Key Concepts in Bilingual Education

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Contents

Abstract

This chapter provides a broad overview of historical and contemporary key concepts in bilingual education while noting the ambiguous definitions and varying purposes and sometimes conflicting aims as driven by ideologies and

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O. García et al. (eds.), *Bilingual and Multilingual Education*, Encyclopedia of Language and Education, DOI 10.1007/978-3-319-02258-1_2

politics. Major contributions and work in progress are considered through traditional program models and efforts to extend bilingual education to varying student populations and global contexts. Problems associated with determining effectiveness are discussed, along with challenges to the traditional concepts of program models based on new scholarship challenging monolingual perspectives and encouraging multilingual understandings of bilingualism as dynamic classroom practices that do not insist on the strict separation of languages. We conclude with a discussion of future directions in bilingual education related to school, classroom, and student-level concepts.

Keywords

Bilingual Education • Immersion Bilingual Education • Transitional Bilingual Education • Dual Language Bilingual Education • Deaf StudentsSpecial Education • Gifted Bilingual Education • School Effectiveness

Introduction

This chapter provides a broad introduction to the origins, aims, and varieties of bilingual education. It shows that bilingual education is an ambiguous term with aims that variously include the assimilation of immigrants, helping children to gain employment through multilingual competences, increasing school achievement, and helping to preserve a minority language. The varieties of bilingual education discussed include United States Dual Language bilingual education and the Canadian immersion bilingual education. In these two varieties, there is a considerable volume of research attesting to the relative success and effectiveness of their programs. Recent developments have taken place in bilingual and multilingual education in major international languages, as well as in bilingual education for Deaf students, thus expanding the types of students who can benefit from such education. While there is less research on bilingual special education and on gifted and talented bilingual education, such topics are of current international interest. Such variety in bilingual education aims and styles means that simple definitions are typically misleading, but the term "bilingual education" often refers to education where two (or more) languages are used for teaching and learning for some, most, or all of the curriculum.

The chapter discusses the difficulties of research into the effectiveness of bilingual education, including the variety of possible outcomes from some such education: academic, social, personality, and employment at an individual level but also social integration and cohesion, language revitalization, and school performance at a local and national level. Arguments about important outcomes from bilingual education also include a movement from outlining effective models and varieties to discussing effective practices, particularly at the classroom level. The chapter ends by discussing the importance of: highly effective staff in bilingual classrooms; language leadership particularly at the school level; achieving high standards of literacy in the languages of the home and school; the involvement of parents and the

local community; classroom strategies for the distribution of two or more languages in instruction and learning; and the value of translanguaging inside and outside the curriculum.

Early Developments

Bilingual education may be as old as education itself and likely used in formal and informal settings where students lived in language contact centers. However, bilingual education is an ambiguous term with many different aims and outcomes within its varieties. For example, the term has been used when students in the school are bilingual, but the emphasis is on just the majority language with only minimal support provided in the home language. Yet the term bilingual education is more accurately used when both languages are used for daily classroom instruction and the students become successfully bilingual and biliterate.

Such variety is revealed in one of the early discussions of international bilingual education by Ferguson et al. (1997) who suggested ten varying, sometimes conflicting, aims of bilingual education: (1) to assimilate individuals or groups into the mainstream of society; (2) to bring unity to multiethnic or multilinguistic country; (3) to enable people to communicate outside their country; (4) to increase language competencies that are marketable, for example, to gain employment; (5) to preserve ethnic or religious identity; (6) to harmonize different linguistic and political communities; (7) to spread the use of a colonial language; (8) to strengthen elite groups and preserve their privileged position in society; (9) to give equal status or rights to unequal languages; and (10) to deepen an understanding of language and culture. To modernize this list can be added: (11) to preserve an endangered or minority language and (12) to increase curriculum achievement and school performance. These two additions highlight that bilingual education aims can be societal (e.g., language planning within a region) but also for the individual child (e.g., the potential communication, cultural, cognitive, character, curriculum, and economic advantages for each student). Thus the aims of bilingual education relate not just to school and classroom pedagogic practices but also to wider societal aims, and different types of bilingual education have varied underlying philosophies, policies, provisions, practices, and not least different politics.

