



This paper is taken from

*Citizenship Education in Society
Proceedings of the ninth Conference of the
Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe
Thematic Network*

London: CiCe 2007

edited by Alistair Ross, published in London by CiCe, ISBN 978-1899764-90-7

Without explicit authorisation from CiCe (the copyright holder)

- only a single copy may be made by any individual or institution for the purposes of private study only
- multiple copies may be made only by
 - members of the CiCe Thematic Network Project or CiCe Association, or
 - a official of the European Commission
 - a member of the European parliament

If this paper is quoted or referred to it must always be acknowledged as

Winstead, L. (2007) Starting with Citizenship in Schools: The Social Inclusion of Immigrant Children via an Alternative Dual Language Program, in Ross, A. (ed) Citizenship Education in Society. London: CiCe, pp 355-362.

© CiCe 2007

CiCe
Institute for Policy Studies in Education
London Metropolitan University
166 – 220 Holloway Road
London N7 8DB
UK

This paper does not necessarily represent the views of the CiCe Network.



This project has been funded with support from the European Commission. This publication reflects the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained herein.

Acknowledgements:

This is taken from the book that is a collection of papers given at the annual CiCe Conference indicated. The CiCe Steering Group and the editor would like to thank

- All those who contributed to the Conference
- The rector and the staff of the University of Montpellier III
- Andrew Craven, of the CiCe Administrative team, for editorial work on the book, and Lindsay Melling and Teresa Carbajo-Garcia, for the administration of the conference arrangements
- London Metropolitan University, for financial and other support for the programme, conference and publication
- The SOCRATES programme and the personnel of the Department of Education and Culture of the European Commission for their support and encouragement

Starting with Citizenship in Schools: The Social Inclusion of Immigrant Children via an Alternative Dual Language Program

Lisa Winstead
California State University (USA)

Abstract

This paper refers to the worldwide lack of inclusion of immigrant children in schools, and the detrimental effect of this on citizenship development. Few schools provide opportunities for social and linguistic participation between migrant children who are New Language Learners and their mainstream peers. This paper focuses on three dyads of school students (aged 12 and 14) who interact in an dual language program. We show how immigrant children who are English Learners negotiate meaning with mainstream peers who are Spanish Learners. The paper shows how these linguistically, socially, and culturally different peers authentically learn language and how the experience empowers them to engage in leadership roles as language experts in an alternative dual language program.

Introduction

Citizenship conjures up a whole host of ideas including participation, the garnering of rights and special privileges, the preservation of democratic ideals and norms in modern states. Historically states have used schools as a vehicle for citizenship 'assimilation' in order to achieve national goals. Immigrants are expected to relinquish their native land, their language, and adopt the principles and ideals of the modern state (Burdette, 1942; Atzmon, 1958; Remy, Anderson & Snyder, 1966; Giroux, 1980; Balibar, 1988).

This paper refers to a phenomenon that exists not only in the United States, but globally as well - the removal of the linguistic, social and cultural capital of the immigrant as antithetical to citizenship inclusion. Schools, in the form of educational instruments of the state, have historically taken on the role as purveyor of citizenship ideals; however, they and their state sponsors have been remiss in providing for the 'additive' inclusion and participation of these potential citizens.

In light of this context, this paper examines: (1) U.S. citizenship policies with a particular focus on Mexicans who continue to be marginalised in the United States; (2) exclusionary and restrictive policies in the state of California that impact the education of immigrant children and their ability to become productive citizens; (3) an overview of second language and social language within a political context; and, (4) the findings of a case study pertaining to a microcosm of society - Mexican immigrant children who socially and linguistically interact with mainstream counterparts in an alternative dual language program.

This paper is part of *Citizenship Education in Society: Proceedings of the ninth Conference of the Children's Identity and Citizenship in Europe Thematic Network*, ed Ross A, published by CiCe (London) 2007. ISBN 978-1899764-90-7; ISSN 1470-6695

Funded with support from the European Commission SOCRATES Project of the Department of Education and Culture. This publication reflects the views of the authors only, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained in this publication.

A Brief History of U.S. Citizenship Policies

In the 1920s, the United States recognised the need to tap Mexico's labour force to fulfil the economic needs of agriculture and industry. This need for labour became especially evident during the two world wars; however, only when it suited the needs of the state. At any sign of economic downturn (e.g., the Great Depression of the 1930s), many immigrants were denied work and/or were repatriated (Melville, 1983). It did not matter that immigrants had become part of the social fabric, attended schools, said the pledge of allegiance, were denied the use of their native tongue, and lost their primary language as well as their identity while participating in 'Americanisation' campaigns that promoted the use of English, or that their children had become American citizens (Valenciana, 2006). However, it appeared that this Americanisation was temporary and insignificant as those who remained were also denied access to licenses in high status careers as early as 1933 in '...medicine, law, accounting, teaching, and kindred pursuits' (Fields, 1933, p. 213). Melville (1983) notes, that it is more about 'non-belonging than belonging':

'Thus, positive ingroup ascription becomes important for the dominant group as a means of maintaining its social integrity and advantage, while pejorative outgroup ascription by them of the disadvantaged population operates to prevent members of the disadvantaged population from passing and diluting the former's power and resources'. (p. 278).

