



# Dual Language on Demand

Issue 8  
Spring 2011

## Dual U Summer Institute to Offer Focused Topics

By: Cheryl Urow, IRC Educational Specialist



In response to requests for advanced dual language workshops, the Illinois Resource Center will be offering *Focused Topics* in addition to *Foundations of Dual Language Education* during its annual **Dual U Summer Institute**.

The Dual U Summer Institute, or DUSI, is a five-day workshop designed for all dual language stakeholders: administrators, teachers, parents, and school board members. DUSI will take place in Santa Fe, New Mexico from June 12 through June 17, 2011. Participants can choose to attend in either the *Focused Topics* strand or the *Foundations* strand. *Foundations of Dual Language Education for Administrators and Teachers* provides a comprehensive overview of both research and best practices in dual language instruction, and is specifically focused on providing workshop participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for working successfully in a dual language program. The *Focused Topics* strand - designed to provide an in-depth look at a single topic critical to effective dual language instruction - will look at Biliteracy: Standards, Instruction and Assessment this year.

Experienced dual language specialists Karen Beeman, John Hilliard, and Cheryl Urow will provide the instruction for the institute strands. Additional special guest speakers include Dual Language Education of New Mexico (DLeNM), Dr. Susan Hopewell, and Dr. Kim Potowski.

Specialists from DLeNM will share their expertise in the area of literacy assessment in dual language programs. Their annual La Cosecha conference (<http://dlenm.org/lacosecha/>) brings in hundreds of educators from across the country interested in dual language programs.

Dr. Susan Hopewell from the University of Colorado, Boulder (see her article on *Paired Literacy* in the Spring 2010 issue of this newsletter, available at [http://www.thecenterweb.org/irc/pages/f\\_duallanguage-news.html](http://www.thecenterweb.org/irc/pages/f_duallanguage-news.html)) will share her research on strengthening biliteracy education for Spanish-English bilingual children in the U.S. Dr. Kim Potowski, Associate Professor of Hispanic Linguistics at the University of Illinois at Chicago, will speak on the current status of U.S. Spanish.

Participants in both strands will also receive copies of *Dual Language Instruction: A Handbook for Enriched Education* by Nancy Cloud, Fred Genesee, and Else Hamayan and *Fundamentos de la enseñanza del español a hispanohablantes en los EE.UU.*, by Dr. Kim Potowski.

For web based information on participation and registration for this exciting institute, please go to: [http://www.thecenterweb.org/irc/pages/f\\_events-dualu.html](http://www.thecenterweb.org/irc/pages/f_events-dualu.html). For additional information, please contact Karen Beeman ([kbeeman@cntrmail.org](mailto:kbeeman@cntrmail.org)) or Hanka Szymborski ([hszymborski@cntrmail.org](mailto:hszymborski@cntrmail.org)).



## The Bridge: Making Cross-Linguistic Connections in the Dual Language Classroom

By: Cheryl Urow



The students sit quietly in rows as they practice for the math portion of the state standardized test. Despite the fact that they have been receiving math instruction in Spanish, the state requires that they be given the academic achievement test in English. The teacher reads the first question aloud to her students:

The sum of 6 and 5 is:

- A) 1      B) 65      C) 30      D) 11

The students look at the options. Suddenly, one student says, “*¡Maestra, sum es como ‘sumar’?*”

### Making Connections

It’s always exciting when a student makes a connection. It demonstrates to us, as teachers, that the student has learned and internalized the information, and can apply it in new ways. The ability to make these kinds of connections is evidence of higher-level thinking and is, in essence, the goal of all teaching. The lessons, facts, and skills we teach students in school are of little importance if the students cannot generalize and extend this learning to novel and different situations. When a student can make a cross-linguistic connection - that is, when the student can connect what is learned in one language and apply it to new situations in the other language as the student does in the vignette above - the student is demonstrating the ability to take advantage of and apply resources across his or her two languages. The ability to make these cross-linguistic connections allows students to actively take advantage of all their linguistic resources, is the theoretical underpinning of dual language instruction, and is the instructional focus of the bridge.

