

Confessions of a Joshua Fishman "Groupie"

I first met Josh Fishman in 1975 when he was Resident Scholar at the Princeton Institute of Advanced Studies. Frankly, Dr. Fishman was no stranger to me; his books (i.e., *Bilingualism in the Barrio*) were the inspiration for my doctoral dissertation, "Bicultural Sharing Through Bilingual Pairing" – describing a ten-year weekly interchange between high school students of Spanish and Spanish-dominant elementary school students in the Bronx, NY. At a time when inner city kids were being bussed **out** of poor neighborhoods, our group was being bussed **into** the inner city for enrichment in their Spanish language fluency.

A blinding blizzard did not deter me from keeping my appointment in Princeton with the "Father of Bilingual Education." He was gracious and helpful in his encouragement of my wish to conduct a semi-experimental study designed to measure how ethnolinguistic minority students can help improve the communicative competence of second- language learners. At the same time the middle class, older Anglo students would contribute to the self-esteem, social skills and commitment to learning of the young Latinos. Bilingualism is thus additive, not subtractive for both groups.

As a newly appointed college professor in a New Jersey state college I turned to Joshua Fishman as keynote speaker to launch our first Bilingual Conference in 1981. This past April we celebrated the 25th anniversary of this ever-growing professional event. Each conference keynoter has stood on the shoulders of our first inspirational speaker – Joshua Fishman. Since 1975 I have come to know Gella and the Fishman family in both their bicoastal homes and have cherished time spent with them. Mazel Tov to you Josh! *Gladys Nussenbaum – 2006.*