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Rebecca Freeman Field
University of Pennsylvania

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Rebecca Freeman Field
Director, Language in Education Division, Caslon Publishing and Consulting
Adjunct Professor, University of Pennsylvania

This paper situates the contemporary debate about education and accountability for English language learners/bilingual learners within a sociocultural context and suggests ways that dual language educators and researchers can help move this debate forward. I begin with a brief review of competing discourses about bilingualism and education for diverse learners on the national level in the United States. The paper then provides an insider's perspective on dual language education in three different contexts (Washington, D.C.; Schaumburg, Ill.; Philadelphia, Pa.) at different times (before and after NCLB was passed) to illustrate how these dual language educators hold themselves accountable for student achievement, program effectiveness, and professional learning on the local level. The paper highlights the potential of dual language educators as powerful agents for change.

I find considerable conflict and controversy about education and accountability for English language learners/bilingual learners[1] throughout the United States today. Although dual language programs for students from two-language backgrounds (i.e., two way immersion or TWI programs) have increased in popularity and number over the last four decades[2], many dual language programs[3] are threatened by the narrow notion of accountability imposed by the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001. Dual-language educators can and must respond. They can work together on the local level to strengthen their programs, broaden our notions of accountability, and promote equity and multilingualism through education for all learners.

Dual language programs have three main goals for their target populations: (a) academic achievement in two languages, (b) bilingualism and biliteracy, and (c) intercultural competence. To reach their goals, dual language programs must provide at least 50% of students' content-area instruction through the partner language (e.g., Spanish, Mandarin, Arabic, Japanese) for at least five years, ideally longer (Center for Applied Linguistics [CAL], 2011). These programs have become increasingly popular in the United States because of strong empirical longitudinal evidence demonstrating that well-implemented dual language programs can effectively close the achievement gap for Emergent Bilinguals (EBs) *who are in the program for five years or longer.* This evidence also demonstrates that well-implemented dual language programs enable English

speakers to reach or exceed state academic achievement standards while they acquire high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy and develop positive cultural understanding and intergroup relations (Collier & Thomas, 2004; 2009; Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006; Gottlieb & Nguyen, 2007; Lindholm-Leary, 2000; Thomas & Collier, 2002).

Those not familiar with this body of research must understand from the outset that this empirical evidence includes but is not limited to results from standardized test scores of all students in reading and math in English. As seen in this article, relying exclusively on standardized test scores in English for accountability purposes is insufficient for dual language educators who need evidence of growth and achievement in both partner languages (i.e., English and Spanish) across content areas to guide their decision making. Furthermore, given that this research demonstrates that it takes *at least five years* for students in well-implemented dual language programs to reach all program goals, it is counterproductive to mandate that all students demonstrate proficiency on standardized tests in English sooner than that. Successful dual language education programs, like all effective educational approaches for diverse learners, are complex systems that require a broader notion of accountability.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) is up for reauthorization, and the "four pillars of education reform" that are the foundation of the Obama administration's *Blueprint for Reform* are likely to be a major part of any new legislation. These four pillars are:

> 1. Adopting standards and assessments that prepare students to succeed in college and the workplace and to compete in the global economy;
>
> 2. Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;
>
> 3. Recruiting, developing, rewarding, and retaining effective teachers and principals, especially where they are needed most; and
>
> 4. Turning around our lowest-achieving schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2009, p. 1).

Through its educational initiatives and public addresses, the Obama administration emphasizes its assumption that there are many examples of successful innovative programs in public schools across the United States that they want to learn from as a strategy for turning around schools that are struggling. Data-driven decision making is central to all of their reform efforts. There are also calls from top administration officials for more dual language programs. Dual language educators and researchers need to respond to these calls strategically and systemically, with particular attention to what is meant by *data* and *accountability*.

