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**Linguistically Diverse Students and the Arts: A Scoping Review**

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**Abstract**

As the number of linguistically diverse students in American schools rises, teachers must facilitate the academic language development of emergent bilinguals (Garcia et al, 2008). Building a theoretical model of creative processes from the work of Mace and Ward (2002), Halliday (2003), and Rogoff et al. (1995), I suggest the arts may be well-suited for supporting the academic language development of emergent bilinguals. In this article, I conduct a scoping review of research literature from 2006 to 2016 to explore the use of the arts in K-12 classrooms with emergent bilinguals. Per scoping reviews, this study reviews the nature of the field, including methods, methodologies, measures, and outcomes. Because there is a pressing need for teachers to facilitate emergent bilinguals' academic language development, further exploration of the intersection of arts and language must hone the tools of research to add depth and impact to a wide-ranging field of inquiry.

*Keywords:* Arts, linguistically diverse students, emergent bilinguals, academic language

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### **Linguistically Diverse Students and the Arts: A Scoping Review**

Within the United States, the last decade has seen a variety of changes in the education systems of two seemingly unrelated fields: language development of emergent bilinguals and the arts. Events such as Proposition 203 (2000) in Arizona have altered the landscape of education for linguistically diverse students, pushing them away from extended language learning and bilingual programs into shorter sheltered immersion instruction meant to return students learning English as a second language to mainstream classrooms as quickly as possible (Garcia, Kleifgen, & Lorraine, 2008; Lawton, 2012). While the landscape of language learning for emergent bilinguals has fluctuated, so has that of the arts in schools. Like the learning of English, political and cultural ideologies have challenged the way Americans view and value arts in schools (Nussbaum, 2010). During the 2000s, critical changes took place in schools for the arts and for language learning. Districts eliminated discipline-based arts positions (e.g., music and visual art) and reduced the amount of time all students engaged in arts activities, especially in predominantly poor schools (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011).

While seen as two separate issues, policy and funding changes at the turn of the century have left emergent bilingual students without access to both appropriate opportunities for advanced academic language development as well as opportunities to explore in the arts. By limiting students' access to the arts in schools, students miss opportunities for aesthetic and personal understandings that help them to better engage flexibly and creatively with the larger society (Donahue & Stuart, 2010). The arts are a key player in the way we, as individuals in a group, understand what makes us unique and what makes us part of a whole (Read, 1958; Walling, 1997). Additionally, learning in language and the arts supports key twenty-first century skills, such as creativity, critical-thinking, and problem-solving, which have been highly valued

in society. Alarming, emergent bilinguals in the United States are missing structured and systematic opportunities to develop the language of school as well as to develop in the arts, especially as they navigate the challenges of entering and making sense of new languages and communities while maintaining ties to those from which they came. The nature of the arts is apt for supporting emergent bilinguals as they navigate linguistic and social boundaries.

Unfortunately, education policy in the United States is trending towards vocabulary first and sheltered instruction, which isolates emergent bilinguals from authentic meaning-making experiences.

In this scoping review, I theorize that arts in the classroom are supportive of the development of academic language for emergent bilinguals. Drawing on the work of Mace and Ward (2002), Halliday (2003), and Rogoff, Baker-Sennett, Lacasa, and Goldsmith (1995), I suggest that academic language may be promoted through the creative processes associated with both the arts and language. By identifying overlaps in the literature of language learning and the arts, I highlight research that includes the arts in the classroom and the discussion of academic language development of linguistically diverse students. By providing a broad review of the literature, this study aims to identify the ways in which these two lines of research complement each other to raise new questions for future theory, research, and practice. Guiding this review is the question: *What is the extent, range, and nature of research connecting the use of the arts in mainstream classroom settings to emergent bilinguals' [academic] language development?*

## **Literature Review**

### **Best Practices in Academic Language Development of Emergent Bilinguals**

Emergent bilinguals are a unique group of students within the United States. Drawing upon the work of Garcia, Kleifgen, and Falchi (2008), I define *emergent bilingual* as students

learning English through the context of school in addition to learning their home language. I do not limit the use of this term specifically to students being educated in bilingual settings, but rather I use it as an asset-oriented term for students who have been identified as English Learners in their varied school contexts. This term is often used interchangeably with English learners and linguistically diverse students. The use of the term *emergent bilingual* contradicts the notion that English language learning is a skill-building exercise meant to overcome a language deficit created by a student's home language. These "deficits" are especially prevalent in standardized testing practices which will often mask the academic language practices of emergent bilinguals as they participate in school settings (Rodriguez-Mojica, 2018).

Because research connecting the academic language and literacy practices of emergent bilinguals with and through the arts is limited, I use what is known about best practices in the instruction of emergent bilinguals' academic language development to identify where the arts promote the continued development of academic language and literacy. A range of research exists related to emergent bilinguals and their academic language development which draws upon several definitions of language and literacy practices. For the purposes of this review, I utilize the work of Enright (2011) and focus upon the instruction of *academic language*, which Enright defines as "the general construct of the language of schooling" (2011, p. 82). I use the term *academic language* as opposed to *academic vocabulary* because of its focus on the purposeful and dynamic use of language for problem-solving and communication. This term, like that of *emergent bilingual*, is asset oriented.

