Supporting Emergent Bilinguals in the VPK Classroom

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June 21, 2014
¡Bienvenidos!
Byenveni!
Welcome!

¡Buenos días!
Bonjou!
Good morning!
Overview & Goals

Focus ➔ What you need to know about bilingual development

- Definition of bilingualism
- Ways of referring to bilingual children
- Overview of the research base in early dual language acquisition for children
- Paths to bilingualism
- Transfer of skills
- Support young bilingual learners
What does it mean to be *bilingual*?

Reflect on your views about bilingualism:

- Are you bilingual?
- What is your definition of bilingualism?
- What makes someone “bilingual”?

Share your thoughts with a partner and compare similarities/differences in definitions.
Your Definitions of Bilingualism

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.
8.
9.
10.
What about individuals who…

- Are able to read in another language, but are not fluent enough in that language to hold an extensive conversation?
- Understand everything that a person says to them in another language, but cannot respond back in that language?
- Are able to communicate their ideas in another language, even though they make some syntactical and grammatical mistakes?
- Are able to hold a conversation with friends and family in another language, but cannot explain language development theories in that language?
What does it mean to be bilingual?

Bilinguals know:
- more than one language to different degrees
- use these languages for a variety of purposes.

A bilingual child is ...
someone who is exposed to two languages no matter what their level of proficiency is in either language.

Types of bilingual acquisition:
- Simultaneous
- Sequential
Describing the bilingual student population

Names/acronyms used for bilingual learners in schools, educational policy, etc.:

- Limited English proficient (LEP)
- Limited English speaker (LES)
- Non-English speaker (NES)
- Potential English proficient (PEP)
- Language minority (LM)
- Non-speaker
- Culturally and linguistically diverse learner (CLD)
- English language learner (ELL)
- Emergent bilingual

- And what about ESOL???
Describing the bilingual student population

Who are emergent bilinguals? Discuss the variation among this group of students.
Describing the bilingual student population

Who are emergent bilinguals? Discuss the variation among this group of students.

• Heterogeneous population, including differences in:
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  •
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  •
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  •
Dual Language Acquisition in Early Childhood: What the Research Tells Us

1. Children have the innate capacity to learn more than one language.

2. The preschool years are crucial for language development, and thus, an ideal time to expose young children to the benefits of two languages.

3. Learning more than one language in early childhood has positive effects on specific types of cognitive abilities.
4. For young emergent bilinguals, intensive support for the home language during preschool years (and beyond) will help long-term attainment in English.

5. The dual language approach is effective for both young emergent bilinguals and English speakers.

6. Becoming bilingual has long-term cognitive, academic, social, cultural, and economic benefits.
Dual Language Acquisition

A variety of language strategies are used to produce bilingual children:
- One person-one language
- L_a at home, L_b outside home
- Both parents speak both languages

Realities of raising bilingual children:
- Additional effort, commitment
- Education of bilingual children
Characteristics Affecting the Second Language Learning Process

✓ Age
  ✓ 0-5 yrs (simultaneous)
  ✓ 5-13 yrs, 13+ yrs (sequential)

✓ L1 proficiency

✓ Personality

✓ Motivation

✓ Exposure
Simultaneous Bilingual Development

- Same linguistic development as monolinguals
- Distinguish between languages
  - Sound
  - Language choice with interlocutor
- Code switching
- Balanced proficiency
Sequential Bilingual Development

- Home language (L1) use
  - use home language as they begin to learn L2
- Observational period
  - upon initial exposure to the L2
- Telegraphic and formulaic communication
  - use short words and formulaic phrases
  - “I wanna play with you”
- Productive language
  - turn formulaic phrases into the pieces
**Earlier vs. Later Exposure**

**Children**
- Length of acquisition is greater
- Less self conscious
- Less expectations to perform at high cognitive level
- Less anxiety due to decrease of pressures and expectations

**Adolescents & Adults**
- Extensive Knowledge
- Mature Cognitive Skills
- Strategies for problem solving
- Not able to produce accent-free speech
- Maintain non-native accent for cultural identity
Changed your mind...?
Statement from the National Association of Bilingual Education (NABE)

...studies reveal that it takes [emergent bilingual] learners more than three years to become proficient in the academic language needed to pass an exam in English. It has also been clearly demonstrated that during their first year of attendance at a school in the USA, [emergent bilingual] learners are at the initial stage of understanding and using English; consequently, after one year of instruction, these students fail to pass an English language arts test and are unable to demonstrate progress in their acquisition of English language skills. As expected, the unfairness of this practice generates discouraging effects among students and parents as well as educators who must demonstrate their efficiency in meeting the needs of [emergent bilinguals].
Bilingual children transfer skills across languages
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Saque de banda</td>
<td>Throw in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Córner</td>
<td>Corner kick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pénalti</td>
<td>Penalty kick</td>
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<tr>
<td>Portero</td>
<td>Goalie</td>
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<td>Pasar</td>
<td>Pass</td>
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<td>Tirar</td>
<td>Shoot</td>
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<td>Árbitro</td>
<td>Referee</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Bilingual children transfer skills across languages
Supporting Bilingual Learners in the Infant/Toddler Classroom

- Use stressed, clearly intoned, repeated utterances
- Attend to children’s reference to objects
- Use vocalization interaction
- Provide opportunities to scribble and draw
- Read books, tell stories
- Communication Strategies
Supporting Bilingual Learners in the Preschool Classroom

Communication Strategies

- Double the message
- Use repetition
- Upping the ante
- Expanding and extending
- Talk about the here and now
Important Language and Literacy skills in Early Childhood Development

- Phonological awareness
- Alphabet knowledge
- Discourse skills
- Vocabulary knowledge
- Book and print concepts
- Literacy activities for young children
Facilitating Bilingual Learning in Preschool Classrooms

- Routine and consistent organizational structures
- Language rich environment in which both languages are privileged and supported
- Strategic training of teachers, staff, and parents to support development in both languages and “training” of peer language models
- Variety of organizational and curricular modifications to help all children feel comfortable, included, and competent.
¿Preguntas?

¡Gracias!

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