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**LINGUISTIC BEHAVIOUR IN RELATION
TO THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE AND
SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION OF CHILDREN
OF ITALIAN ETHNICITY IN SELECTED CLASSES**

by

AGNES NEMESKERI

A thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
in Canadian Studies

Carleton University

OTTAWA, Ontario

(September 24, 1990)

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The undersigned recommend to the Faculty
of Graduate Studies and Research acceptance of the thesis

"Linguistic Behaviour in Relation to the Academic
Performance and Second Language Acquisition of
Children of Italian Ethnicity in Selected Classes"

submitted by Agnes Nemeskeri, M.A.
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

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October 1990

ABSTRACT

In bilingual societies such as Canada, language policies must take into consideration the problems posed by ethnic minority languages.

An important locus of the problems is the educational system. The present study compared data from five research instruments. The subjects were 33 Italian and non-italophone grade 3 children.

Children of Italian ethnicity speaking a low-status dialect constituted a high risk group. Their preschool cognitive development was greatly influenced by the oracy-based home culture. They obtained lower scholastic performance scores than children whose primary language was standard Italian or English. Dialectophones also suffered from poor self-esteem due to low linguistic status within the Italian community and low sociological status outside it.

Instruction in standard Italian in a heritage language program did not affect mother tongue competence; the discrepancy between the language of instruction and the home dialect seemed to undermine such programs' effectiveness.

For this and other reasons, mother tongue education may not be a solution to such problems. Part of a solution, however, would be to provide a teacher-training program focussing on issues in second-language acquisition and minority cultures.

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This thesis is dedicated to all those children whose "silent voices" should finally be heard.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

The Research Problem

The issue of bilingualism and its theoretical and practical implications has emerged in various contexts as an object of discussion and research during the past decade, involving a large number of scholars and researchers from various disciplines and social institutions. However, in Canada, where bilingualism can be interpreted as a phenomenon due not only to the presence of two dominant ethnic groups, but also to the existence of ethnic minorities, the educational and linguistic needs of children of the latter have received far less attention. In the light of recent and current research, it has become obvious that children from certain ethnic minority groups, such as the Italians, Portuguese and Lebanese, among others, may experience more difficulties in Language Arts than do their anglophone and francophone counterparts, and subsequently, end up in special educational classes in disproportionately high numbers (Wright 1971; Samuda 1980; Cummins 1984).

The research that I conducted between October 1988 and April 1989 was aimed at investigating the sociolinguistic and attitudinal characteristics, as well as the school and

home environments of children of Italian ethnicity, in order to identify the factors that might, in some cases, lead to language deficiency in English, and to low academic achievement in the primary elementary school years, where English represents both the object and the medium of instruction, and proficiency in English is one of the main areas of evaluation of the development of the pupils' cognitive skills. The generalizability of the research findings is undoubtedly limited because of the small number of subjects involved, and the fact that the sample was drawn from only one segment of the large Italian population in the National Capital Region.

The hypothesis on which the research was based argued for a correlation between language proficiency in English and academic achievement as dependent variables, and the level of proficiency in the mother tongue of children of ethnic minority background as the independent variable (broadly discussed by Cummins' developmental interdependence hypothesis [1978] and by Skutnabb-Kangas [1976, 113, 115, 138] among others). Both Cummins and Skutnabb-Kangas (op. cit) advocate the use of the mother tongue as the language of instruction in the early elementary school years, perceived as a period of

transition between the mother tongue and English, instead of the current policy of total immersion in the language of the dominant culture.

Edwards (1985, 128), on the other hand, in an overview of various educational policies concerning bilingual children in multicultural societies, points out the difficulties that the introduction of instruction in the mother tongue might imply:

Some have claimed that prolonged mother-tongue instruction for minority group children does hamper their chances for majority language and social success, and that is not required to combat the intriguing but ill-conceived notion of semi-lingualism.

In his paraphrase of Musgrove's (1982) thesis on the role of education in the maintenance of the language and culture for ethnic minority groups, he supports the proposition that "education should strive to accommodate and transform cultures in contact, not to transmit them in toto" (Edwards 1985, 120).

From the perspective of perceptions and attitudes towards cultural diversity, Edwards (1979, 23) proposes that

...although basic cognitive difficulties may not exist for children from certain groups, there are certainly strong social disabilities confronting them--especially in the context of the school which

generally reflects middle-class values unlike those assimilated by the disadvantaged child at home.

And, within the educational context which gives definition to the term "disadvantage", one finds teachers whose views on "correctness" imply negative evaluation of the way many children talk.

In his study focussing on problems concerning disadvantaged children in Ireland (op.cit.), Edwards collected speech samples from both socially disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged elementary-school students in Dublin. The linguistic comparison of these two groups revealed that, within the school context, the disadvantaged group produced fewer words and fewer complex sentences than their non-disadvantaged (middle class) counterparts.

He then presented the tape-recorded speech samples to a group of young student teachers ("judges"), who were asked to rate the samples on seventeen seven-point scales. The analyses of the responses indicated that, on each of the scales, disadvantaged children received less favourable ratings than did the non-disadvantaged children. The findings, thus, demonstrated a causal relationship between teachers' ratings and the status and language characteristics of children.

The values placed on various aspects of interpersonal communication rooted in the cultural patrimony of any given individual, including variation in the proportion of oral

versus written expression and in discourse patterns in a multicultural/multiethnic society might or might not coincide with values represented by the dominant culture. In the latter case, the differing value systems can cause discrimination against members of the minority groups.

As W.J. Ong (1982, 49) points out in his comparative assessment of orality and literacy in different cultures, some mental processes such as abstract thinking intrinsic to literacy cannot be traced in primarily oral cultures. In the absence of abstract categories, oral cultures "use stories of human action to store, organize, and communicate much of what they know."

In their study of discrimination in interethnic communication, Scollon and Scollon (1986, 12) discuss the role of communication patterns as a cultural heritage in the self-identification and self-evaluation of the individual:

The discourse system a speaker uses is learned very early in life.... This system is learned through a long and highly involved process of socialization and communication with caregivers.... This discourse system is closely tied to an individual's concept of identity. Any change in the discourse system is likely to be felt as a change in personality and culture.

Wallace Lambert, in his study of social-psychological implications of bilingualism (1967, 19), quotes Child's

research, conducted in 1943 on second-generation Italian-Americans living in New England, investigating perceptions of their own identity through reactions to social conflicts. The conflict was represented by a dual pressure, by their American peers and by their own parents, each demanding an adjustment of values in self identity. According to the outcomes of the research, the youngsters reacted in three contrasting ways to social pressure: some tried to belong to one group or the other (i.e., to make themselves as Italian or as American as possible), while some, because of the strong pressure from both sides, were unable to identify with either. In any case, their relations were strained, either with their peers if they emphasized their Italianness, or with their family and with the community if they displayed hostility towards and change in their ethnic identity. Scollon and Scollon's (1986, 10) proposal to solve some of the problems caused by interethnic differences is "to cultivate a deep and genuine respect for differences in individual and ethnic communicative styles" instead of striving to eliminate them. This view ties in directly with Fishman's (1976, 23) interpretation of positive societal attitudes in interethnic communication:

Ethnicity understandings may be part of a larger system of moral understandings and intuitions, part of a far more inclusive cosmology than that related to recognition of "one's own kind".... If we fully understand how actors understand ethnicity, we simultaneously understand at least part...of how they understand the world at large and their relation to it.

Based on the above arguments, perhaps it is not premature to assume that some of the subjects displaying linguistic and/or cognitive difficulties might be victims of the insensitivity of the educational system in establishing more flexible instructional and evaluative standards. One also has to take into account the inadequacy of the training presently available to future teachers expected to deal with children whose first language is not English.

Mary Ashworth, in her study assessing the various aspects of educating ESL students in the Canadian school system (1988, 153-154), advocates introducing second-language acquisition theories, and methods of teaching ESL throughout the curriculum, as part of teacher-training programs:

As many regular classroom teachers will, at some time, teach students for whom English is a second language, it would seem advisable that they should at least be introduced to some basic concepts during

their preservice training. This, however, is not the case.

The inability of classroom teachers to meet the needs of ESL students is reflected in the hesitancy of some teachers to accept ESL students in their classes....

As the 1983 Ontario Provincial Review reports: "Very few regular classroom teachers are trained to teach English as a second language/dialect."

Methodology

a. The Subjects

In the original design, I had intended to draw the samples from two major clusters of the Italian population (one in Centretown, the other in Nepean), but for reasons that were mainly logistic in nature, I ended up with a sample of 11 subjects of Italian ethnicity in the first group, and an equal number of subjects in two control groups. The first sample (Sample 1), as well as subjects in one of the control groups (Sample 2), were drawn from a grade three class in one of the elementary schools in the Ottawa West area, whereas the subjects for the second control group (Sample 3) were selected from children participating in an Italian Heritage Language Program. The selection criteria for all groups were based on two factors: age and ethnolinguistic background. The number of subjects in the first group was determined by the number of pupils of Italian ethnicity in the class where

the research was to be conducted; this number, then, determined the number of subjects in the two control groups, owing to the need to match numbers for the purpose of comparative analyses and statistics.

The selection of this particular age group was primarily based on the consideration that grade three represents a turning point in the academic career of ethnic minority children, partially because the first major evaluation of their cognitive skills takes place at this grade level.

In the class that was selected for the purposes of this research, various other ethnic minority groups were represented as well (i.e., Indo-Chinese, Chinese, Lebanese, Philippine), although in far lower numbers than the Italians. The ethnic composition of the class led me to modify the selection criteria for the first control group (Sample 2). It was intended, according to the original design, to include subjects of English ethnicity and home language, but otherwise to be comparable to the students in the primary sample.

The subjects in the second control group were selected from the same age group, but the sample was obtained from two grade levels (grades one and two) and from three different classes in the Italian school, where the

children's grade placement reflected their level of proficiency in Italian.

b. The Instruments

Considering the above arguments, the following research instruments and methodology were proposed and implemented:

1. A sociolinguistic questionnaire, as a qualitative measure of the nature and extent of the linguistic domains in the children's languages. (See Appendix 1.)

The 85 questions in the questionnaire were administered to 33 subjects. (The detailed description of the questionnaire, as well as of the other instruments and the preliminary analysis of the results they yielded, will be discussed in Chapter II.)

2. A modified version of Lambert's "matched guise" technique, as a measure of the children's perception of and attitudes towards ethnic diversity was administered to all subjects.

The children were asked to evaluate six speakers, all speaking English with accents deviating from the standard, in six, tape-recorded segments. In this endeavour, they were assisted by a questionnaire intended to reveal their assumptions about personality traits and socioeconomic

status based solely on the speech samples of the individuals to be evaluated. (See Appendix 2.)

3. The Instructional Environment Scale (TIES), developed by Ysseldyke and Christenson (1987), was used to observe and subsequently to analyse the teaching methods, the pupils' reactions to them, and the pupil-teacher relationship in Language Arts classes.

TIES contains twelve components, each designed to describe an aspect of instruction to be rated by the observer and matched against criteria that are held to characterize effective instruction.

Data were obtained along these parameters, on individual students during observation in the classroom, followed by separate interviews with the teacher and with the pupil, in the context of a specific instructional segment observed in class.

4. Measures of the pupils' proficiency in English and in Italian. (See Appendices 3, 4 and 5). These measures concentrated on oracy, for several reasons. Children of Italian mother tongue often do not have any formal education in that language. The definition of the mother tongue as Italian covers, in fact, a great deal of variation in the spoken dialects that are, very often, not

mutually intelligible and may differ greatly from standard Italian. The level of literacy in the dialect among Italians is almost non-existent, since the language of formal education, both in Italy and in immigrant communities of various countries that have programs set up to foster language maintenance, is standard Italian. If the families of children in these communities are speakers of a dialect variant, the skills in that language develop in the area of oral communication.

If the instruments for measuring proficiency of bilingual children in both of their languages are to be identical in structure, then focussing on oracy, in this case, seemed to be the only option available.

S. Philips, in her study on language proficiency assessment of ethnic minority children (1983, 89-90), proposes a change of perspective in the methodologies used to assess linguistic competence, by emphasizing the importance of testing children's communicative skills in various domains rather than relying on a single model based on school curricula developed in view of middle-class children from the culturally dominant group. She thus envisions observation, participant observation and interviews as methods far more effective in assessing the

bilingual ethnic-minority child's communicative competence in both languages.

The set of tests, both in English and in Italian, consisted of a conversation with an interviewer, followed by the retelling of a short story they had been listening to in the target language. The tests were administered individually, in English only for the non-Italians, and in both languages for the Italian samples.

The testing in English took place in the school setting. The questions asked by the interviewer were geared to tap into the vocabulary and communicative competence in that context. The English proficiency test used in the research was developed by CALS and initially implemented in a Pilot Study in March-June, 1988.

The set of tests used to measure the level of proficiency in Italian was developed, for the purpose of this research, with the help of Professor Ian Pringle, adhering partially to the methods and design elaborated in 1988 by Professors Ian Pringle and Claudia Persi Haines.

For reasons that will be discussed below (see page 46), the proficiency test in Italian was administered during a visit in the children's home. The questions, in this case, focussed on the home environment and were based on

the communicative competence required in interactions in the mother tongue at home and in the ethnic community.

5. Data on the Italian subjects' socioeconomic background that was introduced as a control variable were collected through administering a short questionnaire (see Appendix 7) focussing on the parents' ethnic and linguistic background, level of education, profession, housing, and the combined annual family income.

The questionnaire, and even more so the observation of the home environment, proved to be a useful tool to reveal factors that might lead to a "mismatch" between the models provided by the wider societal context and the children's linguistic and behavioural patterns acquired in and reinforced by the home environment.

6. A complete set of data on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) scores of subjects in the first two groups (i.e., children of Italian ethnicity and their English-Canadian or other ethnic-minority counterparts selected from the same class) were obtained from the school.

The test was administered in January 1989. (Similar data were impossible to collect on children from the third group--that is, subjects participating in the Italian Heritage Language Program--since they were all attending

different schools which were not involved in the research and, thus, could not be asked to disclose confidential information.)

The Classroom Setting

Classroom observations were recorded in a journal. The implementation of the research instruments outlined above was preceded by a three-week period of general observation in class, serving a two-fold purpose: as an adjustment period for the children towards the researcher and as a fairly unengaged time for the researcher with no specific constraints on what, whom and when to observe, resulting, consequently, in impressionistic yet very useful perceptions of the classroom environment.

This period was also conceived to be the time for establishing personal relationships with the individuals in the target groups (as it happened, such a relationship was established with the whole class!) that would alleviate their fears of an unknown person and remove the emotional and mental blocks that might prevent communication in a testing situation, especially if it is perceived by the subjects as part of their regular school activity, and the person administering the test is identified with an authority figure such as the teacher. The observations

usually took place during a whole morning or afternoon session, depending on the availability of the teacher and regardless of the subject matter in which the children were instructed. The only restrictive criterion was the fact that the school designated by the Board for this research was implementing its French-English (half immersion) program in such a way that the children received instruction in one particular language on alternate days. Since an exploration of the implications of bilingualism on linguistic and academic achievements in French classes was beyond the scope of this research, I observed the children in their English class only, and therefore only on alternate days, working always with the same teacher. The observations were recorded in a journal on a daily basis.

Before starting my visits to the class, I had a few informal meetings with the school principal, where logistic matters were discussed. The class to participate in the research was determined by him at the very beginning of the school year, on the basis of criteria outlined in the research proposal that I had discussed with him. During our last meeting, he provided me with more information on the teacher, characterizing her as a quiet person who prefers the teacher-directed approach to less structured

classroom activities, in order to build systematic work habits and to maintain disciplinary standards.

Both my observations and the TIES results have verified the validity of these comments and clearly demonstrated development of communicative skills in English, with a correlation between communicative patterns in the classroom setting involving the frequency and character of teacher-to-pupil, pupil-to-teacher and pupil-to-pupil interactions and the extent of use of patterns and vocabulary acquired in this context in both referential and non-referential settings.

While the atmosphere in the class was very quiet and task-oriented, the children's opportunities to engage in conversations promoting the development of communicative and social interactional skills in English were limited to the minimum, and consisted mainly of asking for help from the teacher or responding to questions related to the instructional material, during controlled group practice. Class time, in general, was divided into two main segments: a brief instructional presentation followed by an equally brief, teacher-directed group practice (actively involving about one third of the pupils at any given time), and a longer period of independent seatwork, which was utilized by the teacher to correct previously done exercises.

However, assistance--if asked for--was still available. In addition, in Language Arts classes there was a period dedicated to reading in teacher-directed groups. Pupils in the class were divided into three groups for this purpose, according to their perceived level of reading competence and ability.

During my first visit, I observed the class silently. Since, as I had anticipated, this was not the best way to become familiar with the children, I offered my help as an assistant to the teacher. Instead, she allowed me to take a group of four or five children to the back of the classroom to introduce myself and have them talk about themselves (this usually occurred during the period of independent seatwork and required about 45-50 minutes per group). I told the children that I wanted to learn about the languages they spoke, and asked them to talk about themselves: their families, their friendships in the school and in the neighbourhood, their preferences as to subjects, and their interests in general. The qualitative data that I collected in this manner yielded information on the children's background and ethnicity, and on their attitudes towards them, on the one hand, and on behavioural and socializing patterns in the school, on the other.

