

Dual Language Instruction and Achievement: A Need and a Void in the Midwest

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In recent years, the benefits of bilingualism through dual language (DL) education models have been well documented. Despite evidence of bilinguals' heightened cognition and achievement, Midwestern English language learners (ELLs) are relegated to language programs that do nothing to enhance or maintain students' native language. This descriptive study employed a survey to collect data on existing DL programs across the state of Illinois (the largest population of ELLs in the Midwest), to better understand the challenges facing DL educators and administrators in the nation's middle. Data suggests the predominant obstacle encountered by school administrators is a lack of qualified DL educators, including an inadequate knowledge of dual language pedagogy and/or limited academic language biliteracy. Dual language program expansion across the Midwest can only continue if the teacher shortage and development needs are addressed. This study presents recommendations for DL teacher preparation and professional development.

The benefits of additive bilingual or dual language (DL) education models for all students are well documented; they include accelerated academic progress, enhanced creative/critical thinking, and narrowing of the achievement gap (Baker, 2011; García, 2009; Maxwell, 2014; Thomas & Collier, 2002, 2003, 2012). In 2000, the U.S. Secretary of Education, Richard Riley, called for an increase in the number of DL programs, resulting in an increase from 260 such programs in 2000 to about 2,000 in 2011 (McKay Wilson, 2011). Nevertheless, the overwhelming majority (96%) of English language learners (ELLs) receive English-only (sub)mersion or pull-out instruction—programs that focus entirely on developing students' English skills (Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE), 2013a). In this article we take aim at understanding the impediments to operating and expanding programs that promote the academic development of two languages.

Beginning with an exploration of the research base supporting DL instruction models, this descriptive study surveys administrators of current DL programs across the state of Illinois—the state with the highest concentration of ELLs in the Midwest. Analysis of collected data uncovers a shortage of qualified teachers to facilitate this model of learning. With this in mind, we present recommendations for increasing Midwestern DL

programming through effective teacher and teacher leader preparation. Finally, we discuss the need for strengthening existing DL programs through professional development.

Literature Review

Dual Language Education

Dual language education (also known as two-way bilingual, two-way immersion, dual immersion, enriched immersion or bilingual immersion education) is an increasingly employed, bilingual instructional practice for developing K-12 students' academic achievement and cross-cultural competence in two languages (Christian, 2011; McKay Wilson, 2011; Mitchell, 2015). Embracing multicultural education as the creation of equitable and just learning environments for all people (Gorski & Pothini, 2014), DL classrooms are composed of native English-speakers and English language learners of a common language (e.g., Spanish, Mandarin, Chinese, Korean, French, German, Portuguese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Hmong, Arabic). DL programs strive to develop language proficiency in *two languages* by giving instruction in both English and a second language—a partner language to language-majority and minority students (Christian, 2011; Collier & Thomas, 2004; Thomas & Collier, 2003, 2012). In the Midwest, as in the rest of the nation, the vast majority of DL programs utilize Spanish as the partner language, reflecting the strong presence of Latinas/os as the largest minority and ELL population (Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), 2014; National Dual Language Consortium, 2015). For the purposes of this paper, we will refer to the partner language as Spanish.

Students enroll in DL programming typically in Kindergarten or first grade and remain for a minimum of five or six years (Collier & Thomas, 2004), the amount of time it takes for students to reach grade-level academic norms in a second language. There are two basic models of DL instruction, 90-10 and 50-50, which vary the amount of time allocated for each language in the early grades. In the 90-10 model, Spanish is prominently used for reading, content area, and language arts instruction for 90% of the Kindergarten/first graders' day. As students move up in grades, the amount of time dedicated to Spanish instruction decreases gradually; transitioning to 80% Spanish and 20% English by second/third grade, and achieving a 50% balance in each language by fourth/sixth grade. In the 50-50 model, instruction begins and remains at 50% English and 50% Spanish across reading, language arts, and content areas, throughout the entire program. It should be noted that in the 90-10 model, students begin reading in the Spanish language and transition to reading in English later (third grade). In the 50-50 model, students begin reading in both languages simultaneously, or are separated by native language in order to learn how to read in their native language. Figure 1 depicts the differences in these two models.

