

Friday, July 1, 2016

What are the instructional and programmatic implications of teaching for biliteracy?

<i>Teaching for Biliteracy: Strengthening Bridges between Languages</i>	www.TeachingForBiliteracy.com
Chapter 1 <i>What do We Mean by Teaching for Biliteracy</i>, sample scenario – bottom of p. 3 Chapter 6 <i>Student Funds of Knowledge and Linguistic Creativity in the Classroom</i> sample scenario, p. 78 Chapter 8 <i>Learning to Write in Spanish in the United States: An Integrated Approach</i>, Student writing sample, p. 8	Sample PD-> • Blog Interview with Karen Beeman: <i>One Good Question</i>, https://rhondabroussard.com/2015/11/03/one-good-question-with-karen-beeman-how-biliteracy-supports-social-justice-for-all/ • Blog interview with Karen Beeman, <i>On the Development of Biliteracy</i>, http://www.edcentral.org/interview-karen-beeman-part-one/ • Blog Interview with Karen Beeman, <i>Creating a Strong Dual Immersion Program</i>, http://www.edcentral.org/beeman-part-two/

Planning for advocacy includes:

- Articulating your own beliefs, understandings, perspective, paradigm
- Knowing the stakeholders and their beliefs, understandings, concerns, perspective, paradigm
- Determining the goal – long term, short term
- Creating opportunities for advocacy
- Outlining and practicing the message – for each stakeholder and for each forum

Effective advocacy sentence prompts:

- What I hear you saying is...
- Our students...
- Our data show...
- Research tells us that...
- Currently, in the field...
- Federal legislation requires us...
- Our current program is/is not...
- Other districts with similar demographics...
- We are simply creating more work for ourselves if...
- Our community...

Advocacy Scenarios

Premise 1: Spanish in the United States is a minority language within a majority culture

Therefore, we have to raise the status of Spanish within the majority environment

<u>Instruction</u> The teacher begins instruction in Spanish but switches to English when students don't understand or when students ask questions in English.	When the teacher switches to English for students who don't understand, or in classrooms where it is common for students to respond in English during Spanish instructional time, the teacher is inadvertently creating an instructional space where Spanish is not able to flourish. If English continues to enter into Spanish time, it will be challenging for students to reach deep levels of Spanish language and literacy development. In addition, the ability of students to study more difficult, abstract concepts in Spanish in the future will be undermined. Rather than switching to English, increased time should be dedicated to oracy building in Spanish, and continued and consistent use of sheltering strategies throughout instruction.
<u>Assessment</u> Instruction is provided in Spanish while the end of the unit assessment is provided in each student's preferred language, in both languages, or in English only.	For our students, when assessments are provided in the language of choice, this often leads to code-switching or translating during instruction and students and teachers both focus on content while lessening emphasis on the language associated with that content. In addition, trends in the field demonstrate that assessments that are provided in English only (after Spanish instruction) devalue the Spanish instruction. And when assessments are given in BOTH Spanish and English to all the students, this reinforces the belief that all content must be both taught and assessed twice (once in each language) for students to become bilingual and biliterate. Bilingualism and biliteracy instruction are supported

	when assessments are given in the language of instruction, and a Bridge following the assessment explicitly teaches students to put new labels on already understood concepts.
<u>Systems/Infrastructure</u> A 5th grade biliteracy teacher says, “The district has provided some really great resources in English for this science unit. I realize that science is taught in Spanish in 5th grade, but I just don’t have the time to create or find these great resources and videos in Spanish.” The teacher asks, “Can I just teach this unit in English? Or can I just use the English resources but teach in Spanish?”	

Premise 2: Students use all the languages in their linguistic repertoire to develop biliteracy

Therefore, we support developing bilinguals by teaching literacy in both Spanish and English, moving from informal to formal language, and reflecting a multilingual paradigm of instruction.

