

The Historical Context for Dual Language Instruction in the United States

აშშ-ში ორენოვანი სწავლების ისტორიული კონტექსტი

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Abstract

The article addresses the historical development of the dual language instruction in the United States. The Americans have experienced a public attention to 'language problems, which caused some radical changes in policies for educating language minority children and bilingual education programs. These policy shifts were caused by struggles over social dominance among cultural and ethnic groups within the larger society. Searching for the sources about the topic showed that the effort to create a social and political atmosphere in which cultural and linguistic diversity are not only accepted but also truly valued is a difficult one. The ideology of cultural and linguistic assimilation and the relative power and status of speakers of different world languages among mainstream, immigrant, and minority populations have created conflicting social and political agendas that play themselves out in reform initiatives in public schools. Bilingualism and bilingual education in the United States became the subject of renewed controversy as schools felt the impact of increasing immigration to the United States. As recent attention and validation has been directed toward Foreign Language and the National Foreign Language Standards that call for communicative competence, many schools are turning to dual language education to strengthen second language proficiency among students in the United States.

Keywords: dual language instruction, bilingual education, cultural and linguistic assimilation, linguistic diversity

რეზიუმე

სტატია ეხება ორენოვანი სწავლების ისტორიული ჩამოყალიბების ეტაპებს ამერიკის შეერთებულ შტატებში. სტატიაში განხილული თემა აქტუალურია იმდენად, რამდენადაც ამერიკელებმა თავიანთი არსებობის მანძილზე მნიშვნელოვანი ყურადღება დაუთმეს ენობრივ პრობლემებს, რამაც რადიკალურად შეცვალა საგანმანათლებლო პოლიტიკა ეროვნულ უმცირესობებთან მიმართებაში. პოლიტიკურმა ცვლილებებმა განაპირობა ბრძოლები სოციალურ ბატონობაზე კულტურულ და ეთნიკურ ჯგუფებს შორის. ამ საკითხზე კვლევამ აჩვენა, რომ რთულია შევქმნათ სოციალური და კულტურული ატმოსფერო, რაც გაითვალისწინებს კულტურული და ენობრივი მრავალფეროვნების ფაქტორს. კულტურული და ენობრივი ასიმილაციის იდეოლოგიამ გამოიწვია ჩვენთვის საინტერესო რეფორმები ამერიკის საჯარო სკოლებში. ბილინგვიზმი ამერიკაში გახდა განახლებული კამათის თემა მას შემდეგ, რაც სკოლებს იმიგრაციის დიდმა ტალღამ გადაუარა. რამდენადაც დღესდღეობით ყურადღება მიმართულია უცხო ენის შესწავლის სტანდარტებისკენ, სკოლების უმრავლესობამ აირჩია ორენოვანი განათლება. მნიშვნელოვანია იმის აღნიშვნა, რომ ორენოვანი იმერსიული პროგრამების არსებობა ფართოდ არის მიღებული ამერიკაში.

საკვანძო სიტყვები: ორენოვანი სწავლება, ბილინგვიური განათლება, კულტურული და ენობრივი ასიმილაცია, ლინგვისტური მრავალფეროვნება

Introduction

Dual language education is defined as a long-term additive bilingual and bicultural program model that consistently uses two languages, usually a majority language and a minority language, for instruction, learning, and communication, with a balanced number of students from two language groups who are integrated for instruction for all or at least half of the day in the pursuit of bilingual school,

biliterate (or able to read and write in both languages), academic and cross-cultural competencies. The program is usually offered for a period of six to eight years, typically from pre K to sixth grade or beyond (Mora & Wink, 2001). Literacy may be acquired in the first or second language, and subject matter is learned in both languages. The learning environment aims to promote positive attitudes toward each language and culture and foster full bilingual and bi literate proficiencies in both languages. (Lindholm, 1991).

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Students from both language groups should be equally represented- 50% of the students from each language in a classroom that integrates them for all or most of their academic instruction. In this paper language majority students refers to speakers of English, since in the context of the United States English is the language used by the majority of the population, and language minority students refers to speakers whose first language is not English and who use their native language as the primary vehicle of communication. The terms "majority" and "minority" are in no way intended to imply that one language is superior or inferior to any other language; rather, they are used in reference to the number of individuals using each language in the context of the United States.

