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Educating New York's bilingual children: constructing a future from the past

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This paper describes the ways in which New York City schools have responded to the multilingualism of its children in the last 40 years, and suggests changes needed in order to accommodate the greater linguistic heterogeneity of the city. In the predominantly Puerto Rican community of the 1960s and 1970s, traditional bilingual education programs were the best way to educate language minority children. But in the twenty-first century, with the demographic shifts and the technological advances of a globalized world, other understandings of bilingualism in education are needed. The paper ends by suggesting ways in which traditional bilingual education may exist alongside other more dynamic approaches of bilingualism in education that consider the city's growing linguistic heterogeneity, thus constructing a future from the past.

Keywords: bilingual education; New York City; Puerto Ricans; emergent bilinguals; dynamic bilingualism; recursive dynamic bilingualism; plurilingualism; translanguaging

Introduction

New York City's multilingualism is not new. Standard English has never been, and cannot be considered today, New York's vernacular (García 1997). New York City is not only highly multilingual, but its sociolinguistic profile is unlike that of any other US city, for the majority of the large number of Spanish-speakers are Puerto Ricans, US citizens by birth.

This paper traces the ways in which New York City schools have responded to the multilingualism of its children in the last 40 years. I argue that in the predominantly Puerto Rican community of the 1960s and 1970s, a simple approach toward bilingualism in education was an appropriate response to meet the needs of language-minority children. However, in the twenty-first century, with the demographic shifts and the technological advances of a globalized world, other understandings of bilingualism in education are needed. To construct a future from the past, I draw not only on existing scholarship but also on my experiences as a bilingual/ESL teacher in the 1970s and early 1980s, an educator of bilingual and ESL teachers in the 1980s and 1990s, a Dean of a School of Education in the late 1990s, and an educator of scholars and researchers working in the field of bilingualism and education in the last decade.

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The US in the 1960s

When the Bilingual Education Act (Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) was passed in 1968 (PL 90-247), the country was in turmoil. The struggle for civil rights raged on. In 1964, President Johnson had signed the Civil Rights Act, which prohibited discrimination based on race, color, religion, or national origin. But the race riots that followed – Watts in Los Angeles in 1965 and the Detroit riots in 1967 – reminded us that the struggle continued.

To try to find a peaceful solution to the issues that underlay the rioting, President Johnson formed the National Advisory on Civil Disorders. New York City's Mayor, John Lindsay, acted as vice-chairperson. The year of the Bilingual Education Act, 1968, was also when the National Advisory issued the Kerner Report, warning that the USA was moving toward two societies – one black, one white – separate and unequal (Podair 2002). In addition, this was the year when the pillar of civil rights – the Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. – was assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee. Also during this time, a half million American soldiers were fighting in the increasingly controversial and unpopular Vietnam War. The My Lai massacre, in which hundreds of unarmed civilians in a South Vietnamese village were killed by American troops, occurred in March 1968. Robert Kennedy, a favored presidential candidate and leader of the anti-war movement, was assassinated this same year minutes after winning a key presidential primary.

The Bilingual Education Act of 1968 has to be understood within this climate of intense dissatisfaction with the injustices of war and the inequities of racial discrimination (Crawford 2004; García and Kleifgen 2010). The passage of the Bilingual Education Act was part of an effort to dissipate the growing anger in the nation about injustices and inequities, specifically those surrounding the education of language-minority students. Although the emphasis of the Bilingual Education Act was clearly on teaching English literacy to poor children of 'limited English-speaking ability', the intent was to provide equal educational opportunity to these children.

The Bilingual Education Act was passed to bring educational resources and relief to poor US language-minority communities – Mexican-Americans in the West and Southwest, Puerto Ricans in the Northeast, and Indigenous peoples – that were marginalized and segregated. This was a period of very low immigration, since the rigid quotas imposed by the National Origins Act of 1924 were not lifted until 1965 when the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 (also known as Hart-Celler) was passed.¹ Thus, the 1968 Bilingual Education Act's support of 'financial assistance to local educational agencies to develop and carry out new and imaginative elementary and secondary school programs designed to meet these special educational needs of the large numbers of children of limited English-speaking ability in the USA' (PL90-247) targeted US students, and not specifically immigrants. At the time of the passage of the Bilingual Education Act, New York City's 'limited English-speaking ability' children were mostly Spanish-speaking Puerto Ricans who were US citizens. The next section develops the historical context of bilingual education in New York City.

New York City in the 1960s

In New York City, second- and third-generation Jewish and Irish children who had come during the large immigration wave of the turn of the century had mostly shifted

to English by the 1960s (Fishman 1966; García 1997). This is the usual pattern of language shift among US immigrants (Fishman 1966). It was then mostly the Spanish of Puerto Ricans, US citizens since 1917 as a result of the Jones Act, which was the language other than English heard in the city at that time (Zentella 1997, 'Spanish in New York'). Puerto Ricans and African-American migrants to the north, following the mechanization of agriculture in the southern USA, made up the city's minorities in the 1960s.

The Puerto Rican great migration was at its peak in the 1960s. Although in 1940 New York City counted 61,463 people of Puerto Rican descent, there were 254,880 in the city by 1950. The number of Puerto Ricans reached 612,574 by 1960. By 1964, Puerto Ricans made up 9.3% of the total New York City population (Colón 1982; Colón López 2001; Sánchez-Korrol 1994).

New York City schools were poorly prepared to educate Puerto Rican students. Whereas in 1947 there had been approximately 25,000 Puerto Rican students, by 1972 there were 245,000, with an additional 38,000 non-Puerto Rican Spanish-speaking students (Falk and Wang 1990, cited in Del Valle 1998). That is, 85% of all Latino students in New York City schools in 1972 were Puerto Rican, and 40% of Puerto Rican students spoke Spanish only (Del Valle 1998; Falk and Wang 1990). In 1966, Puerto Ricans constituted 21% of all students enrolled in New York City public schools (Castellanos 1983).