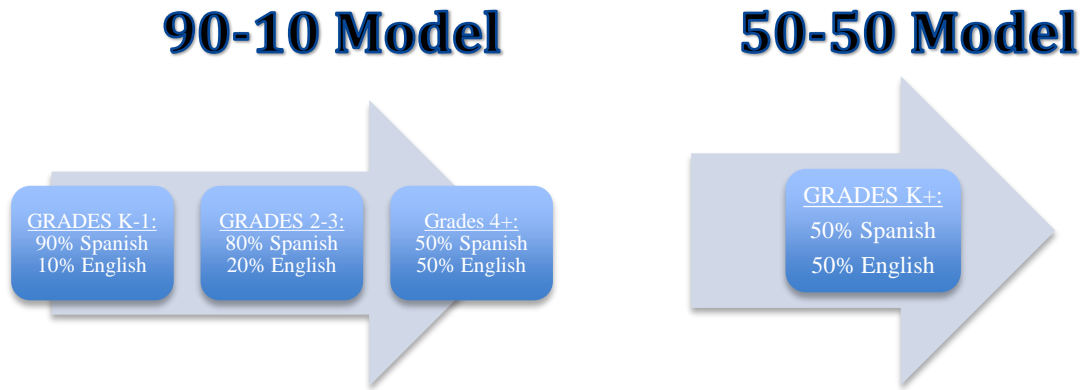


Figure 1. Allocation of Instructional Time in 90-10 and 50-50 DL Models

Throughout all grade levels, instructional materials, books, and research sources are readily available to students and teachers in both languages. While characteristics vary across DL programs based on community demographics, need, and resources, the most successful DL programs adhere to the following theoretical guidelines (Adelman Reyes, & Crawford, 2011; Lindholm-Leary, 2007):

- Additive bilingualism and biliteracy: DL instruction is organized to develop students’ second language without losing their first, or falling behind academically in either area.
- Student balance: The number of students who are English dominant is balanced with the number of students who are dominant in another language. This provides ample opportunities for both groups of students to engage with native speakers of the language they are learning.
- Multicultural appreciation: Students of both language groups learn about another culture in authentic and meaningful ways through the development of relationships with peers of different ethnicities, races and social groups.
- Language separation: Teachers instruct in one language or the other and rarely engage in “code-switching” (fluidly switching between languages within sentences or lessons). Lessons must maintain a singular language approach so that students develop meaning from second-language input in the context of content area teaching.
- Scaffolds/Sheltered instruction: Teachers adjust instruction and vocabulary throughout the day to scaffold students’ understanding from old to new with scaffolds from present knowledge to expanded understanding of concepts and words.

- Educator quality: Knowledgeable teachers and leaders engage in considerable program planning and develop equitable and supportive relationships with families and students.
- Program quality: Standards-based curriculum is grounded in theories of bilingualism and biliteracy development. The program emphasizes instructional strategies that promote comprehensible language and content.

Student, School, and Societal Benefits

Participation in DL programs provides academic, linguistic, cognitive, and sociocultural benefits for historically underserved and low-income populations, such as ELLs, language minority students, African Americans, and students with special needs (Baker, 2011; García, 2009; Lindholm-Leary & Borsato, 2006; Thomas & Collier, 2012). When DL programs are sustained for at least six years during the elementary years, ELLs experience greater academic and linguistic success than in other bilingual programs such as transitional bilingual education, English as a second-language (ESL) pull-out, or English language development. Outcomes include higher test scores on state and federal tests administered in English, greater reading achievement in both English and the partner language, and higher math achievement (Baker, 2011; Thomas & Collier, 2012).