Major Contributions and Work in Progress

Major contributions of bilingual education may be considered through the ways in which it has been conceptualized ideologically and implemented politically with varying linguistic and sociopolitical aims. At the same time, these options may be considered work in progress, given ongoing debates and efforts to extend bilingual instruction to different students in a variety of contexts. Several varieties are now

considered, with the caveat that outlining particular forms of bilingual education in this manner is a simplistic and reductionist way of exploring the complexity of bilingual education.

Developmental Maintenance Language Bilingual Education

Variedly called "maintenance," "developmental maintenance," "indigenous," "native," and "heritage language" bilingual education, such school programs are mostly, but not exclusively, for language minority children. Some, much, or most of the curriculum is provided in the child's home language. Some examples are programs for Navajo in the USA, Māori in New Zealand, Basque in Spain, and Chinese in Cambodia. Most programs are found at the primary school level, and the amount of curriculum time in the minority language is typically between 50 % and 90 %. Developmental maintenance programs aim for students to become bilingual and biliterate in the home and majority languages. In some contexts, the aims may also include a desire to preserve a minority language in its historical strongholds, especially when that language and its culture are deemed threatened.

Immersion Bilingual Education

Canadian education has a high international reputation for its immersion bilingual schools where first-language English speakers are taught mostly or partly through the medium of French. The "immersion" student already owns one prestigious language and acquires another high-status language in school. Immersion children in Canada usually: (1) become bilingual and biliterate, (2) reach normal achievement levels throughout the curriculum including languages, (3) have an enhanced appreciation of the traditions and culture of both French-speaking and English-speaking Canadians, and (4) potentially have an edge in the employment market. Immersion bilingual education has particular variations in the age at which a child commences the experience (early, *delayed*, *or late immersion*) and the amount of time spent in the immersion second language, ranging from commencing with 100 % immersion in the second language (total immersion) to about 50 % (partial immersion). Immersion teachers are competent bilinguals but initially appear to the younger children as able to speak French but only understand (and not speak) English. Canadian immersion education has the most thorough research of any bilingual education model. Hence, claims for its effectiveness and considerable success are well grounded and amply supported.

Adaptation of Canadian immersion has occurred internationally in countries such as Finland, the Basque Country, Singapore, Hong Kong, Israel, United States, New Zealand, Ireland, and Wales. Such adaptations sometimes use (even misuse) the brand name of immersion rather than paralleling the successful Canadian model. For example, structured (or sheltered) English immersion in the United States is a

monolingual assimilationist program that immerses linguistic minority children into English, without any efforts to develop or maintain students' home languages.

Transitional Bilingual Education

Transitional bilingual education is the most common form of bilingual education in the USA and has received the most financial support from the federal government. It allows temporary development and use of students' home languages for literacy and content-area instruction. The aim is to rapidly transition students to majority language monolingual instruction by increasing use of the majority language while proportionately decreasing use of the home language. Thus the dominant aim is for the student to move to learning in the dominant language of the region and not for the development of the home language.

Two main types of transitional bilingual education are mostly found in primary schools: "early exit" (typically K-3) and "late exit" (typically up to 5th or 6th grade). Both may have benefits for self-esteem and curriculum progress compared with mainstreaming, and its proponents argue that it provides equality of opportunity in adjusting to mainstream society. Its critics suggest that it is a remedial, compensatory, and segregating program, reinforcing and reproducing differences in power and progress for those from a lower socioeconomic class and essentially assimilationist in political ideology.