Although the 1954 case of *Brown vs. Board of Education* mandated school desegregation, New York City schools remained mostly segregated in the 1960s. In 1966, of all Puerto Ricans 25 years of age and older in the United States, 87% had dropped out without graduating from high school, and the dropout rate in eighth grade was 53 percent (García 2009 'Bilingual education in the 21st century', 169). The high school graduation rate improved slightly in 1970, from 13% in 1966 to 20% in 1970, as opposed to the 51% graduation rate of non-Latino white students in the same year. In 1970, only one percent of Puerto Ricans were college graduates (Wagenheim 1975, cited in Del Valle 1998).

In the 1950s, the New York City Board of Education commissioned a study – *The Puerto Rican Study 1953–1957* – that recommended the use of Spanish as a way to address the high Puerto Rican dropout rate (Board of Education of the City of New York 1958). By the mid-1960s, groups like United Bronx Parents, the Puerto Rican Educators Association, and ASPIRA, an organization to prepare Puerto Rican leaders and youth, were promoting bilingualism and multiculturalism as goals for education programs (Baez 1995, cited in Del Valle 1998).

In 1966, ASPIRA commissioned a report on Puerto Ricans in New York City public schools. The writer, Richard Margolis, titled his report *The Losers*. ASPIRA decided to press for bilingual education as a means of addressing the mis-education of Puerto Rican children, and also as an organizing tool and a means of preserving community identity (Del Valle 1998).

During the late 1960s New York State educational authorities, including the Board of Regents² and the then New York City schools' Chancellor, Irving Anker, supported bilingual education, leading to the passage of a permissive Bilingual Education Act for the State of New York in 1968 (Santiago 1986). Bilingual education programs that used Spanish as well as English were expanded under this Act in New York City. PS 25, New York City's first bilingual elementary school, opened in 1968 in the South Bronx, led by principal Hernán La Fontaine, who would go on to become the first director of the Office of Bilingual Education of New York

City in 1972 (Pousada 1984). Hostos Community College was founded in 1968 to meet the needs of Latinos of the South Bronx. In 1973, the new Title VII funded two experimental bilingual education programs in New York City. Pousada (1987, 20) explains that the programs' mission was to:

Utilize a maintenance approach to educate the children through their school careers to be bilingual and bicultural, as well as economically, socially and politically able to function in US society.

These new programs embodied the kind of developmental maintenance bilingual education that Puerto Rican parents had in mind for their children. Del Valle (1998, 194) explains:

Mainland Puerto Ricans see bilingual education not only as a method to educate language-minority students, but also as a means to realize the promise of equal citizenship in the educational arena.

In addition, Del Valle reminds us of the sociopolitical objectives of bilingual education for the Puerto Rican community:

Bilingual education was on the agenda of every Puerto Rican school board candidate or politician. It was evident that besides a pedagogical reform, it was a source of ethnic cohesion and a source of community control. (1986, 19)

The poor quality of education for Puerto Rican students was slow to change. Bilingual education programs grew slowly but steadily. In 1970, the Puerto Rican Forum declared that only 27% of the more than 100,000 children needing bilingual education were getting it (Pousada 1984, 1987). A year later, in 1971, only 37 schools had bilingual education programs and instruction was not consistent, meaning that programs did not have clear language goals or language policies, and every teacher used bilingualism according to her or his discretion (Pousada 1984, 1987). By late 1972, ASPIRA had filed a suit with the Community Agency for Legal Services and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund against the New York City Board of Education (Reyes 2006; Santiago 1986).

In the meantime, the first reauthorization of the Bilingual Education Act in 1974 defined bilingual education as transitional and remedial, allowing the use of the child's home language only 'to the extent necessary to allow a child to progress effectively through the education system' (quoted in Castellanos 1983, 120). This transitional philosophy was clearly different from the maintenance one espoused by the Puerto Rican community.

In August 1974, just after *Lau vs. Nichols* had been decided³, the New York City Board of Education signed a Consent Decree with ASPIRA that stated:

All children whose English language deficiency prevents them from effectively participating in the learning process and who can more effectively participate in Spanish shall receive: a) a planned and systematic program designed to develop the child's ability to speak, understand, read and write the English language... b) instruction in substantive courses in Spanish (e.g. courses in mathematics, science, and social studies)... [and] c) a planned and systematic program designed to reinforce and develop the child's use of Spanish;... [I]n addition to the foregoing elements, an important element of the above Program will be that the students receiving instruction will spend maximum time with other children so as to avoid isolation and segregation from their peers. (ASPIRA v. Board 1974a, para. 2, cited in Santiago 1986, 160)

Although the ASPIRA Consent Decree was a great victory for the Puerto Rican community, the settlement narrowed the focus of bilingual education to a transitional approach. And yet, as a result of the ASPIRA Consent Decree, 60,000 Spanish-speaking children who did not speak English were finally placed in bilingual education programs, despite their transitional nature (Pousada 1984, 1987). The New York State Association for Bilingual Education (NYSABE) came into being to support these efforts in 1976 (N. Villarreal de Adler, personal communication, July 2010).

Puerto Rican parents and the Puerto Rican community were deeply involved in the bilingual education movement during the 1970s and 1980s. In 1982, for example, Parent Advocates for Bilingual Education (PABE) organized a successful demonstration against New York City schools' Chancellor Macchiarola, who wanted to undermine bilingual education (Pousada 1987). There were many other efforts to organize the Puerto Rican community at the local level, leading to the foundation of the Coalition to Defend Bilingual Education, the National Congress for Puerto Rican Rights, the Puerto Rican Educators Association, and the Puerto Rican Legal Defense and Education Fund.

