

New Pedagogies for Multilingual Education

Nuevas pedagogías para la educación multilingüe

Novas pedagogias para a educação multilingüística

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Nowadays, the teaching and learning process continues to pose new challenges embedded in the era in which we are living, where the need to use more than one language is still a priority. However, being educated in other languages, additional to L1 has historically taken place since human beings have communicated, paving way for “new linguistic world order” (Maurais, 2009). This new linguistic world order has originated because of the demographic strengths, economic prosperity, and political and cultural changes that have shaped and altered the way language patterns are perceived. Moreover, the extraordinary era that many are experiencing is an era of significant transformations that has proved that linguistic changes are not isolated but subjected to technological, demographic, social and power shifts, therefore requiring different models of education. Nevertheless, bi/multilingual education continues to spread as a result of the world spread of languages, although approaches and methodologies used to deliver/teach those languages remain archaic, thereby putting a strain on the overall teaching and learning process. Teachers and practitioners are not up to date, languages continue to progress, and learning the target language remains a challenge for many learners.

Learning in the 21st century requires competencies needed to successfully thrive in today’s complex and globalized reality, meaning that it requires a certain skill set, such as digital literacy, critical thinking, cultural competence, emotional awareness, problem-solving, and entrepreneurship (Abentao, Castillo, Atitiw, & Asuncion, 2018). This alone sets the paces for learners to collaborate on projects and perfect teamwork skills through the use of information, communication, and technologies (ICTs) as a means of learning, while developing high-order thinking skills (HOTS), which are a hot commodity since they better prepare students for the challenges of academic life and adults’ work and responsibilities (Pogrow, 2005). Nonetheless, there are still many shortcomings and challenges faced by educational systems to meet, develop, expand and improve these skills. Unfortunately, there is still a strong presence of educational structures based on the 19th century; these paradigms were essentially constructed and designed for a different set of learners and, thus, there are places where education is firmly entrenched in an obsolete model where learning is not constructed but transmitted (Penprase, 2018). As a result, stakeholders, re-

searchers, and teachers are embracing an approach to education that integrates content and language, promotes higher-order thinking skills, collaboration, while incorporating real-world problems for real-world answers, namely content and language integrated learning (CLIL).

The persistence of this approach to teaching is perhaps at least partially a consequence of Latin American teachers (in-service and pre-service) who often lack the skills necessary to successfully implement bilingual curricula. Such teachers would surely benefit from the kind of continuous professional development that not only exposes them to more recent teaching methodologies but helps them develop the abilities needed to self-evaluate (Banegas, 2012; Kashiwagi & Tomecsek, 2015). All in all, the traditional, teacher-centered methodology is a poor fit for the needs of contemporary bilingual education, which calls for more practical approaches to managing multiple languages, cultures, content, and critical thinking development. Although an increasing number of Latin American educational institutions are implementing bi/multilingual approaches—be these internationally or nationally based, or through intensive English-language programs—many seem to retain the same outdated, traditional, monolingual pedagogy. This editorial highlights and provides five different scenarios on how teachers could benefit from a pedagogy that genuinely caters to 21st-century demands, where students' real needs are met, content and language objectives are balanced, and effective ICT practices are included, all the while promoting multilingualism.

Innovations in the Language Classroom

Even though teachers in bi/multilingual environments are tasked with teaching classes in English, they frequently use methods that cater only to one language, thereby restricting the opportunities for other rich and dynamic approaches to be embraced within the learning environment, which in turn does not favor the overall language learning process. Learners are often prohibited recourse to their mother tongue, which is a valuable resource that students know very well but that unfortunately has been undervalued in L2 pedagogy (McDougald, 2018).

There is, moreover, still a considerable amount of ignorance about what bilingualism really is and how it works, with a resultant de-emphasis of key strategies that favor translanguaging, or targeted code-switching, between the L1 and L2 within the classroom (García & Wei, 2014; Jaramillo, Opina, & Reinoso, 2016; Lasagabaster & García, 2014). This leads to questions about the validity of the “bilingual” aspects of teaching that are supposed to be included in the teaching and learning process. It is difficult to credit education as truly bilingual if the focus is really only on one language. One response to such challenges could be through adopting a CLIL approach, which “refers to situations where subjects, or parts of subjects, are taught through a foreign language with dual-focused aims, namely the learning of content, and the simultaneous learning of a foreign language” (Marsh, 2002, p. 2). As a profoundly context-dependent approach to education, CLIL has been used successfully to combine content and language learning through an array of different educational models and levels.