Recent Policies in California that Affect Immigrants and their Children

While the social and civil movements of the 1960s endowed historically marginalised groups with increased social rights in terms of better working conditions, hiring practices, and primary language support for the immigrant child, recent policies at state and local levels beginning in the 1980s have placed restraints on the ways in which immigrants and their children are able to participate in society, especially in terms of language use. How can immigrant children be expected to become 'productive' citizens in modern states if they are not socially included or valued for their cultural and linguistic capital?

California is the most racially diverse state in the country, yet the state electorate ignores the social needs of immigrants and their children (Tolbert & Hero, 2001). Restrictive initiatives passed through the direct electorate have circumvented the California state legislature. By garnering enough signatures, initiatives, some of which were previously rejected as laws by legislators, could be placed on the state ballot for voter approval (Tolbert & Hero, 2001).

Proposition 63, the English-Only initiative, proclaimed English as the official language of California in 1989. This set the tone for other initiatives that would chip away at the immigrants' ability to participate in society. Other measures approved between the years of 1986 to 1998 included Proposition 187, known as the Illegal Immigrant initiative, which prevents immigrants from gaining access to social services such as medical care (Hernandez, 2004; Shields & Behrman 2004); and, Proposition 227 which mandated the 'overwhelming' use of English in classrooms resulting in limited native language instruction for English Learners (Tolbert & Hero, 2001; Crawford, 2000). While this

subgroup of English Learners would not be forsaken as districts nation-wide were held accountable for their academic growth per the nation's 2002 No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (Abedi, 2004), it did ignore the social and verbal needs of the English Learner.

Newcomer Mexicans in the United States, as is the case with other immigrants, are often isolated from mainstream peers due to linguistic barriers and their perceived social status. Schools can become a bridge to providing inclusive participation for the children of immigrants via language as well as cultural exchange within the classroom.

Despite the fact that schools can become bridges, few school programs, with the exception of dual immersion and alternative dual language programs, set the native language on equal status with the dominant language of the host state. Dual immersion programs provide immigrant children with opportunities to interact with content in two languages. The alternative dual language program is a microcosm of the dual language movement. It provides access to social language practice for both newcomers and mainstream peers.

Second Language and Social Language Research in a Political Context

A review of recent literature and current events in the United States are briefly delineated to show how changes in language theory moved away from the more behaviourist approaches of the 1950s to allow for authentic social communication and meaning making.

During the 1950s, the behaviourist methods of drill and repetition, rote memorisation of language vocabulary proved inadequate for the United States who prepared military personnel for the Cold War (Krashen, 1983). Thus, the audiolingual method, drill, and repetition were enhanced by social verbal practice that would lead to more authentic language use.

The military were not the only ones to see the benefits of authentic communication. Authentic language use in the form of dual immersion programs emerged in the United States in the 1970s after noted successes with such programs in Canada (Cummins, 2000). These dual immersion programs validated the use of the primary language as well as dominant language in content learning and provided a forum for interaction language study.

Interaction research that emerged during the 1960s and 1970s influenced the study of second language interaction research. A number of seminal studies focused on the observations of social interaction between teachers and students. These studies revealed the varied instruments that were developed to capture language student-teacher reflection via classroom observations such as Interaction Analysis (Flanders, 1970) and Foci for Observing Communication Used in Settings (FOCUS) (Bellack, 1966). These studies set the tone for the study of bilingual student discourse and interaction.

Long, McLean, Adams and Castaños (1976) focused on the interaction of Mexican university students who were taking English as Second Language courses. By placing

students in a small group environment where they could practice English, they found that students engaged in a greater quantity of language production in small groups than in teacher-centred classrooms. This type of research was significant in capturing the identification and quantification of social language functions and pedagogical moves. However, this study did not capture the social interaction of children who utilise language in a bilingual and bicultural environment. Ventriglia (1982) researched conversations between children whose first language was Spanish. She, like Long et al., identified language functions that help bilingual students make meaning (e.g., code-switching, bridging, checking for understanding); but, more importantly, she delineated how the linguistic aspect of language is intended for communication: ‘...the social dimension concerns itself with bicultural status and the ease with which they adapt to various social roles’ (Ventriglia, 1982, p. 105). Her findings also showed how role-play could be advantageous in staging ‘social scenarios’ in which students learn to take on expert roles that may become part of their social scripts.