Within the field of academic language, key instructional practices have been identified for supporting emergent bilinguals in the classroom. A literature review conducted by DiCerbo, Anstrom, Baker, and Rivera (2014) looked closely at the ties between academic language using

English as the language of instruction, which DiCerbo et al. refer to as Academic English (AE) and emergent bilinguals. Per DiCerbo et al.'s (2014) review of the literature, several instructional practices present themselves as especially important for emergent bilinguals developing academic language. Emergent bilinguals need to participate in extended interactions through writing and speaking. These interactions can be supported by teachers through the following: (a) asking follow-up and open-ended questions; (b) promoting instructional conversations; (c) providing non-evaluative listening; (d) modeling for beginning language learners; (e) promoting frequent and extended utterances for intermediate language learners; (f) increasing opportunities for group and partner work with peers; and (g) opportunities for extended writing in a variety of subjects and genres. For the purposes of this review, I focused on instructional practices for supporting emergent bilinguals' development of AE as an organizational lens for viewing the studies included in my review.

In addition to interactions that promote language learning, Schleppegrell (2016) described the larger instructional practices through *systemic functional linguistics* (SFL), which highlights that language is socially and contextually dependent; language is used in specific and functional ways to support the purposes of the context. Schleppegrell (2001) laid out the challenges of the language of school, suggesting that instruction of school registers should include opportunities for emergent bilinguals to garner experience and practice in academic registers, develop motivation, and participate in authentic interactions and negotiations. Menken (2013) also expands upon authentic and motivating language opportunities for emergent bilinguals by reviewing the work of translanguageing and multilingual instructional practices, where students work fluidly through multiple languages depending on their communicative purposes, which promote explicit and integrated language instruction, including home language

instruction for emergent bilingual students in addition to translanguaging processes with support language contextualization and metalinguistic awareness. This is supported by Blair (2016) who argues that supporting students' translanguaging practices promotes more proficient and confident bilingual speakers. While the practices described by DiCerbo et al. (2104) and Schleppegrell (2001) would arguably be beneficial for all learners, regardless of their language status, they have been identified as especially important for emergent bilinguals.

Translanguaging and multilingual practices are theorized specifically for emergent bilingual youth and are built upon social and performative understandings of language, which recognizes language as a social practice of communication that is neither rigid nor binary. These are the instructional practices often missing from current language instruction for emergent bilinguals, which are typically isolated from larger learning contexts and focused on decontextualized vocabulary and grammar knowledge.

### **Arts in Education with Emergent Bilingual Youth**

As public education has developed over the decades, so, too, have ideas about the role of the arts in schools. *Arts education* is a broad term encompassing instruction in a range of arts disciplines including dance, theater, music, and visual art. Arts in education refers to an even broader array of instructional and curricular approaches to the arts in schools, including *arts based* learning, where the arts are taught for the sake of the arts as a discipline, *arts integrated* learning, where the arts learning are intertwined with other content area learning, and *arts infused* or *arts enhanced* learning, where the arts are used to enrich content area curriculum (Davis, 2008). Arts advocates and school stakeholders have argued for the importance of the arts as an integral part of public-school curricula. Dewey (1934) argued that our human experiences are steeped in the arts, whether we recognize it or not. In these experiential instances, we are

artists. Looking at and partaking in the arts are part of what makes us human (Davis, 2008) and part of what makes us human in a society of other humans (Nussbaum, 2010; Read, 1958; Walling, 1997). Bassett (1969) argued that to truly see the world, we must “train the eyes” (p. vii), just as one does through the arts. Bassett contended that education’s focus on the mastery of words and science limit and befuddle what we, as humans, can see and do. Creation, imagination, and exploration of ourselves and of the world through aesthetic education are what make individuals unique and what make us an important part of the whole (Read, 1958; Walling, 1997). Importantly for schools, the arts are just as much about the process of creation as the product created (Sawyer, 2000). It is through creative processes that we begin to see who we are and through observation that we begin to see through the eyes of others.

For these reasons, a range of advocates continue to argue that the arts remain a fundamental centerpiece of the education system (Davis, 2008; Donahue & Stuart, 2010; Eisner, 1998; Fowler, 1996; Greene, 1995; Read, 1958; Robinson & Aronica, 2015; Walling, 1997). Education must be formed around creativity, imagination, and ingenuity (Greene, 1995). The arts challenge teachers and students to act as creative, flexible, and original learners in a larger society (Donahue & Stuart, 2010). Eisner (2002) argued that the arts in schools contribute to “growth of mind” (p. xi) and that the skills developed through the arts are those that benefit both individual students and school structures. Without the critical thinking and keen observation of the artist, society will remain flat, burdensome, and flawed. Indeed, arts in schools provide attention to aesthetics and creativity which challenge students to look beyond familiar spaces.

While arts in education takes a number of different forms in K-12 school settings, it also takes a number of different forms in when used in different in-school and out-of-school contexts with emergent bilingual youth (for more resources related to teaching the arts to linguistically



diverse students, see Latta and Chan, 2011). A range of research has made the case for the inclusion of the arts when working with multilingual students learning English as an additional language, which generally fall into the themes of arts for academic development, arts for identity development, and arts for social change/justice (Chappell & Cahnmann-Taylor, 2013). These examples extend across genres of performance art, visual art, and multimodalities. Research examining arts for academic development include the combination of visual art and poetry writing (Gulla, 2015; Reilly, 2008) and poetry writing and vocabulary learning (Özen & Mohammadzadeh (2012). Researching examining arts for identity development include poetry and creative writing (Owens & Brien, 2014; Saito, 2008) and visual art instruction (Wielgosz & Molyneux, 2015). Research examining arts for social justice and change include Critical Performative Pedagogy (Harman & Smagorinsky, 2014; Harman & Varga-Dobai, 2012), poetry writing (Cahnmann-Taylor, Bleyle, Hwang, & Zhang, 2017), and visual immersion and multimodality (Smilan, 2017). Indeed, these examples of emergent bilingual youth working in the arts highlight the importance of finding linguistic and contextual learning experiences for students that are culturally and socially relevant. Chappell and Faltis (2013) describe arts in education for emergent bilingual youth as the opportunity for authentic experiences, which “stretch learners’ abilities to use language for expressing their understandings, questions, emotions, positions and communities” (p. 13).

