Content integration in bilingual education: educational and interactional practices in the context of MEC-British Council partnership in Madrid Region

Insights into the Geography and History class

Luisa Martín Rojo, Diana Labajos

Con la colaboración de Manuel López Muñoz

April 2009

1

Our research project

- **"School and multilingualism: a critical sociolinguistic study on educational linguistic programs set in the Madrid Region (HUM2007-64694/FILO).**

- **Duration**: 2007-20010

- **Principal Investigator**: Luisa Martín Rojo

- **Researchers**: Diana Labajos, Laura Mijares, Ana M. Relaño Pastor, Esther Alcalá Recuerda.

The research setting

The research setting

- School in the south of Madrid city

- School with a 25% of immigrant Students

- Extremely diverse school: bridging classes, compensatory program, English-Spanish bilingual program called "*Sección Lingüística*"

- 780 Students, pyramidal structure: many Students in the first courses of CSO and very few Students in *Bachillerato*

- 180 Students in the bilingual program

- Most immigrant Students come from Ecuador, Morocco and Romania in the school

- 7 Students with a migrant background in the group of study (Romania, Ecuador and Peru)
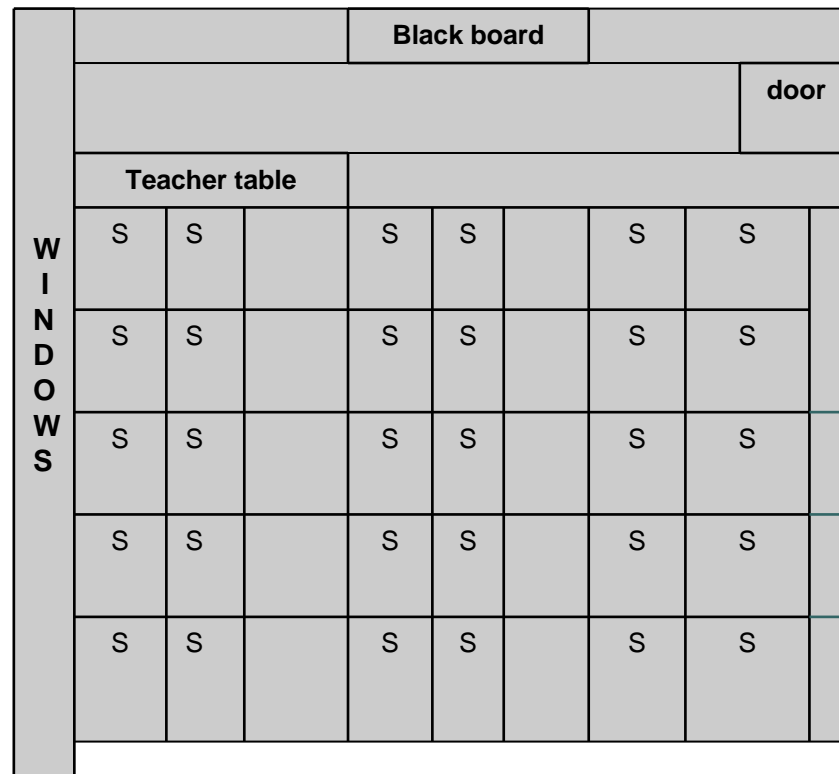
The MEC- British Council program

- 1996

- Integrated curriculum (Britain/Spain)

- Integrated approach to teaching and learning
- History and Geography, English Literacy and Earth science
- Include contents and objectives from the official syllabus
- English and Spanish as the languages of instruction

- Use of innovative methodologies

- Students can do the IGCSE

- The first group of Students doing the program is today in the 4th course of CSO (ESO)

The group of study

- 34 Students in the group of study, 3rd course of CSO (ESO)

- 5 bilingual subjects: History and Geography, Earth science, Literacy, Arts and Crafts and Technology

- Focus of the study on the History and Geography class

		Black board						
						door		
	Teacher table							
W I N D O W S	S	S		S	S		S	S	
	S	S		S	S		S	S	
	S	S		S	S		S	S	
	S	S		S	S		S	S	
	S	S		S	S		S	S	

6

Research questions

- Who, why and how are included and excluded in the classroom?
- What is the connection between methodology, inclusiveness and interaction?
- What is the connection between teacher expectations, teaching methodology, teacher's role, teaching practice and inclusiveness?
- Is the classroom under observation an inclusive one in terms of students' diversity (linguistic, ethnocultural, academic performance, participation) and teaching practices?
- Which linguistic and pedagogical ideologies underlie the teaching-learning processes in the classroom?
- How does "bilingual education" work: what is the role o mother tongues and target language?
- Is the MEC-BC program a clil program, in what way, what ideologies underlie the program?

