Judith Lessow-Hurley

THE FOUNDATIONS OF DUAL LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION

LENGUA
LANGUE
SPRACHE
LINGUA
言語
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The Foundations of Dual Language Instruction

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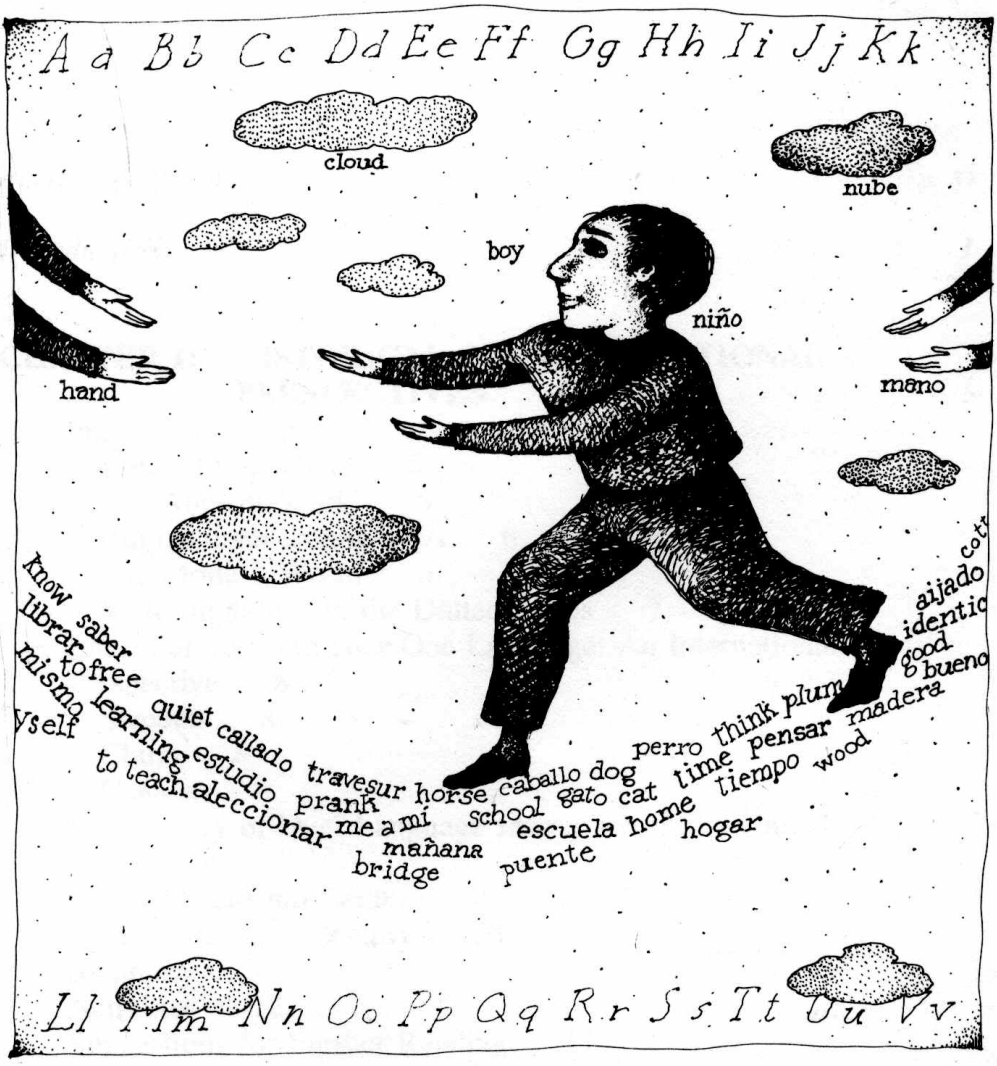
To my father, who encouraged me to learn two languages



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Introduction

Education in more than one language has many historical precedents and is necessary and common around the world today. Population changes in the United States are resulting in a literal flood of public school children whose needs cannot be met without dual language instruction. In addition, our national economic welfare and political security require that we prepare all children with more than one language so they can cope with a shrinking world and an interdependent global economy. Dual language instruction should be, therefore, a routine component of schooling for every child.

This book is a basic text for teachers in training. It is not a book about methodology. The term "bilingual methods" is in itself misleading and often gives rise to confusion and misconstruction. There are, after all, no "bilingual" tangrams, math blocks, or even books or activity sheets.

