CAL CENTER FOR APPLIED LINGUISTICS

Linguistic and Cultural Equity in Two-Way Immersion Education

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Guiding Questions for This Presentation

‣ How is the term *equity* defined and interpreted by dual language immersion practitioners (teachers and administrators)?

‣ What program- and classroom-level policies and practices do practitioners believe contribute to an equitable environment?

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Participants

‣ Elementary, Spanish/English dual language practitioners (two-way immersion)

‣ 15 participants
  – 10 teachers, 3 administrators, 2 teacher/administrators
  – Balance of grade levels and languages taught
  – Balance of White and Hispanic participants
  – 2-37 years teaching (average 15.5 years)

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Participants

‣ 14 programs
  – Balance of urban, suburban, town

‣ 7 West, 2 Southwest, 2 Midwest, 3 East

‣ Diverse program contexts

	Whole-School	Strand
50/50	3	2
90/10	5	4

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Study Methods

‣ Interview 1
  – Definition of equity in terms of dual language education
  – Examples of equity or inequity in your program or classroom

‣ Interview 2
  – Examination of 6 key points from the *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education*
  – What would a strong program look like? A weak program?

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Overall Findings

‣ Wide variety of definitions across the group
‣ Each individual provided multifaceted definitions
‣ Challenges encountered help to define equity

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Findings: Elements of Ideal Equity

1. Practitioners cultivate an environment where English and Spanish have equal status
2. Students of diverse ethno-linguistic backgrounds are positioned and recognized as equals
3. The curriculum and program model reflect the goals of bilingualism and biliteracy
4. Multicultural curriculum and materials are used
5. Students have access to the curriculum and to educational resources

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English and Spanish Have Equal Status

"It never ceases to amaze me how much we continually have to combat the power and the influence of English."

90/10 administrator

▸ Language ideology affects practice
▸ Status of Spanish raised by teachers

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English and Spanish Have Equal Status

▸ Challenges to equity between English and Spanish
  – Motivation
  – Assessment
  – Quality and availability of Spanish materials
  – Authentic texts

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English and Spanish Have Equal Status

▸ Encouraging Spanish language proficiency and use
  – Sheltered instruction
  – What's different about encouraging Spanish L2 use compared to English L2 use?
    – Communication for authentic purposes
    – Using language management system
  – Separation of languages for instruction

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English and Spanish Have Equal Status

▸ Language use at the program and school level
  – Program model
  – Use of Spanish among adults in the building, especially leadership, validates Spanish as language for communication
  – Use of Spanish orally and in writing for routine matters

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Diverse Students Positioned as Equals

"I guess the nature of dual immersion has made it just that everybody's a language learner and everybody's a language model, so that being the case... I don't notice any sense of [differentiating between] the kids that have things and the kids that don't have things like you might see in another program, because everybody has an active role and everyone's a language learner. So you don't have the ones who know and the ones who don't know. Everybody doesn't know something, and everybody knows something."

90/10 Teacher/Administrator

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Diverse Students Positioned as Equals

▸ "We're in this together"
– Mixed L1/L2 classrooms an authentic way to equalize status
– Creates a sense of empathy and respect for the learning process
– Safe environment for language learners to take risks
– Teachers facilitate opportunities for students to challenge their beliefs about kids who are different from them

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Diverse Students Positioned as Equals

[One administrator] reported that several years ago, in the first year of dual language program implementation at her very ethnically-diverse school, students were self-segregating on the playground by ethnicity. In the second year, staff began to facilitate two new strategies: They instituted games on the playground that all students would play together and they began to use the "pair-sharing" strategy in the classroom, where students would discuss something in pairs before being asked to share their answer with the class….

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Diverse Students Positioned as Equals

She reported that pair-sharing gave students the opportunity to help each other… She said, "so in that regard, they were seeing, 'oh! I can help you. I can support you when you don't know. But you can also support me when I ask you'." In the second year of the program, students were more willing to socialize across demographic lines, and she attributes the improvement in interaction between students of different ethnicities to this facilitation of interaction between students on the playground and in the classroom.

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Diverse Students Positioned as Equals

▸ Race/ethnicity
– Atmosphere that diversity is a strength
– Discussing what kids notice about difference, biases that come from the outside

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Model Reflects Goals of Bilingualism and Biliteracy

▸ Support students' language development programmatically
– Design of program model
– Fidelity of implementation
– Language of content areas and specials

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Multicultural Curriculum and Materials Are Used

"Equity means teaching what is required of me to teach them—content standards—and in addition it also means that I am preparing them for beyond high school for things to make them, in my opinion, good citizens: go out into the real world, apply what they've learned, apply the language that they learned, in a way that they're going to be able to participate in our society in a democratic way, and also in a caring way.…"