Dual Language Bilingual Education

Dual Language bilingual education is a predominantly US model that has developed and spread since 1963 to the present and has a high-quality research foundation to demonstrate its success. The basic approach is to attempt to have a reasonably balanced number of minority language speakers (e.g., Spanish) and majority language speakers (e.g., English) in each class; both languages are used for around 50 % of instruction time, though variations include programs with 60 % of instruction in the minority language and 40 % in the majority language (60:40) and other configurations (e.g., 80:20, 90:10). In each period of instruction, one language is used; language is primarily learned through content rather than specific language lessons; and among the intended outcomes are relatively balanced bilingualism, biliteracy, performance across the curriculum that is at least equal to monolingual mainstream education, and positive intercultural attitudes and behaviors (Lindholm-Leary 2001).

A traditional feature of Dual Language bilingual programs is language separation. Language boundaries are often established in terms of: time (e.g., learning through each language on alternative days or in different lessons); curriculum content (e.g., Mathematics in English and Social Studies in Spanish or varied according to the "language day"); and teacher (e.g., one uses Spanish only and another English only). In reality, children tend to use both languages spontaneously and pragmatically. This

has been called "translanguaging" with considerable international interest in the concept (Garcia 2009; Baker 2011). Translanguaging among children maximizes their linguistic and cognitive resources such that language compartmentalization in Dual Language bilingual education may need to be decreasingly emphasized.

Bilingual and Multilingual Education in Major International Languages

The use of major international languages in education has within the last decade or two become increasingly popular among parents, educators, and policymakers. In Singapore, Luxembourg, Japan, China, Brunei, Taiwan, Germany, and Kazakhstan, to name just a few countries, there has been a recent growth in this type of bilingual and multilingual education. In the context of growing globalization, internationalism, global trade, multinational corporations, and transnational employment, many parents and their children have a strong desire to capitalize on the cognitive, social, and economic benefits bilingualism and multilingualism in a major international language may provide. In this context, international schools have blossomed, with over 5000 schools in over 230 countries. While many use just English for curriculum transmission, others use two or more major languages. Prestigious schools at the primary and secondary levels are mainly private, target the more affluent social classes, and enjoy a growing reputation for excellence, including producing bilinguals and multilinguals.

With a prestigious clientele, a high reputation has been accorded to the European Schools movement. Such schools are typically more multilingual than international schools, and particularly cater for over 20,000 children from different European Community nations. Such schools have up to 11 different language sections reflecting the first language of their students. Younger children use their home language as the medium of learning but also receive second language instruction in the primary years. Older children take their instruction partly through their home language but also through the medium of a "vehicular" (working) language that is typically English, French, or German.

Trilingual and multilingual educations have recently been growing. For example, in the Basque Country, a recent interest has been in Basque, Spanish, and English being used in schools, with positive outcomes in achievement. In Luxembourg, children become trilingual through schooling starting their formal education at the age of five through the medium of Luxembourgish, with German then introduced as a main teaching medium, such that students function in much of the curriculum in German by the end of grade six. French is introduced as a subject in grade two and increasingly used as a teaching medium in secondary education. Thus the model is to emphasize learning through Luxembourgish in the early years, then through German in the primary school, and eventually also French, with trilingualism as a successful outcome. In China, India, Uruguay, Argentina, and more multilingual countries, efforts are made in some schools for students to develop and learn through the medium of regional, national, and international languages. For example, for some

children from the Dong ethnic group in southern China, instruction in local schools is provided through the medium of the regional (Dong), national (Mandarin), and international languages (English) (Feng and Adamson 2015).

Finally under this heading comes the European "Content and Language Integrated Learning" (CLIL) – a relatively generic term suggesting that at least some content areas are taught in a target "nonnative" language, but actual practices vary widely (Cenoz et al. 2014). Such practices include a Canadian total immersion approach, a pattern closest to Dual Language bilingual education, but also, at the other end of the spectrum, minimal content learning through a second language. CLIL needs to be understood as rooted in Europeanization as a political ideology and the vision of a multilingual Europe with growing communication in trade between European countries as part of its raison d'être.

