Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education

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*Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education* actually presents a practical and theoretical overview of how to promote bilingual proficiency through school programs. Specifically, it has been written for educational professionals and school policy makers interested in the development, extension and evaluation of successful dual language instruction programs; it is also addressed to educators who are teaching in two or more languages (SL or FL immersion programs), not only in the US and Canada but also in other countries. This complete and easy to read guide answers many of the basic questions that communities investigating dual language programs could ask. I would select this text as the essential starting point for teachers new to the field.

*Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education* explores more profoundly additive models of enriched education for all type of students. It encourages more in-depth examination of these models so that all the suggestions made in the book can be applied to particular school and community settings. The book includes practical tools: sample lessons, evaluation checklists, tables, charts and lists of reference materials.
The text is divided into three parts:

Part I: Foundations
Part II: The Instructional Process
Part II: Applications and Resources

Each part is subdivided into nine chapters. In addition to each chapter, reference lists of articles are presented at the end of each chapter. Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education also contains a series of appendices useful for all EE practitioners. Appendix A is a Glossary of Terms for EE teachers. Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education provides a practical useable list of terms that can be consulted as the book is read. Curriculum Materials “to aid EE teachers in their search for texts to use with their students” language, the list of materials includes both languages. URLs of publishers are also provided. Resource Centers, Professional Periodicals and Journals. Appendix D identifies some Informational Video-Tapes/Directories of Programs. Appendix E is an Index of Tables and Figures that appear in the book. [-1-]

All the information and strategies the authors present in the book come not only from research but also from the practice in the field of dual language programs. In all the chapters the reader can find texts which are placed inside a Table; this type of information is called “Voices from the Field”. “Voices from the Field” should be a must read. It is the most innovative contribution to give the readers a realistic perspective of program development. Real-life examples of the principles and practices are explored. Teachers, parents, head masters and even students offer clear information of their own experiences. “Voices from the Field” also helps to motivate the reader because the Tables are included in the text, so that if the reader needs more information, real life situations (from people taking part in an EE programs) are provided at the same time. “Voices from the Field” also promotes understanding and appreciation for the benefits that dual language instruction facilitates to the educational community.

Chapter One, an introduction, gives very clear information about the contents. It introduces the reader to the field of Enriched Education and clearly describes the benefits of learning two languages from educational, cognitive, socio-cultural, and economic perspectives. It also explains the three programs the book focuses on:

- Second / Foreign language immersion programs for English-speaking majority students;
- Developmental bilingual programs for language minority students;
- Two-way immersion programs for language minority and language majority students.

Finally, the introduction describes the method and rationale behind the book’s organization. This and subsequent chapters leads the reader to the top names in EE programs (Two-Way Bilingual Education, Bilingual Immersion Programs, Content-Based Instruction, Assessment, Lesson Planning). Both author and subject indexes are provided.

Chapter Two, “Critical Features of Enriched Education“ is particularly helpful to school communities whose programs are currently in progress. Research articles and the authors’ own professional experiences have influenced to identify critical features which are relevant in EE program development and implementation.
In Chapter Three, “Program Development and Implementation” discusses practical issues. Clear suggestions about how EE programs are developed and maintained are presented. What makes this chapter very useful is that it provides a step-by-step guide for those trying to start planning an EE program or those who need to know how to ensure program effectiveness:

- People who can initiate the program and how
- Role of the parents and the larger community
- Relationship of the EE program to the rest of the school
- Staff development plan
- Student selection and grouping
- Teachers’ competencies and coordination
- Timing
- Language allocation and status and how this can affect the success of the program
- Materials: selection and adaptability
- Community outreach needed
- Criteria for effective EE programs

Part II begins with chapter Four, “Oral Language Development”, which addresses effective ways of stimulating oral language development in the second language and describes the stages of oral language development for both majority and minority students in EE programs. The authors also underline what teachers expect from students in both the second and the first languages, and introduce the reader to the four contexts for developing oral language proficiency in an EE program:

- The native language art class
- The second language class
- The content area class
- Social interaction with adults and peers

At the end of the chapter there is a summary (Table 4.10) in which the authors return to the critical features identified in Chapter 2. They use these features to add a list of implications for Oral Language Development.

