; it was then revised by the English as a Second Language (ESL) instructor of the class from which the participants were recruited, who is also an interpreter.

All research procedures were approved by the IRB at the University of Northern Iowa before beginning research with human participants. Participants were recruited in an ESL class, and the instructor's permission was obtained to conduct research during class time. After the study was explained to the ESL students, consent forms, which were also written in English (see Appendix C) and translated into Spanish (see Appendix D) were distributed to and completed by twenty students who fit the inclusion criteria (mothers in Iowa whose native language was Spanish and who had at least one child in the household between the ages of four and sixteen) and who chose to participate. All participants chose to receive and complete the consent form that was written in Spanish. Participants were then given the questionnaire; all the participants chose to fill out the questionnaire that was written in Spanish. The questionnaires were completed in two separate sessions a week apart, which amounted to a total of about 40 minutes.

The investigator was present to explain all study procedures to the participants, and to answer any questions they had before, during, or after completing the questionnaire.

Immediately following the second session of completing the questionnaire, the participants were invited to participate in a short focus group discussion, and ten of the twenty participants stayed. The focus group discussion lasted approximately fifteen minutes and served as an opportunity for participants to elaborate on and discuss any components of the questionnaire they wanted. Some questions were asked by the investigator during the session to facilitate and guide discussion.

### **Participants**

Participants were recruited from an ESL class located in Des Moines, Iowa, that is funded by a federal grant given to Des Moines Public Schools, which makes it free of cost to students. This class is targeted toward Hispanic Spanish-speaking parents of children enrolled in the Des Moines Public School district. The purpose of it is to provide them with a solid foundation of English in order to be able to be involved in their children's education and be able to use basic English for daily life. However, it is open for anyone who hears about it and wants to improve their English.

Incidentally, all the students in the class were mothers, so the study was shifted from focusing on parent beliefs to specifically the beliefs of mothers. The participants' ages ranged from 24 to 49 years, and the mean age was 35.65 years, with half of the mothers being below the mean age and half being above the mean age.

Of these 20 participants, 70% (14) were from Mexico, 20% (4) were from El Salvador, 5% (1) were from Guatemala, and 5% (1) were from Nicaragua.

Seventy percent (14) of the participants were married, 5% (1) were living with a partner, 15% (3) were single/never married, 5% (1) were divorced, and 5% (1) were widowed. Of the 75% (15) who had husbands or living partners, 100% of them had husbands or living partners whose primary language was Spanish.

The educational background of these participants was fairly evenly distributed. Options were given for whether participants completed some of elementary, middle, or high school, or whether they completed all of elementary, middle or high school. Choices of higher education were also included. The results were as follows: 15% (3) completed some of elementary school and 10% (2) completed all of elementary school; 10% (2) completed some of middle school and 20% (4) completed all of middle school; 20% (4) completed some of high school and 15% (3) completed all of high school; 5% (1) completed some of college; and 5% (1) completed all of college. An important point to keep in mind is that it is highly probable that most, if not all, education was completed in the participants' countries of origin, and thus may not be equivalent to the education system in the U.S.

The employment statuses of the participants were as follows: 35% (7) were employed full-time, 30% (6) were homemakers, 25% (5) were employed part-time, and 10% (2) were unemployed but searching for work.

Each mother had at least one child living in the home who was between the ages of four and sixteen. Between all the participants, there were 49 total children, and of these 49 children, 83.7% (41) fit the necessary criteria to be eligible to be included in the results. So, when looking at the data, the mothers' responses apply only to those 41 children.

## **Results**

Research results were divided into two separate sections: questionnaire results (mostly quantitative data and analysis) and focus group results (qualitative data and analysis). A considerable amount of interpretation and discussion was included in the presentation of these results.

### **Questionnaire Results**

The following are results of the mothers' responses to questions regarding their children's bilingualism. The mothers were asked to differentiate between their children on survey questions that applied by writing the age of the child next to the response that corresponded to that child. Though this option existed for all questions to which this rule applied, almost all the mothers did not differentiate between their children on any of the questions. This could have been for a couple possible reasons: either they did not understand the instructions, or their responses applied to all of their children and there was no need to differentiate.

It is also important to note that the majority of the items on the questionnaire were multiple choice, and the mothers were encouraged to mark all responses that applied. Each response item was converted into a percentage independently of the other response items under the same question. So, the number of responses for each question choice was always divided out of twenty, not out of the total amount of responses for each question. Therefore, the raw numbers for each question often totaled more than twenty (the number of participants), and the percentages for each question often totaled more than 100%, because participants were able to mark more than one response for each question.

Forty percent (8) of the mothers said their children were most proficient in English, while 30% (6) of the mothers said their children were most proficient in Spanish. Thirty-five percent



of the mothers (7) said their children were equally proficient in both languages. All of the mothers except for one categorized all their children into one category. The one mother who differentiated between her children marked that her five-year-old was more proficient in Spanish, while her seven-year-old was equally proficient in both Spanish and English. Because just one mother separated her children in terms of language proficiency, the total raw number comes out to 21 instead of 20, and the percentage adds up to 105%.