Bilingual Education for Deaf Students

Many Deaf individuals are bilingual in a sign language (e.g., American Sign Language) and the written variety of the language spoken by non-deaf people (e.g., Standard American English). Their need for bilingualism is great given that most Deaf children are born to hearing parents, and most Deaf parents have hearing children who develop sign language as their "native" language (Reagan 2015). Historically, Deaf students were often mainstreamed, with no sign language support, and often perceived as having not only an auditory "problem" but were also seen as "remedial," even "retarded," thus leading to feelings of isolation and disempowerment (Baker 2011). Other approaches in the past focused on oralism (e.g., lip reading, speaking), with great debate over the appropriate role (if any) for sign languages.

In contrast, bilingual education programs for Deaf students enable them to be first taught through sign with varying emphasis on oracy and/or literacy in the majority language but with bilingualism as an outcome. Stephen Nover, an expert on bilingual Deaf education from Gallaudet University, "argues that the order of significance and emphasis of these three kinds of language skill must, in the case of the deaf child, be signacy, literacy and oracy (i.e., S-L-O), rather than the more traditional focus on oracy, literacy and then (if at all) something akin to signacy (i.e., O-L-S)" (Reagan 2015). Also, effective bilingual programs help students develop a positive Deaf identity – not as students with a deficit but as members of the Deaf community with its own distinct culture and ways of using language. The outcome may be increased pride in confidence in Deaf culture and its communities, raise self-esteem and self-identity, and improved school performance.

Bilingual Special Education

A distinction needs to be made between normally developing bilingual children wrongly ascribed as having learning problems and bilingual children with legitimate

learning disabilities (e.g., autism, dyslexia, cognitive disorders). In the United States, for example, there are problems with both overrepresentation and underrepresentation of bilingual children placed in special education due to ignorance, lack of observation, fear of legal repercussions for misplacement, and misuse of assessments designed for monolingual English speakers (Wright 2015). Proper identification and placement in special education requires teams of educators with expertise in both bilingual language development and learning disabilities who consider a wide range of linguistic, cultural, and development factors using screening tools and assessments appropriate for bilingual students (Hamayan et al. 2013).

Bilingual students with genuine learning disabilities should be placed in the "least restrictive environment" depending on the severity of their disability. Past trends focused more on placing students in separate special education classrooms, while current preferences for "full inclusion" emphasize the integration of as many students as possible and appropriate into regular classrooms with specialized support for the student and classroom teacher. Such specialized classrooms and supports, however, do not need to be provided solely in the dominant language. Full inclusion can take place in bilingual classrooms, and instruction and supports provided in a special education classroom can be provided bilingually (Beam-Conroy and McHatton 2015). Indeed, allowing students who receive special education services to develop and draw upon all of their linguistic resources may provide the greatest opportunities for effective learning.

Gifted and Talented Bilingual Education

Bilinguals and multilinguals with exceptionally high abilities are rarely mentioned in the academic literature on bilingual education (Valdés 2003 is an exception) or in educational research and writing on the gifted and talented in general. In practice, there are few examples of bilingual education for gifted and talented students in the USA (e.g., in Milwaukee, New York City, and San Antonio). Despite the literature on bilingualism and cognition indicating that bilinguals share cognitive giftedness in, for example, metalinguistic abilities, creative thinking, and sensitivity to communication, such talents have rarely been examined in the school setting. However, in recognition of these talents, Anatoliy V. Kharkhurin (2012, 2015) has proposed a framework for bilingual creative education which "constitutes a unified teaching model that introduces both language learning and creativity-fostering instructions to the school curriculum" and which "rests on a four-criterion construct of creativity that includes novelty, utility, aesthetics and authenticity." Bilingual students tend to be grossly underrepresented in gifted and talented (GT) education for many of the same reasons described above for special education. In addition, when bilingual students are included, there are often efforts to "change or reconfigure" them to resemble white GT students (Beam-Conroy and McHatton 2015). While some states in the USA require that students screened for GT be assessed either in the language(s)

they understand or nonverbally, in reality there are few linguistically and culturally appropriate measures available for bilingual students (Beam-Conroy and McHatton 2015). Nonetheless, GT programs can and should be conducted bilingually for bilingual students of high ability, and traditional bilingual education programs can also provide the same types of enrichment lessons and activities featured in GT programs, even without the official "GT" label.