### The Bridge

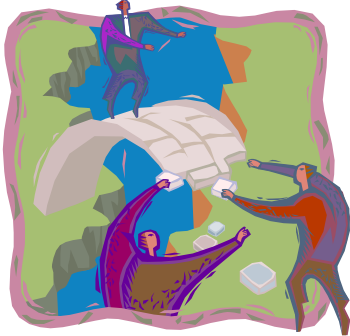
The bridge is that part of the lesson or unit where the focus is on instructing students in how to transfer what they have learned and stored in one language into the other language. The focus moves from teaching content, to teaching the language of content in both of the students’ languages. It is the part of the lesson or unit that explicitly allows students to meet the goal of bilingualism and biliteracy – goals of dual language education. In dual language, for example, students may only receive math instruction in Spanish, and science instruction in English. How then, can they be expected to be truly bilingual and biliterate? If they have never been formally instructed in math in English, how can they be expected to do math, write about math, discuss math in English? It is the bridge that prepares students for these bilingual abilities.

The bridge typically happens at the end of unit, when the students have mastered the content and understood the big idea. The focus of the bridge is on language, rather than on content. It is that part of the unit where students are given the English labels for content they have learned in Spanish (or, alternatively, where they are given the Spanish labels for content they have learned in English).

### An Example of a Bridge

The bridge may look like this: once pre-K children have learned about spring, the teacher returns to the bulletin board she and the students have been creating together. On the bulletin board are drawings the teacher and students have made of the symbols of spring. The drawings include concepts they have studied in Spanish: a rainbow, a puddle, raindrops, flowers, the sun, rain boots, a rain jacket, a rain cloud, etc. The teacher reviews the Spanish vocabulary associated with the pictures by engaging in the actions she and the students developed to go along with each idea. For example, when talking about *botas de hule*, the students mime putting on their boots, and when talking about *charcos*, the students act out jumping in rain puddles. After reviewing these concepts and their associated actions, the teacher dons her magic scarf signaling that she will now be using English as the medium of instruction.

## The Bridge: Making Cross-Linguistic Connections in the Dual Language Classroom



Once the children see the teacher put on her scarf, they recognize that she will begin using English. She continues to mime the actions for the key vocabulary, but this time she asks the students if they can name the associated concept in English. Because this is a dual language classroom in the United States, many of the students in the class speak English at home and others are exposed to it daily through media or in specials classrooms. Some students are able to shout out “rain boots” as they mime putting on their boots, and “puddles” when they perform this action. The teacher provides any English words that the students don’t know. Once all the words have been introduced in English, the teacher repeats the words and looks for the appropriate actions – a kind of “Simon Says” utilizing spring vocabulary.

### The Extension Activity

After spending some time on the bridge, the instructor moves to the extension activity. All the children sit quietly on the rug to listen to a read aloud in English. The read aloud is a book about spring. This book, complementing the information studied during the Spanish instruction on the season, is not simply the English version of a book they have already read in Spanish. Rather, it is a different but related text. Before she begins reading, the

teacher instructs the students to act out any key spring vocabulary they hear. So, as she reads the book she comes across the word “rain boots”. When she says these words, the students mime putting on rain boots, in this way indicating that they understand the word in English as well as in Spanish.

### Some Hints for Implementing the Bridge

- It is much easier to focus the bridge on concrete concepts (family members, community helpers, the water cycle, prime numbers, than abstract skills, sound-symbol correspondence, decoding, predicting).
- If you are new to bridging, it is easier to begin bridging in the content areas (math, science, social studies) than in language arts. Integrate language arts skills (summarizing, predicting, point of view) into bridges in the content areas.
- Plan a metalinguistics focus that meets an observed need of the students and that is cognitively appropriate, but be prepared to change that focus depending upon student interaction during the bridge. For example, if you planned on comparing noun-adjective word order in Spanish and English during a third grade bridge of perimeter, volume, and area, but the students focused on linguistic extensions (also sometimes referred to as false cognates-like using the word *carpeta* to mean carpet), then go ahead and focus on linguistic extensions.
- A students get older, a bridge may have more than one metalinguistic focus

### The Metalinguistic Focus

In addition to transferring what they have learned in one language into the other language, the bridge is also the opportunity to focus on explicit instruction on the similarities and differences of the two program languages. In this case, because the students are so young, the metalinguistic focus may simply be on identifying which words are in English and which are in Spanish. At this age, many children are still in the process of developing the ability to differentiate between and label their two languages. During the metalinguistic analysis, the teacher returns the students’ focus to the spring pictures and asks the students if they can tell her the name of any of the pictured items in any language. As the students volunteer the labels, she asks them to specifically articulate whether the label they

have provided is in English or Spanish. As the students give her the vocabulary, the teacher records the words on a T-chart: English words on the left side, in one color, and Spanish words on the right side, in a different color. Just as children at this age are learning to categorize colors and shapes, during the metalinguistic focus part of the bridge they are learning to classify and label their utterances in either Spanish or English. For older students, the metalinguistic focus can turn to cognates (words that sound the same in the two program languages; for more information on English-Spanish cognates, see: <http://www.esdict.com/English-Spanish-Cognates.html>), gender, noun-adjective order, or the use of prefixes and suffixes, for example.