This article is intended to contribute to the conversation about education and accountability for bilingual learners in the United States today by providing an ethnographic or insider's perspective on dual language education with attention to the role of dual language educators as agents for change. I draw on three distinct cases that offer important lessons for educational policymakers and decision makers today: the successful TWI program at Oyster

Bilingual School in Washington, D.C., where I conducted ethnographic and discourse analytic research from 1989 to 1993 (Freeman,1998); the successful dual language programs in School District 54 (SD 54) in Schaumburg, Illinois, where educators developed a balanced assessment and accountability system (i.e., data system) to drive their decision making (Gottlieb & Nguyen, 2007); and the development of TWI programs in the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) Title VII dual language initiative located in the predominantly Puerto Rican community in North Philadelphia where I had been conducting ethnographic and discourse analytic research from 2000 to 2004 (Freeman, 2004). The analysis is longitudinal and expansive because it studies programs implemented across two decades and in different geographical areas of the country.

The discussion is divided into three major parts that move between the national and local levels over time. First, I consider competing discourses about educating bilingual learners on the national level and focus on Oyster Bilingual School to understand how their successful dual language program was interpreted and implemented on the local level at the time of my research. Second, I review competing discourses about accountability for bilingual learners since NCLB on the national level and look locally at SD 54 to understand how their data system is structured to yield longitudinal evidence of student growth and achievement in two languages, with attention to how these educators use different kinds of data to drive their decision making (i.e., guide instruction, drive program and professional development, inform policy, and ground their advocacy efforts). Third, I look at the SDP dual language program development from 2000–2004 for an insider's perspective on capacity building and professional learning within a dynamic period of educational reform and restructuring on the school, district, state, and federal levels. As a conclusion I present a call for action and suggest ways that dual language educators can promote equity and multilingualism in other local contexts today.

Competing Discourses About Educating Bilingual Learners

An important premise of my work is that (dual) language education is about much more than language. Identity and power relationships figure prominently, although the dynamics of these relationships vary across schools and communities over time. Language-in-education planners, policymakers, and practitioners have choices in how they respond to the kinds of challenges they face in their local contexts. The choices they make about language-in-education policies, programs, and practices reflect ideological discourses about languages, speakers of languages, and the roles of schools in society. These choices have important implications for students, their families, and the communities and societies in which they live (Freeman, 1998; Freeman 2004; Freeman Field, 2007).

In her book *Foundations for Multilingualism in Education: from Principles to Practice*, Ester de Jong (2011) reviews research on educating bilingual learners in the United States and internationally to make explicit defining features of two contrasting discourses, one she labels "pluralist" and the other "assimilationist." These discourses can be understood as lenses, frames, or perspectives that shape the ways educators, policymakers, and community members

understand educational policies, programs, and practices for bilingual learners and that in turn influence their decision making. It is important to remember that pluralist and assimilationist discourses, like all ideological discourses, are abstract, underlying, and systemic. Furthermore, the beliefs and practices that reflect particular discourse systems are generally not seen as ideological by those who hold them. Rather, specific beliefs and practices are generally seen as "common-sense" or "true" by those who see the world from a particular perspective (Fairclough, 1989; Gee, 1990).

Pluralist discourses provide an important lens or frame for viewing the education of bilingual learners and should be used in the education of all students. This perspective generally guides policies, programs, practices, and decision making not only in well-implemented dual language programs but in all effective programs for bilingual learners and it is a perspective I share. According to de Jong, pluralist discourses are characterized by the following assumptions and expectations:

- Linguistic and cultural diversity is assumed to be the norm: languages other than English are resources to draw on and develop, multilingualism is a means of promoting cross-linguistic and intercultural communication, multilingualism is associated with cognitive, educational, cultural, political benefits to individuals, their families, communities, and the broader society.
- Bilingualism is seen from a holistic perspective: a bilingual person is viewed as one individual with one developing bilingual multidialectal linguistic repertoire; languages and literacies are understood as sociocultural practices, assessment is done across two languages with a focus on communicative competence.
- Standardization of approaches is rejected: guiding principles and flexible frameworks that educators draw on and adapt to specific contexts, instruction in more than one language, constructivist model of teaching and learning, formative assessments that are tied to learning and teaching in two languages for accountability purposes.
- Programs, practices, and policies favor pluralism: generally have additive outcomes, leading to the development of bi/multilingual multidialectal linguistic repertories.

De Jong articulates four principles that guide pluralist programs, practices and policies: (1) striving for educational equity, (2) affirming identities, (3) promoting additive bi/multilingualism, and (4) structuring for integration. As I argue in this article, these principles are reflected in effective dual language programs like those at Oyster Bilingual School and throughout SD 54, as well as in my work developing TWI programs in the SDP. These principles can also guide policymaker, administrator, and teacher language education choices in ways that promote multilingualism to the greatest degree possible in any context.