Problems and Difficulties

Several problems and difficulties associated with specific models and student populations have been outlined above. An additional challenge is determining the effectiveness of each program and identifying the most effective programs. Overall, research ranging from evaluation studies, comparative analyses, and meta-analyses have generally found that bilingual approaches are superior to monolingual approaches and that longer-term programs aiming for bilingualism and biliteracy have more positive linguistic and academic outcomes for students than do short-term (i.e., transitional) program models (for a review see Baker 2011; Wright 2015). Such research is often valuable in persuading parents about bilingual education, yet politicians tend to prefer their preconceptions rather than research findings. In such studies, however, program effectiveness is defined by a relatively small range of curriculum outcomes. Performance in one or two languages has been the basic outcome measure, with core curriculum areas often added (e.g., mathematics), but outcomes such as self-esteem, social integration, and employment are rarely considered. Products have been investigated rather than processes in classrooms.

The whole notion of a "program model" is now being challenged as problematic out of concern that they represent a monolingual/monoglossic perspective in which the languages of bilingual students are treated as two separate distinct systems, as if students are two monolinguals in one and placed in programs where languages are simply subtracted or added (Flores and Beardsmore 2015; García 2009). In contrast, these and other scholars advocate for a multilingual/hetereoglossic perspective that views the languages of bilinguals as dynamic and coexisting. Such a perspective opens up space to engage with optimal classroom Dual Language or translanguaging practices that maximize growth and gains for individual students, as well as positive outcomes for schools in an accountability era (Celic and Seltzer 2013; Lewis et al. 2012a). We thus seem to be witnessing a historical change from effective *models* to effective *practices*, although the latter is built upon the former, and space can be made within existing program models for multilingual/hetereoglossic perspectives and effective translanguaging practices. Some effective practices may be similar across models, making pedagogic decisions more universally informed rather than just from within a model. We thus conclude this chapter with a brief exploration of some key modern concepts in effective practices in bilingual and multilingual education that must be considered as we move forward.

Future Directions

School-Level Concepts of Effectiveness

While there are a multitude of school-level elements to effectiveness in bilingual schooling, three important concepts will be considered here. *First*, a foundation element is the recruitment, selection, and retention of highly effective staff. Among the attributes of staff needed are: language proficiency in one or more languages; positive attitudes to bilingualism, multilingualism, biculturalism, and multiculturalism; positive attitudes to minority languages, minority students, and to bilingual education; being inclusive yet seeking an individualized and child-centered curriculum for each student; being engaged in continued professional development; being sensitive to home and community contexts, and working with parents as partners; and not least an enthusiasm and commitment to bilingual schooling. Research on school effectiveness has revealed that leadership is highly important. Principals, headteachers, and other senior staff can encourage high expectations among staff and students, show strength of purpose and direction, be motivating and innovating, work in partnership with community leaders, and empower all staff in decision-making processes and in an enthusiastic bilingual and bicultural mission of the school.

Second, an effective bilingual school is typically dedicated to: achieving high standards of literacy, biliteracy, and multiliteracies to aid learning across the curriculum and engendering the pleasure of reading and writing in two or more languages for multiple purposes; preparing an empowered citizenship; and gaining employment for all its students. Particularly where there are minority languages, the varied use of literacies in the home and community, in religion and neighborhood, to include visual, audio, and gestural elements to literacy, may need to be encouraged.

Learning to read and write in a second language can be achieved simultaneously or sequentially. In Dual Language bilingual education, the simultaneous acquisition of biliteracy tends to successfully occur. In contrast, in Canadian immersion education, children tend to learn literacy in French before English, and this also results in considerable success. What occurs in both models is relatively easy transfer from one language to another. Though vocabulary, grammar, and orthography may be different, generalizable skills in decoding and specific reading strategies (e.g., contextual guessing of words, scanning, and skimming) transfer easily from reading one language to another. When two languages have different writing systems (e.g., English, Arabic), there is still some transfer from the first to a second language (e.g., knowledge of text structure, sensorimotor skills, attitudes to writing) (Koda and Zehler 2008).

