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ABSTRACT

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While foreign language immersion programs have been increasing in number and popularity throughout the United States, their growth in the state of Utah has been particularly dramatic. Utah contains more foreign language immersion programs than any other state and is home to one-fourth of the nation's elementary school Chinese immersion programs. This descriptive study explored the reasons why parents of children enrolled in Utah's Long Hill Elementary School Chinese Immersion program chose to enroll their child. Long Hill Elementary's Chinese Immersion program is 4 years old, with over 200 children enrolled across 4 grade levels. A household survey was developed, distributed, and collected to gather data on parents' demographic and background characteristics, reasons for enrollment, and attitudes towards several statements about language learning. The survey had a 45% return rate, and more mothers than fathers filled out the survey.

Survey responses revealed that the parents of children in Long Hill's Chinese program are pre-dominantly Caucasian, bilingual, holders of undergraduate or advanced university degrees, and have high incomes. When asked to explain their reasons for enrollment, parents listed factors that were Chinese-specific, including future career and educational opportunities, the growing importance of China, and the desire to preserve a heritage language. They also expressed many non-Chinese specific factors, such as the cognitive benefits of learning a second language, the desire for a challenging academic experience, as well as the belief that learning a second language would make their child more multicultural.

A closer look at the differences between parents of different ethnicities, income levels, and language backgrounds suggests that this Chinese immersion program serves different purposes to different subgroups of parents. It acts as a magnet to parents outside of the school boundaries who have a specific interest in the Chinese language. However, parents inside the school boundaries more frequently ($p \leq .05$) cited non-Chinese specific factors, viewing immersion as providing a more rigorous academic experience and cognitive benefits that would transfer to other school subjects. Findings from this study can inform efforts to establish successful immersion programs around the country.

Keywords: immersion programs, parent attitudes, enrollment, Chinese

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Though my wife Shantel has had very little input on the content of this final document, it would not have been completed without her sacrifice, love, and faith. As any thesis spouse will attest, that does not mean the process has been without strain. A successfully-earned diploma seems an insufficient way to express my love and thanks to her, but it is a start and I will improve upon it. My children, Conner, Evelyn, and Landon (who provides the pseudonym for my research site) have been resilient, patient, and short-memoried. Conner has learned the word "thesis" and I look forward to *not* using it in our house for a spell, until he starts writing his own essays.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Foreign language education occupies an uncertain place in the American public school system. Foreign language classes traditionally have been relegated to "elective" non-core status in public schools (Fishman, 1981). Unlike in Europe, where students are required to study at least one foreign language and typically begin at the elementary level, American students elect to study a foreign language and typically do not start until secondary school (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007). Because of the elective nature of foreign language classes, they are often the first casualties in school districts facing the dual realities of budget shortfalls and fulfilling high stakes testing mandates in English and math. Only one in four elementary schools offer foreign language instruction, and the number of middle schools offering foreign languages has fallen from 75% in 1997 to 58% in 2008 (Pufahl & Rhodes, 2009).

The lack of a consistent approach to foreign language education in America may be due to disagreement over the value of multilingualism. What has been called American exceptionalism has emerged as one perspective that expects immigrants to America to adopt English (Brisk, 2006). For example, despite the role of immigration in American history, recent legislation in some states has revealed an ethos of assimilation, and an English-only attitude in some communities. Since 1995, California (Proposition 227), Arizona (Proposition 203), and Massachusetts (Question 2) have passed voter-initiated referendums mandating that English language learners attend English-only immersion classes rather than receive any instruction in their native language.

An opposing school of thought about multilingualism also exists, arguing in favor of foreign language education. Proponents of this point of view include a growing number of

business, political, and education leaders. In 1979, the report of the President's Commission on Foreign Language and International Studies decried America's historical myopic insularity and stated that "Americans' incompetence in foreign language is nothing short of scandalous" (Panetta, 1999). The concern of these critics is that the current era of globalization demands that Americans become fluent in foreign cultures and languages in order to maintain economic competitiveness (Edwards, 1987; Panetta, 1992; Ruiz, 1994; Tucker, 1991). The problem is also being increasingly framed as one of not just economic well-being, but also national security:

> Foreign language is crucial to our nation's economic competitiveness and national security. Multilingualism enhances cognitive and social growth, competiveness in the global marketplace (four out of five new jobs in the United States are created from foreign trade), national security, and understanding of diverse people and cultures. As we approach a new century where global communication will be essential for our survival, we cannot afford the luxury of international ignorance. (Congress, 1994)

The tug and pull between these two camps means that at the same time that some states have pursued "English-Only" initiatives in recent years, other areas of the country are devoting resources to innovation in foreign language education. The greatest evidence that the arguments in favor of foreign language education have begun to gain traction can be found in the dramatic growth of language immersion programs.

Language Immersion Education

Language immersion programs offer instruction in a target language where academic content is taught in that language (Brisk, 2006). The first language immersion programs were established in the United States in the 1960s; by 1987 there were 90 programs nationwide. Within the last two decades, the number of language immersion programs has steadily grown to

832 (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2011a). According to the National K-12 Foreign Language Survey, immersion programs comprised only 2% of all elementary school foreign language programs in 1987. By 1997, the number had risen to 8%; by 2008, it was 14% (Branaman & Rhodes, 1998; Pufahl & Rhodes, 2009).

Two separate immersion models have emerged. The first, two-way immersion (TWI), involves both English-speaking students and language minority students in the same classroom, each group acquiring the other group's language. Most TWI programs have been established in diverse metropolitan communities that contain immigrant or non-English speaking populations. By 2001, the three states with the most TWI immersion programs were California, with 86 programs, Texas with 34, and New York with 20 (Sugarman & Howard, 2001). The vast majority of TWI programs are Spanish/English (361 of 389 programs), the rest being Chinese/English (11 programs), French/English (7), Korean/English (5), Japanese/English (4), and German/English (1) (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2011b).

The second immersion model, Canadian or Foreign Language Immersion, serves mostly majority-language speaking students who are seeking an enrichment language learning opportunity. Because most the students come from a majority-language background to learn a second language, this is also called one-way immersion. In 2007, the states with the highest number of such programs were Louisiana (30), Hawaii (26), Oregon (25), Minnesota (24) and Virginia (24). These states share one of two common characteristics: either the desire to promote a heritage language that is strongly identified with the local culture (Hawaiian in Hawaii and French in Louisiana), or the existence of strong local district initiatives in second-language learning (e.g., Virginia's Fairfax County School District) (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007).

Since 2007, there has been a rapid increase in the number of Chinese language one-way immersion programs, as summarized in Table 1. In 2007, Chinese immersion programs were mainly located in California communities with large heritage language populations and comprised only 4% of foreign language immersion programs (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007). By 2011, Chinese immersion made up 13.4% of language immersion programs and totaled 71 programs nationwide (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2011a).

Table 1

Languages of Instruction in Foreign Language Immersion Programs

2007		2011	
Language	Percentage	Language	Percentage
Spanish	43%	Spanish	45%
French	29%	French	22%
Hawaiian	8%	Chinese	13%
Japanese	7%	Hawaiian	6%
Chinese (Mandarin)	4%	Japanese	5%
German	3%	German	3%
other	6%	other	6%

Chinese language education has received more attention and resources in part because of China's dramatic recent emergence as a global economic and geopolitical force. A 2002 Asia Society report estimated that only 24,000 K-12 students were studying the language of America's biggest overseas trading partner. In the news release accompanying the report, the President of the Committee for Economic Development contrasted this number with the 1 million students studying French and asserted that "our nation's schools are locked in a time warp. By ignoring critical languages such as Chinese and the essential cultural knowledge needed to succeed, our school systems are out of step with new global realities" (Asia Society, 2005, para. 4). In discussing a proposal to increase funding for Chinese language education, Senator Joseph Lieberman commented that "The rise of China comes with a whole set of challenges. But the

ability to talk to and understand each other should not be among them….Providing our children with the opportunity to understand the Chinese language and culture will help ensure they have a better chance of succeeding in the global economy" (Chmelynski, 2005, p. 3).

Uncertainty about the future relationship between China and America has created not just an interest in Chinese language education, but a sense of urgency on the part of the federal government to promote K-16 Chinese language education and develop a cadre of Chinese language speakers. Beginning in 2002, the federal government has established 26 language "flagship" programs in designated "critical" languages such as Korean, Russian, Arabic, and Chinese in universities around the country. Many of these programs have received additional grant monies to establish K-12 pipelines (Richey, 2007). Critical languages such as Chinese have also received the majority of federal Foreign Language Assistance Program (FLAP) grants in recent years (58 of 70 in 2006 and 31 of 52 in 2007). In 2006, President Bush established the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI), characterizing funding for education in languages considered critical to national security as an intellectual investment (Chmelynski, 2005; Richey, 2007). The result is that from 1997 to 2008, Chinese has gone from being the 12th most taught language in elementary schools to the 4th (Pufahl & Rhodes, 2009). There is a palpable sense that Chinese language education is the "wave of the future" (Chmelynski, 2005).

The most unexpected development in the recent growth in language immersion, including Chinese language immersion, has been the emergence of Utah as the state with the most schools offering one-way immersion instruction (see Table 2). As recently as 2007, Utah ranked 16th among states in number of foreign language immersion programs with five, all Spanish-English programs (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007). Ahead of Utah were states with heritage languages to promote (e.g., Louisiana, Hawaii), states with large immigrant communities to serve (e.g.,

California, New York), and states with long-running well-articulated local district language immersion initiatives (e.g., Virginia's Fairfax County School District and Oregon's Portland Public School District). Each of these existing language immersion concentrations contained communities with a critical mass of parents who support language immersion (Craig, 1996; Lambert & Taylor, 1988; Parkes, 2008).

Table 2

Number of Foreign Language Immersion Programs by State

2007			2011		
Ranking	State	Programs	Ranking	State	Programs
1	Louisiana	30	1	Utah	58
2	Hawaii	26	2	Minnesota	50
3	Oregon	25	3	Hawaii	34
4	Minnesota	24	4	Louisiana	31
5	Virginia	24	5	Oregon	27
6	Maryland	16	6	California	25
7	Massachusetts	14	7	Virginia	24
8	California	13			
	…				
16	Utah	5			

By 2011, however, the number of foreign language immersion programs in Utah had grown from five to 58 (see Table 2). Even more dramatic has been the proliferation of Chinese immersion programs within Utah. Utah's 18 Chinese immersion programs—all established since 2007—comprise over 25% of the nation's Chinese foreign language immersion programs. Utah has almost twice the number of schools offering Chinese immersion as the next state, California (see Table 3). This statistic is even more striking given that California is the nation's most populous state and the state with the highest concentration of Chinese-Americans.

Table 3

Number of Chinese Immersion Programs by State

State	# of programs
Utah	18
California	10
Minnesota	6
Arizona	5
Colorado	4
Oregon	4
New Jersey	3
Maryland	3
North Carolina	3

One factor driving Utah's immersion as a Chinese immersion hotspot has been the vision of policymakers at the state level who have enthusiastically touted the benefits of multilingualism. As governor of Utah from 2004-2009, Jon Huntsman Jr.'s support for immersion education stemmed from his own international experience. A fluent Chinese speaker from his two-year service as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Taiwan, Huntsman also served as ambassador to Singapore and deputy United States Trade Representative before being elected governor. As governor, Huntsman sought to foster ties to China and its burgeoning economy in order to promote Utah's economic growth. Shortly after the Utah State Office of Education hired Gregg Roberts as World Languages Specialist, Roberts describes Huntsman meeting with him and saying, "One of the very first charges I am giving you is to get Chinese language programs into our secondary and elementary schools as soon as possible" (Conley, 2009, para. 2). Roberts' commitment to the immersion model and developing multilingual students has allowed Utah's offerings to continue to grow even after Huntsman left the governorship in 2009 to become ambassador to China. Subsequent governor Gary Herbert and Roberts have both stated their goal to have 100 immersion programs and 30,000 enrolled

students by 2014: "We are a small state in Utah. We really want to be economically competitive, and for the national security of our country, we must educate students with a 21st century education. This means they need to be multi-lingual and multi-cultural" (Richards, 2010, para. 5).