While these studies are integral to understanding how language is learned in authentic bilingual contexts, a study conducted by Thomas and Collier (2002) is remarkable in that it provides longitudinal data about the effectiveness of dual immersion and other bilingual programs. This study reveals how English Learners who participated in these programs from four to seven years outperformed their counterpart mainstream schools based on evidence from standardised tests of 210,054 students from five urban and rural school districts over a four-year period.

Although the data is important, what might be more important are the reasons why these language learners outperformed their counterparts in mainstream schools. In this case, it appears that student success may be due to at least three factors: (1) the first language serves to enhance the acquisition of the second language, (2) primary and secondary languages maintain equal status in dual immersion programs and/or the primary language is validated in other bilingual formats, and (3) students are able to remain in the bilingual environment from at least four and up to seven years.

These studies are relevant and provide a backdrop for second language research as well as insight about the importance of dual language learning and bilingualism; however, the research is still dearth with regard to how language and social interaction may play a bigger role in determining the inclusion and status of immigrants who are potential citizens in our society.

Case Study of a Microcosm of Society: An Alternative Dual Language Program

The following case study imparts additional data that reveals how dual language learning and social interaction encourages social inclusion via mutual understanding, confidence, pride, empowerment, and belonging. The research questions posed are: ‘How do adolescent English Learners and Spanish Learners negotiate meaning in an alternative dual language environment?’ ‘How do they perceive themselves during their social and linguistic interaction?’

The study took place in a rural Northern California middle school with 837 students from predominantly White (70%) and Latino (21%) backgrounds. Six students, ages 12

to 14, volunteered to participate in the alternative dual language program. This study explored how linguistically different peers - Spanish Learners (SL), who are native speakers of English and English Learners (EL), who are native speakers of Spanish negotiate meaning in an alternative dual language environment, and perceive their interaction and themselves during this social and linguistic exchange.

Spanish Learners participated in a mainstream Spanish class for six months before participating in the program. English Learner participants had lived in the United States for a year and one-half, with the exception of Leticia who had arrived just six months prior to the start of the program. The participants formed three dyads and are denoted by their pseudonyms: (1) Leticia (EL)-Sam (SL), (2) Maru (EL)-Sylvia, and (3) Teresa (EL)-Helen (SL).

The English Learners and Spanish Learners met every Wednesday for two months engaging in a 30 minute Spanish session and then a 30 minute English session. An additional 30 minutes of time was dedicated to set-up, cleanup and journal reflection. Triangulated data retrieved from journal entries, transcriptions from taped language interactions, interviews, and field notes revealed how the language learners passed through various language stages as they assumed the roles of language teacher and learner, and how their perceptions about one another and their role within the social context of the program began to change.

During the first stage of Language Apprehension, language learners question their confidence, language teaching as well as their own ability to converse or interact in the second language. Helen's words also mirror her lack of confidence: '...I don't think my Spanish is good. A few times we would just sit there and wait for the other person to talk. I can't imagine what 30 minutes will be like when I was at a loss for words in just 15.' Helen's language partner, Teresa expressed similar concerns: 'My experience was, in the beginning, I felt ashamed but afterwards it went away little by little.'

By the second stage of Language Initiation, participants began to problem-solve, initiate language strategies (e.g., language games, quizzes), increase their confidence, perceive some language acquisition, and engaged minimally in conversations. Sylvia notes, 'We first played hangman...Teresa gave the spelling test. We played that whoever got 30 points first wins.' By playing games, students were able to avoid the anxiety of not being able to converse. However, as the playing continued, students relaxed, and conversations emerged.

By the third stage of the program, Language Acquisition, these peers continued to play games but they also begin to engage in lengthy, sometimes humorous, conversations longer than ten exchanges that evinced their language development. Why did this happen? 'We are more comfortable talking to each other,' writes Sam. And, although in the first two stages Sam initiated conversations, Leticia did so in the third stage with great aplomb. 'I could speak but it was very difficult at the beginning but the good thing was that he [Sam] understood me.'

In addition, lengthy conversations that supported language acquisition, humour and 'having fun' became a common denominator for all participants, especially making fun and playing with words. 'They said I eat too much, even though I'm skinny. So, I said

Teresa ate too much. Then Teresa said I was as skinny as the handle of a broomstick,' writes Sam.