The academic, social, and cultural work of emergent bilingual youth in academic settings is mirrored by challenges posed by the complexity of education. Eisner (1998) argues that the process of creativity will always have a place in schools because the field of education is ever changing and challenging, just as creative processes ask participants to clarify, contrast, and

challenge the senses and the mind. These processes of aesthetics and language for emergent bilinguals are further explored through this scoping review.

### **Theoretical Frame**

#### **The Creative Processes of the Arts and Language**

I theorize that the arts in educational settings support the development of academic English on the level of language. I suggest that the arts are especially suited for developing academic language through the creative processes tied to arts and language. To better explore this idea, I put in conversation the model for the creative process of visual artists (Mace & Ward, 2002), theory of language acquisition (Halliday, 2003), and theory of development through sociocultural activity (Rogoff et al., 1995). In order to better understand how these theories work in relationship to each other, I discuss each of them here. First, a key concept from the model for creative processes is that the creative process is cyclical as well as iterative. The development of concepts and ideas, based on personal experience and external influence, is the starting point for attempts at creation. The act of making and producing language or art is based on notions of decision-making and experimentation, which occur naturally and cyclically through the negotiation of structure, expansion, restructuring, and evaluation. Through these processes, creativity is used iteratively until the final product is either accepted or rejected, thereby starting the cycle over again. While Mace and Ward's (2002) original model was developed based on the work of visual artists, the cyclical and iterative nature of the model is pertinent to the development and use of language as well. This is especially critical for emergent bilinguals because of the iterative nature of language learning, where students must explore and experiment with language to communicate and construct meaning.

In addition to the cyclical and iterative nature of creativity, language and art also include sociocultural notions that creative processes and acts of meaning-making are embedded in larger community contexts and are equally subject to personal, experiential, and interpersonal connections, which allow for the collaboration and co-construction of process and meaning. Throughout creative processes, individuals engage in both personal decision-making and evaluation, but are also subject to the external influences of interpersonal relationships and structures of the larger community. Rogoff et al. (1995) defined community as culturally organized and institutionalized settings with set expectations and rules. Interpersonal spaces are those that are face-to-face, based on communication and the inclusion and exclusion of participants. Personal spaces are those of the individual, which are subject to change through engagement with the environment, including community and interpersonal relationships. While the use of language and art for communicative purposes begins with the speaker, they are still framed within the boundaries of community, interpersonal, and personal/experiential spaces, suggesting that these are never separate or removed from creative processes.

To this end, the connections between community, interpersonal, and personal spaces are especially relevant to schooling because the structure of education is designed within broad communities (e.g., the school or district) and smaller interpersonal spaces (e.g. the classroom). Rogoff et al. (1995) explained development through the context of community, interpersonal, and personal interaction. Rogoff et al. (1995) discussed that an individual's development is inseparable from their social context. Social context is reflected in this theory of creative processes for both arts and language because neither are separate from the world in which they are constructed. Creative processes are embedded in larger social contexts, and the personal and interpersonal experiences of the maker shape, in large and small ways, the conception, creation,

and development of any arts or language processes. Because the arts and language are centered around meaning-making, they cannot be segregated from their social context. The emphasis on communication within social context, such as school and the classroom, plays a critical role for the development of emergent bilinguals, especially in regard to academic language, because they are daily asked to negotiate language spaces and social spaces flexibly and creatively. This is often at odds with language instruction, which often approaches language learning as decontextualized and stagnant.

In addition to sociocultural underpinnings of creative processes, this model also includes key concepts of creative processes related to the creation of art, drawing on the work of Mace and Ward (2002). Mace and Ward (2002) built their model of the creative process of art-making by following the artistic work of nine visual artists, including painters, sculptors, and photographers. Based on their interviews and observations, Mace and Ward developed their theory of creative art processes. However, as once argued by Rogers (1954) in his attempts to construct a theory of creativity, in many ways, creative processes across art forms are generally the same. This same argument can be made for creative processes inclusive of language as well as arts since language draws upon similar iterative processes. Just like an artist, a speaker or writer must also make creative and interpretive decisions as part of preparing, evaluating, restructuring, and enriching their language for communicative ends. Additionally, Sawyer (2000) argued for the importance of improvisation in arts creation and for the importance of process over product. Therefore, the most central concept of the creative process is the cyclical and iterative focus on structure, experimentation, and evaluation, rather than on the final product. Sawyer also suggested, drawing on the work of John Dewey (1934) and Robin George Collingwood (1938), that communication and collaboration between artists, audience, and the

community at large are a central feature of creative processes. The emphasis on creation, improvisation, communication, and collaboration are often key concepts missing in the school-based language development of emergent bilinguals. Often, instruction focuses on memorization and recitation practices to quickly allow students to enter back into mainstream classrooms rather than assisting students in developing dynamic and purposeful language skills as are emphasized in the model of creative processes.