Aside from noted benefits for ELLs, DL education has advantages for whites and marginalized students not classified as ELL. White students in dual language programs score higher on state and federal tests than their peers in monolingual English classes, as do language minority students whose heritage language is not English. Latina/o students, for example, develop deeper academic proficiency in English and further connect with the Spanish language and culture through the dual language curriculum. Similarly, African Americans in DL programs achieve higher scores on state and federal tests than their peers in English mainstream or remedial classes (Maxwell, 2014; Thomas & Collier, 2012). Lastly, students with special needs obtain higher reading and math achievement in DL classes than their peers not in DL programs (García, 2009; Thomas & Collier, 2002, 2012). Strong elementary DL programs prepare students for the increased cognitive demand of content learning and assessments in the middle and high school years.

Through its focus on bilingualism, biliteracy, and biculturalism, dual language programs also profit schools (Anberg-Espinosa, 2008; Thomas & Collier, 2012). As students achieve academic and linguistic success, their overall interest in school and content-area learning increases. There is a rise in attendance and school completion (Thomas & Collier, 2012). More parents become involved in helping their children with homework due to greater use of the home language for assignments (Lindholm-Leary & Genesee, 2010). Significantly fewer behavioral referrals originate from DL classes than from English mainstream classes. Furthermore, students have improved self-esteem, bilingual pride, and cross-cultural attitudes. Parents observe their children's enjoyment of school and begin to champion the DL program within their communities and parent-school

association (Thomas & Collier, 2012). In addition, DL education is cost-effective (Baker, 2011; CAL, 2011). Its in-class approach involving cooperating teachers in nearby classrooms does not require expenses associated with the hiring of supplemental teachers and the securing of additional space as in ESL pull-out programs.

Existing Programming: From Nationwide to the Midwest

Considering the benefits of DL education, it is not surprising that this model of language instruction has been growing rapidly since its inception in 1963 (CAL, 2014). Dual language programs can be found in all regions of the U.S. with particular states as regional leaders: New York and Massachusetts in the Northeast; Florida, Greater Washington, D.C., and North Carolina in the Southeast; Illinois, Wisconsin, and Nebraska in the Midwest; Texas and New Mexico in the Southwest; and California, Utah, Oregon, Colorado, and Washington in the West.

Changing student demographics are increasing the demand for DL programs across the nation, particularly in the Midwest. According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics (2013a), minority student enrollment has surpassed that of white students for the first time in K-12 schools across the U.S. Strikingly, Midwestern¹ ELL enrollment trends during the 10 year academic period of 1997-1998 to 2007-2008 show increases of over 170% in Ohio and over 400% in Indiana (Migration Policy Institute, 2010). States with the largest concentration of ELLs include Illinois (9%), Kansas (9%), Minnesota (8%), and Nebraska (7%; National Center for Education Statistics, 2013b).

The availability of effective bilingual and DL programs cannot keep pace with the growing demand. The U.S. Department of Education (2015) has declared bilingual education as a high priority field experiencing teacher shortages. Likewise, dual language administrators have been emphasizing the lack of adequately prepared teacher candidates for 25 years (Coffman, 1992; Met & Lorenz, 1997; Sakash & Chou, 2007).

The considerable shortage of DL teachers stems from multiple requisite strands of expertise: a) fluency in two or more languages, b) educational theory and methodology, c) content in two languages, d) second language instruction, and e) co-construction of language and content (Fortune, Tedick, & Walker, 2008; Lyster, 2007). Add to that another layer of specialization when considering the demands of working in special education, gifted programs, assessment, and middle/high school grades (Veilleux & Bournot-Trites, 2005).

¹ The Midwest includes the following states: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, and Wisconsin.

Dual Language Teacher Retention & Development

To further complicate the shortage of qualified bilingual educators, there is a high staff turnover in language immersion schools (American Association for Employment in Education, 2008). This is not hard to fathom, given that DL teachers are responsible for preparing their students for the same standardized assessments in English and literacy development, with the same amount of time, as educators in English-only programs. Often, teacher candidates are highly proficient in either educational content or dual language fluency but not both (Fortune, Tedick, & Walker, 2008; Obadia, 1995). This is important, since at least in terms of fluency, a teacher's fluency in students' home language is predictive of relatively greater effectiveness with ELLs (Loeb, Soland, & Fox, 2014). Many administrators hire this type of candidate for lack of a fully qualified individual, and provide professional development to strengthen teachers' language fluency or teaching expertise. Each of these factors accentuates the importance of developing and retaining a strong teaching staff to sustain the effectiveness and viability of DL programs.

