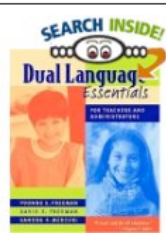


<i>Dual Language Essentials for Teachers and Administrators</i>		
Author:	Yvonne S. Freeman, David E. Freeman & Sandra P. Mercuri (2005)	
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In the last few years, there has been a steady growth in the number of dual language education programs in the United States. Undoubtedly, the success of prior dual language programs, the benefits of acquiring two or more languages, the virulent strictures and public sentiments against bilingual education (Crawford 2000; Krashen 1996; Krashen 1999; Tse 2001) have contributed significantly to this increase. Despite this upsurge, Freeman, Freeman & Mercuri realize that the essential facts about dual language programs are elusive. As a result, they believe that bilingual and second language acquisition (SLA) professionals associated with dual language programs and others who are planning to implement dual language programs will benefit from their insight on dual language education.

Accordingly, the main purpose of this book, *Dual Language Essentials for Teachers and Administrators*, is to enlighten language professionals and policy makers who are planning to implement dual language programs in their school districts. In addition, it is designed to broaden the knowledge of teacher educators, language students and everyone who is associated with dual language education programs. Based on this objective, the book commences with an overview of the common characteristics of dual language education programs. Among other factors, the authors assert that the students in dual language programs consist of native and non-native speakers of English. Most students in dual language programs in the United States are native speakers of English and Spanish. These different groups of students are "integrated during most content instruction" (p. xiv). Also, students receive instruction in two languages. As a result, students "become proficient in the two languages" of instruction (xiv). Another salient point mentioned as part of these characteristics is that students' achievement in English is "equal to or exceeds that of students learning in English only programs" (xiv).

However, despite these shared characteristics, the authors state that there is a considerable variation in the implementation of dual language programs. In most dual language programs, the languages of instruction are based on the 90/10 and the 50/50 instructional models which describe the length of time instruction is provided in two languages. For example, in the 50/50 model, educators might provide instruction in English in the morning and Spanish in the afternoon. In some dual language programs,

instructions in the two languages are divided according to subject matter.

In Chapter one, the authors reviewed some bilingual education programs in the United States, Latin America and Europe. Also, the chapter provides a brief overview of different programs for English language learners. In their discussion of the disparate programs, they used the terms "additive" and "subtractive" to describe different programs where language minority students either retain or lose their native language while learning the target language. Also, they state that the research reports which state that students in dual language programs score higher on "standardized tests in English than English language learners" in other language programs is responsible for the proliferation of dual language programs in the United States (p. 13).

In Chapter two, the authors describe some dual language programs in the United States. Through their analysis, they indicate that there are variations among dual language programs. In addition, they provide a brief description of some students and teachers in dual language programs. In Chapter 3, the authors focus on the essential characteristics of successful dual language programs. They identify schools, administrators and teachers as essential factors. They believe that for a dual language program to be successful, these essential ideas must be implemented. These "essentials" are classified as whole school essentials, administrative essentials, administrative and teacher essentials, and teacher essentials. For example, in the whole school essentials segment, they maintain that the whole school must comprehend and "support the goals and benefits of the program" (p. 63). Also, they aver that every member of the school personnel must be "flexible and open to change" (p. 63). Likewise, everyone must be "committed to academic and social equity and the promotion of equal status for both languages" (p.63). Furthermore, the book states that some school personnel can consciously or unconsciously sabotage the goal of the program if they are not open to change or willing to support the program. In a nutshell, it takes a whole school to establish and implement a successful dual language program!

In Chapter 4, the book continues the discussion of the essential characteristics of dual language programs. These factors include curriculum essentials for overall organization, curriculum essentials for lesson delivery, and curriculum essentials for assessment. In Chapter 5, the authors enumerate reading theory essentials and literacy program essentials. In their discussion of these essential factors, they cite research in the domain of SLA which states that the skills language learners acquire in their native language can transfer to the target language. Then, in Chapter 6, the authors discuss instructional planning that commences with assessment. They state that it is pertinent to take standards into consideration when planning instruction for dual language programs. This chapter also includes what the authors call overall planning essentials, long-term, and short-term planning essentials. In addition, each of the chapters in the book ends with thought-provoking learning extension exercises which challenge the reader to reflect on some of the pertinent issues associated with dual language education programs.

Finally, as an SLA professor, I have heard a lot about dual language education programs. Nonetheless, the Freeman, Freeman & Mercuri book is the most insightful book I have read on the topic of dual language education programs. The essential characteristics of dual language education programs are well presented in very lucid language. Indeed, it is an excellent resource book for anyone associated with dual language programs and for many others who might be thinking about establishing a

dual language program. Also, since bilingual and SLA students are potential instructors in most dual language programs, teacher trainers in the realm of language education should consider using this insightful book in their language programs. This will enable pre-service and in-service teachers to learn more about dual language programs. However, this book focus exclusively on English-Spanish dual language programs in the United States. As a result, some of the information presented in the book may not be relevant to alternative dual language programs in a different context. For example, an English-French dual language program in a private school in Nigeria may not share exactly the same characteristics as English-Spanish dual language program in a public school district in the United States. Based on this perception, language professionals and policy makers who are thinking about establishing an alternative dual language program in a different context may need to adapt some of the information in the book to their context.

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