Dual language education is an additive bilingual education model. This term refers to an educational context that promotes the continual development of the native language and maintenance of the home culture while adding second language and culture (Cummins, 2000). In the additive form of bilingual education, Child's home language and culture are not replaced by the second language and culture; rather, they are further developed in conjunction with the acquisition of the second language and culture (Baker, 2001). In contrast to dual language education and other additive programs, most education models for second language learners in the United States: transitional bilingual education, structured English immersion, newcomer centers, or ESL (English as second Language) programs are subtractive. In subtractive bilingual education, the home language and culture are replaced by the major ones.

Dual language education does not necessarily have to include a majority and a minority language. Dual Language programs may be implemented in two majority languages or two minority languages, such as Dutch-German in some parts of Europe or Malay-Tamil in Singapore, are commonly found in societies in which much of the populations is already bilingual or multilingual (Baker, 2001; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Other programs may use two minority languages, such as Yaqui-Spanish in the southwestern States or other secondary languages in highly multilingual regions like China and India. My dissertation mainly focuses on U.S. dual language programs, which consists of a majority and a minority language. The majority of bilingual and dual language programs in the United States are offered in Spanish and English (center for Applied Linguistics, 2002). Spanish is undoubtedly the language most commonly used in the United States after English. Although attention may, on occasion, be focused on Spanish-English dual language programs, the discussions are here for the most part applicable to programs that use other languages. Schools that use languages other than Spanish do, however, experience certain constraints that are not as apparent for Spanish language programs, such as a scarcity of certified bilingual teachers and shortages of

instructional materials in the minority languages.

It is notable that dual language instruction has been widely available in the United States since the beginning of its history as a nation due to the constant immigration process in U.S. history, where the languages other than English have been tolerated and even officially recognized from the outset. The Continental Congress, for example, published a number of documents in German to assure accessibility for the large German-speaking minority (Keller & Van Hooft, 1982). It's thought provoking for our topic that in the nineteenth century, non-English or dual language instruction was offered in more than a dozen states in a variety of languages including German, Swedish, Norwegian, Danish, Dutch, Polish, Italian, Czech, French, and Spanish (Ovando & Collier, 1985; Tyack, 1974). Since U.S. government gave an administrative permission to Native Americans to be in charge of formal schooling, the instruction in two languages became accessible for both immigrant and Native American children. Native American communities used to provide dual language instruction in the places, where locally controlled education was permitted. The Cherokees established and operated an educational system of 21 schools and 2 academies, which enrolled 1,100 pupils, and produced a population 90 percent literate in its native language. The Cherokee language had a writing system, created by Sequoyah in the early part of the eighteenth century (Foreman, 1938; Kilpatrick, 1965). As a result, bilingual materials were widely available, and by 1852 Oklahoma Cherokees had a higher English literacy level than the white populations of either Texas or Arkansas (Castellanos, 1983). The tribes of the Southeast were particularly successful in dealing with culture contact with Europeans, who called them the "civilized tribes" as a result. The European perception that the southeastern tribes were capable of self-government resulted in some measure of tribal autonomy in education. In addition, several of the southeastern tribes' languages had or developed writing systems, softening the dominance of English and facilitating the availability of dual language education. In general, however, U.S. government tolerance for Native American self-determination, education, and language was tied to political expediency, and those Native American school systems that were permitted to exist and survived the Civil War were eradicated in the latter part of the nineteenth century (Weinberg, 1977).

Among the mammoth immigrant groups living within U.S. territory, Germans were the leaders showing their unity in maintaining their language with the help of dual language instruction during the nineteenth century. It is notable, that the reason why German language and culture were accepted with tolerance was German patriotism in the Revolutionary War, which was highly regarded. Also, despite the fact that Germans were a minority, they were heavily concentrated in the remote farming areas of the

Midwest. As a result of their geographic isolation, they were not viewed as a threat by the rest of the population. Given that education was locally controlled and financed, their concentration enabled them to exert the political strength of their numbers on the schools (Liebowitz, 1978). In response to political pressure from the German community, German-English dual language programs were established in Ohio in 1840, and 'by the turn of the century 17,584 students were studying German in dual language programs, the great majority of them in the primary grades. Dual language programs were also widespread in Missouri' (Tyack, 1974, p.117). In 1880 German was taught in 52 of the 57 public schools in Saint Louis, and German-English programs attracted not only German children, but also Anglo-American children who learned German as a second language. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, anti-Catholic bias provoked by Influx of Irish immigrants spilled over onto previously tolerated Germans, many of whom were Catholic (Escamilla, 1980).