Research questions

- is there a relationship between lesson organization (activities and participation framework), teaching methodology, pedagogical focus? → we study activities.

- The placement of languages in the interaction (front stage vs. back stage) gives us insights of how this languages are valued and the role attributed to them in the program and in the educational process→ we study code-switching instances.

- In order to answer these questions we focus on the bilingual program and on the History and Geography lessons

Analytical framework

- **Critical Sociolingüistic Ethnography**

- The analysis:
- explores the links between local discourse practices (such as interactional routines in classrooms) and wider, complex social processes, including the production of knowledge and ideologies.

- It goes beyond the fine-grained scrutiny of language practices in educational settings in multilingual contexts

- the aim is not just to reveal interactional patterns or to investigate the acquisition process that takes place in the classroom.

- Cicourel: 'ecological validity' cannot be achieved solely by close analysis of recordings of interactions; it also requires broader ethnographic research that enables researchers to place a particular encounter in the context of texts, interactions and institutional practices.
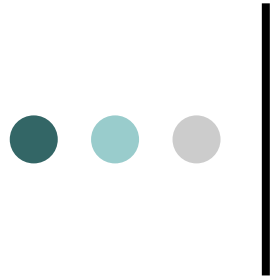
Research data

What	How	methodology
Information about the school and its members	Observations of practices and routines, interactions with agents	Ethnography
	Interviews and school documents	Discourse analysis
Classroom practice	Audio and video recordings	Interactional analysis and CA

The analysis focuses on

- How activities are sequenced through the interactions?

- How interaction sequences match the pedagogical focus?

- The analysis reveals two kind of sequences: **language focus and content focus sequences.**

The History lesson

- Teacher's aims and activities:
  - Book exercises: from a book designed for British Students' topic revision.
- The aim and activities are designed to fix both the content and the language.
- Teacher emphasizes he chose this book because the exercises instruction are easy to understand:
  - he has in mind these 2 targets: language and content
  - he assigns Students an agent role.

Language focus: Exercise 1

Sir Francis Drake

Sir Francis Drake was the first English sea captain to sail right around the world.

1 Fill in the blanks using words from the box.

> PACIFIC SILVER
> SPAIN

Drake wasn't just an explorer. He wanted to capture Spanish ships carrying gold and _____ across the Pacific Ocean from America home to _____. The Spanish thought that only they knew the way to the _____. They would be taken completely by surprise. Then Drake could raid Spanish treasure and please the Queen.

13

Language focus. Exercise 1: Sir Francis Drake

- **Activity development:**
  - Teacher introduces the task
  - Teacher explains the task: fill in the blanks using the words pacific, silver and spain
  - Students do the exercise-some work individually some work in pairs
  - A Student self-selects to correct the exercise: read the filled-in text

- **Skills involved:**
  - Reading (text comprehension)
  - Writing (fill the words)
  - Speaking (Student who corrects the exercise)
  - Listening (classmates)

14

Language focus. Exercise 1: Task development 1/2

1. Teacher: (…)what I want to look at now 39 francis drake/ SIR francis drake let's begin with number one francis drake remember my question was /did English people sit and wait for / the world to be explored by Spaniards
2. Varios Students: no
3. Teacher: or protuguese people/ no they didn't in fact look we have to use pacific silver and spain to complete the text of // francis drake
4. (1)
5. Teacher: let's write the words in the correct place / I think it would be nice if you use a blue pen or a red pen so you can see the words clearly // yeah and we will read it in a moment /so this is the answer to what-what did / some british people do/ easy is it not?
6. (14) {the Students do the exercise}
7. Teacher: is really complicated
8. Student: no
9. Teacher: no?
10. (4)
11. Teacher: a bit (())