The most common method these parents used for raising their children bilingually was the One-Language One-Environment (Minority Language at Home); 75% (15) of the parents said they speak only Spanish at home. They all used this method inadvertently, however, as their reasons for speaking only Spanish were that that was their primary language and that they struggled with English. This is unlike the rationale of majority bilinguals attempting to raise bilingual children. Because majority bilinguals speak the majority language and are attempting to raise children to speak both the majority language and a minority language, they must make conscious efforts to speak the minority language. Native Spanish-speakers therefore have an advantage in that their native language is the minority language, so they unknowingly use one of the best supported methods for raising bilingual children.

Just 5% (1) of respondents used the One-Parent One-Language method in their home. This mother speaks only Spanish at home, while her husband speaks only English at home. However, her husband's primary language is Spanish, and she did not comment on his English proficiency, so it is difficult to determine the effectiveness his use of English has on raising his children bilingually.

Other methods used by the parents included 10% (2) who both speak both English and Spanish in their homes, and 10% (2) who speak only Spanish while their husband/living partner speak both English and Spanish.

To determine if there was a difference between what language the mothers used with their children in different situations, they were asked what language they spoke around other English speakers. Eighty percent (16) responded that they spoke Spanish, 15% (3) responded that they spoke English, and 5% (1) did not write a response. Those that said they spoke Spanish around other English speakers all had the same line of reasoning for doing so; responses included “I speak Spanish because it’s my language and I don’t speak English well” and “Spanish. Our children translate for us because we don’t understand.”

Of the three mothers who said they spoke English around other English speakers, two provided explanations. One mother’s reasoning was this:

(I speak) in English, because it’s a lack of respect at times (to speak Spanish) because they (English speakers) don’t know Spanish, and we shouldn’t mix the two languages, or speak Spanish and English at the same time. Because once you start speaking them together, you lose the essence of the language. Avoid ‘Mex-English’.

The other mother stated that she spoke English when around other English speakers because “they understand all English, and Spanish is more complicated for them to understand.”

Three of the most common strategies that majority or “elite” bilinguals use when raising children bilingually are the Minimal Grasp Strategy/Not Understanding Strategy, the Expressed Guess Strategy, and the Repetition Strategy/Translation Strategy. Of these three strategies, the Expressed Guess Strategy and the Repetition Strategy were the two most-used strategies by the

Hispanic mothers; each strategy was used by 40% (8) of the mothers. The Repetition Strategy/Translation Strategy was used by 30% (6) of the mothers. However, the most-used strategy by these Hispanic mothers was not one of these three strategies; it was reading books to their children in Spanish and/or making sure their children read books in Spanish, which 55% (11) of the mothers used. Similar to this strategy was making sure their children watched movies and television shows in Spanish, with 25% (5) of the mothers using this strategy. One mother (5%) said that she has her children write the grocery list in Spanish. Another mother (5%) wrote, “I tell them things to write in Spanish... letters, sentences. And play ‘Hangman’.”

The issue that concerned these mothers most regarding raising their children bilingually and attempting to maintain their children’s Spanish was that their children would stop speaking Spanish, or lose it altogether. This was the most common concern, with 50% (10) of the mothers marking it as a concern. Twenty-five percent (5) were concerned that their children would confuse Spanish and English. Fifteen percent (3) of the mothers were concerned that their children would have a language delay. Twenty-five percent (5) of the mothers did not have any concerns about raising their children bilingually and attempting to maintain their children’s Spanish. One of these mothers wrote that she had no concerns because “they’ll always retain and maintain their Spanish because we always speak it in our home.” However, as evidenced by the research, this is not always enough for children to be active bilinguals (Fillmore, 2000; Rodriguez, 2010). Another mother wrote that “At the moment, they have both languages down and I am not worried.”

In the hypothetical event that their children were not able to maintain their Spanish, 40% (8) of the mothers indicated that they had concerns. Among these concerns were their children’s loss of their roots and customs, lack of opportunities, and not being able to communicate with

people in their home country. Half (10) of the mothers had no response to this question. Ten percent (2) of the mothers had no concerns, one of the mother's reasoning being that "at home, Spanish is spoken, and at school, English."

Several misconceptions exist regarding the advantages of raising a bilingual child. The two most prevalent are that bilingual children turn out to be more intelligent, and that they receive better grades in school (Bialystok, 2001; King & Fogle, 2006). These are oftentimes the hopes of parents and are some of the main reasons parents want to raise their children bilingually. Other advantages parents hope to impart on their children by raising them bilingually are increased opportunities in life, such as better job opportunities and the ability to relate to more people around the world (Rodriguez, 2010; Bialystok, 2001; Yoshida, 2008). Many of the Hispanic mothers in this study shared these same hopes for their children.

The advantage that the majority of the mothers believed their children would gain from being able to speak English and maintain their Spanish was that they would have more opportunities for work when they were older. Seventy-five percent (15) of the mothers shared this hope.

The second most common advantage these mothers believed, with 65% (13), was that their children would be able to communicate and relate better with more people around the world.

Half (10) of the mothers believed that their children would be more intelligent if they were able to speak English and maintain their Spanish. However, none of their reasons for this included anything about their actual cognitive ability, but instead they wrote about their children's opportunities for the future, work and jobs, and not having problems with the two

cultures. Determining their definition of intelligence would have helped to clarify this issue and made this response more valid.

