The Routledge Handbook of Educational Linguistics

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Bilingual education is the use of two languages in the instruction and assessment of learners (García 2009). Bilingual education programs vary in their goals, language use, and students served, and are shaped by sociocultural and sociopolitical factors, historical contexts, and the power of speakers and languages. Students in bilingual education programs may be language majority or language minority students. A bilingual education program offers all students the possibility of becoming bilingual and biliterate. Language majority children develop the ability to use a language other than the dominant one, which they speak at home. Other students in bilingual education programs may be immigrants, refugees, Indigenous peoples, or simply live in households where a non-dominant language is spoken. For these students, bilingual education programs offer the possibility of developing the language of school in ways that support their home language practices and identities.

Bilingual education differs from traditional language education in which a "foreign" or "second" language is taught. Firstly, in bilingual education the two languages are used as a medium of instruction. However, in traditional language education programs the additional language is explicitly taught as a subject. As such, bilingual education is first and foremost an educational approach to educate students holistically, with language and literacy development in two languages as an educational goal. With the additional language also used to educate meaningfully, the epistemology about language in bilingual education often differs from that of traditional language education. Traditional language educators see language as a system of standardized structures through which students listen, speak, read, and write. In contrast, bilingual educators focus on the development of language practices; that is, on the languaging of students (Becker 1995; Maturana and Varela 1998 [1973]), which is a product of social action and consists of fluid and flexible resources through which students make meaning of what they are learning (more on languaging to follow). Bilingual education and traditional language education also differ in their approach towards the relationship between language and cultural practices. Whereas learners in bilingual education are encouraged to be able to function across cultures, and sometimes to appropriate the different cultural practices as reflective of their integrated selves, learners in traditional foreign language classrooms are expected to become familiar with an additional cultural context, but not necessarily to function competently within it. Pedagogically, bilingual education integrates language and content, whereas traditional foreign or second-language education tends
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to emphasize teaching the language explicitly. Finally, bilingual education has the potential to offer a just education, leveling the power differentials among language groups, as minoritized languages are used in education. Bilingual education, thus, distinguishes itself in the way in which the two languages are used to construct meaningful content, while affirming diversity and tolerance. We consider below the historical development of bilingual education, some of its core issues, the research approaches and key findings, new debates, and, finally, implications for education.

Historical Perspectives

Bilingual education is not a new approach to education or to language education. Throughout history, most elites have been educated bilingually. In the 19th century, the development of public schools became a mechanism of nation-states to establish the dominance of a single state language, and education became mostly monolingual.

Bilingual education continued on its own trajectory throughout the 19th and early 20th century. On the one hand, the elite continued to support privately financed schools offering bilingual education that sought to develop two powerful languages. Known as prestigious bilingual education, these bilingual schools for the elite still exist today. On the other hand, some more powerful autochthonous minorities, especially throughout Europe, developed systems of bilingual education in which both the dominant language and the community language were taught. This was especially so in cases where language and religion coincided, as the community sought to ensure sustainability of the sacred language. These educational programs are known as maintenance bilingual education. In both prestigious and maintenance bilingual education, education was carried out in two languages, often from the first years of schooling.

In the mid-20th century, bilingual education became entrenched as an educational option both for language minorities and language majorities. It was in North America where the field became fertile, and where it was expanded from the more traditional formats of prestigious and maintenance bilingual education. In Québec, Canada, majority Anglophone Canadians demanded bilingual education for their children that would make them truly bilingual, enabling them to live a fruitful life in a Francophone Québec that was becoming more politically powerful. In response to these parents, Wallace Lambert and his colleagues at McGill University developed immersion bilingual education programs. Through this bilingual approach, English-speaking Canadian children were taught initially through French only, with English used increasingly, until by the fourth grade, English was used 50% of the time. At around the same time, educators in the United States started to experiment with bilingual education as a way to educate the nation’s language minorities—who were failing in U.S. schools—Spanish-speaking Latinos and Native Americans. The approach was the inverse of immersion bilingual education. In the United States, the child’s home language—usually Spanish, but also Navajo and others—was used in the early grades either solely or mostly, with English introduced gradually. Whereas in Canadian immersion, bilingual education French and English eventually achieved equal time allocation, in U.S. bilingual education, what became known as transitional bilingual education, the minority language was to disappear from instruction as soon as the child gained proficiency in English. Whereas the goal of Canadian immersion bilingual education was the students’ bilingualism, the goal of the U.S. transitional bilingual education was students’ English monolingualism.