In the 1970s new immigrants from Latin America, Asia and Africa started coming into the city, a result of the lifting of the quotas based on national origin by the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. By the late 1970s–1980s, Puerto Ricans had been joined by a large group of Spanish speakers from another Caribbean island – the Dominicans. Immigration from the Dominican Republic surged especially after the ouster by military forces of the democratically elected Juan Bosch and the US invasion. The growing Dominican population in the city joined the efforts of the Puerto Rican community in supporting bilingual education. The Community Association of Progressive Dominicans played an important role in this regard.

Immigrants from Haiti started to arrive in large numbers. Haitians were fleeing the political oppression of the Duvalier era and the ensuing economic hardships. Also arriving were large numbers of Chinese-speaking students. To serve the increasing number of non-Spanish speaking language-minority students who arrived in the city in the 1970s, the New York City Board of Education developed a separate plan, the Lau plan, with the US Justice Department of the Office of Civil Rights in 1977 (Del Valle 1998). City schools were now in a position to offer transitional bilingual education programs to Spanish-speaking students under the ASPIRA Consent Decree and either bilingual education or English as a second language (ESL) support to other language minority students. The city and the country were increasingly feeling the impact of the growing immigrant population, and schools had to adapt to meet their needs.

The New York State Education Department, which supervises all educational activities within the state of New York, continued to be supportive of bilingual education. The Office of Bilingual Education had been established in 1969, and in 1978 Carmen Pérez-Hogan was appointed Director of the Office, a post she held until 2005. In 1981, the Regents approved Part 154 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, outlining services to 'limited English proficient (LEP) students' in educational programs in the state.

In 1984, 10 years after the Aspira Consent Decree, the Educational Priorities Panel issued a report entitled 'Ten years of neglect: The failure to serve language minority children in the New York City public schools' (Willner 1986). The report

charged that 40% of eligible language-minority children were not receiving any services (Del Valle 1998; Reyes 2006). In 1988, as a response to the continued academic failure of language-minority students, the New York State Regents raised the cut-off score on the assessment used to determine which students were entitled to Bilingual/ESL programs. This enabled more students to become eligible for bilingual education or ESL services (Reyes 2006).

The Multilingual Apple in the twenty-first century

In the 1980s, New York City was mostly a bilingual Puerto Rican city. Today, it is one that is highly multilingual, although still predominantly English–Spanish speaking. By 2007, 37% of New Yorkers were foreign born (US Census 2007). In 2006, 47.6% of New Yorkers spoke a language other than English at home. Coupled with the fact that the city's population is 26% Black, many of whom speak African-American English varieties, it is clear that standard English is *not* New York City's vernacular. New York City's great linguistic diversity makes it unique, with languages other than English (LOTEs) spoken not only by immigrants, but also by the many temporary foreign residents who do business in New York. Spanish is the primary language spoken by New York City residents who speak a LOTE, but as Table 1 also

Table 1. Languages other than English (LOTEs) spoken in New York City homes, 2007.

LOTE at home	Number	% of LOTEs spoken
Spanish	1,865,922	51.06
Chinese	375,375	10.27
Russian	198,556	5.43
Italian	113,416	3.10
French Creole	95,754	2.62
Yiddish	86,615	2.37
French	86,355	2.36
Korean	78,213	2.14
Polish	62,708	1.72
African languages	57,391	1.57
Arabic	53,884	1.47
Hebrew	53,648	1.47
Greek	52,376	1.43
Tagalog	48,985	1.34
Urdu	39,599	1.08
Hindi	26,041	0.71
German	23,101	0.63
Serbo-Croatian	21,147	0.58
Japanese	20,704	0.57
Portuguese	16,162	0.44
Persian	11,865	0.32
Vietnamese	10,535	0.29
Gujarathi	9568	0.26
Hungarian	9220	0.25
Thai	5097	0.14
Armenian	4120	0.11
Mon-Khmer, Cambodian	2024	0.06
Scandinavian languages	3584	0.10
Laotian	204	0.01

Source: US Census, American Community Survey, 2005–2007 estimates.

makes clear, Spanish is not its sole LOTE. There are perhaps as many or more Chinese languages⁴ spoken in New York City than anywhere else in the world, given that Chinese New Yorkers come from many regions in mainland China, as well as from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Singapore, and Malaysia. Russian is the number three LOTE spoken in New York City, fueled by the Jewish emigrants from the Soviet Union during the 1970s and 1980s.

The New York City school population also reflects this complex multilingualism. In 2007, 46.4% of all 5–17 year olds residing in New York City spoke a language other than English at home; 25.9% of these children spoke Spanish (see Table 2).

In 2007–2008, Spanish was spoken by 68% of the New York City public school students who were developing English (New York City Department of Education 2008). Chinese was the language spoken second most often by students who were learning English (spoken by 11% of the total population of English learners). After Spanish and Chinese were the following (in order by number of speakers): Bengali, Arabic, Haitian Creole, and Russian (New York City Department of Education 2008).

While the city was experiencing this greater linguistic diversity, the Puerto Rican community itself was changing. Some Puerto Ricans became middle class and professionals, mostly through their own advocacy efforts during the 1960s, while others remained trapped in poverty. Further, with New York City changing from a manufacturing to a service economy, fewer Puerto Ricans were coming to New York, moving instead to places like Orlando, Florida. The proportion of Puerto Ricans, as compared to the total Latino population of New York City, decreased. The absolute number of Puerto Ricans in the city also began decreasing, although they remain today the predominant Latino group in New York City, as shown in Table 3.