Third, parents, siblings, and the local community are typically important in students' educational development. Students may move between reading sacred religious texts in one language (e.g., Arabic), to speaking in the family and neighborhood in a different language (e.g., Urdu), and then using English in school (Guo 2014). The literacy and language practices of the family and religion may be different from the school, thus needing teachers to have a sympathetic understanding

of out-of-school uses of different languages and literacies but also regarding parents as partners and working for mutually agreed outcomes. Parents have "funds of knowledge," stored wisdom in their histories and traditions, while schools transmit an agreed curriculum. At its best, both parents and teachers understand that education is not the same as schooling, and both the school and the home are educators. Also, home-school cooperation, family engagement and parental leadership in the school, and a family's understanding of the school's bilingual mission can empower students and the school itself (Arias 2015).

Classroom-Level Language Distribution Concepts

Decisions need to be taken for every bilingual classroom regarding how two or more languages will be used by the teacher, between teacher and students as groups and individually, and preferences in informal student exchanges although this may not be easily controlled. For example, what language(s) will be used for Mathematics and Science compared with Social Studies/History/Geography? Will both languages be used for each curriculum area or just one for each specific curriculum activity? Will languages be kept separate as strictly as is possible? For example, will one day be allocated to instruction through Spanish and another day for instruction through English? Or will teachers and students switch between languages in either a formally encouraged manner or serendipitously? Will there be a difference across grades and ages in language distribution decisions? Will more emphasis be given to the minority language in the early grades, with more emphasis on the majority language in later grades? What happens if a child enters the classroom not speaking a standard variety of either of the languages? At what age and grade is a third language introduced? Historically, language distribution decisions tended to reflect separation of languages rather than concurrent usage.

Language distribution decisions also relate to specific content preferences of politicians, public, parents, and pedagogues. The best example is the language of instruction for Science and Mathematics, where some have argued that this should be through the medium of the majority language, particularly English, partly if the other language lacks scientific terminology, partly as University education in Science is often through English or another majority language, and partly because most scientific textbooks and electronic information will often mostly be in the country's majority language. In opposition, the argument has been that a language will lose prestige and status when it is not used for all curricula areas, including Science and Mathematics. Thus, some minority languages (e.g., Basque, Welsh) have developed terminology to cover all aspects of the curriculum including Science.

Even when there is a clear language distribution strategy in a bilingual classroom, students will often be heard code switching (e.g., between Cantonese and English in Hong Kong). This typically reflects local contexts and traditions, with teachers as well as students code switching frequently. This is sometimes for specific purposes such as encouragement, individualized feedback, reprimands, and not least to aid explanation and understanding among students. While Dual Language and

immersion approaches may seek separation of languages, classroom talk, in reality, often utilizes both languages. Students and teachers may be exploiting the availability of both languages to maximize learning. Even when code switching is discouraged, students may find that they best express themselves by code switching. If other students and the teacher understand both languages, communication and understanding are increased for the benefit of all.

Recognition of this reality in classrooms is one of the elements of a relatively new concept called translanguaging. The strategic use of "translanguaging" derives from schools in North Wales in the 1980s (Lewis et al. 2012b). Two educationalists (Cen Williams and Dafydd Whittall) believed that increased competency in two languages and deeper learning would occur if the language of input in a classroom lesson was in one language and the output in another language. For example, children may do their reading in English from a textbook, worksheet, or the Internet and then complete a written assignment (or an oral presentation) through Welsh. They argued that this will produce a deeper and fuller understanding of the subject matter, develop oracy and literacy in both languages, and better integrate language learning with content learning, as well as integrate children with different home languages in classroom activity.