Problem

Utah's status as the state with the most language immersion programs cannot be explained simply by the presence of highly-motivated policy makers. That Utah's programs were created may be attributed to them; that student enrollment is high suggests that there is high demand among Utah parents for this opportunity for their children. In other areas of the country, a historical driver of interest in early language immersion has been parental interest in maintaining a heritage language. Utah, however, has a very small Chinese language minority population (Census 2010). The question becomes, then, who are these Utah parents that are choosing Chinese immersion classrooms for their children, and why? Existing research into parent motivation for enrollment has been carried out outside of Utah and mainly in Spanish TWI programs. The Utah Chinese immersion context is so different than other contexts that existing findings cannot simply be extrapolated to Utah. We know the policy reasons why immersion programs are being implemented in Utah. However, there is currently very little research into why parents in Utah are enrolling their children in Chinese immersion programs.

Research Questions

This study will answer the following questions:

1. What are the background characteristics of parents who choose to enroll their children in a Chinese immersion program at one elementary school in Utah?

2. What are the reasons parents give for enrolling their children in a Chinese immersion program?
3. What are some of the educational, cultural, and economic values underpinning the parents' decision to enroll their child in this Chinese immersion program?
4. How do the reasons parents give for enrolling their children in a Chinese immersion program differ depending on their background characteristics?

Chapter 2

Review of Literature

Studying parents who enroll their children in language immersion programs is not a new research focus. The recent proliferation of language immersion programs has been accompanied by a similar proliferation of studies examining parent background, level of involvement, satisfaction, attitudes toward bilingualism, and also the specific reasons for enrolling their child in an immersion program. When these reasons have been analyzed, however, researchers typically have limited themselves to asking parents why they want their children to be bilingual, rather than viewing the placing of a child in an immersion program as an issue of school choice.

This literature review will review the emergence and evolution of language immersion models. Then, it will look at how previous parent motivation studies categorize the reasons parents give for why they want their children to be bilingual. Finally, it will look at the body of school choice literature in order to place language immersion within the larger context of school choice options.

Different Language Immersion Models

Language immersion programs serve a dizzying range of purposes and agendas, as is evident from the complicated nomenclature that has emerged to describe them: Canadian immersion, dual immersion, two-way immersion (TWI), maintenance bilingual, transitional bilingual (TBE), and structured English immersion (Brisk, 2006). These models fall along a continuum of theoretical approaches with two extremes: compensatory dual language instruction at one end versus enrichment dual language instruction at the other (Mora, Wink, & Wink, 2001). These two extremes are also referred to as subtractive versus additive bilingualism (Lambert, 1977) and differ in their stated goals, populations served, and ideologies.

Compensatory—or subtractive—dual language education views limited English proficiency as a "handicap or deficiency that must be overcome and corrected through a focus on intensive English instruction and a remedial approach to instruction" (Mora, et al., 2001, p. 438). The goal of compensatory language immersion programs is not to develop proficiency in both the native language and English, but rather to help language minority students develop sufficient proficiency in English so they can function in monolingual mainstream classrooms (Brisk, 2006; Gonzalez, Huerta-Macias, & Villamil Tinajero, 2002; Ramirez, 1992). Structured English Immersion (SEI) is the most extreme example of this approach, wherein language minority students are given content-area instruction only in English. Because this approach submerges the native language in pursuit of English proficiency, critics dispute whether it is true bilingual instruction (Brisk, 2006; Johnson & Swain, 1997; Milk, 1993). In communities where the presence of a significant immigrant population has made language policy a political issue, these programs are favored by politicians and policy-makers who support English-only education (Garcia, 2005; Gomez, 2003)

Enrichment—or additive—dual language education is different from subtractive dual language education because it views language as a resource and seeks to promote high levels of proficiency and literacy in two languages (Celce-Murcia, 2001; Crawford, 1999). This approach is termed "enrichment" because it is viewed as providing "clear advantages to students in attaining high levels of academic achievement, with eventual benefits in expanded career choices and economic opportunities" (Mora, et al., 2001, p. 439). This approach acknowledges the benefits of bilingualism in an increasingly interdependent, interconnected, and diverse global society (Thomas, Collier, & Abbott, 1993). Within this category are two models of immersion education-French Canadian immersion and Two-way immersion (TWI), also called "dual-

language immersion," that share the same goal of full bilingualism, but differ based on the populations served.

The first enrichment immersion programs were developed in Canada in the 1960s. Now known as the French Canadian model, this approach emerged in response to English-speaking parents' concern that their monolingual English-speaking children were not as competitive in the job market as bilingual speakers of English and French (Thomas, et al., 1993). Parents felt students were not gaining proficiency through traditional secondary-level French education classes, and would be better served by total immersion starting in the early grades. A program was implemented wherein all subjects were taught in French for the first two grades of primary school. English instruction was introduced in the third grade and was gradually increased through the rest of primary school (Brisk, 2006). Subsequent studies found that students enrolled in these immersion programs developed high fluency in the second language and tested at or above the average of students in conventional monolingual programs on mathematics, reading, and intelligence tests (Cohen, 1976; Genesse, 1987; Lambert & Tucker, 1972; Swain & Barik, 1976).

The Canadian immersion model was exported to the United States by policy makers and parents who sought these same bilingual and cognitive benefits. Beginning in the 1970s, enrichment immersion programs in French, Spanish, and German were established in the United States. As of 2011, there were 448 such foreign language immersion programs in the United States (Center for Applied Linguistics, 2011a). Utah's Chinese immersion classrooms fall into this category because the students are almost exclusively language majority students seeking to become bilingual in a minority language.

A second model of enrichment immersion emerged in the United States in response to the presence of large numbers of immigrant students. This model is called two-way language immersion (TWI) in order to distinguish it from one-way immersion models, like Canadian immersion. In one-way immersion models, all of the students learn in the same direction from proficiency in the majority language to proficiency in a minority language. Two-way immersion programs enroll "students from two language groups, each learning the language of their peers as a second language….In this one program model, two groups of students (majority and minority language students) learn together in the same classroom; they learn two languages and they learn in two languages" (Mora, et al., 2001, p. 444). The TWI model serves two purposes: it helps immigrant children acquire the majority language of their adopted country (while still preserving their home language) and gives opportunities to native English-speaking children to become proficient in a second language (Cava, 1998). The first TWI program was pioneered in 1963 for Spanish- and English-speaking students at Coral Way Elementary School in Miami.

To be considered a two-way immersion program, schools must have a balance of language-minority and language-majority students, with each group comprising between one-third and two-thirds of the class. In keeping with the immersion approach, both languages are used as the "medium of instruction and as the vehicle for academic content" rather than as the subject of instruction (Mora, et al., 2001, p. 444). In 90-10 TWI programs, the minority language is used almost exclusively as the medium of instruction in the early grades, gradually increasing the use of English until a 50-50 split is achieved. In 50-50 programs, from the beginning the percentage of instruction in English and the minority language are equal (Loeb, Christian, & Howard, 2000).

Parent support and advocacy has played a key role in the increase of Canadian Immersion and TWI programs in the United States. While immersion programs designed solely to serve immigrant students are attacked by English-first politicians, TWI programs that serve a mix of immigrant and language-majority students are proliferating throughout the country (Center for Applied Center for Applied Linguistics, 2011b). The added presence in TWI classrooms of language-majority students and thus their highly-motivated, high-status parents is one potential reason for this difference (Craig, 1996).

The increase in language immersion programs around the nation reveals the responsiveness of state and local education authorities when both parent interest is high and parent status is high. The models that have emerged and grown are models that serve high-status parents willing to advocate for their children's enrichment educational experiences (Cloud, Genesse, & Hamayan, 2000). This link suggests that the peculiar growth of Chinese immersion in Utah may be due in large part to parent demand. However, the presence and motivations behind this apparent demand have never been studied and are not well understood.

Parent Motivation Studies

The array of language immersion models that have emerged reflects differences in the constituencies of parents seeking language immersion, from English-speaking Caucasian parents to English-speaking second generation immigrants, to minority language-speaking immigrants. Language immersion programs typically are an opt-in experience that parents must educate themselves about and be willing to arrange transportation for their children if the program is not in their neighborhood school. Existing research has found that parents choosing immersion programs for their children are a highly motivated group that believes bilingualism will be

advantageous for their children (Craig, 1996; King & Fogle, 2006; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Ramos, 2007; Saucedo, 1997; Shin, 2000).

One common denominator of many parent motivation studies has been their use of Gardner and Lambert's (1972) conceptual framework to understand parent beliefs about language learning (see Baig, 2011; Craig, 1996; Doherty, 2008; Giacchino-Baker & Piller, 2006; Lindholm-Leary, 2001; Romero-Gonzalez, 2008; Shannon & Milian, 2002; Sung & Padilla, 1998). Gardner and Lambert articulate two distinct motivational "orientations" people adopt when learning a foreign language. The first orientation is integrative, wherein the language learner aspires to be not just bilingual but bicultural and able to integrate into communities using that language. Dornyei (1990) further elaborated on Gardner's concept of integrative motivation by proposing three sub-categories: "(a)…interest in foreign people, their languages and cultures; (b) the aspiration to widen one's perspective and become more knowledgeable about the world; and (c) the desire of new life experiences and circumstances" (Craig, 1996, p. 404).

The second source of motivation for learning a foreign language proposed by Gardner and Lambert (1972) is instrumental, in which the student learns a foreign language out of the desire to gain a concrete or practical benefit (Hudson, 2000; Norris-Holt, 2001). Such benefits might include fulfilling a language requirement for university admission or graduation (Norris-Holt, 2001). In the instrumental orientation, bilingualism is seen as offering many utilitarian advantages such as enhanced job opportunities and remuneration, the ability to study abroad in a foreign country or read academic materials in a foreign language, and the ability to use the language in business dealings (Lu & Li, 2008). Similarly, the idea that language learning stimulates the brain and provides cognitive benefits is viewed as an instrumental factor.

Though Gardner formulated his concepts of instrumental and integrative orientations to describe the motivations of language learners themselves, researchers have also taken up these terms to describe and categorize the reasons parents state in justifying their decision to enroll their children in language immersion. Each of the constituencies of parents enrolling children in language immersion express both integrative and instrumental aspirations for their children's participation in language immersion. Within these broad categories, however, different specific reasons are cited by different parent groups. While most of the existing parent motivation studies have been conducted in TWI settings that are different from the subject of this study, a closer look at existing findings will help contextualize the findings from this study.

Integrative motivations expressed by parents in motivation studies. Parents of all ethnic and language backgrounds have expressed integrative motives for enrolling their children in dual language education. Integrative motivation, as discussed above, is defined as learning a language in order to be able to communicate with speakers of that language and be able to integrate into a community where that language is used. A review of parent motivation studies reveals that for immigrant parents, this means desiring that their children are able to communicate with extended family and appreciate their heritage language and culture. For language-majority parents, this means widening their children's perspective and curiosity about other cultures.

One area where studies agree is that language minority parents (parents with an immigrant background whose first language is not English) enroll their children in language immersion programs in order to preserve heritage languages and cultures (Banks & Banks, 2003; Howard, Sugarman, & Christian, 2003; Valdes, 2001). Studies have found this to be true across Korean, Vietnamese (Shin, 2000), and Hispanic communities (Giacchino-Baker & Piller, 2006).

When asked to elaborate on their desire to maintain heritage language and culture, Spanish-speaking parents express several integrative emotions. A primary concern of parents across multiple studies was that their children needed to learn Spanish in order to communicate with family members who cannot speak English (Craig, 1996; Shannon & Milian, 2002). In addition to wanting their children to be able to communicate with the ethnic community, Spanish-speaking parents "prize their own cultural and linguistic roots and wish to pass their ethnic pride on to their children (Craig, 1996, p. 399; Giacchino-Baker & Piller, 2006). To these parents, biliteracy is often as important as the ability to communicate (Craig, 1996).