As a result of globalization, the Latino population of New York City became very diverse in the twenty-first century. The growing Dominican population was joined by Mexicans and other Latinos from South and Central America, many undocumented. The Latino Spanish/English bilingual landscape of the city became more complex, for not only are non-Caribbean varieties of Spanish coming to the fore, but many Latinos are now speakers of Indigenous languages, such as the Mixteco and Zapoteco of many Mexicans, the Quichua of Ecuadorians, and the Garífuna of many Hondurans settling in the city. The diversity and changing nature of the national origin of Latinos in New York City is captured by the US census (see Table 4).

The advent of accessible air travel had made Puerto Ricans the first airborne diaspora, and their US citizenship meant that they could take advantage of traveling back and forth to the island in what Zentella (1997 ‘Growing up bilingual’) calls a

Table 2. New Yorkers’ languages at home, 5–17-year-olds.

Language spoken at home	Number	Percentage
Speak only English	714,054	53.6
Speak other languages	617,387	46.4
Speak Spanish	344,570	25.9
Speak other Indo-European language	159,916	12.0
Speak Asian & Pacific Island language	74,834	5.6
Speak other languages	38,067	2.9

Source: US Census, 2007 American Community Survey.

Table 3. New York City Puerto Ricans, 1960–2007.

Year	Number of Puerto Ricans	% Hispanics who are Puerto Ricans
1960	612,574	80
1970	811,843	68
1980	860,552	61
1990	896,763	50
2000	789,172	37
2007	788,560	35

Source: US Decennial Census for 1960, 1970, 1990, 2000, and US Census, 2007 American Community Survey.

‘circular migration’. But technological advances in the twenty-first century made ‘transnationalism’ possible for all immigrants who now could successfully participate in different national contexts at the same time and without having to physically move back and forth. The world had changed, and the sociolinguistic context of students who speak languages other than English at home is today a lot more complex than that of students when the ASPIRA Consent Decree was negotiated.

*Bilingual education under attack*⁵

The increase in linguistic heterogeneity in the Multilingual Apple occurred at a time of increased attacks against bilingualism. Anti-bilingual education laws were passed in California in 1998, in Arizona in 2000, and in Massachusetts in 2002. The word ‘bilingual’, what Crawford (2004, 35) has called ‘the B-Word’, has been progressively silenced (Hornbeger 2006; García 2008). Every federal office with the word ‘bilingual’ in its name has been renamed, substituting for ‘bilingual’, ‘English language acquisition’ (see García 2009, ‘Bilingual education in the 21st century’, 184). In 2001, the Bilingual Education Act (Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act) was repealed. In its place, Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act (PL 107-110) was now entitled ‘Language Instruction for LEP and Immigrant Students’.

In New York City, similar changes were taking place. In 2002, as the city school system was reorganized under Mayor Bloomberg’s control, the Office of Bilingual Education of the New York City Board of Education was replaced by the Office of English Language Learners of the New York City Department of Education. Late in 2009, and signaling the increased attention on student achievement scores, the Office was once more renamed, this time as the Chief Achievement Office: Students with Disabilities and English Language Learners. In some ways the lumping together of students who are developing English with those who have disabilities signals an unfortunate retreat. Since the early 1960s and the research of Peal and Lambert (1962), the cognitive advantages of bilingualism for children have been recognized. But the naming of this office seems to suggest otherwise.

There have been other discursive changes in the twenty-first century. As noted before, the Bilingual Education Act first referred to students whose native language was not English as ‘Limited English Speaking (LEP)’, but in the 1978 reauthorization the designation was changed to ‘Limited English Proficient (LEP)’, expanding eligibility to speakers of English who might have limited English literacy. Educators, however, usually referred to these students as either ‘bilingual’ or ‘language minority’

Table 4. Latinos in New York City, 1990, 2000, 2007.

National origin	1990	2000	2007	% of 2007 Latinos
Puerto Rican	861,122	813,539	788,560	34.74
Dominican	332,713	532,412	549,051	24.19
Mexican	55,698	192,642	288,629	12.72
Ecuadorian	78,844	132,191	176,889	7.79
Colombian	84,454	100,976	96,402	4.25
Cuban	57,019	42,393	43,529	1.92
Honduran	22,167	33,504	39,917	1.76
Salvadoran	23,926	32,086	35,509	1.56
Peruvian	23,257	30,844	33,566	1.48
Guatemalan	15,873	10,909	23,855	1.05
Panamanian	22,707	22,049	21,763	0.96
Spaniard		10,909	23,855	0.69
Argentinean		12,535	13,627	0.60
Nicaraguan	9372	8443	8093	0.36
Venezuelan		8786	8765	0.29
Chilean		6562	6662	0.29
Costa Rican		6464	6603	0.29
Bolivian		2170	5134	0.23
Paraguayan			3927	0.17
Uruguayan		2496	2699	0.12
Other S. Americans	33,354	8947	5812	0.26
Other Central Americans	7177	7243	3522	0.16
Spanish		42,018	13,290	0.59
Spanish-Americans		4270	674	0.00
Other	110,644	30,598	77,939	3.43
TOTAL			2,269,972	100.00

Note: Missing data in columns has to do with the fact that in that year the specific national origin was not accounted for. Those numbers appear in the ‘Other’ category. The categories Spanish and Spanish-American were given by informants. Data are from the US Census Bureau. The 1990 and 2000 data are from the Decennial census. The 2007 data are from the US Census, 2007 American Community Survey.

students. However, educators and scholars increasingly abandoned these terms and started referring to these students as ‘English Language Learners’ or ‘ELLs’. Referring to these students in this way focuses exclusively on their English learning, which, although extremely important, does not constitute a full education for these students. In choosing not to speak about language minorities, the discourse creates the illusion that these children are completely equal, and that schools can, by focusing on their English language and literacy development, close the achievement gap, ignoring the social inequities, the poverty, and the racism and linguicism to which many of these language-minority children are subjected.

