

Reflection paper on  
bilingualism,  
american style (will  
fax chapter)



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Reflective Paper: “ Bilingualism, American Style” Reflective Paper: “ Bilingualism, American Style” The so-called “ American style” of bilingualism discussed in this chapter is focused on the unique cultural aspects of the United States as well as the attitudes of residents concerning languages other than English. Since the United States encompasses both several Native language and culture groups as well as a great deal of immigrant cultures and languages, the American education system must deal with the separate issues inherent in each situation. In previous decades, immigration was slower and included more people from places like Europe and Canada who were already fluent in English; now immigration has steadily increased to include many diverse countries in which English may not be spoken at all. Data shows that in successive generation of non-English speaking immigrants, the tendency to embrace English as the primary language used has increased. Several factors are cited for this trend, including the fact that society has placed a stigma on the use of any language except for English; this is only combated when immigrant families maintain their heritage language at home and when specific cultural groups occupy their own neighborhoods (for example, Chinatowns). Where a few decades ago schools in the United States did not have any real need to include secondary English language classes or primary foreign language classes into their curriculum, now 1 in 5 students in America is either a foreign-language immigrant or the child of one. This means that the call for updated language classes is much more demanding, particularly when English remains the only official language used in the United States.

In 1968 the Bilingual Education Act focused on Native American groups and other minority language groups like the Chinese; these reforms were <https://assignbuster.com/reflection-paper-on-bilingualism-american-style-will-fax-chapter/>

minimal, however, and the modern classroom finds them very lacking. Half of the country's population growth in the 1990's came from non-English speaking immigrants or their children, and while such groups traditionally have held onto their cultural and language differences while living in America, now we are seeing that more and more of them feel the need to take on English as the functional language of their country of business. While non-English speaking immigrants and Native groups that reside in rural areas of the United States tend to hold onto their own languages more stubbornly than their counterparts in urban areas and cities, all of them have increasingly made an effort to integrate in terms of language. According to demographic and linguistic data presented by Census 2000 and other statistical analysts, non-immigrant minority groups are less likely to give up their heritage language for English. Research on the subject of academic achievement in terms of native and non-English speakers, while tending to suggest native speakers are more successful in their studies, have been criticized because of data-gathering methods. While it is a common perception of English-speaking Americans to think that learning English is easy, in the course of 2000-2001 only 10% of English-second-language students were upgraded to a fully proficient status.