MULTILINGUALISM
AND LANGUAGE TEACHER
EDUCATION

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1. “Mainstreaming” bilingual learners
2. Questioning the norm: Multilingualism and/in the mainstream classroom
3. Implications for teacher education
About 49.9 million students were enrolled in US public schools (pre-K to 12th grade) in the 2007-2008 academic year.

- 10.7 percent, or more than 5.3 million children, were English language learners (ELLs).

- 76 percent of elementary school and 56 percent of secondary school ELLs are born in the United States.

- More than half of the ELLs in public secondary schools are second- or third-generation U.S. citizens.

Source: Batalova & McHugh (2010)
States with 150,000 or more ELL students (2007-2008)

States (ranked) with more than 200 percent ELL growth (1997-1998 to 2007-2008)

Notes: There were no states with the size of ELL population between 250,000 and 700,000.
Source: National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, State Title III Information System.

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Between 1992 and 2002, the percentage of LEP students who received Extensive LEP services, with significant native language use decreased by more than half (from 37.0 percent to 17.0 percent).

Between 1992 and 2002, the percentage of LEP students who received mainstream instruction only, without LEP services, increased from 3.5 percent to 11.7 percent. (Zehler et al., 2003)
More Mainstream: Access to Content

- Form-based (grammar) language instruction is not enough to prepare for academic classroom settings (which requires content learning)
  - Focus on “academic language” (the language of school)
- Emphasis on communicative competence and functional use of language to learn content
  - Integration of language and content
Mainstreaming of ELLs

Educational Policies

Demographics / Shortage of specialists language teachers

ELT Trends

“Mainstreaming” of ELLs
Increased attention to how to approach ‘mainstream’ teacher preparation for ELLs in the wake of accountability and common standards for all students.

For many years, the responsibility for working with ELLs was given to specialist language teachers in special programs (ESL, TBE, Sheltered Instruction, bilingual education).
More than “Just Good Teaching” (de Jong & Harper, 2005): language and culture as processes as well as outcomes: students learn language and content in and through language.

Areas of Focus:

☐ Demographics - recognizing growing diversity of students
☐ Policies and laws
☐ Second language acquisition in school contexts
☐ Culturally and linguistically responsive teaching (e.g., Lucas & Villegas, 2013)
In other words

- Affirming Learners’ IDENTITIES
- Promoting ADDITIVE BI-MULTILINGUALISM
- Structuring for INTEGRATION

(de Jong, 2011)
Insufficient Teacher Preparation

- Only 29.5% of teachers with ELLs in their classes have the training to do so effectively.
- Only 20 states require that all teachers have training in working with ELLs.
- Less than 1/6th of colleges offering pre-service teacher preparation include training on working with ELLs.
- Only 26% of teachers have had training related to ELLs in their staff development programs.
- 57% of teachers believe they need more training in order to provide effective education for ELLs.

Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy (2008)
Teaching ELLs requires no more than a toolkit of techniques for teaching English as a second language. “English language arts is the curriculum. ESL is a methodology” (Florida Department of Education Official, 1996)

As ESL teachers collaborated with mainstream colleagues, “the mainstream curriculum became the de facto ESL curriculum and ESL gradually became to be perceived as merely a question of methodology, not content in its own right and not affecting mainstream content” (Davison, 2006, p. 24)

Not all strategies are equal (Harper & de Jong, 2011; de Jong, Coady, & Harper, 2013). Including ELLs is primarily a matter of individual, in the moment, learner accommodation (Coady, de Jong, & Harper, in press).
Mainstream classrooms in the United States use English as the sole medium of instruction.

Most mainstream teachers are monolingual (est. 5% has some proficiency in a language other than English). Naturally, they will engage in monolingual practices.
The accepted norm is therefore that ELL placement in mainstream classrooms implies a monolingual learning environment and monolingual teaching practices.
Preparation Gap

- Practicing graduates indicated lack of skill in building on/using the students' L1 (survey)
- Those with some proficiency in language other than English noted advantages (empathy, cross-linguistic analysis) (Interviews)
- Insufficient knowledge about where and how to locate multilingual resources (Interviews)
Multilingualism and/in the Mainstream
- Affirming Learners’ IDENTITIES
- Promoting ADDITIVE BI-MULTILINGUALISM
- Structuring for INTEGRATION

(de Jong, 2011)
STRIVING FOR EDUCATIONAL EQUITY

Engages in practices that reflect respect, non-discrimination, and fairness for all students

AFFIRMING IDENTITIES

- Respects students’ linguistic and cultural identities.
- Validates students’ cultural experiences in school policies and classroom practices.

PROMOTING ADDITIVE BILINGUALISM

- Creates opportunities for using, developing, displaying, and engaging in multiple languages.
- Builds on all students’ existing linguistic repertoires.
- Makes knowing multiple languages an integral part of the curriculum and instructional practices.

STRUCTURING FOR INTEGRATION

- Brings together different parts, on an equal basis, to make a whole.
- Allows participants to contribute in meaningful ways to the educational process, broadly defined.
“The bilingual is not two monolinguals in one person” (Grosjean, 1989)
Benefits of Multilingualism

Cognitive
- Bilingualism promotes cognitive development and higher levels of abstract thinking.
- Studies have found that it can help delay dementia and Alzheimer’s.

Educational
- Makes you more marketable in the workforce.
- Makes travel a breeze when you can communicate with the locals.

Economic
- Age of onset: Bilingual (75.5) vs. Monolingual (71.4)
- Age of first doctor appointment: Bilingual (78.6) vs. Monolingual (75.4)

Political

Sociocultural

The Benefits of Being Bilingual
Speakers of more than one language fend off the onset of dementia symptoms for an average of four years longer than monolingual patients, researchers found. They looked at the age of the onset of visible symptoms in men and women, and the age when the subjects’ symptoms first necessitated a visit to a doctor.

