Dual language programs in the U.S. and their importance for Spanish and for social justice

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Multiple studies around the U.S. have shown that dual immersion programs that teach in Spanish between 50-90% of the day result in higher levels of both English language learning and academic achievement. But what about students’ Spanish? This study explores in detail the Spanish proficiency of two groups of home Spanish-speaking students in one Chicago public school: those attending the dual immersion program and those in the English program. We will examine their listening, speaking, and reading scores as well as several representative writing samples. Then we will consider the potential of dual immersion programs in promoting social justice among U.S. Latino communities, who are among some of the most vulnerable in the nation.