IMMIGRANT AMERICA: A PORTRAIT

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Chapter 6

Language: Diversity and Resilience

Learning to live simultaneously in two social worlds is a requisite of "successful" immigrant adaptation. In a world so different from one's native land, much has to be learned initially to cope—especially, the new language. With few exceptions, newcomers unable to speak English in the Anglo-American world face enormous obstacles. Learning English is a basic step to enable them to participate in the life of the larger community, get an education, find a job, obtain a driver's license and access to health care or social services, and apply for citizenship. Language has often been cited as the principal initial barrier confronting recent immigrants, from the least educated peasants to the most educated professionals.[1] To be sure, the process of language learning—played out, particularly for the children of the new immigrants, in the institutional context of the public schools—is a complex story of mutual adaptation, of the accommodation of two or more ethnolinguistic groups in diverse structural contexts. It is also, as we will see, a story of considerable diversity, fraught with irony and controversy.

Language acquisition and language shift parallel in many ways the story of immigrant settlement in American society and adaptation to the polity and economy told in earlier chapters. Yet the process is not simply a reflection of the immigrant experience in these other realms, for language in the United States has a meaning that transcends its purely instrumental value as means of communication. In a country lacking centuries-old traditions and receiving millions of foreigners from the most diverse lands, language homogeneity came to be seen as the bedrock of national identity. Immigrants were not only expected to speak English, but to speak English *only* as the prerequisite of social acceptance and integration. Unlike many European nations, which are tolerant of linguistic diversity, in the United States the acquisition of non-accented English and the dropping of foreign languages came to represent the litmus test of Americanization. Other aspects of immigrant culture (such as cuisine, community celebrations, and religion, which we will examine in a later chapter) often last for several generations, but the home language seldom survives.

Linguistic transition, its forms and its implications, are the subject of this chapter. We examine recent data on language loyalty and change in the United States, sketching a national profile of foreign and English language patterns over time and generation, and consider the role of fluent bilingualism on intergenerational relations within immigrant families, school achievement and economic outcomes. As in previous chapters, we also look to the historical record to place present concerns in a broader comparative context.

The Babel Proclamation

In 1870, when the foreign-born comprised 17.1 percent of Iowa's population, the state's Board of Immigration, established by law and chaired by the Governor, published a remarkable 96-page pamphlet, *Iowa: The Home for Immigrants*.[2] A first edition of 35,000 copies was printed in English, plus another 15,000 copies in German, 6,000 in Norwegian, 4,000 in Swedish, and 5,000 in Dutch, with a note urging the reader to "lend it to your neighbor, or send it to some friend in the East who may be benefited by the information it contains." It described Iowa's natural, economic and institutional resources in extraordinary detail, "to give to all who may desire to seek new homes in the West, a correct idea of the superior advantages which our young State offers to those who may be induced to come within her borders." Its opening

chapter dwelled on its diverse history, from the meaning of the state's indigenous name ("Beautiful Land"), to the fate of the tribes that had once been the most numerous and powerful between the Mississippi and Missouri rivers, to the fact that the territory that was now Iowa had been part of France's vast "Province of Louisiana," then of Spain and back to France before the historic 1803 Purchase that absorbed it as a U.S. territory, until achieving statehood in 1846.

From the first Iowa census, Germans formed the largest immigrant group, and remained so for a century; by 1900 German immigrants had settled in all 99 Iowa counties, and developed bilingual parochial schools, German-language newspapers and cultural organizations.[3] Still, despite the immigrant recruitment efforts, 1870 proved to be the high-water mark of the foreign-born share of Iowa's population; it declined steadily in every census thereafter, to 12 percent in 1910, less than 5 percent in 1940, and barely above 1 percent in the last decades of the 20th century.

When the United States entered the World War in 1917 against Germany, German Americans felt the wrath of national hostility. We showed in chapter 5 how the bilingual German-American community was forced to "swat the hyphen" and abandon German-language schools and newspapers shortly after the start of World War I. The nemesis of German-American biculturalism, Theodore Roosevelt, put the general rule in stark terms: "We have room for but one language here, and that is the English language; for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boardinghouse; and we have room for but one sole loyalty, and that is loyalty to the American people."[4]

In Iowa, Governor William L. Harding took the rule to an extreme when he issued "The Babel Proclamation" in 1918, outlawing the public use of *all* foreign languages.[5] Although he had been elected in 1917 with German American support, he argued that destroying the vital bond of language within ethnic communities would force their assimilation into the dominant culture and heighten patriotism and unity in a time of crisis. The Proclamation stipulated that only English was legal in public or private schools, in public conversations, on trains, over the telephone, at all meetings, and in all religious services; those who could not speak or understand English were required to conduct their religious worship in their homes.

As events unfolded, German language instructors were fired and German textbooks burned. German newspapers disappeared from circulation, businesses with German names were branded un-American, and many German Americans altered the spelling of their family names. In the town of Lowden, where most residents were of German heritage, mobs from other towns came during Armistice Day celebrations of the end of the war and made the minister of the German-language Evangelical Reformed Church march through the streets with an American flag before ordering him out of town. Anti-German prejudice spread to disdain for all foreigners, as the Babel Proclamation lumped other non-English-speaking groups—Scandinavians, Bohemians, French, Italians—with the German scapegoats. Although Harding repealed the Babel Proclamation in December 1918, he maintained his support for language restriction in Iowa. "National unity can be best maintained by the employment of a common vehicle of communication, and this vehicle...is the English language."[6]

By 1998 a new Governor of Iowa, Tom Vilsack, took office with a plan to make Iowa the "Ellis Island of the Midwest," seeking to attract and accommodate immigrants and refugees. A

Strategic Planning Council sought to have Iowa designated as an "immigration enterprise zone," and to establish regional Diversity Welcome Centers to assist new residents with legal and cultural obstacles in relocating to Iowa. Yet in March 2002, the Iowa English Language Reaffirmation Act reestablished English as the official language of government in Iowa. The law further urged "every citizen of the state to become more proficient in the English language." The governor signed it despite reservations. Iowa is not alone in declaring English the official language. Thirty other states have approved similar measures, mostly since the 1980s during the present era of mass migration.

The contrasting Iowa experiences of 1870 and 1918, and their echoes in 1998 and 2002, oscillating alternatively between welcoming (economically) and rejecting (socially and politically) immigrants, are illustrative of patterns that go back to colonial times, with foreign languages seen as fractious markers of cultural difference and potential disloyalty even as immigrants are needed to meet labor demands. Benjamin Franklin, alarmed about German newcomers in colonial Philadelphia, put it this way as early as 1751:

> "[W]hy should the Palatine Boors be suffered to swarm into our Settlements, and by herding together establish their Language and Manners to the Exclusion of ours? Why should Pennsylvania, founded by the English, become a Colony of Aliens, who will shortly be so numerous as to Germanize us instead of our Anglifying them, and will never adopt our Language or Customs, any more than they can acquire our Complexion?"[7]

Over two and a half centuries later, Samuel Huntington argued that the arrival of Latin American immigrants in large numbers threatens the core of American identity and culture.[8] He asserted that Latin Americans are much less likely to speak English than earlier generations of European immigrants because they all speak a common language, are regionally concentrated within Spanish-speaking enclaves, and are less interested in linguistic and cultural assimilation than in identity politics. For Huntington,

> "there is no *Americano* dream. There is only the American dream created by an Anglo-Protestant society. Mexican-Americans will share in that dream and in that society only if they dream in English."[9]

"A Babel in Reverse"

> "What do you call a person who speaks two languages?"
> "Bilingual."
> "And one who knows only one?"
> "American."[10]

Contrary to what may seem to be true from a purely domestic angle, the use of two languages is not exceptional, but normal, in the experience of a good part of the world's population. Over seven billion people speak an estimated six thousand languages in a world of some two hundred autonomous states. Thus, there are about thirty times as many languages as

there are states; and the dominance of certain languages (such as Chinese, Hindi, Spanish and English)—combined with global communications and transportation technologies, international trade, and immigration—contributes to the proliferation of bilingualism.[11]

Over the past two centuries, the United States—historically a polyglot nation containing a diverse array of languages—has incorporated more bilingual people than any other country in the world. Yet the American experience is remarkable for its near mass extinction of non-English languages: In no other country, among thirty-five nations compared in a detailed study by Lieberson and his colleagues, did the rate of mother tongue shift toward (English) monolingualism approach the rapidity of that found in the United States. Within the United States, some relatively isolated indigenous groups (such as the Old Spanish, the Navajo and other American Indians, and the Louisiana French) had changed at a much slower rate; but language minority immigrants shifted to English at a rate far in excess of that obtained in all other countries.[12]

Other studies of the languages of European and older Asian immigrant groups in the United States have documented a rapid process of intergenerational "Anglicization" that is effectively completed by the third generation. Bilingualism, American style, has been unstable and transitional--at least until recently. The general historical pattern seems clear: Those in the first generation learned as much English as they needed to get by but continued to speak their mother tongue at home. The second generation grew up speaking the mother tongue at home but English away from home—perforce in the public schools and then in the wider society, given the institutional pressures for Anglicization and the socioeconomic benefits of native fluency in English. The home language of their children, and hence the mother tongue of the third generation, was mostly English.

As a classic essay saw it, immigrant families were often transformed "into two linguistic sub-groups segregated along generational lines… ethnic heritage, including the ethnic mother tongue, usually ceases to play any viable role in the life of the third generation… [the grandchildren] become literally outsiders to their ancestral heritage."[13] Calvin Veltman's extensive study of America's historical experience, *Language Shift in the United States*, concluded in the early 1980s that in the absence of immigration, all non-English languages would eventually die out, usually quite rapidly.[14] As the linguist Einar Haugen put it, reflecting on this paradox, "America's profusion of tongues has made her a modern Babel, but a Babel in reverse."[15]

Language Diversity in the United States

A Century of Change, 1910 to 2010

In 1910, as we saw in chapter 1, nearly 15 percent of the U.S. population was foreign-born, a proportion that has not been reached since. Of those 13.5 million immigrants, 3.4 million spoke English as their "mother tongue"—they hailed mainly from Ireland, Great Britain and Canada. German was by far the largest non-English language spoken, with 2.8 million speakers, followed by Italian (1.4 million), Yiddish (1.1 million), Polish (944,000), Swedish (683,000), French (529,000), Norwegian (403,000), and Spanish (258,000).

As mass European immigration waned over the subsequent decades, so did linguistic diversity. The proportion of the population that was foreign born fell steadily over the next half century to a nadir of 4.7 percent in 1970, when the Census Bureau stopped asking its question on mother tongue. At that time, English was still the language spoken by the largest number of immigrants (over 1.7 million, again drawn chiefly from Canada, the U.K. and Ireland), followed now by Spanish (with nearly 1.7 million speakers and growing rapidly over the previous decade), then German (1.2 million), Italian (1 million), and—with less than 500,000 each—Yiddish, Polish, and French. That year likely marked the end, comparatively, of the most linguistically homogeneous era in U.S. history. By 1980, for the first time, a non-English language—Spanish—surpassed English as the language spoken by more immigrants than any other, and the number of non-English languages spoken has proliferated as well.

Since 1980, official data on languages spoken have been gathered from a set of three questions: Does this person speak a language other than English at home? What is this language? And how well does this person speak English? These questions were asked of all persons aged 5 or older on the censuses of 1980, 1990 and 2000, and thereafter on the American Community Survey, which replaced the census long form. Because respondents were not asked whether this was the "usual" language spoken at home or how frequently or well it was used relative to English, it probably elicited an over-estimate. Still, the data point to the presence of a substantial and growing minority of persons who are not English monolinguals.

Table 6.1 about here

Table 6.1 summarizes the responses to the first question by decade between 1980 and 2010, showing the number and percent of all U.S. residents (whether immigrants or natives) who spoke a non-English language at home, and those who spoke only English. Because Spanish is now by far the most widely spoken non-English language in the United States, also shown is the number and percent of the population who speaks Spanish at home.

Accompanying the rise of immigration in recent decades, the percentage speaking only English at home has steadily fallen, declining from 89.1 percent in 1980 to 79.7 percent in 2010, while the share speaking a language other than English correspondingly increased from 11 percent to 20.3 percent. In absolute numbers, the number of persons 5 years or older speaking a language other than English at home rose from 23.1 million to 59.5 million, with over two-thirds of the increase attributable to the growing number of people speaking Spanish at home, who at 37 million made up 12.6 percent of the total population—and an unprecedented 62 percent of all non-English speakers in 2010. Most of the increase in Spanish language use has been driven by immigration from Latin America. Indeed, as will be elaborated below, most (57 percent) of the country's nearly 60 million speakers of non-English languages *are* immigrants. Among the 230 million who spoke only English at home in 2010, just 2.6 percent were born outside the United States (mostly immigrants from countries where English is a first or native language); among those who spoke Spanish at home, half (49 percent) were foreign born.