I have argued for the use of the term *emergent bilingual* in referring to these children, as a way to remind all of us that the effective teaching of English will make them bilingual, not merely teach them English, and that thus, bilingualism is important for all educators, including those who teach in English only (García 2009, ‘Emergent bilinguals and TESOL’; García and Kleifgen 2010). That is, in recognizing the emergent bilingualism of students, educators of all kinds – whether bilingual, ESL or mainstream teachers – need to build on their strengths – their home languages and cultural practices – and not consider these suspect. Working with these students as emergent bilinguals means holding higher expectations of these children and not simply remediating their limitations.

The focus of attention on the education of those I have called ‘the tail of the elephant’ (García 2006, ‘Equity’s elephant in the room’) – that is, those children who are not proficient in English – ignores that the proverbial ‘elephant in the room’ of New York City public schools is the students’ bilingualism. Today, as when the ASPIRA Consent Decree was passed in New York City, most language minority students, and especially Latino students, are bilingual. Although many speak English well, they continue to fail in schools in disproportionate numbers (Bartlett and García 2011) and many have not developed academic literacy in English (see Menken and Kleyn 2010).

Educating bilingually is the only way to meaningfully teach all children around the world in the twenty-first century (García 2009, ‘Bilingual education in the 21st century’), and especially in multilingual New York. In order to do that successfully, both for language minorities and language majorities, our twentieth-century understandings of bilingualism need to be shed. I turn now to examining how concepts about bilingualism that were developed in the twentieth century have to be reshaped to fit today’s more complex sociolinguistic situation.

Bilingualism in the twenty-first century

Our present conceptions of bilingualism in education have been partly shaped by the work of Wallace Lambert and his associates in Canada who proposed that bilingualism could be either *subtractive* or *additive*. According to Lambert (1975), language minorities usually experience subtractive bilingualism as a result of schooling. Their home language (L1) is subtracted, as the school language (L2) is learned. On the other hand, language majorities usually experience additive bilingualism, as the school language is added to their home language. These models of bilingualism can be rendered as in Figure 1.

Responding to the greater bilingual complexity of the twenty-first century, as well as the increased understanding of the multilingualism of the ‘developing’ world, García (2009, ‘Bilingual education in the 21st century’) has proposed that the concept of bilingualism should also be *dynamic*. This type of bilingualism goes beyond the conception of two separate autonomous languages of additive or subtractive bilingualism, suggesting instead that the language practices of bilinguals are complex and interrelated and are not always simply linear.

Language minority communities who have experienced language loss and then attend bilingual schools in hopes of reacquiring this language undergo a process of *recursive dynamic bilingualism*. They do not start as simple monolinguals (as in the subtractive or additive models). Instead, they recover bits and pieces of their existing ancestral language practices, as they develop a bilingualism that continuously reaches back in order to move forward.

Dynamic bilingualism, on the other hand, refers to the development of different language practices to varying degrees in order to interact with increasingly multilingual communities. In some ways, dynamic bilingualism is related to the concept of *plurilingualism* proposed by the Council of Europe (2000). The difference

Subtractive bilingualism
 $L1 + L2 - L1 = L2$

Additive bilingualism
 $L1 + L2 = L1 + L2$

Figure 1. Subtractive and additive bilingualism.

is that within a dynamic bilingual perspective, languages are not seen as autonomous systems. Thus, educating for dynamic bilingualism builds on the complex and multiple linguistic interactions of students in multilingual classrooms in order to develop new and different language practices. These models can be rendered as in Figure 2.

All students today, whether speakers of majority or minority languages, and especially in a city like New York, need the opportunity to develop dynamic bilingualism, a plurilingualism, to ensure that they would be able to interact in the multilingual contexts of urban communities (García 2009, 'Bilingual education in the 21st century'). For some, such as second- and third-generation Americans who have experienced different degrees of shift to English, education programs must build on their linguistic past, on what remains of their ancestral language practices, even if only single words, to bring them to a dynamic bilingualism in the present. As a nation of immigrants, the US has a clear advantage to support the recursive dynamic bilingualism of many of its citizens.

In New York City very few students start out in school being monolingual in English or monolingual in a LOTE. Most students come into school with some familiarity of different discursive practices at home and in other networks. Sometimes each parent has a different language background; and as a result of step-migration (Portes and Rumbaut 2001) even immigrant families have different language practices. The Internet and cable television have brought into all our living rooms different sounds, colors, and landscapes; as a result, we have become increasingly aware of the linguistic diversity in the world, as well as the growing importance of English. The time is now for schools, especially in New York City, to think of ways to use their linguistic resources, their built-in multilingualism, to educate all their children as emergent bilinguals. To do so would require shedding the belief that bilingualism is a linear construct, and schools would need to move away from curricular arrangements that separate languages, as well as from strict definitions of program types that may no longer be relevant today. Schools would need to develop new models, curricula, and pedagogies that support bilingualism and recognize linguistic interdependence (for more on linguistic interdependence, see Cummins 1979).

New Yorkers and bilingualism in education in the present

The past tension between programs that use the students' home languages to educate them only until they learn English (transitional bilingual education) and those that support students' English language learning without using their home languages (ESL programs) continues today. While the organization and advocacy of Puerto

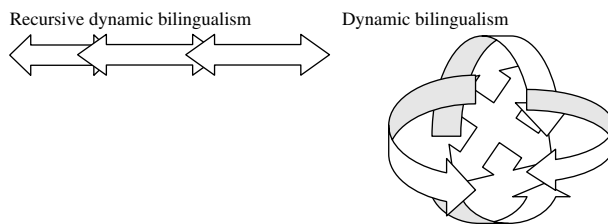


Figure 2. Recursive dynamic and dynamic bilingualism.

