

Developing Critical Consciousness: Five Things We Can Do

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First ... I want to thank ILC and my collaborators!

Cervantes-Soon, C., Dorner, L., Palmer, D., Heiman, D., Schwerdtfeger, R., & Choi, J. (2017). Combating inequalities in two-way language immersion programs: Toward critical consciousness in bilingual education spaces. *Review of Research in Education*, 41(1), 403-427.

Palmer, D., Cervantes-Soon, C., Dorner, L. & Heiman, D. (forthcoming, 2018). Bilingualism, biliteracy, biculturalism and critical consciousness for all: Proposing a fourth fundamental principle for two-way dual language education. *Theory into Practice*.



Today's Agenda

1. The foundations of this talk
(Dual Language Education)
2. The foundations of critical consciousness
3. What we can do

Dual Language Education

Language Education: Zoom Poll

In what kind of language education program do you work?

- English as a Second Language
 - K-12
 - Adult (post-secondary or community-based)
- Dual Language Education
 - One-way Immersion (*mainly for English speakers to learn another language*)
 - Two-way Immersion (*mixes English speakers with other language speakers*)
 - Heritage Language Immersion or Developmental Bilingual (*for speakers of other languages to develop academic capacity in their home language*)
- Other
- None

Dual Language Education: Goals

1. Bilingualism/biliteracy
2. Grade-level academic achievement
3. Cross-cultural competency

Zoom Poll -- Do you agree (Yes/No)?

These should be the goals of any language education program, no matter the age level.

Challenges with Two-Way Immersion Education

1. Student Access
 - a. It is easier for US-born English speakers to enroll, in comparison to others.
 - b. Of the English speakers that do enroll, most of them are White.
2. Focus on English, Marginalizing Other Languages
 - a. Even though ~half of families speak other languages, meetings happen in English.
 - b. English is privileged, spoken first, and translated, rather than the reverse.
3. Classroom Curriculum, Pedagogy, and Interactions
 - a. It is challenging to find authentic resources in the non-English language.
 - b. Materials often depict stereotypical images of cultures not related to students'.
 - c. The manner of teaching may favor middle-class, White US norms.
 - d. Due to different discourse patterns and other socio-political realities, English-dominant children tend to take over conversations.

Because these challenges exist broadly, we recommend a 4th goal for language education.

Developing Critical Consciousness

Critical Consciousness: Foundations

1. We live in an unequal world where oppression exists.
2. We are the ones who must liberate and transform our world.
3. To do this we must:
 - a. Recognize our part in the world and the oppression
 - b. Engage in ongoing dialogues
 - c. Break down the power structures and myths that frame our lives
 - d. Re-humanize our relationships with others

Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity, or it becomes the practice of freedom, the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world (Paolo Freire, 1970)

Components of Critical Consciousness

5 Things You Can Do

- 1. Interrogate power**
2. Historicize school & policy contexts
3. Listen critically
4. Engage with discomfort
5. Take action

Interrogating Power - Definition

To question and analyze existing power structures

To develop more democratic structures

- Which languages exist in our schools (or other places of work)? When are those languages used by which individuals? Who can enroll in this program?
- What resources are used here, depicting whose view of the world?
- Who has the opportunity to run or design this school/program? Is there a manner in which immigrants have a voice in leading the program (e.g., in a school, who joins the PTA or locally-elected school board)?
- What kinds of state tests exist? How do they enforce a particular view of language?

Interrogating Power - How to?

1. First, we must question and consider power from our perspectives.
2. Then, we must speak with others and interrogate power from their perspectives.

PADLET Project: Write up a question you can pose to interrogate power in your context!

1. Interrogate power
- 2. Historicize school & policy contexts**
3. Listen critically
4. Engage with discomfort
5. Take action

Historicizing School and Policy Contexts - Definition

To deconstruct mainstream explanations of the past

To foreground individuals' own histories

- What led to the particular language education that exists in your context?
- Who helped develop your particular school or program? With what goals in mind? For which children/students?
- Which different kinds of linguistic communities have lived in this area? How have these groups used languages?

