I was pleased to read Professor Jeff MacSwan's Aug. 13 My Turn, "Bad data poison language study," which raised concerns about the exaggerated claims made by Superintendent Tom Horne regarding impacts of the anti-bilingual education policy.

MacSwan raises concerns about the flawed methods and misrepresentation of findings that led to conclusions supporting the banning of bilingual education.

Instead of the "substantial differences - as much as one grade level ahead," as Tom Horne recently stated - there were either no differences or very slight advantages for Spanish-background students in all-English classrooms in grades affected by the law.

If the Arizona Department of Education is truly interested in responsible analysis of its policies, why report its findings with such exaggerations?

I work with a dual-language preschool project, in which children experience English immersion in their morning Head Start classroom and then learn in Spanish in the afternoon at our preschool. I have observed the value of maintaining Spanish-speaking children's first language, and how quickly they learn English. English-speaking children also benefit from learning Spanish.

There is a strong research base in support of dual-language programs, and I believe we do a disservice to Arizona's students by limiting their learning options to English immersion.

English learners do not deserve to be misrepresented by anti-bilingual education ideologies, such as those represented by Horne and his colleague, Johanna Haver.

- Beth Blue Swadener, Tempe