This was not the first time that transitional bilingual education was used to educate language minorities for monolingualism. In colonial situations throughout Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, local languages were used in the early years of primary education to enable the transition to the colonial language. In 1953, UNESCO passed a resolution that affirmed the value of this
educational policy for language minorities: "We take it as axiomatic, too, that the best medium for teaching is the mother tongue of the pupil" (p. 6). Nothing was said, however, about the sustainability of bilingualism for these students; the non-dominant language was seen as a problem.

The ethnic revival that spread throughout the world in the 1960s fuelled bilingual education efforts. Transitional bilingual education efforts were touted as not enough by some and as too much by others. Many language minority communities and politicians clamored for forms of bilingual education that would lead to sustainability of diverse language practices and not shift to the dominant language. In contrast, some language majority politicians and others felt threatened by the growing diversity that a new global order was imposing. At the same time, globalization led some majority parents to want bilingualism for their own children.

García (2009) has pointed to the new conceptualization of bilingualism and bilingual education that these sociopolitical transformations produced. Originally bilingualism and bilingual education had been conceptualized from a monolingual monoglossic perspective, where bilingualism was understood as simply the pluralization of monolingualism. From this perspective, bilinguals were thought to have two balanced language systems, supporting the notion that one language plus a second language equals two separate languages. Wallace Lambert (1975) proposed two types of school bilingualism—subtractive and additive. Subtractive bilingualism refers to what happens when a child's home language is subtracted as he or she learns the school's language. It is what happens in transitional bilingual education. On the other hand, additive bilingualism occurs when an additional language is added to the child's home language. It is what happens in prestigious bilingual education or immersion bilingual education. Missing from this conceptualization is what happens in the in-between spaces or border spaces—that is, where the child is neither monolingual nor biliterate and brings into school very complex language practices, as we will see below.

As globalization and new technologies resulted in the greater movement of people, information, and goods, the world's linguistic complexity came into full view, and traditional models of bilingual education, as well as subtractive and additive models of bilingualism, proved to be insufficient. The world's majority was not monolingual, nor fully or balanced bilingual, as had been conceptualized in the monoglossic view prevalent in the early 20th century. Instead, with a more heteroglossic lens of bilingualism, in contrast to the monoglossic lens described above, the fluid and complex language practices of bilinguals came into view. Additionally, most of the world's population became recognized as being at different points on the bilingual continuum. For example, some Indigenous minorities had experienced a great deal of language loss. Although they still held their bilingualism as a mark of their identity, they were now closer to the monolingual end of the bilingual continuum. Other autochthonous minorities, such as the Welsh, now more than ever claimed their bilingualism as a mark of their identity, they were now closer to the monolingual end of the bilingual continuum. Other autochthonous minorities, such as the Welsh, now more than ever claimed their bilingualism as a mark of their identity, they were now closer to the monolingual end of the bilingual continuum. Other autochthonous minorities, such as the Welsh, now more than ever claimed their bilingualism as a mark of their identity, they were now closer to the monolingual end of the bilingual continuum. Then there were nation-states where the entire population was bilingual and wanted to ensure a bilingual future. Still other nation-states saw the plurilingualism of their citizens as a good thing, with many acknowledging the fact that their children had parents and families who spoke different languages, sometimes within the same home, sometimes across different national contexts. The result of acknowledging these sociolinguistic realities has been that our traditional conceptions of additive and subtractive bilingualism no longer hold, and the old models of bilingual education—prestigious, maintenance, immersion, and transitional—do not always make sense.

