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ABSTRACT

Meyers, Matthew Eric, *Analysis of English and Spanish Academic Proficiency of Pre-Service Bilingual Teachers at a University in South Texas*, Doctor of Education (Ed.D.), December 2004, 118 pages, 24 tables, five (5) figures, references, 70 titles.

The purpose of this research was to examine the English and Spanish academic writing proficiency of pre-service bilingual teachers at a university in south Texas and attempt to establish factors that have influenced that proficiency or lack of proficiency.

Ninety-four participants who volunteered to take part in the study completed a 50-question survey that solicited demographic information and perceived proficiencies in English and Spanish. After collecting the data from the survey, participants wrote essays on four separate themes. Two of the essays were written in Spanish, and two were written in English. The compositions purported to elicit the participants' written conversational and academic levels in the two languages.

The results of the study indicated the following: (1) There is a significant difference between the academic writing proficiency in English and Spanish among pre-service bilingual teachers; (2) Spanish academic writing proficiency among pre-service bilingual teachers is a function of six background and affective variables; and (3) English academic writing proficiency among pre-service bilingual teachers is a function of six background and affective variables. According to the data analysis, the variable of

frequency of Spanish use was the single-most significant variable in the participants' total Spanish composition score, while the variable of better ability in Spanish than in English was the single-most significant variable in the participants' total English composition score.

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Because schools across the country show an increasingly higher number of language-minority students (LMS) among their student populations and because research demonstrates the need for highly proficient individuals in the classroom, there may be implications from this study for public school administrators who try to fill teacher positions in LMS classrooms and for university officials who must consider carefully the coursework regarding the preparation of bilingual teachers.