In addition, the informal character of these gatherings allowed me to observe the variation in discourse patterns as a function of language socialization experiences acquired in the culture of origin. Since the conversations were not pre-structured in nature and were, to a certain extent, "out of context", I was able to establish a relaxed atmosphere in which even the most withdrawn child felt at ease and, in fact, eager to talk.

Children were also allowed to bring their workbooks to their meetings with me and to do the exercises that had been assigned by the teacher collectively. However, some of them still preferred to work alone, claiming that the pace set to accommodate everyone's needs was too slow for them. This, eventually, led to the breaking up of the group, and those who would have benefitted the most from a collective-cooperative effort had to resort to asking for assistance from me following the well-established routine of work habits they were conditioned to.

The total class population consisted of 33 pupils. More than half (about 55%) of the children were from an ethnic minority background, not counting the "hidden" cases of ethnic minority origin where either one parent or grandparent(s) represented a minority culture. One third (11 children) constituted the Italian group in the class.

The gender distribution in this group was similar to that of the total class population: five females, six males versus 16 to 17 in the whole class.

After the first week of observations, I asked the teacher to identify the children of Italian ethnicity as low, average, and high achievers. Subsequently, inferences could be drawn between gender and academic achievement as perceived by the teacher: only 20% (one individual) of the female population in the Italian group fell into the category of average achievers, while the rest (four individuals) were identified as high achievers; among the male students in the same group, 68% (four individuals) were placed in the low-achieving category, with the remaining two individuals being identified as average achievers.

Another relevant correlation was discovered between the teacher's informal ratings of students of Italian origin and the frequency and intensity of use of the mother tongue at home as reported by the children. Those identified as low achievers, with no exception, declared themselves to be fluent speakers of Italian, and their identification with Italian ethnicity was much more apparent than that of their counterparts in the groups of average and high achievers.

However, at this point, I did not have any data on their proficiency in Italian.

Another remarkable difference between the perceived low achievers and the rest of the Italian group was that the former were more disposed to engage in conversation and, on average, were more talkative, whereas their reading and problem-solving skills, as observed through their elaboration of assigned exercises, were perceptibly lower. Their sociolinguistic skills related to interpersonal communication seemed to be much more developed than their literacy skills related to cognitive-academic functions.

In recent psycholinguistic research, these two aspects of language proficiency appear to be related, in fact, to two different functions (Cummins 1979; 1984, 54,56). However, we can assume that this dichotomy prevails only in certain types of societies. In various (mainly Southern) Italian local dialects--which serve as the linguistic-cultural background for most of the children under scrutiny--oracy has a major role in perpetuating cultural traditions and educating the young. The literacy-oriented criteria presently applied throughout school curricula in Canada to measure the development of cognitive skills may not address the needs of pupils with such backgrounds.

Ten children from the class were assigned to a special-practice group in the Language Arts directed by a resource teacher. Four students in this group were children of Italian ethnicity perceived by the teacher as low achievers. Day after day, while the rest of the class was involved in independent seatwork, their names were called out by the teacher and they had to leave the classroom to work in a special group.

CHAPTER II

DISCUSSION OF THE RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS AND PRELIMINARY ANALYSES OF DATA

In this chapter, details of administering the various research instruments are discussed, as well as preliminary analyses of the data, some qualitative and some quantitative. The aim was to identify core variables that appeared to lead to conclusions directly related to the major hypotheses of the study. Some of these core variables, where numbers warrant, were then subjected to statistical analyses reported in the next chapter.

The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire

The Sociolinguistic Questionnaire contained 85 items, divided into four sections to be administered to the total population of subjects. The whole Questionnaire is reproduced in Appendix 1.

Questions in the first segment (A) referred to personal data and background information, including the place of birth of the parents and grandparents, family size and structure, languages spoken in the home, parents' occupation, etc. These might have influenced the patterns in linguistic choices and the development of language

skills in the mother tongue and in English, if, for instance, the mother had been working outside the home in the child's preschool years.

The second section (B) contained questions on the extent and character of literacy-related domains in the child's two languages.

The third section (C) was intended to reveal the linguistic patterns in various social contexts. Children were asked to indicate the frequency of use of each of their languages in different interactions using a four-point ratio scale.

Finally, the fourth section (D) was designed to yield qualitative data on the subjects' attitudes towards and perceptions of their ethnic identity.

The administration of the questionnaire started during the last week of November when I already had well-established contacts with the children. The questionnaire was administered to individuals on a one-to-one basis, in the form of an oral interview. Although these interviews were conducted in the school setting, the children were taken out of the classroom for the duration of the interviewing process. The length of time required to administer all the questions varied from 30 to 45 minutes. In some instances, data reported by the children in the

first section (A) were incomplete or invalid, especially in questions requiring data on parents' and grandparents' origin, a phenomenon that might be considered as an indicator that the parents perceived their ethnicity to be of low social status and therefore, not to be discussed openly with their children.

Another common aspect was represented by the homogeneity of the data reported by subjects of ethnic minority origin. Although at least 90% of them reported both their mother tongue and English as being spoken in the home, the dominant language, as revealed by section C, was invariably English, while the domains of their first languages were limited to communication with the grandparents and with other, mostly elderly, relatives.

However, in five cases out of 22 in the two Italian samples, the ethnic-minority language predominated in communicative interactions with the father, whereas the predominance of Italian in interactions with the mother was reported only in two cases, first, by a child who was living with the mother since the parents had been separated, and, second, where the mother was an adult at the time of coming to Canada. This fact shows a correlation not only with the length of time spent in Canada by the parent (for some reason, male parents seem

to have arrived at a later point in their childhood or early adulthood than their female counterparts), but also with gender distribution as a function of language shift and cultural assimilation (Chambers and Trudgill 1980).

The use of Italian in social interactions outside the home was reported to be very limited and occurred mainly during visits to the Italian Church, when communicating with elderly members of the community.

Important areas for future use of Italian (reported in section D) were identified as the home, the school and when interacting with friends, by five subjects; the home and when travelling abroad, by five subjects; when travelling abroad and when interacting with friends, by two subjects; four individuals included finding a job as an important area of communication in Italian, and six individuals identified the home as the only area where they would use Italian as adults. (One of them happened to be the child with the highest level of proficiency in Italian in both Italian groups.) Interestingly enough, although a fairly high number--seven subjects--included interactions with friends among the important areas of future use of Italian, the language spoken with peers and with younger relatives in all sociolinguistic settings was invariably English (as reported in section C). However, patterns of socialization

with peers show a clear preference for children of Italian ethnicity.

As for awareness of the dialects spoken by the parents and/or by the grandparents, and of the difference, in general, between the concept of standard Italian and the dialect, in the first Italian group only two children were able to successfully identify the dialect(s) spoken in their homes: one of them a fluent speaker of one of the Southern-Italian dialects who had never attended a Heritage Language Program, the other (the above-mentioned child with the highest proficiency level) a fluent speaker of standard Italian, consciously raised in that language by the parents, participating in a Heritage Language Program. Both emphasized the fact that the use of the dialects by their parents was restricted to communication with close relatives and friends. Among the remaining nine subjects in the first group, seven were not aware of the difference between the various spoken dialects and standard Italian, and two of them had only some very vague sense of it.

In the second Italian group, where subjects were selected directly from participants in a Heritage Language Program, the level of awareness of their dialectal background was somewhat higher: four individuals knew

exactly what dialects were spoken by their families; four of them were aware of differences between the dialect and standard Italian (although the concepts themselves were unclear for them), but could not specify the dialect(s) spoken in their homes; only three individuals were not aware at all of any difference whatsoever.

Based on information received directly from the parents, I identified nine different dialects spoken in the homes of the 22 Italian subjects. The variation of local dialects in the larger community is, presumably, even higher. It was this fact that promoted the development of a pidginized community language to facilitate communication among members of a mixed group of people with various dialectal backgrounds and with little or no education in standard Italian.

As language shift towards the superstratum becomes more intense, the transfer from English will affect more and more linguistic features. Considering the limited functions of, and the restricted linguistic input available for children in, the dialects spoken in the home, on the one hand, and the increasing level of pidginization in the community language on the other, we can assume that Italian as an ethnic minority language is, in fact, in the process of extinction.

Schumann (1978, op. cit. in Andersen 1983, 27) suggests that

Pidginization occurs when a language is restricted to communication of denotative referential information and is not used for integrative and expressive functions.

Andersen (1983, 17) identifies eight different language acquisition settings in bilingual communities, among which the last three are suggested as prevailing in the linguistic situation discussed above:

In an immigrant community (setting 6), social circumstances may promote an ethnic variety of the national language, on the one hand, or the lack of acquisition of family and community language. It is probably these same social factors that bring about language death (setting 7) and possibly language forgetting (setting 8).

The Attitudinal Test (Perceptions of Ethnic Diversity)

As stated earlier, the application of this type of testing was inspired by Lambert's "matched guise" technique (1967), used to elicit evaluations of speakers with various speech styles, accents, dialects and languages. In the original version of the test, subjects were asked to listen to voices of different speakers reading the same passage, and to evaluate them on 14 bipolar, six-point rating scales. The speech itself was produced by only one speaker, using

the "guises" of different languages or speech styles. In their study investigating the evaluative reactions of grade 6 French-Canadian female students to English- and French-Canadian speakers, Lambert, Frankel and Tucker (1966) found a correlation between the speaker's languages and the evaluation of personality traits, with negative attitudes towards the representative of the minority language.

In the modified version of the test which I developed, I recorded speech samples in English of six individuals, controlling for age, gender and accent characteristics. The reason for recording speech samples only in one language instead of using dialect variants of standard Italian versus standard Italian and English was that the test was going to be administered to all groups, including children of non-Italian ethnicity for whom the difference in status between the dialects and standard Italian would have been meaningless, so that the relevance of their judgements of such speakers for the purpose of identifying attitudes towards ethnic diversity would have been dubious. On the other hand, if I had used standard Italian versus English, the data obtained from subjects of various dialectal backgrounds could not reflect relevant perceptions of their ethnic identity.

All speakers were female, white, over 40 (with one

exception), and from various linguistic backgrounds representing six different speech characteristics in English. As for the occupational distribution, five of them were from the teaching profession and one in an administrative secretarial position. Speakers 1 and 2 had a similar linguistic background, however, they spoke English with differing accents. Speakers 3, 4, 5 and 6 represented, respectively, an English-Canadian, an Eastern-European, a British English and a French-Canadian background.

The speakers had been asked to describe three objects: a toy car, a toy bear and a doll, the descriptions adapted to the age level of the subjects. The speech samples were then separated according to the gender of the listeners-to-be; male subjects, in groups of eight, were asked to listen to speech samples referring to the first two objects (the car and the bear), while their female counterparts listened to the tape-recorded descriptions of the doll. All subjects were instructed to try to imagine the speakers on the basis of their voice and speech characteristics, instead of just concentrating on the content of the recordings, and subsequently, to evaluate their personality features and various attributes along the dimensions provided by the questionnaire. The tape

was stopped after each speech sample, and a five to ten minute period was allocated for the evaluation process.

The questionnaire itself (see Appendix 2) consisted of eight multiple choices and of six bipolar, three-point rating scales referring to the perceived intelligence level, height, friendliness, socioeconomic status and linguistic characteristics of the speaker to be evaluated.

While the amount of data that the questionnaire yielded required a computer analysis, a holistic overview based partially on observation of reactions during the administration of the test revealed that the Italian, the Eastern-European and the French-Canadian speakers had more positive evaluations from most students in terms of friendliness and affinity with the speakers' perceived social status, while the British English and the English-Canadian speakers were identified as being more strict, less friendly and poorer (being of a lower socio-economic status).

There were no outstanding differences between the evaluative reactions of male and female subjects, although female subjects were more successful in identifying the language of origin of individual speakers on the basis of their speech characteristics.

The Instructional Environment Scale (TIES)

This particular instrument was implemented in order to identify those influential factors of instruction that, in some cases, might work to the disadvantage of the ethnic minority child. The Instructional Environment Scale was implemented only with the Italian sample, mainly because it was crucial to obtain measurable data on the quality of their instructional environment, whereas comparable data on the control group in the same class were gathered during the observational period of three weeks that preceded the implementation of the research instruments, and partly because the length of time allocated to the various components in the research did not allow for the rather lengthy process of administering it to 22 other individuals. However, obtaining such data in the framework of a future study would be instrumental for revealing intergroup differences.

TIES, as described earlier, consists of 12 components dealing with various characteristics of the instructional environment, to be rated by the observer along dimensions provided by the Descriptors (a list of key factors to be considered in the rating process).

The implementation of TIES for each individual in the

main Italian sample involved four major steps:

- observation of the classroom environment and of the pupil's reactions to particular aspects of it, in a selected content area (Language Arts), and the parallel recording on the Data Record Form of the resulting perceptions;
- structured interviews conducted separately with the teacher and with the pupil, to reveal the extent of his/her understanding of the teacher's instructional goal and of the assigned tasks, and to identify areas where he/she experienced difficulty, on the one hand, and on the other to identify the teacher's expectations of the pupil and perceptions of his/her academic competence;
- compiling data in the Instructional Rating Form, by rating each of the 12 components on a four-point scale, measuring the previously obtained qualitative data against criteria of a highly effective instructional environment (4 meaning very much like the student's instruction, 3 somewhat, 2 not much like, and 1 not at all like the student's instruction);
- preparing an Instructional Rating Profile for each subject based on evaluations contained by the Instructional Rating Form (step three).

TIES was conceived as a clinical instrument to yield information on the quality of the learning environment of children experiencing behavioural-adaptive or curriculum-related difficulties. However, for the purpose of this study, TIES was implemented without modifications to a mixed group of low, average and high achievers and still proved to be a useful tool in identifying those aspects of the classroom environment that might be conducive to low academic achievement and language deficiency in English for a specific group of ethnic minority children.

On at least four measures, the individual ratings did not show remarkable differences (Instructional Presentation, Classroom Environment, Informed Feedback and Cognitive Emphasis). The uniformity in these scores could be attributed to the unmodified teaching style not explicitly addressing the individual student's needs, including patterns in teacher's feedback, on the one hand, and primarily task-oriented, limited interactional patterns conducive to an unvaried classroom environment, on the other.

Differences in ratings emerged in the areas reflecting the teacher's perceptions of individual students. Children that had been identified by the teacher as low achievers invariably had lower ratings on components such as Progress

Evaluation, Teacher Expectations, Relevant Practice, Academic Engaged Time and Student Understanding. During the practice period following the presentation of new material by the teacher, for instance, students perceived as high or average achievers were given more verbal and non-verbal cues to assist them in answering questions orally, and, on average, had more opportunities to participate actively in collective problem-solving tasks than their low-achieving counterparts, for whom help often consisted of providing the correct answer instead of questions or cues leading them through the cognitive processes required by the task in a step-by-step manner.

In the course of the research, salient intergroup differences in behavioural and speech characteristics were discovered between the low, average and high achievers, with a negative correlation between ratings in the five areas of the Instructional Environment where most individual differences emerged, on the one hand, and willingness to engage in oral communication and the ability to handle extracurricular testing situations, on the other.

Children in the average- and high-achieving groups showed similar tendencies in speech patterns and in linguistic characteristics; they felt more at ease in situations directly related to their regular school

Table 1

Mean scores on the total of 12 components of The Instructional Environment Scale, and on the five components where most differences were found, for the low-, average- and high-achieving subgroups in the main Italian sample. (The maximum obtainable score is four, showing a highly effective Instructional Environment.)

Subgroup	Mean scores on the total of 12 components	Mean scores on the 5 components with salient differences
Low achievers (N=4)	1.9	2.1
Average achievers (N=3)	2.4	2.6
High achievers (N=4)	2.9	3.5

activities and used vocabulary pertaining to that area of communication with a higher frequency. Although they were not reluctant to participate in the research, which implied leaving the classroom for a sometimes prolonged period of time, they did not welcome it excessively, either, and were very succinct when disclosing personal information or when¹ asked to share their personal views or experiences.

¹ The only exception in this respect was a child identified by the teacher as an average achiever based on his unsteady patterns of performance oscillating between low and high. The child proved to be exceptional not only because of the levels of maturity and acceptance of responsibility, exceeding those of his peers, but also on the account of his fluency and expressiveness both in standard Italian (a language in which he had been

Children in the low achieving group, on the other hand, were constantly seeking out opportunities to engage in a conversation with the researcher, both in the classroom and during recesses, and were sometimes redundantly talkative in the accounts of their home life and personal experiences.

Thus, the pupils in the low achieving Italian group in the elementary school class under scrutiny identified with their ethnicity more strongly than their counterparts in the average and high achieving groups. This stronger identity is also apparent on the level of interpersonal communication patterns; it implies a lack of the tradition of literacy that characterizes most Western cultures. For these pupils, discriminatory teacher's attitudes and perceptions prevail that are in turn inspired by the implicitly imposed value system of the group(s) in power.