Twenty-five percent (5) of the mothers believed that their children would get better grades in school. However, similar to their rationale for their children's intelligence, their reasons were not related to cognitive ability. They were instead due to the fact that English is the language used in the schools, so their children would do better by knowing English.

Fifteen percent (3) of the mothers listed other advantages they believed their children would gain from being bilingual. One mother believed an advantage would be that, "They'll be able to communicate better with any person in this country." Another mother stated that, "They can help translate for people who don't understand English."

The issue of what advantages these mothers thought their children would gain from being English-Spanish bilingual was compared between two groups of mothers: those who had completed all of middle school or below and those who had completed part of high school or above. This issue was compared between these two groups of mothers to seek out any differences in beliefs on this issue that may have existed between more highly-educated mothers and less-educated mothers. More specifically, the comparison was done to determine if there was a difference in quantity of cognitive/intelligence-based responses (more intelligent, better grades) versus quantity of opportunity/communication-based responses (job opportunities, relating with people in the world) between these two groups of mothers.

Responses between the two groups were indeed different for cognitive/intelligence-based responses versus opportunity/communication-based responses. Of the mothers who had completed all of middle school or below, 53.8% thought their children would gain opportunity/communication-based advantages, versus 45% of mothers who had completed part

of high school or above. Of the mothers who had completed all of middle school or below, 42.3% thought their children would gain cognitive/intelligence-based advantages versus only 20% of mothers who had completed part of high school or above. The most significant difference between the two groups of mothers was their beliefs about academic performance. While 45.5% of mothers who had completed middle school or below thought their children would get better grades in school, none of the mothers who had completed part of high school or above believed this.

A possible hypothesis for why none of the more highly-educated mothers believed their children would receive better grades in school could be because in their own experience, they received good grades without being bilingual. However this could also be true for the less-educated mothers, except for the fact that they did not have as much experience with the educational system as the more highly-educated mothers. Perhaps the more highly-educated mothers learned that intelligence is not related to languages, or maybe they compared their children to native English-speaking children and reasoned that knowing English would not help their children get better grades than all the other English-speaking children. A solid conclusion definitely cannot be drawn; nonetheless, it is still interesting to ponder such an imbalance in responses between the two groups of mothers. It is important to remember what was discussed earlier, however. None of the mothers' explanations as to why they believe their children would be more intelligent or get better grades in school related to actual cognitive ability.

The reasons for the mothers wanting to maintain their children's Spanish were very evenly distributed. The top reason they wanted to maintain their children's Spanish was so that their children could communicate with Spanish-speaking relatives from their home country; 75% (15) of the mothers indicated this as a reason. Their next most popular reason for wanting to

maintain their children's Spanish was so that their children would maintain their identity as a Hispanic; 65% (13) of the mothers indicated this as a reason. Being able to communicate with Spanish-speaking relatives who live in the U.S. was the third most common reason for wanting to maintain their children's Spanish, with 60% (12) of mothers indicating it as a reason. One mother stated a different reason for wanting to maintain her children's Spanish, saying, "I don't want the same thing to happen again as before, when we came to this country and didn't understand anything or what anyone was saying to us." Though not explicitly stated, it was assumed that she was referring to visits back to their home country and not wanting her children to not understand what people were saying to them.

As was predicted, the Hispanic mothers in Iowa did not mention the community they lived in as a source they consulted for information or support for the development or maintenance of their children's Spanish. In fact, only 35% (7) of them even listed sources they consult for information or support; some listed more than one source. Of these 35%, 85.7% (6) consulted books, 42.9% (3) consulted television programs, 28.6% (2) consulted dictionaries, 14.3% (1) consulted magazines, 14.3% (1) consulted the Internet, and 14.3% (1) used the Head Start Program, which is, as stated on the program's website, "comprehensive child development programs which serve children from birth to age five and their families. The programs are child-focused and have the overall goal of increasing the school readiness of young children in low-income families." (Drake University Head Start, 2011) Ten percent (2) of the mothers stated that they did not need to consult any sources for information or support because Spanish was their first language. One of these mothers wrote, "I don't think it's necessary to find sources of help. I don't see it that way we the parents are the principal teachers in Spanish. When my children have questions in Spanish we are always supporting them." Five percent (1) of the mothers said

that they did not know of any sources of support. Fifty percent (10) of the mothers did not write a response for this question.

Participants were asked to write additional comments, thoughts, and concerns that they had at the end of the questionnaire. Two of the most notable comments were:

The truth is that all (Hispanic) people who live in this country need to learn to speak and maintain both languages. It's important to communicate to your children the importance of speaking both Spanish and English. There are better opportunities for the future.

And:

I think God doesn't look at race, color, religion, or nationality, and it's very good that he has given each country its own language, but we are here in the U.S. and it's necessary that we all learn how to communicate. God loves us and I think this is true as much for the American as for the Salvadorian, Mexican, Guatemalan, etc. And I think that from Chile to Alaska it's an American continent I don't understand why the difference if for God there are no borders.