Notions of creative processes supported by communication in a social context are also supported by theories of society and language. Halliday (1993) argued that the development of language and meaning-making is based, in part, on the combination of experience and knowledge developed through an iterative process of language integration and reconstruction, similar to the model of creative processes. Halliday (2003) also explored the importance of dialogue in language development through experiential and interpersonal collaborations related to shared experience. Through dynamic dialogic spaces, meaning is constructed. Thus, the creative processes, which includes language and art making, draws upon notions of collaboration and construction as part of the development and meaning-making, which is negotiated through interpersonal and personal experience.

These same notions of social collaboration and meaningful processes are taken up by Schleppgrell (2001) in her discussion of the language of schooling and its challenges for students learning English as an additional language. Per Schleppgrell (2001), emergent bilinguals, as well as any student learning the linguistic register of school, need experience, practice, and opportunity for interaction and negotiation to develop and effectively use academic registers. As seen by the current literature related to arts and emergent bilingual students, this language practice can be effectively embedded in authentic language performance through social

and cultural engagement, which emphasizes students' lived experiences through asset-oriented approaches to instruction (Cahnmann-Taylor et al., 2017; Harman & Smagorinsky, 2014; Harman & Varga-Dobai, 2012; Owens & Brien, 2014; Saito, 2008; Smilan, 2017; Wielgosz & Molyneux, 2015). By recognizing the creative process as functioning within the communal sphere, with attention to personal and interpersonal collaboration and experimentation, the focus of the process is on iterative and integrative approaches to meaning-making and development. This suggests that the creative processes tied to the arts are also well-suited for the needs of emergent bilinguals in the development of the language of school. The creative processes of arts and language will provide this scoping review with the means to identify the range and nature of the research, as well as identify gaps in the literature.

### **Methodology**

This scoping review of the literature focuses on peer-reviewed empirical and practical studies related to both the arts in classrooms and language development of emergent bilinguals. Studies included in this review were published between the years 2006 to 2016 to account for major social, political, and economic shifts which occurred in the early 2000s in the United States. By 2002, the type of instruction received by designated English learners shifted drastically from bilingual education to English-only immersion programs (Zehler et al., 2003). Additionally, the passing of No Child Left Behind by President George W. Bush in 2001 required that schools collect accountability data on English learners as a subgroup, separated from the larger student population. As of 2006, high-stakes test scores were collected for all subgroups in math, science, and English (Garcia et al., 2008). These changes in policy and accountability in addition to changes in instruction and school structure have shifted the course of emergent bilinguals' language learning in schools. To collect relevant articles, I first

conducted a multi-staged search utilizing the ProQuest database. Searches included the following terms in a variety of combinations: *the arts*, *classroom*, *instruction*, *English language learners*, *English as a second language*, *linguistically diverse students*, *emergent bilinguals*, *academic language*, and *development*. Once relevant articles were identified from the large database search, I cross-referenced bibliographies for additional sources. In addition, I reviewed tables of contents from 2006-2017 from the following journals: *TESOL Quarterly*, *Journal for Learning through the Arts*, and *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*.

Per the nature of a scoping review, a broad range of literature is included regardless of study design utilizing an iterative rather than linear process (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Given the breadth of the research question, I used the following inclusion criteria for identifying relevant studies. First, I included peer-reviewed empirical studies as well as practice-based or practitioner pieces written for or by teachers. All articles included in this review discussed both the arts in the classroom and some aspect of language development. Second, inclusion criteria required that studies take place in mainstream, K-12 classrooms during normal school hours. Studies were not included if they took place during after school or summer programs, professional development, and teacher preparation programs. Third, studies had to include students learning English as an additional language, in some capacity, as participants in their study. After reviewing each article for the inclusion criteria, I included seventeen articles in this review.

Once relevant articles were identified, I utilized descriptive and numerical analysis by theme in order to categorize studies by content area, art area, participants, methods, and findings. To best understand the nature, range, and extent of the field, I organized the literature to highlight the range of art forms, content areas, and methods used throughout the research,

including the different ways studies included emergent bilingual students in their research methods. Additionally, I utilized the instructional practices from DiCerbo et al. (2014) as *a priori* codes to summarize the studies' inclusion or discussion of best practices for the academic language development of emergent bilingual students. This method of "charting" through basic numerical analysis and examination by theme is consistent with the nature of scoping reviews, which seek to examine the literature through collection and summary rather than by synthesis or meta-analysis (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). An additional benefit of this method of analysis through organizational strategies based on key issues and themes is the exploration of the given research while identifying potential areas for further study.

### **Findings and Discussion**

Of the seventeen articles included in this scoping review, three of the articles were practical articles or practitioner pieces and fourteen of the articles were empirical. Both practical and empirical articles were included in the review since both hold a valuable perspective for the broad field of the arts and linguistically diverse students. Per the particular needs of a scoping review, Table 1, as seen below, includes information from each study regarding arts and content-area learning, methods, participants, and study descriptions. As seen in Table 1, I organized participants designated as English language learners or emergent bilinguals as (a) focal participants, (b) example participants, and (c) demographic participants. Focal participants refer to studies where participation is entirely or primarily focused on emergent bilinguals. Example participants refer to studies where researchers pulled examples of the work of emergent bilinguals from the larger class context. Demographic participants refer to studies where emergent bilinguals were included as a demographic in a larger population, such as "urban" without specific examples of their work. Because scoping reviews seek to explore the range and



nature of studies, tables in this study include a broad range of information that seeks to illuminate the current range of research literature tied to linguistically diverse students and the arts in schools.

