Research Overview: Three Pillars of Dual Language Education

A very brief review!

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The Three Pillars of Dual Language Education

Bilingualism & Biliteracy

High Academic Achievement

Sociocultural Competence
Students are able to speak and understand each of the two program languages.

Students can also read, write, translate, and use each of the two program languages to support the continued growth of the other.

Pillar One: Bilingualism and Biliteracy
Bilingualism and Biliteracy Evidence

- **2001**: A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long Term Academic Achievement. Thomas and Collier.

- Lindholm-Leary: “Native Spanish speakers (NSS) and Native English Speakers (NES) ...performed at or above grade level in the content areas in their first language, achieving standardized mathematics and reading tests scores on par with their state wide peers by about grade 7" (2001 p.180).

- **2004**: Howard, Christian & Genesee: “Overall both groups of students demonstrated mean growth in language and literacy ability in both languages” Howard, Christian & Genesee 2004, p33.)
Concerns:

- "...many DLE programs do not even assess literacy skills in the partner language. As a result, it is unclear whether students are making adequate progress in the partner language" (Lindholm-Leary 2012 p. 260).
- Difficulty of assessment in partner language due to growth of accountability testing.
- Cost of partner language assessment.
Pillar Two: High Academic Achievement

- Students are able to achieve grade level expectations in core areas and specials courses in both program languages.
- Specials, special education, gifted & talented, and intervention services must be offered in both program languages.
Research conducted in 1997, 2001, 2002 confirmed long term effects of DLE

- In the early years of a DLE program, from kindergarten through 3rd grade, ELs perform below NES and are on par or slightly below EL peers in other language programs;
- It takes 4 to 7 years of dual language instruction to close the achievement gap between ELs and NES; and
- By the end of elementary school or the beginning of middle school ELs in DLE programs are on par with NES and out perform ELs in other language programs.
Umansky & Reardon

“students in two-language programs catch up and surpass their English immersion peers in middle school. This pattern holds not only when looking at reclassification as an outcome, but also when examining academic ELA achievement” (2014, p. 903)

Valentino & Reardon

by seventh grade ELs in DI are scoring above their EL counterparts in content areas in all of the other programs” (2014 p. 21).
students will “perform at or above grade level in academic areas in both languages” ...but not right away. ...while there may be a lag in EL performances in the early elementary grades, by 5th grade, ELs have made up the difference and have closed the achievement gap with their native English-speaking peers.
Pillar Three: Sociocultural/Cross-cultural Competence

- Sociocultural competence includes the use of multiethnic curriculum resources and valuing families’ home languages and dialects.
- Instruction promotes sociocultural competence.
- All stakeholders work to ensure equity by understanding and advocating for the culturally, linguistically, and socioeconomically diverse needs of all.
Definitions of Cross-Cultural Competence

- Ability to “demonstrate positive cross-cultural attitudes and behaviors and high levels of self-esteem” (Christian p 67)
- Terms including cross-cultural appreciation, sociocultural competence, cross-cultural competence, and cross-cultural understanding are used.
- High self-esteem is included as a component of positive cross-cultural competence.
Attitude Research focus

- Foster an appreciation of and pride in the multiple cultures represented in the program;
- Call attention to linguistic as well as cultural variation;
- Use study of language and study of culture in mutually reinforcing ways; and
- Promote integration of language (2007 Howard & Sugarman)
“a strong sense of one’s own cultural identity is a first important step in developing intercultural sensitivities and cross-cultural competencies” (Feinauer & Howard 2014, p. 261).

- aligned with language socialization theory
- A focus on the role of identity development
- Emerging critical awareness of how issues of language and power are embedded in the process of bringing together two groups of students: one marginalized and one privileged.
Is there a fourth pillar?

- The case for critical consciousness
Students who attend a well implemented DL program tend to academically surpass those who do not, and this holds true regardless of students’ race, class or dominant language (Lindholm-Leary and Howard 2008; Thomas and Collier 2002, 2012). The academic benefits of DLE begin to appear around 5th grade and later in a student’s educational career, middle school and beyond.

DL can be particularly effective at closing the educational achievement gap for EL students (Lindholm-Leary and Borsato 2006; Rolstad, Mahoney, and Glass 2005; Thomas and Collier 2002).

More attention needs to be given to assessment of student proficiency in the partner language.

The definition of the goal of sociocultural competence need refining.
Questions?


Rolstad, Mahoney & Glass “the Big Picture: A meta-analysis of program effectiveness research on English language learners. Educational Policy Vol 19, Issue 4 2005