In 1965, Congress commended and funded the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was a part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's War on Poverty. The aim of the act was to make educational opportunities neck and neck. The Bilingual Education Act, or Title VII of the ESEA, was signed into law in 1968. Bilingual education was not decreed by Title VII, which tended to subsidize some districts to establish programs that used primary language instruction to assist limited English proficient children. In subsequent amendments to the act, funds were allocated for teacher training, research, information dissemination, and program support. In 1974, the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Lau v. Nichols* held, on the basis of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (1964), that children must have an equal access to education regardless of their Limited English Proficiency. (*Lau* and other relevant decisions are discussed in detail later).

It is striking point for the research Massachusetts was the first state to mandate bilingual education in 1971. By 1983, bilingual education was permitted in all 50 states, and 9 states had laws requiring some form of dual language instruction for students with limited English proficiency. In the three decades following *Lau*, the support for dual language instruction has lessened by the lack of government back for primary language instruction, combined with strong reactions to the influx of immigrants. 'California, for example, with a population of over 1,300,000 limited English proficient children at the present time, eliminated its mandate for bilingual education in 1987, and recently passed a proposition eliminating bilingual education entirely. Arizona followed suit in 2000. However, all across the United States, ever-increasing numbers of immigrants from all over the world ensure a continued demand for teachers with skills to work with limited English proficient students' (Ovando & Collier, 1985,p.83).

In the 19th century, the popularity of dual language instruction started to fade away as anti-foreign and anti-German views reached a fever pitch during World War I. Following World War I, dual language instruction in general fell into disfavor, and even traditional foreign language instruction was viewed with distaste. The United States Supreme Court discouraged the state of Nebraska, which went so far as to outlaw the teaching of foreign languages altogether. The decision (*Meyer v. Nebraska*, 1923) held the prohibition unconstitutional, making a case that is based on the Fourteenth Amendment. The dual language and foreign language instruction remained in public disfavor and suffered from disinterest until World War II, which resulted in a renewed interest in foreign language instruction. This immediate educational need was provoked by the required knowledge of foreign languages, which served to communicate with allies and maintain effective intelligence efforts. The U.S. Marine Corps would use the Navajo language for radio communications, which dramatically demonstrated the real value of bilingualism. It was resulted by the fact, that the Japanese had deciphered all military codes and 400 Navajo marines volunteered to transmit top secret information in their first language. Ironically, the "code talkers" had been forbidden to speak their language in many places at home. Carl Gorman, the oldest of the group, who died at the age of 90 in 1998, 'recalled that as a student at a mission school he had once been chained to an iron pipe for a week because he insisted on speaking his native tongue' (Thomas, Jr., 1998). The U.S. military success in the Pacific was achieved by the Navajo effort, as Japanese were never able to break the "code," and we have to admit, that the contributions of the Navajo code talkers saved many American families. The servicemen who were in the U.S. army were highly respected and appreciated due to the fluency in German, Italian, and Japanese. Bilingualism started to fall in favor of country and the U.S. Army took a preparatory steps in developing methodologies for fast and effective foreign or second language instruction for military personnel. After World War II, the federal government passed the National Defense Education Act (1958), which strongly backed the dual language and foreign language instructions. World War II played a historical role in framing Americans' consciousness about their own status and rights. Moreover, it helped the country to better comprehend the need of expertise in foreign languages as a part of the national defense. In addition to an awareness of the need for expertise in foreign languages, World War II affected many indigenous minorities and children of immigrants (serving in World War II) to bolster a self-concept of "Americanness" (Ovando & Collier, 1985). In sum, minorities were no longer willing to be regarded as interlopers or second-class citizens.

The late 1950s and early 1960s are considered as favored periods of establishing dual language programs in

the United States of America. As I have mentioned above, the increased requirements for programs for other non-English-speaking children was shaped through the influx of Cuban refugees and the establishment of bilingual programs for Spanish-speaking children in Florida. The ethnic self-awareness of minority/immigrant families and the philosophical stimulus of the civil rights movement became a success indicator for bilingual programs in Florida, which led to legislation and litigation that established the educational rights of language minority children. Albeit, the educational process is theoretically retained to the states, the federal government proves to have a powerful influence on schooling in terms of funding, legislation, and judicial action. The educational funds are divided the federal government at all levels and backs financially the services that are not funded through state budgets. 'In 1998, \$29.4 billion was provided in discretionary funds for the Department of Education. The bill allotted nearly \$200 million dollars for instructional services to LEP (English proficient children) students, \$150 million for instructional services for immigrant children, funds for financial assistance for college students and after school programs, as well as support for school reform and technological innovation in schools' (Thomas and Collier, 1997. p. 102). Under the federal regulation, an overwhelming number of federal agencies spend significant sums for educational programs (the National Science Foundation, the Department of Agriculture, the U.S. Information Agency, etc.), which means their powerful influence in the area of education. This influence is strongly generated by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which aims to ban institutions that receive federal assistance from discriminating on the basis of race, color, or national origin. Any institution failing to comply with the Civil Rights Act may lose all its federal funding. Most institutions receive federal funding and must therefore support the government's agenda of protecting minorities.