Researchers who have examined DL or bilingual teachers entering the classroom have primarily focused on pedagogy and instruction (e.g., Alanis, 2013; Gort & Pontier, 2013; Gort, Pontier, & Sembiente, 2012; Lucero, 2014). The limited few who have studied professional development needs or struggles have found that educators face a number of challenges when educating ELLs, including their colleagues' lack of knowledge and skills in the education of ELLs, professional stress due to understaffing, and understanding of diversity or multicultural education. When participating educators were asked about professional development needs their responses regarding important topics included parent involvement, ESL curriculum development, Spanish language classes, and first and second language literacy methods (Batt, 2008).

Teachers hired from Spanish-speaking countries face a number of additional challenges. According to Fee (2011), these challenges include adjustments to differences between American and home country classrooms (e.g., availability of materials; lack of a national curriculum; large number of standardized tests), academic challenges (e.g., being treated as a student rather than a professional; navigating various university, district, and state requirements), and personal challenges (e.g., adjusting to a new place; prejudice and discrimination).

Research Design and Methodology

This descriptive study utilizes quantitative and qualitative data collected simultaneously through a single survey (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011) to describe existing dual language programs in the state of Illinois. As such, the survey included quantitative descriptors (e.g., number of students served, number of teachers) as well as qualitative descriptors (e.g., reflections on hiring, perceived benefits of dual language for students).

This approach was selected to provide triangulation between the data sets for the purpose of validity, and increase the depth of interpretation about the DL programs across the state.

Rationale for State Selection

In order to establish a deeper understanding of the benefits and obstacles related to DL programming in the Midwest, we take a closer look at the state of Illinois. Illinois was chosen because it is the most populous state in the Midwest and because nearly a quarter (22%) of individuals ages five and over speak a language other than English in the home—the largest percentage of all states in the Midwest (U.S. Census Bureau, 2013). As of 2012, more than 207,417 students were identified as ELLs—making Illinois the state with the fifth highest ELL population in the nation. Illinois ELLs speak at least 138 non-English native languages, with 81% speaking Spanish (ISBE, 2013a).

Another aspect to consider is that bilingual policies have a stronger presence in Illinois than in the other Midwestern states. In 2009, Illinois became the first state to target statewide bilingual policies for pre-K instruction. The state mandated that early childhood educators with 20 or more ELLs of the same language background in their classroom or center obtain the ESL endorsement by 2016. Initially, the deadline was 2014, but the state extended it due to the lack of credentialed educators. The state mandate has had a ripple effect of alerting elementary and secondary teachers to the importance of pursuing the endorsement in preparation for similar regulations for K-12 educators in the future.

Most recently, in late 2014, Illinois was the third state in the nation to pass legislation offering a State Seal of Biliteracy. The Illinois State Seal of Biliteracy (see Figure 2) is added to high school diplomas and transcripts of students who demonstrate proficiency in linguistic and cultural literacy in one or more languages other than English. This designation aims to encourage students to develop dual academic language fluency, and by recognizing this important skill, “provide evidence of these achievements to future employers and college admissions offices” (ISBE, 2015).



Figure 2. *The Illinois Seal of Biliteracy*

In short, the Illinois State Board of Education has established bilingual policies to foster dual language fluency; however there are not enough qualified educators at the current time to meet the demand or to support native language development. In 2012-2013, the largest percentage of Illinois ELLs (54%) were enrolled in transitional bilingual programs, the goal of which is to transition students into English-only instruction. The next largest group of ELLs (12.6%) participate in sheltered English instruction, where instruction is provided entirely in English and the teacher may serve students from various language backgrounds. The goal is to make content more accessible to students who have limited proficiency in English, with English language acquisition the secondary goal. Next are the 12.1% of students who receive “other” services including heritage language programs, content area instruction, structured English instruction, and inclusionary support. In total, 78.7% of ELLs in Illinois are enrolled in transitional bilingual programs that do not afford students the opportunities to maintain or expand academic or linguistic proficiency in their native language (Illinois State Board of Education, 2013a).