In the following chapter, “Teaching Literacy in Two Languages”, the authors deal with the question of what literacy is and how it develops. Teachers often ask these foundational questions and they need to be answered when designing literacy instruction for both first and second language learners. When students are taught to read and write in two languages simultaneously, the authors “prefer a sequential plan for formal reading/writing instruction in one language before beginning formal reading/writing instruction in the other” (p. 90). The concept of “transfer” from the first language to the second is also presented. In the second part of the chapter, questions about primary instructional objectives achievement, appropriate literacy materials selection and effective strategies with early emergent literacy students, are answered. A very useful and complete materials list is also provided as well as a list of pre-reading and pre-writing activities to develop oral language (Tables 5.3, 5.4, 5.5).
The third part of the chapter is addressed to teachers of special needs students or with atypical backgrounds ("Special Population Concerns"). In Table 5.10, an extensive list of references for working with special needs learners is provided. A most useful and clearly explained synthesis is provided in Table 5.12: a “Critical Features Summary”, in which both the main points of the chapter and implications for literacy development are summarized.

In addition, Dual language instruction in Chapter Six provides a rationale and strategies for teaching students through a Content-Based Approach. Reviewing the Glossary of terms at the end of the book is very useful at this moment in order to clarify the terms presented in the chapter, which is aimed at answering teachers’ questions about how to cope with content area instruction to language minority or majority students. It is also very useful for those teachers not working in the USA or Canada and who are trying to plan integrated instruction.

The chapter begins with Figure 6.1, in which the Goals of Integrated Instruction are presented. The first part of the chapter deals with identifying and selecting short- and long-term objectives.

The authors then describe the process of planning integrated lessons and discuss content area instruction according to three phases:

- Preview
- Focused Learning
- Extension

According to these three phases of instruction, they introduce teachers to the process of planning the activities they recommend and which are summarized in Table 6.5.

At the end of the chapter, a list of teaching strategies of effective instruction is presented (Special Needs Students are also taken into account as well as links with Home and Community).

In Chapter Seven “Assessment”, the authors discuss the design of effective assessment in EE classrooms. They provide effective and practical ways which teachers can use to design assessment goals. They also discuss the ways in which assessment in EE classrooms and other types of classrooms differs; “most of these differences arise from the fact that EE students are taught and learn academic skills and knowledge through the medium of a language they are also learning” (p. 161). A selection of rubrics provides educators real examples of tools to assess students’ progress. Portfolio design for assessment is also addressed. At the end of the chapter the authors present a list of benefits as a result of involving students in their own assessment (what they call “Self-Reflection”), as well as the way to include parents. All the material in this chapter is summarized in a checklist presented in Table 7.12 and which refers to the Critical Features presented in Chapter 2.

Part III begins with Chapter Eight, “Model Lessons and Assessment Procedures”. In this chapter the authors present two model lessons aimed at Second Language Learners. Unit 1 is addressed to learners of Spanish. It is an Early Grade Literature-Based Thematic Unit called: “Qué comes tú?” (What do you eat?) It is a series of very useful lesson planning guidelines for teachers interested in planning their own model lessons including:
The second model lesson called “The Weather” differs from the first. It is aimed at primary students learning English as Second Language but could also be applied to those learning another language. This lesson assumes that students have different levels of proficiency in English. Figure 8.3 explains how the unit can be expanded to different content areas.

Chapter Nine, the final chapter, addresses advocacy. This chapter is helpful for those who want to start up a new program and are facing conflict from a diversity of people or institutions. The role of advocacy is discussed especially when a program is initiated in order to ensure excellence. The authors describe the people or institutions implicated in advocacy, such as parents, teachers, school principals and administrators, members of the local community, professional and political leaders, etc. They assure that, probably, parents make up the group which can provide the advocacy that is required to create and maintain effective EE programs.

Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education is an important and useful guide. The book is clearly written, reader-friendly and recommended for all educators interested in starting up or being informed about EE Education.

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