# Language focus. Exercise 1: Task development 2/2

1. Student: **es el ejercicio uno no?**
2. (is that exercise 1?)
3. Teacher: only number one
4. Teacher: ok can-can we can we read it aloud and
5. So / let me
6. (18)
7. Teacher:ok? Right?
8. Student: **empiezo**
9. **(I begin)**
10. Teacher: You want to begin? Ok perfect
11. Student: { starts reading}drake wasn't just an explorer

■ Task introduction

■ Task description

■ Task correction

16

Language focus: Ex. 1: Sir Francis Drake

1. Student: *es el ejercicio uno no?*
2. (it is exercise one, isn't it?)
3. Teacher: only number one
4. Teacher: ok can-can we can we read it aloud and
5. So / let me
6. (1´)
7. Teacher:ok? Right?
8. Student: *empiezo*
9. (I begin)
10. Teacher: You want to begin? Ok perfect
11. Student: { starts reading} drake wasn't just an explorer
12. Teacher: pronounce drake drake
13. Student: drake wasn't just an Explorer / he want to capture
14. Teacher: he he what?
15. Student: he wanted
16. Teacher: ah ok

17
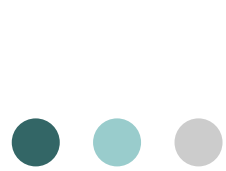
Language focus: Ex. 1: Sir Francis Drake

17. Student: {repeats the sentence pronouncing "wanted" correctly} he wanted to capture spanish chips carrying gold and silver
18. Teacher: very good carrying gold and silver it was the sentence
19. Student: across the Pacific ocean from America home to spain the spanish thought that only they knew the way to pacific
20. Teacher: to the pacific
21. Student: to the pacific
22. Student: (()) {continues reading} they would be taken completely by surprise then drake could raid spanish treasure and please the queen

🟥 Code-switching: S: clarification of procedure in Spanish and T: answer in English

🟪 Code-switching: S: self-selects (focus on procedure) in Spanish and reformulation in English

🟩 Skill: Reading-pronunciation (focus on oral accuracy)

🟦 Skill: Reading- word missing (focus on oral accuracy)

Content focus: example 1

- Two moments in the lesson when content is being taught by means of teacher questions or Students introduction of pedagogical focus (the Student introduces a topic different to the one started by the Teacher)

1. Teacher: & what's the end? When do you think is the end of the modern period?
2. Alex: renaissment
3. Profe : sorry ?
4. David M. : **mil ochocientoos**
5. Student**: mil ochocientos**
6. Alex: renaissment
7. Teacher: no renaissance is one important period in the be-very begin and then there's another period in art which is called baroque

- This extract shows how, despite Alex produces a wrong word "renaissment" and the Teacher reformulates with the correct word, as the focus is on content and not in language (form and accuracy),the Teacher admits the contribution as valid in terms of content and does not make the Student reformulate the word correctly. The Teacher pays no attention to the spanish contributions.
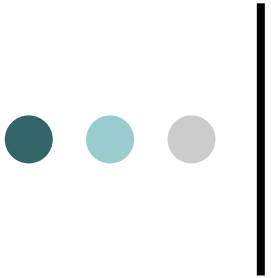
Content focus: example 2

1. {the Teacher and the Students read a text about Christopher columbus and America, the text says it was an "unknown new continent" }:

2. Student: **pero** unknown **del todo no era** (but it wasn't completely unkwown)

3. David A.: yes

4. Profe: yes it was [well u-unless you think that the Vikings reached there which is really possible]

- This extract shows here how the Student uses an English-Spanish sentence which is not accurate in terms of grammar or pronunciation, however, as the pedagogical focus here is the content, the Teacher does not correct the sentence and admits the Students contribution as valid, answering to the student initiation.

Code Switching

- We approach this uses from the critical perspective led by Heller and Martin-Jones (see Martin-Jones ?, and Heller and Martin-Jones 2001).
-
- From this perspective local practices like the discursive construction of what can be placed at the front stage of the lesson, and what is expel to the backstage is related to a process of social "valuation" of languages.
- We also understand code-switching as a contextual index (Gumperz)
- We study the instances of code-switching in relation to taks and activities
- How the linguistic norms are built through the interaction
- As it was analyzed in a previous study (Martín Rojo 2009):
- The norm built shows which languages are allowed in the front stage space of the class, and which ones are relegated to the back stage.
- This placement is related to the valuation of languages, and to the understanding of the aim of the program.