AGE OF ONSET
- Bilingual: 75.5
- Monolingual: 71.4

AGE OF FIRST DOCTOR APPOINTMENT
- Bilingual: 78.6
- Monolingual: 75.4

Source: Bialystok, Craik and Freeman, Neuropsychologia
Activation and building on prior knowledge requires the linking of English concepts and knowledge with the learner’s L1 cognitive schemata (see also Lucas & Katz, 1994)

Teaching for transfer (Cummins, 2009)
“Attention to student’s L1 occurs in the context of formal bilingual education programs, such as TBE or TWI. If our school does not have such a program or we have a multilingual population, we can and should only focus on L2 issues.”

“Monolingual language arts teachers cannot tap into native languages because they do not have a working knowledge of other languages” (Reyes, Laliberty, and Orbansky, 1993, p. 659 cited in Schwarzer et al, 2003).
Continuum of Additive Bi/multilingual Practices (de Jong & Freeman, 2010)
“an additive bilingual stance is always possible and desirable from a social justice perspective because it aims to validate the linguistic (and cultural) resources of students and their families” (de Jong & Freeman, 2010)

- Our goal needs to be to foster native languages, not merely allow them to be used by students on a temporary basis (Schwarzer et al., 2003)

- While bilingual teachers have a broader repertoire to achieve this goal, monolingual teachers are also integral to reaching this goal.
Identity Texts: “Encouraging newcomer students to write in their L1 and, working with peer, community, or instructional resource people to translate L1 writing into English, scaffolds students’ output in English and enables them to use higher order and critical thinking skills much sooner than if English is the only legitimate language of intellectual expression in the classroom (Cummins, 2009, p. 319)

See also Cummins & Early (2010) & Prasad (2014) – Toronto, Canada

- http://www.thornwoodps.ca/dual/index.htm
- http://lewebpedagogique.com/cm2plurilingualproject2012
I am a Canadian
By Aditi
(English & Gujarati)

Canada is a very rich country with beautiful people. Now I am going to tell you how I felt when I first moved to Canada. At first, it was really scary because I didn't know proper English and I missed my family and friends a lot. Then I came to this school and met many people. They were so helpful. Like the time I had difficulties with math. They didn't give the answer but they gave me strategies on how to solve it. But I was missing my aunts, uncles, cousins, and the rest of my family in India. Then, I found out that there was another school.

Also, the education understanding was named, Nazneen. I was getting bet problem because others. The other and curry. And But then, finally.

Now I am going to be thankful to be in Canada. The diversity and the respect to me of friends from the because of the fr things bossing us around.

Finally, I like Canada. Ambulances, police about our safety house. The fire has no time. So that I am Canadian.

One summer day, a girl named Sally, went outside. She asked her dad to pump up her swimming pool.
“Teachers can inquire about students’ languages, not simply as part of the home language survey or for district reports, but to locate someone in the school and home communities who can help to foster the students’ languages within the classroom. Schools and communities can become partners in the development of lifelong multilingual/multiliterate individuals who are aware that their native language and literacy is a precious resource for the school community” (Schwarzer et al., 2003, p. 455).
What Might It Look Like?

  - Family Language Use Tree (Schwarzer, 2001)
  - Learn/teach simple phrases (parents)
  - Multilingual print environment (labels, alphabets)
  - Language experience project (insects and spiders)

- Lotherington (2007): multilingual narratives using technology and community resources
  - Multilingual retelling of stories through different cultural lenses
Ernst-Slavit & Mulhern (2003): Bilingual Books: “The presence of such reading materials sends clear messages to all students -- L1 and L2 alike -- about the status that schools and teachers attach to other languages”.

Some strategies for using bilingual books:

- Introducing new topic
- Supporting transfer of L1 reading to L2 reading
- Support independent reading
- Using L1 version as preview
- Cognate instruction
- Home-school connections

http://readingonline.org/articles/art_index.asp?HREF=Ernst-slavit/index.html
Implications for Teacher Preparation
Including a Multilingual Perspective

- Building on and expanding students’ multilingual resources and repertoires is important regardless of where the language learner is placed (additive & dynamic bilingualism).

- Even (and some might say, especially) in mainstream classrooms, teachers still need to be expected to engage in bi/multilingual practices. These practices are not the exclusive property of bilingual programs (or EAL/D specialist teachers).
1. Re-Framing of the Mainstream

- The realities of linguistic and cultural diversity challenges the assumption that mainstream placement necessarily implies monolingual practices.

- As (language) teacher educators we need to disrupt this myth and reframe ‘the mainstream’:
  - “General” or mainstream education = multilingual learning environments
Teachers of multilingual learners need to be aware of their role as language decision-makers and the impact that decisions about language and language use have on their students and on their students’ opportunities to learn.
Teachers of bilingual learners need to be able to (and be comfortable) highlight language diversity through their curriculum and pedagogy choices, e.g.,

- Choose literature that contain code-switching, dialects, or language alteration that encourage children to write from their own experiences and use their home and school discourses (Yokoto & Cai, 2003)
- Select lesson content that include reflection on use of different languages and discourses
- Allow for student group activities where ‘hybrid’ language use (Perez, 2004) or translanguaging (Garcia, 2009) is celebrated
How do we prepare mainstream and specialist ESL/bilingual teachers? What are our expectations? What kinds of experiences do they need to be effective teachers of bilingual learners?

How do we ensure access to and application of deep expert knowledge and skill related to multilingual learners at the classroom, school, and district level?