Assimilationist discourses provide another lens or frame for viewing the education of ELLs as well as that of all students. According to de Jong (2011), assimilationist discourses structure most policies, programs, practices, debates, and decisions about language in education

today and are characterized by the following assumptions and expectations:

- Monolingualism is assumed to be the norm: languages other than the dominant societal language are problems for students and the school, one language is seen as necessary to support effective communication, efficiency, and national unity.
- Bilingualism is seen from a fractional perspective: a bilingual person is one individual with two separate and separable linguistic repertoires, language is an autonomous code, assessment is done in one language with a focus on separate skills or proficiencies.
- Standardization of approaches is favored: "one-size-fits-all" program models, transmission model of teaching and learning, standardized tests in English for accountability purposes.
- Programs, practices, and policies favor assimilation: English-only instruction or transitional bilingual education, generally with subtractive outcomes leading to the replacement of the bilingual learners' "first" language with their "second" language.

As suggested in this paper, assimilationist discourses have dominated most discussions about accountability for bilingual learners since NCLB.

Because assimilationist discourses are generally the dominant, more powerful discourses in education debates today, dominant approaches to accountability for ELLs as well as all learners (i.e., results on standardized achievement tests in English) are often presented as the logical choice or the only feasible option while pluralist contributions are often discounted as ideological. Similarly, choices for educating ELLs/bilingual learners have generally been framed in terms of binary oppositions (e.g., English-only vs. bilingual education; heterogenous vs. homogenous student groupings; phonics vs. whole language), or in terms of a quest for the "best educational model" (e.g., dual language vs. transitional bilingual education; 90/10 vs. 50/50 TWI programs). However, from a pluralist view, these narrow notions tend to stifle the development of creative, context-responsive approaches to the very real challenge of educating an increasingly linguistically, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse student population in U.S. schools today (de Jong, 2011).

It is important to remember that whenever we look closely at what people say, write, and do about controversial issues in any linguistically and culturally diverse educational context (e.g., about how long it takes for students to develop oral and written academic English; about what language(s) to use for initial literacy instruction; about what form(s) of assessment is (are) appropriate for bilingual learners; about who is responsible for educating bilingual learners; about what kinds of professional development is appropriate for classroom teachers who work in diverse classroom settings), we are likely to find evidence of competing pluralist and assimilationist discourses. In fact, we often see traces of these competing discourses in our own speech or writing. As I argue throughout this paper, when we view specific conflicts and controversies in terms of competing discourses, we can often identify important negotiation opportunities or spaces for professional learning and development on the individual and

collective level that can move the conversation about education and accountability for bilingual learners forward in productive ways.

In the sections that follow I demonstrate how three bilingual education programs in different states confronted competing discourses while at the same time creating productive opportunities for professional growth and program development. The Oyster Bilingual School, SD 54, and SDP dual language educators work collaboratively, strategically, and systemically as agents for change to address the challenges that they face as they work to strengthen their dual language programs and provide evidence of student learning through two languages. These educators take responsibility for demonstrating how their program functions to all of their constituents including teachers, students, principals, parents, and community members on the local level as well as external administrators and policymakers on the district, state, and federal levels in ways that are relevant and useful to these diverse groups of decision makers. However, their efforts faced distinct challenges and met different outcomes.

Bilingual Education for Social Change at Oyster Bilingual School

The dual language program at Oyster Bilingual School in Washington, D.C., was established in 1971, and it is one of the first dual language programs in the United States. At the time of my study, during the early 1990s, about 50% of the students were from low-income Spanish-speaking households (primarily Salvadoran) and about 50% were from middle-income English-speaking households (approximately balanced numbers of African American and White students). My three-year ethnographic and discourse analytic study of dual language planning at this successful school investigated and documented how the Oyster educators interpreted their TWI policy and how they implemented it in practice throughout the school. Through my analyses of interviews with Oyster educators and students, a wide range of site documents (e.g., policy statements, the school handbook, home-school communication, samples of student work, scores on standardized tests), and transcriptions of audiotaped interactions in classrooms and other key contexts at school, I described, interpreted, and explained what made the dual language program successful from the perspective of the members of the Oyster community.