Spatial Patterns

Accordingly, speakers of non-English languages are concentrated in areas of primary immigrant settlement (described in Chapter 3)—notably along the Mexican border from Texas to

California, and in large cities such as Chicago, Miami and New York. Figure 6.1 shows the share of non-English language speakers by county in the contiguous 48 states in the year 2000 (the last decennial census which collected data on the foreign-born population for each county). Among all the 3,141 counties in the United States, the median percentage of the population who spoke a language other than English at home was a mere 4.6 percent. That is, in half of all counties—a vast swath of the United States shown in white in Figure 6.1—more than 95 percent of the residents were English monolinguals. In other areas, however, bilingualism was prevalent—as was the case in Hialeah and Miami in South Florida; Santa Ana and East Los Angeles in Southern California; Laredo, McAllen, Brownsville and El Paso along the Texas-Mexico border; and Elizabeth, New Jersey, across the Hudson River from New York City, where between 67 and 93 percent of the residents spoke languages other than English.

Figure 6.1 and Table 6.2 here

Table 6.2 updates the geography of foreign language use through 2010, ranking the top twenty-five states and the top twenty-five metropolitan areas with at least 500,000 inhabitants according to the percentage of non-English speakers. Clearly, speaking a foreign language remains concentrated in cities and states along the coasts, the Great Lakes, and the U.S.-Mexico border. California tops the list of states with 43 percent of its 37 million residents speaking a non-English language at home, followed by 36 percent in New Mexico, 34 percent in Texas, and over 29 percent in both New York and New Jersey. The states listed in Table 6.2 include both the six most important immigrant-receiving states (California, New York, New Jersey, Texas, Florida, and Illinois) as well as a number of emerging immigrant destinations (Arizona, North Carolina, Virginia, Georgia, Utah, and Nevada). In a country where by 2010 one in five persons (20.3 percent) spoke a foreign language at home, West Virginia, Mississippi, Kentucky, Montana, North Dakota, and Alabama stood in sharp contrast, with 95 to 98 percent of their populations speaking English only.

Linguistic diversity, like immigration, is also chiefly a metropolitan phenomenon. Over 91 percent of the population of non-metropolitan areas in the United States speaks English only. The twenty-five metropolitan areas with the highest percentages of residents who speak a non-English language at home are confined entirely to the six gateway states, as shown in Table 6.2; the sole exceptions are Las Vegas and Albuquerque. Ten of the top twenty metros are in California alone. Not surprisingly, the largest shares of people living in homes where a language other than English is spoken are found in the large border metropolises of McAllen and El Paso, Texas, where 85 percent and 75 percent of their populations, respectively, speak a non-English language at home (overwhelmingly Spanish). Miami (73 percent), Jersey City (59 percent), Los Angeles (57 percent), and San Jose (51 percent) are also home to dominant shares of non-English speakers.

Even at the bottom of the list, 30 percent of the Chicago metropolitan area's population speaks a non-English language at home. Among metropolitan areas of newer immigrant settlement which do not appear in Table 6.2, by 2010 only Tucson, Phoenix, Seattle and Denver exceeded the national non-English-usage norm of 20 percent; but Portland, Atlanta, Salt Lake City and Raleigh-Durham were not far behind.

Language Variability

What non-English languages are spoken in the United States today? The Census Bureau records 382 discrete languages, coded into 39 main languages and language groups, the largest of which are summarized in Table 6.3. The first two columns of the table show the estimated number and percentage of people aged 5 or above who reported speaking various languages at home (though no official data are collected on their fluency in or frequency of use of the non-English language). As noted, Spanish dominates among non-English languages: 12.6 percent of U.S. residents aged five or older said they spoke Spanish at home. The next closest language was Chinese, accounting for just 0.9 percent of the population (2.4 million speakers), followed by Hindi, Urdu, and related languages at 0.7 percent (1.7 million), Tagalog and related Filipino languages at 0.6 percent (1.5 million), and Vietnamese at 0.5 percent (over 1 million). No other language category exceeded 0.5 percent. Moreover, the two largest non-English categories after Spanish hide considerable diversity, given the many mutually unintelligible varieties of Chinese and the diversity of tongues spoken by people from the Indian subcontinent.

Table 6.3 about here

The right-hand columns of Table 6.3 show the percentages of language speakers born abroad and in the United States. Immigrants who speak English only number nearly 6 million out of the 40 million foreign-born in 2010. Among languages spoken in Europe and the Americas, the percentages of immigrant versus U.S.-born speakers vary widely, reflecting both past and present immigrant flows. Russian, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, and Polish speakers today are largely foreign-born, while French, German, Italian, and Greek speakers are mainly U.S.-born. Spanish speakers lie between these two extremes, with roughly half being born in the United States and half abroad. Among those speaking Asian languages, the vast majority were born abroad, with two exceptions: those who speak Khmer, Hmong, Lao and related languages, and those who speak Japanese, over a third of whom were born in the U.S. The former reflects high levels of U.S. fertility and declining migration after 1990 for refugee groups from Laos and Cambodia; the Japanese are the only contemporary Asian-origin population that is primarily U.S. born. The share of speakers born in the United States does not exceed 25 percent for any other Asian language. Speakers of Arabic and Farsi are likewise dominated by immigrants.

Table 6.4 about here

Among immigrants aged 5 years or older, what do we know about linguistic variability within national origin groups? Table 6-4 presents data on home language use for the largest non-English immigrant cohorts, average length of U.S. residence, and educational and occupational attainment. The bottom panel presents a breakdown by period of arrival for the pre-1990, 1990-1999, and post-2000 foreign-born populations, compared to the native born.[16] Two main conclusions can be derived from these results. First, recently arrived immigrants tend to remain loyal to their native language, regardless of age and education. Although there is some evidence that nationalities with high proportions of college graduates and professionals shift toward English more rapidly, the vast majority of recent arrivals retains its own language at home. Second, time has a strong eroding effect on native language retention: As seen in the bottom rows of the table, about 11 percent of recently arrived immigrants use English only at home, but more than 20 percent of immigrants with longer U.S. residence do so. These results align well

with those concerning shifting political affiliations and interests with the passage of time, reviewed in the previous chapter.

Language Shift

English Proficiency and Contemporary Immigrants

Language transition among recent immigrants has a second aspect, namely, the extent to which they have learned English. In other words, use of the native language at home does not indicate whether users are non-English monolinguals, or limited or fluent bilinguals. The ACS does not test for English knowledge objectively, but includes a self-report of ability to speak English (very well, well, not well, or not at all). Table 6.5 presents the relevant figures, again broken down for the largest non-English origin nationalities, and by year of immigration. While self-reported bilinguals (defined here as those who both spoke a foreign language at home and spoke English very well) among 2000-2010 immigrants represented only about one-third of the total, that proportion had grown to nearly 45 percent of the pre-1990 immigrants. Among the most recent (2000-2010) arrivals 44 percent reported not being able to speak English well or at all, but that figure had declined to 29 percent of pre-1990 arrivals.

Table 6.5 about here

A fuller picture of today's linguistic diversity can be gleaned by examining the data in Table 6.5 on English speaking ability for the largest non-English origin nationalities. The highest levels of fluency are seen for the Germans, Nigerians, Filipinos, Indians and Pakistanis, the latter four coming from countries where English is either an official language or the common language among speakers of different native tongues.[17] Between two-thirds and four-fifths of these immigrants are able to speak English "very well." Most others, however, fall well below those levels of self-reported fluency. Among immigrants from Southeast Asia, China, Ecuador, Cuba and the Dominican Republic, more than 40 percent do not speak English well, as is the case among more than half of the immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, Honduras and Guatemala.

In general, age at arrival, in conjunction with time in the United States and level of education, are the most significant predictors of the acquisition of English fluency among immigrants of non-English origin. The effect of each of these three factors is specified in Table 6.6 for the largest immigrant nationalities.

The speed with which English fluency is acquired by immigrant children is especially notable, underscoring the importance of age at arrival. As shown in Table 6.6, among immigrants who arrived in the U.S. as children under 13 years of age and who speak another language at home, 71 percent could speak English "very well," compared to 35 percent of those who immigrated between the ages of 13 and 34 (in adolescence or early adulthood), and only 18 percent of those who were 35 or older when they immigrated. Even among the nationalities with the poorest English proficiency—those from Mexico and Central America, the Spanish Caribbean, Ecuador, China and Southeast Asia—between two thirds and three fourths of children under 13 spoke English very well. At the same time, level of education is strongly associated

with English fluency. Among immigrant adults, almost two thirds of college graduates speak English very well, compared to 38 percent of high school graduates and only 11 percent of those with less than a high school diploma.

Table 6.6 about here

Figure 6.2 illustrates these patterns jointly for all immigrants from non-native-English countries. Linearly, over time in the United States, immigrants at different ages at arrival and with different levels of education all increase their level of English fluency (defined as speaking English only or very well), but the younger the age at arrival and the higher the level of education, the greater the difference in fluency. Thus, among those arriving as children under age 13 most recently (2000-2010), 65 percent already spoke English very well, a share that increases to 81 percent for those who had lived in the U.S. the longest (pre-1990); but among those arriving at ages 35 and older, the degree of maximum fluency in English barely nudges up (from 23 to 25 percent) as time in the country increases. Similarly, among college graduates the share who speak English very well increases from 58 percent of the most recent arrivals to 78 percent of the old timers; while among adults with less than a high school education, the proportion who speak English very well increases from only 8 percent of the most recent arrivals (post 2000) to 21 percent of those who had resided in the U.S. since before 1990.

Figure 6.2 about here

Generational Patterns

The power of assimilative forces, already detected on economic achievement and the character of ethnic politics (Chapters 4 and 5), is nowhere clearer than in the linguistic shift across generations over time. Until recently, however, there were scarcely any systematic three-generation analyses of language maintenance and shift in the research literature. (A key problem is that census data on parental nativity, which until 1970 had permitted the identification of the foreign-born -- the first generation -- from the U.S.-born of foreign parentage -- second generation -- and of native parentage -- third and higher generations -- have not been collected since, making it impossible to rely on these national data for intergenerational analyses of language change.)

An early exception was the work of David López, who conducted two relevant studies among Spanish-origin minorities in the United States. The first involved a 1973 survey of a representative sample of 1,129 Mexican-origin couples in Los Angeles. His findings document a pattern of rapid language transition across the three generations that contradicts the common assumption of unshakable Spanish language loyalty among Mexican-Americans. Among first-generation women, for example, he found that 84 percent used Spanish only at home, 14 percent used both languages, and only 2 percent used English solely. By the third generation, there was almost a complete reversal, with only 4 percent speaking Spanish at home, 12 percent using both, and 84 percent shifting to English only.[18]

Figures for men were similar, except that the first to second-generation shift to English was still more marked. The study also attempted to examine the determinants and consequences of language transition. It found that generation had the strongest causal effect, exceeding by far

those of age, rural origin, and other predictors. Spanish maintenance appears to have had some positive occupational advantages--controlling for education and other factors--among the immigrant generation, but none for subsequent ones. Among the latter, residual Spanish monolingualism is associated with poor schooling and low socioeconomic status. López concluded that the appearance of high language loyalty among Mexican-Americans is due largely to the effect of continuing high immigration from the country of origin.[19]

A second study by the same author assessed language patterns across three generations, this time for different Spanish-origin groups on the basis of data from the 1979 Current Population Survey. The study confirmed the same negative association between Spanish monolingualism and social class as measured by such variables as education, occupational prestige, and income. For the entire sample, as well as for each national group, adoption of English was positively associated with both higher education and higher socioeconomic status. However, López also uncovered a second trend that differed from both monolingual patterns in which Spanish maintenance was associated with high social class and greater English fluency.[20]

This latter trend was clearer among Spanish-origin groups other than Mexican-Americans and may help explain why third-generation bilingualism is relatively higher among Hispanics overall than among other foreign-origin groups. In effect, despite strong pressures toward anglicization, this evidence documents the existence of a small but resilient group of high-achieving bilinguals across generations. Thus, López's findings raise the issue of "elite" versus "folk" bilingualism or "fluent" versus "limited" use of two languages. Although the intergenerational trend toward English monolingualism is unmistakable and by far the dominant one for all immigrants, this last intriguing set of results compels us to probe deeper into the relationships between social class, language, and socioeconomic achievement.

Before turning to those considerations, however, we highlight briefly the results of other recent studies of intergenerational language shift which provide convergent and compelling contemporary evidence of the three-generation model of mother-tongue erosion from the adult immigrant generation to that of their grandchildren. The first is an innovative analysis of the 2000 census by Richard Alba and his colleagues focusing on children 6 to 15.[21] It analyzed the home languages of school-age children in newcomer families, linking children to their parents in the same household to permit distinguishing between the second generation (US-born children with at least one foreign-born parent) and the third (or a later) generation (US-born children whose parents are also US-born).

