



Chapter 1

Foundations in Teaching for Biliteracy

Key Points

- Biliteracy instruction includes a broad range of teaching and learning activities involving reading and writing that occur in Spanish and English across the curriculum.
- Effective biliteracy educators embrace a holistic, multilingual perspective on teaching, learning, and assessment that sees the two (or more) languages that each student speaks as complementary parts of that student's developing linguistic repertoire.
- Teaching for biliteracy in Spanish and English in the United States involves complex processes that are informed by fundamental sociolinguistic premises.
- The Bridge is the instructional moment in teaching for biliteracy when teachers bring the two languages together, guiding students to engage in contrastive analysis of the two languages and to transfer the academic content they have learned from one language to the other language.
- Bridging involves the use of cross-linguistic strategies that leads to the development of metalinguistic awareness.
- The biliteracy unit framework is a flexible structure that teachers can use to plan and implement effective biliteracy instruction in any teaching-for-biliteracy context.

Book Study Activity Objectives: Participants will:

Activity 1: Describe, define, and compare and contrast the monolingual and multilingual perspectives

Activity 2: Describe the instructional and programmatic implications of the three socio-linguistic premises for teaching for biliteracy.

Instructions for activities, and notes for book study leader:

Activity 1: Participants will describe, define, and compare and contrast the monolingual and multilingual perspectives

Notes for book study leader:

- Use the descriptors below to engage the participants in a concept attainment activity. (See pp 53-56 and 81-82 of the text for more information on concept

attainment.) You can also find more information here:

<http://www.brainpopesl.com/level3/unit1/lesson1/lessonplan/image3.pdf>

- Encourage participants to go back to the chapter to find evidence for their choices.
- Additional monolingual and multilingual descriptors can be added as necessary, to fit the audience.

Monolingual perspective	Multilingual perspective
Students have an L1 (or dominant language).	Students are emerging bilinguals who have linguistic resources across languages.
Students are expected to behave and learn like monolinguals.	Students are expected to behave and learn like developing bilinguals.
Students who use words like “puchar” or who mix their languages are demonstrating that they are low in both languages.	Developing bilinguals are expected to use all of their linguistic resources, and will use language in a way that challenges the traditional labels of “Spanish dominant” or “English dominant”.
Students are taught in L1 and then transfer their learning to L2.	Students are taught in the language of heavy lifting (as defined by the content allocation plan) and are provided a Bridge to the other language.
Languages are strictly separated to avoid confusion on the part of the students: two linguistic spaces.	Languages are used strategically in three distinct linguistic spaces.

Activity 2: Participants will describe the instructional and programmatic implications of the three socio-linguistic premises for teaching for biliteracy.

Notes for book study leader

- Copy the word sort on card stock
 - Make sure there is enough of each word sort for every two participants.
- Word sorts are most effective when done in groups of two, rather than in larger groups. Make sure partners are sitting next to each other, rather than facing each other, so that neither partner has to read the words upside down.
- Partnerships should work together to place the descriptors in one of four categories (included in the word sort):
 - **Premise 1: Spanish is a minority language within a majority culture**
 - **Premise 2: Students use all the languages in their linguistic repertoire to develop literacy.**
 - **Premise 3: Spanish and English are governed by distinct linguistic rules and cultural norms.**
 - **Non-examples (Descriptors that do not fit any of the three premises, and therefore do not promote biliteracy)**
- Make sure to allocate time for review and discussion after the sort.

The answers can be found in the description of the three sociolinguistic premises, beginning on p. 5. Optional challenge activity: Ask partnerships to come up with their own, original descriptors for each of the four categories.

Premises word sort:

Premise 1: Spanish is a minority language within a majority culture	Premise 2: Students use all the languages in their linguistic repertoire to develop literacy.	Premise 3: Spanish and English are governed by distinct linguistic rules and cultural norms.	Non- Examples (Descriptors that do not fit any of the three premises, and therefore do not promote biliteracy).
Teachers and staff display and promote all the home languages represented in the school.	Assessments and interventions are designed for developing bilinguals and take advantage of all their linguistic resources, across their languages.	Students are provided explicit instruction in the similarities and differences of the cultural norms that frame language use in both Spanish and English.	Onset and rime is taught in Spanish (<i>c-ama, d-ama, r-ama</i>).
Signage, announcements and communication home are done in both English and Spanish.	Simultaneous bilinguals who use both languages together are placed in bilingual and dual language programs instead of monolingual English programs.	Word walls in Spanish highlight the “tricky letters” (like the “b” and the “v”) and look different from English word walls.	Students engaged in biliteracy development follow the same pacing chart as students engaged in monoliteracy.
Staff strategically includes Spanish speaking role models and guests when planning career day, assemblies, community outreach, etc.	U.S. Spanish (<i>bleediando</i>) is respected and analyzed in the classroom, and viewed as an opportunity for metalinguistic analysis and vocabulary enrichment.	Syllable segmentation is one of the major word study areas of focus in the primary grades.	Word walls in Spanish are organized alphabetically.

Bilingual teachers speak Spanish with each other, even when the students are not present.	Oral language development is a key goal in both Spanish and English, and the teacher carefully plans opportunities for students to develop oracy (academic listening and speaking skills) in anticipation of literacy.	Students engage in formal Bridges and begin “bridging” as early as Pre-K. This “translanguaging” continues throughout their learning.	Students first learn to read and write in one language, and then transition at one moment in time to reading and writing in the other language.
Students are provided long term and explicit biliteracy instruction (literacy instruction in both Spanish and English) beginning as soon as they enter the US school system.	Instruction focuses on moving from student “informal” language (<i>tochar</i>) to formal language (<i>empujar</i>) in Spanish, and these comparisons are captured in word walls.	Students constantly look for patterns in how Spanish and English are similar and different, developing metalinguistic awareness in the areas of phonology, morphology, syntax and grammar, and pragmatics.	Students are assessed in their dominant language only.
Bilingual teachers continually develop their own academic Spanish, and academic English.	Student writing reflects how they speak. It is not “monolingual-like”.	Students regularly read texts originally written in Spanish (rather than translations from English), and from a variety of Spanish speaking countries.	Students and teachers practice the absolute separation of languages.