In the normal course of instructional events, all competent teachers can design objectives, organize materials, structure activities, and devise evaluation strategies. Any good teacher doing those things can answer the questions: "What are you doing?" and "Why are you doing that?" A dual language classroom teacher performs the same tasks, but must also include language as a variable in all aspects of planning.

"What" and "why" are basic questions for all teachers, but the dual language teacher must answer an additional and difficult question: "What language are you using to teach each particular child, at any given time, in any particular subject?" While this question is methodological in part, the answer results not only from the nature of the task at hand, but also from an interplay

of theoretical knowledge about language and culture, state and federal mandates, and administrative decisions about program design.

The foundations of dual language instruction comprise, therefore, a complex mosaic involving theory, research, and discourse from several different areas of scholarship and inquiry. To understand how language works in an educational setting, it must be objectified and identified as a tool, to be manipulated for instructional purposes, much as we manipulate books, maps, and other instructional aids. To develop this awareness we must turn to linguistics for information about the nature of language, to psycholinguistics for information about language and the mind, to sociolinguistics for information about how language works in society, and to psychology, sociology, and anthropology for insights into human interaction and culture.

The purposes of this book are twofold and may at first appear to be contradictory. First, dual language instruction must be removed from its controversial political environment and its component parts examined in an objective and scholarly fashion. This is necessary to correct the misinformation about dual language instruction that permeates the public mind and, all too often, the teaching profession itself.

Having attempted an objective view of dual language instruction, we next must reinsert it into the social environment and develop an understanding of the politics of dual language instruction and the controversy it inspires.

Many people are surprised to learn that bilingual environments are common around the world and that learning in more than one language is the norm rather than the exception. In the United States, dual language instruction is not at all new, having enjoyed a significant period of popularity in the nineteenth century. Chapter 1 presents a historical and international overview of bilingualism and dual language education and sets the stage for later discussions of politics and policy. Chapter 2 explains the concept of a program model and describes the different models prevalent in the United States today.

Language is as essential to us as the air we breathe and is equally invisible. On the one hand it is difficult to see, and on the other it is a source of powerful emotion. Because teachers need an objective understanding of language and of bilingualism, Chapters 3, 4, and 5 are devoted to fundamental aspects of language. As a starting point in the process of creating a vision of language as an instructional tool, Chapter 3 offers a definition of language and description of its subsystems. And because discussion of language is so often obscured by attitudes, biases, and emotional attachments, the chapter analyzes and attempts to defuse biases that people often hold about language.

Strategies for teaching languages must be based on what we know about how languages are learned. Chapter 4 reviews current theories of first language development and second language acquisition. Chapter 5 describes language ability, explains how it can be assessed, and includes a discussion of bilingualism in individuals.

While no one seems to deny that knowing more than one language is beneficial for children whose first language is English, controversy surrounds the idea of providing first language instruction for limited English proficient children in the United States. Chapter 6 develops a five-point rationale for providing primary language instruction to limited English proficient children, emphasizing the work of Jim Cummins, whose analysis of school-related proficiency has laid much of the groundwork for current thinking in this area. In addition, Chapter 6 describes approaches for providing primary language support in the classroom, depending on program models.

Many program models include some type of direct second language instruction. Chapter 7 discusses the historical development of several approaches to second language instruction and recent innovations in the field. Also included is a discussion of sheltered English, which simultaneously addresses both content instruction and second language development.

Language is a natural focus for the study of dual language instruction, but language is inextricably tied to culture. The increasing heterogeneity of our school population demands increasing attention to cultural diversity. Many school administrators and classroom teachers make a sincere attempt to respond to ethnic diversity through holiday observances, inclusion of ethnic foods in school menus, and selection of materials that reflect different life-styles. While these well-intentioned responses to diversity are positive, they remain essentially superficial.

A culturally responsive classroom must reach beyond surface or artifact culture and attend to the basic differences in the way children from different backgrounds understand, communicate, and learn. Teachers must understand the nature of culture, its relationship to language, and the relationship of specific cultures to the culture of American schools. Chapter 8 outlines a definition of culture, giving examples of its characteristics and manifestations. Chapter 9 describes four analyses of the relationships between culture and school achievement, with emphasis on the contextual interaction model and the recent work of John Ogbu and Carlos Cortés.

Dual language instruction requires educational planning, based not only on theoretical considerations, but also within the framework of federal and state law. Chapter 10 reviews the legislative and judicial foundations of dual language instruction. Special attention is given to the federal Bilingual Education Act (Title VII), the U.S. Supreme Court's 1974 decision in *Lau v. Nichols*, and subsequent legislation and case law.