Language Proficiency Tests in English

This set of tests, including an oral interview and a story-retelling task, as well as the evaluative criteria were

consciously raised and reinforced by his parents) and in English. In the interview testing for oral competence in English, he outperformed some of the high achievers on the basis of the extent of vocabulary and grammatical correctness.

developed and field-tested by the Centre for Applied Language Studies at Carleton University, in the framework of a pilot research project investigating a number of factors as potential causes of academic difficulties of bilingual children of Italian ethnicity representing three age groups in selected elementary-school classes. Rating criteria of oral proficiency in both tasks included discourse competence, fluency, vocabulary range, grammar² and second language interference.

For the testing in English, the subjects were taken out of their classroom for individual interviewing. Since I wanted to create an atmosphere as friendly and relaxed as possible, I started out with some informal, non-contextual questions or remarks inviting the children to "warm up" before starting the actual testing process. Both the interview and the story retelling were intended to be tape recorded for the purpose of future analyses; so I let them experiment with the tape recorder and the microphone while engaging them in a conversation about their previous experiences of public interviews.

2 For a detailed description of the methods and for the analyses of research findings, see: Taaffe, R., I. Pringle, L. Clarke, "Pilot Study of Ethnic (Italian) Children in Selected Classes of the Carleton Roman Catholic Separate School Board." A Report to the Executive, Ottawa, 1988.

The interview itself consisted of eight basic, sequential questions (see Appendix 3) about the scholastic environment and school-related activities, allowing, however, for a variation in length and in question content according to the personality and areas of interest of the individual pupils.

Following the interview, the subjects were invited to listen to a tape-recorded short story narrated by a young woman with a standard Canadian accent. According to the procedures followed during the field testing, the children were asked to listen to the story through earphones, which not only elicited more concentration, but facilitated the following retelling task psychologically by removing the lesson-reproduction-control (evaluation) aspect of it (the children did not know whether I was familiar with the story or not). By the same token, to avoid mechanical repetition and to render the story-telling situation more authentic and purposeful, a second child (in most cases, the non-Italian counterpart of the Italophone child) joined us as an auditor. Then, this child, after being interviewed, listened to a story, equal in length and narrated by the same person. Both stories contained a number of crucial elements--the description of the setting and of the characters, the plot and the conclusion -whose presence or

absence in the re-telling could be considered in the rating of comprehension.

In the preliminary evaluation of the data obtained, I compared the scores of individual subjects with their status as low, average and high achievers.

The results were consistent both with the teacher's informal ratings and with scores in the CTBS total-language component for most pupils in the main Italian sample and in the non-Italian control group.

The findings for the second control group (children of Italian ethnicity receiving instruction in standard Italian in the framework of a heritage language program) were similar. Here, however, I had to rely solely on informal reports on academic performance provided by the parents and by the subjects themselves, as formal data were not available.

In the main Italian sample, low achievers scored below the mid-point on most measures in both tasks, the only anomalous case being that of a child who scored high on the measures of discourse competence and fluency in the interview task. One of the three average achievers scored exceptionally low in the interview task, but obtained scores slightly above the average in the story retelling; a second child identified as an average achiever obtained

excellent or high scores on all measures in both tasks, while the third scored at the mid-point on all measures in the interview task and obtained similar scores in the story retelling.

The high achievers--with one exception--scored high on all measures in both tasks. The child representing an anomalous case obtained poor ratings on all measures, except for grammaticality, in the interview task, and average scores in the story-retelling subtest.

As for the non-Italian sample, two of the four children in the low-achieving subgroup obtained scores around the mid-point on all measures in the interview task, and scored mediocre on measures in the retelling task. The remaining two subjects scored mediocre on all scales in both tasks.

The scores obtained by the second subgroup in both tasks were consistent with their status as average achievers.

In the third, high-achieving subgroup, two of the four subjects scored at the mid-point on most measures, except for grammaticality where their scores were above average. The remaining two subjects scored high on most measures in both tasks.

As stated earlier, for the second Italian sample no CTBS scores or teacher's ratings were available; thus, self-reported data and parents' assessments were used to

construct the control variable of academic achievement. In this group, the two perceived low-achieving subjects obtained mediocre or mediocre-to-average scores on all measures.

Two of the five children in the average-achieving subgroup scored as their perceived academic status would predict in both tasks; two subjects scored below the mid-point on all measures, while one obtained high scores on all scales in both tasks.

Three of the four perceived high achievers scored high; one scored low to mediocre on most measures, except for grammaticality where she scored at the mid-point.

Although both the interview and the story-retelling tasks were intended to tap into oracy-related language skills, the retelling task seemed to be a better predictor of scholastic achievement than was the interview, whose parameters yielded more free-flowing speech, less restricted by the context of the task. For the first Italian group, in seven of the 11 cases the results in this latter task correlated positively with the measures of scholastic achievement, namely, the CTBS scores and the informal evaluation by the teacher. Of these seven subjects, three had been identified as high, one as average and three as low achievers. Weak positive correlations

were identified, however, for one subject in the high-achieving, two in the average and one in the low-achieving subgroup. As it turned out, all four subjects identified as high achievers had a weak or somewhat weak linguistic background in Italian, whereas their low-achieving counterparts--with no exception--featured a strong dialectal background.

For the non-Italian control group, the respective number of subjects with a positive correlation between scores obtained in the English interview test and the measures of academic achievement was, again, seven, with a distribution pattern of two-three-two among the high-, average- and low-achieving categories. The remaining subjects, two in the high-achieving, none in the average and two in the low-achieving subgroups, scored either lower or higher than expected.

In the second Italian control group, three of the four perceived high achievers scored high; one scored low. The scores correlated positively with the identification of two subjects as average and two as low achievers (as reported by the parents and by the subjects themselves). One perceived average achiever scored high, while two scored below the average on measures in the interview tasks.

(Incidentally, eight subjects in this group featured a strong or somewhat strong dialectophone background.)

Although the overall findings indicate a positive correlation between scores in the English testing and formal or informal ratings of scholastic achievements, the occurrence of anomalous cases suggests that more differences might emerge in research conducted with larger samples.

Table 2 summarizes the correlations between ratings of academic achievement (either formal or informal) and the composite scores indicated as high, average and low in the two components of the English language proficiency test for the three samples.

Table 2

The distribution of mean scores as low, average and high in the two English subtests by scholastic achievement of subjects in the three samples.

Samples	English Interview Task			English Story- Retelling Task		
	High	Average	Low	High	Average	Low
<u>First Italian Sample</u>						
High achievers (N=4)	3		1	3	1	
Average achievers (N=3)	1	1	1	1	2	
Low achievers (N=4)		1	3		1	3
<u>Non-Italian Sample</u>						
High achievers (N=4)	2	2		2	2	
Average achievers (N=3)		3			3	
Low achievers (N=4)		2	2			4

Table 2 (cont'd)

	English Interview Task			English Story- Retelling Task		
	High	Average	Low	High	Average	Low
<u>Second Italian Sample</u>						
High achievers (N=4)	3		1	3		1
Average achievers (N=5)	1	2	2	1	4	
Low achievers (N=2)			2			2

Language Proficiency Test in Italian

The fundamental methodology applied in this segment of the research had been conceived by Professors Ian Pringle and Claudia Persi Haines, for the purpose of the previously outlined pilot study of Italian children (Taaffe, Pringle, Clarke, 1988). However, the fact that the two-fold research instrument thus developed relied mainly on the presumed proficiency in standard Italian of the subjects seemed to have a hindering effect, failing to tap into the children's primary languages that in many instances differed from the standard variety used both by the interviewer and by the speaker in the tape-recorded story, as stated by the principal investigators in the assessment of the Italian language proficiency test they had applied.

The point of this part of the test was not to find out whether or not the children could handle standard spoken Italian (in fact, there is good reason to think that most of them should not be

expected to do so), but simply to find out whether or not they could function in some version of Italian, and if so, how well.

The fact that the interviewer spoke only standard Italian...may have had two effects: to make it less easy for those children who spoke only a local dialect to understand her..., or to make those students who were aware of the difference between their Italian and hers reluctant to talk....

(Taaffe, Pringle, Clarke 1988, 26)

In light of this post-hoc discovery, the Italian test was revised and two measures were implemented to avoid the occurrence of a similar bias:

- a speaker of the local variety of Italian--a so-called "community language" featuring non-standard (often non-Italian) morphology and a high frequency of English loanwords--was selected to conduct interviews with the subjects, within pre-set parameters;
- for the second part of the testing, short stories were recorded in seven different dialects of Italian in order to accommodate the children's primary languages (as identified by the parents).

Most people chosen as possible candidates for story telling (among the selecting criteria was the exclusion of members of the children's immediate family, as a potential bias) were not only reluctant to use their dialects deemed to be inferior to the standard variant, but also felt uneasy with the task of reciting a story without the presence of a live

audience. Where speakers of small local lects were unavailable, larger regional lects have been used for recording. The dialects recorded for the story-retelling task included two major variants of calabrese, sicilian (regional variant), abruzzese, molisano, napoletano and parmigiano (local variants). In some instances, where the mother and the father of the subject spoke different dialects, either standard Italian or both dialects were used when administering the story-retelling test. As well, standard Italian was used when a child failed to comprehend the story recorded in a dialect.

The frequencies with which each dialect and/or standard Italian have been listened to for the story-retelling test were as follows: calabrese 1 (9); calabrese 2 (1); abruzzese (4); molisano (1); napoletano (1); parmigiano (1); standard Italian (11). On four of the 11 occasions, the standard variant was used alone; once along with ³parmigiano; and in six instances with calabrese 1 and 2.

3 These numbers--although far too small to substantiate any conclusions--might suggest that the impact of factors conducive to the extinction of a particular lect within the immigrant community might be greater for some dialects than for others. In order to verify the validity of such a hypothesis, an equal--and far greater--number of speakers should be tested for each dialect.

By looking at these figures, one might also assume that speakers of the calabrese dialect are present in greater numbers than speakers of other lects within the Italophone

Both the interview and the story-retelling part of the test were administered to the total population in the Italian samples (22 subjects). The testing itself took place in the children's home; I assumed that they would feel more at ease displaying skills in a language whose domains are often restricted to that setting. Prior to the actual visit, appointments had been set up with the families by the interviewer (a speaker of a local community variant of Italian).

Contrary to the privacy of the setting during the administration of the English test, where only the researcher and a maximum of two subjects had been present at any time, in this endeavour, children were often assisted, coached, cajoled into responding by the whole family, including grandparents and siblings. According to my observations, the presence of an audience had negative rather than positive consequences. On some occasions, the subjects felt pressured into production, while on others they remained silent as an act of defiance against the

community of the region. This assumption, however, cannot be concluded without an ethnographic study of the entire Italian population.

Such analyses are beyond the scope of the present study. I quote the numbers purely for the purpose of yielding information on the linguistic character of the Italian samples.

"intruder." It seems, nevertheless, that selecting the home offered the best solution available for similar testing purposes.

The testing procedure started with the administration of the interview task by the speaker of the local community language. Preliminary parameters set up for the interview included the following:

- the interview should be conducted in a conversational, informal manner, using the "community version" of Italian (that is, the local variety of Italian spoken by members of the immigrant community with varying dialectal backgrounds);
- questions leading to yes/no answers should be avoided, if possible. The objective was to elicit as large a speech sample as possible from the children. The order of the questions could be changed if need be, and additional questions could be asked, depending on the disposition of the subject;
- the interviewer was to start speaking "community" Italian as soon as she/he met the child, so as to avoid an automatic switch to English.

The primary outline of the interview consisted of 16 open-ended questions focussing on the children's families, the home environment and related activities (see Appendix 4).

However, the number and--to some extent--the content of the questions could be varied according to the individual speakers' linguistic and psychological characteristics.

Procedures followed for the story-retelling part were similar to those in the same section of the English testing: children were invited by the interviewer to listen to a tape-recorded story through earphones, either in their presumed dialect or in standard Italian, or both; and, subsequently, to retell the story to the interviewer. Descriptors of oral proficiency in both tasks included the language used (Italian, dialect, or English); linguistic competence; grammaticality; vocabulary range; anglicisms; French loans and dialectal interference (where applicable).

The Italian test revealed no major intergroup differences between the two Italian samples; that is, children in the first sample (with only five subjects participating in a heritage language program) were not outperformed on most measures by their counterparts in the second sample, all receiving formal instruction in standard Italian.

While the scores on measures such as language used and comprehension showed some variation, on other measures highly similar patterns emerged for individual subjects in both groups. Generally, the subjects' level of

comprehension in both tasks proved to be considerably higher than their functional competence. The scores for comprehension were highest in the interview task, the mean being 2.9 on a 5-point scale, across the two groups. In the story-retelling task, the mean comprehension score allocated to the 18 subjects listening to a story in a dialect was 2.7, while the lowest mean comprehension score (2) was that of children (N=11) listening to a story in standard Italian.

The distribution of mean scores on linguistic competence using, again, a 5-point scale, was 2.38 for the interview task across the two groups; 1.77 for the story retelling in the dialect; and 1.18--almost non-existent--for the same task in standard Italian.

These results, along with the fact that 14 of the 22 subjects resorted to English in the story-retelling task, indicate that both the standard and the dialect variants of Italian are, in most instances, no longer actively used by younger speakers, especially in non-referential linguistic domains

Although the scores on the measure of linguistic competence were not significantly higher in the interview than in the story-retelling task, it should be noted that 18 subjects used, or at least attempted to use, the highly

pidginized community variant--mainly with a denotative referential function--in their responses to the interviewer's questions.

Among the descriptors, linguistic competence and vocabulary range correlated positively, whereas grammaticality correlated negatively with the frequency of anglicisms, in both tasks. The occurrence of French loans was low in the interview task (no French loans were detected in 15 of the 22 interview samples, with the rest scoring low), and even more so in the story-retelling part where the nature of the task triggered less code switching (18 children did not use any French loans whatsoever; the remaining subjects scored low, with one exception. The exception was a child with virtually non-existent linguistic competence but fairly good comprehension skills in standard Italian who, in a desperate attempt to reproduce the story as closely to the original as possible, resorted to an English-French mixtilanguage.

Almost identical frequencies were detected for dialect interference (16 speech samples in the interview and 17 in the story-retelling task did not feature any dialect interference; for the rest, the frequencies were either low or occasional). It should be added that such interference

occurred on a lexical level only, whereas anglicisms appeared on all levels of linguistic structure.

The results of the Italian test showed virtually no correlation with those of the English test when compared on an individual level. The only slight relationship between the two tests emerged on the measure of vocabulary range, but the in-depth statistical analysis of the scores showed a very weak correlation. This result, thus, calls into question Cummins' (1978) hypothesis of interdependence.

CTBS Scores

The grade-equivalent scores in the Canadian Test of Basic Skills were made available by the school for the entire class population. The subtests comprised the areas of vocabulary, reading, language skills in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, usage, problem solving, and mathematic skills.

For comparative purposes, averages for Italian and non-Italian children were tabulated in vocabulary, reading, total language and total math subtests. To reveal intragroup differences, averages for the Italian subgroups were calculated as well.

Children in the non-Italian control group performed slightly better on all measures, except for the vocabulary

subtest where the average score for the Italian group was higher (although all the differences were insignificant).

Interestingly enough, when comparing the high-, average- and low-achieving subgroups of Italian and non-Italian students, the only subgroup to outperform the non-Italians of the same category were the low-achieving Italian children, on the measure of competence in vocabulary.

The surprisingly low scores in reading competence and total math skills of the average-achieving Italian subgroup might be partially due to the unavailability of data on the complete set of tests for one subject who was absent during each testing session, and to a missing score in the total math subtest for one of the remaining two subjects.

Except for this deviation, the results in scores were consistent with the teacher's ratings of low, average and high achievers in the Italian sample.

Table 3

Mean grade-equivalent scores on CTBS subtests for Italian and non-Italian subjects

	Vocabulary	Reading	Total Language	Total Math
Italians (N=10)	3.32	3.06	3.37(N=9)	3.16(N=9)
Non-Italian control Group (N=10)	3.25	3.65	3.69(N=9)	3.3(N=9)

Table 4

Mean grade-equivalent scores on CTBS subtests for the low-, average- and high-achieving subgroups of the Italian and non-Italian samples

	Vocabulary	Reading	Total Language	Total Math
<u>Italian Sample</u>				
High Achievers (N=4)	3.87	4.34	4.39	3.75
Average Achievers (N=2)	3.44	1.86	3.03	2.68(N=1)
Low Achievers (N=4)	2.72	2.39	2.24(N=3)	2.69
<u>Non-Italian Sample</u>				
High Achievers (N=4)	3.93	4.59	4.49	3.83
Average Achievers (N=2)	3.75	3.91	3.70	3.65(N=1)
Low Achievers (N=4)	2.32	2.58	2.61(N=3)	2.68

The Socioeconomic Questionnaire

As a control variable, a short questionnaire was administered to the parents of children in the Italian samples. This questionnaire yielded information on the families' ethnic and linguistic background, the parents' level of education, profession(s), housing and combined annual income. Similar data were not available for the non-Italian sample, as the administration of the questionnaire took place during the home visits undertaken

to obtain speech samples in Italian from the subjects involved.