The quantitative results from the questionnaire provided important information and some surprising results; the following qualitative results from the focus group will provide insight into individual mothers' lives and thoughts that the quantitative results were not able to offer.

### **Focus Group Results**

In order to obtain more in-depth responses and allow the participants to discuss any thoughts that may have arisen about the questionnaire, a short focus group was conducted immediately following their completion of the questionnaire. Ten of the twenty participants chose to stay, and it lasted about fifteen minutes. Results are presented one participant at a time,



in an attempt to present, as much as possible, an individualized and complete portrayal of each mother and her children. It is important to note that not each mother responded to each question or shared thoughts about each issue that was brought up, so some mothers' portraits may not be as detailed as others. It is also important to note that the information for these portraits was taken only from the focus group discussion, therefore, there may be differences between their focus group responses and their survey responses, and do not include as much information as the surveys.

Nancy\*, a thirty-year-old mother from Mexico whose children are eight and twelve, elaborated on her children's use and proficiency of English and Spanish. She said, "They don't know how to write it (Spanish), but they do know how to read, speak, and understand it. They like to speak Spanish and English, and they're learning how to write in Spanish." However, she also stated that her children's Spanish pronunciation was better than their English pronunciation. Spanish is the primary language used in her home, though she said, "I try to speak English to them when I'm angry so they understand me and pay attention to me!" Strategies she used to help her children with their Spanish were practicing the alphabet in Spanish with them and having them watch television in Spanish. On whether she had any worries about the maintenance of her children's Spanish, she replied, "Yes, it's important that they know Spanish because my husband and my families both only speak Spanish. If we go to Mexico (she did not distinguish between going to visit and going back to live, but it was interpreted as going to visit) they won't understand and the people won't understand them."

Alice\* is a 36-year-old mother from Mexico, whose children are three, eleven, and sixteen. She speaks only Spanish at home. She said her children were equally proficient in both languages and she had no concerns about maintaining their Spanish because "they speak both

languages very well.” However, she did note that her children are older and speak only English among themselves. A strategy she used was having her children watch television in Spanish.

Meg\* is a 34-year-old mother from El Salvador with a ten-year-old daughter. She speaks only Spanish at home with her, but her daughter “plays with her cousins a lot and they speak English together.” She is concerned about her daughter maintaining her Spanish, because the primary language she deals with is English; her daughter can read and write more easily in English than she can in Spanish. She said, “When my daughter doesn’t understand us or know what my husband and I are talking about, we try to explain it to her.”

Kate\* is a 37-year-old mother from El Salvador, whose children are six, nine, ten, and fourteen. Like the other mothers, Kate speaks only Spanish in her home, but stated that all her children were more proficient in English. She also pointed out that her children have “American friends with whom they speak English.” Writing was her main concern regarding maintaining her children’s Spanish, because her children do not know how to write in Spanish. However, the only strategy she mentioned using was having her children watch television in Spanish.

Marcy\* is a 43-year-old mother from Mexico whose children are nine and ten, and she has been in the U.S. for one-and-a-half years. In Mexico, she was an elementary school teacher. She only speaks Spanish at home, and she said that her children are equally proficient in both Spanish and English. However, Marcy’s concerns are different from most of the other mothers: “I’m more concerned about their learning English because we only speak Spanish at home. I make sure they watch TV in English, like cartoons – all in English. We also go to church, which is all in English.”

Lauren\* is a 27-year-old mother from Mexico whose children are two, five, and seven. She speaks only Spanish at home, and she said that her children were equally proficient in both

English and Spanish. Developing her children's Spanish was a concern of hers, as they are all still relatively young. Her strategies to help her children develop their Spanish were reading to them in Spanish, having them practice writing in Spanish, and having them watch television in Spanish.

Sarah\* is a 29-year-old mother from Mexico whose children are seven and ten. She has been in the U.S. for six months, and has just started to learn English. She speaks only Spanish in her home, and her children, like her, are much more proficient in Spanish. Because she and her children have only been in the U.S. for six months, her main concern was also different from that of most of the other mothers; she was concerned with her children learning English. Of this, she said, "My kids want to learn (English), but they don't know how to do it and I can't help them because I'm trying to learn, too."

Allison\* is a 29-year-old mother from Mexico whose children are six and twelve. She explained her situation, which was unique from the other mothers' in the focus group:

We lived in Chicago before we came here. Then when we came here, the teachers here told me my kids don't speak English. It turns out the schools in Chicago are bilingual and they had all their classes there in Spanish and the teachers spoke only Spanish. Even my twelve-year-old didn't speak English! Bilingual schools don't work because then what will my kids do if they don't speak English?

Until she had moved from Chicago, she had not known that her children did not speak English, because Spanish was the only language she used in her home and with her children.

Jodi\* is a thirty-year-old mother from Mexico whose daughter is seven. She speaks only Spanish at home, and she said that her daughter was equally proficient in both English and

Spanish. The main reason she hoped to maintain her daughter's Spanish was because, "If she speaks Spanish, she can get a better job in the future."

Ellie\* is a 34-year-old mother from Mexico whose children are one, four, and eight. Spanish is the primary language spoken in her home, and she said her children were more proficient in Spanish. Her main reason for wanting to maintain her children's Spanish was so that "they won't have to struggle either in Mexico or here."