Some might question whether English should be used to deliver curriculum content at all. The answer is simple, however: We live in a world where English has effectively become a lingua franca in many fields of activity. Although there are perhaps some 350-400 million L1 speakers of English (Crystal, 2003, p. 67), beyond this, David Crystal (2003) estimates that “approximately one in four of the world’s population are now capable of communicating to a useful level in English” (p. 69). Many countries are actively promoting the learning of English through their national educational system, throughout the Latin American region, with its national bilingual programs (de Mejía, 2011; Fandiño-Parra, Bermúdez-Jiménez, & Lugo-Vásquez, 2012). The objectives are straightforward: to enhance communication at the global level, helping learners take a greater part in international business, trade, education, and tourism. These are just a few of the considerable potential benefits of successfully including the learning of English within educational systems. However, it is also clear that simply deciding to include English within the national curriculum and state exams is not enough. Latin American teachers still need to be able to innovate and move away from traditional teaching methods if their learners are to truly be able to communicate more effectively in international settings and contexts—which is a conscious objective for CLIL approaches

(Garton, Copland, & Burns, 2013; Granados, 2018; Humphries & Burns, 2015; Parab, 2015; Scott, 2015).

In This Issue

The articles in this issue of the *Latin American Journal of Content and Language Integrated Learning* (LACLIL, Vol. 11, No. 1, 2019) focus on the role of language, the importance of writing strategies, academic language, international standardized testing, teacher reflection and development as well as key strategies for managing language in non-language subjects. As these are all diverse students from all levels of education as well as courses, CLIL provides key elements to successfully combine content, language, increase higher-order thinking skills (HOTs) and better learners for real-world scenarios. This also reminds practitioners of the need to stay up to date with new, innovative teaching practices that cater to the quality of education in the 21st century. The issue starts off with strategies on how to deal with word problems in a math class in secondary in Spain. As math is a language in itself, it is oftentimes overlooked in bi/multilingual environments, learners more often than desired do not achieve the desired or expected results on standardized exams. Nevertheless, Pavón-Vázquez and Cabezuelo's (2019) findings claim that the complexity surrounding mathematical word problems related to the interaction between linguistic difficulty and mathematical complexity is at the forefront of the issues surrounding solving word problems. However, along the same lines in terms of linguistic complexity in English, Pat-López and Sánchez-Escobedo (2019) in Mexico also report on the importance of developing academic English. Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) plays an important role in learners being able to successfully "survive" in content classes, providing them with an array of benefits for their academic performance. Therefore, the need for school curriculums to incorporate both language and content objectives, where CALP is considered and taken more seriously, is a priority. Nevertheless, the study carried out by Vega and Moscoso (2019) in higher education in Ecuador found that there was no significant change in learner's language per-

formance when switching from an English for Specific Purposes (ESP) approach to a CLIL-based approach. Researchers were able to closely observe that both ESP, which is closely related to CLIL, did not produce serious differences in language or achievement.

Furthermore, a Process-Based Approach (PBA) is another opportunity to explore in the teaching and learning process towards that new improved pedagogy for the bi/multilingual classroom. In Colombia, Sánchez and López-Pinzón (2019) discuss how PBA proved to be a viable solution to improve young learners' (YLS) writing performance in areas such as content, organization, conventions, vocabulary, and fluency. The stages in this approach generated innovative strategies for YLS that aided in boosting their confidence towards writing while contributing to their self-efficacy when performing writing tasks.

Once again, changes to the traditional model of teaching surfaces in Ecuador, where Edwards, Holguín-Barrera, Ortiz, and Pérez (2019) examined the efficacy of a specially-designed approach, platform-based collaborative learning strategy, aimed at encouraging a change in student behavior from teacher dependence to learner independence. The preliminary results revealed that additional modifications to the strategy were needed along with experimenting with other LMS or digital platforms, as well as the design of additional tools and interaction patterns that would further foster autonomy amongst learners at university language centers. On another note, Moayeri and Rahimi (2019) provide a systematic literature review on teacher reflection, in which key insights as to the development of evolution of teacher reflection. The review confirms that reflecting on teaching practices can be beneficial to the teaching and learning process.

Overall, the articles in this issue are reminders of thinking outside of the box, coming up with innovative ways of educating and moving forward. Nevertheless, it is important that practitioners continue to be open to new ideas, to be motivated towards making changes, and knowledge to embrace those changes in today's education. This shift in attitude would certainly help get teachers out of their comfort zone and into wider fields of study, specifically when exploring options such as teaching through CLIL. In short, pedagogy in this century has to encourage all those involved, teachers, stakeholders, and educational pioneers and experts to synergize and increase collaborating

in hopes of sharing effective teaching strategies and techniques. This type of collective collaboration amongst stakeholders will allow such inertia to stay afloat in the contemporary world to ensure that upskilling is at the forefront in order to meet the learners' real needs while integrating a CLIL approach towards the construction of knowledge, which transcends the traditional approaches to both subject and language teaching.

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