Despite group differences in the degree of language shift, for every nationality without exception the following patterns held: The vast majority of first-generation immigrants who come to the U.S. as children speak English well; bilingualism is most common among second-generation children, who grow up in immigrant households and speak a foreign language at home, but are almost all proficient in English; English-only is the predominant pattern by the third generation; and what third-generation bilingualism exists is found especially in border communities such as Brownsville and El Paso, Texas, where the maintenance of Spanish has deep historical roots and is affected by proximity to Mexico, or in areas of high ethnic densities, such as found among Dominicans in New York and Cubans in Miami. Away from the border, Mexican-American children of the third generation are unlikely to be bilingual.

A second study, done by the Pew Hispanic Center, was based on a national telephone survey of a representative sample of Hispanic adults 18 and older in the 48 contiguous states, of whom 2,929 self-reported as Hispanic or Latino (with oversamples of Salvadorans, Dominicans, Colombians and Cubans).[22] Unlike previous censuses or the ACS (which ask only about spoken proficiency in English), the respondents were asked about their ability to speak and read in both English *and* Spanish. On the basis of their answers they were classified as Spanish dominant, bilingual, or English dominant. The results by generation parallel uncannily those of Lopez's Los Angeles survey taken three decades earlier. First-generation adults were overwhelmingly Spanish dominant (72 percent), with a fourth classified as bilingual and only 4 percent as English dominant. That pattern was reversed by the third generation, with 78 percent being English dominant and 22 percent still classified as bilingual, but less than 1 percent could be deemed Spanish dominant. Among the second generation, Spanish dominance plummeted to only 7 percent. However, nearly half (47 percent) were classified as bilinguals and nearly as many as English dominant (46 percent) by the second generation.

Findings from Southern California

Additional evidence of language shift patterns comes from two surveys carried out in Southern California, a region adjacent to the Mexican border that has been not only the nation's largest net receiver of immigrants in the decades since 1970, but one that also contained more Spanish-speakers and persons of Mexican origin than any other area. By the year 2000, one of every five immigrants in the United States resided in the region's six contiguous counties (San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, Ventura, Riverside and San Bernardino), including the largest communities of Mexicans, Salvadorans, Guatemalans, Filipinos, Vietnamese, Taiwanese, Koreans, Iranians, and Cambodians outside of their countries of origin. The data come from the Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles (IIMMLA) survey,[23] on which we will further rely in Chapter 8; and the San Diego third wave of the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS-III), which will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 7. The two data sets were merged to boost sample size; they total 6,135 young adults of the same average age (mid to late twenties), evenly divided by gender, who were surveyed at about the same time in the six contiguous counties. The sample is representative of 1.5- and second-generation groups of immigrant origin who had settled in the area, as well as third and fourth (and later) generation whites, African Americans, and Mexican Americans.

All were asked if they spoke a language other than English at home growing up, about their understanding, speaking, reading and writing proficiency in the non-English language, and their current language preferences and use. The results, broken down by detailed generational cohorts—from the "1.5" generation (foreign-born, arrived pre-adolescence), to the "2.0" (U.S.-born, both parents foreign-born), the "2.5" (U.S.-born, one parent foreign-born), the third (both parents U.S.-born, one or more grandparents foreign-born), and the fourth generations (those with no foreign-born grandparents)[24]—are presented graphically in Figure 6-3. They show clearly the generational progression in each of the measures of language use and preference. For example, while 94 percent of the 1.5 generation and 87 percent of the U.S.-born with two foreign-born parents grew up speaking a non-English language at home, those proportions dropped to 58 percent among the "2.5" generation, suggesting how rapidly English can become the sole language in homes where one parent is U.S.-born.

Only 22 percent of the third generation reported speaking a non-English language at home when growing up, and only a tenth by the fourth generation. At the same time, their preference for English increased rapidly in the 1.5 and second generations, reached 89 percent among the U.S.-born with only one foreign-born parent, and had become universally preferred by the third generation.

Figure 6.3 about here

Those preferences in turn reflect the rapid atrophy of understanding, speaking, reading and writing skills in the foreign language from one generation to the next. (Without exception, proficiencies in English are greater than those in the non-English language.) One dichotomous measure shown on the last panel of Figure 6.3 is "balanced bilingual," defined as the ability to understand, speak, read and write a non-English language "very well" or "well." Those who are not “balanced bilinguals” by this measure include English monolinguals and "limited bilinguals" (who understand, speak, read and write a non-English language not well). Figure 6.3 shows that the proportion of “balanced bilinguals” decreases generationally from 51 percent in the 1.5 generation, to 9 percent in the third, and 4 percent by the fourth generation.

Of the four dimensions of non-English language proficiency, respondents reported greater ability in *understanding* a language, followed by *speaking* it, then *reading*, and the greatest difficulty in *writing* in that language. Figure 6.4 provides a similar graphic presentation, from the 1.5 to the fourth generations, of each of the measured dimensions of linguistic ability: understanding, speaking, reading and writing. The atrophy of each of these proficiencies is seen clearly, with the most rapid decrease occurring in the 2.5 generation. Once a respondent is raised in a family where one parent is not an immigrant or native speaker of a non-English language, it becomes very difficult to sustain balanced bilingualism in the home.

Figure 6.4 about here

The patterns described hold without exception across all of the ethnic groups surveyed, and demonstrate the rapidity with which English is acquired and comes to be preferred by immigrants who arrive at a young age and especially by the U.S.-born children and grandchildren of immigrants. All of the Asian-origin groups were much more likely than all of the Spanish-speakers to lose bilingual skills (especially literacy skills) by the second generation, and to effectively become English monolinguals. Among those of Mexican descent, between half and two-thirds of the 1.5 and 2.0 cohorts can still speak and read Spanish very well, but those proportions fall to between a quarter and a third in the 2.5 cohort, and decrease to single digits by the third.

In a recent study of “linguistic life expectancies,” also using the merged CILS-San Diego and IIMMLA data sets, we estimated the average number of generations a mother tongue can be expected to survive after the arrival of an immigrant in Southern California.[25] The analysis showed that even among those of Mexican origin, the Spanish language “died” by the third generation; all other languages “died” between the second and third generations. These data again provide confirmatory evidence that assimilation forces in American society, even in a border region as dense with immigrants as Southern California, are strongest in the linguistic realm and that they operate most visibly across rather than within generations.

Bilingualism and Achievement

The remarkable rapidity and completeness of language transition in America is no mere happenstance, for it reflects the operation of strong social forces.[26] During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, pressures against bilingualism had actually two distinct, albeit related strands. First, there was the political variant--represented by Roosevelt, Harding and others--that saw the continuing use of foreign languages as somehow un-American. Pressure along these lines led to rapid linguistic loss among immigrant minorities and to the subsequent rise of ethnic reactive formation processes, as seen in Chapter 5. Second, there was a scientific and educational literature that attempted to show the intellectual limitations associated with lack of English fluency. These works gave scientific legitimacy to the calls for restriction and linguistic assimilation so common in the political discourse of the time. We turn now to a review of these studies and their conclusions.

Language and Achievement in the Early Twentieth Century

By the early twentieth century, the scientific debate did not revolve around the close relationship between lack of English and lower intelligence--a settled matter at the time--but around the direction of causality: Did the immigrants' lack of intelligence cause their lack of English or vice versa? At about this time, the development by Alfred Binet of a test of "mental age," soon after translated into English by H.H. Goddard, provided a powerful new tool to the eugenics perspective on immigration. In a 1917 study, Goddard administered the English version of the Binet IQ test to thirty newly arrived Jewish immigrants on Ellis Island and found twenty-five of them to be "feeble-minded." Taking the validity of the test for granted, he argued on the basis of their responses to a section of the test measuring word fluency that "such a lack of vocabulary in an adult would probably mean lack of intelligence" and concluded, "[W]e are now getting the poorest of each race."[27]

When World War I broke out, Goddard and his colleagues persuaded the U.S. Army to test some two million draftees, many of whom were foreign born and illiterate in English. Perhaps the most influential analysis of these data was *A Study of American Intelligence,* published in 1923 by Carl Brigham, who concluded: "The representatives of the Alpine and Mediterranean races in our immigration are intellectually inferior to the representatives of the Nordic race." A confirmed hereditarian, Brigham further insisted that "the underlying cause of the nativity differences we have shown is race, and not language."[28] Along the same lines, in his 1926 volume on *Intelligence and Immigration,* Clifford Kirkpatrick argued against expecting much progress among immigrants through the reform of school programs, because "High grade germplasm often leads to better results than a high per capita school expenditure. Definite limits are set by heredity"[29]

Educational psychologists who shared similar hereditarian views and whose work was shaped by the larger *Zeitgeist* followed with a string of studies seeking to demonstrate that the cause of low IQ among bilingual immigrant schoolchildren was based on genetic factors (nature) rather than on a "language handicap" (nurture). One line of argument claimed that the inferiority of foreign-born children on tests of mental age persisted even after the children had had time to learn English. Another, typified by the influential work of Florence Goodenough, reviewed numerous studies of immigrant children that showed a negative correlation between group intelligence and the extent of foreign language use in the home.

From such correlational evidence, Goodenough argued against a "home environment" theory that would interpret the data to mean that "the use of a foreign language in the home is one of the chief factors in producing mental retardation as measured by intelligence tests" and instead proposed a different causal sequence in favor of innate differences: "A more probable explanation is that those nationality groups whose average intellectual ability is inferior do not readily learn the new language."[30] In other words, for early psychologists of this school, lack of English was not a cause but an effect of inferior intelligence, and the disproportionate presence of feebleminded aliens was blamed on "selective immigration."

Educational psychologists who stressed not heredity but the environment of the bilinguals came to diametrically opposite interpretations regarding causality, but until the early 1960s, most reached equally negative conclusions about immigrant intelligence. From this point of view, low intelligence and poor academic achievement were caused by a learned characteristic: bilingualism itself. Beginning in the early 1920s, in tandem with the flourishing of psychometric tests, the overwhelming majority of these studies consistently reported evidence that bilingual children suffered from a "language handicap." Compared to monolinguals, bilingual children were found to be inferior in intelligence test scores and on a range of verbal and nonverbal linguistic abilities (including vocabulary, grammar, syntax, written composition, and mathematics).

Such findings were interpreted as the effects of the "linguistic confusion" or "linguistic interference" supposedly suffered by children who were exposed to two languages at once. That handicap, in turn, was viewed as a negative trait of the bilingual person's mind. Bilingualism in young children particularly was said to be "a hardship and devoid of apparent advantage," bound to produce deficiencies in both languages being learned and to lead to emotional as well as educational maladjustment.[31]

Perhaps most influential in advancing these views was the work of Madorah Smith, whose research on the speech of preschool Chinese, Filipino, Hawaiian, Japanese, Korean, and Portuguese children in Hawaii concluded that the attempt to use two languages was "an important factor in the retardation in speech" found among these youngsters. The bilinguals fared poorly in comparison to a monolingual sample of children from Iowa, based on her method for analyzing proper English usage in speech utterances.[32] This and similar studies reinforced the popular nostrum that bilingualism in children was a serious handicap and English monolingualism for immigrant youngsters, the proper course to follow.

Bilingualism Reassessed

This negative view dominated academic circles until the early 1960s, oblivious of the fundamental methodological flaw of the research on which it was based. With few exceptions, none of these studies--whether approached from hereditary or environmental perspectives--had introduced controls for social class. They had also typically failed to assess the immigrant children's actual degree of bilingualism, itself a complex issue (in one study, bilingualism had been determined by looking at the child's name).[33] These and other methodological problems fatally flawed the validity of early research findings purporting to document the negative effects of immigrant bilingualism on intelligence and achievement.

In an influential 1962 study in Montreal, Peal and Lambert pointed out that earlier research often compared high-status English-speaking monolinguals with lower-class foreign-born bilinguals, obviously stacking the results *a priori*.[34] In their study, Peal and Lambert distinguished between two types of bilinguals: true or "balanced" bilinguals, who master both languages at an early age and can communicate competently in both, and semi- or "pseudo-" bilinguals, who know one language much better than the other and do not use the second language in communication. They carried out a carefully controlled study of ten-year-old children, classified into groups of French monolinguals and French-English balanced bilinguals, finding that the bilingual group had, on the average, a higher socioeconomic level than the monolinguals. Of more consequence, with socioeconomic status controlled, the bilingual group performed significantly better than the monolinguals on a wide range of verbal and nonverbal IQ tests--contradicting four decades of prior research.