Some studies have found that English-speaking parents value heritage language maintenance as much or more than non-English-speaking parents (Lao, 2004; Parkes, 2008; Whiting & Feinauer, 2011). This counter-intuitive finding is due in part to the problematic nature of using “English-speaking” and “Spanish-speaking” as parent categories; in many cases, second generation immigrants may self-report as English-dominant but yet still identify strongly with the minority language and culture.

English-speaking parents who have enrolled their children in TWI programs alongside language minority children also express integrative motivations for doing so, but heritage language maintenance is not one of them. Survey responses reveal these parents to be a highly-motivated group seeking opportunities for their children to develop a global worldview and become multicultural while still attending a neighborhood school (Brisk, 2006; Cava, 1998; Cloud, et al., 2000; Tokuhama-Espinosa, 2003). These parents view learning a second language as a broadening experience that every educated child should have (Craig, 1996, p. 396; Marquez-Lopez, 1998; Whiting & Feinauer, 2011).

Particularly appealing to language majority parents is the fact that in Two-Way immersion classrooms their children will have native speakers as classmates and models (Doherty, 2008). In one of the only studies of parent motivation set in Utah, Whiting and Feinauer (2011) surveyed parents with children in a Spanish-English TWI classroom. Twenty-seven percent of parents enrolled their children in the program "because of the culture and diversity that they expected to find at the school" (p. 647). One parent in the study remarked that "cultural diversity is hard to find in Utah" (p. 649). This would seem to suggest that parents' desire to expose their children to diversity in a fairly homogenous state might be driving the proliferation of language immersion programs in Utah. This may explain the growth in Utah's Spanish TWI classrooms, where language majority parents can expect their children to have daily interactions with children from other cultural backgrounds. However, Utah's Chinese immersion classrooms follow the Canadian immersion model, where all students are native English speakers, eliminating interaction with children from other cultural backgrounds as a motivation for parents.

Instrumental motivations expressed by parents in motivation studies. As defined above, the instrumental orientation in second language learning refers to those who learn a language believing it will yield specific practical benefits. A review of parent motivation studies reveals that integrative and instrumental motivations are not mutually exclusive; parents often cite instrumental factors alongside integrative factors in explaining their decision to enroll their child in an immersion program. The two specific instrumental benefits that parents across studies believe their children will receive are: (a) bilingualism enhances one's future educational and career opportunities and (b) learning a second language at a young age stimulates cognitive

development. A look at the ways in which different parent groups cite these specific factors will highlight the questions this study seeks to answer.

Studies have consistently found that both language majority and language minority parents with children in Spanish TWI programs believe that bilingualism will lead to enhanced career opportunities (Craig, 1996; Lao, 2004; Romero-Gonzalez, 2008; Shin, 2000; Whiting & Feinauer, 2011). Parents in these studies often cite the proximity of a large Spanish-speaking community when discussing the job-related benefits of bilingualism (Craig, 1996). This raises another question about the Utah context of Chinese immersion. Utah parents who tout the career advantages of bilingualism cannot cite an analogous Chinese-speaking population in Utah. Nor is the Utah context similar to the first foreign language immersion programs pioneered in Quebec, where French is so prevalent that English-speaking parents wanted their children to be bilingual. The question arises, then, if Utah parents, in discussing career opportunities, will discuss globalization, international business, and the rise of China as an economic power in the same way that policy makers have in decrying the previous lack of Chinese language programs.

Other motivations expressed by parents in motivation studies. Most of the instrumental and integrative reasons cited by parents for enrolling their children can be tied to becoming bilingual. However, some studies have found a small but committed subset of English-speaking parents who enroll their children in language immersion purely for its perceived cognitive benefits as a more challenging academic experience (Doherty, 2008). When interviewed, this subset of parents does not express a desire to integrate into a specific community or an instrumental desire to improve future job prospects. Doherty interviewed middle-class English speaking parents who enrolled their children in a Spanish TWI program located in a suburban area in the mid-Atlantic region, and found that the parents "liked that their

children were learning a language from an early age but they did not foresee knowing Spanish as important either now or in the future….What mattered most was the early exposure to a second language and not the specific language" (2008, p. 72).

When discussing their choice, these parents cited research suggesting bilingualism can stimulate brain development. These parents admitted that even though their first choice languages (French and Japanese, in this case) were not offered, they were still satisfied with the program. In other studies, parents didn't even express a preference as to the second language: an English-speaking mother in a study of a Spanish-English TWI program in the Midwest stated that "my husband and I agree that if it were English and…Lithuanian we'd put her in, we have no reason to speak Lithuanian but the benefits to her…[are] neurologically of course" (Romero-Gonzalez, 2008, p. 45). In the context being examined in this study—the proliferation of Chinese immersion programs in Utah—there may be a subset of Utah parents who enroll their children in immersion believing it will be a more challenging educational experience, offering cognitive benefits regardless of the language chosen.

Research does suggest that both language majority and language minority students in bilingual TWI programs do perform at or above the level of their monolingual peers on standardized assessments, supporting the notion that parents can expect cognitive benefits from bilingual education (see Christian & Howard, 1997, March; de Jong, 2002; Lindholm-Leary & Aclan, 1991; Senesac, 2002). Studies have also been conducted on French Canadian Immersion programs, the model being investigated in this study. A study of students participating in the original French Canadian Immersion program in St. Lambert, Quebec, found that they were able to read, write, speak, understand, and use English as well as youngsters instructed in English in the conventional manner. In addition and at no cost they can also read, write, speak, and

understand French in a way that English pupils who follow a traditional program of French as a second language never do (Tucker & D'Anglejan, 1972).

More recent research has documented that students in language immersion programs lag behind their age cohort in performance on standardized tests in early grades before catching up and surpassing them in upper elementary grades (Thomas, et al., 1993).

Parent Motivation through the Lens of School Choice

The studies discussed above have typically taken parental desire for their children to be bilingual as the starting point for inquiring into motivation. Within this parameter, they have often used the framework of integrative and instrumental motivations to find differences in parent motivations. This approach ignores a wide range of other possible reasons—unrelated to bilingualism—that may motivate parents to enroll a child in language immersion. Given that many language immersion classrooms operate as somewhat of a school-within-a-school, parent reasons for enrolling a child in language immersion may be similar to those involved in putting a child in a private school, charter school, or homeschooling. Thus, literature on school choice was reviewed for this study.

Because school choice is an ideologically charged issue, school choice studies often report their results in service of an advocacy position. Proponents of expanding school choice argue that it will lessen school inequality because schools will be forced to compete and improve in order to retain students and because it will enable dissatisfied students in poor schools to switch schools (Chubb & Moe, 1990; Goyette, 2008; Young & Clinchy, 1992). Opponents of expanding school choice believe that privileged students will use school choice to further separate themselves from students from minority groups and lower social classes (DeSena, 2006; Fairlie, 2002; Renzulli & Evans, 2005; Saporito, 2003)

Both perspectives view parents as consumers in an educational marketplace. In this marketplace, a child's school situation is more the result of a parent's education decision than arbitrary district boundaries. Parents' school choice decisions can take many forms: enrolling a student in a private, charter, or magnet school, purchasing or renting a residence within the boundaries of a desired school, or homeschooling their child (Holme, 2002). Even the decision not to enroll a child in a special program, but rather send him to his assigned neighborhood school can be a calculated one, made after considering various options (Goldring & Hausman, 1999). Thirty-nine percent of parents in one study reported that the school their child would attend influenced their choice of where to live (Peterson, 2001). Portraying parents as consumers allows studies to inquire into the different reasons that lead parents to make different school choice decisions. This perspective may also serve to shed light on possible motivations leading parents to enroll their children in language immersion programs.

One of the most controversial questions in school choice studies is whether the existence of school choice (e.g., an available opt-in language immersion program) leads to increased stratification along socioeconomic and racial lines (Schneider & Buckley, 2002). Studies have analyzed census data to determine if an influx of immigrant students in several metropolitan areas has precipitated the "white flight" of Caucasian students to other schools (Betts & Fairlie, 2003; Conlon & Kimenyi, 1991). Betts and Fairlie (2003) noted that one cause of flight may be the perception that immigrant school children divert resources away from their classmates.

The idea that school choice leads to racial sorting relies on the argument that parents of different socio-economic and ethnic backgrounds choose schools for different reasons. This argument focuses on the "presumed predilection" (Schneider & Buckley, 2002, p. 134) of low-income and minority parents to choose schools based on convenience, proximity, sports, and

other non-academic factors, while high-income parents choose based on academic quality (Bast & Walberg, 2004; Coulson, 1999; Fiske & Ladd, 2000). Schneider and Buckley (2002) observed that when studies use a self-reporting methodology, such as surveying, parents of all backgrounds cite academic quality as most important. However, studies that looked at actual parent behavior confirmed that both white and minority parents had an "own group" preference and were more likely to place their children in schools where they would not be in the minority (Glazerman, 1997; Henig, 1994). Middle class white families, in particular, use the racial composition of a school as a proxy indicator of the academic quality of the school Fiske and Ladd (Betts & Fairlie, 2003; Fiske & Ladd, 2000).

These findings suggest the possibility that some parents may be placing their children in language immersion classrooms for reasons unrelated to valuing bilingualism. Parents may also be motivated by the belief that the socioeconomic status and racial composition of the immersion classrooms will more closely match their circumstances than that in the regular education classrooms of the same school. Several language immersion studies have acknowledged the ability of enrichment language immersion programs to "halt the flight of middle class white parents from the public schools" and reverse shrinking enrollment (Armendariz, 2002; de Jong, 2002; Doherty, 2008, p. 30).

Parent Motivation in the Utah Chinese Immersion Context

While there exists a body of research into why parents choose to enroll their children in language immersion, the research has not caught up with some of the most recent trends in immersion education. Most of the extant research has been conducted on Spanish-English TWI programs, and focused on comparing language majority parents' motivations with language minority parents' motivations. Very few studies have been conducted on one-way Canadian

Immersion model programs, where the children are all native English speakers. Indeed, the emergence of Utah as the state with the most one-way immersion programs, and with one third of the nation's Chinese immersion programs, has not been adequately investigated. To understand this context, one needs to understand the motivations of the parents who are filling Utah's immersion classrooms with their children. Are they motivated by traditional integrative and instrumental language-learning orientations, or are language immersion classrooms simply another option for parent consumers looking to place their children in the highest quality classroom? Who are these parents and how do they report their reasons for their school choice decision? What sociological forces unique to Utah might explain its emergence as a language immersion hotspot?

Chapter 3

Methods

Between 2006 and 2011, Utah went from having five foreign language immersion programs to 58, making it the state with the most language immersion programs in the country. Currently, 25% (18 of 71 programs) of the country's Chinese foreign language immersion programs are in Utah. This study sought to describe the parents who are enrolling their children in one Utah Elementary School's Chinese immersion classrooms. This study specifically asked the following four questions: (a) What are the background characteristics of parents who choose to enroll their children in a Chinese immersion program at one elementary school in Utah? (b) What are the reasons parents give for enrolling their children in a Chinese immersion program? (c) What are some of the educational, cultural, and economic values underpinning the parents' decision to enroll their child in this Chinese immersion program? (d) How do the reasons parents give for enrolling their children in a Chinese immersion program differ depending on their background characteristics?

Setting and Participants

This study was conducted at Long Hill Elementary School (pseudonym used), an extended-day elementary school located in a mid-sized suburban city in Utah. Prior to beginning its Chinese dual immersion program in the 2010-2011 school year, the school experienced a gradual decline in enrollment from a one-time high of 600 students to about 450 students. This decline was due to changing demographics in the school boundaries as well as the proximity and success of several nearby charter schools. The principal, realizing the need to attract students from both within and outside the school boundaries, applied for and received a grant to begin a Chinese immersion program. Chinese was chosen, despite a history of French and Spanish

immersion programs within the district, because the recent emergence of China as a world power had created, in the principal's words, "a sense of urgency" about Chinese language learning.

To help achieve the stated goal of increasing student enrollment at Long Hill, it was mandated that at least half of the students entering the immersion program must come from outside the school boundaries. The program has proved very popular with parents; there are waiting lists for both within-boundary spots and outside-of-boundary spots. Some parents drive their children more than 25 miles to school each day.