To the monoglossic models of additive and subtractive bilingualism, García (2009) has added two more types of bilingualism that confirm a heteroglossic view of bilingualism—the recursive dynamic model and the dynamic model. Both of these types of bilingualism are in no way linear
or add two languages as wholes. Recursive dynamic bilingualism refers to drawing on language practices that have almost been silenced, in order to revitalize them and bring them forward toward a future. It refers, for example, to the bilingualism of schools in communities such as that of the Māori of Aotearoa/New Zealand. The Māori language cannot be simply added whole, since the Māori community is revitahzing language practices not from scratch, but from bits and pieces, as ancestral language practices are reconstituted for new functions. On the other hand, bilingual schools in some contexts support dynamic bilingualism. These bilingual school programs acknowledge that the children hold different degrees of bilingualism because their families speak different languages or because they have lived and worked across national contexts. The bilingualism of these children also cannot be simply added or subtracted whole, since their language practices are already multiple, non-linear, and complex when they come into school. The European Schools for children of civil servants, for example, acknowledge their children’s dynamic bilingualism, as we will see below.

As we said before, the traditional models of bilingual education are simply not adequate to reflect the more complex multilingualism of the world today. Thus, other types of bilingual education have been developed. It is important to underline that the greater power and visibility of language minorities in the 21st century has resulted in bilingual education programs for them, and by them, where they exercise a great deal of agency. Immersion revitalization bilingual education programs and developmental bilingual education programs are two such programs. In Aotearoa/New Zealand, the revitalization of Māori needed an early start. The result was the development of “language nests” preschools, known as Kōhanga Reo, which involved Māori-speaking elders in the community interacting in Māori with the very young. This model of early childhood bilingual education has been adopted by other groups who speak threatened languages—Hawaiian peoples and Native Americans in the United States; Canada’s First Nations; and the Saamis of Norway, Finland, and Sweden, among others. In the case of the Māoris, the early childhood schooling is continued in Kura Kaupapa Māori schools, offering immersion bilingual education in Māori in elementary grades. These efforts to offer immersion schooling to communities whose languages have been decimated are different from the immersion bilingual education efforts in Canada described above, although they share some characteristics. They are known as immersion revitalization bilingual education. On the other hand, there are communities that have suffered language loss, but not to the same extent as the Māoris. For them, developmental bilingual education programs (sometimes called developmental maintenance bilingual education), with a focus on the language that is threatened, are often more appropriate. Welsh bilingual education programs often fall under this type. These programs differ from those called maintenance above, in that they focus on the protection and development of the minority language, which has endured much hardship under previous educational arrangements. In addition, students in these classes often display a broad range of bilingual abilities, and are not always speakers of the minority language prior to schooling.

The greater sense of a multilingual world has meant that more language majorities are looking for bilingual education options for their children. In the United States, two-way bilingual education programs (often referred to as dual language bilingual education) have been developed to accommodate students learning languages other than English (often Spanish), as well as students developing English. Although those learning English are always language minority students, those developing another language are English-speaking children of many kinds, including those whose families may have spoken languages other than English. Sometimes all the children in these programs share one ancestral language, although they fall at every point on the bilingual continuum, including some children who may already be English monolinguals. When bilingual programs serve one language minority group whose members exhibit very diverse language practices, the programs are often referred to as one-way bilingual education. In effect, they are developmental bilingual education programs.
Increasingly in a globalized world, an education in two languages is simply not enough. And so, multilingual education programs in more than two languages have grown. In the European Union, the European Schools for children of civil servants offer education in more than two languages to students in different language tracks within their schools. These programs are known as *poly-directional bilingual education*. They are similar to the U.S. two-way bilingual education programs in that they are meant for children of different ethnicities and language backgrounds. However, although in the United States children in two-way bilingual education programs are integrated in the same classroom, the European Schools have several language tracks, and only integrate students linguistically after they have developed some measure of bilingualism.

Nowhere has the value of bilingualism been more affirmed today than in the European Union. Taking note from the success of bilingual education, CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) bilingual education programs are substituting foreign language programs, with one or two subjects taught in a language other than that of the dominant school system. The greater sense of a multilingual world has also resulted in nation-states and autonomous regions where two languages (and sometimes more) are spoken by the entire population, and are part of their identity. Although the language arrangements of these programs depend on the national context in which they are carried out, there is a developmental focus for all languages. Schools in Luxembourg, for example, follow a type of *multiple multilingual education*, enabling all their school children to become trilingual—in Luxembourgish, German, and French—through school.