Multilingual choices vs. a monolingual norm

- A monolingual norm is constructed through three interactional patterns (see Martín Rojo 2009):

  - The first pattern: the explicit or implicit rejection or negative evaluation of the use of other languages, by means of directive acts.
    - In the History lesson the norm is not made explicit: usually, Students' answers in Spanish are allowed;
    - In most of the cases, the Teacher transalate the answer into English in the evaluation turn, and keep the activity going

- Student: *es el ejercicio uno no?*
- (is that exercise 1?)
- Teacher: only number one
- Teacher: ok can-can we can we read it aloud and

22
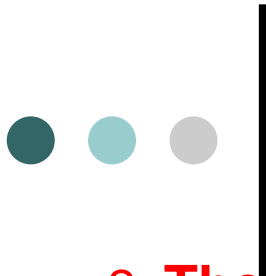
2. **The second pattern: the Teachers' lack of response (indifference):**

> **It creates an interaction order in which the Students' language, Spanish, is not integrated into the class but retain a position of non-focal side-play;**

- these sequences in Spanish occur in parallel conversations between peers;

- Gladys {talking to a classmate}: *(que es* woollen clothes) [o]

- Alex {dirigendose a Gladis}: (*creo que lo que ha dicho de lana) [o]*

- they are strategies of self-facilitation, in order to follow explanation sequences within the nucleus of the class.

1. Profe: & what's the end? When do you think is the end of the modern period?
2. David a. : now
3. Alex: renaissment
4. Profe : sorry ?
5. David m : mil ochocientoos
6. Alumna : mil ochocientos
7. Alex: renaissment
8. Profe: no renaissance is one important period in the be-very begin and then there's another period in art which is called

23

3. The third pattern: Teacher's trasgression of the norm

- Teacher's exceptional suspension of monolingual norm and allow it to be disobeyed: the status of Spanish as the language of the community allows this transgression.
- In procedimental sequences, or in disciplining sequences.
- But also Teacher' pedagogical focus: in content focus sequences.

- Profe: what about Modern times let me think What did you understand tell me that in Spanish // what did you understand by modern times

- David a: Now

- Otros: now

- Profe: now ok that's the problem because this part of history we are studying is called MOdern history

  - Cuando transgrede el Teachersor
  - Patrones interactionles procedimental: procedure
  - Para incluir en content focus interaction

- As a result, Spanish is placed at the front stage area,

25

Conclusion

- Activities and how they are sequenced show a relative balance between content and language pedagogical focus

- The aim of the program (teaching content and language) shapes the interactional organization of the lessons (sequences and participant framework) and the activities, classroom procedures and language choices.

What code-switching shows about the valuation of languages.

- The analysis shows which language are legitimated as language of instruction: English but also Spanish are placed at the front stage of the lesson.
- This legitimation shows in its turn, which language are considered capitals (in Bourdieu's terms).

  - Spanish is legitimate as a language of instruction within the socioling order of the class,
  - and also as a language of negotiating relationships, that is, it emerges a as a community language.
  - Spanish is also a language to show Students' resistance. The norm of the game, which is also built in the class, is a monolingual norm.
  - Students linguistic choice shows that Spanish can be used to improve performance, that is, it re-capitalizes Students, and in this line, its use should not to be avoided.
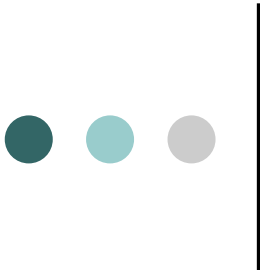
Questions for further development: The valuation of English

- In relation to the reasons why English is taught in a bilingual section in a public School of the south of Madrid, in a lower class neighborhood?

- We should examine in the future the way English is taught as a way to capitalize Students. The potential linguistic and cultural colonizing effects of this program and if they are prevented in any way by increasing Students' awareness about cultural an historical differences.

Bibliography

- Seedhouse

- Goffman

- Heller and Martin Jones

- Gumperz

- Martín rojo

- Bourdieu

29

Content integration in bilingual education: educational and interactional practices in the context of MEC-British Council partnership in Madrid Region

Thanks for your interest on our work