Fifty-two students, split into two first grade classes, enrolled in the inaugural cohort during the 2010-2011 school year, each class spending half the school day with a Chinese-speaking teacher, and the other half with an English-speaking teacher. At the time of this study, 50 students from the inaugural cohort were in the fourth grade. Subsequent cohorts, ranging in size from 56 - 60 students, started first grade in 2011, 2012, and 2013. A total of 224 students across grades 1-4 are currently in Chinese immersion. Parents from all four cohorts were invited to participate in the study.

School-wide data shows that the student body at Long Hill Elementary is less diverse than the Utah state average. Ninety-two percent of Long Hill students are Caucasian, compared to a state average of 79%. Five percent of students at Long Hill Elementary are of Hispanic descent and 3% are Asian/Pacific Islander. Families at Long Hill Elementary also reported higher than average measures of socio-economic status: 24% of Long Hill students are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, while the state average is 31%. In 2010, at every grade level and in every subject, Long Hill students scored above the state average on the end-of-year criterion-referenced tests.

Data Collection

Data for all four research questions were collected through a household survey administered to parents of Long Hill Elementary's Chinese immersion students. The survey was adapted from one developed by Lindholm-Leary and Hargett (1991) for the Center for Applied Linguistics' *Evaluator's Toolkit for Dual Language Programs*. The adapted survey used in this study (Appendix A) contained four sections: (a) a demographic component collecting information about income, education, language background, residence, and ethnicity, (b) an open-ended question asking parents to rank the top 3 reasons they enrolled their child in the program, (c) a Likert-scale section asking parents how much they agree or disagree with statements expressing educational, cultural, and economic values regarding language-learning, and (d) a final question asking parents to share any additional information relevant to their decision to enroll their child.

A small group of parents with students in a different Chinese immersion program in the same school district were invited to pilot the survey. Out of 40 parents invited, 30 returned the survey. Based on their responses to the demographic questions, it was decided to add a question asking which parent was primarily responsible for the decision to enroll the student in Chinese immersion. The range of choices in the Likert scale section was also changed. The middle option was changed from “neutral” to a simple dash to discourage parents from frequently selecting "neutral." The wording of seven of the Likert scale items was also sharpened or focused to better align with the attitude being evaluated. Finally, the responses to the open-ended question asking parents to rank their reasons for enrolling their children were analyzed and coded. Those codes were then used in the analysis of the actual survey responses.

In November of 2013, the amended survey and an informed consent letter were distributed to parents of children in Long Hill Elementary's immersion program. The students' classroom teachers distributed the survey. The letter described the parameters of the study and invited parents to complete the survey and return it to the classroom teacher via their child. As an incentive, students in the class with the highest percentage of returned surveys received a small Chinese souvenir.

Data Analysis

Out of 225 surveys handed out, a total of 102 surveys were returned, for a return rate of 45%. Data from the demographic, Likert scale, and open-ended items were inputted into SPSS and used to answer each of the research questions, through analytic methods described in Table 4. Demographic information such as parents' income, educational background, language background, and ethnicity was used to answer question 1 and provide a profile of the parent group involved in immersion education at Long Hill Elementary.

To answer question 2, I read the answers to the open-ended survey item asking parents to list and explain three reasons they enrolled their child in the Chinese immersion program, looking for emergent themes. There were 16 distinct reasons that emerged. After identifying the different reasons, I reread the responses to assign the codes. A second reader, with experience coding data, was asked to code the data as well to assure inter-rater reliability. The first iteration of coding revealed only 60% agreement, at which point the two readers met to discuss areas of disagreement. At this point, grouping the codes into six broad themes helped to clarify their definitions and eliminate overlap. These six overarching categories were (a) Future preparation, (b) Academics, (c) Cultural, (d) Bilingualism, (e) Social and affective, and (f) Convenience. A

second iteration of coding achieved over 85% agreement. Frequency counts were then run on these codes to find the most-cited reasons for enrollment.

Table 4

Data Analysis by Research Question

Research Question	Analytic Approach
1. What are the background characteristics of parents who choose to enroll their children in a Chinese immersion program at one elementary school in Utah?	Descriptive statistics; Measures of central tendency
2. What are the reasons parents give for enrolling their children in this Chinese immersion program?	Open coding for themes; Frequency counts of themes
3. What are some of the educational, cultural, and economic values underpinning the parents' decision to enroll their child in this Chinese immersion program?	Descriptive statistics; Measures of central tendency
4. What are the differences in parent responses depending on their background characteristics?	Chi-square analyses for differences

The third research question was addressed by looking for central tendencies in parent responses to the Likert-scale items. The items were grouped into categories of nationalism, economic, multiculturalism, cognitive, and school choice to see which values emerged as most important to parents.

The final research question differed from the first three because it sought to uncover differences within the parent population. Making these comparisons required using Chi-square statistical tests to look for significant differences between responses to the open-ended question across parents with various background characteristics.

Limitations

The participants in the survey and interviews, by virtue of their voluntary enrollment of their children in the immersion program, are a self-selected group of parents already predisposed toward immersion education. It must also be acknowledged that the surveys involve self-reporting and thus may involve a motivation to portray oneself positively. The relatively small sample number of parents who were surveyed, as well as the fact that they all come from the same school, means that the opinions and attitudes expressed should not be extrapolated and said to be representative of the population at large. Rather, the purpose of the study was to discover the reasons why this subset of parents enrolled their children in a Chinese immersion program.

Chapter 4

Findings

This study sought to create a descriptive profile of the parents of students in one Utah Chinese immersion program, as well as shed light on the motivations behind their enrollment decision. Table 5 displays information about the parents who returned surveys.

Table 5

Descriptive Information about Survey Respondents

Variable		Frequency	Percent
Relationship to immersion student			
Father		15	16.5%
Mother		75	82.4%
Jointly filled out		1	1.1%
	Total	91	100%
Grade the immersion student is in			
1st Grade		25	27.5%
2nd Grade		17	18.7%
3rd Grade		23	25.3%
4th Grade		15	16.5%
Multiple children in program		11	12.1%
	Total	91	100%
Residence			
Inside Long Hill boundaries		44	48.9%
Outside Long Hill boundaries		46	51.1%
	Total	90	100%

Of the respondents who reported their residence, 44 lived inside Long Hill's boundaries and 46 lived outside the school boundaries, almost perfectly reflecting the program's mandated 50/50 demographic. All four grade cohorts were well-represented, with the least-represented grade level (4th grade) still comprising 16.5% of the survey respondents. Eleven of the 91

returned surveys (12%) came from parents with multiple children in the program. Eighty-four percent of the surveys were filled out by mothers.

Data from the parent surveys were analyzed to answer the four research questions. This chapter will be organized along these four questions: (a) What are the background characteristics of parents who choose to enroll their children in a Chinese immersion program at one elementary school in Utah? (b) What are the reasons parents give for enrolling their children in a Chinese immersion program? (c) What are some of the educational, cultural, and economic values underpinning the parents' decision to enroll their child in this Chinese immersion program? (d) How do the reasons parents give for enrolling their children in a Chinese immersion program differ depending on their background characteristics?

Background Characteristics

Before addressing later questions about parent motivation, it was important to look at household demographic data. Table 6 displays findings about the ethnicity, income, marital status, and educational background of the parents.

The parents of Long Hill Elementary's Chinese immersion students are a fairly homogenous population. About 86% of the survey respondents were Caucasian, with Hispanic parents (5.9%) making up the largest portion of the remaining parents. As expected, the program has attracted parents of Chinese heritage who want their children to speak Chinese, but these comprised only 3.6% of the survey respondents. The population's homogeneity can also be seen in fact that 86 of the 91 respondents are married. This homogeneity is reflective of the community around Long Hill Elementary, which contains a large proportion of two-parent nuclear families who are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

Table 6

Background Characteristics of Survey Respondents (n= 91)

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Ethnicity	Caucasian	72	85.7%
	Hispanic	5	5.9%
	Chinese	3	3.6%
	Other	4	4.7%
	Total	84	100%
Marital Status	Married	86	94.5%
	Other	5	5.5%
	Total	91	100%
Household Income	less than $20,000	2	2.4%
	$20,001 - $40,000	11	12.9%
	$40,001 - $60,000	15	17.6%
	$60,001 – $80,000	24	28.2%
	$80,001 - $100,000	15	17.6%
	more than $100,000	18	21.2%
	Total	85	100%
Education	Elementary School	1	1.1%
	High School	13	14.3%
	Post-High School	12	13.2%
	4-year University Degree	57	62.6%
	Advanced Degree	8	8.8%
	Total	91	100%
Education of respondent's partner	Elementary School	1	1.1%
	High School	10	11.4 %
	Post-High School	10	11.4 %
	4-year University Degree	31	35.6%
	Advanced Degree	34	39.1%
	Total	87	100%

Two-thirds of the survey respondents reported a household income above $60,000, while roughly one in five of the respondents earn more than $100,000. This income level corresponds with the parents' education backgrounds. The typical Chinese immersion student at Long Hill Elementary belongs to a two-parent household (94.5% of survey respondents were married) where *both* parents have a 4-year college degree (the case in 70% of the surveys), and in many cases an advanced graduate degree. Thirty-nine percent of the partners of the survey respondents hold an advanced degree.

As noted in the literature review of this study, enrichment one-way immersion programs serve predominantly English-speaking populations, and Long Hill's program was no exception, as described in Table 7. Roughly 9 in 10 of the children in the program live in a home where English is the first language of both parents. However, this group of parents are unusually multi-lingual. Fifty-five percent of the survey respondents and 66% of their partners speak a second language. Both of those numbers are well above the national average of second language speakers. Also notable is the variety of languages spoken by the parents. Among the 91 families who returned surveys, 21 different languages are spoken. While Chinese was one of the most commonly spoken second languages among the parents, it still was spoken by only 6% of respondents and their partners.

Parent Reasons for Enrollment

The decision to place one's young child into an immersion Chinese environment at the same time that he or she is transitioning into full-day schooling is not a minor one. The heart of the household survey was an open-ended question asking parents to list the top three reasons they made such a decision. The question also asked parents to explain the thinking behind each

reason. The length of parent responses (from three words to three long paragraphs) suggested that parents put varying amounts of thought into this decision.

Table 7

Language Background of Survey Respondents (n=91)

Variable	Categories	Survey Respondent		Survey Respondent's Partner	
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
First language	English	80	90.9%	75	87.2%
	Spanish	5	5.7%	8	9.3%
	Chinese	2	2.2%	3	3.5%
	Other	1	1.1%	0	0.0%
	Total	88	100%	86	100%
Other languages spoken	None	44	44.9%	29	33.7%
	Spanish	16	16.3%	23	26.7%
	English	7	7.1%	8	9.3%
	Chinese (Mandarin)	6	6.1%	5	5.9%
	French	6	6.1%	4	4.7%
	German	4	4.1%	2	2.3%
	Arabic	2	2%	1	1.2%
	Chinese (Cantonese)	2	2%	0	0%
	Portuguese	2	2%	4	4.7%
	Russian	2	2%	2	2.3%
	American Sign Language	1	1%	0	0%
	Ashante Twi (Ghana)	1	1%	0	0%
	Creole	1	1%	0	0%
	Italian	1	1%	1	1.2%
	Japanese	1	1%	1	1.2%
	Swedish	1	1%	0	0%
	Turkish	1	1%	0	0%
	Cambodian	0	0%	1	1.2%
	Hebrew	0	0%	1	1.2%
	Hungarian	0	0%	1	1.2%
	Laotian	0	0%	1	1.2%
	Thai	0	0%	2	2.3%
	Total	98*	100%	86*	100%
Ability to communicate in Chinese	No ability	66	77.6%	68	81.9%
	Can understand and speak somewhat	16	18.8%	9	10.8%
	Native or native-like speaker	3	3.5%	6	7.2%
	Total	85	100%	83	100%

* The total is greater than the number of survey respondents because several parents reported more than one language.

The responses were coded using an open-coding strategy, and no fewer than 16 reasons for enrollment were identified. Table 8 presents these 16 reasons grouped into six overarching categories: (a) Future preparation, (b) Academics, (c) Cultural, (d) Bilingualism, (e) Social and affective, and (f) Convenience.