As the world becomes more and more multilingual, rendering traditional bilingualism insufficient, some schools are experimenting with yet another form of bilingual education, what García and Kleifgen (2010) have called *dynamic bi/plurilingual education*. In all the programs described above, the language allocation in classrooms is strictly controlled in top-down fashion by schools and educators. However, in dynamic bi/plurilingual education programs, the locus of control of language rests with students, as they are given agency to negotiate their linguistic repertoires. In these schools, most often at the secondary level, there is a great deal of peer teaching and collaborative learning. For example, in a class in which students read a book in English, the teacher provides space for students in groups to discuss the reading using home languages before sharing ideas with the whole class in English. There are also opportunities for students to read, write, and conduct research in multiple languages (see García and Sylvan 2011). Although all the types of bilingual education considered in this section are different, they rest on similar core principles. The next section considers what those principles are and how they function.

**Core Issues**

Bilingual education rests on three core principles: the central role of language and bilingualism in society and education, the role of bilingualism in enacting identities and ideologies and leveling issues of power, and the ways in which bilingualism can be used to educate. We discuss the first two core issues in this section, while reserving the last one for the section covering the implications for education.

**Language in Society and Education**

In the last two decades, our actions in a globalized world of dynamic movement and advanced technologies, coupled with advances in complexity theory, have transformed the ways in which we think about language. The new understandings of language as practices, of *languaging*, have had an impact on our epistemologies about bilingualism. Becker (1995) reminds us that to learn a new way of languaging is not just to learn a new code; it is to enter another history of
interactions and cultural practices and to learn “a new way of being in the world” (227). That is, becoming bilingual does not refer to “picking up” new language structures, but it is about acting differently as new positionings are taken.

The Chilean biologists Maturana and Varela argue that it is language that brings forth the world. They explain: “We work out our lives in a mutual linguistic coupling, not because language permits us to reveal ourselves but because we are constituted in language in a continuous becoming that we bring forth with others” (1998, 234–235, our italics). It is our language practices that bring us forth as individuals, at the same time that they constitute us differently as we interact with others. Language is not external to us; it is not, as Pennycook (2010, 9) has said, “an autonomous system that preexists its use,” or “competence as an internal capacity that accounts for language production.” Instead, Pennycook says, language is “a product of the embodied social practices that bring it about” (9, our italics). If we accept this definition of language as a form of human action, embodied in the social world of human relationships, and intimately connected to all other forms of action—physical, social, and symbolic—then it is easy to understand why language plays such an important part in education.

All learners need to embody their language practices in schools if they are to make meaning of their education. Bilingual education gives all students the possibility of doing so—that is, of doing language, of languaging in ways that constitute them, connect them, and relate them to their human actions and those of others.

The field of bilingual education has been deeply influenced by the psycholinguistic constructs that were developed very early by Jim Cummins (1979). Central to the development of bilingual education in the 20th century was Cummins’ construct of interdependence. For Cummins, there is interdependence between the two languages, enabling transfer of linguistic abilities and knowledge across languages, since there is a Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP) across languages. Cummins also posits that it takes learners of an additional language one to three years to develop BICS (basic interpersonal communication skills), and five to seven years to develop CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency), thus arguing for sustained bilingual instruction throughout the grades. Although still grounded in the idea that language was an autonomous system of structures, Cummins had already envisioned the changes in epistemologies about language and bilingualism that have been ushered into the 21st century.

In the 21st century, super-diverse patterns of multilingualism are evident (Blommaert 2010), with different linguistic features not bound by geographical territories and national spaces, but rather representing complex local practices of interactions that are dynamically enacted by human beings. These super-diverse patterns of languaging go beyond our conceptualization of bilingualism and multilingualism of the past. While bilingualism in the past was seen as having command of two languages, and multilingualism as having command of more than two languages, languaging in society today is considered in its complexity of action as dynamic bi/multilingualism (García 2009; Herdina and Jessner 2002; Larsen-Freeman and Cameron 2008). But there are more than just fluid language practices that impact bilingual education in the 21st century; there are issues of identity, ideologies, and power that are important to consider, and these are the subject of our next section.