The above presented information draws an obvious picture of the U.S. federal government, which is believed to be the government's most powerful educational decision maker and takes absolute judicial rights of being actively involved in educational processes. According to the law, all high courts' decisions regarding desegregation, religion in schools, student discipline, rights of handicapped and gifted students, and private schooling are taken into account while creating education programs. It is noteworthy to highlight the government's vital role in determining the educational place for minority language, as it has a right not to permit the use of minority languages in the media and in public life. We can bring an example of Basque, which was forcefully suppressed during the Franco regime in Spain but has been revitalized to the status of an official provincial language under the current liberal monarchy (Grosjean, 1982).

The American colonial policies used to weigh the schools as a means of replacing local languages with English in Hawaii, the Philippines, and Puerto Rico. Replacement of Native American languages through forced schooling played a significant role in debilitating Native American societies and destroying indigenous North American cultures (Swain, 1991). It has long been recognized the repressive reactions towards Spanish language in the United States. Popular sources state that Spanish is indigenous to the Southwest, and its continued use there is supported by substantial and continuing immigration by Spanish speakers. On the East Coast, there are large numbers of Puerto Ricans who are citizens by birth and native Spanish speakers. It's obvious that 'the United States is the logical destination for Spanish-speaking refugees and immigrants from all of Latin America and the Caribbean. As a result, Spanish is widely spoken in the United States and seems to have staying power. There have been rigorous and ongoing attempts to suppress the use of Spanish in schools, including ridiculing, punishing, and expelling children for speaking it, even in play' (Carter, 1970. p.201).

In 2002-2001, more than one out of every ten ESL students was reclassified to have the English proficiency and has an opportunity to participate fully in the regular all-English mainstream program. States and districts relied on several methods and tests to assess a student's readiness to enter the regular all-English program. Reclassification rates vary by grade. Rates are lowest in Grades K-2 and in Grade 9 when ESL students are entering school systems and may have little or no experience with Academic English. Rates are highest in Grades 3 and 5.

States with high classification rates of 15 % or more include Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, New Jersey, New Mexico and Virginia. States with low classification rates of 5% or less include Idaho, Mississippi, Montana, Oklahoma, Vermont, West Virginia and Wisconsin (NCES, 2002a). The variability of assessment measures used by states make it difficult to interpret available data and impossible to make a cross-state comparison. Since states only conduct assessments in selected grades and are not required to specify which grades are tested, it's impossible to define the ESL population eligible for assessment. Based on the research, approximately 45% ESL students are tested in English and 4.3 % are tested in the native language. Only 18.7 % of the ESL students assessed scored above the state-established norm in English Reading Comprehension (NCES, 2002a). Of the 13 states that were able to report on ESL students' success in native language reading comprehension assessments, 57.4% of ESL students assessed scored above the state-established norm. Commonly used tests administered to assess English reading comprehension were the Language Assessment Scales (LAS) and Terra nova. Three states reported native language reading comprehension tests: Spanish LAS and Spanish Assessment of Basic

Education (SABE). States also reported they used state-designed tests. It's note-worthy to point out that 22.7 % of ESL students are receiving native language instruction compared to 54% of ESL students receiving English-only instruction (NCES, 2002a).

As expected, the use of the native language for instruction is most frequently incorporated at the early elementary levels with English becoming most prevalent in the upper elementary and secondary schools. Many scientific studies applied to the question of cause and effect in order to responsibly tie bilingualism to cognitive benefits. Albeit most of the research surmises that bilingualism is the cause and cognitive advantages are the result, "it is not impossible," acknowledges Baker, "that the causal link may run from cognitive abilities to enhanced language learning."(Baker, 2001, p 101) The other possibility is that they enhance each other. It is remarkable that, Diaz (1985) has addressed to statistical analysis techniques in order to investigate this issue, and stressed bilingualism as an amenity for increased cognitive abilities among bilingual children. In sum, there are no overall disadvantages to bilingualism.

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