Ricans in New York City during the second half of the twentieth century clearly tipped the balance in favor of transitional bilingual education programs, ESL-only is more popular today. In school year 2002–2003, 53% of New York City emergent bilinguals were in ESL classes; by school year 2007–2008, 69% were instructed in English as a Second language programs (New York City Department of Education 2008). Thus, more than two-thirds of all eligible children are in ESL classes that increasingly ‘shelter’ English and make no use of students’ home language practices.

In the past decade, we have witnessed the slow dismantling of transitional bilingual education in New York City, which follows a nationwide trend. The argument has been that in a highly diverse city, transitional bilingual education programs that serve only one language group are no longer relevant. Transitional bilingual education programs are also criticized for segregating emergent bilingual students. In school year 2002–2003, 34% of the New York City programs that served emergent bilinguals were transitional bilingual education programs. By school year 2007–2008, that figure had been reduced to 22% (New York City Department of Education 2008).

Despite the greater linguistic heterogeneity of the city, the city is more racially and linguistically segregated than ever (Center for Social Inclusion 2005; Logan, Stults, and Farley 2004), and Latinos and Asians are more segregated in New York schools than in any other system in the country (Logan, Stowell, and Oakley 2002). The increased segregation of New York City neighborhoods means that large numbers of speakers of one language (especially Spanish, but also Chinese and Haitian Creole) continue to make transitional bilingual education programs important in some communities, and especially at the high school level (for an example of a bilingual secondary school for Latino newcomers, see Bartlett and García 2011; García and Bartlett 2007). Although transitional bilingual education programs may not go far enough in providing emergent bilinguals the support they need throughout their education, they have at least provided ‘safe houses’, which Mary Louise Pratt (1991, 39) defines as:

social and intellectual spaces where groups can constitute themselves as horizontal, homogeneous, sovereign communities with high degrees of trust, shared understandings, temporary protection from legacies of oppression...Where there are legacies of subordination, groups need places for healing and mutual recognition, safe houses in which to construct shared understandings, knowledges, and claims on the world that they can then bring into the contact zone.

We cannot destroy the transitional bilingual education ‘safe houses’, for students will need them, temporarily, before they come into the ‘contact zone’ of the mainstream classroom. And yet, traditional transitional bilingual education programs in which instruction is in English and the home language are not possible when children come from many different language backgrounds.

In New York City, both bilingual education programs and ESL programs have been the target of reform under Mayor Bloomberg’s ‘Children First’ reforms. With regard to bilingual education, advocacy for transitional bilingual education has been replaced by support for so-called ‘dual language’ programs, named this way to avoid the word ‘bilingual’ and the negative connotation with which it has become associated in US society. Sometimes these ‘dual language’ programs, especially at the elementary level, include more than one language group, as in two-way bilingual education programs. However, sometimes they include one language minority group

with varying degrees of proficiency in English and the LOTE. These programs, in the past, had been simply known as developmental bilingual education programs.

The advantage of these 'dual language' bilingual education programs is that emergent bilinguals (both when they involve only language-minority children and when they involve both language-minority and language-majority students) are schooled throughout their elementary years bilingually (Howard et al. 2007; Lindholm-Leary 2001). Despite their promise, few 'dual language' bilingual education programs have been implemented, since their success depends upon the support of both language-minority and language-majority communities, along with a belief in bilingualism as an important educational goal. In 2002–2003 these 'dual language' programs constituted 2.3% of all programs for emergent bilinguals, while today they only represent 3.6% (New York City Department of Education 2008). Despite advocacy efforts, their increase has been negligible. There are other problems inherent in these programs, for there is the danger that less attention is paid to emergent bilinguals (see García 2006, 'Lost in transculturation'; Valdés 1997). But, as we will see in the next section, these 'dual language' bilingual programs also suffer from some of the assumptions of bilingualism that we had in the twentieth century.

Traditional ESL pullout programs have also been reformed. In the last decade, ESL professionals, supported by a favorable political climate and the growing importance of teaching English throughout the world (Canagarajah 1999; Phillipson 1992), have appropriated bilingual methodologies. For example, *Structured English immersion* or *Sheltered English* is based on the concept of *structured immersion*, originally used in immersion bilingual education programs in Canada. These programs use language that is slow and simplified, with guarded vocabulary and short sentences, while the grade level curriculum is used. In time, however, structured English immersion became the antithesis of bilingual education, instead of being recognized as one of the components of bilingual education. Thus, as bilingual education fell into disfavor, structured English immersion became the most commonly utilized strategy in the education of emergent bilinguals. The result has been a growing rift between bilingual and ESL scholars and educators, when in reality much stands to be gained from having an integrated field.

On the one hand, 'dual language' bilingual education programs hold a promise that is only being partly fulfilled. On the other hand, reformed ESL programs have gone beyond the promise they held, for they have, at times, been used to annihilate educational practices that build on students' multilingualism, silencing decades of international bilingual research. Speaking about 'dual language' bilingual education programs in New York City, in García 2006, 'Lost in transculturation', I evoked the image of cruise ships entering New York City ports that were once abandoned, and the hybrid smells and tastes of fusion restaurants and ethnic restaurants that now appeal to all, to remind us that New York has changed, but also to warn us that life in the flux can be an illusion. This is a fact that came to bear upon all New Yorkers when the epitome of modern technology, the airplane, was turned into a weapon that made time stop on September 11, 2001.

Despite their promise, the transformed bilingual and ESL programs of the twenty-first century could be the reforms-turned-weapon that might destroy a bilingual future for New York children in subtle ways. The issue then lies in how we ensure that these programs work for all children, especially those who are developing English, for they are the most vulnerable. Do we improve these reforms to ensure that they remain attentive to the bilingual needs of language minorities for the future?

