Building A Professional Learning Community Around Writing Development Within A Dual Language Program Elementary School

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CABE 2016
Building Robust Biliteracy Instruction and Assessment

It takes a complex network to create comprehensive biliteracy instruction for diverse learners.

1. **Collaboration between teachers** and communities
2. **Repertoire of instructional and assessment practices**
   a. Contextualized instruction with discipline specific lessons
   b. Strategic and varied student groupings with opportunities for extended discourse
   c. **Multiple assessment measures with broad conceptualizations of literacy**
Objectives:

1. Delineate steps for creating a professional learning community around bilingual writing resulting in broader conceptualizations of bilingual writing
2. Analyze differences in emerging bilingual writing as they relate to narrative text
3. Discuss holistic writing rubrics used to monitor growth and honor biliteracy
4. Describe implications for instruction based on findings
Purpose of Research

1. Build awareness of emergent bilinguals’ assets in writing
2. Create comprehensive assessments to honor bilingualism and assess students with more equity using broader conceptualizations of language and literacy, which incorporate both holistic biliteracy and explicit language instruction.
Building on ‘Authentic Assessment’ Research

- • Soltero-González et al. (2012) found notable differences between the number of instances researchers and teachers counted the assets emerging bilinguals displayed in their writing.
• These results indicate the need to develop language awareness as a resource so teachers are more equitable in curricular and pedagogical practices for emerging bilinguals.
**Theoretical Framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sociocultural theory</th>
<th>Holistic bilingualism</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bakhtin</td>
<td>Grosjean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vygotsky</td>
<td>Escamilla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gee</td>
<td>Gort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Garcia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sociocultural Learning

- social interaction as an important mediating factor in language and literacy development

- emphasizes the learner as active constructor of knowledge, taking a role in learning from others

- allows both the teacher and the student to be agentive in the learning process (Gee, 1996)
Holistic Bilingualism

- bilingual learning process as a unified whole rather than two independent processes (Grosjean, 1989)

- theory supports notion that emerging bilingual children draw on all of their linguistic resources as they learn to read and write in two languages (Grosjean, 1989; Escamilla, 2006; Gort, 2006)

- emphasize the dynamic nature of language and literacy development, rather than a fixed set of stages (Garcia, 2009)

- language is always changing and growing to meet the needs of its interlocutors, rather than seeing it as a static non-changing entity (Garcia, 2009)
Broader conceptualizations of literacy development for bilinguals

“The key to using children’s written work is not dependent solely on what children produce; rather it is equally reliant on teachers’ interpretations of children’s written work” (Soltero-González, Escamilla, & Hopewell, 2012)

“Bilingual behaviors must be assessed bilingually” (Váldes, 2004)
Parallel vs. Holistic Bilingualism

**Parallel Bilingualism**

- Two monolinguals in one person
- Bilingual code-switching is seen as “interfering” with language development
- Second language writing development is measured against standards developed for monolingual speakers

**Holistic Bilingualism**

- Bilingual strategies such as code-switching, lexical borrowing, and phonetic transfer are viewed as cognitive advantages in both languages
- Second language writing development is measured against language development standards created for emerging bilingual
Sociocultural Learning: Teachers and Students

**Teacher:**
- Understand the language resources and multiple literacies bilingual students bring to class
- Collaborate with other teachers to develop robust literacy lessons
- Provide varied ways to give students access to discipline specific knowledge (ie: group work)
- Teach language and structures needed to understand and display knowledge of specific disciplines

**Student:**
- Collaborate with teacher and peers to develop ownership of their learning
- Understand the specific language and structures necessary for discipline knowledge
- Develop multiple identities and literacies
How our study is different: Two approaches

Through this study we combined two analytic approaches. We analyzed and evaluated how students not only used their bilingual language resources, but how they applied language skills to specific narrative text features in their writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Holistic Lens: Emergent Bilingual Writing Strategies</th>
<th>Genre Specific Narrative Text Features</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How English dominant writes in both Spanish and English</td>
<td>How do emerging bilinguals develop narrative text writing skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How Spanish dominant student writes in both Spanish and English</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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How our study is different:
Holistic rubric with genre features