Of the 22 respondents across the two samples, 19 indicated that their mother tongue, as well as that of their spouses, was Italian. In three families (one in the main sample and two in the control group), the mother tongue of one parent was either French or English, while that of their spouses was Italian. Where both parents indicated Italian as their mother tongue, a mismatch between the dialects spoken emerged in eight cases (six in the main sample and two in the control group). None of the respondents reported standard Italian as their mother tongue.

As for birthplace, in Sample 1, four mothers were born in Canada, six in Italy and one in the U.S.A. All fathers were born in Italy. In Sample 3, that is, in the Italian control group, three of the mothers were born in Canada and eight were born in Italy, which was the birthplace of all⁴ the fathers in this group as well.

4 Incidentally, on this variable data were also available for the non-Italian sample, as they were reported by the children: seven mothers in this group were born in Canada; one in Mexico; two in Hungary; and one in Yugoslavia. Among the fathers, seven were born in Canada; one in England; one in Poland; and one in Yugoslavia. The country of birth of one father was unverified.

In order to facilitate the analysis of data on the parents' highest level of education, five major categories were set after the pertinent information had been collected: grade 8/9; grade 12/13; two years of post-secondary education; three years of college; and three years of university.

As a general statement, it can be concluded that the mother's highest level of education was somewhat superior to that of the father, in both groups; and that more mothers in Sample 1 featured education exceeding grade 8/9 than did mothers in Sample 3.

For the variable on parents' occupation, data reported by the respondents were classified in four major categories: unskilled; semi-skilled; skilled; and non-manual. In Sample 1, the majority of the mothers--six persons--performed non-manual jobs; the remaining categories (semi-skilled and skilled), were each allocated to one respondent. Three of the mothers worked at home as housewives. On the other hand, six of the fathers in the same sample held jobs that fell into the "skilled" category; three performed non-manual jobs; the "unskilled and "semi-skilled" categories featured one respondent each.

A similar pattern emerged for Sample 3, the Italian control group: seven fathers worked in jobs classified as

Table 5

Crosstabulations of the fathers' highest level of education by sample

Father's highest level of education	Sample 1 (N=11)	Sample 2 (N=11)	Sample 3 (N=11)
Grade 8	5	1	3
Grade 12/13	2		3
3 years college	1		1
1 year university	1		
3 years university			1
4 years university	1		
Ph.D.			1
unverified	1	10	2

Table 6

Crosstabulations of the mothers' highest level of education by sample

Mother's highest level of education	Sample 1 (N=11)	Sample 2 (N=11)	Sample 3 (N=11)
Grade 8			4
Grade 12/13	6		6
2 years college	1		
3 years college	1		
3 years university	2		1
unverified	1	11	

"skilled"; two held non-manual jobs, while two persons fell into the "semi-skilled" category. The distribution among the four categories of the mothers' occupations in this group was the following: four non-manual; one skilled; one semi-skilled; and two unskilled. Three respondents worked as housewives. (See Tables 10 and 11, pp. 69-70.)

Consistent with the pattern that emerged for the parents' educational levels in both groups, in general more mothers than fathers worked in socially more prestigious non-manual occupations; however, the respective number of female respondents in the latter category was lower in the control group. Comparative analyses of data reported for education and occupations suggest that parents in Sample 3 generally had fewer years of formal education and worked in socially less prestigious positions. (These differences, however, might be considered statistically insignificant,⁵ given the small number of respondents in each sample.)

The questionnaire also yielded information on the combined annual income of the families in the Italian samples. For this variable, the following categories were established: \$10,000-\$15,000; \$20,000-\$30,000; \$30,000-\$40,000; and over \$40,000 per annum. (See Table 7.)

5 For the variable on parents' occupations, data were available for the non-Italian sample (Sample 2), as well, reported by the children in the respective section of the sociolinguistic questionnaire. In this group, the distribution of the mothers' occupation featured a pattern very similar to that in the main Italian sample (Sample 1): six mothers held non-manual jobs; one fell into the "skilled", and one into the "unskilled" category. Three mothers were working in the house as housewives. A different pattern emerged, however, for the fathers' occupational distribution: six of them worked in non-manual jobs, which was the highest number of male respondents in this category, across the three samples. Two fathers held

Table 7

Crosstabulation of combined annual family income, by samples 1 and 3

	Combined Income				
	\$10,000- 15,000	\$20,000- 30,000	\$30,000- 40,000	over \$40,000	No Response
Sample 1 (N=10)		1	2	6	1
Sample 3 (N=11)	1	3	4	3	

For the main Italian sample (Sample 1), the measures of academic achievement of the subjects (i.e., CTBS scores and teacher's evaluations) were matched against the socioeconomic status of the respective families. For this purpose, categories such as low-middle class (LMC), middle class (MC), and upper-middle class (UMC) were established, based on the above-discussed data reported by the parents, relative to education, profession and combined family income. The introduction of this control variable was induced by the assumption of a relationship between social status and teacher's perceptions, as discussed by Trueba (1989, 15), who states that

semi-skilled jobs; one fell into the "skilled" category. The occupation of two fathers was unverified, as the information requested was not known to the children.

In schools...the culture of the middle- and upper-middle-class families may determine...the achievement expectations of teachers...and/or the overall access to resources and information required to succeed in school.

In the sample under scrutiny (Sample 1), all high-achieving subjects featured either a middle-class or an upper-middle-class background, similar to the average achievers. Differences emerged between these and the low-achieving subgroup, where three of the four subjects fell into the LMC category. Children of a lower socioeconomic background may well experience hardships that prevent them from performing in the school according to their actual abilities, or they may have restricted occasions to acquire non-referential linguistic codes. On the other hand, by placing children into neat categories on the basis of social class, schools and teachers may help their own self-fulfilling prophecies to take full effect.

Immigrant children from middle and upper classes, regardless of their particular linguistic and cultural backgrounds, seem to adjust faster to modern industrial settings than their lower income...counterparts.

Some scholars believe that children of upper-middle and middle class families tend to reach higher educational levels, to network successfully, and to hold power....

Undoubtedly, poverty and lower income status have clear implications for participation in educational institutions....

Perhaps income determines not only the knowledge and experiences of children but also the way in which these children are treated in public institutions.

(Trueba 1989, 14-15)

CHAPTER III

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

In a preliminary assessment of data, core variables that were directly related to the initial hypothesis and/or seemed to lead to conclusions were selected for in-depth statistical analyses. These analyses are reported below in the following sequence:

1. Sociolinguistic questionnaire (33 subjects; Samples 1, 2 and 3)
2. Canadian Test of Basic Skills (22 subjects; Samples 1 and 2)
3. English language proficiency test (33 subjects; Samples 1, 2 and 3)
4. Italian language proficiency test (22 subjects; Samples 1 and 3)
5. Attitudinal test (33 subjects; Samples 1, 2 and 3)
6. The Instructional Environment Scale (11 subjects in Sample 1).

Analyses of Data Reported by the Subjects in Response to the Sociolinguistic Questionnaire

The language spoken in the home at the time of the interview is examined by sample in Table 8. No statistical difference emerged between the three samples on this

measure. In Sample 1, that is the main Italian group, of the 11 subjects, five reported English and six Italian.

In the second, non-Italian sample, six subjects indicated English; two indicated French, and the remaining three indicated an ethnic-minority language, namely Spanish, Polish and Philippino.

In Sample 3 (subjects selected among participants in an Italian heritage language program), five respondents indicated English, five Italian, and one French as the primary language spoken in the home.

Table 8

Crosstabulation of the language spoken at home at the present by sample.

	English	Italian	French	Spanish	Polish	Philippino
S 1	5	6				
S 2	6		2	1	1	1
S 3	5	5	1			

Chi-square: 13.76136

Significance: 0.1842

The chi-square test comparing the frequency in each cell was $\chi^2(10)=13.76$ ($p < 0.1842$), indicating that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups. In all three Samples, the number of respondents reporting English as the home language was high enough that

the effect of having Italian as the home language (in Samples 1 and 3) could not be said to be statistically significant.

Table 9, which examines the first languages spoken by the subjects in early childhood, is more revealing.

Table 9a

Crosstabulation of the first language spoken in early childhood by sample

	English	Italian	French	Dialect
Sample 1	4	3		4
Sample 2	10		1	
Sample 3	1	2		8

$$\chi^2(6) = 21.20; p < 0.001$$

In Sample 1, four of the subjects indicated English, three standard Italian, and four a dialect version of Italian, as their first languages in early childhood.

In Sample 2, the non-Italian control group, 10 of the 11 subjects indicated English as their first language, and one indicated French. Of the 11 subjects in Sample 3--the Italian control group--only one spoke English in early childhood; two spoke standard Italian; the remaining eight subjects spoke a dialect of Italian.

Table 9b

Crosstabulation of the language spoken at home at the present by the first language spoken in early childhood, for Sample 1

	English	Italian	Dialect
English	4		
Italian		3	
Dialect	1		3

$$\chi^2(4) = 17.60; p < 0.001$$

Table 9c

Crosstabulation of the language spoken at home at the present by the first language spoken in early childhood, for Sample 2

	Language spoken at home				
	English	French	Italian	Polish	Philippino
English	6	1	1	1	1
French		1			

$$\chi^2(4) = 4.95; p < 0.29$$

Table 9d

Crosstabulation of the language spoken at home at the present by the first language spoken in early childhood, for Sample 3.

	Language spoken at home		
	English	French	Dialect
English		1	
Italian	2		
Dialect	2		6

$$\chi^2(4) = 15.12; p < 0.004$$

A crosstabulation of data reported in Tables 8 and 9 shows that in Sample 1 three of the four dialectophone subjects and all three speakers of standard Italian retained their primary language. There was a switch to English in the home language of one childhood dialectophone speaker. In Sample 3, a switch to English occurred in the case of two childhood dialectophones and of two childhood speakers of standard Italian.

These data indicate a relatively strong tendency towards language maintenance in subjects whose primary language in early childhood was Italian.

Table 10 compares the three samples on the measure of the mothers' type of job.

Table 10

Crosstabulation of the mothers' type of job by sample

	Unskilled	Semi-skilled	Skilled	Non-manual
Sample 1		1	1	6
Sample 2	1		1	6
Sample 3	2	1	1	4

$$\chi^2(4) = 2.33; p < 0.674$$

For the four categories (unskilled; semi-skilled; skilled; and non-manual) there were no statistically significant differences between the three groups. However, the degree of similarity between Samples 1 and 2 was higher than that between either of these groups and Sample 3. (As reported earlier, in each of the first two samples six mothers held non-manual jobs, whereas the corresponding number of mothers in Sample 3 was four.) Incidentally, as data reported in Table 21 indicate, the number of mothers using English in communication with their children in Sample 1 was remarkably higher than in Sample 3, implying a correlation between social prestige and linguistic assimilation.

Table 11 is a comparison between the three samples on the type of job of the fathers.

Table 11

Crosstabulation of the fathers' type of job by sample

	Unskilled	Semi-skilled	Skilled	Non-manual
Sample 1	1	1	6	3
Sample 2		2	1	6
Sample 3		2	7	2

$$\chi^2(6) = 9.35; p < 0.15$$

Again, the three samples do not differ statistically as to whether the fathers performed unskilled, semi-skilled or non-manual types of work. Generally, however, fathers in the Italian samples had social less prestigious jobs.

The following four tables compare the present level of listening, speaking, reading and writing skills in the subjects' native languages across the three samples. (N.B.: All these analyses are based on self-reported data.)

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted on the variable "understand first language now." The results are reported in Table 12. The three samples did not differ significantly on whether they understand their native language at the present time. (The categories for

responses were: 1 = very well; 2 = well enough; 3 = not very well; 4 = not at all.)

Table 12

Means on the self-reported level of understanding the first language spoken in early childhood at the present time, by sample

	Mean
Sample 1 (N=11)	1.1818
Sample 2 (N=11)	1.5455
Sample 3 (N=9)	1.7778

There are, however, some apparent differences between the means: subjects in Sample 3 receiving instruction in standard Italian had the lowest rating for understanding their native language now. This rather surprising finding (given the importance attributed to heritage language education by Cummins [1984], among others) suggests that the heritage language program in standard Italian might, in fact, lower considerably the linguistic confidence towards the mother tongue of children whose primary language is a dialect of Italian which thus deviates from the standard.

The non-Italian group had the second lowest rating; and subjects in Sample 1 reported that they understand their native language the most.

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted to determine whether the three samples were different on the

variable "Speak first language now". Results are shown in Table 13. (The categories for responses were the same as in Table 12.) The F-ratio was $F(2.28) = 0.8544$, at the probability level of $p < 0.43$, indicating that there were no statistically significant differences between the groups: the means were all relatively similar.

Table 13

Means on the self-reported level of language spoken in early childhood at the present time, by sample.

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	1.5455	0.6876
Sample 2 (N=11)	1.5455	0.6876
Sample 3 (N=9)	1.8889	0.6009

$$F(2.28) = 0.8544; p < 0.43$$

On the variable "Read first language now", a one-way analysis of variance showed no significant differences between the three groups. (See Table 14. Again, the categories for responses are as in Table 12.)

Table 14

Means on the self-reported level of reading in the first language of early childhood at the present, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	2.0000	1.0954
Sample 2 (N=11)	1.5455	0.8202
Sample 3 (N=9)	1.5556	0.7265

$$F(2.28) = 0.8770; p < 0.42$$

A one-way analysis was conducted on the variable examining the subjects' self-evaluation of writing ability in their first language. (Table 15; same response categories.) The F-ratio was $F(2.28) = 0.459$, at a probability level of $p < 0.63$, indicating again that the three samples did not differ statistically.

Table 15

Means on the self-reported level of writing in the first language of early childhood at the present, by sample.

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	1.8182	1.1677
Sample 2 (N=11)	1.4545	0.6876
Sample 3 (N=9)	1.6667	0.7071

$$F(2.28) = 0.4590; p < 0.63$$

The comparison of mean values in these four tables indicates that there is a slight difference between the two Italian samples in terms of self-assessed skills in the subjects' primary languages (either standard Italian or a dialect version of Italian), although the differences were not statistically significant.

A comparison of the three groups on what task they found easiest to do in their native tongue (Table 16) did not reveal statistically significant differences in terms of whether the subjects found speaking, listening, reading or writing the easiest task to perform.

Both in Samples 1 and 2 the majority of the children (eight) found speaking and listening easier tasks to perform than either reading or writing.

Table 16

Sample comparisons on what the subjects found the easiest task to perform in their native tongue.

	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	Doesn't Have Skills	All
Sample 1 (N=11)	5	3		2	1	
Sample 2 (N=7)	3	1		1		2
Sample 3 (N=11)	4	4	2	1		

In the response to the question on whether their parents found good grades in school important, there was a statistically significant difference between the three samples. (See Table 17.) A one-way analysis of variance conducted on this variable yielded an F-ratio of $F(2.30) = 3.75$ ($p < 0.035$), indicating that, according to data reported by the subjects, parents in the two Italian samples (Samples 1 and 3) found their children's scholastic achievement more important than did parents in the non-Italian sample. There was no variability for either Sample 1 or 3; that is, all children responded that their parents

found grades to be very important, whereas in the non-Italian sample, some of the children reported that their parents found their grades to be less than very important. This clear difference would seem to point to a particular cultural value common to the Italophones which, however, does not translate into measurable difference in measures of command of English and French and school success.

Table 17

Means on importance of good grades (scholastic achievement) to parents, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	1.0000	0.0000
Sample 2 (N=11)	1.2727	0.4671
Sample 3 (N=11)	1.0000	0.0000

$$F(2.30) = 3.7500; p < 0.03$$

Children of Italian ethnicity were compared by sample on the variable "Do you speak an Italian dialect?" (see Table 18), but the differences were not significant. Samples 1 and 3: ($\chi^2(1) = 2.93; p < 0.08$). In Sample 1, four subjects spoke a dialect versus seven who did not. In Sample 3, eight subjects reported that they spoke a dialect, and three indicated that they did not. These findings are consistent with the statistics presented in Table 2 on the variable "First language spoken in early

childhood" indicating that all childhood dialectophones still consider themselves competent in that language, even when an apparent switch to English has occurred in the home language.

Table 18

The proportion of dialect speakers of Italian in Samples 1 and 3

	Dialect speaker	Non-dialect speaker
Sample 1 (N=11)	4	7
Sample 3 (N=11)	8	3

$$\chi^2(1) = 2.9333; p < 0.08$$

To examine language-related cultural activities of the 22 subjects in the two Italian samples, a composite measure of these activities was computed based on the frequencies reported for watching television, listening to the radio, reading, watching movies, and listening to records or tapes in Italian. (The values were: 1 = once per week or more; 2 = less than once per week; 3 = never).

In a one-way analysis of variance, the two samples did not differ statistically in terms of the frequencies with which they engaged in these activities.

Table 19

Frequency means of language-related cultural activities in Samples 1 and 3

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	10.3636	2.5009
Sample 3 (N=11)	8.9091	1.9212

$$F(1.20) = 2.3400; p < 0.14$$

The following 19 tables compare the samples on variables referring to linguistic choices in various domains.

