From English Language Learners to Emergent Bilinguals: Equity Perspectives

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Equity in Education Forum

January 30, 2008
Teachers College, Columbia U.
The report

García, Kleifgen & Falchi

- About whom?
  - Speak a language other than English and are acquiring English, becoming bilingual, in schools
  - Growing much more rapidly than entire student population, 56% vs. 3% (1995-2005)
  - Around 4.5 million
  - 11% of U.S. student population
Naming

- Limited English Proficient
- English Language Learners
- Emergent Bilinguals
Parts of the Report

I. Who?
II. History of policies
III. Equity: Research and practices

- Dissonance between research and policy and practices
Inequities
Research vs. policy & practice

- Educational programs
- Assessment
- Instruction and Resources
- Parents & communities exclusion
Characteristics of emergent bilinguals

- Spanish speakers (75-79%)
- Poor (75%)
- Urban areas (91%)
- Live in household in which no one over 14 is speaker of English (80%)
- Half live with parents who haven't completed 8 years of schooling
- Half born in the United States
- Half in elementary schools, the greatest increase in high school
- Few in early childhood programs
Research:

1. Support for bilingualism

- Greater support for home language
  - Higher long-term academic attainment
    - Ramirez et al, 1992
    - Thomas and Collier, 2002
    - Lindholm-Leary, 2001
    - Krashen, Rolstad and MacSwan, 2007
    - National Literacy Panel on Language Minority Children and Youth (August and Shanahan, 2006)

- Cognitive benefits of bilingualism
  - Bialystok, 2004
Linguistic Interdependence

- Interdependence or Common Underlying Proficiency (Jim Cummins)
  - The idea of transfer
“Compared with prior years, LEP students are now more likely to receive instructional services provided in English, and less likely to receive extensive ESL services” (Zehler et al., 2003, p. 35)

- 16-20% being educated using home language
- Percentage students educated in English only increased from 34% to 48% between 1992 and 2002
- Percentage students in bilingual education decreased by more than half, from 37% to 17%
- Only 52% receive different educational programs
Research:
2. Time in Development of bilingualism

- 5 to 7 years for academic proficiency
  - Cummins (1991)
Only one year (California, Arizona, Massachusetts), or 3 years (NY, Washington)

NCLB tests after one year
3. Type of Instruction

- Content and Language Integrated Learning (English as a Second Language or bilingual) →
  higher long-term educational attainment
  than English as a Second language pull out.
Policy and Practice

- More English as a Second Language pull-out programs than any other.
Language proficiency and Content proficiency are not the same thing

No validity
- No construct validity
- No content validity
- No consequential validity

Translations – not psychometrically equivalent
As result of high stakes assessment in one year:

- Lower curriculum tracks
- Higher dropout rates
- Poorer graduation rates
- Disproportionate referrals to special education
Research:
5. Pedagogy

- Academic rigor and high expectations

- Builds on students’ strengths
Practice

- Remedial education and tracking
- Poor alignment of instruction with standards
- Overrepresentation in special education
- Exclusion from gifted programs and Advanced Placement
- Disconnect from students’ identity, parents and community
Shifts in Language Education Policy

1970s and 1980s: Bilingualism for educational equity

1990s: English only for equity
Education

► There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education….

- Lau vs. Nichols, 1974

Assessment

► Difficulties in speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language may be sufficient to deny the individual the ability to meet the State's proficient level of achievement on State assessments

- No Child Left Behind, 2001
### Silencing of bilingualism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Languages Affairs (OBEMLA)</th>
<th>Office of <strong>English Language Acquisition</strong>, Language Enhancement and Academic Achievement for LEP students (OELA)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education (NCBE)</td>
<td>National Clearinghouse for <strong>English Language Acquisition</strong> and Language Instruction Educational Programs (NCELA)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title VII of Elementary and Secondary Education Act: The Bilingual Education Act</td>
<td>Title III of No Child Left Behind, Public Law 107-110: Language Instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant</td>
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</tbody>
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Silencing of bilingual education

- 1998, California, Proposition 227
- 2000, Arizona, Proposition 203
- 2002, Massachusetts, Question 2
By 2014, all Limited English Proficient students, regardless of how long they have been in the United States, must be English Proficient, according to their state's accountability tests.

If not the school is deemed as failing.
Understanding the dissonance

- Why is there a gap between research, policy and practice?
Faulty Monoglossic Lens

- Monolingual English speakers
  the goal

- Bilinguals as two monolinguals
Bilingualism

ALL TERRAIN VEHICLE

- Adapt to ridges and craters
Faulty monoglossic lens

- Categorizing as Limited English Proficient and English Proficient

- Not “seeing” our bilingualism

- Not recognizing bilingualism as
  - a resource to educate deeply
  - a national resource
### Bilingualism as a resource: Languages spoken at Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>United States</th>
<th>New York</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Only English</td>
<td>80 %</td>
<td>52%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Languages Other than English</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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# U.S.-NY Multilingualism

*(2006 ACS)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>United States</th>
<th>New York</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Spanish</td>
<td>34,044,945</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Chinese</td>
<td>2,492,871</td>
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<td>3 Tagalog</td>
<td>1,415,499</td>
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<td>4 French</td>
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<td>5 Vietnamese</td>
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<td>6 German</td>
<td>1,135,999</td>
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<td>7 Korean</td>
<td>1,060,631</td>
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<td>8 Italian</td>
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<td>9 Russian</td>
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<td>10 Arabic</td>
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<td>11 Africanlang</td>
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<td>12 Portuguese</td>
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<td>13 Polish</td>
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<tr>
<td>14 FrCreole</td>
<td>601,886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 Hindi</td>
<td>504,607</td>
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Recommendations for advocates

- **Educate** through the media about bilingualism and its benefits
- Urge **federal funding** for quality schools, instruction and assessment
Recommendations for policy makers & school officials

- Develop **stable definition** across federal and state lines
- Design **educational policy** based on current theory and research
- Support and expand **programs of high quality**
- Support and expand student **access to materials and technologies**
- Start support early – **bilingual early childhood**
- Extend support **beyond elementary level**
- Support the **preparation of teachers and school leaders**
- Engage **families and communities** and recognize their funds of knowledge
Recommendation for Researchers

- Develop dynamic **assessments** that separate language from content or that can tap into children’s other linguistic knowledge to perform in English.
- Conduct multidisciplinary and multimethod **studies** to help educators and school officials.
Expanding our lens

- Bilingualism as a resource for ALL our children in the 21st century