

BILINGUAL IMMIGRANT CHILDREN AND LITERACY DEVELOPMENT: INCLUSIVE LEARNING ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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ABSTRACT

The present study was concerned with eliciting information about the difficulties bilingual immigrant students of 5th and 6th primary school classrooms encounter and the strategies they employ while writing in a second language (Greek as L2). The reason for conducting the study stemmed from the growing number of bilingual students in Greek mainstream classes, since Greece has been an immigrant receiving country for the last two decades. A number of variables are associated with bilingual students' literacy attainment, such as their personal characteristics, socio-economic factors, as well as parental interest and involvement in school activities. For this purpose, an attempt was also made to record immigrant parents' views on their children's literacy development and their attitudes to involvement in their children's education. Both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection and analysis were employed: a) students' *think-aloud reports* and *retrospective interviews* b) parents' semistructured interviews were used as the basic instruments for collecting data. Although this study may be limited in scope, it is hoped that it will make a contribution to the promotion of inclusive practices for immigrant children as the findings provide signposts for practices to develop children's literacy skills and strengthen full inclusion into school life.

Key Words: Literacy development, writing strategies, bilingual children, immigrant parents, inclusive learning.