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Understanding Bilingual Education 3: Analyzing Cases of Bilingual Education



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Summary:

The first paper on bilingual education focused on the varied purposes it serves (McCarty, 2012a), while the second installment elaborated upon the types of bilingual education that result from such diverse aims (McCarty, 2012b). Only in strong forms of bilingual education do students become or remain bilingual, while weak forms are more common, and some programs called bilingual are close to monolingual and not a form of bilingual education at all. Putting the information and charts from the first two papers together with this third and final one, it will be possible to analyze the use of languages in any school system in terms of types of bilingual education. This paper will take a pedagogical approach in providing lesson plans that have been used in Content-Based English as a Foreign Language university classes on Bilingualism and Bilingual Education. Ten realistic cases of school systems in Japan and the world will be presented for analysis, and a checklist of ten items will provide further criteria to consider in classifying the language use of school systems. Referring also to the chart of ten aims in the first paper and especially the chart of ten types of bilingual education detailed in the second article, various school situations around the world can be analyzed in terms of established criteria in the field of bilingualism.

Keywords:

bilingual, education, cases, languages, additive, immersion

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Understanding Bilingual Education

1. Analyzing Purposes of Bilingual Education
2. Analyzing Types of Bilingual Education
3. Analyzing Cases of Bilingual Education (This paper)

Introduction to this paper

The aim of this final installment is to activate the information and analytical skills gained in these three papers through lesson plans. The process is to examine the languages used in school systems and to analyze those cases into types of bilingual education. Ten cases are first given, and experience with university classes has shown that there is enough information in these papers for most students to correctly classify the cases into types of bilingual education. The important thing to learn is not the answers to these cases but rather to gain the analytical skills, such as to infer the cause-and-effect relationships between the aims of decision-makers in a society and the type of education that results. In not only these realistic cases but in any situation in the world where enough information is available about the languages used in schools, the whole chain of causation between a cultural way of thinking and actual classroom practices can be discerned.

Lesson Plans to Analyze Cases of Language Use in Schools into Types of Bilingual Education

As a series of class lessons, students first learn and discuss the list of ten "Varying Aims of Bilingual Education" presented earlier. For example, which aims do learners think are beneficial for the whole society? A more advanced activity would be to predict what types of bilingual education or school systems might result from the different aims. Students then use the chart of ten "Types of Bilingual Education" along with the list of ten aims and the further criteria in the worksheet at the end of this paper to analyze the ten "Cases of Languages involved in Education." The list of aims and the chart of types handed out to students in the author's classes are bilingual in English and Japanese, adapted from Baker (2001) and Oka (1996), to lighten the cognitive load of undergraduates and to reduce lecturing time. An alternative activity for seminars or conferences would be for individuals to describe the medium of instruction in a school system they know in another region of the world, and then the group could analyze it by the criteria in these papers.

The first chart in this paper describes ten realistic cases in Japan and the world where different languages are connected to an educational system, whether all the pertinent languages are used in the schools or not. That is, the worksheet to follow will allow for the conclusion that a system called bilingual education by local or national authorities is, besides the ten types, not actually bilingual education at all, chiefly because there is only one medium of instruction. The basic exercise of this paper is to use the list of ten aims, the chart of ten types of bilingual education, and the worksheet with ten items to classify the ten cases below into types of bilingual education.

Cases of Languages involved in Education
1. Native speakers of Japanese start studying English in the 5th grade of elementary school and several hours a week from junior high school. This is because English as an International Language may be valuable for their future studies and career. 2. Immigrants from South America and Asia are working in a small city in Japan where there are not many other foreigners. Their children can study only in regular public school classes. 3. There are Korean and Chinese ethnic schools in Japan. They teach Korean or Chinese language and culture. Including Japanese and some English, students may become bilingual or multilingual to some extent. 4. An American Indian tribe tries to keep their children in their home region, to protect their language and culture, so they teach subjects mostly through their native language, using some English where it is necessary. 5. In some areas of Africa, black Africans are isolated from government support and suffer from problems like child labor. Their children do not have the choice to study in a regional or international language like Swahili, Arabic, French or English, which could lift them out of poverty. Such African villages must try to conduct their own education in their native language. 6. Many Canadian Inuit wish to maintain their native language and culture, but also to trade with others in North America. The government recognizes their right to keep their native language and helps their children learn English along with their native language. 7. Most Canadians speak English, but people in the province of Quebec are mostly native speakers of French. Canada has a bilingual and multicultural policy with both English and French as official languages. Many schools in Quebec conduct classes in English at least half of the time. 8. Mexican immigrants to the United States are often seen as having difficulty in school and adjusting to American society because they speak Spanish. Many of their children are therefore taught in simple English or regularly taken out of mainstream classes for lessons in English as a Second Language (ESL). 9. Uyghur children receive education only in Chinese. The government has called it "bilingual education" in a press release that appeared in international news. Recently Uyghur students have been urged to live in dormitories at school and see their parents mostly during vacations. 10. A small number of American schools form classes with about half English and half Spanish native speakers (or native speakers of other languages, including Japanese). The two languages are alternated in the curriculum, both cultures are valued, and the students can help each other.