Future preparation. The most prevalent reason parents gave in explaining their decision is that enrollment in this Chinese immersion program will increase their child's future career and education opportunities. Forty of 91 parents (44%) cited this reason. Some parents specifically envisioned a business career: "I am an entrepreneur, and I can see many future business opportunities for this child if he can speak Chinese fluently." Typically, however, parents had a more amorphous sense that this skill would give their child an advantage in the job market at large: "if there are 100 people with similar credentials vying for the same job, my son will have a leg up because he speaks Chinese (in theory)."

This persistent and wide-spread belief that fluency in this particular language will open doors professionally was interesting given that the demographic section of the survey revealed only 10% of parents surveyed had any experience doing business in China or with Chinese speakers. Despite this lack of direct experience, 21 parents (23.1%) described Chinese as an important language to know. While a few parents echoed the same national security and global concerns cited by policy-makers in promoting Chinese language education, by and large they framed the importance of learning Chinese in more personally beneficial terms. Many parents referred to Chinese as the most-spoken language in the world.

Table 8

Reasons Parents Enrolled Child in Chinese Immersion (n=91)

Overarching theme	Reason	Frequency	Percentage
Future preparation	Future career/education opportunities	40	44%
	Chinese is an important language to learn	21	23.1%
	Future service opportunities (LDS mission)	14	15.4%
	Total	75	82.4%
Academics	Transferable cognitive benefits	29	31.9%
	Better overall education experience	24	26.4%
	Academic challenge	19	20.9%
	Total	72	79.1%
Bilingualism	It's good for children to be bilingual	26	28.6%
	Start early	14	15.4%
	Springboard to learn more languages	8	8.8%
	Total	48	52.7%
Cultural	Multiculturalism	27	29.7%
	Maintain heritage language	9	9.9%
	Total	36	39.6%
Social and affective	Family with interest/ability in Chinese	15	16.5%
	Child's interest	7	7.7%
	Friends enrolled	7	7.7%
	Build child's confidence/self-esteem	6	6.6%
	Total	35	38.5%
Convenience	Neighborhood school	17	18.7%
	Total	17	18.7%

Career and education were not the only arenas where parents envisioned future opportunities for their Chinese-speaking children. Fourteen parents (15.4%) said they believed knowing Chinese would provide service opportunities for their children, though this was sometimes expressed quite broadly: "Learning about other cultures and languages will help in serving the community." Ten parents, however, specifically mentioned the possibility of their child using Chinese as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS).

The LDS Church currently has over 80,000 volunteer missionaries, mostly young men and women between the ages of 18-30, who it assigns world-wide in conversion and service activities. While Chinese-speaking LDS missionaries are stationed in Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and other major world cities with Chinese-speaking populations, they are not yet allowed in the People's Republic of China. China is viewed by some church members as a last "frontier," one that will require a dramatic increase in Chinese-speaking missionaries. One parent respondent approached this view with the response: "Missionary service. 1.3 billion Chinese people need to hear the Gospel." The other parents were more generic in their responses: "Maybe helpful in serving a mission for LDS church."

It should be noted that each of the 14 parents who gave service opportunities as a reason also cited "future career/education opportunities" or "Chinese is an important language to know" in their response. In their ranking, parents either mentioned career advantages first, and then missionary service, or more typically lumped the two together as one reason: "Hoping it will be useful to him in the future. For example job opportunities or/and LDS mission." This suggests that while the LDS Church missionary element is certainly a factor in enrollment decisions, it was considered in concert with other future opportunities made possible by Chinese.

Academics. The next category of reasons mentioned most often by respondents focused less on the utility of Chinese itself, and more on the academic benefits their child would accrue by participating in the program. Parents talked about these benefits in three ways: (a) improved cognition from language learning that transfers to all aspects of life, (b) Chinese is a difficult language that will challenge my student more than if he was in a regular educational program, and (c) the elementary school itself, independent of the Chinese program, would provide a better overall educational experience.

Twenty-nine parents (31.9%) expressed the belief that learning a second language would trigger brain development that would benefit their children in other areas as well. These responses were often very clearly articulated compared to other responses. One parent wrote: "I believe the benefits of learning another language at a very young age carry throughout life and into other aspects of life. It can help with problem-solving skills and encourage new thought processes." Three of these parents specifically wrote that they had read research studies about this. One wrote: "Want him to exceed academically – have read studies that kids who learn a second language do well academically."

Closely related to the concept of transferable cognitive benefits from learning Chinese is the idea that a language immersion program would be more rigorous than the regular education program at the school. Nineteen parents (20.9%) wrote that this was a factor in their enrollment decision. The word "challenge" was used again and again by parents who felt their child needed to be pushed more. One parent enrolled her child out of a desire "to challenge him. He wasn't challenged a lot in Kindergarten and we thought learning material in another language would challenge him." Several parents described their child as gifted (e.g., an "early reader" or "way ahead in kindergarten") and thus in need of a more rigorous educational experience. A few out-of-boundary parents specifically said this program would meet that need better than their neighborhood school.

The final code in the academic category—"better overall education experience"—served somewhat as a catch-all for any parent response that discussed factors outside the actual Chinese immersion aspect of the program. Within the 24 responses (26.4%) assigned to this code, parents expressed confidence in the school's academic reputation, teacher quality, and the

administration. These parents focused on the overall experience their child would be having at Long Hill Elementary school.

Bilingualism. As opposed to the future preparation category in which parents specifically referenced Chinese, there was a significant subset of parents who commented on the value of language-learning and bilingualism in general. Twenty-six of 91 surveys (28.6%) expressed the belief that children benefit from being bilingual. These beliefs varied in their intensity from a gut feeling ("I like the idea of her being bilingual") to a mission statement ("Foreign language should be a basic part of all children's education"). This category is distinct from the academics category because rather than focusing on the academic benefits of learning a second language, these parents seemed to value bilingualism for its own sake.

Related to this code was the idea, mentioned by 14 parents (15.4%), that they were attracted to this program because their child would be maximizing a prime language-learning age window. In explaining themselves, multiple parents said they had come in contact with research asserting that children learn languages more easily than adults. These parents felt that language immersion in an elementary school setting was a great idea and an opportunity they didn't want their children to miss out on.

The third thread fitting into this category of bilingualism is the concept that by learning Chinese in elementary school, kids would be better able to learn a third or perhaps fourth language in the future. Eight parents (8.8%) expressed this belief, revealing, if possible, an even broader vision for their children's future than parents who focused on career opportunities for Chinese speakers.

Cultural. The cultural category comprises two motivations that both emphasize the value of culture but come from two different subsets of parents. Twenty-seven parents (29.7%)

viewed the truly foreign nature of China's language and culture as a unique opportunity to teach their children to be multicultural. In contrast, there were nine households (9.9%) with some degree of Chinese ethnic background who wanted to strengthen their child's heritage identity.

It is no surprise that Long Hill Elementary's Chinese Immersion program would serve as a magnet for Chinese parents wanting their children to learn Chinese. Families where one or both parents were Chinese all expressed a desire that their child be able to connect with their heritage culture. This was true even for parents who were ethnically Chinese but could not speak Chinese themselves. Three parents coded in this category were actually not ethnically Chinese, but had adopted children of Chinese descent. They had taken up this same desire for their children to connect with the culture of their birth.

By itself, multiculturalism was the third most-mentioned reason (27 out of 91 surveys, 29.7%) that parents gave for enrolling their child in Chinese immersion. One parent wrote that being "exposed to more languages and cultures can only benefit a child." Another parent noted that "Utah doesn't have a lot of cultural diversity. I feel like this program has opened her eyes to the world." Multiculturalism was typically defined as exposing children to diversity and expanding their world view. Some parents elaborated on the benefits of a multicultural education: One wrote "I feel she will be a better human being when she learns and respects other cultures," while another agreed that "Learning any additional language allows them to be exposed to a different perspective. This will allow them to be more accepting and kind to 'different people'." Another parent expressed it thus: "I feel it's important for kids to have a second language. They have more self-respect, respect for others different than themselves, and empathy towards difference."

The multiculturalism code, more than others, revealed the strong underlying values behind parents' decisions. Parents used words like "we feel," "we believe," and it is "important" in explaining their reasoning.

Social and affective. Fifteen surveys (16.5%) mentioned a family member who either speaks or has an interest in Chinese. Examples included a parent or sibling who had learned Chinese as an LDS missionary or in a university or high school setting. Five surveys also mentioned an older sibling who is also in the Long Hill Chinese immersion program. In their responses, several parents wrote of "keeping it in the family" and creating a "family tradition" suggesting that they view Chinese ability as a defining characteristic of their family.

Other social and affective reasons that motivated parents to enroll their child included the child's own interest in learning Chinese, the ability to participate alongside friends, and the belief that participation would increase their child's self-confidence and self-esteem. Parents cited both the uniqueness and difficulty of Chinese in saying the program would promote their child's self-confidence. Another parent emphasized the child's role in the decision: "My child expressed a desire to participate. We discussed it together and a week later he said he wanted to do it. It was important that he decide!"

Convenience. Roughly half of the parents reported (51.1%) that they live outside of Long Hill's boundaries, which means they are willing to drive farther than their neighborhood school to participate in this program. Some drive as far as 20 miles each way. While this indicates that proximity to Long Hill Elementary was not a motivating factor for the out-of-boundary parents, there were still 44 parents who live inside Long Hill's boundaries. Of those parents, 17 of them (38.6%) reported that their proximity to Long Hill was one of the top three reasons they enrolled their child. Parents referenced the convenience and lack of cost in

expressing appreciation that their neighborhood school offered, in one parent's words, such a "great opportunity." The variety of parent attitudes is reflected by the presence of parents who drive their child a significant distance to attend Long Hill as well as parents who said they would not have done Chinese immersion if it hadn't been their neighborhood school.

Parent Values

While the open-ended ranking question gave parents the opportunity to express the reasoning behind their enrollment decision, a forced-choice component was also included in order to gather data about parent values that may have underpinned their enrollment decision. The forced-choice section comprised 19 statements that parents were invited to select their level of agreement or disagreement with. These 19 statements fell into 5 broad themes: (a) Nationalism, (b) Economic, (c) Multiculturalism, (d) Cognitive, and (e) School choice. Appendix B displays the number and percentage of parents who selected each level of agreement, as well as the mean for each item.

As described in the introduction to this study, the growth of Chinese language study in America has been partially subsidized by local and national government. In touting these programs, policy-makers have spoken of the economic and national security benefits to the nation of increasing the number of Chinese speakers in the country. The four statements in the Nationalism theme were intended to discover to what degree parents resonated with this perspective. Parents, on average, agreed with every statement in this category. They agreed most with the statement that "the future of the world depends on how nations will get along with China" and felt that the "future of American-Chinese relations is bright." While very few parents disagreed with any of these statements, almost one third of them chose the middle option, neither

agreeing nor disagreeing. In fact, more parents expressed antipathy to statements belonging to the Nationalism theme than to statements belonging to any other theme.

In the open-ended ranking item, 44% of parents indicated that the thought of future career/education opportunities motivated them to enroll their child. This was definitely supported by their responses to the Likert-scale statements related to economic values. The statement "In the future, knowing Chinese will pay off economically for my child" garnered the third highest level of agreement among all the statements (4.38). Parents were more confident that knowing Chinese would benefit them more career-wise than with getting into university, but they still agreed it would improve their educational opportunities (3.63). The statement in this category that generated the most disagreement was "I will be disappointed if, as an adult, my child does not use Chinese in his/her career." Forty-one percent of parents either disagreed or strongly disagreed, 31% agreed or strongly agreed, and 28% were neutral.

The Multiculturalism category contained three of the four statements that parents most strongly agreed with. Whether or not a desire for their child to be more "multicultural" was one of their top three motivations for enrollment, 97% of parents agreed that learning about a foreign culture enriches their child's life and 86% agreed that children who study other languages have a better understanding of the world. There were two items in this category that parents were noticeably more reluctant to agree with. A quarter of the parents were unwilling to either agree or disagree that "American schoolchildren do not learn enough about other cultures" or that "learning a second language is essential for being a well-educated person."

