Language for Social Cohesion: Toward Plurilingualism and Pluriculturalism in Language Education

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Outline

- Key Issues in Language Education
- Plurilingualism as Pedagogy
- Findings from a Study in Canada: Benefits and Challenges of Plurilingual Instruction
- Future Directions and Implications
Key Issues

Canada is officially bilingual (English/French) but languages are often seen as separate entities. Despite its bilingual nature, language education is typically delivered in a monolingual way. Number of immigrants and refugees continue to grow. Number of immigrant languages is on the rise.
Number of speakers of an immigrant language as a mother tongue increased from 6.8 to 7.7 million (13%)
More people speak an indigenous language as an additional language (228,770) than as a mother tongue (213,225)
Over 200 languages are spoken in Canada

Nearly 60 indigenous and 140 immigrant languages

Monolingualism is the exception
Toronto: Multilingual Setting
46% speak an immigrant language as a first language
(Statistics Canada, 2016)
Learning one language as an attempt to blend in is not compatible with a society that is increasingly diverse.
How can language educators address the needs of an increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse society?
Plurilingualism

(Coste, Moore & Zarate, 2009; Council of Europe, 2001, 2018; Marshall & Moore, 2016; Piccardo, 2013; Canagarajah, 2009; Taylor & Snoddon, 2013)
Plurilingualism & Pluriculturalism
Council of Europe, 2001, 2018

Language/culture integration rather than separation

Mix of languages/cultures rather than purity

Heterogeneity rather than homogeneity

Individuals have one repertoire with several languages/cultures

Competence in the languages/cultures vary

Encourages people to learn additional languages/cultures

The “native speaker” model is unrealistic

Individuals have agency over their linguistic and cultural repertoire
Good Classroom Practices

Cross-cultural comparisons
(CoE, 2001; 2017)

Comparisons nos langues
(Auger, 2004)

Languaging
(Swain, 2006; 2010)

Translanguaging
(Williams, 1994; 1996; Cenoz & Gorter, 2015)

Intercomprehension
(Doyé, 2005)

Exploration of linguistic and cultural landscapes
(CoE, 2001; 2017)

Harnessing full repertoire
(Piccardo, 2013; 2017)
Canadian Study

What are affordances and challenges of plurilingual instruction compared to monolingual instruction?

Three Main Areas

1. Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence
2. Academic Vocabulary Retention
3. Overall Affordances and Challenges

(Galante, forthcoming)
English Language Teachers Delivered Two Different Types of Instruction

Comparison Group
Monolingual

Treatment Group
Plurilingual
Student Participants

129

Comparison Group
Monolingual: 50

Treatment Group
Plurilingual: 79
Plurilingual Tasks Used are Available at

www.breakingtheinvisiblewall.com
Instruments

1. Demographic Questionnaire (T & C)
2. Plurilingual and Pluricultural Competence Scale (PPCS) (T & C)
3. Weekly Learner Diary Entries (T)
4. Classroom Observations (T)
   (start, mid-point, end)
5. Focus Groups (T)
6. Teacher Interviews (T & C)
7. Vocabulary Test (T & C)
## PPC Scale

### 24 items

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat disagree</th>
<th>Somewhat agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>When talking to someone who knows the same languages as I do, I feel comfortable switching between one language to another language</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>It’s difficult for me to accept cultural differences when talking to people from different cultural backgrounds</td>
<td>1 2 3 4</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
What are potential affordances and challenges of plurilingual instruction?
Finding 1

Plurilingual instruction has a positive effect on students’ plurilingual and pluricultural competence over time.
Students who received plurilingual instruction had an increase on plurilingual and pluricultural competence over time.

T1: treatment ($M = 2.97$, $SD = .30$) and comparison ($M = 2.95$, $SD = .32$), $t(127) = .33$, $p = .74$.

T2: treatment ($M = 3.15$, $SD = .28$) and comparison ($M = 3.02$, $SD = .32$), $t(127) = 2.52$, $p = .013$. 
Finding 2

Plurilingual instruction has a positive effect on students’ academic vocabulary retention
Students who received plurilingual instruction had higher vocabulary scores at the end of the language program.

Treatment ($M=6.14$, $SD=1.50$) and comparison ($M=5.36$, $SD=1.57$); $t(127) = 2.81$, $p = .006$
Finding 3

Plurilingual instruction has several affordances
Students’ Perceptions of Affordances of Plurilingual Instruction

- Cognition
- Plurilingual and pluricultural awareness
- Flexible language and cultural use
- Additional language and cultural learning
- Awareness of societal multilingualism and multiculturalism
- Empathy
- English language learning
- Relatability
- Critical thinking
- Willingness to learn additional languages
Teachers’ Perceptions of Affordances of Plurilingual Instruction

- Plurilingual instruction is more beneficial than monolingual instruction
- Shared lived experiences
- Challenging the monolingual and monocultural mindset
- Role reversal
- Validation of plurilingual practices
- Engagement
- Safe space
First of all, I would really like to say that I am really impressed about this task. Since in normal practices that we are doing in the class does not show us how deep and different can be another culture. I have been in the same class with these students for such a long time and I didn’t know that China has totally different dialects from province to province. Moreover, this task was really useful for communicating and learning my group mates interests and abilities. I am really happy, I wish we will have more tasks like this one.

Sunshine
Challenges

Lack of Support from Policy and School Administrators

Schools’ English-only Policy

Lack of Training in Plurilingual Instruction

Shift from Monolingual to Plurilingual Mindset
Future Directions and Implications

1. Practical application of plurilingualism is a challenge
2. Inclusion of plurilingualism in teacher education is needed
3. Teachers need to be supported by policies and school administration
4. Teachers who have a monolithic mindset may face more challenges
5. A paradigm shift is needed
From Monolingual and Monocultural
To Plurilingual and Pluricultural
For more information:
www.breakingtheinvisiblewall.com
References


References


References