The answer to this question lies in a re-commitment to *bilingualism in education for all* (and not just exclusively to bilingual education), while we recognize that dynamic understandings of bilingualism and bilingual acquisition are needed. The boundaries between bilingual education and ESL need to be brought down, and more hybrid programs must be developed in order to respond to the dynamic bilingualism of the twenty-first century.

The future of the past: bilingualism in New York City education in the twenty-first century

Both ESL and bilingual education programs in the United States, and certainly in New York City, grew out of what I have called (García 2009, 'Bilingual education in the 21st century') a monoglossic vision that considered each language as autonomous. That is, whether teaching monolingually or bilingually, English has been 'sheltered' from the students' other language. This is based on principles of second language acquisition (SLA) that look at the individual performance of bilingual students in light of what may be considered 'native-like proficiency', as if a static and complete set of grammar rules were available for acquisition (Selinker 1972). And yet, since the end of the twentieth century, the idea of a 'native speaker' has been questioned by many (Canagarajah 1999; García 2009, 'Bilingual education in the 21st century'; Kramsch 1997, 2009; Valdés 2005). The emphasis on 'ultimate attainment' in SLA studies have impacted the ways in which second language educators view their learners – as incomplete.

For these 'incomplete' learners to develop 'native-like proficiency', it is thought that ESL programs should use only English, and that bilingual education should carefully separate the two languages, provide ESL instruction in English only, and stamp out the bilingual discursive practices that characterize bilingual communities. Thus, either additive bilingualism or subtractive bilingualism is currently accepted in the education of emergent bilinguals, while dynamic bilingualism, responding to a more complex view of bilingual acquisition, has hardly entered the conversation.

By proposing the concept of *multi-competence*, Cook (2002) argues that second language users are different from monolingual speakers because their lives and minds are also different. As Cook (2001, 407) has said:

Learning a L2 is not just the adding of rooms to your house by building an extension at the back: it is the rebuilding of all internal walls. Trying to put languages in a separate compartment in the mind is doomed to failure since the compartments are connected in many ways.

Bilinguals are not simply two monolinguals in one (Grosjean 1982; Valdés 2005). For Larsen-Freeman and Cameron (2008, 135), working within complexity theory, bilingual acquisition is *not*:

the taking in of linguistic forms by learners, but the constant adaptation of their linguistic resources in the service of meaning-making in response to the affordances that emerge in the communicative situation, which is, in turn, affected by learners' adaptability.

Thus, what is needed for the future is not a strict language education policy that specifies when and how one language or the other is to be used, but ways of helping teachers, and children, adapt their linguistic resources to make sense of the concepts

being taught (for more on this, see Menken and García 2010). In so doing, all teachers will need to build on the bilingualism of the students in their classrooms, whether linguistically homogenous or heterogeneous.

Duverger (2005, 93) has pointed out that both macro-alternation (allocating languages to periods of the day, teacher or subject matter) and micro-alternation (the use of hybrid language and instructional practices by both teachers and students) are important in schools that educate linguistically diverse children: 'Macro-alternation is programmed, institutionalized, demanding; micro-alternation adds suppleness, flexibility, and efficiency. The combination of the two is subtle'. New York City has come a long way toward mandating a language education policy for all programs that serve emergent bilinguals. However, whereas all programs have clear language allocation policies, and bilingual education programs have clear curricular arrangements for macro-alternation of languages, little thought has been given to the micro-alternation of languages, both in bilingual and ESL programs.

Until very recently, these complex interrelated discursive practices, what I have called *translanguaging* (García 2009, 'Bilingual education in the 21st century'), have not been seen as appropriate in teaching emergent bilingual students or, in fact, any students. Extending Cen Williams, who coined the term to refer to a pedagogical practice that changed the language of input and that of output (cited in Baker 2001), translanguaging for me is an approach to bilingualism that is centered not on languages, but on the observable communicative practices of bilinguals. Translanguaging includes code-switching, the shift between two languages in context, and it also includes translation; however, it differs from both of these simple practices in that it refers to the *process* by which bilingual students perform bilingually in the myriad ways of classrooms – reading, writing, taking notes, discussing, signing, etc. Translanguaging is not only a way to 'scaffold' instruction, to make sense of learning and language; rather, translanguaging is part of the metadiscursive regimes that students in the twenty-first century must perform, part of a broad linguistic repertoire that includes, at times, the ability to function in the standardized academic English language required in US schools.

There is now mounting evidence that keeping the two languages separate in schools at all times and following only monolingual instructional strategies is not always appropriate (Creese and Blackledge 2010; Cummins 2007, 2008; Gajo 2007; Lewis 2008; Li Wei 2009; Martin-Jones and Saxena 1996; Serra 2007). Translanguaging, if properly understood and suitably applied in schools, can enhance cognitive, language and literacy abilities.

Any language education approach – be it monolingual or bilingual – that does not acknowledge and build upon the hybrid language practices and the translanguaging in bilingual communities is more concerned with controlling language behavior than in educating (Cummins 2007; García 2009, 'Bilingual education in the 21st century'; García, Flores, and Chu 2011; Makoni and Pennycook 2007). Language education policies must involve educators in negotiating these sense-making, moment-by-moment, instructional decisions (for educators as language policy-makers, see Menken and García 2010).