**Identities, Ideologies, and Power**

As human action, language practices function as semiotic and symbolic tools that can be used in the formation of identities. Language practices are instrumental in developing and sustaining subjectivities in homes, communities, and especially schools. Today’s understandings about identity are far from those of German Romantics, and in particular those of Johann Gottfried Herder
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(1744–1803), who defined identity as natural and immovable, and closely connected to the language a people spoke. Scholars in the late 20th century such as Joshua A. Fishman (1989) argued that language also has a rhetorical function, and as such may discursively construct the group’s subjective belief in a common ethnic identity. Traditional types of bilingual education were based on a unitary monoglossic approach to language and identity, ensuring that each of the languages performed a single identity and sociolinguistic function that resulted in a bicultural individual able to keep language and cultural practices separate.

Postmodern scholarship has demonstrated the situational and subjective construction of identity (Bhabha 1994; Heller 1987; Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985; Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004). This scholarship has also described the fluid identities affected by the complex linguistic repertoires and spaces where individuals embody or enact multiple identities today. As Pavlenko and Blackledge make clear, language and identity are mutually constitutive in that language provides “the linguistic means through which identities are constructed and negotiated” (2004, 14). This is the position taken up by heteroglossic types of bilingual education, acknowledging the construction of transcultural individuals whose identities are negotiated as they adapt to the image they have of themselves in relationship to the interlocutor, and as they decide whom they want to be.

Postmodern scholarship has also pointed to the fact that attitudes, values, and beliefs about language are always ideological, and are enmeshed in social systems of domination and subordination of groups, having to do not only with ethnicity, but also with class, gender, and power (see for example Irvine and Gal 2000; Pavlenko and Blackledge 2004). Language and identity options may be limited or not, or negotiable or not, depending on particular sociohistorical contexts. Language practices can signal ideological positions, and can construct boundary markers for inclusion and exclusion of the Other (Kroskrity 2000). Children’s bilingual development is deeply affected by the constraints and options in their socialization in communities and schools. School children exhibit considerable agency as they resist and construct new ways of using language and new identities, not necessarily those of the home and immediate community, but also not necessarily those of the school and the dominant society. Given the greater range of linguistic and social choice that bilingual children of dominant groups have, they will obtain greater cognitive and social advantages from their bilingualism than those whose choices are more restricted by their social and historically situated conditions. Thus, schools need to provide a greater range of choices for all students, and develop and empower all students to negotiate their multiple identities and language practices.

**Research Approaches and Key Findings**

Research on bilingual education has repeatedly affirmed its effectiveness in educating language minority children, as well as language majority children. The study of bilingualism in education has used positivist models of quantitative research methodology to explore its effectiveness in educational outcomes. Because of the centrality of this issue in the United States where bilingual education continues to be suspect, the most comprehensive quantitative studies, often comparing different types of bilingual education, have been conducted there. We review here a few such studies. Ramirez (1992) conducted a longitudinal study of 554 kindergartener-to-sixth grade Latino students in five states who were in three types of programs—English-only programs, transitional early-exit bilingual education programs, and late-exit developmental bilingual education programs. Students in late-exit developmental bilingual programs in which their home languages were used for at least five years had the most academic success. In 2002, Thomas and Collier compared achievement on nationally standardized tests of students who entered school
without English proficiency and were enrolled in different kinds of programs. They found that
the strongest predictor of English language achievement was the amount of formal schooling the
students received in the home language. Thomas and Collier showed that developmental bi­
guage education programs and two-way bilingual education programs were the only types of
programs that enabled emergent bilinguals to reach the 50th percentile in both languages in all
subjects. Lindholm-Leary (2001) conducted a comprehensive evaluation of programs serving
students who were learning English in California. Like Thomas and Collier, Lindholm-Leary
concluded that students who were in instructional programs in which English was initially used
for only 10 to 20% of the time did as well on English proficiency tests as those in English-only
programs or 50:50 dual language bilingual education programs. By sixth grade, however, students
in dual-language bilingual education outperformed transitional bilingual education students.

These quantitative findings in the United States have been confirmed by recent meta-analyses.
For example, Krashen, Rolstad, and McSwan (2007), Slavin and Cheung (2005), and Goldenberg
(2008) have shown that students in bilingual programs outperform those in English-only pro­
grams on tests of academic achievement. Likewise, the National Literacy Panel on Language
Minority Children and Youth (August and Shanahan 2006) and the synthesis conducted by
approaches are more effective in teaching students to read than are English-only approaches.

