

# Young Dual Language Learners' Emergent Writing Development

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# MARACAIBO, VENEZUELA

How I  
became  
interested  
in this  
topic?



# LITERATURE REVIEW

- ❖ Writing follows a developmental path (e.g. Ferreiro & Teberosky, 1982; Tolchinsky, 2003)
- ❖ Studies in a variety of languages show similar developmental paths (e.g. Spanish, Hebrew, Chinese).
- ❖ As in any other area of development, we need to view the development of writing as a cultural process (Rogoff, 2003)

Gillanders, C., Franco, X., Seidel, K., Castro, D. C., & Mendez, L. I. (2016) Young dual language learners' emergent writing development, *Early Child Development and Care*, 187, (3-4), 371-382, DOI: 10.1080/03004430.2016.1211124

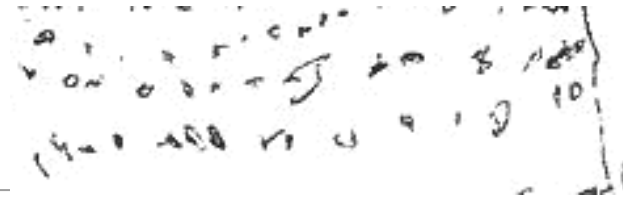
# LITERATURE REVIEW

First, children demonstrate knowledge of universal features of writing.

➤ Linearity



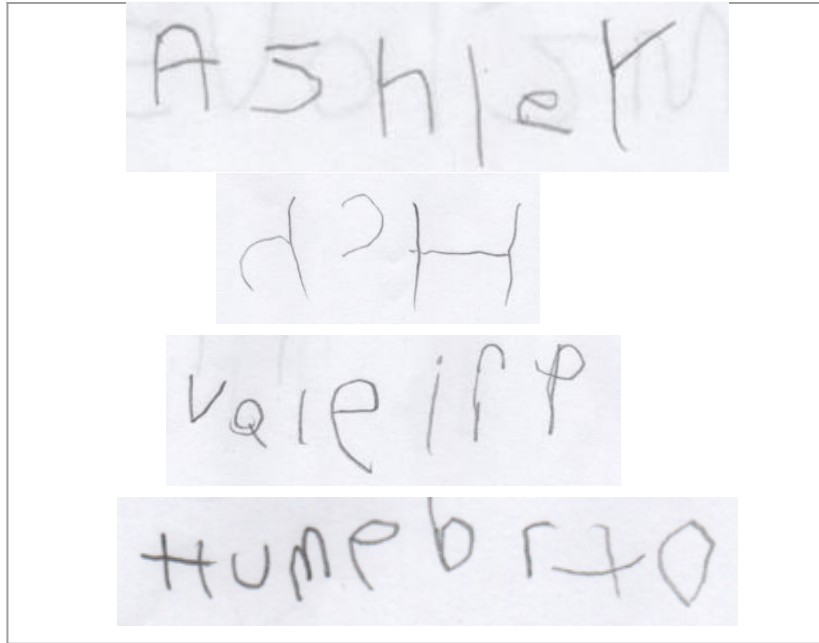
➤ Discreteness



➤ Abstractness



# NAME WRITING



- ❖ Show higher levels of development than in writing words
- ❖ Name writing and letter knowledge skills do not develop simultaneously

# WRITING DEVELOPMENT IN DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS

- ❖ Similar writing characteristics in English and Spanish, although children read it differently (Rubin & Carlan, 2005).
- ❖ More differentiation as children become more knowledgeable of the relationship between oral language and writing (Raynolds & Uhry, 2010; Raynolds, Uhry & Brunner, 2013)

# RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- ❖ What is the writing conceptualization progression of 4 to 5-year-olds Spanish-speaking DLLs' writing of names and words in English and Spanish? How are they similar or different?
- ❖ What are the cross-linguistic relationships that manifest in DLLs' emergent writing in English and Spanish?
- ❖ What is the relationship between vocabulary development in each language and DLLs' conceptualizations of writing?

# METHOD

## Setting

- California, Florida, and North Carolina.
- High quality Programs
- Classrooms had an enrollment of at least 25%, but not more than 75%, 4-year-old Spanish-English DLLs
- 50% of the classrooms had either a lead or an assistant Spanish-English bilingual teacher
- 43% of the classrooms had both lead and assistant bilingual teachers
- Language of instruction was English with Spanish in varying degrees



# PARTICIPANTS

- 153 children aged 3-5
- Follow-up a group of 14 children during the fall of their kindergarten year
- Mexican (53%) and Central American (47%) descent
- Had at least one foreign-born parent
- 83% reported using Spanish at home as their first language

# PROCEDURES

- Assessment in English and Spanish in their prekindergarten year and a sample of children were followed-up in kindergarten
- Data collection was separated by language
- English and Spanish counterbalanced to control for order effects.
- One-assessor-one language approach was used
- Data collectors were bilingual in English and Spanish

# MEASURES

- Write your name task (Yaden and Tardibuono, 2004)
- Write these words task (Vernon and Ferreiro, 1999; Kamii, Long, Manning, & Manning, 1990; Kamii & Manning, 2002)
- Receptive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test (ROWPVT)

# FINDINGS

## Dual Language Learners Writing Conceptualization Progression

- Paired *t*-tests (fall and spring): for 4 year-olds, and between fall for 4 and for 5 year-olds show significant differences but small changes across time
- Similar progression in their conceptualization of writing as monolingual children, that is, from the universal features of writing to the specific features of the writing system of their language in both Spanish and English
- In the fall, 95% 4 year-olds were either unable to write their name conventionally or could write their name conventionally but were unable to read it both languages
- In the fall, most drew a picture and by spring, 50% were able to write graphemes with no relationship with spoken word

# FINDINGS

## Cross-linguistic Relationships in Emergent Writing

- We conducted paired *t*-tests between Spanish and English tasks and found no significant differences among tasks
- Regardless of the classroom level differences, writing words in English in the fall was a predictor of writing names and words in Spanish in the spring
- Strong correlations between writing words in English and Spanish
- We did not ask the children if they noticed differences between languages

# FINDINGS

## Vocabulary in Spanish and English and Emergent Writing

- Relationship between vocabulary and writing was partially supported
- Stronger relationship was found in the K sample (not significant)
- Vocabulary seems to have an influence when children are able to apply a phonological analysis in their writing

# FUTURE STEPS

- A longitudinal study with a larger sample to follow DLL children through their process of writing development (4-7-year-olds)
- Ask children their ideas about the differences between languages
- Relationship between writing, phonological awareness and alphabet knowledge in both languages
- Differences in writing progression depending on classroom and home sociocultural practices

# IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

- Very few opportunities for children to write on their own
- Teachers need to understand this process and identify it
- It is critical that the teacher is aware of children's developmental process in the acquisition of writing to be able to provide the appropriate scaffolding within the ZPD
- Look closely into the language and literacy practices of the families and the community in which the children live

Gillanders, C. (2018). ¿Cómo Lo Escribo en Inglés o en Español? Writing in Dual Language Learners. *The Reading Teacher*, 71(4), 421-430.



¡MUCHAS GRACIAS!