Bilingualism in education emerges from the meaningful interaction of linguistically diverse students and their educators – be they bilingual or monolingual educators – instead of merely from a language education policy handed down to educators. In New York City, all schools that have emergent bilinguals must put in place one of three programs as defined by educational authorities – ESL, transitional

bilingual education, and ‘dual language’. The problem is that these categories are not valid reflections of what is happening in reality. As educators impose more rigorous standards and construct more challenging curricula for all emergent bilinguals, traditional program structures and pedagogies are becoming more flexible and hybrid. For example, 40% of NYC high school students are Latinos. It is not surprising then that preliminary findings of the LAT-NYHS research project attest that Spanish is ‘seeping in’ to instruction in bilingual as well as in ESL programs (LAT-NYHS 2010).⁶ The small high schools that have opened up as a result of the closing down of large high schools have had to become creative in order to teach their emergent bilinguals. They increasingly use students’ home languages in supposedly ‘ESL programs’ (for an example of how this happens in two small high schools in NYC, see García, Flores, and Chu 2011; García and Sylvan, with Witt, forthcoming). This is also the case of the network of ‘international high schools’, a group of 11 NYC public schools for newcomer immigrant adolescents who are new to English. The internationals approach promotes students’ use of their home languages in heterogeneous classrooms where students speak many different languages, and the use of Spanish in the two schools where the student population is comprised of all Latinos. Although the teacher may be using only English, students are encouraged to use bilingual dictionaries (both electronic and paper), and to switch between English and their home languages as needed to complete complex cognitive tasks and collaborative projects (García and Sylvan, with Witt, forthcoming). Educators are increasingly building on the bilingualism of their students regardless of whether students are in ESL, transitional bilingual education or in ‘dual language’ bilingual education; whether the group is linguistically homogenous or linguistically heterogeneous; or whether the teacher is bilingual or not.

The locus of control for the use of language must rest with students as they make sense of the lesson, and not solely with teachers who respond to rigid curricular arrangements (García and Sylvan, with Witt, forthcoming). In any program model, teachers must be mindful of encouraging students to use languages other than English to search the web or conduct research, to read meaningful books and articles, or to discuss and brainstorm with classmates. Instead of the usual macro-linguistic curricular arrangements where a language is used at certain times or for certain subjects with certain teachers, schools must build on micro-linguistic adaptations that respond to students’ complex bilingualism. That is, instead of bilingualism being enacted top-down by administration and teachers, bilingualism needs to be promoted through the students’ bilingual language practices. Granted, teachers who are bilingual themselves will find it easier to meaningfully use and extend their students’ bilingualism, especially if their language ability matches that of their students. Even so, all teachers need to be cognizant of how to support students’ bilingualism, regardless of their own language abilities. Therefore the task of all educators in New York City today is to pay attention and support the singularities of students’ language practices in the pluralities that make up New York City’s classrooms in the present (García and Sylvan, with Witt, forthcoming).

The most coveted language ability in the twenty-first century will not be to speak English ‘natively’, since English is spoken by more bilinguals than ever (García 2009 ‘Bilingual education in the 21st century’; Grin 2003). It will also not simply be to be bilingual and biliterate in two languages, since two whole languages, although important, are no longer sufficient. The most coveted language ability will be to be

comfortable translanguaging in order to make sense of multilingual encounters, an ability that schools in multilingual New York would be well poised to develop for all their children. To do so would require us to understand the complexities of dynamic bilingualism for the twenty-first century.

Conclusion

In the past decade, ESL programs have unfortunately become, more than ever, separate from bilingual instruction. As the diminishing number of bilingual educators pales in comparison to the growing number of ESL teachers, the professions have become 'two solitudes' (Cummins 2008). Bilingual teachers are in charge of both the development of English and of a LOTE, and generally teach language minority children of the same language group. On the other hand, ESL teachers are focused solely on the development of English for language minority children, often with different linguistic backgrounds. However, the way in which both ESL and bilingual educators understand bilingualism and build on the home language practices of their students must be the same. We need to 'stretch' ESL classrooms (García and Celic 2006) to have teachers build on all the language practices of their students, regardless of their own language abilities or practices. And we need to 'stretch' bilingual classrooms so as to not only develop 'standard' school use of English and the LOTE, but also to understand the important role of translanguaging in bilingual contexts and an increasingly multilingual world.

To construct a future from our past experiences, while recognizing the increased linguistic diversity and greater language fluidity of the twenty-first century, we must not cede all the educational spaces to the types of English-only or bilingual programs that keep the students' other language (or languages) apart. On the contrary, we must allow students in all educational programs to use their full range of discursive abilities, including their translanguaging practices. This would not only be of help in educating emergent bilinguals, but also in building multilingual awareness, linguistic tolerance, and the dynamic bilingualism ability that we will need in the future.

If properly carried out, this dynamic bilingualism could extend and expand bilingualism in the education of language minorities, whether emergent bilinguals or not, and of all language majorities. A future of the past in New York City and beyond needs to build more flexible uses of bilingualism in education than those we have developed in the past, while extending them beyond bilingual classrooms to all classrooms in the Multilingual Apple.

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Notes

1. The National Origins Act of 1924 limited the number of immigrants who could be admitted from any country to two percent of the number of people from that country who were already living in the USA in 1890, thus significantly restricting immigration of Latin Americans, Africans, Asians, and Southern and Eastern Europeans.
2. The Board of Regents is responsible for supervision of all educational activities within the State of New York. It consists of 17 members.
3. In *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), the Supreme Court ruled in favor of the Chinese plaintiffs in San Francisco and ordered that something additional be done for language minority students to address their language learning needs in school.
4. The Chinese usage would be 'dialects', emphasizing that these languages are written in the same way. I call them 'languages' to signal their differences. Mandarin, official in both Taiwan and Mainland China, predominates today in New York City.
5. This reflects the title of Stephen Krashen's book: *Under Attack: The Case Against Bilingual Education* (1996).
6. The LAT-NYHS research project is a longitudinal study of 10 high schools in New York City with large Latino populations. The team is composed of Ofelia García (research director), Haiwen Chu, Nelson Flores, Heather Woodley, Laura Kaplan and Suzanne Dikker (research assistants).

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