Our new understandings that language and literacy practices are shaped by local, social, and
economic conditions, and that language and literacy practices contribute to the reproduction of
asymmetrical relations of power, have resulted in increased use of qualitative methodologies in
studying bilingualism. Qualitative methods conceive of knowledge as reuniting epistemology and
hermeneutics and go beyond the distinctions that have served to “subalternize” the kinds of
“border” knowledge that bilinguals and multilinguals bring to school (Mignolo 2000). For exam­
ple, ethnographies of cases of bilingual education (for example, Blackledge and Creese 2010; and
Bartlett and García 2011) show how language practices in schools matter to people on their own
terms. Critical discourse analysis, such as Pennington’s analysis of bilingual classroom discourse at a
high school in Hong Kong (1999) enables researchers to study the structure of discursive prac­
tices, while connecting language ideologies and language practices to relationships of power.
Historical or document analysis, in which researchers collect documents that are then subjected to
interpretive policy analysis, is also broadly used, especially to study bilingual education policy and
the multiple reading of the policies by various stakeholders as interpretive communities. A recent
extension of document analysis methods is what has become known as linguistic landscape studies,
documenting the multilingual ecology and physical spaces of bilingual classrooms and how they
are used by students. Despite the research evidence, debates surrounding the efficacy of bilingual
education continue. There are also new debates, especially surrounding some past assumptions,
such as the existence of a first, second, and native language and the dualities in bilingualism. These
debates are considered in the next section.

New Debates

First and Second Languages? Native Languages?

The changing epistemologies about language and bilingualism discussed above mean that tradi­
tional terms used in speaking about bilingual education are not always useful. For example, some
scholars speak about first languages, second languages, and even third languages, whereas seen
through a heteroglossic lens, the language practices of bilinguals are not made up of two or more
autonomous language systems. The grammar of bilingual speakers consists of features that are
socially assigned to one language or the other, but for the bilingual person there isn’t an L1, an L2, or an L3, except perhaps as the chronological order of acquisition. What then do we call the heteroglossic practices that characterize bilingual speech? In the last decade, alternative terms have proliferated.

Jørgensen (2008) refers to the combination of features that are not discrete and complete “languages” in themselves as *polylingualism*. Jacquemet (2005) speaks of *transidiomatic practices* to refer to the communicative practices of transnational groups that interact using different communicative codes. Canagarajah (2011) uses *codemeshing* to describe a single-integrated system in writing for rhetorical effectiveness. *Metrolingualism* is the term proposed by Otsuji and Pennycook (2010) in speaking about the fluid language practices in urban contexts.

Perhaps the term that has had the most traction in the literature to refer to these flexible language practices is that of *translanguaging*. The term *translanguaging* was coined in Welsh by Cen Williams (1994). In its original use, it referred to a pedagogical practice in which students are asked to alternate languages for the purposes of receptive or productive use; for example, students might be asked to read in English and write in Welsh and vice versa (Baker 2011). Since then, the term has been extended by many scholars (Blackledge and Creese 2010; Canagarajah 2011; Creese and Blackledge 2010; García 2009; forthcoming; García, Flores, and Woodley 2012; García and Sylvan 2011; Hornberger and Link 2012; Lewis, Jones, and Baker 2012a; 2012b). Translanguaging for García (2009; 2011; forthcoming) refers not to the use of two separate languages or even the shift of one language or code to the other, since there are not two languages. Rather, translanguaging is rooted in the belief that bilingual speakers select language features from one integrated system and “soft assemble” their language practices in ways that fit their communicative situations. That is, bilinguals call upon social features in a seamless and complex network of multiple semiotic signs, as they adapt their languaging to suit the immediate task environment. Bilingualism, as a soft-assembled mechanism, comes into existence with *enactation*, with each action being locally situated and unique to satisfy contextual constraints, and creating an interdependence among all components of the system.

The greater presence of plurilingual individuals and multilingualism in the world means that it is impossible today to talk about “native” speakers of any language. As many have argued (Kramsch 2009; Bonfiglio 2010), the concept of being a “native” speaker is anchored on concepts of ethnicity, race, class, status, and privilege, and acts as a system of exclusion. “Doing” bilingualism goes beyond the concept of being a “native” speaker, as it includes all who appropriate that languaging in their lives.