With the written policies in place around bilingual fluency, in 2012, only 4.8% of Illinois ELLs were enrolled in language learning programs that include as one of their goals the building of students’ academic proficiency in their native language. Of this number, 3.1% are in developmental bilingual programs (extended instruction in student’s native language) and only 1.7% are in dual language programs. This statistic is concerning, given the superior cognitive, linguistic, academic, and cultural benefits offered by the DL program model.

Data Collection Instrument

In order to learn more about DL programming and instruction that exists in Illinois, we conducted a survey of Illinois public school administrators (respondents included principals, assistant principals, and directors of language programming). The 24-item survey asked for 1) demographic information about the participant (e.g., role, school, years of experience, bilingualism, biliteracy), 2) quantitative descriptive information about the dual language program (e.g., language of program, strand/whole-school, type of model, number of students, demographics of students, number of part-time and full-time teachers, intent for growth, ability to fill all teaching positions) as captured through primarily close-ended responses, and 3) qualitative information about experiences and perceptions (e.g., recruitment of teachers, benefits of dual language for students and school, concerns and challenges) as captured through open-ended responses. Survey design was informed by other directories that share descriptive information on dual language programs (e.g., CAL, 2014; Illinois Resource Center [IRC], 2012) and documents related to dual language program development (e.g., Howard, Olague, & Rogers, 2003). We integrate selected study findings into the sections below.

Participants

The researchers combined efforts to locate all DL programs that currently exist in the 4,493 public schools across Illinois' 494 school districts. Using the documents and directories prepared by the Illinois Resource Center (IRC, 2012), the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL, 2014), and internet searches, we identified a total of 111 public schools across 21 districts that offer DL programs. In the fall of 2014, all 111 schools were sent the online survey. A total of 20 (85%) responded—a response rate of 18%. Of those who responded, 25% represented schools in the city of Chicago.

Data Analysis

We report on selected survey data here that best reflect the needs of current dual language programs. Conducting exploratory data analysis of the open-ended responses, two major categories emerged: issues with recruitment of DL teachers and challenges that face DL teachers. Responses were coded to identify and quantify the themes in each of the categories. The frequency of specific codes were counted and cross-tabulated. Quantitative data was tabulated and graphed in order to inform and support theme descriptions, qualitative responses, and qualitative data interpretation. Both methods were cross-analyzed by the co-investigators to check for validity and reliability.

Results and Discussion

Results from the survey revealed two main contributors to insufficient expansion of DL programs at a rate that cannot keep up with the growing demand—teacher recruitment and teacher development. The following section will explore factors underlying each, establishing guidelines for DL teacher preparation and development.

Issues with Recruitment of DL Teachers

In our study we asked school leaders to specifically reflect on the hiring and recruitment of DL teachers during the 2014-2015 year, and report to what extent recruitment was challenging, if (and how many) teachers outside of the U.S. were contracted, and their perceptions of the recruitment pool (the presence of high quality and qualified candidates). The respondents' open-ended narratives about their experience with the dual language educator recruitment pool and hiring process were organized into one of three categories: successful (all positions were staffed with effective dual language teachers), somewhat successful (most positions were staffed with effective dual language teachers; some teachers may have been deficient in content knowledge, academic language), and unsuccessful (positions went unfilled or primarily staffed by teachers deficient in content knowledge, academic language). Of those ($n = 19$) who recruited teachers for the 2014-2015 year, only 11% ($n = 2$) of the respondents had a *successful* recruitment and hiring year, while 21% ($n = 4$)

were *somewhat successful*. The majority, 68% ($n = 13$), indicated that the recruitment pool or hiring process was *unsuccessful*. *Very difficult, extremely challenging, and costly* were the most common phrases used to describe the hiring seasons for those who experienced limited success.

