WinkWorld May 2005

Hello Friends,

This month I am happy to introduce you to some of the treasures which some of the students in my classes are sharing. The sharing in Prairie Pedagogy and Phamily Fotos is small, but mighty this month.

The Bilingual Home

Last month I shared The Bilingual Home, http://www.joanwink.com/treasure.php which graduate students created last semester. Gina Grgich created the graphic, and Ken (Vern) Hixson conceptualized it, with the help of colleagues. Forgive me, for not mentioning Vern's name. This semester, another group of graduate students would like to help you understand the principles embedded in that bilingual home graphic. They have researched some of the primary sources for you. Thank you, Lesa, Kevin, Elisa, Victor, Nichelle, Greg, and Greg. If you are interested in the relationship between deaf education and bilingual education, you will find something of interest from Elisa. Enjoy.

The following websites were provided by the students
Conversational and Academic Language
Shared by Victor Serrato.

James Cummins description-definition of Academic/ Conversational language from his Web Site http://www.iteachilearn.com Conversational fluency is often acquired to a functional level within about two years of initial exposure to the second language whereas at least five years is usually required to catch up to native speakers in academic aspects of the second language (Collier, 1987; Klesmer, 1994; Cummins, 1981a). Failure to take account of the BICS/CALP (conversational/academic) distinction has resulted in discriminatory psychological assessment of bilingual students and premature exit from language support programs (e.g. bilingual education in the United States) into mainstream classes (Cummins, 1984).

*In the Bilingual Home graphic, this idea is embedded in the green hill on both sides of the house; the green line is designed to reflect Cummins' BICS/CALP and/or academic and conversational language.

Threshold Hypothesis
Jim Cummins http://www.iteachilearn.com
*For the concept of the Threshold Hypothesis, the entire class suggested that Cummins's web pages are the best. Please note the threshold in the window of the door on The Bilingual Home graphic.

Common Underlying Proficiency (Cup) and Separate Underlying Proficiency (Sup)
Shared by Greg Groll.
http://www.azusausd.k12.ca.us/bilingual/CLAD1Concepts.html
*In the Bilingual Home graphic, this idea is implied by the CUP in the window.

The Metaphor of the Dual Language Iceberg
Shared by Eliza, who also discovered the relationship between deaf education and

bilingual education. Eliza's sister, who is deaf, grew up in a trilingual home: Spanish, sign, and English.
http://sunsite.utk.edu/cod/pec/1998/allington.pdf

Linda Marie Allington wrote the article, "Critical Literacy: Key to Empowerment in Deaf Language Education." She uses Cummins' metaphor on the "Dual Iceberg" to describe "the surface features of language and the linguistic and cognitive overlap among all humans," regardless of their surface features. Cummins believes the first and second language academic skills depend upon one another. The common underlying proficiency allows the transfer of literacy between languages. American Sign Language is considered another language in which the first and second language are interdependent.

*In the Bilingual Home, note the dual language iceberg in the green line of the grass.

Below, Elisa share a short story of her life, growing up in her trilingual home.

My sister Sylvia was born in my great-grandmother's tiny, dark, cold kitchen in Mexico. An ancient midwife assisted in the delivery that summer day in June. We had a normal childhood living in a two room brick home in a small town. Yet my parents noticed my sister's inability to speak any words in Spanish by the age of two and a half. Sylvia mostly screamed and yelled in frustration because she was not understood by anyone.

When we arrived to Modesto, my parents finally took her to the specialists and were given the news. Sylvia was completely deaf in one ear, and the doctors recommended deaf education right away. By three, she was enrolled in Walter White in Ceres in a deaf program. Soon she learned ASL and was writing in English. My parents were not able to attend any of the parental ASL courses because as new arrivals, we were financially needy.

As the oldest, I had the greatest responsibilities. I became the translator. Sylvia became confident in her ASL, therefore she started to teach me a few signs. In order to communicate with my Sylvia, my parents spoke to me in Spanish, then I translated the message to English, and finally to ASL. Sometimes we utilized inventive sign-language to fully understand each other. Three languages became part of our household. Today Sylvia is a mother, a college graduate, and is learning more and more Spanish. When I asked her which language she feels most comfortable with now, she responded without any hesitations. She definitely believes ASL is her "mother tongue."

The Metaphor of the Water Lily
A ~real~ water lily http://www.JoanWink.com/gifs/waterlilly.jpg
Tove Skutnabb-Kangas

Home Page www.ruc.dk/~tovesk/
http://akira.ruc.dk/~tovesk/cv-uk.htm
World Congress on Language Policies
http://www.linguapax.org/congres/plenaries/skutnabb.html
A Review of Tove:
http://fuzzy.arts.kuleuven.ac.be/ling/led/abap/bertc/skutnabb-kangas.htm
A Tribute to Tove.

Thank you, Nichelle and Elisa. "According to Tove, even if we have deaf individuals who were raised "orally" for most of their lives, and who have learned American Sign Language (ASL) later, we might perceive them, or they might perceive themselves, as having ASL, as

their mother tongue if that is the language of greatest ease of use and access to creative thought" (Allington, 1998).

http://www.alliance.brown.edu/programs/eac/lncblt_v2-1.shtml
http://www.stanford.edu/~hakuta/Education388/Ed388_Spr01.htm
(Shared by Lesa Prine, who used the first site for terminology and definitions, and the second site for Kenji Hakuta's work, while he was at Stanford. Kenji is now at UC Merced.)