While each mother's story and situation is different, what all of these mothers have in common is that they want to give their children the benefit of being able to speak English and Spanish, which will improve their children's lives. Their responses for both the questionnaire and focus group often demonstrated their caring and concern for helping their children be bilingual, but also showed their lack of knowledge concerning this topic. This has important implications for SLPs and other professionals who assist individuals with the issue of language.

*\*Names have been changed to protect participants' privacy.*

## **Conclusion**

### **Discussion**

Results of this research support the assertions that SLPs need to know what and how this population thinks in order to effectively assist them. As evidenced by some of their responses, Hispanic mothers would benefit from guidance from knowledgeable professionals. SLPs are one of the most educated and knowledgeable professionals regarding language acquisition and so it makes sense that they be relied on to assist and provide information to Hispanics attempting to raise bilingual children. Because some Hispanic mothers do not know of sources to consult or even that sources exist that could help them, these resources need to be made known to mothers like these so that they know who and what to consult for accurate and helpful information. Many

think they do not need information or support, or if they do, they may not be proactive in seeking it out, simply because they are unsure of where to begin. Therefore, an effort needs to be made by SLPs and other professionals to find a way to steer them in the right direction.

It should be noted once again that it is very common for Hispanics to believe that they have no place in their children's education because of their cultural value of "respeto," and this can be generalized to all positions of authority, including SLPs. So, it is important for SLPs not to erroneously interpret Hispanic parents' possible lack of involvement as disinterest. Instead, they should make attempts to include parents in their children's therapy and make sure they understand what is happening.

Some of the mothers are also misinformed or have errors in their thoughts and methods of raising their children bilingually. These include thinking that speaking Spanish with their children will be sufficient, thinking their children will be more intelligent or get better grades in school, thinking their children will confuse the two languages, and thinking their children will have a language delay.

Also, some of the mothers had concerns regarding their children's bilingualism, but used methods that were not effective for resolving the issue. Kate\*, for example, is the mother whose biggest concern is that her children do not know how to write in Spanish, yet she mentions no methods involving writing. This is an issue that could be easily resolved by receiving some helpful, accurate information from a professional such as an SLP. If more of these Hispanic mothers knew where to look for guidance and information, there would be a higher likelihood that they would have more success in raising their children bilingually. The reason for this is because misconceptions and misinformation would be clarified, and they would have a much better understanding of how to successfully go about raising bilingual children.

If children were able to successfully maintain their heritage language, both mothers and children would gain crucial benefits and avoid the damaging consequences of not maintaining their heritage language. The mothers would have less chance of losing their authority over their children (Fillmore, 2000), the children would maintain their cultural identity and ability to communicate with family in their home country (Alba et al., 2002; Fillmore, 2000; Rodriguez, 2010), and the mother and children would be less likely to become emotionally distant from one another (Fillmore, 2000). These benefits alone are reason enough to maintain heritage language, and for professionals who are able to help, such as SLPs, these should be motivators for striving to meet the challenge of helping this population as effectively as they can.

### **Limitations**

This study had several limitations. Due to a limited amount of time and resources, the questionnaire was not tested or piloted for validity or reliability. It was created, translated, reviewed, edited, and then administered. Therefore, it is possible that some of the questions were not understood by the participants or that results may not have been as accurate as they could have been had the questionnaire been tested for validity and reliability.

As stated earlier, some of the responses provided by participants were different for the questionnaire versus the focus group. This could have been due to a number of reasons: the mothers were not accustomed to expressing their thoughts through writing, they did not understand certain survey items, the questions covered topics they were unfamiliar with, unfamiliar format, being in a hurry to finish the questionnaire, or others.

The third limitation was that the sample size (20) was too small and the location (Des Moines, Iowa) was too confined to be representative of all Hispanic mothers.

### **Future Research**

Due to the fact that this area of study has rarely focused on Hispanic mothers' views, there is a considerable amount of research that could be done in the future. A nationwide research study could be done to see whether there are significant differences in the way Hispanic mothers from certain geographical areas in the U.S. think, or if significant differences exist in the way Hispanic mothers of different countries of origin think. This would also be much more useful for SLPs all over the country, as results would be more representative of their geographical location, and the immense increase in sample size would yield results that could be more accurately generalized to Hispanic mothers who do not participate in the research study.

In the future, I could also improve and expand this study. I could test my questionnaire for validity and reliability and greatly increase the sample size to include participants from all areas of Iowa.

Another interesting and useful direction to take would be to research Hispanic fathers' thoughts regarding their children's bilingualism. Results would likely differ greatly from mothers' responses.

### **Conclusions**

Despite the limitations, this research study still obtained valuable information about Hispanic mothers living in Iowa attempting to raise their children bilingually. A balanced mix of quantitative and qualitative data was collected and analyzed, showing percentages and the mothers' explanations and reasons along with many of the responses. Some of their responses showed certain misconceptions or erroneous thinking that SLPs could use to tailor the way in which they disseminate information or offer assistance. Overall, the information that was gathered covered Hispanic mothers' beliefs, concerns, and methods regarding raising their

children bilingually. There is a very small body of research that has been done on this topic, and this study added to it by providing a useful and informative representation of Hispanic mothers in Iowa attempting to maintain heritage language in their children. Speech-Language Pathologists and other professionals could use this information to get a better understanding of these types of clients, and ultimately use it to serve and inform them in a more effective and culturally-sensitive manner.



