

Dual Language Based on Research

Theoretical Foundations of Dual Language Programs.

Strategies implemented within DL Programs are based on critical linguistic, pedagogical and theoretical principles. The major theoretical principles are: (a) cognitive academic language learning requires five to seven years (Collier, 1992; Cummins, 1991); (b) students can transfer knowledge and skills from one language to another (Cummins, 1981b, 1991); and (c) continuous development in two languages enhances learners' educational and cognitive development (Collier, 1992; Cummins, 1992).

Christian (1994) stressed that the goal of DL Programs is to balance the development of language, academic, and social development and not to choose or sacrifice one over the other. According to Thomas and Collier (1997) there are six critical factors that contribute to the success of DL Programs: (1) students participate for at least six years, (2) there is a balanced ratio of speakers of each language, (3) there is a separation of languages, (4) emphasis is on the minority language in the early grades, (5) core academics are emphasized as well as instructional excellence, and (6) parents have a positive relationship with the program. Lindholm-Leary (2001) added the following three to the list of critical success factors: (1) effective leadership and support by administrators and instructors, (2) a positive school environment composed of an additive bilingual environment, and (3) high quality instructional personnel and staff training (p.12-13).

Key relevant to the document

L1 = child's first language

DL = dual language speaker

ELL = English Language Learners

L2 = child's second language

Bilingual student = native Spanish speaker

DL Research Support

Research studies in the fields of bilingual and DL education indicate that academic achievement is very high for both language minority and language majority students participating in the program when compared to students receiving English instruction only (Cummins & Swain, 1986; Lindholm & Aclan, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1996, 2001). DL Programs allow native English speakers to develop advanced second language proficiency without sacrificing L1 development of academic proficiency (Genesee, 1987; Swain & Lapkin, 1982). In their recent national study, Thomas and Collier (2001) found that, enrichment 90:10 and 50:50 one-way and two-way developmental bilingual education (DBE) (or dual language, bilingual immersion) are the only programs to date that assist bilingual students to reach the 50th percentile in both L1 and L2 in all subjects. In addition, these programs enable students to maintain that level of high achievement, or reach even higher levels through the end of schooling. Notably, the fewest number of dropouts are reported by these programs. (Refer to the full report at <http://www.crede.ucsc.edu/research/llaa/1.1es.html>). Optimal DL Programs show promising results for both ELLs and native English speakers in terms of both Spanish and English linguistic and academic development, inter-group relationships, and parental-school partnerships. (p. 13)

Source: **Texas Dual Language Program Cost Analysis: A Report** developed for the Texas Education Agency and The Texas Senate Education Committee (2005) <http://ldn.tamu.edu/Archives/CBARreport.pdf>

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