The items in the Cognitive category attempted to uncover how much parents linked second language learning with brain development that would transfer to other academic areas. Only one parent (1.1%) disagreed that studying any second language would make their child

smarter in other areas. To clarify whether this meant that parents would have signed their child up for any language, parents were also asked if they would have enrolled their child in Long Hill's program if it had been in a language other than Chinese. This item elicited the most divided reaction: 49% of parents agreed, while 31% of parents indicated they would not have enrolled their child in a non-Chinese immersion program.

One final goal of the Likert-scale section was to discover if parents believed that by participating in this immersion program, their child was also receiving a better education. Parents steered clear of taking strong positions in this section: roughly 40% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed that their child had better teachers or higher-performing classmates by participating in this program. Even those that agreed or disagreed were not willing to choose the "strongly" option. While parents were reluctant to comment on classmates or teachers, they were more willing to agree that parents who enroll their children in immersion are more engaged in their child's education.

Differences within the Parent Population

The final research question sought to uncover any differences of motivation or values within the parent population. Cross tabs were run to see if different demographic characteristics such as income, educational background, and language background yielded any significant difference in parent responses to either the open-ended motivation ranking question or the Likert forced-choice attitude scale. Appendices B and C contain the results of these statistical tests.

Open-ended parent motivation question. Overall, there was a high level of homogeneity within the population's responses to the open-ended parent motivation item, as shown in Appendix C. When looking at parents' responses to the open-ended motivation ranking item, there was no significant difference between the reasons for enrollment given by

parents with incomes over $60,000 and those with incomes below $60,000. There was also little difference between how parents with a four-year college degree and those without one responded. The only instance of significant difference regarding education was that survey respondents without a four-year college degree more frequently cited learning Chinese as a springboard to learning a future third language as a reason than parents with a college degree.

One area of significant difference was the way parents of different ethnic backgrounds spoke about the academic benefits of participation in Chinese immersion. None of the 12 non-Caucasian respondents or the 13 respondents with partners of non-Caucasian background listed transferable cognitive benefits or the desire to provide an academic challenge for their child. In contrast, 36% of Caucasian parents cited transferable cognitive benefits and 25% wrote about academic challenge.

There was also a significant difference between how parents responded depending on whether or not they spoke a second language. Thirty-five percent of bilingual parents listed "Chinese is an important language to learn" as a reason, compared to 16% of monolingual parents who did so. A greater number of bilingual parents cited multiculturalism than monolingual parents (38% to 18%). This finding was significant at the $p \leq .05$ level. One reason cited more by monolingual parents than bilingual parents (30% to 13%) was to provide more challenging academic experience for their child.

One subset of the parent population that responded in significantly different ways from other parents was those that had some connection to China. Forty percent of parents who had travelled to China noted that Chinese was an important language to learn, while only 18% of parents who had not been China cited this reason. Parents with a Chinese-speaking partner also significantly more frequently noted that Chinese is an important language to learn, and that they

wanted to preserve their child's heritage language. Parents who wanted to maintain Chinese as a heritage language all lived outside the school boundaries.

There were two groups of parents who cited transferable cognitive benefits at a significant higher rate in explaining their decision. Forty-three percent of parents who lived inside the school boundaries mentioned cognitive benefits as one of their three reasons, while only 22% of out-of-boundary parents did. On the survey, parents were asked to write down the grade level of their child, allowing the comparison of the responses of early "adopters" to later entrants, as well as parents with more than one child in the program. The other subset of parents to mention transferable cognitive benefits more than their peers was those with multiple children in the program. Seven of the 11 parents (64%) in that category listed that as one of their three reasons.

Parent values and responses to Likert-scale statements. There were several points of significant difference among parent subgroups' responses to the 19 Likert-scale statements. The 19 statements were grouped into five themes: (a) Nationalism, (b) Economic, (c) Culture, (d) Cognitive, and (e) School Choice. Tables nine through 14 in the following pages display the Chi square statistics of the cross tabulations for each demographic subgroup's level of agreement to the statements within each theme.

Nationalism. There was a strong associative relationship between several characteristics and the nationalism theme, as demonstrated in Table 9. Respondents who were fathers, bilingual, Caucasian, high-income earners, or native English speakers tended to agree with nationalism statements more frequently than other groups.

Table 9

Chi-Square Statistics for Significant Difference between Parent Background Characteristics and Responses to Nationalism Statements

	L1. The future of the world depends on how nations will get along with China.	L7. The economic future of the United States depends on Americans knowing how to speak Chinese.	L12. Increasing the number of Chinese speakers in the country is important to America's national security.	L16. The future of American-Chinese relations is bright.
Household income	.397	.183	.001**	.356
Education (respondent)	.675	.739	.374	.868
Education (partner)	.293	.462	.568	.848
Who filled out the survey	.199	.000**	.002**	.635
Grade level of child	.150	.573	.231	.702
Residence	.626	.971	.968	.504
Ethnicity (respondent)	.528	.020**	.082	.469
Ethnicity (partner)	.101	.057*	.048**	.092
1st Language (respondent)	.016**	.511	.030**	.067
1st Language (partner)	.141	.158	.087	.000**
Able to speak a 2nd language (respondent)	.027**	.305	.536	.529
Able to speak a 2nd language (partner)	.388	.834	.093	.374
Chinese ability (respondent)	.329	.166	.955	.575
Chinese ability (partner)	.778	.501	.257	.480
Experience travelling to China	.624	.913	.523	.469

* $p \leq .05$

For example, 51% of mothers who filled out the survey neither agreed nor disagreed that "The economic future of the United States depends on Americans knowing how to speak Chinese" while only 11% of them either strongly agreed or strongly disagreed that "Increasing the number of Chinese speakers in the country is important to America's national security." In contrast, on both statements, roughly 50% of the fathers gravitated towards the extremes of the spectrum, with more fathers strongly agreeing.

Similarly, 59% of respondents with an income of less than $60,000 did not take a position on the national security statement, selecting the middle choice, and only 4% of them either strongly agreed or disagreed. Respondents earning more than $60,000 took stronger positions: 18% strongly agreed that "Increasing the number of Chinese speakers in the country is important to America's national security," while 9% strongly disagreed.

Ethnicity and language background also affected how much parents identified with the nationalism value. More Caucasian respondents and respondents with Caucasian partners agreed with statements 7, 12, and 16 than non-Caucasian respondents. A significantly higher number of respondents whose first language was either English or Chinese agreed with nationalism statements than Spanish-speakers, who tended to remain neutral.

Economic. There was very little significant difference in the ways parents responded to statements asserting the economic and career advantages of learning Chinese. The Chi-Square statistics for this are shown in Table 10. Item 9, which asked parents if they would be disappointed if their child did not use Chinese in their adult career, generated the widest spectrum of agreement and disagreement across the population as a whole, but there were no subsets of the population that responded significantly differently. The only statement in this theme that generated significant difference between groups was that "knowing a second or third language will help my child get into a prestigious college or university." Fathers agreed more frequently than mothers with this statement, and English and native Chinese-speakers also agreed with this statement more frequently than did native Spanish speakers.

Table 10

Chi-Square Statistics for Significant Difference between Parent Background Characteristics and Responses to Economic Statements

	L2. In the future, knowing Chinese will pay off economically for my child.	L9. I will be disappointed if, as an adult, my child does not use Chinese in his/her career.	L11. Knowing a second or third language will help my child get into a prestigious college or university.	L18. Knowing Chinese will increase my child's likelihood of getting a better job in the future.
Household income	.457	.352	.750	.894
Education (respondent)	.785	.974	.284	.294
Education (partner)	.823	.781	.251	.864
Who filled out the survey	.457	.187	.048**	.115
Grade level of child	.479	.275	.204	.364
Residence	.722	.405	.414	.903
Ethnicity (respondent)	.381	.493	.056	.465
Ethnicity (partner)	.697	.202	.116	.901
1st Language (respondent)	.293	.450	.004**	.245
1st Language (partner)	.711	.176	.028**	.499
Able to speak a 2nd language (respondent)	.440	.614	.282	.372
Able to speak a 2nd language (partner)	.737	.911	.653	.146
Chinese ability (respondent)	.644	.933	.801	.552
Chinese ability (partner)	.806	.995	.607	.330
Experience travelling to China	.761	.860	.595	.300

** $p \leq .05$

Cultural. The Cultural category contained the most points of significant difference between subsets of parents, as displayed below in Table 11. These points demonstrated a clear association between several demographic factors and valuing multiculturalism. Respondents with a household income over $60,000, with a 4-year college degree or higher, who speak a second language, of who are Caucasian all agreed with multicultural statements more frequently than did other groups in the study.

Table 11

Chi-Square Statistics for Significant Difference between Parent Background Characteristics and Responses to Cultural Statements

	L3. Learning a second language is essential for being a well-educated person.	L5. Children who study other cultures have a better understanding of the world.	L8. Learning about a foreign culture enriches my child's life.	L14. I want my child to know people who are from different cultures than his/her own.	L19. I am concerned that American school children do not learn enough about other cultures.
Household income	.478	.331	.034**	.067	.237
Education (respondent)	.927	.199	.777	.285	.488
Education (partner)	.444	.564	.038**	.855	.115
Who filled out the survey	.510	.703	.003**	.830	.143
Grade level of child	.805	.402	.810	.778	.898
Residence	.111	.269	.376	.638	.464
Ethnicity (respondent)	.351	.301	.028**	.000**	.018**
Ethnicity (partner)	.659	.010**	.004**	.001**	.047**
1st Language (respondent)	.577	.092	.053	.000**	.004**
1st Language (partner)	.803	.046**	.000**	.000**	.010**
Able to speak a 2nd language (respondent)	.104	.082	.012**	.260	.294
Able to speak a 2nd language (partner)	.077	.643	.727	.302	.125
Chinese ability (respondent)	.488	.956	.269	.401	.800
Chinese ability (partner)	.249	.756	.420	.032**	.835
Experience travelling to China	.644	.136	.040**	.147	.557

** $p \leq .05$

Cognitive. This theme contained some of the most important and provocative statements of the Likert-scale section. While it might be easy to assume that parents enrolled their child in a Chinese immersion program because they wanted their child to learn Chinese, the three statements belonging to this theme were included to reveal whether parents valued language immersion for non-language specific reasons. Running cross tabulations on these items allowed us to see if there were any specific subsets of parents that agreed more frequently that enrollment in language immersion gave their children a more challenging academic experience and made them smarter in other subjects. The results of these tests are displayed in Table 12.

Table 12

Chi-Square Statistics for Significant Difference between Parent Background Characteristics and Responses to Cognitive Statements

	L6. If Long Hill Elementary's immersion program had been in a language other than Chinese, I would still have enrolled my child in it.	L15. Learning ANY second language will make my child smarter in other subjects.	L4. Language immersion programs are more academically demanding than non-immersion educational programs
Household income	.024**	.578	.930
Education (respondent)	.479	.287	.933
Education (partner)	.854	.817	.400
Who filled out the survey	.706	.173	.054
Grade level of child	.612	.837	.689
Residence	.000**	.194	.298
Ethnicity (respondent)	.623	.380	.146
Ethnicity (partner)	.435	.527	.272
1st Language (respondent)	.754	.991	.116
1st Language (partner)	.233	.877	.022**
Able to speak a 2nd language (respondent)	.258	.616	.023**
Able to speak a 2nd language (partner)	.109	.643	.182
Chinese ability (respondent)	.600	.610	.206
Chinese ability (partner)	.019**	.997	.692
Experience travelling to China	.014**	.835	.276

** $p \leq .05$

Parents who did not speak a second language more strongly agreed that language immersion programs are more challenging than bilingual parents (33% to 18%). Seventy-five percent of parents with native Spanish-speaking partners were neutral on the issue of academic challenge whereas English and Chinese-speakers agreed more frequently statements about academic challenge.