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**Appendix A****Hispanic Parents in Iowa****1. Age:****2. Country of Hispanic/Latino origin (circle or write response):**

México	Puerto Rico	Cuba	Guatemala	El Salvador
República Dominicana		Colombia	Honduras	Ecuador
España	Nicaragua	Argentina	Venezuela	Panamá
Costa Rica	Chile	Bolivia	Uruguay	Paraguay

**3. Marital Status:**

- Single, Never Married
- Not Married, but Living with Partner
- Married
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widow/Widower

**4. Highest Level of Education Completed:**

- I never went to school
- Some elementary school
- Completed elementary school
- Some middle school
- Completed middle school
- Some High School
- Completed High School/GED
- Some College
- Technical School
- 2-Year College Degree (Associate)
- 4-Year College Degree (BA, BS)
- Post-Graduate (Master's)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Current Employment Status:**

- Employed Full-Time
- Employed Part-Time
- Unemployed/Looking for Work
- Student
- Homemaker

- Retired

6. **Relation to Child(ren) (circle response):** Mother \_\_\_\_\_ Father \_\_\_\_\_  
Stepmother \_\_\_\_\_ Stepfather \_\_\_\_\_

7. **Age(s) of Child(ren):**

8. **If you are married or living with a partner, what is your spouse's/living partner's primary language? (Circle response):**

Spanish \_\_\_\_\_ English \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*Note: If more than one child, please write age of child next to answer that corresponds to that child, for the following questions.*

9. **In which language is/are your child(ren) more proficient?**

- English  
 Spanish  
 Equally proficient in both English and Spanish

10. **What language(s) do you speak with your child(ren) when you are at home? (Check all that apply):**

- I speak only Spanish with my child(ren).  
 My spouse/living partner and I speak only Spanish with our child(ren).  
 I speak only Spanish and my spouse speaks only English with our child(ren).  
 I speak only English and my spouse speaks only Spanish with our child(ren).  
 My spouse and I speak both Spanish and English with our child(ren).  
 Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

11. **What language do you speak with your child(ren) when you are around English speakers? Why?**

12. **What strategies, if any, do you use to encourage your child(ren)'s use of Spanish? (Check all that apply):**

- I pretend not to understand what they are saying if they speak English to me.  
 If they speak English to me, I rephrase what they said to me into a yes-no question in Spanish. (For example - Child: "I don't like vegetables!" Adult: "No te gustan las verduras?")  
 If they speak in English to me, I repeat what they said to me, but in Spanish.

- I read books to them in Spanish/I make sure they read books in Spanish.
- I make sure they watch television/movies in Spanish.
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Please indicate any concerns that you have regarding maintaining your child(ren)'s Spanish (check all that apply):**

- I am concerned that my child(ren) will confuse Spanish and English.
- I am concerned that my child(ren) will have a language delay in one or both languages (that they will not learn them at the rate they should be learned).
- I am concerned that my child(ren) will eventually stop speaking Spanish, or lose it altogether.
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**14. Do you have any concerns if your child(ren) do not maintain their Spanish? If so, what are they?**

**15. Please indicate any benefits you think your child(ren) will gain from being able to speak English AND maintaining their Spanish (check all that apply):**

- I think they will be smarter. (If so, why?) \_\_\_\_\_

- I think they will get better grades in school. (If so, why?) \_\_\_\_\_

- I think they will have more job opportunities when they are older.
- I think they will be able to better communicate with and relate to more people around the world.
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**16. Why do you hope to maintain your child(ren)'s Spanish (if it is that you do hope to)? (Check all that apply):**

- I want them to maintain their identity as a Hispanic/Latino.
- I want them to be able to communicate with Spanish-speaking relatives that live in the U.S.
- I want them to be able to communicate with Spanish-speaking relatives that live in our home country.
- Other (please explain) \_\_\_\_\_

**17. What sources, if any, do you consult for information and/or support regarding maintaining your child(ren)'s Spanish? For example, friends, magazines, experts, etc. (Only write a response if you consult or have consulted sources for information and/or support.)**

**\*\*Please add any additional comments/thoughts/concerns you would like to share, below\*\***



**Appendix B****Padres Hispanos en Iowa****1. Edad:****2. País de Origen Hispana/Latina (circule la respuesta):**

México	Puerto Rico	Cuba	Guatemala	El Salvador
República Dominicana		Colombia	Honduras	Ecuador
España	Nicaragua	Argentina	Venezuela	Panamá
Costa Rica	Chile	Bolivia	Uruguay	Paraguay

**3. Estado Civil:**

- Soltera, Nunca Casada
- Viviendo con Compañero
- Casada
- Separada
- Divorciada
- Viuda

