

MULTILINGUAL SM IN SCHOOLS

Elisabeth Mesaric, Kaylee Welles, Marisa Casartelli

OVERVIEW

- Definition
- Advantages in education and issues of implementing
- Types of Bilingualism/Multilingualism
- European projects on multilingualism learning and teaching
- Multilingualism in Austrian schools

DEFINITION

- ▶ Multilingualism: social phenomenon governed by the needs of globalization
- ▶ Multilingual speakers acquired and maintained at least one language (L1) during childhood and can communicate in more than one language either actively or passively
- ▶ Multilingual education: Two or more languages are used as languages of instruction in subjects other than the languages themselves

ADVANTAGES OF MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION

- ▶ it promotes language equality
- ▶ cultivates and promotes student's linguistic and cultural capital (prior knowledge)
- ▶ encourages cognitive engagement and identity investment
- ▶ advocates student's creativity
- ▶ supports involvement of culturally and linguistically-diverse parents
 - increases parent-student communication and collaboration

ISSUES OF IMPLEMENTING

- requires massive and complex variety in educational provision and organization
- allocating different functions, times or spaces to each language
- separation of minority students into their own linguistically homogenous groups
- necessity of having to find bilingual or multilingual teachers
- complexity of a linguistically heterogeneous student group
- minority languages involved need to be standardized and have written literature

TYPES OF MULTI/BILINGUALISM

- ▶ 10 different types
- ▶ Strong vs. weak forms
- ▶ Strong forms: reading and writing are conducted in both/all languages, resulting in biliteracy
- ▶ Weak forms: the program contains bilingual children

Weak Forms of Bilingual Education

Type of Program	Typical Students	Languages used in the Classroom	Educational/ Societal Aim	Language Outcome
SUBMERSION	Language Minority	Majority Language	Assimilation	Monolingualism
SUBMERSION with withdrawal classes / sheltered English	Language Minority	Majority Language with pull-out L2 ** lessons [held in a different location]	Assimilation	Monolingualism
SEGREGATIONIST	Language Minority	Minority Language (forced, no choice)	Apartheid	Monolingualism
TRANSITIONAL	Language Minority	Moves from Minority to Majority Language	Assimilation	Relative Monolingualism
MAINSTREAM with Foreign Language Teaching	Language Majority	Majority Language with L2/FL ** Lessons	Limited Enrichment	Limited Bilingualism
SEPARATIST	Language Minority	Minority Language (out of choice)	Detachment / Autonomy	Limited Bilingualism

Strong Forms of Bilingual Education

Type of Program	Typical Students	Languages used in the Classroom	Educational/ Societal Aim	Language Outcome
IMMERSION	Language Majority	Bilingual with initial emphasis on L2 **	Pluralism / Enrichment	Bilingualism & Biliteracy
MAINTENANCE / HERITAGE LANGUAGE	Language Minority	Bilingual with emphasis on L1 **	Maintenance / Pluralism / Enrichment	Bilingualism & Biliteracy
TWO-WAY / DUAL LANGUAGE	Mixed Language Majority & Minority	Minority & Majority	Maintenance / Pluralism / Enrichment	Bilingualism & Biliteracy
MAINSTREAM BILINGUAL	Language Majority	Two Majority Languages	Maintenance / Pluralism / Enrichment	Bilingualism & Biliteracy

EUROPEAN PROJECTS ON MULTILINGUALISM LEARNING AND TEACHING

- ▶ Using other languages than the first language as media of instruction
- ▶ “The European Union’s aim is for citizens to be able to use their mother tongue plus two other languages”.
- ▶ European Comprehension project, European centre of Modern Languages foster multilingualism
- ▶ goal: to at least have receptive skills in other languages and be able to understand people within the same language family

MULTILINGUALISM IN AUSTRIAN SCHOOLS

- ▶ How many Austrian school children speak another mother tongue?
 - ▶ Answer: 17.7%
 - ▶ 200.000 students
 - ▶ number is rising

MULTILINGUALISM IN AUSTRIAN SCHOOLS

- ▶ More different languages are spoken in cities than in the countryside.
- ▶ Vienna: every third student speaks another mother tongue than German
- ▶ languages influence school life
- ▶ True multilingualism teaching is not often found in schools
- ▶ school types which teach two (or more) different foreign languages: HAK, HLW

MULTILINGUALISM IN AUSTRIAN SCHOOLS

HLW Rankweil

- ▶ three different foreign languages: English, French, Italian/Spanish
- ▶ marketing is taught in English and German
- ▶ multilingual seminars which offer practice in switching between languages
- ▶ voluntary subjects: additional conversation classes in any of the foreign languages

SOURCES

- ▶ Baker, C. (2006). Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism (4th ed.). Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters.
- ▶ Blackledge, A. (2009). Multilingualism. London, UK: Continuum.
- ▶ Gardner, S. (2012). Multilingualism, Discourse and Ethnography. New York: Routledge.
- ▶ García, O. (2007). Imagining Multilingual Schools. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters Ltd.
- ▶ Jessner, U. (2006). Linguistic Awareness in Multilinguals. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press