

# Concepts and approaches to bilingual education



Today, English is used widely. It has become the most popular language of communication between countries and in many fields, so it is important that non-native speakers learn to use English otherwise, they will be at a disadvantage. Coming into America only knowing your native language and trying to learn English in an all-English classroom will be hard to withstand. The amount of non-English-speaking minorities in the United States is continuously increasing. Classrooms need to have a bilingual education so non-native speakers can learn to speak English and have a more effective education. This is why there are many arguments for schools being bilingual and whether, English should be the official language of the United States.

Bilingual education is a system aimed to reach the goal of helping non-native speakers learn English. It explains academic content in two languages, in a native and secondary language with varying amount of each language (Bilingual Education). Bilingual education consists of students who are all English language learners and native English speakers learning other languages. Bilingual education gives ELL students the opportunity to learn grade-level academic skills in their native language until they have acquired enough language to achieve academically in English, too (Bilingual Education). The purpose is to enable students to become competent in literacy and academic skills in English through their native language.

There are five main approaches to bilingual education. The other approaches are submersion, two-way bilingual education, English as a second language, immersion, and three language systems. Submersion is when non-native speakers are given instruction completely in English, regardless of how long the student has been learning English (Manno, 2013). Two- way bilingual

education is when native and non-native English speakers are placed in the same classes. Instructions are given in English as well as the other native language, with the goal of all students becoming proficient in both (Manno, 2013). English as a second language, students spend part of the day in regular classes and part in ESL classes. In the ELS classes, they receive focused instruction in mastering English (Manno, 2013). Immersion is often aimed towards native English speakers who want to conquer a foreign language (Manno, 2013). Teachers present instructions in a foreign language for the entire day. Three language systems, students are first taught in one language and a combination of a second early on. Once, students begin to grasp the first two languages, a third is presented with the expectation of students becoming fluent in all three by the time for graduation (Manno, 2013).

These bilingual programs are essential to the academic success of non-native English speakers. These programs allow English Language Learners to stay on the same academic level as their peers (Manno, 2013). These programs also promote diversity and include the members of non-native English speakers' families and parents who may have limited English proficiency. A new language is difficult; approaching bilingual students with methods such as these could improve their understanding.

Bilingual students encounter a few disadvantages when they are learning English as a foreign language. One major disadvantage for those not in favor of bilingual education is that bilingual education can contribute to the loss of heritage (Krashen). Regardless of the argument of bilingual education programs in the United States, immigrant children in American school

systems should be able to maintain their own culture and native language in addition to becoming fully proficient and literate in the English language.

There is a great number of students who speak a language other than English and with a growing population, schools across America should consider which programs are the best models for educating immigrant children, since the demographics vary across the country (Alanis, 2008). Statistics show that only 13 percent of English language learners who received English acquisition beginning in Kindergarten were reclassified as fluent English proficient by third grade (Mora, 2009). In order to be fluent, a child generally needs five to seven years in a second language. Some children learn quicker than others but it is best to start at a young age where children will benefit more.

Another disadvantage are problems tied to identity and culture. Children growing up with two languages are also faced by two cultures. Therefore, they often struggle when trying to find their own identity. This may cause a person to be criticized because they have a different accent and pronunciation of words. Language can also play a small role in how people's identities are developed. When someone changes their way of speaking because they feel they are being looked upon by others, it means that they are changing their identity (Cordova et al).

Bilingual education also has many advantages. One advantage is students who are bilingual tend to have higher academic achievement. If students are offered a stable education in their native language, they will be able to gain higher academic achievement in a second language (Pros and Cons of Bilingual Education). Therefore, if students' native language helps in their

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academics, this will help advance them in gaining higher English proficiency. Since, they are able to understand what they are learning in English, this will prompt them to study further, resulting in higher academic achievement (Pros and Cons of Bilingual Education).

Bilingual education gives students further options for education. Knowing more than one language is a great quality to have and will benefit the student when comes time for applying to schools. Also, being bilingual will help when trying to get a job later on. When it comes down to two people if one is bilingual they will be more likely to receive the job. Those who are bilingual stand out and are at an advantage to other potential employees. Being bilingual will greatly help with success and open many doors for extra opportunities.

In order for students to prosper from bilingual education more things must be done to enhance the schooling of non-native speaking students. Things such as targeting educators will greatly help. Bilingual education requires teachers that must have the necessary professional skills to be proficient in both their native language and English. Teachers also must know how to use the Limited English Proficiency curriculum to educate students in English (Parmon, 2010). The demand for teachers with these abilities and are confident managing a class are difficult to find and another disadvantage.

The limited budgets most places have makes it almost impossible to fund the schooling and cause for lack of classrooms (Cordova et al). The lack of classrooms causes for great problem in both public and private schools. The schools have students from all different levels of English and it is hard to

divide them into separate levels because there are not enough classrooms. This causes students to learn topics not to their needs and to be put with students of all ages making it nearly impossible to have students at the same learning level. The last disadvantage is bilingual students will have double the academic load (Cordova et al). They have to read and write in another language on top of the first, causing great stress.

There are many ways to help these students succeed. One benefit for these students would be to have more books in English accessible to them. This way they can practice English at home on their own time, at their own comfort level, and benefit greatly. Many immigrants do not have access to books or other educational materials because of their financial situations, and it would benefit Limited English Proficiency students to further their practice of the English language as bilingual education is an advantage to native English speaking students as well (Parmon, 2010).

Teachers can also aid these students in the classroom by making points and ideas easier and more clear to understand. Teachers can do this by making things visual, English language learners have a harder time processing spoken language (Gonzales, 2011). Basic instructions for classroom procedures should be written on the board whenever possible. Pictures should be used to help with difficult ideas and when modeling steps. Showing students what to do is sometimes all they need in order to understand and grasp a better concept.

Another way to help students is by having them do more group work. Having kids engaged is a great way for them to practice language with their peers in

a more personal, lower-risk setting (Gonzales, 2011). Also, allow some scaffolding with the native language, letting students use some of their first language in second language classrooms is gaining acceptance (Gonzales, 2011). Having students new to the language it is good to pair them with a student who speaks the same language. Students tend to be afraid to talk out loud because they do not know how to pronounce these new words. Use sentence frames to give students practice with academic language, all students need practice with academic conversations (Gonzales, 2011). Teachers can do this by showing students how to structure language in a formal way and make it visible to the students in the classroom, so they can refer back to it whenever unsure.

Some more ways are to pre-teach whenever possible to give these students the chance to preview material (Gonzales, 2011). This way it will increase the odds that they will understand the material better when presented to them and feel more confident. Lastly, get to know the students and learn about their cultural background. Take the time to learn where a child comes from and religious and cultural practices. This helps a student feel more comfortable in the classroom.

Bilingual education provides various effective approaches to educating the growing number of native English speaking students. It promotes English and native language development and academic progress. The primary goal of bilingual education in the United States is to teach English to students who don't speak English or have limited English proficiency. Both English and non-native speakers will benefit and learn material through dual language. Non-native speakers will learn essential life skills that will benefit them for <https://assignbuster.com/concepts-and-approaches-to-bilingual-education/>

the rest of their life. English is very important, it is a global language; English is a magical key to helping people access their knowledge (“ Non-Native Speakers Learn English,” 2015). Knowing English as a second language will be beneficial for anyone living in America. It is one of the most popular languages of communication in fields and everyday life.

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