Reasons behind an unsuccessful or challenging recruitment/hiring process included a majority of candidates with a) a lack of bilingual fluency, b) limited content knowledge, c) minimal bilingual instruction pedagogy sophistication, and/or d) a lack of necessary credentials. For at least one school leader, linguistic challenges were making recruitment and hiring difficult, as indicated in the following response:

It is extremely challenging to find teachers who are both fully bilingual *and* bi-literate, as well as teachers with experience who are willing to take on the dual language [program]. We have not been able to hire highly qualified candidates.

While this school leader faced systemic challenges that hindered success, others lamented more specific challenges, such as finding candidates with necessary levels of content knowledge and academic language in English and Spanish:

It is a challenge to find high school teachers who are fluent in Spanish and able to teach content area subjects (math, science, social studies) in Spanish. We can find EL teachers, but many are not fluent in Spanish and cannot teach a subject area outside of English. We are constantly seeking skilled dual language teachers who are able to teach content classes in either English or Spanish.

Other recruitment obstacles involved a lack of proper credentials as the reason candidates were not hired:

[It was] extremely difficult to fill positions. Endorsements are hard to find. [It was] difficult to find candidates for Middle School with MS endorsements as well as language endorsements. The language endorsements are expensive for people who don't have them. When we find candidates, many of them are quality but lack experience and readiness for urban settings.

Some school leaders who were disappointed with the recruitment pool of U.S. teachers sought out candidates from other countries to fulfill their vacancies, as noted here:

We did not have highly qualified candidates from the recruitment pool. When we had candidates that met the qualifications on paper, we found very few teachers that were the quality that I would have my own son in the classroom. We interviewed more than two-dozen candidates. We have

interviewed candidates from Spain and have been very impressed with their skills. We would not have teachers to fill the classroom without the visiting teacher program.

In 4 of the 20 participating schools in this study, 11 teachers were hired from outside of the U.S. in the 2014-2015 school year.

Challenges Facing Current DL Teachers

Given the paucity of research on bilingual and DL teachers’ professional development needs, we asked respondents in our study to note the three most important challenges DL teachers face. From the responses, challenges were organized into four overarching categories: lack of resources, lack of time, difficulty in communicating with parents, and teacher- and teaching-specific struggles. Figure 3 provides a comprehensive list of these challenges.