Historicizing School and Policy Contexts - How to?

1. We must learn more about the history of our local area, program, and related policies.
2. We must also dive into the particular histories and migrations of those who take part in our programs.

PADLET Project: Write up a question you can pose to historicize your context!

1. Interrogate power
2. Historicize school & policy contexts
- 3. Listen critically**
4. Engage with discomfort
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Listening Critically - Definition

To develop understanding of others' lives and experiences

To empathize with others, sharing and caring about their experiences

To embody curiosity and attention, reciprocity, and responsiveness

- What are the unspoken (or spoken) assumptions about people of certain racial, linguistic, gender, or immigrant backgrounds in your contexts?
- Do students, teachers, or parents of certain backgrounds seem to stay silent -- or get silenced ("drowned out" by others) -- in your classroom or program? Who usually talks the most or loudest? Who doesn't?

Listening Critically - How to?

1. First, we must think about what practices we might need to adapt, in order to listen more closely.
2. Second, we must *practice* listening critically with others.

PADLET Project: Write up one thing you want to do, to listen more critically in your context.

1. Interrogate power
2. Historicize school & policy contexts
3. Listen critically
4. **Engage with discomfort**
5. Take action

Engaging with Discomfort - Definition

In doing any of this work, we are:

- recognizing the histories of oppressed peoples
- acknowledging unequal histories
- trying out new ideas in our classrooms
- going against the norm (what our school leaders/policymakers may expect)
- speaking languages in which we're not proficient and may feel judged

This entails engaging with discomfort.

This is part of the risk-taking that has to happen for us to grow.

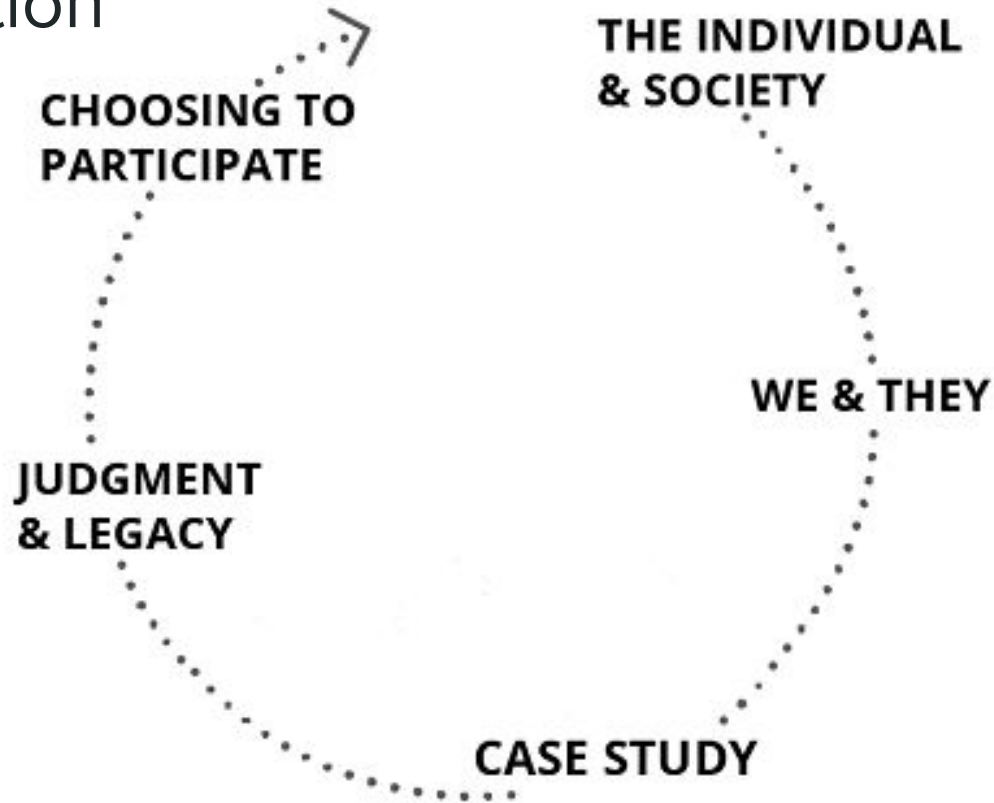
Engaging with Discomfort - How to?