On the variable "In which language do you speak to your mother?" (the choices being English, French and Italian), the three samples were compared using a crosstabulation. (See Table 20.)

Table 20

Crosstabulation of the language spoken to the mother, by sample

	English	French	Italian
Sample 1 (N=11)	10		1
Sample 2 (N=11)	11		
Sample 3 (N=11)	9	1	1

$$\chi^2(4) = 3.2000; p < 0.52$$

There were no statistically significant differences between the samples. Most children in each of the samples indicated that they spoke English to their mother.

There was a significant difference between the three samples in terms of the language which the mother used to the child. (See Table 21.) Examination of the cell means indicates that in Sample 1, eight of the 11 children were spoken to in English by their mother; three were spoken to in Italian. In contrast, of the 11 subjects in Sample 3, seven were spoken to in Italian and only three in English. In the non-Italian sample, nine of the 11 subjects indicated English, the remainder indicating either French or another language spoken by their mother to them.

Table 21

Crosstabulation of the language spoken by the mother to the child, by sample

	English	French	Italian	Other
Sample 1 (N=11)	8		3	
Sample 2 (N=11)	9	1		1
Sample 3 (N=11)	3	1	7	

$$\chi^2 (6) = 13.500; p < 0.03$$

On the variable "In what language do you speak to your father?" the three samples did not differ, indicating that most children spoke English to their fathers. (See Table 22.)

Table 22

Crosstabulation of the language spoken to the father, by sample

	English	French	Italian
Sample 1 (N=11)	7	1	3
Sample 2 (N=10)	9	1	
Sample 3 (N=11)	9		2

$$\chi^2(4) = 4.11; p < 0.39$$

On the variable referring to language use by the father to the child there was a statistically significant difference between the samples.

Table 23

Crosstabulation of the language spoken by the father to the child, by sample

	English	French	Italian
Sample 1 (N=11)	5	1	5
Sample 2 (N=10)	10		
Sample 3 (N=11)	4	1	6

$$\chi^2(4) = 10.16; p < 0.03$$

The Italian subjects in Samples 1 and 3 indicated that their fathers speak to them either in English or in Italian, with a nearly equal split. On the other hand, all respondents in the non-Italian sample reported that their fathers speak to them in English.

Data in Tables 21 and 23 indicate that, in the first Italian sample (Sample 1), more mothers adopted English in communication with their children than did mothers in Sample 3, and that 50% of the fathers in both of these samples used Italian for similar purposes. Also, data reported earlier in Tables 10 and 11 reveal that more mothers than fathers held socially more prestigious non-manual jobs across the two samples, and that their number was greater in Sample 1. Thus, the greater the social prestige of a particular immigrant population, the greater the tendency to promote language switch--in this case to English--as a measure of assimilation to the dominant culture.

Comparing the three samples on the language used by the parents to one another yielded a statistically significant finding. Examination of the cell means reveals that, in Sample 1, five of the 11 children indicated that their parents spoke English to one another, and five that they used Italian. (See Table 24.)

In Sample 3, nine of the 11 respondents reported that their parents spoke Italian; the remaining two indicated either English or French. In the non-Italian sample, nine sets of parents used English and one spoke another language.

Table 24

Crosstabulation of the language used by parents with one another, by sample

	English	French	Italian	Other
Sample 1 (N=11)	5	1	5	
Sample 2 (N=10)	9			1
Sample 3 (N=11)	1	1	9	

$$\chi^2(6) = 18.45; p < 0.005$$

On the variable "In what language do you speak to your brothers and sisters?" (see Table 25), all children indicated that they used English with their siblings; therefore, there were no differences between the three samples.

Table 25

Crosstabulation of the language spoken to siblings, by sample

	English	French	Italian	Other
Sample 1 (N=10)	10			
Sample 2 (N=11)	11			
Sample 3 (N=10)	10			

The three samples were compared using a chi-square test on the variable "In what language do you speak to your mother's parents?". The result was marginally significant. (See Table 26.)

Table 26

Crosstabulation of the language spoken to maternal grandparents, by sample

	English	French	Italian	Other
Sample 1 (N=11)	4	1	6	
Sample 2 (N=11)	7	2		2
Sample 3 (N=11)	4	1	6	

$$\chi^2(6) = 11.70; p < 0.06$$

The cell means were similar for Samples 1 and 3: in each of these groups, six of the 11 children reported that they spoke Italian to their maternal grandparents; four indicated English and one French as the language used by them in communication with the grandparents. In the non-Italian sample (Sample 2), on the other hand, seven used English and the remainder spoke either French or another language.

On the variable "In what language do you speak to your father's parents?" the three samples were compared, and the chi-square test naturally revealed highly significant differences. (Table 27.)

An examination of the cell means indicates that in Sample 1, seven of the nine respondents spoke Italian to their paternal grandparents, and only two speak English. In Sample 3, nine used Italian versus two who indicated

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English as the language used by them in communication with their fathers' parents. In Sample 2, of the eight subjects who responded to this question, seven reported English and one French.

Table 27

Crosstabulation of the language spoken to paternal grandparents, by sample

	English	French	Italian
Sample 1 (N=9)	2		7
Sample 2 (N=8)	7	1	
Sample 3 (N=11)	2		9

$$\chi^2 (4) = 15.56; p < 0.003$$

The same comparison was carried out on the variable referring to language use by the maternal grandparents to the child. (See Table 28.) The chi-square value was, again, statistically significant.

Table 28

Crosstabulation of the language spoken by maternal grandparents to the children, by sample

	English	French	Italian	Other
Sample 1 (N=11)	3	1	7	
Sample 2 (N=11)	5	2		4
Sample 3 (N=11)	2	1	8	

$$\chi^2 (6) = 17.50; p < 0.007$$

Examination of the cell means reveals that in both Italian samples the majority of the subjects were spoken to in Italian by the maternal grandparents (seven in Sample 1, and eight in Sample 3); three subjects in Sample 1 and two in Sample 3 were spoken to in English; one child in each of these samples is spoken to in French. In the non-Italian sample (Sample 2), five subjects were spoken to in English; four in a language other than English or French; and two were spoken to in French by their maternal grandparents.

There was a statistically significant difference between the three samples on the variable referring to the language spoken by paternal grandparents to the children, as well (See Table 29.)

Both in Samples 1 and 3, nine subjects indicated that they are spoken to in Italian by their paternal grandparents (for Sample 1, this was the total number of respondents), and only two in Sample 3 reported being spoken to in English. Seven of the eight respondents in Sample 2 indicated English and one indicated French, as the language spoken by their fathers' parents to them.

The statistical findings reported in Tables 26 to 29 correlate positively with data on the maternal and paternal grandparents' country of birth. In Sample 1, all grandparents were born in Italy; all maternal grandparents

emigrated to Canada at some point in their lives, while five sets of paternal grandparents still live in Italy.

Table 29

Crosstabulation of the language spoken by paternal grandparents to the children, by sample

	English	French	Italian
Sample 1 (N=9)			9
Sample 2 (N=8)	7	1	
Sample 3 (N=11)	2		9

$$\chi^2(4) = 21.14; p < 0.0003$$

In the non-Italian control group (Sample 2), data reported by the subjects on the maternal grandparents' country of birth were available in seven cases. Of these, three were born in Canada, one in Mexico, two in Hungary and one in the Philippines. They all live in Canada at the present. Six of the nine paternal grandparents of this group were born in Canada; one in England; one in Poland; and one in Yugoslavia. All, except for those born in Poland, had moved to Canada.

In Sample 3, nine of the 11 maternal grandparents were born in Italy; two were born in Canada. Of those born in Italy, three couples still live in that country, while six had moved to Canada. All paternal grandparents were born in Italy; in six of the 11 cases they still live there.

Both in Samples 1 and 3 almost all the grandparents were born in Italy, and the majority of them moved to Canada, presumably as adults, in times when learning English was not essential for survival. Consequently, Italian usually retained its primary role in communication with family members.

It can be assumed, thus, that linguistic interactions with the grandparents constitute one of the main areas where children are required to use Italian, at least on the level of comprehension, in order to accommodate the linguistic needs of their interlocutors.

No statistical differences emerged between the three samples on the variable of language used with friends in school. (See Table 30.)

Table 30

Crosstabulation of the language used with friends in school, by sample

	English	Italian
Sample 1 (N=11)	10	1
Sample 2 (N=11)	11	
Sample 3 (N=11)	11	

$$\chi^2(2) = 2.06; p < 0.35$$

All subjects reported English for this domain, with the exception of one child in Sample 1 indicating Italian.

The findings were similar in Table 31 analyzing data on language use with friends in the home.

Table 31

Crosstabulation of the language used with friends in the home, by sample

	English	French	Italian
Sample 1 (N=11)	10		1
Sample 2 (N=11)	9	2	
Sample 3 (N=11)	11		

$$\chi^2(4) = 6.20; p < 0.18$$

The responses of 30 subjects across the three samples were agreed in indicating English as the primary language of communication with friends in the home setting. In the three anomalous cases--one in Sample 1 and two in Sample 2--the choice was either Italian or French, respectively. The chi-square value indicates that no difference existed between the samples on this variable.

The three samples were compared on the variable referring to language use when visiting relatives. The three groups differed in terms of what language they reported for this setting. (See Table 32.)

Table 32

Crosstabulation of the language used when visiting relatives, by sample

	English	French	Italian
Sample 1 (N=11)	9		2
Sample 2 (N=6)	4	2	
Sample 3 (N=11)	3	1	7

$$\chi^2(4) = 13.04; p < 0.01$$

In Sample 1, of the 11 respondents, nine indicated English and only two Italian as the language used when visiting relatives.

In Sample 3, seven of the 11 respondents reported Italian and only three English, with one subject indicating French.

In the non-Italian sample (Sample 2), of the six subjects who responded to this question, four indicated English and two French.

In Tables 33, 34 and 35, the two Italian samples were compared in terms of language use in the heritage language school. Variables such as language use in the classroom setting and during breaks with peers and with the teacher were examined. No statistically significant differences emerged from the analyses.

Table 33

Crosstabulation of the language used in the heritage-language class, by Samples 1 and 3

	English	French	Italian	Other
Sample 1 (N=7)	1	1	5	
Sample 3 (N=11)	6		5	

Table 34

Crosstabulation of the language used during intervals in the heritage-language school, by Samples 1 and 3

	English	Italian
Sample 1 (N=7)	6	1
Sample 3 (N=11)	11	

Table 35

Crosstabulation of the language used with the teacher in the heritage-language school, by Samples 1 and 3

	English	French	Italian	Other
Sample 1 (N=7)		1	6	
Sample 3 (N=11)	1	1	9	

The three samples were compared on the variable "Language used with older people in the church." The chi-square value was statistically significant. (See Table 36.)

Table 36

Crosstabulation of the language used with older people at church, by sample

Italian	English	French
Sample 1 (N=10)	4	5
Sample 2 (N=6)	6	
Sample 3 (N=11)	3	8

$$\chi^2(4) = 10.46; p < 0.03$$

In Samples 1 and 3, many of the children reported using Italian at church when speaking to older people, whereas in the non-Italian control group all six respondents indicated that they spoke English.

Again, the three samples were compared in terms of language spoken to younger people in the church setting. (See Table 37.)

The chi-square value is statistically significant, at a probability level of 0.05. The examination of the cell means indicates that in Sample 1, seven of the 10 respondents used English, and only three Italian. In Samples 2 and 3, all subjects reported that they used English when speaking to younger people at church.

Table 37

Crosstabulation of the language used with younger people at church, by sample

	English	Italian
Sample 1 (N=10)	7	3
Sample 2 (N=6)	6	
Sample 3 (N=11)	11	

$$\chi^2(4) = 5.73; p < 0.05$$

Statistically significant differences emerged between the three samples on the variable referring to language used when speaking to the minister or priest in the church. (See Table 38.)

Table 38

Crosstabulation of the language used with the minister (priest) in the church, by sample

	English	French	Italian	Other
Sample 1 (N=9)	2	1	6	
Sample 2 (N=6)	5			1
Sample 3 (N=11)	3		8	

$$\chi^2(6) = 13.57; p < 0.03$$

While in the Italian samples the majority of the children (six of the nine respondents in Sample 1, and eight of 11 in Sample 3) indicated using Italian when speaking with the priest, in the non-Italian sample, five of the six

respondents reported English. A single respondent indicated using a language other than English or French.

Data reported by subjects in the Italian samples on the variable "Language used with Italian neighbours" are compared in Table 39. The two groups did not differ statistically: most children used English in communication with Italophone neighbours.

Table 39

Crosstabulation of the language used with Italian neighbours, by Samples 1 and 3

	English	French	Italian
Sample 1 (N=11)	7	1	3
Sample 3 (N=10)	7		3

$$\chi^2(4) = 1.99; p < 0.73$$

The findings in the above analyses of data on linguistic choices in various domains indicate that the use of Italian by the age group examined is confined to the home (with a primarily referential function), and to communication with elderly people and with cultural representatives of the community.

The following five tables analyze the responses to questions in Section D of the sociolinguistic questionnaire related to the subjects' attitudes towards and perceptions of their ethnic identity.

In response to the question "Have you ever been in Italy?" (or "in the country of your native language" in case of ethnic-minority subjects in the non-Italian sample), a comparison of the three samples showed no difference as to whether they had visited the country of their native language. (See Table 40.)

Table 40

Crosstabulation of whether ethnic-minority subjects have visited the country of their native language, by sample

	Have visited	Have not visited
Sample 1 (N=11)	4	7
Sample 2 (N=4)	1	3
Sample 3 (N=11)	8	3

$$\chi^2(2) = 4.09; p < 0.12$$

The comparison between the three samples on the variable "Did you speak English before starting school?" did not indicate statistically significant differences. (See Table 41.) The examination of the cell frequencies reveals that in Samples 2 and 3 almost all of the subjects (10 of 11 children in each sample) reportedly spoke English at a pre-school age.

In Sample 1, on the other hand, only eight of the 11 respondents spoke English when starting school, indicating

Table 41

Crosstabulation of ability to speak English at a pre-school age, by sample

	Spoke English	Did not speak English
Sample 1 (N=11)	8	3
Sample 2 (N=11)	10	1
Sample 3 (N=11)	10	1

$$\chi^2(2) = 1.88; p < 0.38$$

a slight--although statistically non-significant--difference between this and the other two samples.

In Table 42 the three samples are compared on their responses to the question referring to socialization patterns with peers of the subjects' own ethnicity ("Does your best friend speak Italian?"--or French, or another ethnic-minority language in case of non-Italian respondents). There were no statistically significant differences between the three samples.

Almost half of the subjects in each group reported that their best friend spoke Italian, or French, or whatever their native tongue was, suggesting that only about half the children may have a preference for peers with the same ethnolinguistic background.

Table 42

Crosstabulation of socialization with peers of the subjects' own ethnicity, by sample

	Best friend does speak language	Best friend does not speak language
Sample 1 (N=11)	5	6
Sample 2 (N=10)	6	4
Sample 3 (N=11)	7	4

$$\chi^2(2) = 0.82; p < 0.66$$

The three samples were compared on the variable "What do you consider the most important skill in Italian (or in your native language)?" The three samples did not differ in terms of what they considered to be the most important skill in their native tongue. (The categories were: speaking; listening; reading; writing; or not having an opinion.)

Table 43

Crosstabulation of the subjects' perception of the most important skill in their native language, by sample

	Speaking	Listening	Reading	Writing	No opinion
Sample 1 (N=11)	5	2	1	2	1
Sample 2 (N=11)	5	3	1	2	
Sample 3 (N=11)	4	3	3	1	

$$\chi^2(8) = 4.39; p < 0.82$$

The findings were somewhat surprising in that the group attending a heritage language program (Sample 3) and, thus, receiving training in reading and writing in standard Italian, might be thought to place more importance on literacy skills; however, they did not differ significantly from the other two groups, attributing more importance to oracy-related skills.

In the last table dealing with variables in the sociolinguistic questionnaire selected for statistical analyses, the three samples are compared in terms of the language(s) they would like to use with their co-workers when they grow up, the choices being: English; Italian; English/Italian; English/French; English/French/Italian; Other/French/Italian; and Other. There was a significant

Table 44

Crosstabulation of the linguistic preference(s) for a future workplace, by sample

	English	Italian	English French	English Italian	English French Italian	Other French Italian	Other
S1 (N=11)	1	2		4	3		1
S2 (N=11)	3		5				3
S3 (N=11)	1				10		

$$\chi^2 (12) = 43.75; p < 0.00$$

difference between the samples on the measure of linguistic choices in a future workplace. (See Table 44.) In Sample 3--children of Italian ethnicity participating in a heritage language program--of the 11 respondents, 10 indicated that they would like to work with people who spoke English, French and Italian when they grow up. In Sample 1, on the other hand, of the 11 respondents, only three indicated that they preferred to use all three languages in their future workplace. One respondent opted for English; two for Italian; four for English/Italian; and one for another language. In the non-Italian sample, five subjects preferred English and French; three English only; and three another language to use with co-workers as adults.