90/10 5th-6th grade teacher

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Multicultural Curriculum and Materials Are Used

- Curriculum and materials reflect diversity
  - Connect to students' backgrounds
  - Help students see others' perspectives
- Curriculum includes cross-cultural and social justice themes
  - Seek missing perspectives
  - Challenge: time and structured curriculum
- Pedagogical framework that works for diverse student backgrounds/needs

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Multicultural Curriculum and Materials Are Used

- Inclusive and appreciative at the school level
  - Celebrations
  - Non-Hispanic languages and cultures
- Empowering parents
  - Involvement
  - Communication
  - Understanding different parent involvement paradigms

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Access to the Curriculum and to Resources

- Access to the curriculum, to education
- Access to the dual language program
  - Support for all students who want to participate
  - Outreach to parents
- Meeting student learning needs
  - Instructional strategies/framework
  - High expectations with differentiation

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Access to the Curriculum and to Resources

- Equity among strands
  - Fairness of resource distribution
  - Communication

Equality	Equity
Sameness	Fairness
Avoid discrimination	Social justice

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Access to the Curriculum and to Resources

"I think one of the hardest things is just when we compare ourselves to other schools… the things our kids are struggling with at home are so dramatic. I like that we're pushed to be at the level of other schools, but also sometimes it's just like, how can you expect us to meet that with the same teacher resources that other schools have? We have kids with such incredible emotional issues, or who experience abuse at home…. If they really want schools to be equal, equality often means dollars. So, yeah, we could give these kids what they need, but if we had a lot more accessible to us."

50/50 1st grade teacher

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Access to the Curriculum and to Resources

Ms. Jiménez noticed a tension in her strand program in that the monolingual program teachers felt that it was unfair that the dual language teachers had fewer students in their classroom than the monolingual classes, although the reason was that the program was having trouble keeping students enrolled into the upper elementary grades. When she was discussing this in the lunch room with another dual language teacher, her colleague admonished her, …

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Access to the Curriculum and to Resources

"You need to keep your voice low. Don't be talking about these things because then they're going to hear." When she said "they're going to hear," she was referring to the union people and to the other teachers who were mainstream. And I said, "You know what? I don't care if they hear. They need to hear these things, because that way they'll know why we have 18 in our classrooms, not 30, and that way there aren't these assumptions about us."…

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Access to the Curriculum and to Resources

She went on to say that building bridges across the two strands in the school was not only helpful for sharing ideas on how to solve problems, but that dual language teachers need to rally mainstream teachers to support them in overcoming challenges just as the civil rights movement was not just made up of the oppressed but "people of all kinds of backgrounds who had seen the injustices."

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Equity Contextualized by Challenges

‣ Dual language intended to challenge power structures
  – Raise status of minority language(s)
  – Value minority students' linguistic and cultural expertise
‣ Challenges from broader socio-political context
  – Attitudes toward bilingualism
  – Funding priorities
  – Assessment in English

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Rationale for Fostering Equity

‣ Academic benefits
  – Increased student language use
  – Improved linguistic and academic outcomes
‣ Symbolic or long-term benefits
  – Increase motivation to learn Spanish
  – Increase empathy
  – Pride in heritage
  – Positive attitudes toward diversity

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Equity Contextualized by Challenges

SOCIETAL ATTITUDES
TOWARD BILINGUALISM

EDUCATIONAL
PRIORITIES

PRACTITIONERS'
RESPONSES

STUDENTS'
EXPERIENCES

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Equity in the Guiding Principles for DL

‣ Common theme across principles and key points
‣ Equity in terms of
  – Assessment (in English and Spanish)
  – Resources
  – Multicultural pedagogy/curriculum
  – Use of instructional strategies designed to help language learners
  – Equal value of all languages and cultures

www.cal.org/twi/guidingprinciples.htm

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Equity in the Guiding Principles for DL

STRAND 3 *Instruction*

Principle 4 *Teachers create a multilingual and multicultural learning environment.*

	MINIMAL	PARTIAL	FULL	EXEMPLARY
A	There is cultural and linguistic equity in the classroom			**A**
	One linguistic or cultural group is more highly valued than others in the classroom.	There is an attempt at equality, but one linguistic or cultural group may be more highly valued in subtle and symbolic ways.	Teachers create a learning environment where all linguistic and cultural groups are equally valued and respected.	Teachers and students work together to create a learning environment where all linguistic and cultural groups are equally valued and respected. Issues of linguistic and cultural equality are discussed on a regular basis as is developmentally appropriate.

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Discussion

▸ What are aspects of your program/classroom that you would point to as fostering linguistic and cultural equity?

   – Think about language status, positioning students as equals, reflecting the goals of bilingualism and biliteracy in the program model, using multicultural materials, and providing access

▸ What might you do to foster cultural and linguistic equity even more?

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