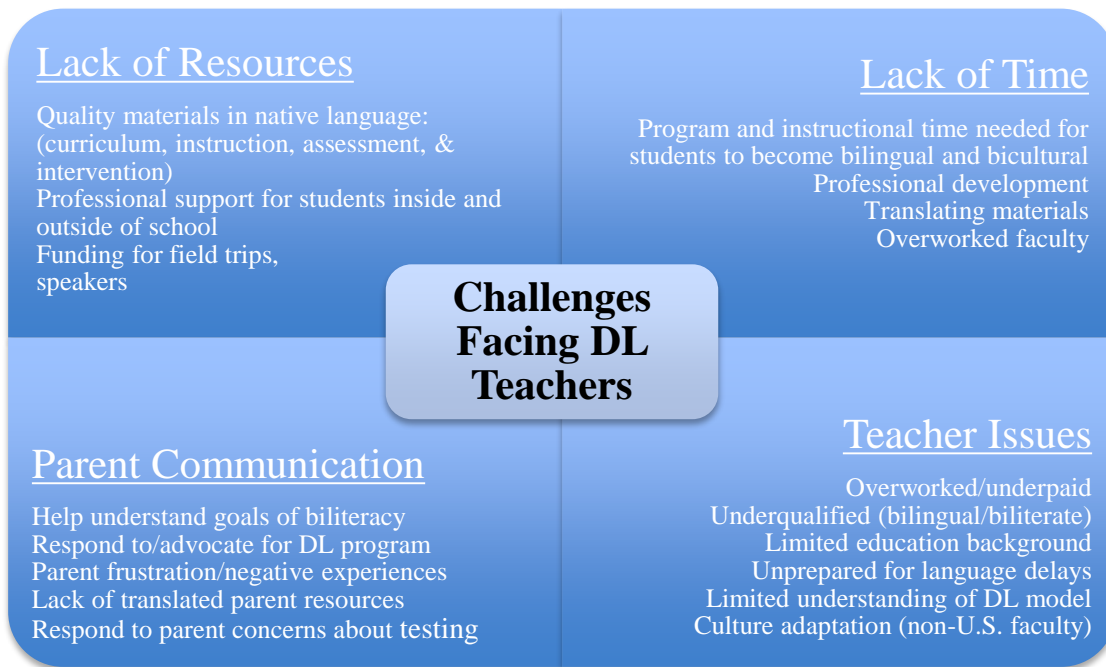


Figure 3. *School Leaders’ Perceptions of Top Challenges Facing DL Teachers*

From the category Parent Communication, two related issues emerged which have implications for DL teacher preparation and development—advocacy and student progress reporting. From the responses, it appears that in addition to possessing the ability to communicate and teach in both languages fluently, teachers need to enter their classrooms with a toolbox of ways to advocate for their own teaching, as well as for the goals and outcomes of bilingualism and the DL program. Current state-mandated

assessments (conducted in English) do not capture the learning accomplishments of DL learners; therefore teachers must be prepared to demonstrate and communicate student progress in other ways. As one leader noted, this includes teachers being able to describe the “long-term academic development” of DL learners and explain why “results may not be apparent until late middle/high school.”

Many respondents expressed concerns about how students’ progress (and teachers’ instruction) was being valued in various ways. This included (as mentioned above) assessment options, but also encompassed recent initiatives such as the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). One respondent illustrated the disconnect between the CCSS and expectations for DL teachers:

DL teachers need to be allowed to teach in cross-curricular, integrated ways. For example, learning Spanish through the study of science and social studies makes so much more sense to students than teaching Spanish in isolation, just like teaching reading in isolation is less effective than when it is through the content areas. CCSS is stymying those efforts and making things much more difficult for teachers. CCSS is not respectful of language learning.

As DL programs continue to expand, it is vital that assessments and policies are put into place to support rather than hinder DL program success.

Limitations of the Study

Response rates to online surveys range from 20-47% (Nulty, 2008). However, considering the drop in response rates over time with the inundation of electronic communication (Kaplowitz, Hadlock, & Levine, 2004) and research documenting lower response rates from teachers to online surveys (11%; Mertler, 2003), we found our response rate of 18% as acceptable for surfacing issues worthy of pursuit. It is important to note that urban schools had higher response rates (26%) than non-urban schools (16%). These response patterns suggest that the experiences in dual language programs in non-urban settings may not be adequately represented in the existing findings.

Conclusions

Given the growing trends in ELL and diversity expansion in the United States, the need for effective bilingual education is critical—for both language-minority and language-majority students. Keeping pace with other countries across the world demands bilingual or multilingual skills. Attaining these goals involve four critical components which act as a cycle, further developing and advancing growth in each of the other areas. Figure 4 organizes these categories: a) advocate for bilingualism, b) develop a bilingual Midwest,

c) increase DL teacher preparation programs, and d) increase DL programming at all levels of education.

