The Bilingual Advantage: Native Language Instruction in Dual-Language Programs

NYC-RBERN
June 1, 2015
Reflective Questions

1. What are the main theoretical and research principles guiding the implementation of dual-language programs?
2. What does current research say about a quest for making students biliterate and bilingual?
3. Which instructional strategies and practices facilitate the acquisition of literacy in students’ first language?
4. What classroom assessment tools are useful in measuring bilingual students’ biliteracy growth?
Guiding Principles for Dual Language Instruction

- Dual language teaching is a developmental, language-enriched, instructional program in which instruction is provided in two languages as the medium of communication and learning.

- In the United States, the goal of most dual language programs is to provide high quality instruction for students who start school primarily speaking a language other than English, and simultaneously, to provide instruction in a second language for English proficient students.
This instructional approach allow students to achieve balanced language proficiency by providing high levels of content knowledge accessible in two languages, and by developing metacognitive and cognitive strategies to learn grade level curriculum.
Video: Building Language through Thematic Learning
https://www.teachingchannel.org/videos/dual-language-programs

Questions to Consider
- What is a teacher-based dual language model?
- How does each center help students develop understanding of both content and language?
- What are the benefits of learning similar content in two languages?
Dual Language Classroom

- Not all dual language programs are the same.
- Describe the dual language program
Benefits of Dual Language

- Video:
  - Benefits of being Bilingual
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZANBvuS_iDU
Bilingual Education

Adapted from Herrera (2010), p. 29
Benefits of Dual-Language Programs

- High Levels of Academic Achievement
  - There is substantial evidence to support dual-language education as a viable and enriching method of supporting high levels of academic achievement.

- Bilingual Proficiency and Biliteracy
  - Bilingual students who enroll in dual-language programs develop both oral proficiency and literacy in two languages.
Benefits of Dual-Language Programs

- Development of Cross-Cultural Awareness
  - Effective dual-language instruction depends on the implementation of a bilingual environment at the school level, which supports the development of language and enhances both groups of students’ self esteem and cross-cultural understanding.
Administration’s Commitment to Bilingualism, Biliteracy, and Bilingual Education

- Dual-Language instruction has the greatest impact when the entire school’s staff believes in bilingualism plus promotes and encourages the implementation of bilingual programming.
Equal Status of Both Languages

- Both languages are seen as important learning and instructional vehicles in the development of knowledge, concepts and academic language.
- School promotes a bilingual environment in which general announcements, written communication, displays and other communicative tools are done in the two languages.
Challenging Grade-Level Curriculum

It is well established that the challenging task of attaining academic proficiency in two languages requires a high level of abstract cognitive processing, increased cognitive skills, and consistent meaningful exposure to the content areas.
Teacher Effectiveness in Delivering of Instruction

- Research has consistently documented that the best way to improve the education of students is to provide them with qualified and effective teachers as well as effective classroom instruction.
Students’ Motivation and Engagement in Learning

- Factors that may contribute to increased student motivation and self esteem:
  - Interest in the subject matter
  - Perception of its usefulness
  - General desire to achieve
  - Self-confidence and self-esteem
  - Patience and persistence.
Students’ Academic Growth and Performance

In successful dual-language programs, grade-level academic achievement is demonstrated throughout the academic year.
Home Involvement in Child’s School Learning

- Parents who are knowledgeable about the benefits of dual-language programs, and who understand its structure, tend to collaborate with the school regarding their children’s education.

- The spectrum of parental involvement can begin with simple support of the school curriculum through the reinforcement of school skills at home, to active advocacy of the program and school policies, to becoming change agents at the decision making level.

- These parents are guided, motivated, and challenged to work with their children on a regular basis, to know their children’s school curriculum, and to become partners in their learning.
Implementation and Instructional Practices

- Development of students’ sense of price in their involvement in dual language
- Identification of grade level content and concept from the different subject areas.
- Outline in advance the required processes necessary to achieve identified goals/standards
- Listing instructional strategies
- Provision of appropriate context in which learning and teaching occurs
- Development of classroom assessment activities
- Maintenance of close contact with the parents
Implementation and Instructional Practices

- Building Domain Knowledge
- Teaching Vocabulary and Concepts Explicitly
- Maximizing Literacy Engagement
- Checking Comprehension Frequently
- Extending Academic Language
- Scaffolding Meaning
- Use Writing as a Tool for Learning
One to One Conference

- Conferences between teacher and bilingual students give learners an opportunity to share what they are learning, and they also allow teachers to help frame a student’s thinking and check for understanding and level of achievement.
Classroom Assessment of Biliteracy Growth

Figure 5.1. Assessment of Biliteracy Growth: A Cyclical Process

- Planning
- Language and literacy development in the two languages
- Collecting and recording information
- Analyzing information and interpreting results
- Using information for decisionmaking
Classroom Assessment of Biliteracy Growth

- Collective Students’ Growth in Literacy Through a Portfolio
- Student’s Language Characteristics and Strengths
- Student’s Level of Native Language Development
- Identification of Student’s Proficiency in the Second Language
- Student’s knowledge of the Structure of Both Languages
- Student’s Daily Language Use
- Student’s Language Curriculum Demands
# Classroom Assessment Tools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools</th>
<th>Tool Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oral interview</td>
<td>Students respond orally about a range of topics that help teachers to identify students’ prior knowledge; past experiences related to language and literacy; and their interests and preferences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>Through observations, the teacher can gain insights into students’ knowledge about sounds, meaning, and syntax, and their capability to speak and interact appropriately in different situations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>Questioning helps to identify bilingual students’ level of experiences and background knowledge about topics and concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anecdotal records</td>
<td>These are brief, written descriptions of concrete actions or events observed by the teacher (e.g., notes, record situations that describe how students are progressing in the use of academic vocabulary in Spanish language arts).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Story or text retelling</td>
<td>Retelling a story or reporting informational text in the students’ own words requires thinking about the story that was read or told; relating events of the story; and arranging the events in sequence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Checklists/Rubrics</td>
<td>These are sets of key behaviors that typically represent an activity of interest or a phase of literacy development and identifying markers of developmental levels within the set of identified behaviors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Writing prompts</td>
<td>These prompts provide clear information about the student’s writing performance and level of proficiency and growth, revealing, for instance, whether students use writing strategies to gather and organize ideas; whether they use feedback from teachers and peers and whether they think about their audience when they write.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusion

- Video: Media