**Dualities in Bilingualism?**

Bilingualism as 1+1 = 2 is no longer viable in our globalized, multilingual world. The Council of Europe (2000) uses the term *plurilingualism* to refer to an individual’s ability to use several languages to varying degrees and for distinct purposes. That is to say, European citizens are encouraged to have at their disposal a varying and shifting repertoire of language practices to fulfill different purposes. Although it is a new European concept, it is important to recognize that the multilingual practices of many Africans have always reflected this more dynamic linguistic repertoire (see Makoni and Pennycook 2007).

Although bilingual scholars throughout the world are shifting the conversation in the direction of plurilingualism, the United States has gone in reverse. The term “bilingual” is being further silenced, and the categorization as “two” has been solidified in the now popular term “dual language.” Bilingual education in the United States has always been associated with a history of social struggle around civil rights issues, mostly having to do with Latinos. The critical
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definition of political struggle for the educational rights of language minorities, and specifically of Latinos, has made U.S. bilingual education contentious. By 1974, the time of the second reauthorization of the Bilingual Education Act (Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, authorized in 1968 for the first time), bilingual education in the United States had been defined as "transitional," with few exceptions. And the Supreme Court decision of *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), which ruled that children developing English must have a different educational program, never required bilingual education. As maintenance bilingual education programs disappeared under political pressure, transitional bilingual education programs grew. Bilingual education became less a program to develop language and literacy in two languages, and more a program to develop the English of those who increasingly became known as "English language learners." By the time No Child Left Behind was implemented in 2002, the word "bilingual" had become a "bad word," and "dual," insisting that the two languages had to be strictly separated, came into popular use (Crawford 2004).

Claiming "dual" languages, learners, books, pedagogies, etc., runs counter to the shapes of the dynamic bilingualism of societies that truly value the multiple and fluid language practices of the 21st century. The insistence on keeping the two languages as dualities is partly responsible for the failure of U.S. schools in developing their students' bilingualism. In the separation, language practices in languages other than English never become a part of an American identity, and are instead branded as the languaging of immigrants and the "Other." In identifying English as the "second language" of "English language learners," bilingual Americans are never given permission to truly appropriate English language practices as their own. In insisting that the two languages be kept separate, bilingual Americans are made to think that their fluid language practices are inferior (García, Zakharia, and Otcu 2013). For example, in maintaining that Spanish and English language practices should always be separate, Latino bilinguals are made to believe that their language practices are nothing but "Spanglish." Scholars analyze their "code-switches," instead of acknowledging the translanguaging that characterizes all dynamic bilingual communities of practice. This has implications for education, which is the topic of the next section.

**Implications for Education**

Bilingual education is good for education and language learning, for both language minorities and language majorities. But bilingual education in the 21st century must go beyond the emphasis on the dominant language (as happens in the United States) or monolingual proficiency in two languages (as in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages). As bilingual education is reimagined under a dynamic framework of bilingualism, it is important to do away with what Cummins (2007) has called "the two solitudes," and consider the use of translanguaging in schools, rather than a strict separation of languages. Translanguaging is used by students and teachers as they make sense of their bilingual worlds, using their entire linguistic repertoires across various modalities (reading, writing, speaking, and listening), and across different people in order to meaningfully learn. For example, although a lesson might be officially in one language, students may discuss, research, and produce work using all their language practices. Teachers who use translanguaging may not be bilingual themselves, but they always encourage their students to use their entire linguistic repertoire in making meaning (García, Flores, and Woodley 2011). As such, these teachers provide students with handouts, books, media, and print material in many languages, and encourage students to find others (see Celic and Seltzer 2012). Incorporating translanguaging pedagogies in today's classrooms ensures that the bilingualism of all children is used as a resource, even when there are no bilingual education programs. In many ways, translanguaging acknowledges the dynamic language practices of bilinguals as human
action. It allows the formation of multiple identities capable of leveling the power differentials among language practices and language hierarchies that continue to exist in schools that are organized by nation-states. Translanguaging is capable of releasing the histories and enunciations of all people that have been buried and constrained within the fixed identities of national ideologies. It may be the only way of sustaining bilingual education for all children in the 21st century.

Further Reading


Note

1. Most of the conceptualization and information that follows can be found in García (2009).

References


Bilingual Education