Because I was studying a *dual language* program I originally focused my research on *language*, specifically on the distribution and evaluation of Spanish and English in policy, program structure, classroom implementation, and unofficial classroom interactions. However, my discussion with Oyster educators about the discrepancies that I observed between ideal policy and actual implementation within and across classrooms made it clear to me that language was just a means to an end at Oyster, albeit an important one. The Oyster dual language educators' overarching goal was equity for their linguistically and culturally diverse student population. Their 50/50 dual language policy, bilingual multicultural curriculum content, bilingual student-centered classroom interaction, bilingual performance-based assessments, and bilingual parental involvement all work together to make up one coherent discourse system. Using de Jong's (2011) terms, the Oyster dual language educators created an alternative pluralist

discourse that challenges dominant assimilationist discourses about effective education for bilingual learners on the local level.

My analysis of discourse practices at Oyster revealed their assumptions and expectations that mainstream U.S. schools are discriminatory against, for example, Spanish-speaking students as well as Latino and African American students (students can belong to more than one identity group and so we find Black and White Spanish-speaking students as well as Latino students from monolingual Spanish-speaking, monolingual English-speaking, and bilingual households), and these identity groups make up a large part of the Oyster community. A primary goal of Oyster's dual language education policy, program, and practices is therefore to elevate the status of Spanish and Spanish speakers and of Latino and African American students so that Spanish and English speakers and Latino, African American, and White students are positioned more or less equally at school. Students are socialized through this alternative educational discourse to see themselves and each other as having not only the ability but also the right to participate and achieve at school and in U.S. society. The dual language educators who developed Oyster's dual language program work together as agents of change to challenge English-only discourses and promote equity on the local level. The students who attend Oyster achieve academically through two languages, develop high levels of bilingualism and biliteracy, and learn to expect, tolerate, respect, and effectively negotiate linguistic and cultural diversity (see Freeman, 1998 for details).

Oyster Bilingual School is an example of a successful dual language program that was dealing seriously with issues of assessment and accountability, broadly defined, at the time of my research. Their focus at that time (before NCLB) was on collecting formative and summative evidence of student performance to respond to the broad accountability requirements of students, parents, teachers, and administrators on the local school and district levels. The Oyster educators used this evidence to drive their instruction, program, and professional development. For example, one of the Oyster principals[4] showed me how she used teacher assessments of student writing in Spanish and English to support the need for focused and sustained biliteracy professional and program development. The Oyster assessment practices reflected a more or less authentic notion of accountability at the time in which teachers and administrators took responsibility for their students' learning and achievement, and they held themselves accountable to students, parents, the district, and each other for dual language program effectiveness in ways that made sense to their different constituents.

Like all dual language programs in the United States, Oyster Bilingual School does not exist in a sociopolitical vacuum. Although the school was constituted by a relatively coherent pluralist discourse, I did identify discrepancies between ideal dual language policy of equal distribution and evaluation of Spanish and English throughout this 50/50 program and actual implementation in classrooms and other key contexts throughout the school. These discrepancies can be explained by the larger sociopolitical context in which Oyster was situated. For example, like all teachers in the district, Oyster teachers across grade levels had formal assessments in English, but they had fewer comparable assessments in Spanish. Furthermore, the English component of the dual language program emphasized the kinds of skills that were

included on district assessments more than the Spanish component of the program did. The principal and many of the teachers were aware of these (and other) discrepancies between ideal policy and actual implementation. Rather than passively accepting these discrepancies, they took action at the local level to resolve them. At the time of my research the teachers developed comparable assessments in Spanish and used them in their classes. To counter any outside threats to their comprehensive and pluralist approach to accountability, they made these comparable assessments a requirement across the English and Spanish curriculum.

My research at Oyster Bilingual School took place prior to the passage of NCLB in 2001. As I will explain in the next section, the accountability requirements under NCLB have dramatically narrowed our notions of accountability. Although the specifics have changed, we still see the same kinds of discrepancies between ideal dual language policies and actual implementation today that I observed at Oyster in the 1990s. And we still see dual language educators across contexts working on the local level to challenge English-only discourses, respond to the broad accountability requirements of all of their constituents, and promote equity and multilingualism for all of their students.