In particular, controlling for social class and demographic variables, the bilinguals in this study performed best on the type of nonverbal tests involving concept formation and cognitive or symbolic "flexibility." Peal and Lambert offered several hypotheses to explain the advantages observed for the bilinguals. They suggested, following Leopold's extensive case studies, that people who learn to use two languages have two symbols for every object.[35] Thus, from an early age, they become emancipated from linguistic symbols--from the concreteness, arbitrariness, and "tyranny" of words--developing analytic abilities to focus on essentials and to think in terms of more abstract concepts and relations, independent of the actual word.

In switching from one language to another, the balanced bilingual uses two different perspectives and is exposed to the "enriched environment" of a wider range of experiences stemming from two cultures. By contrast, monolinguals "may be at a disadvantage in that their thought is always subject to language" and "may be more rigid or less flexible than the bilinguals on certain tests."[36] It bears emphasizing, however, that these and subsequent positive evaluations in the literature are built on a considerable body of evidence concerning the performance of fully (or "true") bilingual children. By contrast, little research was done on limited (or "semi") bilinguals.

Adding and Subtracting

Language learning is only one dimension, though a fundamental one, of the process of acculturation. Until recently, the prevailing notion, derived from the assimilationist perspective (see Chapter 2), was that of a zero-sum process: Acculturation involves shedding the old and assimilating the new and hence a necessary trade-off between the native language and English. To learn English and become American means, from this point of view, that immigrants should not maintain their mother tongues: In the final analysis, this is the litmus test of Americanization. Bilingualism is regarded as unstable and transitional, for, as Roosevelt stated, there is no room for two languages and two ethnic identities under the same national roof. In theory, however, English monolingualism and abandonment of the mother tongue represent only *one* possible linguistic outcome of the process of immigrant incorporation. As portrayed in Figure 6-5, others include continued mother tongue use, limited bilingualism, and fluency in both languages. Still, assimilationists have continued to emphasize use of English as the proper end result of the process.[37]

Figure 6.5 about here

The call for prompt linguistic assimilation has not been motivated exclusively by concerns with the inferior intellectual performance of immigrants. Similar concerns have been voiced, albeit in a different tone, when immigrants actually outperformed natives. An example comes from a Canadian study conducted in the mid-1920s that departed markedly from the familiar reporting of intellectual inferiority among the foreign born. Five hundred Japanese and Chinese children attending public schools in Vancouver were tested in the study. The Japanese median IQ score was 114.2, and the Chinese 107.4, both well above the white norm. The authors found these results "surprising, even startling," and concluded:

> There is every reason for believing that the Japanese are the most intelligent racial group resident in British Columbia, with the Chinese as a more doubtful second. The superiority is undoubtedly due to selection. In the main, it is the Japanese and Chinese possessing the qualities of cleverness, resourcefulness, and courage who emigrate...But the presence of so many clever, industrious, and frugal aliens, capable (as far as mentality is concerned) of competing successfully with the native whites...constitutes a political and economic problem of the greatest importance.[38]

Half a century later, a leader of the U.S. English movement in Miami was to express a similar concern by complaining that "the Latins are coming up fast" and that he and other natives had not come to Miami "to live in a Spanish-speaking province."[39] The meaning of such calls is further clarified when the attempt to compel immigrants to shed their language is contrasted with the efforts of many native-born middle-class youths to acquire a foreign tongue in universities and other institutions of higher learning. There is irony in the comparison between the hundreds of hours and thousands of dollars put into acquiring a halting command of a foreign language and the pressure on fluent foreign-born speakers to abandon its use. These contradictory goals—English monolingualism for the masses but bilingualism or multilingualism for elites—shed light on the real underpinnings of linguistic assimilation.

The pressure for immigrants to learn English can be attributed, reasonably, to the need to maintain a fundamental element of American identity and culture. The pressure to learn English *only*, especially when contrasted with the efforts of many Americans to do exactly the opposite, must be sought in other factors. The conclusions of Peal and Lambert's study concerning the cognitive advantages accruing to fluent bilinguals are relevant at this point. Knowledge of more than one language represents a resource in terms of expanding intellectual horizons and of facilitating communication across cultures. This resource and its associated advantages can become a serious threat to monolinguals who must compete in the same labor markets. It is for this reason that nativist calls for subtractive acculturation--not English, but "English only"--find a receptive audience among less educated segments of the domestic population.[40]

Although the sense of threat among those exposed to labor market competition is understandable, we must ask whether campaigns to compel immigrants to entirely abandon their

cultural heritage are justified. In Chapter 5, we saw how such campaigns leveled against turn-of-the-century immigrants gave rise to processes of reactive formation and ethnic strife later on. Reactive ethnic mobilizations came, however, without the benefit of fluent bilingualism, sacrificed by earlier generations that sought to Americanize as quickly as possible. To the personal suffering inflicted on the first generation by discrimination and xenophobic attacks must be added the net loss of intellectual and economic resources for their offspring and for American society at large. The "Know Nothing" movement has been a perennial tendency in the politics of the nation leading to frequent attacks precisely against those who "know something" or "know more", bilinguals included.

Growing evidence of the significance and positive benefits of speaking more than one language leads a number of immigrant parents today to seek to balance learning of English among their offspring with preservation of their own languages. Such efforts are mostly unsuccessful because of external pressures, but the factors leading to different outcomes deserve additional attention. Indeed, they are increasingly coming to national attention and leading to major efforts at the state and local levels to implement language immersion programs from kindergarten through the end of high school for all students. A program such as this is currently being implemented throughout the state of Utah, among other places.[41]

English Plus and the Role of Social Class

Large-scale studies in the San Diego Unified School District and elsewhere have found that students classified as fluent bilinguals tend to excel in school, surpassing the performance of both English monolinguals and limited bilinguals.[42] This positive association may be due to the effects of bilingualism on cognitive skills, an argument in line with Peal and Lambert's hypothesis; but it may also be due to the effect of other factors, such as family socioeconomic status, which account for *both* language knowledge and academic performance.

Research findings elsewhere confirm that immigrants from higher class backgrounds are most able to cope with contradictory demands through an "additive" approach that incorporates knowledge of the new language and customs, while preserving the old. An example is provided by a survey of 622 adult Korean immigrants in Chicago. These immigrants, ranging in age from thirty to fifty-nine, had been in the United States for an average of eight years. Their English ability was tested through an objective vocabulary scale drawn from the Wechsler Adult Intelligence Test (WAIS) and through subjective self-reports. English ability and English language use at home decreased with age but increased with time in the United States, as did the proportion of respondents who regularly read American newspapers and magazines-- while *also* maintaining fluency and usage of the Korean language, including reading of Korean newspapers. This additive pattern was strongest for college graduates, who maintained more ethnic attachments with Korean friends and organizations. Over time, the more educated the Koreans in this sample, the more they fit the pattern of high-achieving balanced bilingualism noted by López among non-Mexican Hispanics.[43]

Similar results were obtained by the Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study (CILS), referred to previously and to be examined in detail in Chapter 7. In this panel of over 5,200 youths in the San Diego and South Florida areas whose parents came from seventy-seven different countries, it was found that higher parental socio-economic status was positively and

significantly associated with fluent bilingualism, controlling for other factors. Each additional point in the parental socioeconomic status (SES) index led to a net increase of 3 percent in the probability of fluent bilingualism in the second generation. The study also showed that fluent, but not limited bilingualism, has significant and positive effects on academic achievement, as well as on related dimensions such as educational and occupational aspirations and self-esteem. Controlling for other predictors, fluent bilinguals had significantly higher math and reading scores, as well as grades, in junior high school. Effects of language types on psychosocial correlates of achievement are graphically portrayed in Figure 6.6.

Figure 6.6 about here

Chances for additive acculturation—not English-only, but English-plus—are thus greater in families of professionals and other educated immigrants. Migrant laborers, on the other hand, are more likely to swing from foreign-language monolingualism in the first generation to limited bilingualism or English monolingualism in the second. All children of immigrants must contend, however, with the powerful external pressures pushing toward the latter outcome. The same CILS longitudinal panel found that, about the time of high school graduation, only a minority (28.5%) were fully bilingual; the majority had already shifted toward English monolingualism, with a significant number (17.8%) becoming limited bilinguals. As seen in Figure 6.6, the latter pattern is associated with the worst social-psychological adaptation outcomes.[44]

Bilingualism and Dropping Out of High School

Dropping out of high school is a key turning point in the transition to adulthood, and a key predictor for future life chances, particularly in the labor market. Prior research has shown that dropping out of high school is strongly linked to higher unemployment, the likelihood of being laid off, or having never worked; with the lowest level of earnings and lifetime income; with being disabled, and with worse health outcomes.[45] High school dropouts are more likely to be divorced or separated, to come from low-SES families, and to have grown up in more dangerous neighborhoods. They are four to five times more likely to be incarcerated, to have had a teen pregnancy, and a non-marital birth. Given the strong link of dropping out of school with future economic outcomes, what are the effects of balanced bilingualism on the odds of dropping out?

Data from the merged IIMMLA and CILS surveys in Southern California described earlier were used to analyze the effects of balanced bilingualism and other key predictors on the likelihood of dropping out of school. English monolinguals (or limited bilinguals) and non-Hispanic whites were the reference groups. High school grades and parental socioeconomic status were the strongest inhibitors of dropping out. Latinos and blacks, and males of all groups were significantly more likely to drop out, even after controlling for other predictors. Chinese and Vietnamese were the least likely to do so. The gender effect disappeared once grades entered the model (females had higher GPAs). However, in all models, the dichotomous measure of balanced bilingualism had a strong and significant negative effect on dropping out: English monolinguals and limited bilinguals were 66% more likely than balanced bilinguals to abandon their schooling, net of other factors.[46]

This finding confirms other research that has pointed to the positive effects of

bilingualism for academic achievement, family cohesion, parent-child relations, aspirations, and other factors that are protective against the decision to drop out.[47] Feliciano, for example, found that bilingual students are less likely to quit school than English-only speakers; students in bilingual households are less likely to drop out than those in English-dominant or English-limited households; and students in immigrant households are less likely to quit than those in nonimmigrant households.[48]

Bilingualism and Earnings

The research literature has largely focused on examining the workplace and economic benefits of English (or host country language) fluency among immigrant workers.[49] Proficiency in the host language is seen as a human capital variable, a resource in the labor market. That literature regularly finds that the more proficient immigrants are in the language of the host country, the higher their wages. Fluency in a second language combined with English proficiency has been largely ignored as a competitive resource. Some new studies are now providing evidence of the economic benefits of bilingualism.

Figure 6.7 graphically summarizes the effects of different levels of bilingualism (fluent, moderate and limited) on annual earnings (measured in dollars), again using the merged IIMMLA and CILS data sets in Southern California. Respondents were classified as "fluent bilinguals" if they understand, speak, read and write a non-English language "very well"; "moderate bilinguals" if they understand, speak, read and write a non-English language "well"; and "limited bilinguals" if they understand, speak, read and write a non-English language less than well. In the regressions, English monolinguals are the reference group, as are non-Hispanic whites.

Figure 6.7 about here

Two models are presented: the first controlling for age, gender, ethnicity, and parents' socioeconomic status, and the second adding controls for high school GPA and total years of education attained. The regressions predicting annual earnings show strong and significant effects for the different levels of bilingualism: the higher the level of bilingualism, the higher the annual earnings and the more strongly significant the effect. Fluent bilingualism, net of other predictors, is associated with an annual gain of $2,827; when GPA and years of education are entered into the second model, the effect is reduced but fluent bilinguals still earn $2,234 more than English monolinguals. Moderate bilingualism is associated with annual earnings advantages of $2,425 and $1,876, while even limited bilingualism shows a more modest but statistically significant annual earnings advantage.[50]

Related research examining the effects of balanced bilingualism on earnings has reported parallel results based on two separate data sets: one is the National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS), based on the final follow up of a nationally representative sample when respondents were 26 years old on average; and the other is the full CILS-III study, described previously, with respondents from both the San Diego and South Florida samples, when they were in their mid-twenties. Regression analyses indicate that balanced bilingual students earn significantly more as young adults at the beginning of their career than linguistic minorities who were proficient in English only. Even after controlling for cognitive ability, educational

attainment, and parental socioeconomic status, the cost of monolingualism was estimated at $2,100 to 3,300 dollars annually.[51]

These results are not accounted for by differences in English language acculturation among these young children of immigrants. On the contrary, as we have shown, for all groups without exception, proficiency and preference for English is well established by the second generation and entirely dominant by the third with fluent bilingualism rapidly atrophying. What is novel is that bilingualism is positively associated with educational, occupational and economic attainment among those youths who have managed to maintain their linguistic skills despite strong assimilative pressures.