Instruction

One of the teachers, Samuel, brought an example of student writing to class and asked his classmates for help. One of his 1st grade students, María, had written, “*Voy a una party con mi broder*” as part of a language experience activity. Samuel wondered whether María has fully development her home language and asked his classmates, “How can I teacher her when she doesn’t speak with of the two languages well?” Several classmates questioned whether María was even in the right program. Some argued that since María’s Spanish isn’t good to begin with, perhaps she should be placed in an all-English program. (*Teaching for Biliteracy*, p. 3-4)

<u>Assessment</u> After assessing a student with both an English diagnostic assessment and a Spanish diagnostic assessment, it is determined that the student is low in both languages and therefore not a good candidate for biliteracy instruction.	Many developing and/or simultaneous bilinguals can look “low” when compared to monolingual peers. Because developing bilinguals have resources shared across languages, it is imperative to provide diagnostic assessments to students across languages. In other words, rather than assess the student twice monolingually, it is more informative to assess a student bilingually, which might require a change in diagnostic assessment protocol. For example, if a student is being assessed on letter sounds, and offers the letter sound in English (This letter says “em”) but gives an example of a word that begins with that letter in Spanish (<i>mesa</i>), rather than count that response as incorrect, that response should be counted on as correct, while the language use is also noted.
<u>Systems/Infrastructure</u> Common Core English language arts units of instruction are created by the district. Biliteracy teachers are instructed to implement the same units, on the same pacing, but some in Spanish and some English.	Biliteracy instruction is NOT simply monolingual instruction twice. Biliteracy instruction includes planning for oracy instruction in anticipation of literacy instruction, the consistent use of sheltering strategies throughout instruction, and the Bridge and extension. Each of these elements will interfere with following a monolingual pacing chart. In addition, because biliteracy instruction includes two literacy classes each day for all students, year-long pacing charts need to indicate how standards will be met across languages in order to leverage language and reduce redundancy.

Premise 3: Spanish and English are each governed by different linguistic rules and cultural norms

Therefore, we have to use strategies appropriate for each language, and ensure that students have the explicit opportunity to compare and contrast their languages.

<u>Instruction</u> Literacy instruction in Kindergarten in Spanish begins by learning the names of the letters of the alphabet first, and then moves on to initial sounds.	Learning letter names in Spanish is less important than matching vowels to consonants to form syllables. For some students, learning letter names in Spanish can actually interfere with initial literacy development, because the letter names do not directly match the sounds that can be created by the letter. For example, teaching “<i>pe</i>” for the letter <i>p</i> may prevent some students from understanding that the letter <i>p</i> is also used in the <i>pa</i>, <i>po</i>, <i>pi</i>, and <i>pu</i> syllables. Syllable awareness and the ability to break words into syllables are the foundation of Spanish early literacy development.	
<u>Assessment</u> The district creates standard writing prompts to be given to all the students in the district. The writing prompts and the rubrics used to evaluate the responses to the prompts are translated into Spanish for use for biliteracy.		

Systems/Infrastructure

The biliteracy program in District X includes both the one-teacher model (where one teacher instructs in both Spanish and English) and the two-teacher model (where one teacher instructs in Spanish and the other in English). Whether in the one teacher model or the two-teacher model, District X holds teachers accountable for the strict separation of languages. In other words, a Spanish medium teacher may not use English, and the English medium teacher may not use Spanish. In one-teacher models, the teacher must absolutely separate Spanish and English instruction.

Biliteracy instruction includes explicit and planned content and language instruction. Students are supported in developing both content area skills and the language of the content areas, and it is critical to establish clear expectations about language use and avoid translating. While students are instructed in and then held accountable for language within content areas, students also benefit from the opportunity "...to strengthen their metacognitive muscle" (Thomas & Collier, 2012) through a planned Bridge between languages. The Bridge happens after the end-of-the unit assessment, and its purpose is two-fold: to help students transfer academic language learned in one language to the other language and to engage students in contrastive analysis (metalinguistics) by focusing on how Spanish and English are similar and different.

In the one-teacher model, there are three distinct linguistic spaces: Spanish, the Bridge, and English. In the two-teacher model, there are two distinct linguistic spaces: the language of instruction (either Spanish or English) and the Bridge (where the two languages come together). The Bridge is NOT translation.