**4. Nivel más Alto de Educación Escolar Completado:**

- Nunca asistí a la escuela
- Parte de la Primaria
- Terminé con la Primaria
- Parte de la Secundaria
- Terminé con la Secundaria
- Parte de la Preparatoria
- Terminé con la Preparatoria
- Parte de la Universidad
- Escuela Técnica
- Graduado Asociado
- Licenciatura - Titulada de la Universidad
- Maestría
- Otro \_\_\_\_\_

**5. Situación Actual de Empleo:**

- Empleada de Tiempo Completo
- Empleada de Medio Tiempo
- Desempleada/Buscando Trabajo
- Estudiante
- Cuida la Casa

Jubilada

6. **Relación a Hijo(s) (circule la respuesta):**    Madre                      Padre  
   Madrastra                      Padrastro

7. **Edad(es) de Hijo(s)**

8. **¿Si está casada o vive con un compañero, cual es el idioma principal de su esposo/compañero? (circule la respuesta):**

Español                      Inglés                      Otro \_\_\_\_\_

*\*\*Dese cuenta: Si tiene más de un hijo, por favor, escriba la edad de su hijo junto a la respuesta que coincide con ese hijo, para las siguientes preguntas.*

9. **¿En cuál(es) idioma(s) es/son más hábil(es) su(s) hijo(s)?**

- Inglés
- Español
- Tiene(n) la(s) misma(s) habilidad(es) en los dos idiomas

10. **¿Qué idioma habla con su(s) hijo(s) cuando están en casa? (marque cada respuesta que se aplica):**

- Hablo solo español con mi(s) hijo(s).
- Mi esposo/compañero y yo hablamos solo español con nuestro(s) hijo(s).
- Yo sólo hablo español y mi esposo/compañero sólo habla inglés con nuestro(s) hijo(s).
- Yo sólo hablo inglés y mi esposo/compañero sólo habla español con nuestro(s) hijo(s).
- Mi esposo/compañero y yo hablamos inglés y español con nuestro(s) hijo(s).
- Otro (por favor, explique) \_\_\_\_\_

11. **¿Qué idioma habla con su(s) hijo(s) cuando están con personas que hablan inglés? ¿Por qué?**

12. **¿Cuales estrategias (si usa estrategias) usa con su(s) hijo(s) para asegurar de que use(n) el español? (marque cada respuesta que se aplica):**

- Fingo no entender lo que está(n) diciendo si me habla(n) en inglés.

- Si me habla(n) en inglés, reformulo lo que me dijeron a una pregunta de “si-o-no” en español. (Por ejemplo, si mi hijo dice, “I don’t like vegetables,” entonces yo le digo, ¿No te gustan las verduras?”)
- Si me habla(n) en inglés, repito lo que me dijo/dijeron, pero en español.
- Le(s) leo libros en español/Aseguro de que lea(n) libros en español.
- Aseguro de que mire(n) películas y programas de la televisión en español.
- Otra (por favor, explique) \_\_\_\_\_

**13. Por favor, indique cosas que le preocupan (si tiene preocupaciones) con respecto a mantener el español de su(s) hijo(s) (marque cada respuesta que se aplica):**

- Me preocupa que mi(s) hijo(s) confundirá(n) el español con el inglés.
- Me preocupa que mi(s) hijo(s) no aprenderá(n) uno o los dos idiomas a la velocidad que se deben aprender.
- Me preocupa que, con el tiempo, mi(s) hijo(s) dejará(n) de hablar español, o lo perderá(n) completamente.
- Otra (por favor, explique) \_\_\_\_\_

**14. ¿Le preocupa algo por si su(s) hijo(s) no mantengan su español? ¿Si es que sí, que son?**

**15. Por favor, indique las ventajas (si cree que haya) que cree que su(s) hijo(s) obtendrá(n) por poder hablar inglés Y mantener su español (marque cada respuesta que se aplica):**

- Creo que será(n) más inteligente(s). (¿Por qué?) \_\_\_\_\_

- Creo que sacarán mejores notas en la escuela. (¿Por qué?) \_\_\_\_\_

- 
- Creo que tendrá(n) más oportunidades de trabajo cuando sea(n) más grande(s).
  - Creo que podrá(n) comunicarse y relacionarse mejor con más gente por todo el mundo.
  - Otra (por favor, explique) \_\_\_\_\_

**16. ¿Si es que sí desea mantener el español de su(s) hijo(s), por qué desea hacerlo?:**

- Quiero que mantenga(n) su identidad como Hispano/Latino.
- Quiero que se pueda(n) comunicar con parientes que hablan español y viven en los EEUU.
- Quiero que se pueda(n) comunicar con parientes que hablan español y viven en nuestro país de origen.
- Otro (por favor explique) \_\_\_\_\_

**17. ¿Cuales fuentes (investigaciones) consulta para conseguir información y/o apoyo sobre el mantenimiento del español de su(s) hijo(s)? Por ejemplo: amigos, revistas, expertos, etc. (Solo escriba una respuesta si hay fuentes que consulta o que ha consultado para información y/o apoyo.)**

**\*\*Por favor, escriba cualquier comentario/pensamiento/duda adicional en el espacio abajo.\*\***

**Appendix C****UNIVERSITY OF NORTHERN IOWA  
HUMAN PARTICIPANTS REVIEW  
INFORMED CONSENT**

**Project Title:** Beliefs, Concerns, & Methods of Parents Raising Children Bilingually: A Study of Hispanic Iowa Mothers Attempting to Maintain Heritage Language in their Children

**Investigator:** Briana Vera

You are invited to participate in a research project conducted through the University of Northern Iowa. The University requires that you give your signed agreement to participate in this project. The following information is provided to help you made an informed decision about whether or not to participate.