Immigrants and their Contexts

The typology of contemporary immigrants that has accompanied us throughout this book--primarily a classification of fundamental differences in social class background and skills--now serves to highlight the principal differences in the process of linguistic adaptation. Before doing so, however, we must again take into account the social context in which immigrants settle. For our purposes, the basic difference is between immigrants who cluster in ethnic communities and those who become dispersed throughout the country.

The fundamental impact of context in the course of linguistic adaptation has been documented consistently by past research. A large study of bilingualism in Canadian cities found, for example, that French and English usage among urban groups was closely related to the proportion of other-tongue speakers in the same city. In general, the more each group found itself in a linguistic minority, the greater the pressure to become bilingual. Because of the national dominance of English, a greater concentration of French speakers was needed to induce bilingualism in native English speakers than vice versa. The pressure was mainly occupational, resulting in more bilingual men than women, given the higher rate of labor force participation among males. Thus, the greater the occupational demand for one language, the greater the pressure for native speakers of the other to become bilingual.[52]

Labor market pressures in the United States also lead in the direction of prompt English acquisition, but their effect is attenuated by the presence of a large and diversified ethnic community. The latter tends to encourage use of the immigrants' native tongue during off-work hours and results in spin-off commercial and service opportunities that *require* fluent knowledge of the non-English home language. That is why use of these languages tends to flourish in entrepreneurial ethnic enclaves. Linguistic requirements in the outside labor market also vary significantly. For most high-status occupations, fluent and even non-accented English is required. For many manual-level jobs, however, English may be almost unnecessary. In some extreme cases, employers may actually prefer non-English monolinguals, whom they perceive as more pliable sources of labor.[53]

Figure 6.8 summarizes the interplay between type of immigration, context, and expected social and linguistic outcomes. Working-class immigrants and refugees who become dispersed throughout the country tend to have minimal impact in the communities where they settle. Adult immigrants must perforce learn some English, and their children are likely to become English

monolinguals. Working-class immigrants who cluster in certain areas give rise to homogeneous ethnic neighborhoods that help preserve mother-tongue monolingualism among adults. Their children are likely to be limited bilinguals because they are insufficiently exposed to English--as is the case with recent arrivals--or to full use of the mother tongue--as is the case with the U.S.-born.

Entrepreneurial groups that disperse after arrival tend to give rise to middleman-type businesses, as seen in earlier chapters. They must learn some English in order to carry out transactions with their domestic customers. Their children are prone to become English monolinguals because of outside pressures for assimilation and the absence of ethnic supports for mother-tongue use. A different story is that of entrepreneurial groups that give rise to ethnic enclaves. English is learned, but there is less pressure for adults to do so given the possibility of conducting business in the mother tongue. The children of enclave entrepreneurs are likely to become fluent bilinguals because of access to quality English language education financed by their parents' resources combined with strong ethnic support for continuing use of the mother tongue. Fluent bilingualism in these contexts is associated with superior economic opportunities. This conclusion is supported by findings from the CILS study that Cuban-American children who attended private schools in the midst of Miami's Cuban enclave were the most likely group in the second generation to preserve bilingual fluency. It is also supported by a recent study; based on 2010 census data, showing that offspring of earlier Cuban exiles (who attended mostly private bilingual schools in Miami) tend to have high average incomes, at par with non-Hispanic whites.[54]

Figure 6.8 about here

As seen in chapter 3, immigrant groups with a strong professional component tend to become dispersed upon arrival. The more dispersed they are, the less impact they have on the communities where they settle. Immigrant professionals become fluent, though not necessarily "accentless" bilinguals by force of circumstance and because of their higher education. Although they may try to transmit full bilingualism to their children, the absence of outside ethnic supports makes this a futile enterprise in most instances. But some professional-level immigrants and many upper-class refugees settle where their own group concentrates. Their presence gives to ethnic enclaves or preexisting ethnic neighborhoods a more diversified educational and occupational character. Linguistic transition in these contexts is slower because the community tends to attenuate outside pressures for assimilation.[55] Absence of fluent bilingualism among adults is compensated by its presence among children. The mechanism leading to this outcome is exactly the same as in the case of entrepreneurial communities.

Other individual and collective factors affect language use among immigrants and their descendants.[56] Thus, the outcomes summarized in Figure 6.8 must be read as a set of tendencies, based on past experience. The figure highlights the three core findings of the existing research literature on language adaptation, namely, that home-country monolingualism seldom outlasts the first generation; that English monolingualism is the dominant trend among the second generation; and that preservation of fluent bilingualism, despite its psychological and economic advantage, is an exceptional outcome, dependent on both the intellectual and economic resources of parents and the presence of outside structural supports.

Conclusion

Wide open and unguarded stand our gates,
And through them presses a wild motley throng...
Accents of menace alien to our air,
Voices that once the Tower of Babel knew![57]

The author of these lines, Thomas B. Aldrich, was the eminent editor of the *Atlantic Monthly,* penning his poem in the same period that Emma Lazarus contributed hers to the pedestal of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor. Although the gates are far less "unguarded" today than they were at the turn of the 19th century, one can only imagine what Aldrich might have written of the greater linguistic diversity of the newest immigrants to the United States. Yet he might have saved his muse for a better cause. A rapid transition to English has been the lot of the vast majority of foreign groups in the history of American immigration and continues to be so today. Thus, as noted earlier, instead of a Tower of Babel, the American experience has produced "a Babel in reverse."

The shift to English is both an empirical fact and a cultural requirement demanded of foreigners who have sought a new life in America. In its extreme but usual version, the requirement has included both the acquisition of English and the loss of anything else immigrants might have brought with them. Research on intelligence and the psychology of mental ability until the mid-twentieth century served to buttress this position by documenting the intellectual handicaps of immigrant children and debating whether it caused lack of English fluency or vice versa. The introduction of controls for social class background after decades of such reports reversed this finding, showing that fluent or "true" bilingual children actually out-performed monolinguals on a variety of achievement tests. The expansion of intellectual horizons associated with bilingualism must have been suspected earlier by members of the domestic elite, who devoted much time and effort to acquiring foreign tongues, often the same ones immigrants were being told to forget.

Calls for subtractive assimilation have persisted and have gained renewed vigor in recent years with the advent of U.S. English and other militant nativist movements.[58] The significant new ingredient brought about by contemporary immigration is, however, the presence of a sizable minority of educated newcomers who are both able to understand the advantages of fluent bilingualism and to maintain it for themselves and their children. Giving up a foreign language means sacrificing the possibility of looking at things from a different perspective and becoming bound to the symbols and perceptions embedded in a single tongue. Like educated Americans, educated immigrants have sought to avoid these limitations and to transmit this advantage to their progeny.

Unfortunately, their efforts will have only a limited collective effect. First, the vast majority of immigrants do not belong to this privileged stratum, and their adaptation is likely to follow the time-honored pattern toward English monolingualism in the course of two generations. Second, bilingual parents who try to educate their children in their mother tongue confront the immense pressure for cultural conformity from peers, friends, teachers, and the media. In the absence of a sizable and economically potent co-ethnic community to support

language maintenance, fluent bilingualism in the second generation is likely to prove an elusive goal.

These conclusions reverse the usual concerns and alarms found in the American popular and journalistic literatures that call attention to the proliferation of foreign languages and to the threat that they pose to English dominance. Fears of linguistic and cultural fragmentation, like fears of ethnic radicalism, play well in the press and harping on them has made the fame and fortune of many a pundit. However, historical and contemporary evidence indicates that English has never been seriously threatened as the dominant language of the United States and that--with some two hundred and thirty million monolingual English speakers--it is certainly not threatened today. The real threat has been to the viability of other languages, which have mostly succumbed in the wake of American-style assimilation. To the extent that language fluency is an asset and that knowledge of a foreign tongue represents a valuable resource, immigrants' efforts to maintain this part of their cultural heritage and pass it on to their youths is worth supporting. Although in the course of time they too may be destined to disappear, the existence of pockets where Spanish, Chinese, Hindi, Korean, French, or Italian continue to flourish enriches American culture and the lives of native and immigrants alike.

Endnotes: Chapter 6

[1] Rumbaut, "Passages to America;" Haines, *Refugees as Immigrants*. See Cortés, *Cuban Exiles in the United States*, for the research reports of Raúl Moncarz on the professional adaptation of Cuban accountants, architects, engineers, lawyers, nurses, optometrists, pharmacists, physicians, pilots, and teachers.

[2] Iowa Board of Immigration, *Iowa: The Home for Immigrants* (Des Moines, 1870). Accessed at: http://books.google.com/books?id=rIYUAAAAYAAJ.

[3] Kamphoefner, "German-Americans: Paradoxes of a 'Model Minority.'"

[4] Quoted in Brumberg, *Going to America*, 7. See also Schlossman, "Is There an American Tradition."

[5] Frese, "Divided by a Common Language."

[6] *Ibid*.

[7] Benjamin Franklin, "Observations Concerning the Increase of Mankind, Peopling of Countries."

[8] Huntington, *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity*.

[9] *Ibid*., p. 256.

[10] Quoted in Görlach, "Comment."

[11] Wardhaugh, *Languages in Competition*, 1-22; Mackey, *Bilingualism as a World Problem*, 11; Landry, "Comment." See also Crystal, *Language Death*; and Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopeia of Language*.

[12] Lieberson, Dalto, and Johnston, "The Course"; Lieberson and Hansen, "National Development." See also Lieberson, *Language Diversity and Language Contact*.

[13] Nahirny and Fishman, "American Immigrant Groups;" Fishman, *Language Loyalty in the United States*; Fishman, "Language Maintenance"; López, *Language Maintenance*. See also Portes and Schauffler, "Language and the Second Generation."

[14] Veltman, *Language Shift in the United States*. See also Veltman, "Modelling the Language Shift."

[15] Haugen, *The Ecology of Language.*

[16] Excluded from the first group are Great Britain, Canada, Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Ireland, Australia and New Zealand, where English is the dominant language. Included are India, Pakistan and the Philippines, where English use is both an official language and common among the educated classes, but other languages are also spoken.

[17] In Germany, over half of the population speaks English. In Scandinavian countries such as Norway and Sweden, over 80 percent of the population speaks English.

[18] López, The Maintenance of Spanish.

[19] Ibid.

[20] López, The Maintenance of Spanish.

[21] Alba, "Language Assimilation Today"; Alba *et al.*, "Only English by the Third Generation?"

[22] Pew Hispanic Center, "Assimilation and Language" and "Bilingualism."

[23] Rumbaut *et al.*, "Immigration and Intergenerational Mobility in Metropolitan Los Angeles."

[24] Rumbaut, "Ages, Life Stages, and Generational Cohorts."

[25] Rumbaut, Massey, and Bean, "Linguistic Life Expectancies."

[26] *Cf.* Crawford, "Seven Hypotheses on Language Loss."

[27] Quoted in Hakuta, *Mirror of Language*, 17. See also Laponce, *Languages and Their Territories*.

[28] Brigham, *A Study of American Intelligence*, 194-197.

[29] Kirkpatrick, *Intelligence and Immigration*, 2.

[30] Goodenough, "Racial Differences." See also Hakuta, *Mirror of Language*, 28-33.

[31] Díaz, "Thought and Two Languages." For an early case study on the question of language and identity, see Child, *Italian or American?*

[32] Smith, "Some Light on the Problem."

[33] For detailed reviews, see Díaz, "Thought and Two Languages"; Hakuta, *Mirror of Language*; Peal and Lambert, "The Relation of Bilingualism."

[34] Peal and Lambert, "The Relation of Bilingualism."

[35] Leopold, Speech Development.

[36] Peal and Lambert, "The Relation of Bilingualism," 5-7, 14-15. See also Reynolds, "Language and Learning."

[37] See Marshall, "The Question;" Thernstrom, "Language." For a prominent assimilationist statement, see Rodríguez, *Hunger of Memory*.

[38] Sandiford and Kerr, "Intelligence."

[39] Quoted in Schmalz, "Hispanic Influx". See also Resnick, "Beyond the Ethnic Community."

[40] For an example of the argument for forced linguistic assimilation, see Henry, "Against a Confusion of Tongues." See also the journalistic account of the origins of the U.S. English movement by Crawford, "The Hidden Motives."

[41] Kluger, "The Power of the Bilingual Brain."

[42] Rumbaut, "The New Californians;" Rumbaut and Ima, *The Adaptation*; Rumbaut, "Immigrant Students."

[43] Kim and Hurh, "Two Dimensions."

[44] Portes and Rumbaut, *Legacies*, Ch. 6.

[45] *Cf.* Rumbaut, "Turning Points;" Rumbaut, "The Coming of the Second Generation."

[46] Rumbaut, "English Plus."

[47] Portes and Rumbaut, *Legacies*; Rumbaut, "Children of Immigrants and Their Achievement;" Rumberger and Larson, "Toward Explaining Differences in Educational Achievement."