Table 1

*Empirical and Practical Articles Included in Scoping Review*

	<u>Study</u>	<u>Arts</u>	<u>Content</u>	<u>Method</u>	<u>EB Design.</u>	<u>Description of Study</u>
Bournot-Trites, M., Belliveau, G., Spiliotopoulos, V., & Seror, J. (2007). The role of drama on cultural sensitivity, motivation and literacy in a second language context. <i>Journal for Learning Through the Arts</i> , 3(1), 1-35.	Empirical	Theater (process- based drama)	Social Studies	Mixed- Methods Pilot Study	<i>Focal participants</i> Two early French immersion elementary classrooms Canada	This study compared two French immersion classes, one using drama and the other using typical teacher- centered instruction. The drama group scored significantly higher for motivation and writing.
Brouillette, L. R., Burge, K., Fitzgerald, W., & Walker, P. (2008). Teaching writing through the arts in urban secondary schools: A case study. <i>Journal for Learning through the Arts</i> , 4(1), 1-28.	Empirical	Arts-based strategies	Literacy (writing)	Mixed- Methods	<i>Demographic participants</i> 10 <sup>th</sup> grade students in 44 Title 1 schools California, USA	This study followed classroom arts teachers involved in professional development for writing instruction. The expository writing skills of students with participating teachers improved significantly.

Brouillette, L. & Missakian, I. V. (2012). Stages of learning: Theater and language in San Diego schools. <i>Boom: A Journal of California</i> , 2(2), 70-75.	Practical	Theater	Language	Descriptive	<i>Demographic participants</i> Kindergarten classrooms in arts-poor areas Southeast San Diego, CA, USA	This study interviewed classroom teachers and described their positive experiences using dance and theater to teach vocabulary to young students.
Craig, M., & Porter, C. (2014). "Speaking back" from the English periphery: Art-work in a south Korean high school English classroom. <i>English Teaching: Practice and Critique</i> , 13(2), 35-54.	Empirical	Visual Art	English language learning	Case Study	<i>Focal participants</i> High school students in an English language learning class Seoul, South Korea	This study described the experiences of language-marginalized Korean students who participated in multimodal literacy practices to speak back to authoritative media outlets.
Crommiller, S. (2007). Essential poetry: Activating the imagination in the elementary classroom. <i>Journal for Learning through the Arts</i> , 3(1), 1-23.	Practical	Poetry	Workshop Model	Descriptive	<i>Focal participants</i> Spanish-English dual language immersion program, 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade San Ana, CA, USA	This study described the experiences of urban 3 <sup>rd</sup> -5 <sup>th</sup> graders as they participated in the development of poetry curriculum for dual immersion instruction.

Cunnington, M., Kantowitz, A., Harnett, S., & Hill-ries, A. (2014). Cultivating common ground: Integrating standards-based visual arts, math and literacy in high-poverty urban classrooms. <i>Journal for Learning through the Arts</i> , 10(1), 1-24.	Empirical	Visual Art	Math/Literacy	Mixed-Method	<i>Demographic participants</i> 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade cohort in six urban elementary schools New York, USA	This study looked at the effects of professional development for arts integrated instruction across content areas. Findings suggest successful engagement of lower performing students and students with disabilities.
Delacruz, S., & An, S. (2014). Lights, camera, iPads, action! How a fourth-grade class learned 21st century literacies through various arts projects. <i>New Waves - Educational Research and Development</i> , 17(2), 12-24.	Empirical	Music	Literacy	Case study	<i>Focal/Example participants</i> 4 <sup>th</sup> grade classroom	This study examined interdisciplinary teaching of arts and core content areas. Results suggest students recalled facts and visualized content given integrated instruction.
Fennessey, S. (2006). Using theater games to enhance language arts learning. <i>The Reading Teacher</i> , 59(7), 688-691.	Practical	Theater	ELA	Descriptive/How To	<i>Example participants</i> Fifth grade classroom	This article described the theater activities used in the fifth-grade classroom and discussed their usefulness for improved classroom instruction.

Flint, A. S., Allen, E., Nason, M., Rodriguez, S., Thornton, N., & Wumter-Hoyte, K. (2015). "It happened to me": Third grade students write and draw toward critical perspectives. <i>Journal of Language and Literacy Education</i> , 11(2), 23-43.	Empirical	Visual Art	Language Arts	Naturalistic case study	<i>Example participants</i> 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade classroom in large, urban city, Southeast, USA	In this study, students utilized writing, language, and drawing to further their understanding of important social issues such as civil rights and migrant workers.
Graham, N. J., & Brouillette, L. (2016). Using arts integration to make science learning memorable in the upper elementary grades: A quasi-experimental study. <i>Journal for Learning through the Arts</i> , 12(1), 1-17.	Empirical	Dance	Science	Quasi-Experiment	<i>Demographic participants</i> 3-5 grade classrooms in Title I elementary schools, California, USA	This study examined the role of arts integration in STEAM instruction. Results found that students involved in STEAM instruction showed greater improvement on physical science benchmark assessments than those engaged in STEM instruction.