Competing Discourses About Accountability for Bilingual Learners Since NCLB on the National Level

NCLB is the latest version of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and it functions as a de facto language policy in the United States today (Menken, 2008). The accountability requirements of NCLB dominate educational discourses in the United States at this time, and they reflect features of assimilationist discourses outlined by de Jong (2011). Under NCLB, schools are held accountable for the academic achievement of all students as evidenced by their scores on state-mandated standardized reading and math tests. Schools are also held accountable for the English language proficiency (ELP) of every ELL as evidenced by their scores on state-mandated standardized ELP tests.

Under No Child Left Behind, administrators disaggregate the data (i.e., the results of standardized achievement test scores in English) so that they can make an increasingly broad range of data-based decisions. When they look at the disaggregated data, researchers, policymakers, and educators often see that the ELL subgroup is lagging behind. This observation often leads to a search for research-based interventions or programs, most of which call for more English, earlier interventions, phonics, or other one-size-fits-all programs that focus on basic skills. The outcomes of these programs or interventions, like student achievement in math and language arts, are generally measured by standardized test scores in English. To achieve the best results, these programs and interventions must be implemented with fidelity (i.e., in the same way by all teachers in all schools). The results of high-stakes tests are used to evaluate student achievement as well as teacher, program, and school effectiveness. Punitive measures follow when teachers and schools are deemed "failing."

Wright (2010) describes problems with NCLB's narrow notions of accountability for all

students, particularly ELLs. He explains that a test is like a snapshot that measures a sample of a students' ability at one particular time. A test (like a snapshot) can be misleading because it cannot measure what took place before or after it was taken or the context in which it was taken, nor can it provide evidence of everything that a student knows or can do. Wright outlines many unresolved issues about how to test ELLs in a valid and reliable manner: (a) ELLs' developing proficiency in English means that academic tests given in English cannot provide a fair and accurate measure of the students' true academic ability and (b) language tests cannot fully measure a student's proficiency because of the complexity of the construct of language proficiency and the multifaceted nature of bilingualism. Furthermore, the logic and requirements of NCLB set up unreasonable expectations for ELLs (e.g., beginning and intermediate ELLs are required to take academic achievement tests in English before they have had time to develop academic English language proficiency). Wright concludes that, given the many unresolved issues surrounding testing for ELLs, the mandates of NCLB to use ELLs' high-stakes test results for school accountability purposes are problematic and that recent requirements to tie these scores to teacher evaluations are even more problematic.

Many national-level *alternatives* to the narrow accountability requirements of NCLB have been proposed that reflect features of more flexible, context-responsive pluralist discourses. Here I briefly review three approaches that have particular relevance for dual language educators: (1) guiding principles proposed by the Forum on Educational Accountability (FEA) for all schools, (2) the Castañeda Standard for programs serving ELLs, and (3) guiding principles for dual language programs. As we see later in this section, the balanced assessment and accountability system that the SD 54 educators developed for their dual language programs reflects de Jong's (2011) principles and meets the standards of all of these approaches, and can be used not only in other dual language programs but by educators working with linguistically and culturally diverse students in any educational context.

The FEA was formed in 2007 to expand on and advance the ideas in the "Joint Organizational Statement on No Child Left Behind" to improve federal education policy. The FEA outlines a set of recommendations developed by a broad array of education and assessment experts concerned about the reauthorization of the ESEA. The recommendations are grounded in six guiding principles.

Principle 1: Equity and capacity building for student learning

Principle 2: Comprehensive and local assessment systems

Principle 3: Assessment and accountability for diverse populations

Principle 4: Fair appraisal of academic performance

Principle 5: Fair accountability decisions

Principle 6: Use of assessment and accountability information to improve schools and student learning

The 151 organizations that have signed off on the report vowed to work for the adoption of these

recommendations as central structural changes to NCLB while they continue to advance their individual organization's proposals (go to www.fairtest.org/node/30 for list of signers).