## Woodstock's Dual Language Program

By: Keely Krueger, District 200 Director of Grants & Bilingual Education



The community of Woodstock sits at the edge of the rural farmlands of northwestern Illinois and the sprawling suburbs that lead to the city of Chicago. Currently, the district serves 6,503 students in grades PreK-12, an increase of over 1,500 students in the last ten years. Twenty seven percent of the students are Hispanic, with 12.4% English Language Learner.

Due to changing demographics and needs, a transitional bilingual education program was implemented in 1999. In 2004, the district decided to change to a dual language program model in hopes of giving all students the opportunity to become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural. The program has grown from 50 students in 2004 to now over 900 students in grades K-7. With this rapid growth, it became apparent that our program needed a structure in place in a variety of areas. For example, there was little consistency across the grade levels and buildings to which language was being taught in specific content areas. Professional development was a concern as every year more teachers were being added to the program with little knowledge of dual language and second language acquisition. It also became very evident that the reading program that was being used in both Spanish and English was not meeting the needs of the second language learners in the classroom regardless of which language was being taught. With all of these issues that needed to be addressed, and the program continuing to grow at a dramatic rates, it became evident that a plan for tackling these matters needed to be in place.

Utilizing the expertise of Karen Beeman, from the Illinois Resource Center, and the *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* developed by the Center for Applied Linguistics, a district committee comprised of (teachers from various grade levels,) literacy coaches, administrators and was formed to take a deeper look at the issues surrounding our program. The group meets monthly, and we are currently in our third year of a four year action plan that was developed during our first year of meeting together.

Our first year of work together focused on using the *Guiding Principles for Dual Language Education* to assess where we were with our current program – good and bad. Four areas of needs were identified, for our program: a Language and Content Allocation Plan, Professional Development Plan, curriculum specialized to dual language, and common assessments. After the areas of need were identified an action plan was developed to start organizing our initiatives into a timeline.

Under the guidance of Karen Beeman, we were able to continue our work as a committee that first year to develop a **Language and Content Allocation Plan** for our program. We explored four options, weighing the pros and cons of each. Checking personal preferences at the door, we decided on a plan that we feel is the best for the students in our program. With the plan in place, we have seen more uniformity and cohesiveness across the program. In addition, we have been able to eliminate wasteful spending on materials as we had been buying most materials in both languages.

During the first year we also were able to decide on a **Professional Development Plan**. One concern was that new staff who were being added each year to the program didn't have a bilingual or ESL endorsement. To help alleviate this problem, the district sponsored a bilingual/ESL endorsement cohort to allow for all teachers teaching in the dual language to receive this endorsement. The District also supported this initiative by covering all costs for taking this coursework if the teacher was part of the dual language program. We are also in the process of training all dual language teachers in Guided Language Acquisition Design (GLAD). Project GLAD is a U.S. Department of Education Program of Excellence that provides professional development in language acquisition and literacy. The strategies and model promote language acquisition, academic achievement, and cross-cultural skills. Four staff members are being certified to become G.L.A.D trainers so that we can train new teachers in this initiative and provide follow up training as well as



## Woodstock's Dual Language Program

By: Keely Krueger, District 200 Director of Grants & Bilingual Education



modeling to ensure that the strategies are being implemented with fidelity.

Our second and third years of work have centered around the development of a **Curriculum** specific to dual language. The committee has based the curriculum on State and Common Core standards as well as the English Language Proficiency standards. During the committee's second year of work, science curriculum was written incorporating big ideas as well as language and content objectives. Currently in our third year, the committee, is focusing on the development of a literacy framework that integrates social studies content with literacy instruction. We have found that most packaged programs do not meet the needs of our students, so each year a portion of our funds go to purchase supplemental materials that align with our curriculum. Upon completion of the curriculum, professional development will take place to train all dual language teachers on implementation of the curriculum.

Next year the committee will continue our work with Karen in the development of **Common Assessments**. We feel this is an extremely important part of our program. Common assessments will allow us to measure Spanish proficiency growth, determine the needs of our students, and ensure instructional consistency throughout the program.

With a program that continues to grow rapidly each year, and with about 20% of the district's student population participating in dual language, we understand the need to continually be refining and updating our action plan to meet our needs in the areas of curriculum, assessment and professional development. The annual commitment by committee members and support from the Illinois Resource Center has really helped our program to not only grow in size but in effectiveness as well.