Ofelia García (2009) suggests that in New York classrooms, a looser form of translanguaging is often prevalent. Students systematically, strategically, and sensibly use both languages to maximize understanding, communication, and performance. Students did not have clear-cut boundaries between their languages but functional integration. This led her to believe that teachers can maximize learning by encouraging children to use both of their languages without compartmentalization or boundaries, allowing students to define and maximize use of their two language repertoires and their language preferences in classroom activity (see Celic and Seltzer 2013).

Translanguaging requires some degree of competency in both languages, though the level of competency is rarely equal in both languages. When one of their languages is less well developed in emergent bilinguals, an important dimension in effective bilingual classrooms is the scaffolding of language. Scaffolding refers to language support that children need in the classroom when they cannot easily operate in the majority language of that classroom. Scaffolding includes use of gestures, visual aids, and repeating something in a simpler way, using concrete examples and simpler vocabulary to enable an "emergent bilingual" to understand a lesson (Walqui and van Lier 2010).

Student-Level Concepts

Effective bilingual education for students involves numerous complex and interacting list of concepts and considerations. The many very effective and high-performing bilingual schools in many countries attest that there is now sufficient evidence to ensure success. In this section, three important issues are considered to exemplify student-level considerations to promote success.

First, scholars involved in Dual Language bilingual education in the United States have debated the optimal balance of students from different language backgrounds in each classroom. In theory, in a 50/50 model half the students come from English speaking homes and half come from homes where the target non-English language is spoken, and each language is used 50 % of the time. However, in practice, the higher status language – English – tends to dominate and be more highly valued (Valdés 1997). In the USA and around the world, another challenge is when children who speak neither of the languages of the local children are placed in bilingual classrooms (e.g., Eastern European immigrants in Ireland placed in Irish/English bilingual classrooms). Another challenge is when students speak three or more languages at home or there are multiple home languages in a single classroom as is common in many urban centers around the world that attract immigrants, refugees, and international workers. Bilingual educators must consider ways to value students learning new languages (including third or fourth languages) such as with school-wide activities that celebrate multilingualism and multiculturalism. The language balance of the classroom is important if bilingualism is to be achieved and hence is an important topic in individual and group student considerations.

Assessment of bilingual students, especially those not yet proficient in the dominant societal language used for testing, is another widely debated consideration. For example, in English-dominant countries, when assessment and testing in school is only or mostly available in English, then accommodations are essential for students who have not yet obtained sufficient proficiency to obtain meaningful results. Examples include testing in the home language, oral interpretation of instructions and/or test items, simplified English for instructions and test items, allowing use of a bilingual dictionary, and more time to complete a test. Such accommodations attempt to make the test more valid and reliable for bilingual children and enable them to demonstrate their true ability. However, the research literature on such accommodations is too small to drive effective policy and practice (Wright 2015).

Finally, one of the most important considerations, not only for the future of bilingual education but also for the future of each bilingual child, is identifying the desired outcomes from bilingual education. The expectation is that the child becomes competent in two or more languages. Above that baseline, helping students become bicultural, biliterate citizens who value linguistic diversity is highly desirable. For a bilingual school, the success of its students on assessments, in graduating from secondary school, and getting into university is essential for its status, image, and attractiveness to future parents. Less attention has been given to success in the job market. Where there is a customer interface needing bilingualism or multilingualism, in multilingual economies and multinational companies and in many forms of employment where communication is important, bilingual students are increasingly of more value.

There are also other potential gains from bilingual education: the higher self-esteem of children who otherwise would have experienced monolingual mainstream education; the higher self-esteem of students who can operate in two or more different language communities; and the cognitive, communication, cultural, and

character advantages that research has located for bilinguals. No outcomes can be assured, but bilingual education appears increasingly to have multiple positive outcomes for education systems, schools, classrooms, and not least, for students.

Cross-References

- ▶ Bilingual Education in Canada
- ▶ Indigenous Bilingual and Revitalization-Immersion Education in Canada and the USA
- ▶ Sign Bilingualism in Deaf Education
- ▶ Translanguaging in Bilingual Education

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