6

Analyses of the Results in the Canadian Test of Basic Skills, and of Their Assumed Relationship with Sociolinguistic Variables

On the first variable in the CTBS testing (total language grade-equivalent scores) Samples 1 and 2 were compared using a one-way analysis of variance. The F-ratio

6 It is important to keep in mind that the CTBS scores were available only for Samples 1 and 2 (the main Italian sample and the non-Italian control group); therefore, the respective analyses are based on data for these two groups only.

comparing these two groups was $F(1.18) = 0.065$, at a probability level of $p < 0.80$, indicating that the samples did not differ in their CTBS total language scores. (See Table 45a.)

Table 45a

Means of the CTBS total language scores, by Samples 1 and 2

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=9)	3.37	1.11
Sample 2 (N=11)	3.50	1.03

$$F(1.18) = 0.065; p < 0.80$$

On the second variable (the problem-solving task) comparing the two samples yielded an F-ratio of $F(1.19) = 1.38$, at a probability level of $p < 0.25$, revealing that the samples did not differ on the problem-solving component of the CTBS scores.

Table 45b

Means of the CTBS problem-solving scores, by Samples 1 and 2

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=10)	3.22	0.62
Sample 2 (N=11)	3.63	0.91

$$F(1.19) = 1.38; p < 0.25$$

The third test compared Samples 1 and 2 on their scores in mathematics. Here the F-ratio was $F(1.18) = 0.48$, at a probability level of $p < 0.49$, indicating that the samples did not differ on this component of the CTBS testing either. (See Table 45c.)

Table 45c

Means of the CTBS math scores, by Samples 1 and 2

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=9)	3.16	0.62
Sample 2 (N=11)	3.37	0.71

$$F(1.18) = 0.48; p < 0.49$$

Subsequently, I examined the relationship between the CTBS total-language scores and the composite scores in both tasks of the English language proficiency test, for Samples 1 and 2 separately.

The composite measure of proficiency in the interview task was constituted of scores in discourse competence; fluency; vocabulary range; grammar; and second-language interference. The correlation of the CTBS total language scores with this composite interview score for the subjects in Sample 1 was $r(9) = 0.368$ (low to moderate), at a probability level of $p < 0.165$, indicating that the relationship between the CTBS total language scores and the

composite interview scores in the English testing was not statistically significant.

A similar analysis was conducted on Sample 2; that is, a composite measure of proficiency in the English interview task was correlated with the total language scores in the CTBS test. For this sample, the correlation was $r(11) = 0.767$, at a probability level of $p < 0.003$. The magnitude of this correlation indicates a very strong relationship between the CTBS total language scores and the interview scores in the English language proficiency test. This correlation was statistically stronger for Sample 2 than for Sample 1, indicating a higher relationship for the non-Italian than for the Italian subjects.

Subsequent analyses were conducted on the relationship between the CTBS total language scores and the composite scores in the story-retelling task of the English testing, again, for Samples 1 and 2 separately. The retelling score was comprised of ratings in discourse competence, grammar, and second-language interference.

For the nine subjects in Sample 1, the correlation between the CTBS total language and the English story-retelling scores was $r(9) = 0.527$, at a probability level of $p < 0.07$, indicating a marginally significant relationship. The magnitude of this correlation could be

considered moderate to high, although the significance did not reach the 0.05 level because of the small number of subjects examined.

The same correlation was computed for Sample 2; here, data were available on all 11 subjects. The correlation between the variables was $r(11) = 0.717$, at a probability level of $p < 0.006$, indicating a very strong relationship (in other words: the higher one's CTBS total language scores, the higher the scores in the English story-retelling task). All in all, the correlation between scores in the English story-retelling task and in the CTBS total language component was higher than the correlation between ratings in the interview task and the CTBS language scores.

Correlations were computed between the CTBS total language scores and each of the subscales in the Italian interview task (namely comprehension; linguistic competence; grammaticality; vocabulary range; anglicisms; French loans; and dialectal interference). (See Table 46.) These correlations were based on data for Sample 1 alone, as CTBS scores were not available for subjects in the Italian control group (Sample 3). The analysis revealed that the CTBS total language scores were not related to any of the subscales in the Italian interview task. The

correlations all approached 0; for instance, the correlation between grammaticality and the CTBS total language scores was $r(9) = 0.08$, at a probability level of $p < 0.410$. Similarly, the correlation between comprehension and the CTBS total language scores was $r(9) = -0.23$, at a probability level of $p < 0.275$. All the correlations ranged from $r(9) = -0.23$ to $r(9) = 0.19$, and none of them were statistically significant.

Correlational analyses were conducted on Sample 1, the variables being the CTBS total language scores and each of the subscales in the Italian story-retelling task. (Table 47.)

These analyses indicated overall a poor relationship between the retelling subscales (comprehension; linguistic competence; grammaticality; vocabulary range; anglicisms; French loans; and dialectal interference) and the CTBS total language scores.

Two exceptions were notable: dialectal interference in the story-retelling task was negatively correlated with the CTBS total language scores ($r(9) = -0.53$; $p < 0.10$) implying that the higher the dialectal interference when the language of the retelling was other than a dialect, the lower the CTBS total language score. Also noteworthy is the fact that the linguistic competence subscale had a low

correlation with the CTBS total language scores: $r(7) = 0.30$; $p < 0.25$, indicating a statistically non-significant relationship.

Table 46

Correlations between the CTBS total language scores and each of the subscales in the Italian interview task, for Sample 1

Comprehension	$r(9) = -0.23$; $p < 0.27$
Linguistic Competence	$r(9) = -0.05$; $p < 0.44$
Grammaticality	$r(9) = 0.08$; $p < 0.41$
Anglicisms	$r(9) = 0.19$; $p < 0.32$
Vocabulary Range	$r(9) = -0.11$; $p < 0.38$
French Loans	$r(9) = -0.17$; $p < 0.38$
Dialectal Interference	coefficient could not be computed

Table 47

Correlations between the CTBS total language scores and each of the subscales in the Italian story-retelling task, for Sample 1

Comprehension	$r(7) = 0.03$; $p < 0.47$
Linguistic Competence	$r(7) = 0.30$; $p < 0.25$
Grammaticality	$r(7) = 0.06$; $p < 0.44$
Anglicisms	$r(7) = 0.18$; $p < 0.36$
Vocabulary Range	$r(7) = -0.03$; $p < 0.47$
French Loans	$r(7) = -0.07$; $p < 0.43$
Dialectal Interference	$r(7) = -0.53$; $p < 0.10$

A one-way analysis of variance was conducted for Sample 1 on the variables "First language spoken in early childhood," and the CTBS total language scores. (See Table 48.) The subjects were further split into three subgroups, that is: speakers of English; of standard Italian; and of a dialect version of Italian in early childhood. This analysis yielded an F-ratio of $F(2.6) = 4.46$, at a probability level of $p < 0.06$, indicating a marginal difference between the subgroups. Subjects whose first language had been English obtained the highest scores on the CTBS total language subtest, followed by childhood speakers of standard Italian, whereas those whose first language in early childhood had been a dialect version of Italian featured the lowest scores.

Table 48

Analysis of variance of the CTBS total language score by the first language spoken in early childhood, for Sample 1

	Subset	N	Mean
Standard	English 1	4	4.13
	Italian 2	3	3.75
	Dialect 3	4	2.25

$$F(2.6) = 4.46; p < 0.06$$

Analyses of Data in the English Language Proficiency Test

A composite score was computed on the English interview task constituted by the discourse competence score, the fluency score, the vocabulary score, the grammar score, and the score on second-language interference. Subsequently, all three samples were compared on whether they differed on this composite measure, using a one-way analysis of variance. (See Table 49.) The F-ratio was $F(2.30) = 0.17$, at a probability level of $p < 0.84$, indicating that the three samples did not differ in their English interview performance. Examination of the cell values revealed highly similar means for all samples.

The three samples were also compared on each of the five components of the interview task in the English proficiency test, computing a one-way analysis of variance. (See Tables 50a-e.)

Table 49

Means of the composite English interview score, by Sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	17.3636	5.6969
Sample 2 (N=11)	18.3636	2.2033
Sample 3 (N=11)	18.0909	3.6457

$$F(2.30) = 0.17; p < 0.84$$

In summary, the analyses indicated that there were no sample differences on any of the five interview subscales.

Table 50a

Mean scores on the discourse competence subscale of the English interview, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	3.0000	1.6733
Sample 2 (N=11)	3.3636	0.6742
Sample 3 (N=11)	3.1818	1.1677

$$F(2.30) = 0.23; p < 0.79$$

(Values: 5=outstanding; 4=high; 3=average; 2=mediocre; 1=poor; 0=no score allocated)

Table 50b

Mean scores on the fluency subscale of the English interview, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	2.8182	1.6624
Sample 2 (N=11)	2.7273	0.6467
Sample 3 (N=11)	3.0000	1.1832

$$F(2.30) = 0.13; p < 0.87$$

(Values: 5=outstanding; 4=high; 3=average; 2=mediocre; 1=poor; 0=no score allocated)

Table 50c

Mean scores on the vocabulary subscale of the English interview, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	2.7273	1.4206
Sample 2 (N=11)	3.0909	0.5394
Sample 3 (N=11)	3.0000	1.0000

$$F(2.30) = 0.35; p < 0.70$$

(Values: 5=exceptional; 4=high; 3=average; 2=mediocre; 1=poor; 0=no score allocated)

Table 50d

Mean scores on the grammar subscale of the English interview, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	2.9091	1.3751
Sample 2 (N=11)	3.1818	0.9816
Sample 3 (N=11)	3.0909	0.5394

$$F(2.30) = 0.20; p < 0.81$$

(Values: 5=perfect; 4=good; 3=average; 2=mediocre; 1=poor; 0=no score allocated)

Table 50e

Mean scores on the second-language interference subscale of the English interview, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	5.9091	0.3015
Sample 2 (N=11)	6.0000	0.0000
Sample 3 (N=11)	5.8182	0.4045

$$F(2.30) = 1.07; p < 0.35$$

(Values: 0=none; 1=very low; 2=low; 3=occasional; 4=somewhat high; 5=high; 6=n/a)

A composite score was computed on the English story-retelling task, as well, comprised of ratings in discourse competence and fluency; grammar; and second-language interference. The three samples were then compared, implementing a one-way analysis of variance. (See Table 51.) The F-ratio indicated that the three samples did not differ in their performance in the story-retelling task.

Table 51

Means of the composite English story-retelling task, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	11.9091	1.8141
Sample 2 (N=11)	11.0909	2.0226
Sample 3 (N=11)	11.6364	1.4334

$$F(2.30) = 0.60; p < 0.55$$

A series of one-way analyses of variance were also computed on each of the subscales in the story-retelling task. (See Tables 52a-c.) The F-ratios for each of the three separate analyses were not significant, indicating that the three samples did not differ in their performance on any of the measures at a 0.05 level of probability.

Table 52a

Mean scores on the discourse competence and fluency subscale of the English story-retelling task, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	3.4545	0.9342
Sample 2 (N=11)	3.0909	1.1362
Sample 3 (N=11)	3.1818	0.9816

$$F(2.30) = 0.37; p < 0.68$$

(Values: 5=excellent; 4=good; 3=average; 2=mediocre; 1=poor)

Table 52b

Mean scores on the grammar subscale of the English story-retelling task, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	3.4545	0.9342
Sample 2 (N=11)	3.0000	1.0000
Sample 3 (N=11)	3.5455	0.6876

$$F(2.30) = 1.20; p < 0.31$$

(Values: 5=excellent; 4=good; 3=average; 2=mediocre; 1=poor)

Table 52c

Mean scores on the second-language interference subscale of the English story-retelling task, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	0.0000	0.0000
Sample 2 (N=11)	0.0000	0.0000
Sample 3 (N=11)	0.0909	0.3015

$$F(2.30) = 1.00; p < 0.37$$

(Values: 0=none; 1=very low; 2=low; 3=occasional; 4=somewhat high; 5=high)

Analyses of Data in the Italian Language Proficiency Test⁷

Samples 1 and 3 were examined on the language used in responses to questions in the Italian interview task. (See Table 53.) This analysis yielded a chi-square value of $\chi^2(1) = 3.47$, at a probability level of $p < 0.06$, which indicates a marginally significant difference between the samples. It appears that in Sample 1, of the 11 subjects, three responded in English and eight in Italian; on the other hand, in Sample 3 all of the 11 subjects used Italian in their replies.

⁷ All analyses in this section were conducted on Samples 1 and 3--the Italian samples--only.

Table 53

Crosstabulation of the language used by subjects in the Italian interview task, by Samples 1 and 3

	Language Used	
	Italian	English
Sample 1 (N=11)	8	3
Sample 3 (N=11)	11	

$$\chi^2(1) = 3.47; p < 0.06$$

The two samples were compared on a number of variables in the Italian interview and story-retelling tasks. Both tasks were comprised of the following measures: comprehension; linguistic competence; grammaticality; vocabulary range; anglicisms; French loan words; and dialectal interference. A series of t-tests were conducted comparing Samples 1 and 3 on each of these measures, and none of them yielded significant differences. (See Tables 54 and 55 for means and standard deviations.)

One added note about the pattern in these findings: the subjects in Sample 1 were more variable in their performance than subjects in Sample 3. That is, on the interview scales of comprehension, grammaticality, linguistic competence, anglicisms, and vocabulary range, the standard deviation was notably larger for Sample 1. Similarly, in the story-retelling task, on the subscales of

grammaticality, vocabulary range, French loan words, and dialectal interference, the subjects in Sample 1 showed a larger standard deviation. These patterns suggest that Sample 3 was more homogeneous as a group in their performance in the Italian testing than was Sample 1.

Table 54

Sample comparisons of mean scores on the Italian interview subscales (Samples 1 and 3)

Comprehension	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	2.9091	1.700
Sample 3 (N=11)	4.0009	0.775

(Values: 0=not verifiable; 1=non existent; 2=low; 3=mediocre; 4=good; 5=native-like competence)

Linguistic competence	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	2.0909	1.044
Sample 3 (N=11)	2.2727	0.467

(Values: 0=not verifiable; 1=non existent; 2=low; 3=mediocre; 4=good; 5=native-like competence)

Grammaticality	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	2.6364	2.461
Sample 3 (N=11)	2.7273	1.618

(Values: 0=not verifiable; 1=non existent; 2=low; 3=mediocre; 4=good; 5=native-like competence)

Table 54 (cont'd)

Anglicisms	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	2.2000	1.169
Sample 3 (N=11)	2.3636	0.809

(Values: 0=none; 1=low; 2=occasional; 3=high; 4=interview performed in English)

Vocabulary range	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	2.2727	2.412
Sample 3 (N=11)	2.5455	0.820

(Values: 1=very low; 5=mediocre; 9=native-like, appropriate to age group)

French loan words	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	0.4545	0.688
Sample 3 (N=11)	0.3636	0.674

(Values: 0=none; 1=low; 2=occasional; 3=high; 9=N/A)

Dialect interference	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	0.1818	0.603
Sample 3 (N=11)	0.5455	0.820

(Values: 0=none; 1=low; 2=occasional; 3=high; 9=N/A)

Table 55

Sample comparisons of mean scores on the Italian story-retelling subscales (Samples 1 and 3)
(The same values were applied as in Table 54.)

Comprehension	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=9)	2.1111	0.928
Sample 3 (N=11)	2.6364	1.433

Table 55 (cont'd)

Linguistic competence	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=9)	1.2222	1.302
Sample 3 (N=11)	0.4545	0.820
Grammaticality	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=9)	3.0000	3.240
Sample 3 (N=11)	1.6364	1.286
Anglicisms	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=8)	1.8750	1.808
Sample 3 (N=11)	3.0000	1.549
Vocabulary range	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=9)	2.7778	2.728
Sample 3 (N=11)	0.9091	1.700
French loan words	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=9)	0.6667	1.118
Sample 3 (N=11)	0.1818	0.603
Dialect interference	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=9)	2.1111	3.919
Sample 3 (N=11)	0.2727	0.467

I also wanted to explore whether the 22 Italian subjects' performance in the Italian interview task bore any relationship to their performance in the same task in English. The measures of discourse linguistic competence,

vocabulary, and grammaticality were compared. (See Table 56a.) None of the correlations reached the 0.05 level of probability.

Table 56a

Correlations between the discourse competence, the grammaticality and the vocabulary range subscales in the English and the Italian interview task, for Samples 1 and 3

<u>English</u>	<u>Italian</u> Linguistic Competence	Grammaticality	Vocabulary Range
Discourse Competence	0.1968 (N=22) p=0.190		
Vocabulary			0.2959 (N=22) p=0.091
Grammaticality		0.1602 (N=22) p=0.238	

Similar were the findings comparing scores on the subscales of discourse competence, grammaticality, and second-language interference (anglicisms) in the English and the Italian story-retelling task (see Table 56b). The variables appeared to be unrelated, none of the correlations reaching the level of statistical significance.

