

**Taking Two Roads At Once:
Bilingual Education in Early Elementary**

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This paper explores the benefits of implementing dual language immersion programs into the early elementary curriculum of schools. Dual language immersion is a fairly recent implementation for the modern U.S. school system. It is a form of bilingual education that provides instruction to a class of students in two languages—English and a partner language—with the goal of producing bilingual students who can produce grade-level work in both languages.

While bilingual education was fairly common in early America, anti-foreign sentiment during World War I discontinued the practice. Ironically, instead of unifying the country around English, this shift arguably led to a more fragmented and mistrustful society as well as inhibiting American diversity.

Bilingual education began to reemerge in the 1960s, and I argue that its widespread implementation should be encouraged—particularly in the first few grades—because of the benefits it brings to native English speakers, English learners, and to society as a whole. Despite initial challenges such as designing the curriculum and hiring teachers, bilingual education has been shown to be a feasible undertaking that is well worth the investment, proven to give all of its students advantages over their peers and to be effective at fostering bilingualism.