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Finally, the following worksheet can be used to analyze salient factors involved in any school system and, referring to the previous charts in these three papers, reach a conclusion as to what type of bilingual education the case may represent. The author developed this worksheet to lighten the cognitive load for second and third year university students in bilingualism and bilingual education classes to analyze cases of languages involved in education by just selecting among the choices in **boldface type**. By simply circling their choices on the worksheet, the students can make a paragraph analyzing any number of cases. Students can work in groups, with one person saying their analysis out loud to the whole class, starting with "We think that ..." In this way, second to fourth year students majoring in English usually reach a reasonable conclusion as to the type of bilingual education.

Worksheet to Analyze Cases of Bilingual Education
We (or I) think that... 1. Leaders of the society see different languages in their communities as a [problem resource right human right as well as a resource]. 2. The leaders are trying to [change maintain develop] the native language use of children. 3. This education is for language [majority minority majority and minority] students. 4. >Education for these students is mostly in their [native second foreign] language. 5. This education is for the purpose of [assimilation of language minority students into the majority culture separation of an ethnic group from the mainstream culture maintenance of a minority or ethnic language enrichment of language majority students encouraging linguistic diversity and multiculturalism]. 6. The result of the educational system or outcome for students is [elite (or elective) folk (or circumstantial)] and [additive subtractive monolingualism, not a kind of] bilingualism. 7. It is [a strong form a weak form not really a type] of bilingual education. 8. This is because [students may be bilingual but their native language is not used in school students learn all subjects in their native language students take some foreign language classes taught in their native language students learn in two languages but not enough to become bilingual students can get enough input and interaction in both languages to become bilingual (and possibly bicultural)]. 9. This type of bilingual education is [submersion submersion with pull-out or sheltered second language classes segregationist transitional mainstream with foreign language teaching separatist immersion maintenance or heritage language two-way or dual language mainstream bilingual]. [If the program is not called Immersion, stop after item #9. If it is called Immersion, add item #10:] 10. It is [actually enrichment, because the teaching is less than 50% in the second language partial immersion total immersion]. It is [not immersion early immersion (starting around pre-school) middle immersion (starting around the middle of elementary school) late immersion (starting around junior high school)].

Items 1 and 2 in the worksheet focus attention on the motives of decision-makers faced with different native languages of students in their schools. The first one examines their attitudes, adapted from Ruiz (1984), who held that authorities view language as a problem, resource, or right, with very different policies following from these views. The author sees "language," which can mean so many things, as referring in this case to different languages in contact or occupying the same space, while, similarly, "right" can more precisely draw from United Nations human rights agreements pertaining to native languages, and from scholarship on linguistic human rights (Skuttnabb-Kangas & Phillipson, 1995). These also bear on the right of authorities in the second item to alter the language use of children rather than maintaining or, in the best scenario for the student, developing L1, which can bolster L2 development as well.

Items 3 and 4 clarify the profile of the students involved from their perspective. Item 5 clarifies the purpose or aim of a school system more specifically in line with the criteria for types of bilingual education. Item 6 probes the likely results or outcomes of a school system

for students in terms of types of bilingualism. Briefly, elite bilingualism is for the fortunate majority by choice, hence it is also called elective, whereas folk bilingualism is a common situation that immigrants and minorities find themselves in, not of their own choice, hence it is also called circumstantial (cf. McCarty, 2010, for further details). Additive bilingualism is where the L2 is acquired with no cost to the L1 and therefore beneficial to the person, which is generally the case with enrichment or strong forms of bilingual education. Whereas subtractive bilingualism means that L2 replaces L1, which is detrimental to the person cognitively, and can alienate children from parents and relatives who speak only the L1. Item 6 also includes the option of concluding that the school system is not a case of bilingual education at all, usually because having only one medium of instruction tends to lead toward students remaining or becoming monolingual. The elite/folk distinction often maps onto the additive/subtractive outcome, but there are exceptions such as Separatist bilingual education, so the item is expressed as it is to cover as much as possible the different types of bilingual education.

With item 7 the type of bilingual education can be narrowed down to weak, strong, or monolingual, based on analyzing the previous criteria such as the likely learning outcomes, regardless of what a school system claims to practice. Item 8 offers a range of specific reasons for the item 7 selection and, together with other criteria, leads to the conclusion of the analysis in item 9, namely the type of bilingual education the case represents.

One further option is to add an item 10 for cases where an educational program is called immersion. That is to say, immersion programs have been shown to be effective, but because they are popular and sound attractive, it is not uncommon for school programs to inaccurately claim to be practicing immersion or bilingual education generally, either due to lack of specialized knowledge or because many of the students entering their schools speak different languages or are already bilingual. The strong forms of bilingual education would develop both languages in any case by using at least two languages as the medium of instruction.

Conclusion to the three papers on Bilingual Education

In conclusion, by learning the criteria and analytical skills introduced in these three papers, and completing the worksheet with ten items utilizing the list of ten aims and the chart of ten types, various school systems, such as the ten cases represent, can be analyzed into types of bilingual education. For further reading on bilingualism, see the links below.

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Profile

Steve McCarty

Steve McCarty is a Professor at Osaka Jogakuin College and University in Japan. He is also President of the World Association for Online Education (WAOE). He was born in Boston and studied Asia at the University of Hawaii, specializing in Japan in graduate school. He teaches content-based EFL courses such as topic discussion, research paper writing, intercultural communication, language acquisition, and bilingualism. He regularly lectures to foreign officials on "Japanese People and Society" for the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). He also advises Worldwide Kids English for Benesse Corporation in Tokyo.

He and his Japanese wife have raised two happy sons.

See his homepage of online publications in English/Japanese

-English would link to <http://waoe.org/steve/epublist.html>

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