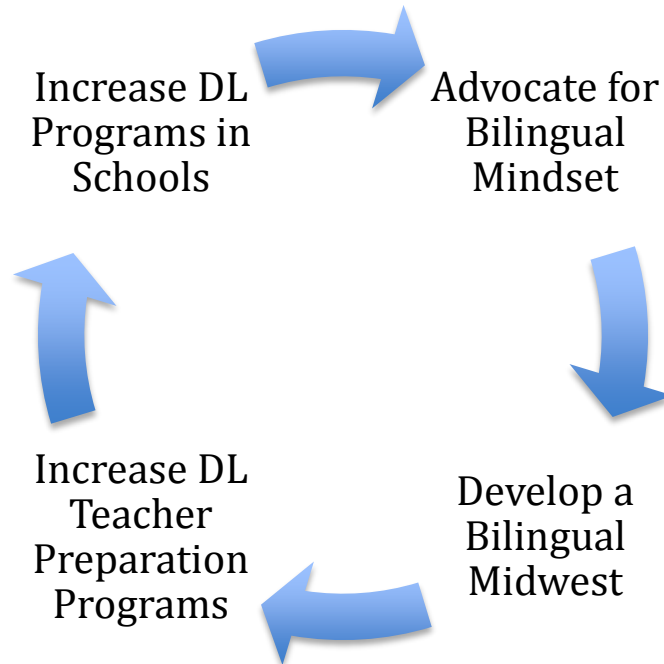


Figure 4. *Components of Increasing Academic Bilingual Fluency*

Advocating for a Bilingual Mindset

In many effective movements, change follows a shift in thinking. The current climate of literacy in the Midwest is sharply centered on English, with limited opportunities for students to develop rich levels of proficiency in non-English languages. Sociolinguist Michael Clyne’s research underscored that “the greatest impediment to recognizing, valuing and utilizing our language potential is a persistent monolingual mindset” (Clyne, 2005; p. xi). Increasing the awareness and appreciation of the benefits of multilingualism is a precursor to increasing the pool of academically bilingual students in the Midwest. Educational policies, standards, curriculum, and evaluation can be leveraged to promote a bilingual mindset in schools and classrooms.

Developing a Bilingual Midwest

A lack of academic fluency in two languages severely limits the qualified candidate pool of bilingual teachers in Illinois. In the 2012-2013 school year, only 529 teachers demonstrated enough fluency in two languages to hold a Type 29 Transitional Bilingual Certificate—the state requirement for teaching second language learners (ISBE, 2013b).

Given the large number of Spanish-speaking ELLs in Illinois, the shortage of Spanish-speaking teachers in the Midwest is particularly problematic, and efforts to increase their numbers should mirror those of states like Texas, California, and New Mexico where Spanish bilingual education has a longer history, and thus a larger population of academically fluent bilinguals. To reverse the lack of fluent bilinguals in the Midwest, the development of academic Spanish for all students ought to be accentuated and promoted in elementary and secondary schools, as well as in higher education.

Increase DL Teacher Preparation

The major obstacle to increasing the number of academically fluent bilinguals is the lack of qualified language teachers. The shortage of qualified bilingual educators can be traced back to the limited history of dual language education in the U.S. The typical language requirement students complete in high school is an inadequate substitute for the five to six years it takes to develop academic language proficiency. Furthermore, even when teacher candidates possess proficiency in two languages, teaching dual language requires a specialized subset of teaching that is “over and above the over and above” (Met, 1989, p. 181). Given the complexity and multiplicity of learning strands that must be developed for a DL teacher candidate, it is not surprising that the number of DL teacher education programs in the United States is very low. There is an Indigenous Teacher Education Program at the University of Hawaii-Hilo and several two-way immersion programs in states that have a long history of bilingual programs (e.g., California, New Mexico, Texas).

At present, there are very few dual language and immersion certificate programs in the Midwest; existing programs include those offered at Edgewood College in Wisconsin and the University of Minnesota, and a new Dual Language Teacher Leader master’s degree that is being developed at Roosevelt University in Chicago. To support the development of dual language teacher preparation programs, Midwestern state boards of education can establish bilingual/dual language teacher program standards and credentials, similar to those that are established in other regions of the United States (i.e. Massachusetts Association for Bilingual Education Dual Language Educator License Standards).

Increase DL Programming

Dual language education most effectively enhances student achievement and closes the achievement gap as compared to other language instruction methods, and is cost effective. Program, teacher, and school evaluation should take into account that although the benchmark standards may take longer to achieve in DL education, the trajectories reach higher. With that structure in place, more schools can provide educational programs that develop bilinguals, fully fluent in two languages.

A large majority of our respondents (75% [$n = 15$]), indicated that they hoped to expand their DL program in the next five years. If there is not a response that lays out an achievable plan to train and prepare high quality DL teachers, and more of them, soon, this goal is hardly attainable, and a bilingual future for Midwestern students looks grim. Moving toward a multilingual reality will improve the outlook for these students in terms of their own growth and in terms of contributing to globally competitive careers.

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