When asked if parents would still have enrolled their child in this program if it had been in a language other than Chinese, there were four subsets of parents whose responses differed significantly from the larger sample. Predictably, language-specific factors such as experience travelling to China and having a Chinese-speaking partner divided parents on this question:

parents with a Chinese connection disagreed most frequently with the statement. Out-of-boundary parents whose children "commute" to the program also disagreed more frequently, suggesting that Chinese was specifically drawing them to the program. Subgroups of parents who agreed that they would have enrolled their child in an immersion program in any language were in-boundary parents and parents with incomes over $60,000. These observed differences were significant at the $p \leq .05$ level.

School choice. The three statements in this category dealt with the sensitive issue of whether parents believed that enrollment in an immersion program was a proxy for enrolling in a more exclusive academic program while still in a public school setting. As reported earlier, parents were reluctant as a whole to agree strongly that their child had higher-performing classmates or better teachers through participating in immersion. Within the population, however, there were areas of significant difference, reported in Table 13. There was a significant difference in the number of Caucasian respondents and non-Caucasian respondents who agreed with school choice statements. Forty-five percent of Caucasian parents agreed that their child had better classmates by being enrolled in the immersion program while only 10% disagreed.

Table 13

Chi-Square Statistics for Significant Difference between Parent Background Characteristics and Responses to School Choice Statements

	L10. My child has higher-performing classmates in his immersion classroom than if he/she was enrolled in a non-immersion classroom.	L13. Language immersion programs attract better teachers than other educational programs	L17. Parents who enroll their children in immersion programs are typically more engaged in their child's education.
Household income	.140	.452	.257
Education (respondent)	.474	.136	.527
Education (partner)	.321	.132	.210
Who filled out the survey	.714	.562	.362
Grade level of child	.374	.527	.732
Residence	.233	.508	.944
Ethnicity (respondent)	.013**	.061	.256
Ethnicity (partner)	.569	.675	.841
1st Language (respondent)	.136	.220	.361
1st Language (partner)	.089	.083	.831
Able to speak a 2nd language (respondent)	.335	.538	.340
Able to speak a 2nd language (partner)	.832	.811	.871
Chinese ability (respondent)	.649	.874	.646
Chinese ability (partner)	.486	.872	.947
Experience travelling to China	.392	.376	.351

** $p \leq .05$

Two-thirds of non-Caucasian parents were neutral, and of those that took a stand more disagreed than agreed. Caucasian parents also more frequently agreed that teachers in immersion programs are better than teachers in regular education programs. These specific results are reported in Table 14.

The other subset of parents that differed significantly in their beliefs regarding school choice were parents with partners whose first language is English, Spanish, or Chinese. Respondents with partners whose first language was English or Chinese both more frequently agreed that immersion programs attract better-performing teachers and students. Roughly 75% of respondents with native Spanish-speaking partners did not take a position to both statements.

Table 144

Chi-Square Statistics for Parent Responses to School Choice Statements by Ethnicity and 1st Language of Partner

	L10. *My child has higher-performing classmates in his immersion classroom than if he/she was enrolled in a non-immersion classroom.*					L13. *Language immersion programs attract better teachers than other educational programs*				
	SA	A	--	D	SD	SA	A	--	D	SD
Ethnicity										
Caucasian (n=71)	11	19	24	12	1	6	24	28	11	1
	16.4%	*28.4%*	*35.8%*	*17.9%*	1.5%	*8.6%*	*34.3%*	*40.0%*	*15.7%*	*1.4%*
Other(n=12)	1	1	8	0	2	0	2	5	2	2
	8.3%	*8.3%*	*66.7%*	*0.0%*	*16.7%*	*0.0%*	*18.2%*	*45.5%*	*18.2%*	*18.2%*
Chi-Square			.013**					.061		
1st Language (Partner)	SA	A	--	D	SD	SA	A	--	D	SD
English (n=71)	10	20	26	12	3	6	22	30	12	2
	14.1%	*28.2%*	*36.6%*	*16.9%*	*4.2%*	*8.3%*	*30.6%*	*41.7%*	*16.7%*	*2.8%*
Spanish (n=7)	0	0	5	1	1	0	0	6	1	1
	0.0%	*0.0%*	*72.4%*	*14.3%*	*14.3%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*75.0%*	*12.5%*	*12.5%*
Chinese (n=7)	2	1	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0
	66.7%	*33.3%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*100%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*	*0.0%*
Chi-Square			.089					.083		

Note. When the number of parents does not add up to the n in the left column, it is because some parents left this item blank.

** $p \leq .05$

Chapter 5

Discussion

As noted previously, the overall purpose of this study was threefold: (a) describe the parents of students in one Utah Chinese immersion program (b) understand the motivations and values behind their enrollment decision, and (c) uncover some differences within that parent population. A parent survey was administered to parents of children enrolled in one elementary school's Chinese immersion program. The survey contained a variety of questions about parent background and demographic information. Further attitudinal data were collected about these parents and their motivations for enrollment. From these data, several preliminary conclusions can be advanced and questions raised for future research. This chapter highlights the most interesting findings and trends that emerged from the analysis of parent surveys, and presents future questions for consideration.

Chinese as a Critical Language

In allocating funding and shining a spotlight on the need for more Chinese language education, politicians and economic leaders have designated Chinese as one of several critical languages. It was surprising, then, to learn that a significant group of parents were more interested in language immersion in general than in Chinese specifically. While the parent population was relatively homogenous in both demographic background (ethnicity, education, marital status) as well as attitudes towards multiculturalism and bilingualism, they were clearly divided on this issue. Twenty-nine percent of respondents strongly agreed that they would have enrolled their child in Long Hill Elementary's immersion program had it been in a language different from Chinese. Twenty percent strongly disagreed, indicating that Chinese was, for them, a critical language.

These two distinct trends in parent responses regarding the importance of Chinese was the most compelling finding to emerge from the study and prompted further analysis. There were several unsurprising factors that made parents significantly more likely to view Chinese as critical: parental ability to speak Chinese and experience travelling to China. It was also not surprising that, because the program served as a magnet for Chinese heritage families outside of the school boundaries, residence significantly affected how critical Chinese was. In other words, families who travelled from outside the school boundary were more likely to cite Chinese as a critical language and the reason for enrollment. Thus, a major finding from this study is that parents who live in the school boundary, who have higher socio-economic status and who cited transferable cognitive benefits as a motivation for enrollment, would have enrolled their child in any immersion program in any language, and were not specifically motivated by the Chinese language.

This parent group seemed to view the immersion program as a substitute for a more rigorous academic experience. If Chinese was important to these parents, it didn't seem to relate to a personal interest, connection, or background in Chinese, but rather the reputation of Chinese as a difficult and useful language. Parents who were Caucasian, monolingual, lived inside school boundaries, or native English speakers all more frequently cited pragmatic non-Chinese specific considerations for enrollment, such as academic challenge, cognitive benefits, or opening doors to prestigious universities. Monolingual parents and native-English speaking parents were the only subgroups who more frequently agreed that immersion programs are more academically demanding than non-immersion programs.

These findings raise an important question going forward. Have Chinese Immersion programs become positioned as the option that highly-motivated and ambitious parents want for

their children? Has Chinese become more valued than other languages, even for parents who don't have any link to Chinese, because of the current perception that it is an important language to know for future economic reasons? While parents gave many reasons for enrollment, one word that kept coming up in responding to the open-ended motivation question was "opportunity," suggesting that parents of young children want to feel like they are best positioning their child for future success. Chinese immersion seems to be viewed now as the thing "good parents" do to fulfill this responsibility.

This finding was supported anecdotally by a conversation I had with a parent while writing the conclusion of this paper. After hearing about my study, the parent exclaimed that she wished she had "jumped on the band-wagon" and signed her children up for Chinese immersion. She commented that perhaps she was just too lazy, revealing an insecurity that she hadn't done all she could to give her children this opportunity. Though it was clear she didn't have any particular background in or connection to China, she asserted a belief that knowing Chinese would be really useful because so many companies now do business in China.

Underlying Parent Beliefs

Analysis of the survey's open-ended motivation question uncovered some differences within the parent population in terms of the reasons they gave for enrolling their child in this Chinese immersion program. Further, analysis of the parent responses on a Likert-scale to the list of statements – grouped by themes of nationalism, economics, multiculturalism, academics, and school choice – revealed some additional surprising differences. Increased Chinese language education as a benefit to America's economic future and national security seemed to resonate more strongly with fathers than mothers, with Caucasian parents more than Hispanic parents, and with wealthier parents more than with less-wealthy parents. With all the differences

noted above between Caucasian and non-Caucasian parents, it was interesting that all parent groups felt that knowing Chinese would confer future economic benefits. Non-Caucasian, Spanish-speaking parents strongly agreed with that idea, but were less likely than native-English speaking parents to agree that knowing Chinese would help their child get into a prestigious college or university.

One belief that emerged more prominently than expected was multiculturalism. It was the third most cited motivation for enrollment in the open-ended responses, almost tied with transferable cognitive benefits. On the Likert-scale section, the multicultural statements garnered higher levels of agreement than any other theme. Within this broad agreement, however, it was the higher-income, Caucasian, native-English speaking and bilingual parents that agreed with the multicultural items most frequently. This reinforces the idea that this subgroup of parents views this immersion program as an elite bilingualism experience that will enrich their child's life. Out of the five multiculturalism statements, it was the statement that "learning about a foreign culture enriches my child's life" that reflected this significant difference the most.

Implications for the Growth of Chinese Immersion In-State and Out-of-State

Implicit in the description of the emergence of Utah as the nation's Chinese immersion hotspot was the question of whether this growth is dependent on Utah-specific factors or if it could be transferable elsewhere. There were some characteristics of the parent population that were context-specific. For example, for such a predominantly Caucasian, English-speaking group, the parents spoke a wide array of second languages among them. While there are certainly other communities with a higher percentage of bilingual parents, it would be hard to imagine communities that could count 21 such wide-ranging languages among 91 households.

Though the survey was unable to directly ask religious affiliation, it is possible that most of these parents learned these languages as a result of LDS missionary service.

The number (15.4%) of parents that expressed the hope that their child might use Chinese as an LDS missionary someday also might lead an observer to doubt whether this level of parent enthusiasm for Chinese immersion might also be found outside Utah. However, as noted earlier, every parent who cited missionary service did so in tandem with future career and educational opportunities, suggesting that the church service reason is not independently driving enrollment decisions.

Though parents in Utah are different in several visible ways from the rest of the nation, the characteristics mentioned in the previous section as driving enrollment did not seem to be context-specific. A Chinese immersion program would reasonably be expected to appeal to any community with highly-educated, mostly Caucasian parents who seek a challenging academic experience for their children. Though parents may not have a specific desire for their child to learn Chinese, the reputation that Chinese has acquired as a language that is current, unique, challenging, potentially useful in the future, and where opportunities to learn it are rare, has made it the language of choice. Parents' responses to the open-ended question about motivation suggested that Chinese was viewed as having these attributes.

Considerations for Recruitment

Though not a formal research aim, one of the ancillary purposes of this study was to provide insight into how parents made the decision to enroll their child in this immersion program. School administrators, both in-state and out-of-state, may find these data useful in rolling out their own immersion programs. As reported in Table 15, two-thirds of respondents indicated that the female spouse was most responsible for the enrollment decision. While clearly

a case of self-reporting, as 82% of the surveys were filled out by mothers, it is not surprising that they were the driving force behind this educational decision. Mothers, especially those in-boundary respondents living in close proximity to each other, have a built-in social network that allows news of the program's existence and publicized benefits to be spread by word of mouth.

Table 15

Frequency and Percentage of Individuals Responsible for Enrollment Decision

Who was most responsible for the decision to enroll your child in this program?		
	Frequency	Percent
Wife	60	67.4%
Husband	13	14.6%
Joint Decision	13	14.6%
Joint decision with child	3	3.4%
Total	89	100%

Indeed, word of mouth networking was the second most frequent reason given for how respondents first heard about the program (see Table 16). Despite the power of word-of-mouth publicity, school districts should not neglect print and web-based literature, as over a third of the parents said that school-produced literature was their first introduction to the program. Several out-of-boundary parents indicated that they received pamphlets in their child's kindergarten class, suggesting the importance of district-wide literature in attracting out-of-boundary parents.