Lorimer, M. R. (2011). Arts-infused learning in middle level classrooms. <i>Journal for Learning through the Arts</i> , 7(1), 1-13.	Empirical	Visual Art (primary); Theater/Dance/Music (secondary)	Science (primary); History/Language Arts/Social Studies/Life Skills/Math (secondary)	Case Study	<i>Demographic participants</i> 6-7 grade classrooms in urban middle schools California, USA	This study explored arts integrated instruction for middle level students. Findings support that arts-infused learning supported the developmental needs of early adolescents.
Medina, C. L., & Costa, M. del R. (2013). Latino media and critical literacy pedagogies: Children's scripting of <i>Telenovelas</i> discourses. <i>Journal of Language and Literacy Education</i> , 9(1), 161-184.	Empirical	Theater	Literacy	Ethnography (of Globalization)	<i>Focal participants</i> 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade classroom in community-based project San Juan, Puerto Rico	This study described the classroom experiences of third graders as they explored critical literacy and performative inquiry through the examination of telenovelas.
Montero, M. K., Bice-Zaugg, C., Marsh, A. C. J., & Cummins, J. (2013). Activist literacies: Validating aboriginality through visual and literary identity texts. <i>Journal of Language and Literacy Education</i> , 9(1), 73-94.	Empirical	Visual Art	Literacy	Thematic Narrative Analysis	<i>Focal participants</i> Two focal students (Canadian Aboriginal) in mixed grade high school class Ontario, Canada	This study described the creation of visual and literary identity texts by Aboriginal students rooted in social and political histories.

Park, J. (2015). Learning in/through collaborative poetry translation: Documenting the impact of poetry inside out with high school-aged English language learners. <i>Journal of Language and Literacy Education</i> , 11(2), 134-149.	Empirical	Poetry	Language Learning (translation)	Descriptive Case Study	<i>Focal participants</i> Mixed grade (11-12) sheltered English class in urban high school Northeast, USA	This article described the impact of Poetry Inside Out, a literacy program where students use translation practices to build semantic awareness and evidence-based reasoning.
Paugh, P., & Moran, M. (2013). Growing language awareness in the classroom garden. <i>Language Arts</i> , 90(4), 253-267.	Empirical	Arts-based strategies	Literacy	Action Research	<i>Demographic participants</i> 3 <sup>rd</sup> grade class in urban K-5 school USA	This study described a community-based literacy and science project. Students worked in a local garden to better bridge curriculum and community.
Poldberg, M. M., Trainin, G., & Andrzejczak, N. (2013). Rocking your writing program: Integration of visual art, language arts, & science. <i>Journal for Learning through the Arts</i> , 9(1), 1-20.	Empirical	Visual Art	Language Arts/Science	Pilot Study	<i>Example participants</i> 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade classroom California, USA	This study described the instruction of teachers who participated in a professional development of arts integration in literacy and science instruction. Findings suggest arts integration provided effective curriculum benefiting all students.

## Methods and Methodologies

The small number of practical articles focused on the arts and language development of linguistically diverse students were generally descriptive. In the case of Brouillette and Missakian, authors described the Teacher Artist Project (TAP) in southeastern San Diego schools. Using interviews with classroom teachers, the efforts, successes, and struggles of the project are described as they relate to important vocabulary learning for young English Language Learners. Similarly, Cronmiller (2007) described a poetry project in a workshop model in a dual language elementary school in Santa Ana, California. Fennessey (2006) described drama practices in her fifth-grade classroom, in this case specifically describing with examples how to replicate her classroom practices tied to language development.

Empirical pieces include a range of research methods across quantitative and qualitative methodologies (see Table 2). Qualitative methods include experiments (Walker, Tabone, & Weltsek, 2011), pilot studies (Bournot-Trites, Belliveau, Spiliotopoulos, & Séror, 2007; Poldberg, Trainin, & Andrzejczak, 2013), and mixed-methods (Bournot-Trites et al., 2007; Brouillette, Burge, Fitzgerald, & Walker, 2008; Cunnington, Kantrowitz, Harnett, & Hill-Ries, 2014; Graham & Brouillette, 2017). Qualitative methods include case studies (Craig & Porter, 2014; Delacruz & An, 2014; Flint et al., 2015; Lorimer, 2011; Park, 2015), ethnography (Medina & Costa, 2013), narrative (Montero, Bice-Zaugg, Marsh, & Cummins, 2013), and action research (Paugh & Moran, 2013).

Table 2

### *General Characteristics of Included Articles*

	<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>Number (n =</u> <u>17)</u>	<u>Percentage (%)</u>
Publication Year	2006-2010	4	23.5
	2010-2014	10	58.8



	2014<	3	17.6
Publication Type	Empirical	14	82.4
	Practical	3	17.6
Journal	<i>Journal of Learning through the Arts</i>	7	41.2
	<i>Journal of Language and Literacy Education</i>	4	23.5
	<i>English Teaching: Practice and Critique</i>	1	5.9
	<i>Language Arts</i>	2	11.8
	<i>The Reading Teacher</i>	1	5.9
	<i>New Waves – Educational Research and Development</i>	1	5.9
	<i>Boom: A Journal of California</i>	1	5.9
Method	Experiment	1	5.9
	Quasi-experiment	1	5.9
	Pilot study*	2	11.8
	Mixed-methods*	3	17.6
	Case study	5	29.4
	Ethnography	1	5.9
	Narrative	1	5.9
	Action research	1	5.9
	Descriptive	3	17.6
Arts Areas	Visual art**	6	35.3
	Theater	5	29.4
	Dance	1	5.9
	Music	1	5.9
	Poetry	2	11.8
	Arts-based Strategies	2	11.8
Content Areas	Language Arts/Literacy***	10	58.8
	Social studies	1	5.9
	Science	3	17.6
	Math	2	11.8
	Language Learning	3	17.6
Eb	Focal	7	41.2
Participants****			
	Example	4	23.5
	Demographic	6	35.3
Grade Level*****	K-3	8	47.1
	4-6	4	23.5
	7-9	2	11.8
	10-12	3	17.6

\*One study identified as both a pilot study and a mixed-methods study.