This social bicultural world gave them a sense of confidence in their language teaching, learning, and language development. 'It helped me a lot to see that we would support one another. Just like they wanted to learn Spanish like we wanted to learn English, they were very patient with us as we were with them,' comments Teresa. Sam sums up their experiences:

'Confidence just to speak in Spanish and words - I mean, not as much like a test, but gradually, small words like 'mercado'...I'm learning it's more speaking than words, you know because you are not forced to know it...Like the first day it was kind of like we looked at the paper [language guide], and now we're kind of friends, and we're not afraid to try'.

Conclusion

Schools are microcosms that reflect society in terms of social status and inclusion. If schools are vehicles for citizenship, then school systems need to find ways to include and prepare immigrant children to become a part of society. The only way to help these students become included is to set up programs or courses that promote interaction, value the native language, knowledge, and cultural background of the immigrant. While the immigrant children in the alternative dual language program were not explicitly told that their cultural and linguistic capital had value, they were aware that teaching their language to mainstream students was a valuable part of the program and that without their expertise the program would not exist. The outcomes of the program were also immeasurable on a social affective level.

Sam was not the only participant who commented that they had become friends by the end of the program. Spanish Learners also commented on how they came to understand the difficulties in learning a second language even if only for 30 minutes a day during a Spanish session. On a linguistic level, these students taught language by utilising strategies such as games, quizzes, and drawings to help scaffold language learning. And, after their anxiety was lowered and they became accustomed to one another and their roles in the language program, they began to culturally share language and create new words, sentences, phrases, and eventually sentences that were longer than ten exchanges. They found a sense of belonging in the bicultural social world they created.

Once schools validate the language and culture of the immigrant child as additive versus deficient, once they provide opportunities for immigrant children to participate within the microcosm of society with equal status, then schools will have begun to fulfil their roles as purveyors of citizenship.

References

- Abedi, J. (2004) The No Child Left Behind Act and English Language Learners: Assessment and accountability issues. *Educational Researcher*. 33, 1, pp 4-14
- Atzmon, E. (1958) The educational programs for immigrants in the United States. *History of Education Journal*. 3, 9, 75-80
- Balibar, E. (1988) Propositions on citizenship. *Ethics*, 98, 4, pp 723-730
- Bellack, A.A., Kliebard, H.M., Hyman, R.T., & Smith Jr., F.L. (1966) *The language of the classroom*. New York: Teachers College.
- Burdette, F.I. (1942) Education for citizenship. *The Public Opinion Quarterly*. 6, 2, pp 269-279
- Crawford, J. (2000) Language politics in the United States: The paradox of bilingual education. In C. Ovando & P. McClaren (eds) *The politics of multiculturalism and bilingual education: Students and teachers caught in the crossfire*. Boston: McGraw-Hill
- Cummins, J. (2000) *Language, power, and pedagogy: Bilingual children in the crossfire*. Tonawanda, NY: Multilingual Matters
- Fields, H. (1933) Where shall the alien work? *Social Forces*. 12, 2, pp 213-221
- Flanders, N.A. (1970) *Analysing teaching behaviour*. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley
- Giroux, H.A. (1980) Critical theory and rationality in citizenship education. *Curriculum Inquiry*. 10, 4, pp 329-366
- Hernandez, D.J. (2004) Demographic change and the life circumstances of immigrant families. *The Future of Children*. 14, 2, pp 16-47
- Krashen, S. (1983). The din in the head, input, and the Language Acquisition Device. *Foreign Language Annals*. 16, 41-44
- Long, M.H., Adams, L., McLean, M., & Castaños, F. (1976). Doing things with words—verbal interaction in lockstep and small group classroom situations. In J. Fanselow and R. Crymes (eds), *On TESOL '76*. Washington, D.C.: TESOL
- Melville, M.B. (1983) Ethnicity: An analysis of its dynamism and variability focusing on the Mexican/Anglo/Mexican American Interface. *American Ethnologist*. 10, 2, pp 272-289
- Remy, R.C., Anderson, L.F., & Snyder, L.F. (1966) Citizenship education in elementary schools, *Theory into Practice*. 15, 1, pp 31-36
- Shields, M.K., & Behrman, R.E. (2004). Children of immigrant families: Analysis and recommendataions. *The Future of Children*, 14, 1, pp. 5-29.

- Thomas, W.P., & Collier, V.P. (2002) A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement. *Eric Digest*, ED475 048 FL 027 622 Washington: Office of Educational Research and Improvement, 337
- Tolbert, C.J., & Hero, R.E. (2001) Dealing with diversity: Racial/ethnic context and social policy change. *Political Research Quarterly*. 54, 3, pp 571-604
- Valenciana, C. (2006). Unconstitutional deportation of Mexican Americans during the 1930's: A family history and oral history. *Multicultural Education*, 13(3), 4-11.
- Ventriglia, L. (1982) *Conversations of Miguel and Maria: How children learn English as a Second Language*. Menlo Park, CA: Addison-Wesley