The Impact of Talk and Conversations in the Dual Language Classroom

Presented by
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About Speaking in Class...

“At home I was fine, but at school I never opened my mouth except when the teacher called on me...

I didn’t like school because all they saw was the outside of me” (Sandra Cisneros, 2015).

How do your students feel in your classroom? Do you know who they are, or just know the outside of them?

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Today, we will dive into this question of Speaking in the classroom.

Why is it important? Why is it important when learning a new language, and in a new language?
Goals for Today’s Session:

• Further our knowledge about the role that Talk and Conversations play in learning in two languages

• Examine the impact of Talk and Conversations through the analysis of short videos of children in a Spanish/English DL program

• Reflect on the importance of Speaking in class, particularly when learning a new language and in a new language.

• Decide your next steps.

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Who are the Children?

- **Simultaneous Bilinguals**
  Children who learn more than one language from birth.

- **Sequential Bilinguals**
  Children and adults who begin to learn the second language after they have acquired the first language.
Who are the Children?

Sequential bilingual

Sequential bilingual

Simultaneous bilingual

Source: Bridging for Bilingual Programs. Introduction to Teaching for Biliteracy by Cheryl Urow.
Why is Talk important?

Based on research:

• Language is our cultural tool, and the development of the spoken forms of language foster academic knowledge and personal success.

• Talk and conversations are essential for second language learners as a bridge to the more academic language associated with learning.

• The spoken forms of language foster students’ autonomy and the type of collaboration that produces greater gains in achievement (NYS).

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Linguistically Diverse Learners & The NYS Next Generation P-12 Learning Standards

Building on Linguistically-Diverse Students’ Language and Cultural Resources

Students who are multilingual often benefit from instruction that allows them to use all of their language knowledge when discussing complex topics.

Quick Tip: Invite linguistically-diverse students into class discussions by encouraging their use of home language resources and sharing with peers their connections across languages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>From...</th>
<th>To...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infrequent classroom discussion and talk</td>
<td>Frequent use of formats that promote classroom talk – think-pair-share, jigsaw, debates, and small group work</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using discussion and talk as strategies for processing new content</td>
<td>Also using discussion and talk as a method for demonstrating thinking and learning</td>
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<tr>
<td>Using discussion and talk as a stand-alone strategy for learning</td>
<td>Using discussion and talk to support reading and writing instruction, and vice versa</td>
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PS 70, Max Schoenfeld School, Bronx

Kerry Castellano Principal
Kimberly Fisher Mosey, Assistant Principal, Dual Language Program

The message to the 1,225 K-5 students:

LEARN

L: Learn
E: Excellent Expectations
A: Aim high
R: Respect, (and)
N: No excuses
“From the moment the children enter our classrooms, we encourage them to speak their minds, and not be afraid of the target language.”

Ms. Torres & Ms. Melendez
DL Teachers,
PS 70, Bronx NY
Interaction (Talk and Conversations): The Heart of the Learning Process

Speakers interact to clarify their intended meaning.

Speakers interact to negotiate their intended meaning.

Speakers re-word what they try to say to communicate.
Learning a New Language and in a New Language
Input, Output, Interactions
Learning a New Language and in a New Language
Input, Output, Interactions

Please refer to the “Viewing Worksheet”
Conversations

- A conversation is an exchange of individual ideas through talking with other people.

- The purpose is not to transmission, but to create and clarify knowledge. In other words, building ideas with the ‘given’ and the ‘new’.

Conversational Discourse in Context by Jeff Zwiers & Ivanna Soto

- There is an agreed-upon purpose for talking.

- The cooperation is key for an effective conversation. That is, participants,
  - Contribute to the extent that is required at current stage
  - Contribute ideas than are clear; avoid those that lack evidence
  - Listen actively, with a mind-set to enrich and extend
  - Demonstrate a disposition to negotiate ideas

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What part of the conversation is ‘The ‘Given’? 
What part of the conversation is ‘The ‘New’? 

- **The ‘Given’**, 
  It is very important to an ELL student, because the information is familiar, and therefore, easier to process 
  - A reference to common knowledge, something experienced by both partners  
  - A paraphrase, a recap with perhaps, additional details  

- **The “New”** 
  It encourages ELL students to use new language to generate and share ideas  
  - It also connects to the purpose of the conversation  
  - It offers new perspectives, ideas, questions or concerns  

*Conversational Discourse in Context*, J. Zwiers & I. Soto
Conversations: ‘The ‘Given’ & the ‘New’
Video Watching & Analysis
Boy: …y después me cambio, y después … y después me pongo mi mochila … y después busco el lunch...

Girl: …asi es como haces, como dices.. y a mi siempre me gusta hacer dibujos un ratito en mi casa, … y después veo los muñequitos y me pongo a dormir un rato, y … al rato me levanto y, después, después ... otra vez cuando viene la noche me cuesta dormir un ratito [...] no me duermo

Boy: Yo no me duermo también [...] porque hay mucha bulla [...] en mi casa

Girl: pero en mi casa no hay bulla

Boy: En mi casa hay muchos /paries/ en la noche cuando me tengo que /kostar/

Girl: Mi mami siempre ve peliculas en la noche, oh [...] y tú?

Boy: Mi tía ve muchas películas que hacen bulla
Conversations: ‘The ‘Given’ & the ‘New’ 

Please use the “Viewing Worksheet”
Boy: ...y después me cambio, y después ... y después me pongo mi mochila ... y después busco el lunch...

Girl: ...asi es como haces, como dices.. y a mi siempre me gusta hacer dibujos un ratito en mi casa, ... y después veo los muñequitos y me pongo a dormir un rato, y ... al rato me levanto y, después, después ... otra vez cuando viene la noche me cuesta dormir un ratito [...] no me duermo

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Partner Talk: Building conversations for Literacy purposes

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Please use the “Viewing Worksheet”
Collaboration:
Key for an effective Conversation
Conversations in Groups

When working in small group, students work collaboratively towards a common purpose.

Group members,

- Contribute their ideas while respecting others and their time
- Listen actively, with a mind-set to enrich and extend
- Demonstrate a disposition to negotiate ideas
The Impact of talk and Conversations in a Dual Language Classroom

Going Deeper:

• Is conversation more than talking and listening. Why? Why not?

• To what extent does the impact of a conversation depend on taking in information?

• How does the feedback provided by the teacher influence students’ learning and language development?
Reflection:

- Based on today’s session, what will you do new, or different tomorrow to ensure that Talk and Conversations have an impact on your students’ learning and language development?

Please complete the feedback form. Thank you.