Table 56b

Correlations between the discourse competence, the grammaticality and the linguistic interference subscales in the English and the Italian story-retelling task, for Samples 1 and 3

	<u>Italian</u> Linguistic Competence	Grammaticality	Anglicisms
<u>English</u> Discourse Competence	0.0097 (N=20) p=0.484		
Grammaticality		-0.0397 (N=20) p=0.434	
Second-language Interference			-0.2085 (N=19) p=0.196

Analyses of Data in the Attitudinal Test

A composite measure of children's attitudes was obtained for each of the six speakers. Although there were 14 items on each attitudinal scale, only six were included in the composite measure: those that were perceived to be directly related to the speakers' personality traits and socioeconomic background, in terms of friendliness, strictness, intelligence, height, the type of home the speaker was perceived to live in and wealth. The responses for each of these items in a particular attitude scale were added to give a composite attitude score.

The three samples were then compared on their evaluations of each speaker as indicated by the composite attitude score, using a one-way analysis of variance. (See Tables 57a,b,c,d,e,f.)

The attitude scores of the three samples did not differ for the first Italophone speaker; that is, all groups viewed this individual in a positive light (the F-value was $F(2.28) = 0.50$; $p < 0.60$).

For the attitudes towards the second speaker, there were differences between the samples. The F-value here was $F(2.28) = 3.17$, at a probability level of $p < 0.057$. Post-hoc comparisons (using a Newman-Keuls test) indicated that subjects of Italian ethnicity in Sample 1 perceived this speaker with a significantly more positive attitude than did non-Italian subjects in Sample 2; and somewhat more positively than subjects in the Italian control group (Sample 3).

Similar sample comparisons were conducted for the remaining four speakers, as well, revealing that the samples did not differ in their perceptions of any of these individuals. That is, all subjects viewed the Canadian,

the Eastern-European, the British and the French Canadian⁸ speakers with similarly positive attitudes.

Table 57a

Means of composite attitude scores for Speaker 1, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	14.0000	2.3664
Sample 2 (N=11)	13.1818	2.6007
Sample 3 (N=9)	14.2222	2.4381

$$F(2.28) = 0.50; p < 0.60$$

Table 57b

Means of composite attitude scores for Speaker 2, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	13.9091	2.7732
Sample 2 (N=11)	11.0909	3.0151
Sample 3 (N=9)	12.8889	1.9003

$$F(2.28) = 3.17; p < 0.05$$

8 This finding was contrary to what was expected on the basis of observations of the children's immediate reactions during the administration of the test, where less positive attitudes towards the Canadian and British speakers seemed to emerge.

Table 57c

Means of composite attitude scores for Speaker 3, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	14.5455	3.2974
Sample 2 (N=11)	12.8182	3.3412
Sample 3 (N=9)	12.8889	1.1667

$$F(2.28) = 1.23; p < 0.30$$

Table 57d

Means of composite attitude scores for Speaker 4, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	13.8182	1.3280
Sample 2 (N=11)	13.4545	3.7514
Sample 3 (N=9)	13.7778	1.7159

$$F(2.28) = 0.06; p < 0.93$$

Table 57e

Means of composite attitude scores for Speaker 5, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=11)	13.5455	2.2074
Sample 2 (N=11)	13.6364	3.3248
Sample 3 (N=9)	14.1111	1.7638

$$F(2.28) = 0.13; p < 0.87$$

Table 57f

Means of composite attitude scores for Speaker 6, by sample

	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=10)	12.6000	2.2211
Sample 2 (N=11)	13.3636	4.1539
Sample 3 (N=9)	13.3333	1.4142

$$F(2.27) = 0.21; p < 0.80$$

Subsequently, the two Italian samples (1 and 3) were examined in terms of whether the language spoken in the home would influence the subjects' perceptions of a particular speaker.

The two samples were dichotomized into subjects who indicated English as their home language versus those who reported Italian. These two groups were then compared on their composite attitude scores towards each of the non-anglophone speakers, using a t-test. The analyses indicated that whether a child's home language was English or Italian did not seem to influence his/her perceptions of a speaker. (See Table 58.)

Each group across the two Italian samples perceived the Italian, the Eastern-European, and the French-Canadian speakers in an equally positive manner.

Table 58

The relationship between the subjects' home language and their perceptions of non-anglophone speakers, from Samples 1 and 3

Speaker 1	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=8)	13.2500	1.832
Sample 3 (N=11)	14.7273	2.649

$$t(17) = -1.35; p < 0.19$$

Speaker 2	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=8)	13.3750	2.615
Sample 3 (N=11)	13.9091	2.023

$$t(17) = -0.50; p < 0.62$$

Speaker 4	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=8)	14.0000	1.690
Sample 3 (N=11)	13.8182	1.328

$$t(17) = 0.26; p < 0.79$$

Speaker 6	Mean	Standard Deviation
Sample 1 (N=8)	13.2500	2.315
Sample 3 (N=10)	12.7000	1.160

$$t(16) = 0.66; p < 0.52$$

In a final attempt to reveal any possible attitudinal differences towards the six speakers, post-hoc pairwise comparisons were computed for each of the samples, using t-tests. (See Tables 59a,b,c.) These analyses indicated that for the non-Italian sample (Sample 2) the attitudes

Table 59a

Post-hoc pairwise comparisons of attitudes towards the six speakers, for Sample 1

	N	Mean	St.Dev.	T	P
Speakers 1/2	11	14.000 13.909	2.36 2.77	(10)0.10	0.91
Speakers 1/3	11	14.000 14.545	2.36 3.29	(10)-0.47	0.64
Speakers 1/4	11	14.000 13.818	2.36 1.32	(10)0.20	0.84
Speakers 1/5	11	14.000 13.545	2.36 2.20	(10)0.81	0.43
Speakers 1/6	10	13.600 12.700	2.06 2.05	(9)1.13	0.28
Speakers 2/3	11	13.909 14.545	2.77 3.29	(10)-0.79	0.44
Speakers 2/4	11	13.909 13.818	2.77 1.32	(10)0.11	0.91
Speakers 2/5	11	13.909 13.545	2.77 2.20	(10)0.49	0.63
Speakers 2/6	10	13.500 12.700	2.55 2.05	(9)1.10	0.30
Speakers 3/4	11	14.545 13.818	3.29 1.32	(10)0.80	0.44
Speakers 3/5	11	14.545 13.545	3.29 2.20	(10)0.96	0.36
Speakers 3/6	10	14.200 12.700	3.25 2.05	(9)1.36	0.13
Speakers 4/5	11	13.818 13.545	1.32 2.20	(10)0.32	0.75
Speakers 4/6	10	13.700 12.700	1.33 2.05	(9)1.58	0.14
Speakers 5/6	10	13.200 12.700	1.98 2.05	(9)0.76	0.46

Table 59b

Post-hoc pairwise comparisons of attitudes towards the six speakers, for Sample 2

	N	Mean	St.Dev.	T	P
Speakers 1/2	11	13.181 11.090	2.60 3.01	(10)2.86	0.01*
Speakers 1/3	11	13.181 12.818	2.60 3.34	(10)0.41	0.68
Speakers 1/4	11	13.181 13.454	2.60 3.75	(10)-0.35	0.73
Speakers 1/5	11	13.181 13.636	2.60 3.32	(10)-0.96	0.36
Speakers 1/6	11	13.181 13.818	2.60 4.02	(10)-0.47	0.64
Speakers 2/3	11	11.090 12.818	3.01 3.34	(10)-1.50	0.16
Speakers 2/4	11	11.090 13.454	0.90 1.13	(10)-2.42	0.03*
Speakers 2/5	11	11.090 13.636	3.01 3.32	(10)-2.69	0.02*
Speakers 2/6	11	11.090 13.818	3.01 4.02	(10)-1.94	0.08
Speakers 3/4	11	12.818 13.454	3.34 3.75	(10)-1.00	0.34
Speakers 3/5	11	12.818 13.636	3.34 3.32	(10)-0.99	0.34
Speakers 3/6	11	12.818 13.818	3.34 4.02	(10)-0.77	0.46
Speakers 4/5	11	13.454 13.636	3.75 3.32	(10)-0.23	0.82
Speakers 4/6	11	13.454 13.818	3.75 4.02	(10)-0.32	0.75
Speakers 5/6	11	13.636 13.818	3.32 4.02	(10)-0.12	0.90

Table 59c

Post-hoc pairwise comparisons of attitudes towards the six speakers, for Sample 3

	N	Mean	St.Dev.	T	P
Speakers 1/2	9	14.222 12.888	2.43 1.90	(8)1.84	0.10
Speakers 1/3	9	14.222 12.888	2.43 1.16	(8)1.60	0.14
Speakers 1/4	9	14.222 13.777	2.43 1.71	(8)0.45	0.66
Speakers 1/5	9	14.222 14.111	2.43 1.76	(8)0.13	0.90
Speakers 1/6	9	14.222 13.555	2.43 1.50	(8)0.82	0.43
Speakers 2/3	9	12.888 12.888	1.90 1.16	(8)0.00	1.00
Speakers 2/4	9	12.888 13.777	1.90 1.71	(8)-1.36	0.21
Speakers 2/5	9	12.888 14.111	1.90 1.76	(8)-1.98	0.08
Speakers 2/6	9	12.888 13.555	1.90 1.50	(8)-0.78	0.45
Speakers 3/4	9	12.888 13.777	1.16 1.71	(8)-1.84	0.10
Speakers 3/5	9	12.888 14.111	1.16 1.76	(8)-2.82	0.02*
Speakers 3/6	9	12.888 13.555	1.16 1.50	(8)-0.92	0.38
Speakers 4/5	9	13.777 14.111	1.71 1.76	(8)-0.53	0.60
Speakers 4/6	9	13.777 13.555	1.71 1.50	(8)0.25	0.80
Speakers 5/6	9	14.111 13.555	1.76 1.50	(8)0.73	0.48

towards Speaker 1 were more positive than attitudes towards Speaker 2 ($t(10) = 2.86; p < 0.01$); attitudes towards Speaker 4 were more positive than attitudes towards Speaker 2 ($t(10) = 2.42; p < 0.03$); and the attitudes towards Speaker 5 were, again, more positive than those towards Speaker 2 ($t(10) = 2.64; p < 0.02$). For Samples 1 and 3, the analyses did not reveal any mean differences on the composite attitude scores compared by speakers, with one exception--Sample 3 viewed Speaker 5 more positively than Speaker 3.

Analyses of Data From the Instructional Environment Scale

With reference to the Instructional Environment Scale evaluating the effectiveness of instruction from various aspects for children in the main Italian sample (Sample 1), the sample was trichotomized along the parameters "English" (four subjects); "Standard Italian" (three subjects); and "Dialect" (four subjects) on the variable "First language spoken in early childhood". These three subgroups were too small for statistical analysis. Instead, the mean scores allocated to each group for components in the Instructional Rating Profile section of the IE scale are compared for patterns and trends (see Table 60).

While none of the subgroups reached a mean indicating a highly effective instructional environment (four), subgroup three (consisting of speakers of a dialect version of Italian in early childhood) had a lower mean than either subgroup one or two, comprised of speakers of English or of standard Italian in early childhood. These findings are consistent with those reported in Table 48 comparing the same subgroups on their CTBS total language scores as a formal measure of academic performance in the language arts area.

Table 60

Mean TIES (Instructional Environment) scores by the language first spoken in early childhood, by Sample 1

Language first spoken	Mean
English (Group 1) N=4	2.71
Standard Italian (Group 2) N=3	2.66
Dialect Version of Italian (Group 3) N=4	1.85

$$F(2.8) = 12.28; p < 0.003$$

In addition, a high correlation was found between the CTBS total language scores and the ratings in the Instructional Rating Profile for individuals in Sample 1. The r-value for nine subjects was $r(9) = 0.90$, at a probability level of $p < 0.000$, indicating that the lower a child scored on the CTBS English language component, the

less efficient/adequate was this individual's instructional environment.

All in all, a strong implicational relationship appeared between the variables referring to language use in early childhood, measures of academic achievement, and the effectiveness of the instructional environment. Early childhood speakers of an Italian dialect had the least adequate instructional environment, and were perceived--with no exception--as low achievers by the teacher (as indicated by the teacher interview section of the Instructional Environment Scale). They had, invariably, the lowest scores on the Canadian Test of Basic Skills. This issue might have been further investigated if the formal evaluation of academic achievements had been available for the Italian control group, as well.

CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION AND SUMMARY

The current study was designed to explore the relationships between the sociolinguistic background characteristics, proficiency in English, and the level of academic achievements of children of Italian ethnicity in the early elementary-school years. The research instruments were aimed at investigating the characteristics of the home environment, linguistic choices in various domains, attitudes towards a specific ethnic identity, as well as proficiency in English and in the mother tongue, and characteristics of the instructional environment including teacher's perceptions; and at identifying those factors that might influence the children's academic performance where English is the medium of instruction.

Among these instruments, those investigating the home and the school environments as the areas where the children's lives are shaped proved to be the most revealing. Since both of these entail elements difficult to capture by means of numerical data, they were also subject to participant observation.

One of the most important findings yielded by correlational analyses of data in the sociolinguistic

questionnaire, the testing of proficiency in both L_1 and L_2 , the Instructional Environment Scale and the CTBS scores was that children whose first language spoken in early childhood had been a dialect version of Italian seemed to constitute the most disadvantaged subgroup as indicated by their low scores in the Instructional Rating Profile, in the CTBS language subtest and by the teacher's informal ratings of their scholastic performance, which in many cases were also consistent with scores in the language proficiency test in English. (No major differences emerged between the remaining two subgroups in the main Italian sample--those speaking either standard Italian or English in early childhood--and their non-Italian counterparts on any of these measures.) Interestingly, however, their proficiency in Italian did not show any kind of statistical relationship with the above variables. They did not seem more competent in their assumed mother tongue, a local dialect of Italian, than were those children of Italian background whose self-reported first language had been either standard Italian or English. This phenomenon might be partially accounted for by the fact that dialectophone speakers of Italian often try to conceal their proficiency in a particular dialect, given the low status of local lects both in Italy itself and in immigrant societies (Tosi

1986, 150,156). Such attitudes are a strong deterrent to public use of the dialect, a deterrent which is transmitted through the parents to the children.

On the other hand, a pattern clearly distinguishable in the linguistic choices of these subjects indicates the predominance of English in the most important areas of childhood socialization, including interaction in the home, even in those cases where self-reported data indicate Italian as the home language. Moreover, informal observations made in the course of the research suggest that both this "socializing" English and the primary languages are mainly used in referential functions, and do not reach the level of abstract reasoning (denotative function) which children are expected to perform in the school.

It also appears that dialectophone children suffer from poor self esteem reinforced by the double impact of having a low-status linguistic background within an ethnic-minority culture, and of being relegated to low status by the host society, in spite of all the efforts to adapt to the language and culture of that society. These children, thus, virtually end up in a no man's land, both linguistically and culturally (Persi Haines and Pringle, 1985).

These findings seem to be consistent with theories on children termed "semilinguals" (Hansegard 1961, in Skutnabb-Kangas 1981) who never reach the level of abstract reasoning in their low-status mother tongue, and whose education in a second language results in "subtractive bilingualism" (Lambert 1975).

One of the consequences of such symbolic confinement is that these children accept their relegation to a low status group, as discussed by Roosens (1987 op.cit. in Trueba, 1989, 15):

The decisive factor would thus be that one has "surrendered" and has internalized the failure for reasons of a quasi-caste position that socially and psychologically seals off any way out.

Consequently, they tend to socialize with peers of their own group (as also indicated by self-reported data in this research).

Incidentally, three of the four children identified as dialectophones in early childhood and low achievers in the school featured a low-middle class socioeconomic background. However, since datasets on the variables involving CTBS scores as formal ratings of academic achievement and the children's socioeconomic background (including the parents' level of education and family income) were not available for all the samples due to

logistic constraints (the former were not available for the Italian control group--Sample 3--while the latter were not available for the non-Italian sample), the implicational relationship between these variables could not be substantiated by adequate statistical analyses. However, some recent research in this area indicates that such a relationship might exist (Jaspaert & Kroon 1987; Roosens 1987; Trueba 1989).

Education in the mother tongue of ethnic minority children in the early elementary-school years advocated, among others, by Cummins (1978) in the multilingual Canadian context, and by Skutnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa (1976) based on research involving Finnish immigrant children in Sweden, does not seem realistic in the case of children of Italian ethnicity, given the great variety of small local lects spoken as first languages, and the lack of teachers qualified to provide instruction in each of these dialects, which are usually confined to the home environment and feature a very limited referential function. (Even in Italy, where the dialects are still part of the everyday life in a number of communities, the creation of such programs for dialectophone children proved to be an enormous task [Zuanelli Sonino 1982].) In an immigrant society, such endeavour would only create small

artificial linguistic islands disconnected from the outside world of the ethnolinguistic community.

On the other hand, ignoring the dichotomy between the standard and the dialect variants, and using standard Italian as the medium of instruction for all children of Italian ethnicity would not comply with the criterion of educating them in their mother tongue.