[48] Feliciano, "The Benefits of Biculturalism."

[49] Chiswick, "Speaking, Reading, and Earnings among Low-Skilled Immigrants;" Chiswick and Miller, "Immigrant Earnings;" Dustmann and Van Soest, "Language and the earnings of immigrants."

[50] Rumbaut, "English Plus."

[51] Agirdag, "The Long-Term Effects of Bilingualism."

[52] Lieberson, *Language and Ethnic Relations*.

[53] Sassen-Koob, "Exporting Capital"; Bustamante, "Espaldas Mojadas"; Cornelius, "The United States Demand."

[54] Portes and Shafer, "Revisiting the Enclave Hypothesis"; Doeringer, Moss, and Terkla, "Capitalism and Kinship"; Min, "Ethnic Business"; Gold, "Refugees and Small Business"; Resnick, "Beyond the Ethnic Community"; Portes and Rumbaut, *Legacies*, Ch. 6.

[55] Portes and Hao, "The Price of Uniformity"; Zhou, "Straddling Different Worlds"; Alba, "Language Assimilation Today".

[56] See, for example, Laponce, *Language and Their Territories;* Ben-Rafael, *Language, Identity, and Social Division;* Silva-Corvalán, *Language Contact and Change;* Pinker, *The Language Instinct.* For a discussion of the effect of age on accentless second language acquisition, see Lenneberg, *Biological Foundations of Language.* For a statement on the politics of ethnic language use over time in the context of competitive intergroup relations, see Taylor, "Ethnicity and Language." On language and bicultural identities, see Hoffman, *Lost in Translation*; Pérez Firmat, *Life on the Hyphen.*

[57] From Aldrich's poem, "Unguarded Gates," quoted in *Time,* "Immigrants," 31.

[58] Crawford, *Hold your Tongue;* Crawford, "The Hidden Motives"; Loo, "The 'Biliterate' Ballot Controversy." For a concise argument against the U.S. English movement, see Capen, "Languages Open Opportunity's Door." See also Marshall, "The Question," and the entire special issue of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* 60; Crawford, *Language Loyalties;* and Baron, *The English-Only Question.*

Table 6-1.
Language Diversity in the United States, 1980 to 2010

Year	U.S. population 5 years or older	Spoke English only		Spoke non-English language at home		Spoke Spanish at home	
	N (millions)	N (millions)	%	N (millions)	%	N (millions)	%
1980	210.2	187.2	89.1	23.1	11.0	11.1	5.3
1990	230.4	198.6	86.2	31.8	13.8	17.3	7.5
2000	262.4	215.5	82.1	47.0	17.9	28.1	10.7
2010	289.2	229.7	79.7	59.5	20.3	37.0	12.6

Sources: 1980, 1990 and 2000 U.S. censuses; 2010 American Community Survey (ACS).

Table 6-2.
Percent of Population Who Speak a Non-English Language at Home, by States and Metropolitan Areas, in Rank Order, ca. 2010[1]
(U.S. mean = 20.3%)

Top 25 States	%	Top 25 Metros	%
California	43.4	McAllen, TX	85.4
New Mexico	36.1	El Paso, TX	74.7
Texas	34.5	Miami, FL	73.0
New York	29.6	Jersey City, NJ	59.0
New Jersey	29.1	Los Angeles, CA	56.8
Nevada	28.8	San Jose, CA	50.8
Arizona	27.0	New York, NY	46.3
Florida	27.0	Orange County, CA	44.8
Hawaii	26.0	Fresno, CA	43.1
Illinois	21.9	San Francisco, CA	42.2
Massachusetts	21.5	Bakersfield, CA	41.0
Rhode Island	21.0	Riverside, CA	40.5
Connecticut	20.8	Bergen-Passaic, NJ	40.5
Washington	17.8	San Antonio, TX	40.2
Colorado	16.9	Houston, TX	38.8
Maryland	16.4	Oakland, CA	38.8
Alaska	16.0	Ventura, CA	37.4
Oregon	14.5	Fort Lauderdale, FL	37.1
Virginia	14.4	San Diego, CA	36.9
Utah	14.1	Middlesex-Somerset, NJ	34.4
District of Columbia	13.9	Las Vegas, NV	32.8
Georgia	12.9	Dallas, TX	32.1
Delaware	12.1	Albuquerque, NM	31.3
Kansas	10.6	Vallejo-Fairfield-Napa, CA	30.9
North Carolina	10.6	Chicago-Gary, IL	30.2

[1] Persons 5 years or older; metropolitan areas with populations above 500,000.

Source: American Community Survey (ACS), 2008-2010 merged files.

Table 6-3.
Main Languages Spoken in the United States and Nativity of Speakers, ca. 2010
(persons 5 years or older)

Languages spoken	Estimated N of speakers	% of population	% speakers foreign-born	% speakers born in U.S.
English-only	228,285,377	79.7	2.6%	97.4%
Non-English languages	58,266,345	20.3	56.7%	43.3%
Europe/Americas:				
Spanish	36,149,240	12.6	49.4%	50.6%
French*	1,267,188	0.4	38.6%	61.4%
German*	1,102,804	0.4	38.6%	61.4%
Russian	849,796	0.3	82.6%	17.4%
Italian	738,871	0.3	40.6%	59.4%
Haitian Creole	696,163	0.2	71.5%	28.5%
Portuguese	689,697	0.2	70.5%	29.5%
Polish	583,427	0.2	66.7%	33.3%
Greek	313,092	0.1	42.1%	57.9%
East/South Asia:				
Chinese	2,633,123	0.9	78.0%	22.0%
Hindi, Urdu and related	2,088,057	0.7	81.4%	18.6%
Filipino Tagalog and related	1,709,651	0.6	87.1%	12.9%
Vietnamese	1,338,309	0.5	76.7%	23.3%
Korean	1,124,994	0.4	80.7%	19.3%
Khmer, Hmong, Lao, related	748,896	0.3	65.7%	34.3%
Dravidian	595,019	0.2	88.5%	11.5%
Japanese	455,253	0.2	60.4%	39.6%
West Asia/North Africa:				
Arabic	819,678	0.3	69.5%	30.5%
Persian (Farsi)	370,759	0.1	79.5%	20.5%
All other languages	3,992,328	1.4	61.3%	38.7%
Total (5 years or older)	286,551,722	100%	13.6%	86.4%

* French excludes Patois, Cajun, Haitian Creole; German excludes Pennsylvania Dutch.

Source: American Community Survey (ACS), 2008-2010 merged files.

Table 6-4.
Language Spoken at Home and Related Social Characteristics for the Largest Immigrant Groups and the Native-Born, 2010
(Ranked by Percent of Foreign-Born from Non-English-Speaking Countries Who Spoke English Only)

Country of Birth	Persons 5 years or older (N)	Language speaks at home: English only (%)	Language speaks at home: Non-English language (%)	Length of residence in U.S. (years)	College graduate[1] (%)	High status profession[2] (%)
Germany	619,534	42%	58%	37	32%	45%
Nigeria	205,268	27%	73%	14	61%	49%
Italy	367,090	23%	77%	41	18%	36%
Japan	333,145	18%	82%	20	48%	53%
Korea	1,079,550	16%	84%	19	51%	43%
Philippines	1,777,857	14%	86%	19	50%	40%
Poland	459,026	13%	87%	24	30%	29%
Hong Kong	211,471	12%	88%	23	54%	55%
Former USSR (15 Reps.)	1,001,251	12%	88%	15	53%	42%
Iran	343,994	10%	90%	21	53%	51%
India	1,762,129	9%	91%	13	75%	67%
Brazil	338,340	9%	91%	12	34%	27%
Taiwan	364,071	8%	92%	20	70%	62%
China	1,491,659	8%	92%	16	45%	47%
Haiti	560,474	8%	92%	18	17%	20%
Laos	198,195	8%	92%	24	13%	19%
Pakistan	294,504	7%	93%	15	53%	41%
Colombia	633,945	7%	93%	18	29%	27%
Vietnam	1,210,036	6%	94%	19	23%	27%
Peru	412,526	6%	94%	16	29%	22%
Guatemala	782,144	6%	94%	14	7%	7%
Cuba	1,037,332	5%	95%	25	21%	24%
Honduras	491,087	5%	95%	13	8%	8%
Nicaragua	250,324	5%	95%	20	17%	17%
El Salvador	1,162,749	5%	95%	17	7%	9%
Ecuador	431,437	4%	96%	17	15%	15%
Dominican Republic	825,765	3%	97%	18	14%	14%
Mexico	11,595,014	3%	97%	17	5%	8%
Foreign-born:[3]	39,067,294	15%	85%	19	27%	27%
arrived before 1990	12,485,764	21%	79%	33	25%	31%
arrived 1990-1999	10,930,073	12%	88%	14	26%	25%
arrived 2000-2010	15,651,457	11%	89%	5	32%	24%
U.S.-born:	247,484,428	90%	10%	NA	28%	33%

[1] Persons 25 and older.
[2] Professionals, managers, technicians among employed persons 16 and older.
[3] Totals include immigrants from native-English-speaking countries.

Source: ACS 2008-2010 merged annual surveys.

Table 6-5.
English Speaking Ability of Immigrants from Largest Source Countries, 2010

Country of Birth	Foreign-born persons[1] who speak a non-English language at home N (5 years or older)	English proficiency[2] Speaks English "very well" (%)	Speaks English "not well" or at all (%)	Median age (years)
Germany	358,522	83.2%	2.2%	59
Nigeria	150,067	82.2%	3.7%	42
Philippines	1,525,993	65.3%	8.1%	48
India	1,597,005	70.0%	10.0%	37
Pakistan	272,813	62.2%	13.3%	39
Hong Kong	185,803	52.1%	16.3%	45
Taiwan	333,806	44.0%	18.5%	47
Italy	284,112	49.8%	19.5%	64
Iran	309,366	52.6%	21.5%	50
Brazil	308,460	49.7%	22.7%	36
Japan	272,399	38.8%	23.3%	42
Poland	399,939	43.5%	24.0%	48
Haiti	517,787	41.9%	25.5%	43
Former USSR (15 Reps.)	881,861	42.3%	27.4%	43
Peru	389,265	41.7%	28.6%	43
Colombia	592,400	41.1%	29.9%	44
Korea	906,258	34.0%	32.9%	44
Nicaragua	238,637	38.1%	36.7%	42
Laos	183,241	30.5%	40.4%	44
Vietnam	1,131,845	28.1%	41.1%	43
Ecuador	413,405	32.2%	41.8%	39
China	1,377,462	29.8%	42.0%	44
Cuba	986,849	34.7%	44.4%	51
Dominican Republic	798,746	31.6%	45.4%	42
El Salvador	1,109,449	25.1%	50.2%	37
Mexico	11,223,211	24.8%	52.8%	36
Honduras	467,326	24.3%	54.1%	34
Guatemala	738,150	21.5%	56.1%	34
Foreign-born:[1]	33,074,187	38.8%	36.1%	40
arrived before 1990	12,305,028	44.4%	29.6%	52
arrived 1990-1999	9,634,961	39.2%	35.6%	37
arrived 2000-2010	11,134,198	32.4%	43.7%	29

[1] Totals exclude immigrants from native-English countries and those who speak English only.

[2] Asked of persons who spoke a language other than English at home.

Source: ACS 2008-2010 merged annual surveys.

Table 6-6.
Ability to Speak English "Very Well" by Age at U.S. Arrival, Decade of Arrival, and Highest Education Attained, among Selected Immigrant Groups who Speak a Language Other than English at Home, 2010

Country of Birth	Percent who speak English "very well" by:								
	Age at U.S. arrival			Decade of U.S. arrival			Education completed		
	0-12	13-34	35 and older	Before 1990	1990s	2000s	Not high school grad.	High school graduate	College graduate
Germany	88%	84%	72%	85%	86%	76%	68%	84%	89%
Nigeria	84%	85%	72%	87%	85%	77%	27%	76%	90%
Philippines	82%	71%	46%	70%	65%	59%	24%	58%	77%
India	85%	76%	40%	71%	72%	68%	14%	45%	81%
Pakistan	86%	63%	36%	67%	66%	55%	13%	50%	76%
Brazil	84%	49%	27%	64%	56%	42%	16%	40%	69%
Italy	82%	45%	25%	48%	63%	57%	27%	61%	78%
Hong Kong	76%	51%	22%	57%	48%	43%	7%	38%	72%
Iran	87%	64%	20%	64%	46%	36%	7%	36%	72%
Poland	84%	45%	14%	47%	44%	36%	22%	34%	63%
Former USSR (15 Reps.)	81%	49%	13%	47%	45%	36%	10%	26%	47%
Taiwan	81%	44%	13%	50%	43%	33%	11%	23%	53%
Colombia	83%	40%	13%	44%	42%	37%	11%	33%	54%
Peru	82%	43%	13%	49%	42%	35%	13%	33%	52%
Haiti	72%	43%	16%	47%	45%	33%	14%	43%	66%
Japan	60%	41%	21%	45%	52%	28%	19%	32%	47%
Nicaragua	80%	31%	10%	45%	35%	23%	13%	43%	53%
Ecuador	72%	28%	10%	40%	33%	25%	8%	34%	56%
Cuba	83%	30%	8%	46%	28%	19%	11%	36%	51%
Korea	76%	32%	9%	37%	35%	30%	14%	22%	39%
Laos	70%	19%	6%	34%	22%	20%	9%	38%	65%
Vietnam	70%	24%	6%	35%	24%	19%	6%	24%	58%
China	64%	35%	9%	29%	35%	25%	3%	14%	51%
Dominican Republic	69%	25%	7%	34%	34%	25%	10%	34%	50%
El Salvador	65%	20%	6%	31%	25%	18%	11%	35%	50%
Honduras	63%	18%	9%	39%	26%	16%	9%	30%	47%
Mexico	63%	15%	6%	30%	26%	18%	10%	33%	49%
Guatemala	62%	16%	6%	34%	25%	12%	9%	33%	49%
Total[1]	71%	35%	18%	44%	39%	32%	11%	38%	64%

[1] Excluding immigrants from native-English countries and those who speak English only.

