13th Annual Academic Success Institute
Strategic Use of Language Transfer
March 14, 2015

Presented by
Dr. Gracie Guerrero
Often, Sometimes, Never

- Face challenges when teaching concepts in both English and Spanish
- Have to translate for students to understand content
- Focus on development of literacy in only one language
- Find it difficult to teach students to read in their second language
Bilingual/ESL Teachers

- Teachers in bilingual/ESL programs:
  - are not simply second-language teachers, nor exclusively literacy teachers
  - are required to develop language skills plus reading, writing and content-area knowledge with language-minority students
  - must apply psycholinguistics theories and principles related to second-language acquisition, along with effective literacy practices.
ELA/ELD Framework

Strategic Use of Language Transfer
Framework Key Themes

• Meaning Making-Interacting with text
• Language Development-Learning how English works and using foundational skills
• Effective Expression-Reciprocal nature of reading, writing, speaking, and listening
• Content Knowledge-Learning that texts are structured differently
• Foundational Skills-print concepts, phonological awareness, phonics and word recognition, and fluency
Group Discussion

• I find it challenging to teach concepts in both English and Spanish because ______.
• Translating for students is _______ because ________.
• Development of literacy in the native language __________.
• Students have difficulty learning to read in their second language when ________.
Language Transfer

• What do I know?
• What do I want to know?
Common Definitions

- Applying knowledge from one language to another language
- The transfer of linguistic features between languages
- The transfer of rules and elements from previously learned languages when acquiring a new language
Transfer of Learning

• The application of skills, knowledge, and/or processes learned in one context to another learning situation
• The influence of prior learning on performance in a new situation—we don’t start from scratch in every new situation learning situation
  – Language transfer is a type of transfer of learning in a bilingual/biliterate setting
Transfer of Learning

• There is a high level of transfer of skills and strategies from the first (L1) to the second (L2) language in reading.

• The greater the similarity in the writing systems of the two languages, the greater the degree of transfer:
  – The time and difficulties involved in learning to read the second language are reduced.
What Transfers?

• Automatic skills and processes
• Rules, principles, patterns, and categories
• Problem-solving, abstract thinking, and critical thinking skills
Metalinguistic Awareness

- Build on students’ established & developing L1 to teach L2
- Teach how language works to convey meaning
- Analysis of concepts and principles, not just phonics or grammar rules
- Facilitate transfer through direct instruction, integrated teaching, and “teachable moments”
The Alphabetic Principle

- Spanish Orthography
- English Orthography
Biliteracy in the Classroom

- Spanish Phonics
- English Phonics
Concepts of Print

• Concept of a word
  – Written words are separated from each other by blank spaces

• Concept of a sentence
  – Sentences have signals that set them apart when written (capital letters, period, question mark, etc.)
Concepts of Print

- Morphology
- Syntax
Metalinguistic Aspects

- Cognates
- Morphological Patterns
- Use of Punctuation Conventions
- Capitalization Rules
- Structural Differences
- Articles and Gender
- Use of Accents
Metalinguistic Aspects

- Cultural Differences
- Prefixes and Suffixes
- Verb Conjugations
- Syntax and Grammar
- Noun-Adjective Order/Agreement
- Word Families and Parts of Speech
Classroom Practices

- Based in student needs
- Part of the daily instructional time
- Remain in the language of instruction
- Discuss the linguistic features
- Bring the two languages together for instructional purposes
- Use language and talk about language
Language Transfer: What Does it Look Like?
References