1. First, please consider: What do you think might make you or your students uncomfortable?
2. Then, make a plan: How will you handle such discomfort?

PADLET Project: What makes you most nervous about the strategies discussed so far? Where will you or your students experience discomfort?

1. Interrogate power
2. Historicize school & policy contexts
3. Listen critically
4. Engage with discomfort
- 5. Take action**

Taking Action



Muchas gracias . . .

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Missouri Dual Language Network

www.modlan.org

Resources for Critical Consciousness

Teaching and Learning Resources

British Council - English lessons that integrate the 17 UN Goals for Sustainability: www.teachingenglish.org.uk/article/integrating-global-issues-creative-english-language-classroom

Association for Citizenship Teaching - <https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/>

Teaching Tolerance - Lessons toward an inclusive, diverse democracy: www.tolerance.org

Human Library - a place to “check out” people, to build a positive framework for challenging stereotypes and prejudices through dialogue: <http://humanlibrary.org/>

Parable of the Paragons - a “playable post” on how bias happens: <http://ncase.me/polygons/>

Ted Talks App for Language Learning - <http://ngl.cengage.com/learnenglishwithtedtalks#home>

Examples of Critical Consciousness

Interrogating Power: Example from the Community

Example of a parent from Mexico in a dual language school in Chicago

En cierto caso, no estaba muy bien lo que están haciendo, porque mi manera de pensar es que: el niño que aprendió inglés, ¿su castigo haberlo aprendido lo van a dejar afuera del programa? ¿Entiendes? Un niño, un niño Hispano que hace el examen, y sabe mucho inglés, afuera del programa. . . ¡No tiene sentido, si lo que se trate que los niños aprendan los dos idiomas!. . . O no entendí cual es la razón del programa. . . Estoy inscribiendo la niña porque yo quiero que lleve un educación bilingüe.

Historicizing: Example from a Key Court Case

Lau versus Nichols (1974 Supreme Court Case)

This suit claimed that children of Chinese parents were not receiving a fair and equal education due to their lack of English fluency. They argued they were entitled to special help, for instance, because of the ban on educational discrimination from the *Civil Rights Act*.

The result became the basis of bilingual education: **thus in the recent US history bilingual education exists for all because of the historical fights of immigrant parents in California.**

Historicizing: Example from a Political Name Change

Within the US Department of Education,

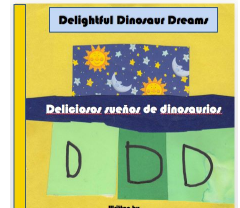
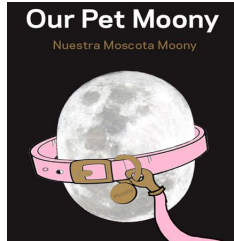
The Office of Bilingual Education and Minority Language Affairs (1974)

was replaced by the

Office of English Language Acquisition (in 2001)

Critical Listening: Examples from a Spanish School

- A family literacy, storytelling workshop was presented first in **the school's immersion language** (Spanish) and then English (to privilege the less “dominant” language in this context).
- Children worked with their parents to learn their stories and together write a children's book. Then, they presented these books to their classmates.



writing in my languages

Eso escribo
en español
estoy textian-
do en mi
teléfono



Myo te
mensaje
mensajes
en mi teléfono
le doi mensajes
a mi papá
mamá
mis primos

Eyo escribo
en mi libro
de tags
de la
escuela



I learn
about different
things when I am
in a trip



Engaging with Discomfort: Example from a Classroom

When engaging in difficult and sometimes uncomfortable topics regarding language use or immigration, one teacher in a bilingual school in Texas offered several entry points for students.

- Some children chose to speak out loud in small groups.
- Others spoke up during whole-class discussions.
- Others engaged only in written, online responses.
- Meanwhile, others only talked to the teacher in side conversations.