Finally, all schooling in the United States takes place in a political context. Dual language instruction manipulates language and culture for instructional purposes. The emotional relationships that people have to language and culture result in a particularly charged reaction to bilingual education. The last chapter analyzes the politics of bilingualism and discusses language and its relationship to the ideas and ideals of American identity.

As a text for teachers in training, this book is intended to be simple and, given the scope of the subject, is necessarily superficial in many areas. With this in mind, annotated suggestions for further reading have been included at the end of each chapter, so that readers may pursue their particular interests in depth. In addition, each chapter is followed by a list of suggested hands-on activities to provide students with first-hand experience in the concepts presented.

While this book attempts to provide an objective review of theory, research, and practice in dual language instruction, the reader will quickly note that I have a strong bias. When I started teaching in a bilingual demonstration program in the late 1960s, our program provided Spanish instruction for monolingual English-speaking children of all backgrounds, and Spanish maintenance with English as a second language for Hispanic children whose English was limited. Our program had a strong community base and moved effectively toward the goal of making all our children bilingual and biliterate in English and Spanish.

It is ironic that the growing legislative support we hoped for was the undoing of programs such as ours. Faced with mandates for services for large numbers of limited English proficient children, school districts decided that two-way programs (as they are now called) were a dispensable luxury. There can be no doubt that the needs of limited English proficient children are an immediate first-order priority. But until we inculcate an understanding of the value of bilingualism in the general population, such programs will always be vulnerable and insecure. As a bilingual person and a bilingual teacher, it is my unshakable conviction that dual language instruction benefits all children.

CHAPTER 1

Historical and International Perspectives

INTRODUCTION

People from the United States are sometimes surprised to find that tourists or immigrants often speak, read, and write several languages. Around the world, bilingualism is more the norm than the exception. This is true now and was true historically as well. In this chapter we review the history of bilingualism and dual language education around the world and consider examples of the use of two languages at the present time in society and in education.

SOCIETAL BILINGUALISM

The Ancient World

Bilingualism was common in antiquity. Political and territorial consolidation and domination of one or more groups of people by others generally created situations in which conquered groups added the dominant language to their repertoire. Linguistic tolerance on the part of ancient conquerors favored linguistic diversity. Starting in the sixth century B.C.E., ancient Greeks, for example, penetrated and dominated large areas of the Mediterranean. While they preserved and promulgated Greek language and culture through schooling, they had no interest in replacing local languages with their own. With language shifts slow in the making, many individuals maintained the ability to function in more than one language (Lewis, 1976).

To the extent that formal schooling was available, education in more than one language seems to have been the norm in the ancient world. The need for dual language education may have been tied to literacy. The scarcity of written materials meant that a person who wanted to read widely had to read in more than one language (Mackey, 1978).

Education in Europe has always placed value on bilingualism and biliteracy, dating back to the fact that formal schooling was implemented on a large scale by the Romans throughout their empire and that all students were schooled in Latin regardless of their first language. Latin as the language of schooling has persisted until relatively recently, when the rise of nationalism and the concurrent Protestant Reformation motivated the use of vernaculars for scholarship and education.

Bilingualism among Jews

Jewish bilingualism from ancient times to the present has received the special attention of scholars (Lewis, 1976). Hebrew was used for worship by Jews long after it ceased to be a mainstream Jewish language. Dispersed around the world, Jews have learned many languages, while simultaneously maintaining a home or community language. Although no longer widely spoken, Yiddish is perhaps the most familiar Jewish language to English speakers, since it is related to German. As you can see in the list below, many Yiddish words and constructions have entered English.

BAGEL:	A bread, shaped like a donut, that is boiled and then baked
CHUTZPAH:	Nerve or audacity
GLITCH:	An unexplained malfunction; usually refers to computer programs
KLUTZ:	A clumsy person (adjective: klutzy)
MAVEN:	An expert; sometimes slightly pejorative—a know-it-all
SCHLOCK:	Cheap or badly made merchandise (adjective: schlocky)
SCHMALTZ:	Over-flowery sentiment (adjective: schmaltzy)

It is interesting to note that there is still a significant population of Sephardic Jews who speak Ladino, a form of Spanish spoken by Jews of Greek, Turkish, and Syrian ancestry and written with the Hebrew alphabet. Spanish was carried to the Middle East by Spanish and Portuguese Jews exiled from Spain in the late fifteenth century.

The Modern World

Bilingualism is common in modern times in almost every corner of the world. Grosjean (1982) suggests that only Japan and West Germany can be classified