Source: ACS 2008-2010 merged annual surveys.

Figure 6-1. (Click to open file)

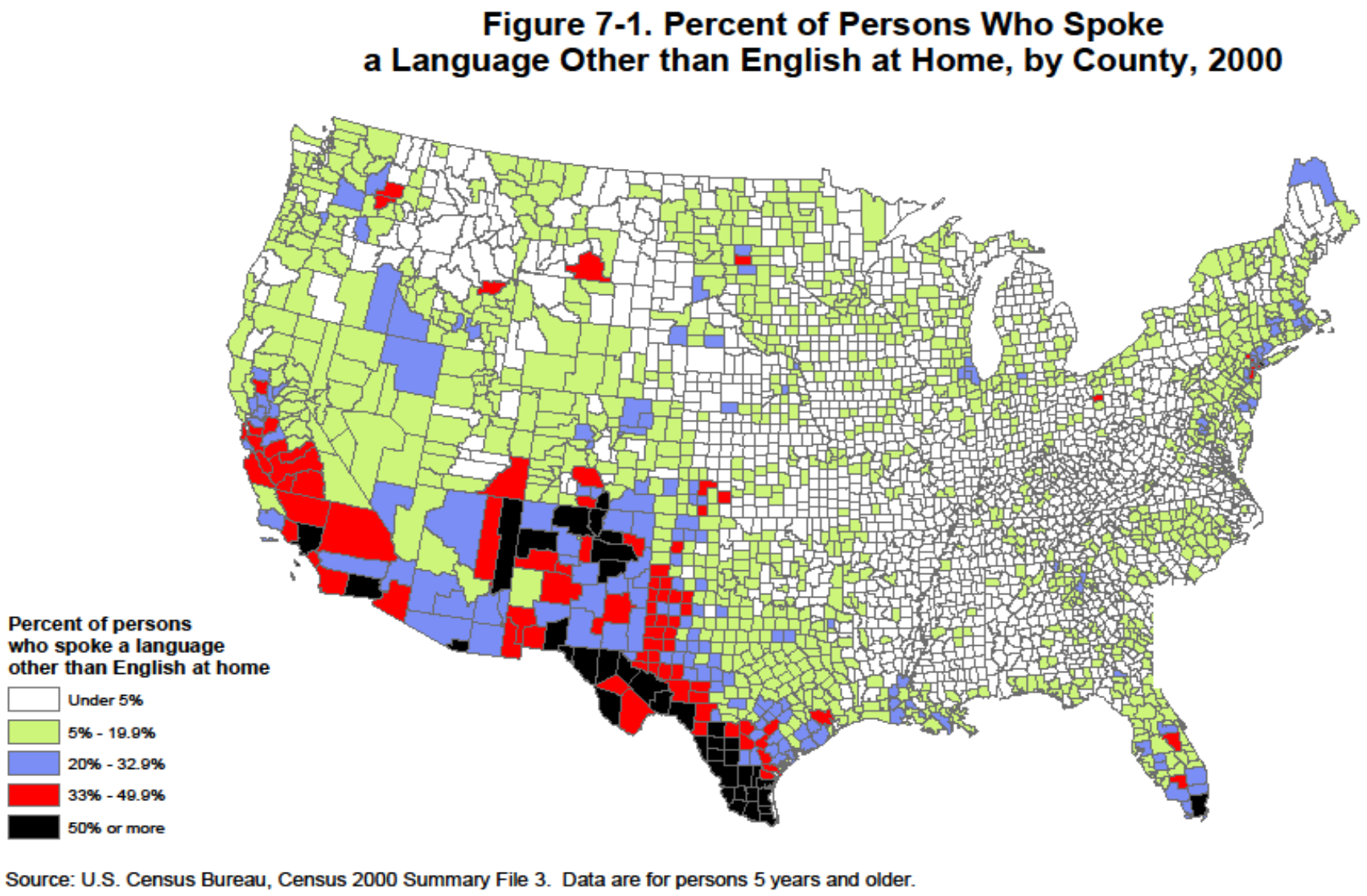
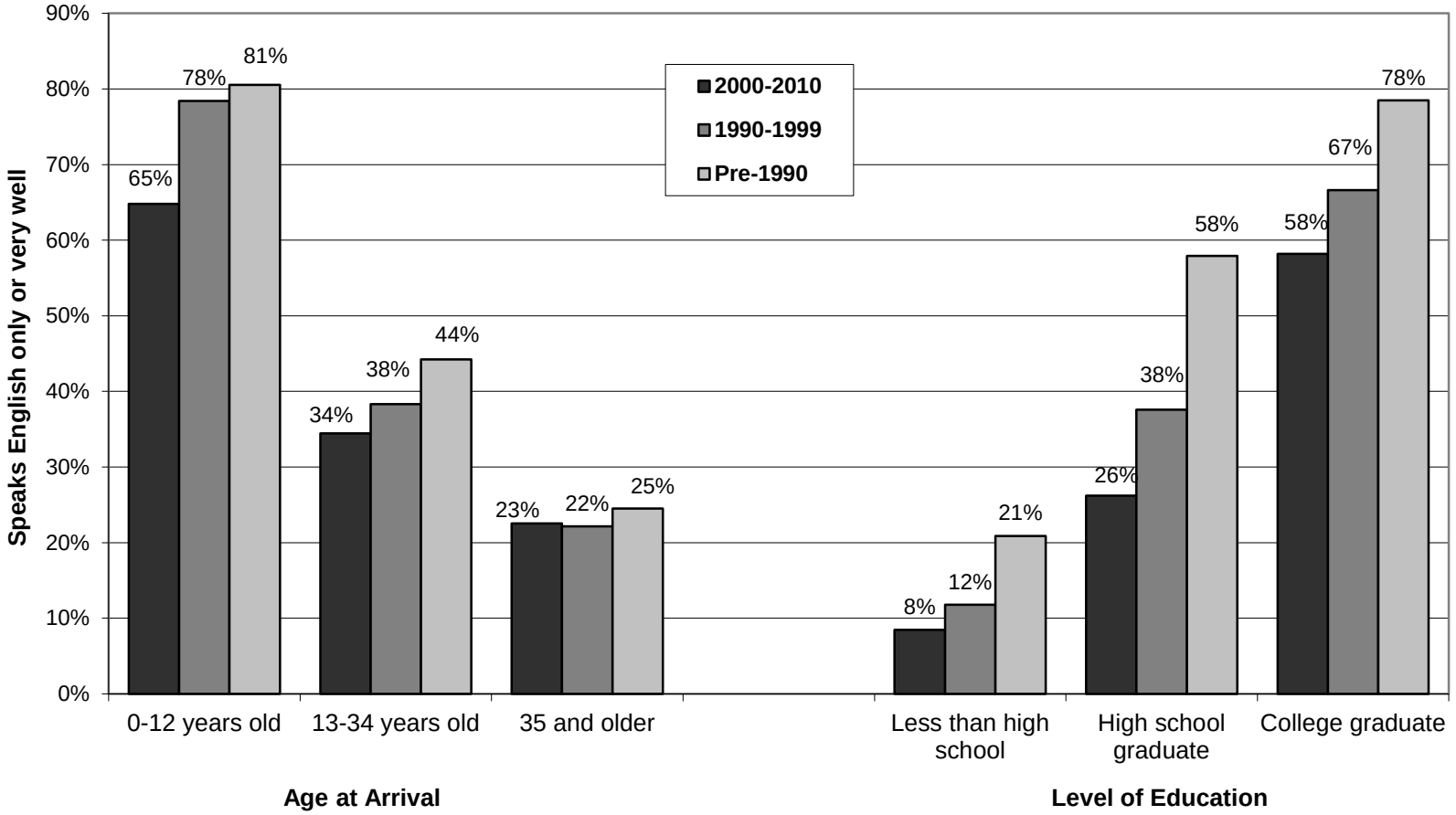


Figure 6-2.
English Fluency of Immigrants by Age at Arrival, Education, and Decade of Arrival, 2010
(Persons 5 years or older from non-English countries who speak English only or very well)



Source: ACS 2010.

Figure 6-3.
Language Shift and Bilingualism by Generation
(IIMMLA and CILS-San Diego merged samples)

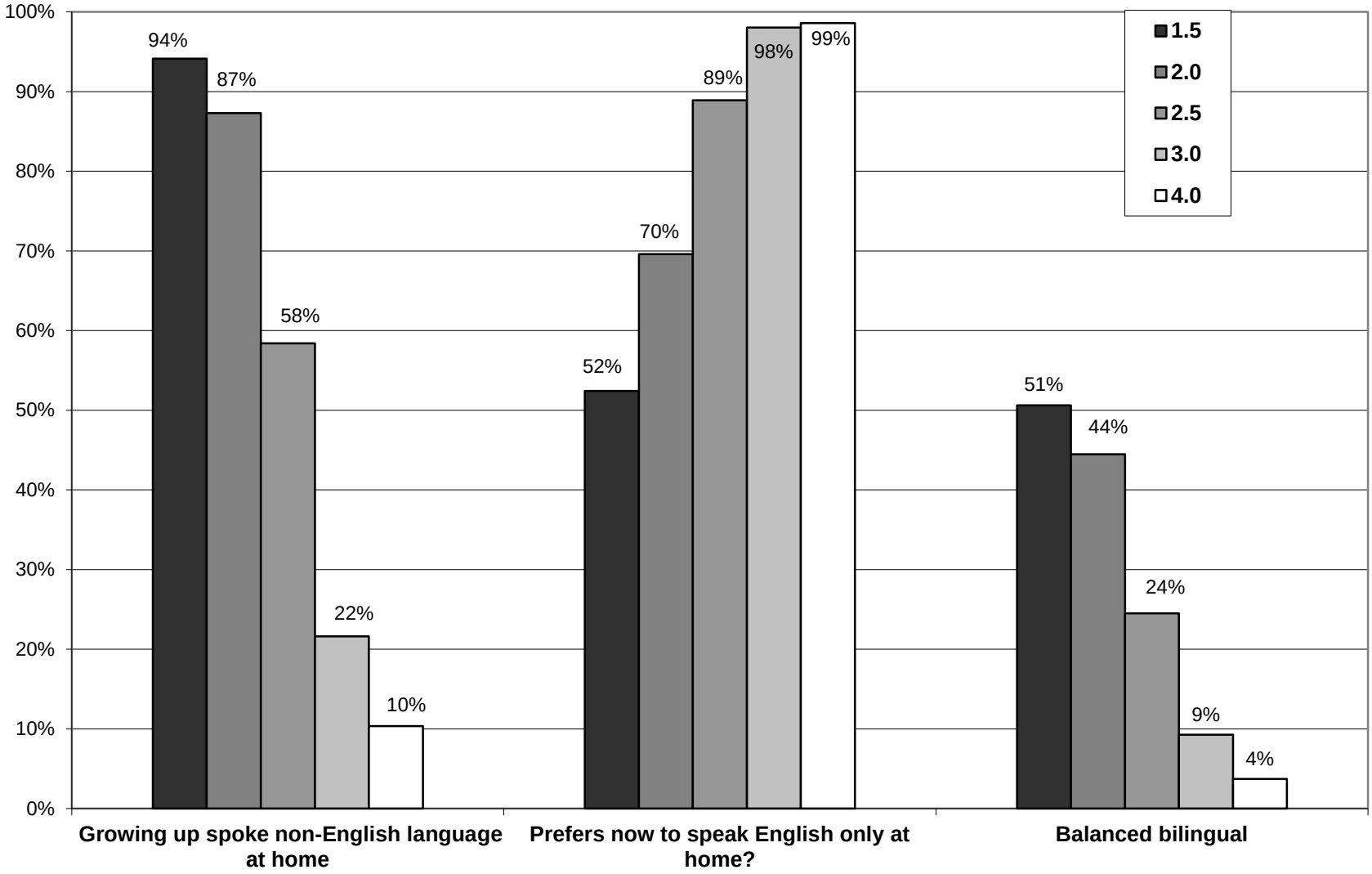


Figure 6-4.
Dimensions of Non-English Language Proficiency, by Generation
(IIMMLA and CILS-San Diego merged samples)

