

INTRODUCTION

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Lo que bien se aprende, nunca se pierde.

—Spanish dicho

Bilingual education encompasses all aspects of teaching and learning. Bilingual teachers are held accountable for teaching the different content areas (i.e., math, science, and social studies) while meeting all national and state curricular standards. And, above all the content areas and standards, bilingual teachers must ensure the acquisition of English. Throughout the years there has been a debate on the purpose of bilingual education: to teach English language or to teach content. Some educators focus solely on the development of the English language before teaching content, while others aim to teach content as students develop the English language. Here is the resolution to the debate: a growing group of bilingual educators aspires to effectively teach all content areas while developing both the native language (L1) and the second language (L2)—for most students L2 is English.

The challenge to accomplish this task, however, is the limited amount of educational resources. Classroom bilingual teachers are faced with the difficult task of finding suitable instructional materials for their students. Often there may be Spanish teaching materials available, but the selection is very limited. Bilingual teachers have even commented on the authenticity of the materials available to them. Many instructional materials are direct translations of the English materials. As educators or pre-service teachers we know that much is lost in translation.

The challenge continues in higher education. Faculty has literally hundreds of books to choose from when teaching learning theories to students in general education, for example. Conversely, when these theories need to be applied to bilingual settings, the number of available textbooks is reduced exponentially. Therefore, faculty who teach bilingual education courses are left to find supplemental resources that will “fill in the gaps” left behind by textbooks written for mainstream courses.

Therefore, just like the Chinese proverb: “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.” this book strives to provide resources that will assist pre-service and in-service bilingual teachers to deliver effective instruction to bilingual/dual language learners (B/DLLs). Pre-service teachers can use this book as a tool to help make connections between language theory, learning theories, and pedagogy as they prepare to become bilingual teachers. In-service teachers can utilize this book as an instructional guide as they better prepare lesson plans and teach content literacy to B/DLLs more effectively.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

With the importance of understanding how B/DLLs develop new knowledge within the school context, *Teaching Content to Latino Bilingual/Dual Language Learners: Maximizing Their Learning* provides effective pedagogical and instructional strategies that are specific to this population. This book introduces the framework for teaching B/DLLs new content literacy that supports student learning outcomes, especially in math, science, and social studies.

The editors of this book decided to use the term bilingual/dual language learners (B/DLLs) because we are focusing on developing biliteracy, content literacy, and learning skills in both languages, English and Spanish. In addition, we promote the idea that Latino bilingual/dual language learners can learn the academic content in either language because knowledge transfers. Under that premise, what a child learns in one language transfers to the other language; therefore, content knowledge can be communicated in either L1 or L2 when the child is bilingual/biliterate.

One unique aspect of this book is the use of graphic organizers for each chapter. You will find that each chapter provides a distinctive graphic organizer designed to help you process the new concepts discussed in that particular chapter. The purpose of the graphic organizers is to assist you in the metacognitive process. As you study the chapters, each graphic organizer is intended to help you manage the newly acquired knowledge. The graphic organizers should be completed *after* reading the chapter to facilitate the transfer of knowledge from short-term memory to long-term memory.

The following summarizes the information covered in each chapter.

Chapter 1: Who are Bilingual/Dual Language Learners?

This chapter defines and provides the reader with a description of who the English language learners in the United States are, how they are performing in schools, and how their native and second language proficiency impacts their academic development and performance. Additionally, this chapter clarifies why this book concentrates particularly on Latino B/DLLs.

Chapter 2: How do Bilingual/Dual Language Learners Learn?

This chapter surveys three major principles of learning and how they apply to B/DLLs. You will read about the alignment of these three principles to home knowledge and second language acquisition theories. This information will help you better understand how B/DLLs process new information. It also examines these learning principles and language development theories as they relate to the development of content literacy. The “Framework for Developing Content Literacy for B/DLLs” is introduced and four components are explained.

Chapter 3: What are Pedagogical Approaches to Teaching B/DLLs?

This chapter examines effective pedagogical approaches for B/DLLs aligned to principles of learning and language acquisition theories. As a bilingual teacher, it is essential that you understand the importance of setting up the environment for positive implications of B-DLLs’ acquisition of language and fostering of literacy. Moreover, this chapter expands on the lesson plan development, the writing of objectives, and the use of appropriate modifications for B/DLLs.

Chapters 4, 6, and 8: How do B/DLLs Learn the Content (math, science, and social studies)?

These chapters describe conceptual and procedural understandings of the content areas (i.e., math, science, and social studies). They propose specific content area pedagogy that is more receptive and relevant to B/DLLs. In addition, there is a review of various types of assessments pertinent to math, science, and social studies that are especially responsive to the needs of B/DLLs. There is an explanation of some considerable and prevailing roadblocks for B/DLLs as they attempt to learn math, science, and social studies content. Then, there are recommended strategies for helping B/DLLs break down these academic roadblocks.

Chapters 5, 7, and 9: How is Content put into Practice?

These practice chapters are written in Spanish and they provide the reader with a framework of how to develop lesson plans for the specific content area (i.e., math, science, and social studies) that meet the needs of B/DLLs. The lessons and activities reviewed properly incorporate Bloom’s Taxonomy specific to the content area. Additionally, these chapters establish specific pedagogical and instructional approaches that help meet the needs of B/DLLs in each of the content areas.