

Bilingual Basics

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The more, the better.

The sooner, the better

The faster, the better

The harder, the better

The louder, the better.

Often, it seems that this is what the public understands about second language acquisition. If we want children to speak English, and we do, we have to give more, sooner, faster, harder, and louder. Because of this public (mis)understanding, each of us is often called upon to explain language acquisition, ESL, ELD, sheltered content, SDAIE, bilingual education, and the multiple approaches to immersion.

How do we get another language?

First Language Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition

5 Hypotheses

Acquisition vs. Learning

Monitor

Comprehensible Input, a.k.a.

Natural Order

Affective Filter

What do we know about language acquisition?

Mamas, Meaning, and Motivation

Levels of Language Acquisition

- 5 levels: beginning, early intermediate, intermediate, early advance, advance

- 4 levels: preproduction, early production, speech emergence, intermediate fluency (Krashen & Terrell, 1983)

- *4 quadrants (Cummins, 1981)

- 3 levels: early, intermediate, or later language learner

Sup/Cup

http://www.achievementseminars.com/seminar_series_2005_2006/readings/tesol.turkey.pdf

Dual Iceberg Model

<http://www.joanwink.com/scheditems/CWU081505/iceberg1.jpg>

<http://www.joanwink.com/scheditems/CWU081505/b.w-iceberg.pdf>

Floating Water Lily

<http://www.joanwink.com/gifs/waterlily.jpg>

<http://www.joanwink.com/scheditems/bilingual-waterlily.jpg>

Bilingual Bike

<http://www.joanwink.com/scheditems/effects-of-bilingual.jpg>

The Bilingual Home, or the Principles of Bilingual Education

<http://www.joanwink.com/scheditems/bilhouse.pdf>

Threshold Hypothesis

Literacy transfers

What is bilingual education?

Education in two languages.

It is literacy and knowledge in two languages.

It is quality subject matter in the two languages.

It is a positive self-esteem, language, and knowledge.

Quality subject matter in two languages.

ELD/ESL, SDAIE/sheltered content, and primary language

Programmatic Models

Transitional, Maintenance (Enrichment), English Immersion, French Canadian Immersion, Dual (2-way) Immersion

How do we do it?
Who needs what?
Who can do it?

ESL and/or ELD – good oral English
Sheltered and/or SDAIE – good intermediate English in the content areas
Primary language literacy
Mainstream Activities
Transmission; Generative; Transformative

Benefits of Bilingualism

Fights the cognitive deterioration of aging
Metalinguistic awareness
Increases intelligence
Stimulates creativity
Promotes cognitive flexibility
Fosters divergent thinking
Facilitates high levels of mental-linguistic and mental-cultural awareness
Enables faster and more efficient learning of other languages
Heightens sensitivity to feedback cues and general verbal communication

Bilingual Basics

English and knowledge are the primary goals of bilingual education.

Bilingual education is all about *literacy* and *knowledge*.

The truth is that we can all stop worrying about the kids not getting conversational English. They're all doing it. We can't stop them. However, conversational English alone is not the answer. Our job, as teachers, is to focus on academic language.

Kids can't learn what they don't understand. Me either.

Knowing your first language really well makes learning the second easier and faster.

Lots of first language literacy is a great indicator of success in school.

Poverty is a great roadblock to literacy and knowledge; our job is to level the playing field while the kids are with us in school.

People around the world feel strongly about their first language. And, why not? It is how we all originally received love from our parents and families. It is okay to love your first language. It is okay for everyone to love the first language.

Being bilingual is not bad. In fact, it is very good.

Students must be prepared for a world we can only imagine. They will need to pose problems and solve programs with technology, which stretches beyond our wildest thoughts. Being able to do this in more than one language will be an advantage.

Above all, students who will succeed socially and economically are those who can thrive in a multilingual world. And, when that day comes, it will still be okay for each of us to have strong feeling about our first language.

Summary

Assumptions

Language is acquired naturally in real contexts when the learner receives meaningful messages in a safe environment. Language is socially and culturally grounded, and learning activities must relate to the experiences of the learner. Language is used as a tool to enhance all levels of two-way communication and to understand and mediate our world.

Guiding Principles for Language Teachers

All activities must be *meaningful, purposeful, respectful, and relevant* to the learner. Respect for the learner's language and culture enhances second language acquisition.

Methods

Methods which build upon the natural processes of acquisition use various names in the literature: Natural Approach, Total Physical Response, cooperative learning, communicative approach, thematic approach, sheltered instruction, contextualized learning, and problem-solving activities.

What do these methods look like in practice?

Although many names exist for second language methodology, all have similar characteristics when used in learning environments. Attributes and activities common to all are: interactive and transformative processes; focus on tasks; 2-way communication; socially integrated activities; use of real language which is important in the lives of the learners; problem-solving; problem-posing; peer and family involvement; student-centered processes; and active dialogue used to construct knowledge.

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