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The writing rubrics used:

1. Document and honor the bilingual language strategies the students used in their writing
   (Soltero-González, Escamilla & Hopewell, 2012)

2. Outline specific narrative text features used (Brisk, 2014)
Bilingual Strategies Identified

1. Intra-sentential code-switching (changes in language use within the boundary of a sentence)
2. Inter-sentential code-switching (changes between sentences)
3. Bidirectional phonetic transfer (phonetic principles of one language used to encode words in another)
4. Bidirectional syntax transfer (syntactic structures unique to one language applied to the writing of another language, ex. The house of my uncle)

(Soltero-González, Escamilla & Hopewell, 2012)
Genre Specific Instruction

1. Understanding how language is used within a specific register or purpose.
2. Learning the specific linguistic and organizational features needed for a particular genre
Our Process

• Find prompts for “Personal Narrative Genre”
• Two similar prompts across languages couched within thematic units
• Steps: (based discussion on current research)
  • Administered a baseline with one prompt
  • Worked in vertical teams to delineate features we agreed should be included in writing
  • Analyzed student work
  • Discussed implications for instruction
  • Created graphic organizers and writing lessons
  • Keep a writing portfolio of student work over time with rubric feedback
Narrative Writing Prompts

Family Prompt
Tell us in writing/drawing about your most recent family outing or get together. What did you do?

Spanish: Dinos por escrito/dibujo acerca de una salida o reunión con tu familia. ¿A donde fueron? ¿Qué hicieron?

Friend Prompt
Write about a fun outing with your friends. Where did you go? What did you do?

Spanish: Cuéntenos/Escribe acerca de una excursion de diversion o un tiempo divertido que has tenido con su amigo(s). ¿A donde fueron? ¿Qué hicieron?
## Teacher Created Criteria

### Narrative Genre Criteria:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>Sense of completeness-clear sequence of events (beg/mid/end) with details (introduction, and conclusion for fluent writers)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Use of effective transitions (first, then, after, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Describes two ideas: who is in the narrative and/or what action is taken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Describes one idea through pictures, labels or lists of words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Prewriting: Only draws scribbles or unrelated pictures.

Initially discussion was only on conventions!
Emerging Narrative Genre Writing in Spanish

What do you notice in this student’s writing? Think, pair, share.

Título: mi navidad

Un noche fue a mi abuela y abuelo casa por navidad. Cuando espece corra abajo las escaleras y ya miraba la albor de navidad, y las regadas abajo.

Last Thanksgiving in the morning

the sun shined in my room and I awoke. First I eat breakfast. Next I pick out my clothes. Then we drove to my thees Wes. We got there me and my brother played in the bakyard. I cuead small the tree.

Finally
Developing Writing In Both Languages-SLL

December

Last Thanksgiving I went to my aunt's house. My cousin came and I made Nino a colander. And my Grandma and Grandpa Mom, Dad. First Me and my cousin play ping pong. After we went to eat Everyone said thank you. Then we ate. Next we wash my cousin pass the bowl. After we ate dinner finally we watch a movie. That was lots Thanksgiving.

Me
Last Thanksgiving I went to my cousins house. First, we all got the game around the table and then we played. Everybody loved it. Next we had some fish. Then we all walked a little bit. I bought the Barbies in a box and they were speshul.

When everybody left me my brother my tree cousins, my mom, my nina and my mom and dad. Then it was so late it was two o’clock and we stayed the night and in the morning we left.