\*\*One study listed visual art as the primary art form, with dance, theater, and music as secondary art forms

\*\*\*Four studies paired language arts with another content area or listed language arts as the primary focus of content learning

\*\*\*\*Focal participants refer to ELL students who were the primary focus of the study. Example participants refer to ELL students who were discussed individually as part of the larger group. Demographic participants refer to large data sets that identified percentage of students designated as ELL.

\*\*\*\*\*Studies which spanned multiple grade levels, such as 3-5 were categorized in their lowest participating grade level.

Eighty-eight percent of the studies, both empirical and practical, included qualitative methods in their research and writing. Thirty-five percent of studies included quantitative methods.

### **Designations of Linguistically Diverse Students**

While each of the studies included linguistically diverse students, authors did so in a variety of ways. Some studies included language learners as their focal participants (Bournot-Trites et al., 2007; Craig & Porter, 2014; Cronmiller, 2007; Delacruz & An, 2014; Medina & Costa, 2013; Montero et al., 2013; Park, 2015). In these studies, the participants in the study were primarily language learners, including a range of immersion, bilingual, and urban classrooms. Other studies included language learners as example participants in a larger study (Brouillette & Missakian, 2012; Fennessey, 2006; Flint et al., 2015; Poldberg et al., 2013). In these studies, the work and experiences of a few language learners were included as part of the larger discussion of findings related to the arts and language development. Finally, studies included linguistically diverse students as part of a demographic population (Brouillette et al., 2008; Cunningham et al., 2014; Graham & Brouillette, 2017; Lorimer, 2011; Paugh & Moran, 2013; Walker et al., 2011). In this last set of studies, student populations were broken down by demographic, including emergent bilinguals, generally identified as English language learners

within the research. Though these six studies recognized emergent bilinguals as participants of a larger grouper (e.g., urban population), linguistically diverse students were not specifically discussed.

Quantitative research was mostly likely to identify linguistically diverse students as a demographic in a larger population but was least likely to discuss the implications of the arts and language specifically for emergent bilinguals. Qualitative research took a more diverse approach to research including emergent bilinguals. In some cases, such as Brouillette and Missakian (2012), practicing teachers were interviewed about their work with the arts and language development. In such instances, teacher explained their arts pedagogy and its perceived impact on the language development of emergent bilinguals in their classrooms. In other examples, such as Flint et al. (2015) and Poldberg et al. (2013), interviews and student work samples of emergent bilinguals were analyzed and used as exemplars in larger classroom activities. Research studies with linguistically diverse students as the focal students generally took place in classrooms that were designated for English learning, such as English/French immersion class in Canada (Bournot-Trites et al., 2007) and a sheltered English class in the Northeast United States (Park, 2015). Montero et al. (2013) not only engaged in language learning through the arts, but also co-wrote with researchers and students to provide a deep and thorough description of learning experiences.

### **The Arts and Language**

Art forms featured in the literature related to linguistically diverse students and language development include: music (Delacruz & An, 2014), visual art (Craig & Porter, 2014; Cunnington et al., 2014; Flint et al., 2015; Lorimer, 2011; Montero et al., 2013; Poldberg et al., 2013), dance (Graham & Brouillette, 2017), theater/drama (Bournot-Trites et al., 2007;

Brouillette & Missakian, 2012; Fennessey, 2006; Medina & Costa, 2013; Walker et al., 2011), poetry (Cronmiller, 2007; Park, 2015), and general arts-based strategies (Brouillette et al., 2008; Paugh & Moran, 2013). Visual art and theater are the most studied art forms with language development and linguistically diverse students, both empirically and practically. Very little is known or has been studied about music or dance, and their relationship to English language development.

In addition to an art form, research tied the art form to language development. In forty-seven percent of the articles in this review, language development was tied to literacy or language arts instruction, depending on the grade level of the participating students (L. R. Brouillette et al., 2008; Cronmiller, 2007; Delacruz & An, 2014; Fennessey, 2006; Flint et al., 2015; Medina & Costa, 2013; Montero et al., 2013; Paugh & Moran, 2013). In twenty-four percent of studies, literacy instruction was discussed in tandem with another core subject area, such as math or science (Cunnington et al., 2014; Lorimer, 2011; Poldberg et al., 2013; Walker et al., 2011). Eighteen percent of articles discussed language development in terms of English language instruction (Brouillette & Missakian, 2012; Craig & Porter, 2014; Park, 2015). Finally, science and social studies each had one study which specifically included discussions of language development (Bournot-Trites et al., 2007; Graham & Brouillette, 2017).

The included articles approached language learning in a variety of ways and through a range of means (see Table 3). Using the lens of DiCerbo et al. (2014), as described in the theoretical frame, I highlight tools for the language development of linguistically diverse students used in these arts-based studies. Sixty-five percent of studies described students' opportunity for frequent and extended utterances when engaging in arts-based activities. Fifty-nine percent of studies reported students' opportunities for extended writing practices, including

twenty-nine percent of studies which discussed genre expectations for forms of academic writing. Fifty-nine percent of studies described students' opportunities for perspective-taking and sharing, while eighteen percent of studies included student presentations and twelve percent included instructional conversations and discourse. Forty-seven percent of the studies included group work or partner work, generally referred to as collaboration, in their arts-based language learning. Other examples of language learning such as open-ended questions (12%), non-evaluative listening (12%), and recasting (12%) were present in smaller numbers. Though claims cannot be made about the quality of the findings and implications described in these studies, much of the work described reflecting on students' language development in regard to arts-based work is reflected in the theoretical framework.