Table 16

Program Advertising

How did you first hear about Long Hill Elementary's Chinese immersion program?		
	Frequency	Percent
School-produced literature and advertising	34	37.4%
Word of mouth/networking	26	28.6%
Long Hill was neighborhood school	25	27.5%
Other	6	6.6%
Total	91	100%

Another example of the importance of school literature in attracting students was the degree to which parents would echo the recruitment pitch in their explanations of what motivated them to enroll their child in the program. Several parents referred to what they were told in either brochures or parent meetings. The idea that learning a second language at this age would hold academic benefits in other subjects as well was something that parents have really taken up. Citing research on the transferable cognitive benefits of language immersion is an effective recruitment approach.

Limitations and Implications for Future Research

The results from this study should not be extrapolated to explain the phenomena of the popularity of Chinese immersion throughout Utah. This was a case study of one school, and therefore the statistical findings can only be attributed to the specific characteristics of that school and its population. However, the study can broadly inform administrators and educators both inside and outside of Utah. Findings from this work suggest that the reasons Chinese has emerged as the language of choice for many parents in Utah are more varied than first thought. Chinese immersion satisfies both the desires of heritage parents and parents with specific interest in China, as well as the desires of parents seeking the cognitive and multicultural benefits that come with an enrichment immersion experience. Chinese seems to have become positioned as an immersion language that addresses many parental desires, and future research across multiple schools is needed to understand how parents perceive Chinese..

This study employed a survey approach like much of the existing literature on parent motivation regarding language immersion. There were several limitations implicit in this approach. Parents are self-reporting their motivations and beliefs about immersion, and thus may have responded in ways that they deemed socially appropriate. One area where this may

have influenced parent responses was the reluctance of parents to take a stand on whether a Chinese immersion program serves as a de facto gifted program with higher-income and better-performing classmates. Because making decisions based on race or socio-economic factors is viewed as politically incorrect, parents may have felt uncomfortable acknowledging the role school choice considerations played in their decision. Another limitation was the inability, via the survey approach, of asking follow-up questions to allow parents to elaborate on their responses. Future research efforts should consider interviewing parents either individually or in focus groups, in order to test the preliminary conclusions of this study.

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Appendix A

Parent Questionnaire

1) What is your relationship to the student enrolled in the Chinese immersion program?

   a) Father
   b) Mother
   c) Other _____

2) Which grade is your immersion student currently enrolled in?

   a) First grade
   b) Second grade
   c) Third grade
   d) Fourth grade

3) What is your current marital status?

   a) Married
   b) Single
   c) Separated/Divorced
   d) Widowed
   e) Other _____

4) What is your annual combined household income?

   a) less than 20,000
   b) 20,001 - 40,000
   c) 40,001 - 60,000
   d) 60,001 - 80,000
   e) 80,001 - 100,000
   f) more than 100,000

5) What is the highest level of education that you and your partner have completed?

	you	your partner	
a)	_____	_____	Elementary school
b)	_____	_____	High school
c)	_____	_____	Post-high school vocational training
d)	_____	_____	4-year college degree (undergraduate)
e)	_____	_____	Professional/Graduate degree

6) Please rank (in order of importance) the top 3 reasons you enrolled your child in Cascade Elementary's Chinese Immersion program. Please give a brief explanation/justification for each ranking.

7) Who was most responsible for the decision to enroll your child in this program?
   a) Myself
   b) My partner

8) Do you live inside or outside of Cascade Elementary's school boundaries?

9) What is your ethnic background?

10) What is your partner's ethnic background?

11) What do you consider your "first" language?

you:_____

your partner:_____

12) What other language(s) do you and your partner speak?

you:_____

your partner:_____

13) Please check below your own and your partner 's ability to communicate in Chinese.

	you	your partner	
a)	_____	_____	No ability; cannot understand or speak the language at all.
b)	_____	_____	Can understand and speak the language somewhat.
c)	_____	_____	Native speaker, or native-like ability in the language.

14) Have you or your partner ever traveled to or lived in an area where Chinese was widely spoken? If so, please describe the nature of your activities.

15) How did you first hear about Cascade Elementary's Chinese immersion program?

For the following statements please indicate your level of agreement or disagreement.

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. The future of the world depends on how nations will get along with China.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
2. In the future, knowing Chinese will pay off economically for my child.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
3. Learning a second language is NOT essential for being a well-educated person.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
4. Language immersion programs are NOT more academically demanding than non-immersion educational programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
5. Children who study other languages have a better understanding of the world.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
6. If Long Hill's immersion program had been in a language other than Chinese, I would still have enrolled my child in it.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
7. The economic future of the United States depends on Americans who know how to speak Chinese.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
8. Learning about a foreign culture enriches my life.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
9. I will be disappointed if, as an adult, my child does not end up using Chinese.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
10. My child has higher-performing classmates in his immersion classroom than if he/she was enrolled in a non-immersion classroom.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
11. Knowing a second or third language will help my child get into a prestigious college or university	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
12. Increasing the number of Chinese speakers in the country is important to America's national security.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
13. Language immersion programs attract better teachers than other educational programs.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
14. I want my child to know people who are from different cultures than his/her own.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
15. Learning ANY second language will make my child smarter in other subjects.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
16. The future of American-Chinese relations is bright.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
17. Parents who enroll their children in immersion programs are typically more engaged in their children's education.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
18. Knowing Chinese will NOT increase my child's likelihood of getting a better job in the future.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
19. I am concerned that American schoolchildren do not learn enough about other cultures.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

Appendix B

Parent Attitudes by Category

Category and Questions	SA	A	-	D	SD	N	Blank	Mean
Nationalism								
L1. The future of the world depends on how nations will get along with China.	15 *16.9%*	43 *48.3%*	27 *30.3%*	4 *4.5%*	0 *0%*	89	2	3.78
L7. The economic future of the United States depends on Americans knowing how to speak Chinese.	11 *12.4%*	22 *24.8%*	43 *48.3%*	10 *11.2%*	3 *3.4%*	89	2	3.31
L12. Increasing the number of Chinese speakers in the country is important to America's national security.	11 *12.5%*	35 *39.8%*	30 *34.1%*	7 *8%*	5 *5.7%*	88	3	3.45
L16. The future of American-Chinese relations is bright.	11 *12.8%*	38 *44.2%*	34 *39.5%*	2 *2.2%*	1 *1.2%*	86	5	3.65
Economic	SA	A	-	D	SD	N	Blank	Mean
L2. In the future, knowing Chinese will pay off economically for my child.	45 *50.6%*	34 *38.3%*	9 *10.1%*	1 *1.1%*	0 *0.0%*	89	2	4.38
L9. I will be disappointed if, as an adult, my child does not use Chinese in his/her career.	13 *14.4%*	15 *16.7%*	25 *27.8%*	22 *24.4%*	15 *16.7%*	90	1	2.88
L11. Knowing a second or third language will help my child get into a prestigious college or university.	14 *15.6%*	38 *42.2%*	30 *33.3%*	7 *7.8%*	1 *1.1%*	90	1	3.63
L18. Knowing Chinese will increase my child's likelihood of getting a better job in the future.	28 *31.5%*	40 *44.9%*	18 *20.2%*	2 *2.2%*	1 *1.1%*	89	2	4.03
Multiculturalism	SA	A	-	D	SD	N	Blank	Mean
L3. Learning a second language is essential for being a well-educated person.	26 *29.2%*	21 *23.6%*	24 *27.0%*	10 *11.2%*	8 *9.0%*	89	2	3.53
L5. Children who study other languages have a better understanding of the world.	45 *50.6%*	32 36.0%	11 12.4%	1 1.1%	0 0.0%	89	2	4.36
L8. Learning about a foreign culture enriches my child's life.	68 *76.4%*	19 *21.3%*	2 *2.2%*	0 *0.0%*	0 *0.0%*	89	2	4.74
L14. I want my child to know people who are from different cultures than his/her own.	58 *65.2%*	22 *24.7%*	6 6.7%	3 *3.4%*	0 *0.0%*	89	2	4.52
L19. I am concerned that American schoolchildren do not learn enough about other cultures.	25 *28.1%*	29 *32.6%*	24 *27.0%*	10 *11.2%*	1 *1.1%*	89	2	3.75
Cognitive	SA	A	-	D	SD	N	Blank	Mean
L6. If Long Hill Elementary's immersion program had been in a language other than Chinese, I would still have enrolled my child in it.	26 *28.9%*	18 *20.0%*	18 *20.0%*	10 *11.1%*	18 *20.0%*	90	1	3.27
L15. Learning ANY second language will make my child smarter in other subjects.	38 *42.7%*	40 *44.9%*	10 *11.2%*	1 *1.1%*	0 *0.0%*	89	2	4.29
L4. Language immersion programs are more academically demanding than non-immersion educational programs.	22 *24.7%*	38 *42.7%*	18 *20.2%*	8 *9.0%*	3 *3.4%*	89	2	3.76
School Choice	SA	A	-	D	SD	N	Blank	Mean
L10. My child has higher-performing classmates in his immersion classroom than if he/she was enrolled in a non-immersion classroom.	12 *14.1%*	22 *25.9%*	33 *38.8%*	13 *15.3%*	5 *5.9%*	85	6	3.27
L13. Language immersion programs attract better teachers than other educational programs.	6 *6.9%*	27 *31.0%*	37 *42.5%*	13 *14.9%*	4 *4.6%*	87	4	3.21
L17. Parents who enroll their children in immersion programs are typically more engaged in their child's education.	22 *24.7%*	37 *42.6%*	20 *22.5%*	8 *9.0%*	2 *2.2%*	89	2	3.78

*Responses were coded between 5 (strongly agree) and 1 (strongly disagree).

Appendix C

Chi-Square Statistics for Open-Ended Responses by Demographic and Language Background

	Household Income	Education		Who filled out survey?	Grade level of child	Residence	Ethnicity		1st Language	Able to speak a 2nd language		Chinese Ability		Experience travelling to China
		Respondent	Partner				Respondent	Partner	Respondent	Respondent	Partner	Respondent	Partner	
Future career/ education opportunities	.810	.463	.294	.704	.490	.540	.654	.721	.351	.883	.343	.299	.422	.072
Chinese is an important language to learn	.681	.582	.586	.316	.939	.528	.917	.601	.676	.044**	.564	.851	.010**	.031**
Future service opportunities (LDS mission)	.703	.520	.796	.298	.661	.928	.403	.399	.802	.696	.976	.708	.491	.964
Transferable cognitive benefits	.658	.255	.684	.267	.045**	.030**	.012**	.394	.149	.537	.660	.278	.169	.036*
Better overall education experience	.442	.760	.968	.914	.670	.715	.174	.601	.674	.130	.762	.571	.847	.541
Academic challenge	.968	.744	.831	.133	.339	.161	.051	.041**	.345	.057	.362	.219	.079*	.149
It's good for children to be bilingual	.265	.769	.216	.461	.271	.426	.231	.766	.074	.463	.821	.229	.033**	.588
Start early	.081	1.00	.424	.298	.722	.098	.597	.109	.482	.877	.546	.693	.533	.238
Springboard to learn more languages	.616	.026**	.952	.740	.504	.947	.225	.203	.680	.547	.091	.779	.377	.278
Multiculturalism	.777	.514	.499	.835	.546	.426	.693	.705	.065	.047**	.247	.010**	.892	.990
Maintain heritage language	.469	.739	.335	.637	.280	.002**	.471	.070	.645	.614	.107	.001**	.000**	.064
Family with interest/ability in Chinese	.453	.794	.929	.805	.354	.120	1.00	.079	.482	.696	.520	.500	.319	.689
Child's interest	.983	.384	.658	.379	.915	.649	.347	.933	.754	.322	.914	.873	.715	.579
Friends enrolled	.379	1.00	.033**	1.00	.234	.214	1.00	.928	.073	.904	.011**	.192	.700	.369
Build child's confidence/self-esteem	.983	.789	.585	.257	.612	.955	.299	.277	.754	.202	.234	.435	.671	.140
Neighborhood school	.522	.610	.064	.904	.660	.363	.268	.304	.780	.092	.701	.573	.126	.528

** $p \leq .05$