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Título:

Un viaje inolvidable. Un día, fui a la casa de mis primos para jugar. Primero, me dieron unas reglas. Luego, fui a jugar con mis primos. Después de jugar, decidimos hacer algo más. Luego, me dieron una sorpresa en la casa. ¡Fue una experiencia inolvidable!
1. What considerations to make in looking at student work?
2. What kind of feedback can be provided to student?
3. What instructional implications are there?
# Rubrics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Simple scales</th>
<th>Analytic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With a holistic rubric the rater assigns a single score (usually on a 1 to 4 or 1 to 6 point scale) based on an overall judgment of the student work. The rater matches an entire piece of student work to a single description on the scale.</td>
<td>Specific criteria with various levels of proficiency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matrix with various variables to score</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Adapted Rubric (Soltero-González, Escamilla & Hopewell, 2012)

**Student Name:**

**Grade:**

**Date:**

Dual Language Writing Rubric (Draft 1/15)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish/Mandarin Score</th>
<th>Narrative Genre</th>
<th>English Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sense of completeness-clear sequence of events (beg/mid/end) with details (introduction, and conclusion for fluent writers)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Use of effective transitions (first, then, after, etc)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Describes two ideas: who is in the narrative and/or what action is taken</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Describes one idea through pictures, labels or lists of words</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pre-writing</td>
<td>Only draws scribbles or unrelated pictures</td>
<td>Pre-writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish/Mandarin Score</th>
<th>Conventions/Spelling</th>
<th>English Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Writing includes appropriate spelling, punctuation, capitalization and grammar</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Use of some standard spelling, punctuation, capitalization with few grammar mistakes</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Little use of punctuation, capitalization and/or correct grammar/spelling</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Limited use of punctuation, capitalization and/or correct grammar-attempts spelling</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergent writing</td>
<td>Does not use conventions or does not attempt spelling</td>
<td>Emergent writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spanish/Mandarin Score</th>
<th>Word Use/Sentence Fluency</th>
<th>English Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Writing includes complex sentence patterns with vivid vocabulary</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Use of some varied sentence patterns and descriptive vocabulary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Repetitive sentence patterns with little use of details in writing</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Limited sentences with basic vocabulary words and or HFW</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emergent writing</td>
<td>Does not use sentences or basic high frequency words</td>
<td>Emergent writing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Word Level Bilingual Strategies:
- code switching
- loan words

Sentence Level Bilingual Strategies:
- code switching
- literal translations
- syntax (word order)

Notes:
Next Steps

• Continue developing a common vocabulary when looking at bilingual writing

• Continue working in vertical teams to create a virtual writing resource:
  – student writing samples at each of the stages (emerging, developing, proficient)
  - mentor texts (culturally relevant)
  - lesson ideas
  - authentic purposes for writing that weave oral language with thematic units

• Continue developing school writing binder and portfolios:
  - describes the genres
  - has exemplars
  - delineates graphic organizers rubrics used for each genre
  - rubrics used for each genre
Findings From This Study Reveal

1. The trends and patterns of bilingual writing processes and skills in relation to narrative genre features such as transition words.
2. The transfer of writing skills and processes from one language to another.
3. Emergent bilingual writers utilized their two languages as resources.
4. Growth in narrative writing features after explicit genre instruction is provided.

Some examples:

- If students were not as proficient in the language, they tended to use some transition words, but did not provide as much extended description in the writing, instead they included more details in the illustrations.

- For those learning English as the target language, there was more evidence of bi-directional phonetic transfer such as using mi for my or me or si for she.
**Implications for Instruction**

1. Building teacher capacity around broader biliteracy conceptualizations and development so they provide culturally sensitive feedback  
   a. Viewing translanguaging as a window into emergent bilingual literacy development.  
   b. Documenting the bilingual strategies used, so students build “bilingual strategy consciousness” and use it more intentionally.  
   c. Provide more opportunities for students to develop a biliterate identity and voice.  
2. Engaging teachers in a reflective cycle about the explicit language features in genre instruction  
3. Create assessment measures that reflects both holistic bilingualism and explicit genre features.

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Think, pair, share.
Professional Support Models

- Video Interaction

- Reflective Cycle

- Peer Support

- Cognitive Coaching
KWL

What did you learn about building a professional learning community around bilingual writing?

(word tennis)
# Writing Action Plan Template

**Writing goal for this year:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action Step</th>
<th>People responsible</th>
<th>Resources needed</th>
<th>Deadlines</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
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