While it is outside the scope of this review to establish any statistical significance related to the occurrence of best practices for language learners, the frequent inclusion of many of these strategies across studies suggests that they could be significant. Future research focused on these language events, especially in the context of participation in creative processes, may give us a better understanding of their potential impact on the academic language development of emergent bilinguals.

Table 3

*Approaches to Language Learning Based on Best Practices for Academic Language Development*

	<u>Number (n = 17)</u>	<u>Percentage (%)</u>
Follow-up/open-ended questions	2	11.8
Instructional conversation/discourse	2	11.8
Non-evaluative listening	2	11.8
Modeling	3	17.6
Frequent/extended utterances	11	64.7
Group/partner work	8	47.1
Extended writing	10	58.8

Genre expectations	5	29.4
Perspective-taking sharing	10	58.8
Student presentations	3	17.6
Recasting	2	11.8

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### **Limitations**

As with scoping studies, a limitation is always the quality of the studies included in the review (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005). Because of the nature of the scoping review, studies are not reviewed for their quality and, therefore, the review does not make claims based on a synthesis of research findings. Within this review, the limited number of research articles related to the pairing of the arts and language development of linguistically diverse students would make such claims challenging even in a systematic review.

This review is also limited by the level of detail included, or not included, in the reviewed articles. While many researchers write carefully about the methods of their studies, often key information can still be found lacking. Especially when discussing linguistically diverse students, it can be important to think about where they are on their language learning journey. Not only is it important to know the grade level of students learning English as an additional language, it can also be important to know the circumstances under which they are learning English. How long have they been practicing English as an additional language? What are the circumstances for their schooling? It may not be enough to know what grade level a linguistically diverse student is without additional information about their language learning experiences. Rarely is this kind of detail relative to emergent bilinguals included.

### **Implications and Conclusions**

Overall, the body of research which studies language development of emergent bilinguals and the arts is fragmented and incomplete. There is little consistency across grade levels, arts

areas, and content areas. When looking at the whole, there are few pieces to represent elementary, middle, or secondary students (see Table 2). Similarly, little can be said about music, dance, theater, visual art, or poetry. While visual art and theater are best represented in the research, music and dance have been virtually excluded from the literature. When looking at the model of creative processes for arts and language, it may be helpful for researchers to spend more time analyzing and describing the creative processes students are asked to engage in. While clearly identifying art forms and content areas is important, the emphasis for research should lie in the work of language development as it occurs within the creative process.

The included research does include descriptions of the arts in classrooms and the arts' connections to language development of emergent bilinguals. However, the range of art forms and content area learning makes it difficult to think about how the research might build upon its existing foundation. The good news is that even given the wide range of art forms and content areas, evidence suggests that creative processes tied to language development and the arts does act as a unifying thread for the opportunities it presents for students learning English as an additional language. To build upon this unifying thread, future research must make clear: (1) the processes tied to the art form in the classroom, including how it is taught and who is engaging in that instruction; (2) best methods for generating and describing data related to inclusion of the arts in classrooms and its connection to language learning opportunities; (3) the lens by which we view and describe emergent bilinguals in the classroom setting.

*First, future research should focus on how the arts are being used in the classroom with attention to the way emergent bilinguals are engaging in those practices.* By focusing on emergent bilinguals' experiences participating in creative processes, attention can be drawn to the kinds of language students develop and utilize within their arts contexts. Park (2015) is an

example of this process by which students engage in arts learning and in language learning.

Though students in Park's study were translating published poems rather than writing their own original poems, the focus on process and the language production tied to that process provides an effective way to look at students' academic language development through creative processes. Researchers can continue to draw upon these examples as a means for thinking about how arts production and language production are tied together.

*Second, researchers should pay increased attention to the methods used for generating and describing data from the classroom.* There are a range of descriptive methodologies that may lend themselves well to researching emergent bilinguals' creative language and arts processes. Currently, several research studies utilized case study design, which complements and highlights the intricacies of creativity and language in classroom settings. Researchers also make use of mixed-method and descriptive designs to tell stories and make claims about language and the arts. While the language learning in Montero et al. (2013) is tied more to identity than academic language, the piece is written as an engaging and thought-provoking discussion that looks closely at the experiences of students.

*Finally, future studies will also want to clearly address the way they include students learning English as an additional language,* which currently varies drastically from study to study. To say more about the relationship between the arts and English language learning, emergent bilinguals will need to become the focus of research. Whether studying classrooms in the United States or in other countries, more emphasis can be placed on the experiences of language learners. Currently, classroom experiences vary widely both in structure and in grade, as do the emergent bilinguals participating in those settings. In many cases, studies focused less directly on emergent bilinguals, either discussing them as example students within a larger study



or acknowledging their presence embedded in a larger population. Occasionally, studies would simply refer to a school as “urban” with little discussion of what that means for the student population.

While the findings of the given articles hold promise for the arts in education and their ties to language development, the breadth without depth in the research holds troubling implications for the field. Though researchers lament the status of the arts in schools, the lack of cohesion in the field may contribute to the difficulty in building a strong case for the arts as a key component of education for linguistically diverse students. This is not only an issue for language development and the arts, but also in relationship to other underresearched fields related to emergent bilinguals, the arts, and additional key learning opportunities, such as social-emotional development, collaboration, creativity, and broader notions of identity work and social change. We must work diligently to present thoughtful, high-quality, high-profile research and literature that builds upon and extends the questions, methods, and findings of previous literature. As future research builds cohesively on the theory, method, and practice which currently exists, then can we begin to see the positive change for policy, teachers, and students engaged in the challenging work of art and language in school.

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