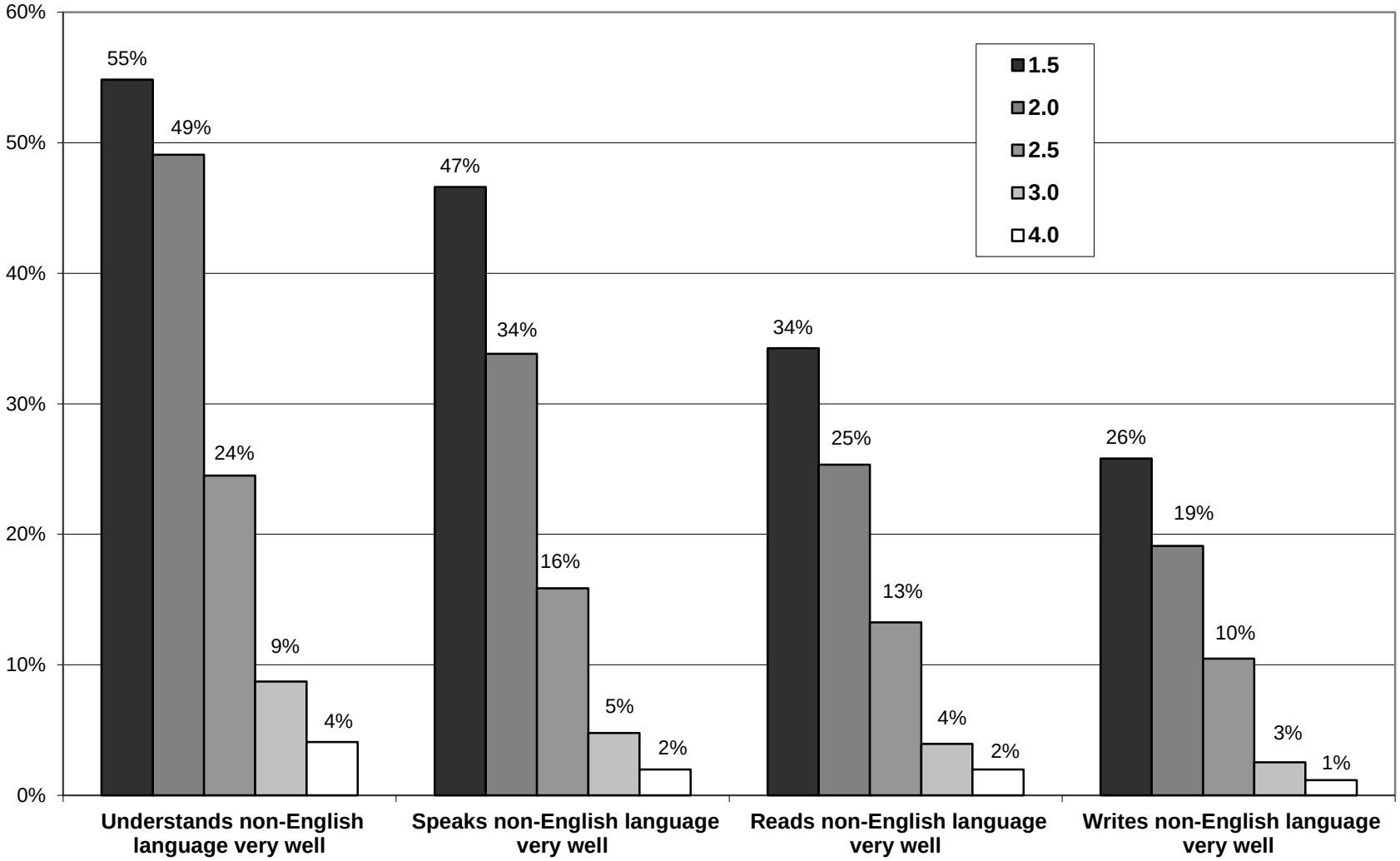
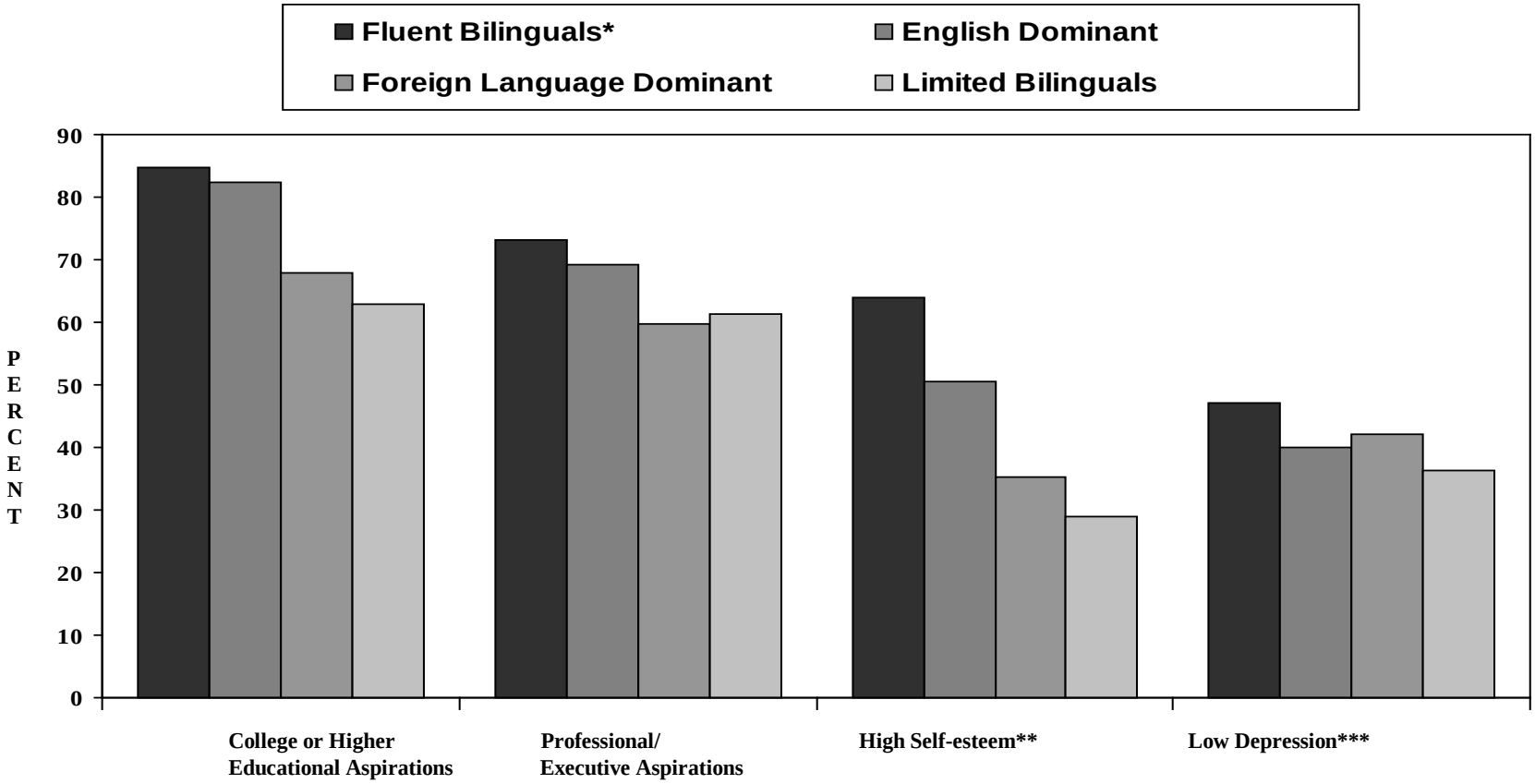


Figure 6-5.
Language Retention and Acquisition among Immigrant Groups:
A Typology

Parental Language Retention	*English Language Acquisition* -	+
-	I. Limited Bilinguals	II. English Monolinguals
+	III. Mother-tongue Monolinguals	IV. Fluent Bilinguals

Figure 6.6

Types of Language Adaptation and their Social Psychological Correlates



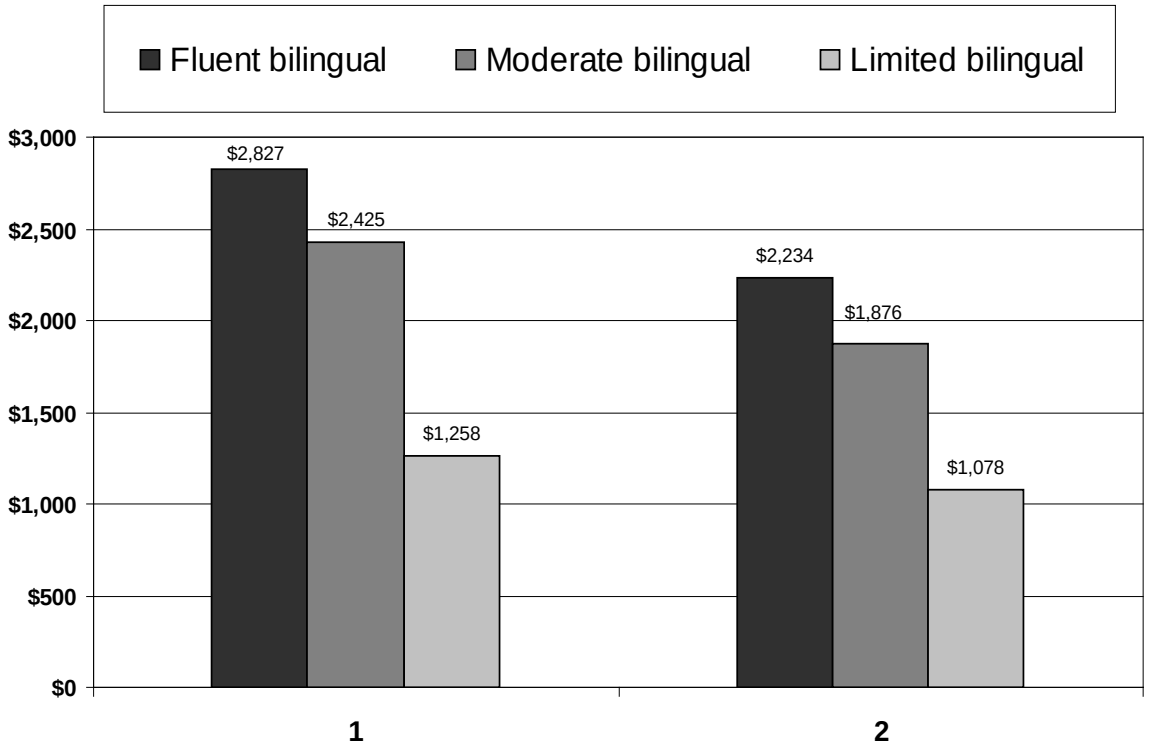
* See text for description of types of language adaptation.

** Mean scores of 3.5 or higher in Rosenberg's Self-esteem Scale. Range is 1 (low) to 4.

*** Mean scores of 1.5 or less in Center for Epidemiological Studies-Depression Subscale (CES-D). Range is 1 (low) to 4.

Source: Portes and Rumbaut, *Legacies*, p. 132.

Figure 6.7
Regressions of Annual Earnings on Level of Bilingualism among Young Adults in Southern California



Model 1 controls for age, gender, ethnicity, parents' socioeconomic status, and living with parents (white native-parentage English monolinguals are the referent group).
Model 2 controls in addition for high school GPA and total years of education attained in adulthood.
Bilingualism levels are measured on a 4-item scale of ability to understand, speak, read and write the non-English language (fluent bilingual = "very well" on all 4; moderate = "well" on all 4; limited = less than well).
Earnings (regression coefficients) in annual dollars, net of other variables in the models.
Results for fluent and moderate bilinguals are significant at $p < .001$; for limited bilinguals at $p < .05$.

Source: Rumbaut, "English Plus;" IIMMLA and CILS-San Diego merged samples.

Figure 6.8
Type of Immigration, Social Context of Settlement, and Predicted Community and Linguistic Outcomes