The purpose of this study is to discover more about parents who are raising their children to be English-Spanish bilingual, particularly their beliefs, concerns, and methods regarding this issue. It will focus on Hispanic/Latino parents in Iowa whose native language is Spanish, and who have at least one child in the household between the ages of four and twelve. This information is important because with the Hispanic population in the U.S. constantly rising, it is necessary for professionals such as speech-language pathologists to understand Hispanic parent views regarding their children's bilingualism. Information gained from this study could help speech-language pathologists to effectively assist, guide, and communicate with Hispanic parents.

If you decide to participate, you will be given a questionnaire consisting of twenty questions regarding your thoughts and concerns about maintaining your child(ren)'s Spanish. The questionnaire should take between fifteen to twenty minutes to complete, and it is completely anonymous. All surveys will be shredded once the findings have been summarized and the study is over.

Risks to participation are minimal.

There are no direct benefits from participating in this study.

Information obtained during this study which could identify you will be kept confidential. The summarized findings with no identifying information may be published in an academic journal or presented at a scholarly conference.

Your participation is completely voluntary. You are free to withdraw from participation at any time or to choose not to participate at all, and by doing so, you will not be penalized.

If you have questions about the study or desire information in the future regarding your participation in the study, you can contact Briana Vera at (641) 841-0225. You can also contact the office of the IRB Administrator, University of Northern Iowa, at 319-273-6148, for answers to questions about rights of research participants and the participant review process.

**I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement. I am 18 years of age or older.**

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of participant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Printed name of participant)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of investigator)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of instructor/advisor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

**Appendix D****UNIVERSIDAD DE IOWA DEL NORTE  
REVISION DE PARTICIPANTES HUMANOS  
CONSENTIMIENTO INFORMADO**

**Título del Proyecto:** Creencias, Preocupaciones, y Métodos de Padres Criando Hijos Bilingües: Un Estudio de Madres Hispánicas en Iowa Que Intentan Mantener el Idioma de Patrimonio en sus Hijos

**Investigadora:** Briana Vera

Le invito a participar en una investigación organizada por la Universidad de Iowa del Norte. La universidad requiere que usted dé su consentimiento firmado para poder participar en esta investigación. La siguiente información le ayudará a hacer una decisión informada acerca de participar o no participar.

El objetivo de esta investigación es descubrir más sobre los padres que están criando sus hijos bilingües en inglés y español, particularmente sus creencias, preocupaciones, y métodos con respeto a este asunto. Se enfocará en padres Hispánicos/Latinos en Iowa que son hablantes nativos de español, y que tienen por lo menos un hijo en casa entre cuatro y doce años. Esta información es importante porque la población Hispánica en los EEUU está creciendo rápidamente. Por lo tanto, es necesario que los profesionistas como logopedas entiendan los pensamientos de los padres Hispánicos acerca del bilingüismo de sus hijos. La información que esta investigación obtiene podrá ayudar para que logopedas puedan eficazmente ayudar, aconsejar, y comunicar con los padres Hispánicos.

Si usted decida participar, recibirá un cuestionario con veinte preguntas acerca de sus pensamientos y preocupaciones de mantener el español de sus hijos. El cuestionario tardará entre quince y veinte minutos para completar, y es completamente anónimo. Todos los cuestionarios serán destruidos después de que las respuestas hayan sido leídas y la investigación se haya terminado.

Los riesgos de participar son mínimos.

No habrá beneficios directos de su participación.

Se mantendrá confidencial la información obtenida durante esta investigación que podría identificar su identidad. Las conclusiones resumidas sin información que podría identificar su identidad se podrán publicar en una publicación escolar o ser presentadas en una conferencia escolar.

Su participación es completamente voluntaria. Se puede retirar de participación en cualquier momento o se puede elegir no participar, y por hacer eso, no habrá ningún castigo.

Si tiene preguntas sobre la investigación o desea información en el futuro acerca de su participación en la investigación, se puede poner en contacto con Briana Vera al 641-841-0225. También puede ponerse en contacto con la oficina del Administrador del IRB, Universidad de Iowa del Norte, al 319-273-6148, para respuestas acerca de los derechos de los participantes de investigaciones y el proceso de la revisión de participación.

**Estoy completamente consciente del tipo de proyecto en lo cual estoy participando y a qué medida estoy participando como se demostró anteriormente. También estoy completamente consciente de los riesgos posibles de mi participación en este proyecto. Por medio de lo siguiente, estoy de acuerdo y doy mi consentimiento participar en este proyecto. Reconozco que he recibido una copia de esta declaración de consentimiento. Soy mayor de edad (mayor de los 18 años).**

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(Firma del participante)

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(Fecha)

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(Nombre escrito del participante)

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(Firma de la investigadora)

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(Fecha)

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(Firma de la instructora)

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(Fecha)