What seems to be a more plausible solution is to provide training programs for present and future teachers focussing on issues in the second-language acquisition of minority language children, and to acquaint them with culture-specific value systems. Increased awareness and factual knowledge of these issues would, it can be supposed, lead to the appreciation and acceptance of cultural diversities and to a better understanding of the educational needs of these children in terms of pedagogical approaches and instruments (both instructional and evaluative), instead of automatically relegating them to special education classes unless they comply with the norms established from representatives of the mainstream culture. (Evaluative criteria, in fact, should be established for individuals and not derived from group norms.)

Another interesting finding in this research was that no significant differences emerged in terms of linguistic

competence in the mother tongue between subjects receiving instruction in standard Italian and those who did not participate in such programs.

Two hypotheses might be developed from this fact. One is that the discrepancy between the language of instruction (standard Italian) and the minority language spoken in the home (either the so-called "community" version of standard Italian abounding in anglicisms on the morphological and lexical levels, or a similarly corrupted dialect) prevents the children from applying either the former or the latter to a wide variety of contexts.

The second hypothesis is related to the apparent ineffectiveness of heritage language programs due, partially, to the lack of teaching materials specifically developed for these particular pupils and of training programs for their teachers to prepare them to deal with the linguistic needs of such pupils. As well, a thorough survey of the dialects spoken in Italian immigrant communities across Canada--revealing also their current state--and of the linguistic characteristics of the community variant of Italian would be necessary.

Among the research instruments, the attitudinal scale proved to be the least revealing. Again, two hypotheses might be considered here: either the children in the age

group selected for examination have not yet developed attitudes towards ethnic diversity strong enough to be expressed; or the research instrument failed to tap into areas where these attitudes manifest themselves.

The present study was exploratory in that it addressed a wide variety of issues. Research focussing on fewer variables and involving larger samples still needs to be conducted in order to verify the validity of the findings.

Appendix 1

SECTION A

1. Date of Birth: _____
2. Female _____
Male _____
3. Place of Birth: _____
City Province Country
4. If not born in Canada, how old were you when you came?

5. Did you ever go to school abroad?
Yes _____ Specify: _____
No _____
6. What grade are you in presently? _____
7. Where did you attend
kindergarten? _____
grade 1? _____
grade 2? _____
grade 3? _____

8. What language(s) are spoken in your home?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

9. In what language did you start speaking? _____

10. Where was your mother born? _____
Town Country

11. If born outside of Canada, how old was she when she
came here? _____

12. Is your mother working outside the home?

a. No _____

b. Yes _____ Occupation: _____

Full Time: _____

Part Time: _____

12.a. If yes, who is/was the caregiver?

a. grandparents _____

b. a neighbour _____

c. an older brother/sister _____

d. other _____

12.b. What language did you use when staying with this person?

1. English _____

2. French _____

3. Other _____

13. Where was your father born? _____
Town Country

14. If born outside of Canada, how old was he when he came here? _____

15. Is your father working outside the home?

a. No _____

b. Yes _____ Occupation: _____

Full Time: _____

Part Time: _____

16. How many older brothers/sisters do you have? _____

17. How many younger brothers/sisters do you have? _____

18. Where were your mother's parents born? _____
Town

_____ Country

19. Where do they live now? _____

20. Where were your father's parents born? _____
Town

Country

21. Where do they live now? _____

SECTION B

1. What language did you speak in the first five years of your life?

[illegible]

2. How well do you think you understand, speak, read and write that language now?

Very well	Well enough	Not very well	Not at all
1	2	3	4

understand _____

speak _____

read _____

write _____

3. How good do you think you are in French compared to other children in your class?

A lot better _____ A little bit worse _____

A little bit better _____ A lot worse _____

About the same _____

4. How much do you like each of the following subjects?

	Very well	Well enough	Not very well	Not at all
a. Math	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. English	_____	_____	_____	_____
c. French	_____	_____	_____	_____
d. Italian (if applicable)	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. How important is it to you to get good grades in school?

Very important _____

Not very important _____

Not important at all _____

6. How important do you think it is to your parents that you get good grades at school?

Very important _____

Not very important _____

Not important at all _____

7. Have you ever attended classes to study any language besides French and English?

Yes _____

No _____

8. When were the classes held?

On Saturday mornings _____

After school _____

During regular school hours _____

Other _____

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS SHOULD BE ADMINISTERED TO
THE ITALIAN SAMPLE ONLY

9. Where have you learned Italian? For how many years?

On Saturday mornings _____

After school _____

During regular school hours _____

Other _____

10. Do you speak a dialect of Italian?

Yes _____ (specify)

No _____

10.a. If yes, when do you speak it most often?

At home _____

With relatives and friends _____

At the Saturday school _____

At church _____

At the club of your parents _____

11. Which of the following do you find easiest to do in Italian?

Speaking _____

Listening _____

Reading _____

Writing _____

12. Which do you find most difficult?

Speaking _____

Listening _____

Reading _____

Writing _____

13. How often do you watch Italian TV programs, listen to the radio or read in Italian?

	Once a week or more	Less than once a week	Never
watch TV	_____	_____	_____
listen to the radio	_____	_____	_____
read	_____	_____	_____

14. How often do you watch Italian movies or videocassettes?

Once a week or more _____

Less than once a week _____

Never _____

15. How often do you listen to Italian records or tapes?

Once a week or more _____

Less than once a week _____

Never _____

16. Do you read any of the following more or less frequently in Italian?

	More	Less
Letters	_____	_____
Newspapers/Magazines	_____	_____
Comics	_____	_____
Fairy tales	_____	_____
Schoolbooks	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____

17. Where is your reading in Italian taking place most often?

At home _____

At the Saturday school _____

Other _____

18. How often do you write in Italian?

	Once a week or more	Less than once a week	Never
Letters	_____	_____	_____
Assignments	_____	_____	_____
Other	_____	_____	_____

19. Does your family have at home Italian books, newspapers and/or magazines?

Yes _____ (specify if you can)

No _____

SECTION C

In the following questions, please indicate the frequency of use:

1 = always
2 = most of the time
3 = not very often
4 = never

1. At home, do you speak to your mother in:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other (specify)	1	2	3	4

2. When you ask your mother to do something for you:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

3. When you talk to your mother about school or school friends:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

4. When you talk to your mother about family matters:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

5. In which language does your mother talk to you?

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

6. At home, do you speak to your father in:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

7. When you talk to your father about school or school friends:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

8. When you ask your father for permission to do something or to go somewhere:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

9. When you talk to your father about family matters:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

10. In which language does your father speak to you?

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

11. In which language do your parents talk to each other?

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

12. At home, do you speak to your brothers and sisters in:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

13. In which language do you speak to your grandparents?

a. Mother's parents

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

b. Father's parents

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

14. In what language do they speak to you?

a. Mother's parents

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

b. Father's parents

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

15. In which language do you speak to your friends?

a. at school

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

b. at home

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

16. At school, when you don't want to be understood by the others:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4
Other	1	2	3	4

17. When you are visiting Italian relatives or friends:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

18. At school, when you are talking with Italian children:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

19. At the Italian school, speaking to classmates in class:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

20. At the Italian school, speaking to other children before class, during breaks, or after class:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

21. At the Italian school, speaking to the teacher:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

22. When you go shopping with your parents to an Italian store:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

23. When you meet Italian-speaking neighbours:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

24. At Church, speaking to your relatives or friends:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

25. At Church, speaking to older people:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

26. At Church, speaking to younger people:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

27. At Church, talking to a priest:

English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4
Italian	1	2	3	4

28. Do you go to Italian parties (weddings, dances, dinners, baptisms, etc.) with your parents?

Yes _____

No _____

29. If yes, on those occasions do you speak

a. to your parents

Italian	1	2	3	4
English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4

b. to older relatives

Italian	1	2	3	4
English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4

c. to younger relatives

Italian	1	2	3	4
English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4

d. to friends of your age

Italian	1	2	3	4
English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4

e. to other people present

Italian	1	2	3	4
English	1	2	3	4
French	1	2	3	4

SECTION D

(Questions in this section should be administered to all children, applying the necessary changes to indicate the ethnic minority language, or the country of origin.)

1. Have you ever been in Italy?
 - a. No _____
 - b. Yes _____ For how long? _____
2. Have you ever had visitors from Italy staying in your house?
 - a. No _____
 - b. Yes _____
3. Did you have any problems talking to them? _____
4. Did your Italian seem different from theirs? _____
5. Would you like to learn Italian at your regular school?
 - a. No _____
 - b. Yes _____
6. Would you like to study Italian at university when you grow up?
 - a. No _____
 - b. Yes _____

7. Would you like to be able to use Italian at work when you grow up?

a. No _____

b. Yes _____

8. In your opinion, what subjects could be best taught in Italian?

Math _____

History _____

Art _____

Religion _____

Literature _____

9. Did you speak English before starting school?

a. No _____

b. Yes _____

10. If your best friend does not speak any Italian, would you like to teach him/her how?

a. No _____

b. Yes _____

Could you list five words that you would teach him/her?

11. Does your best friend in the neighbourhood speak any Italian?

a. No _____

b. Yes _____

12. Do you invite some of your classmates from the Italian school to your birthday party? _____

13. I think that the most important skill for me in Italian is:

Speaking _____ Reading _____

Listening _____ Writing _____

14. In the future, I would like to do better in:

Speaking _____ Reading _____

Listening _____ Writing _____

None of the above _____ All of the above _____

15. When I grow up, I would like to work with people who speak:

English _____

French _____

Italian _____

Other _____

16. As an adult, my knowledge of Italian will be most useful:

a. at home (with my family)	b. with friends
c. at school	d. at work
e. in finding a job	f. when travelling abroad

Appendix 2

PLEASE SELECT AND UNDERLINE (OR CIRCLE) ONE ANSWER
IN EACH SECTION:

1. How friendly do you think this person is?

Very friendly 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not friendly at all

2. How many children do you think this person has?

- three or more
- two
- one
- none

3. How strict do you think this person is?

Very strict 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not strict at all

4. How intelligent do you think this person is?

Very intelligent 6 5 4 3 2 1 Not intelligent at all

5. Where do you think this person works?

- in a store
- in a library
- in a school
- on a farm

6. How tall do you think this person is?

Tall 6 5 4 3 2 1 Short

7. In what type of a house do you think this person lives?
Big 6 5 4 3 2 1 Small
8. What language do you think this person speaks the best?
- English
- French
- Other language(s)
9. How rich do you think this person is?
Rich 6 5 4 3 2 1 Poor
10. I think that this person and my parents could be good friends
- Yes
- No
11. I would like to have this person as my teacher
- Yes
- No
12. I would like to have this person to be my neighbour
- Yes
- No

13. This person reminds me of:

- my teacher
- my mom
- my friend's mom
- nobody that I know

14. I wish this person would read me a bedtime story

- Yes
- No

Appendix 3a

Sample of the English Proficiency Test Format

NAME _____

SCHOOL _____

GRADE _____

TEACHER _____

INTERVIEW DATE AND TIME _____

My name is _____. What's yours?

Where do you live?

How far is that? / Is it far from here?

How do you come to school?

Do you come that way all the time?

What do you like most/least about school? Why?

What are your favourite games/sports/activities? Why?

Do you have any brothers/sisters/pets? (grandparents,
cousins)STORY FELIX THE CATSetting: description of where Felix lives and lady's
routineCharacters: Felix the cat
lady

- Events:
- 1) Felix comes home, finds boxes and movers
 - 2) lady returns home, puts fish in box instead of dish
 - 3) hungry Felix jumps in box
 - 4) lady puts lid on box, traps Felix inside
 - 5) angry Felix meows, falls asleep
 - 6) later, lady takes lid off and Felix jumps out (still angry)
 - 7) suprised to be in new home, new and exciting place
 - 8) forgets anger, explores house

Appendix 3b

Sample of the English Proficiency Test Format

NAME _____

SCHOOL _____

GRADE _____

TEACHER _____

INTERVIEW DATE AND TIME _____

My name is _____. What's yours?
 How old are you?

Where do you live?

How far is that? / Is it far from here?

How do you come to school?

Do you come that way all the time?

What do you like most/least about school? Why?

What are your favourite games/sports/activities? Why?
 Which games/sports/activities do you dislike? Why?

Do you have any brothers/sisters/pets? (grandparents,
 cousins)

STORY _____ Told to: _____
 Title: Found the lost dog

Setting: dog sitting on sidewalk

Characters: dog, John, Peter, their Mom

Events: 1) dog jumps and tries to lick boys' faces
 2) Peter asks mom to keep it, mom says no
 (he's lost)
 3) look in paper, no ad for lost dog
 4) take him to lost dog place, leave him there
 5) three days later, go back, dog (sad) still
 there, sees them, is very happy
 6) mom allows boys to keep dog
 7) take dog home
 8) name him Found

Appendix 4

Italian Interview

I: Ciao, come ti chiami?

Qual è il tuo cognome?

Quanti anni hai?

Hai un fratellino o una sorellina?

Quanti anni ha? Come si chiama

É più piccolo/più grande?

Cosa fa? (va a scuola, ecc.)

Dove va a scuola?

Con chi abiti?

Cosa ti piacerebbe avere a casa? Un animaletto,
un gatto, un cane?

Quando ritorni dalla scuola, chi c'è a casa?

Cosa fai quando arrivi a casa dalla scuola?

Aiuti la mamma? Come?

Che cosa ti piace fare a casa?

Fuori della casa cosa fai? Con chi giochi?

Cosa fai il sabato?

I tuoi cugini ti vengono a trovare il sabato?

Cosa fai con la nonna? (i nonni?)

Ti piacciono gli sport? Quali? Con chi giochi?

Cosa fai la domenica? Vai alla messa (in chiesa?)
E il pomeriggio?

Come si chiamano la mamma e il papà?

Sei mai andato in Italia? Ci vorresti andare?

Parli italiano a casa? Con chi?

Appendix 5Transcript of Instructions for the Interviewer in
the Italian Proficiency Test

The interview should be conducted in a conversational, informal manner, using the "community version" of Italian (that is, the local variety of Italian spoken by members of the community with various dialect backgrounds). "Yes/No" questions should be avoided if possible (i.e., questions that lead to monosyllabic answers). The goal is to elicit as much language sample from the children as possible. The order of the questions could be reversed if need be and additional questions could be asked depending on the interviewees' level of comfort, willingness to go along with the interviewer and the task, etc. The interviewer should start speaking community Italian as soon as she/he meets the child (so as to avoid automatic switch to English).

Appendix 6

Transcript of Research Outline Described to the Parents
(at the time of establishing in-home appointments for
the testing of proficiency in Italian)

Informazioni da usare per fare degli appuntamenti con i genitori per la visita a casa.

- Si tratta di una ricerca sui bambini bilingui che si svolge alla scuola San Agostino con il permesso e appoggio assoluto del Board of Education, del direttore della scuola Fergus Lyons, e dell'insegnante della 3a elementare, la signora Ruth West.

- La ricerca ha lo scopo di provare l'importanza della madrelingua e il suo effetto positivo allo sviluppo cognitivo dei bambini bilingui.

- La ricerca, condotta dalla Signora Agnese Nemeskeri dell'Univ. di Carleton è stata cominciata nell'ottobre scorso con la massima collaborazione della scuola. Una lettera del Sig. Lyons è stata mandata ai genitori avvisandoli dello svolgimento del progetto.

- L'ultimo passo per poter completare la ricerca e riassumere i risultati, coinvolgerebbe la visita a casa dei bambini per osservare (registrare) che lingue parlano a casa e per fare un'intervista breve (con ciascuno), in italiano (con domande semplici come: "Quanti anni hai?"

"Come ti chiami?" "Quanti fratelli/sorelle hai?" ecc.
(circa 35 min. in tutto)

- La signora Nemeskeri ha avuto la possibilità per conoscere bene i bambini durante il processo di ricerca, quindi potete rivolgervi anche al Vostro bambino per referenze! Per ulteriori informazioni si può chiamare il Sig. Lyons al 725-8020 o la Signora Nemeskeri al 788-2108 durante il giorno, o al 671-0101 di sera. Grazie della vostra gentile collaborazione!

Appendix 7

The Socioeconomic Questionnaire

- a. 1. What is your mother tongue? _____
2. Where were you born? _____
3. What languages do you speak besides ()? _____
4. What is the mother tongue of your husband/wife? _____
5. Where was he/she born? _____
6. What languages does he/she speak besides ()? _____
- b. 1. Tell me about your schools _____
2. And now about your husband's/wife's schools _____
- c. 1. What is your present occupation?
- construction or other unskilled worker
 - waiter, salesperson, cleaner, housekeeper, or other service occupation
 - driver, machinist, mechanic, electrician, plumber, repairman, policeman, fireman, or other skilled service occupation

- shopkeeper, restaurateur, hotelier, or other small business manager or owner
- clerk, government functionary, or other white-collar without specialized professional training
- teacher, doctor, priest, librarian, or other professional
- other

2. What is your spouse's present occupation?

d. Type of housing:

- rented	- apartment
- owned	- house (single; semi-detached; row; garden)

e. Please show me in which category would your annual family income fall?

- A. less than \$10,000
- B. 10,000 - 15,000
- C. 15,000 - 20,000
- D. 20,000 - 30,000
- E. 30,000 - 40,000
- F. over \$40,000

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