Fostering Cross-Linguistic Connections for Bilingual Learners

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Lost in Translation:
Myths and Progress in Bilingual Education

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Key Topics

- Theoretical underpinnings
- Fostering cross-linguistic connections at the **letter-sound** level
- Fostering cross-linguistic connections at the **word** level
- Fostering cross-linguistic connections at the **syntactic** level
- Promoting **home-school collaboration** to foster cross-linguistic connections
Theoretical Underpinnings

- Shifting from a monolingual perspective to a bilingual/multilingual perspective (Escamilla, 2006; García, 2009; Grosjean, 1989)
  - “The bilingual is not two monolinguals in one person.” (Grosjean, 1989).
  - “Bilingual means two.” (Escamilla, 2006)
  - Monoglossic vs. heteroglossic language ideologies; translanguaging (García, 2006)
Letter-sound level connections: cross-linguistic spelling influences

Horses

All have Horses santaims all gev fud uen all gav tallm tu fitam. All have a Bird anda Dogs sam tayms may Dogs jump on mi. May ded dasen meyc dat mach noys uen all fid may dogs dell gamp on mi llaic tu teic cer may Dogs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English features prone to Spanish influence</th>
<th>Example words (correct spelling)</th>
<th>Examples of Spanish-influenced spelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wh-</td>
<td>when</td>
<td>g uen</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Cross-linguistic spelling errors

Horses
I
Sometimes
All have Horses santaims
I give? (them) food when I have time to feed them
all gev fud uen all gav tallm tu fitam.
I
Some-
All have a Bird anda Dogs sam
times my jump me
tayms may Dogs jomp on mi.
My dog? doesn’t make that
May ded dasen meyc dat
much noise When I feed my
mach noys. uen all fid may
they jump me.
dogs dell gamp on mi I
like to take care (of) my
laic tu teic cer may Dogs
Revised writing sample

Horses
I have Horses sometimes
I give (?) food when I have time to feed them.
I have a Bird anda Dogs sometimes my dogs jump on me.
My dog (?) doesn’t make that much noise. When I feed my dogs they jump on me I like to take care my dogs.
## Observed Cross-linguistic Spellings

(Howard, Arteagoitia, Louguitt, Malabonga, & Kenyon, 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Example</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Long e as i</td>
<td>seed as sid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long i as ai, ay, all</td>
<td>alive as alaiv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long a as ei, ey, e</td>
<td>paint as peint</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short o as a</td>
<td>drops as draps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short u (oo) as u</td>
<td>stood as stud</td>
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<tr>
<td>Short u (Λ) as a, o</td>
<td>summer as samer, somer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nasal clusters nt or nd as n</td>
<td>stand as stan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interdental diphthong th as t, f, d</td>
<td>thanked as tanked, faith as feif, weather as weder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W as gu, gü, u</td>
<td>sandwiches as sandguiches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flap as r</td>
<td>hospital as hospiral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H as j</td>
<td>hospital as jospital</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Z as s</td>
<td>zipped as sipt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sh as ch, s</td>
<td>ashamed as achamed, asamed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key findings from cross-linguistic spelling research (Howard, Green, & Arteagoitia, 2012)

- The cross-linguistic spelling errors of Spanish-English bilinguals follow predictable patterns and provide evidence that students are actively working to making connections across languages.

- Students in bilingual programs make more cross-linguistic errors than students in monolingual English programs, but by the upper elementary grades, these errors are very infrequent among students in all program types.

- Both native Spanish speakers and native English speakers in bilingual programs make cross-linguistic spelling errors.

- Cross-linguistic spelling errors disappear by the upper elementary grades (or after a few years of instruction in the US) and do not predict long-term reading difficulties.
El acoso es un problema en las escuelas de hoy. Tanto niños como niñas pueden acosar o ser acosados. Dar puñetazos, molestar, y comenzar rumores todos constituyen acoso. Aproximadamente la mitad de todos los niños dicen haber sido intimidados, o asustados, en algún momento durante su estancia en la escuela. Muchos de los niños que son acosados tienen una autoestima baja. Algunos intentan evitar la escuela.
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Key findings from vocabulary research
(Carlo, et al., 2004; Dressler, et al., 2011; Goldenberg & Coleman, 2010)

- Of the five main components of reading, ELLs struggle the most with **vocabulary** and **comprehension**.

- Explicit vocabulary instruction has been associated with improved comprehension.

- One of the instructional strategies that has been found to be especially valuable for Spanish-speaking students is to focus on **cognates** – words in English and Spanish that share a common root and therefore have similar meanings.
Why focus on cognates?
(Hiebert & Lubliner, 2008; 2011)

- Cognates are the only vocabulary items that allow students to make cross-linguistic connections – all other words must be learned separately in each language.
- Most academic vocabulary in English comes from Latin or Greek.
- Cognates comprise as much as half of the vocabulary of an educated native English speaker.
- Spanish counterparts of English academic words are often more common words that students are likely to know (e.g. culpable).
Fostering cognate awareness
(Howard & Simpson, in preparation)

The Water Cycle
Water travels in a cycle, yes it does!
Water travels in a cycle, yes it does!
It goes up as evaporation.
And forms clouds as condensation.
Then comes down as precipitation.
Yes, it does!

El ciclo del agua
El agua mueve en un ciclo, así se hace
El agua mueve en un ciclo, así se hace
Como evaporación se sube, ☀️ ☀️
Como condensación hace nubes, ☁️
Como precipitación hay lluvia ♂️♂️♂️
¡Así se hace!
The importance of word parts in vocabulary/cognate instruction

- Teaching about morphemes, or meaningful words parts (prefixes, roots, and suffixes) is central to academic vocabulary development.
  - English spelling has a morphological (word part) layer in addition to a sound-symbol layer, and this becomes increasingly important in more sophisticated words.
    - Syllabic approach: mo-ti-va-tion
    - morphological approach: mot-iv(e)-at(e)-(t)ion
  - Roots provide the core meaning of words, and are the basis for cognates (motivation/motivación).
  - Many prefixes and suffixes have Spanish equivalents as well (ive/ivo; ate/ar; tion/ción).
Getting to the root of vocabulary instruction – Dance *The Locomotion*!

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lNNW0SPkChI

Explain how -mot- means move in LOCOMOTIVE.

Explain how -mot- means move in EMOTION.
Promoting Cross-Linguistic Connections in Comprehension
(Howard & Simpson, in preparation)

Three Ways to Read A Book
Tres formas de leer un libro

We can read the pictures.
Podemos leer los dibujos.

We can read the words.
Podemos leer las palabras.

We can retell a story we already know.
Podemos recount a historia conocida.

Así se dice (Escamilla, et al., 2013)
Home-School Connections


- How can teachers and parents work together to promote cross-linguistic connections at school and at home?
The Power of Bilingualism

- Poet Francisco Alarcón
  - http://www.colorincolorado.org/videos/meet-authors/francisco-x-alarc%C3%B3n