James Crawford, president of the Institute for Language and Education Policy (www.languagepolicy.net), supports the FEA's recommendations and argues that a more promising framework for accountability for ELLs already exists. The Castañeda Standard, first outlined by a federal appeals court in response to the 1981 *Castañeda v. Pickard* case, is a three-prong test to gauge whether school districts are taking "affirmative steps to overcome language barriers" as required by the Equal Educational Opportunity Act of 1974. The court ruled that schools are obligated to meet three standards:

1. Programs must be based on an educational theory recognized as sound by experts.
2. Resources, personnel, and practices must be reasonably calculated to implement the program effectively.
3. Programs must be evaluated and restructured, if necessary, to ensure that language barriers are overcome.

In contrast to NCLB's exclusive reliance on test scores (i.e., outputs), Crawford (2009) maintains that the Castañeda Standard offers a comprehensive approach to accountability encompassing both inputs (e.g., program model, teacher qualifications, instructional quality, language assessment and placement, classroom materials) and outputs (e.g., student outcomes, broadly defined). Furthermore, in contrast to the punitive sanctions for failing to meet AYP targets, the Castañeda Standard emphasizes capacity building, flexibility in program model, and instructional reform.

Dual language educators working on the national level have also developed guiding principles for dual language programs that focus on assessment and accountability (Howard, Sugarman, Christian, Lindholm-Leary, & Rogers, 2007). Grounded in evidence from research and best practices for diverse learners, these guiding principles address program issues in seven strands: assessment and accountability, curriculum, instruction, staff quality and professional development, program structure, family and community, and support and resources. The guiding principles for the first strand on assessment and accountability are:

Principle 1: The program creates and maintains an infrastructure that supports an accountability process.

Principle 2: Student assessment is aligned with state content and language standards, as well as with program goals, and is used for evaluation of the program and instruction.

Principle 3: The program collects a variety of data, using multiple measures, which are used for program accountability and evaluation.

Principle 4: Data are analyzed and interpreted in methodologically appropriate ways for program accountability and improvement.

Principle 5: Student progress toward program goals and NCLB achievement objectives is systematically measured and reported.

Principle 6: The program communicates with appropriate stakeholders about program outcomes.

The dual language guiding principles are intended to provide a tool for dual language educators to help with program planning and ongoing implementation.

Although the specifics of the reauthorization of ESEA remain to be seen, the new ESEA is expected to include the four pillars of education reform listed in the introduction to this paper. Because of its relevance to this paper, I repeat the second pillar here:

- Building data systems that measure student growth and success, and inform teachers and principals about how they can improve instruction;

Many critics reject the exclusive reliance on standardized test scores for accountability purposes under the Obama Administration (to date the only "data" that the Department of Education is using is standardized test scores in English, although we can find evidence of the U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan's acknowledgement of problems with this practice, e.g., Duncan, 2009). I agree with this criticism for many reasons. What is important to highlight here is that this narrow approach to accountability reflects an assimilationist perspective that is not equitable for linguistically and culturally diverse learners.

However, in recent months, other voices from the Federal Government have started to articulate a more inclusive and broader conceptualization of accountability. If we listen closely we can also hear a federal commitment to the principles of flexibility, fairness, and focus as well as calls for more dual language programs in speeches made by Administration officials. These kinds of statements reflect pluralist discourses, and realizing these commitments demands broader notions of accountability than we have seen since NCLB was passed.

For example, Assistant Secretary of Education Thelma Meléndez de Santa Ana and Director of the Office of English Language Acquisition Rosalinda Barrera both spoke at the March 2011 TESOL national convention. They articulated what the principles of "flexibility, fairness, and focus" would mean in practice: "no one-size-fits-all approach," "give states and districts flexibility to improve student performance," "reward states for high standards and expectations," "fair accountability that measures student growth," and "develop more dual language programs." The Obama Administration's focus, Meléndez de Santa Ana explained, would be on "growth and gain as opposed to AYP as we see it now." Barrera highlighted the need for "breaking down the silos" that separate ELL education from general education, and making ELL education "an integral part" of all education discussions. She also pointed out the Administration focus on "collaboration" with a wide range of partners and emphasized the importance of "professional learning" about ELL education (Meléndez de Santa Ana, 2011; Barrera, 2011).

Meléndez de Santa Ana's and Barrera's pluralist statements and some of the language used to describe current department of education funding opportunities may indicate more ideological space on the national level—from the top not only for dual language education but also for more pluralist approaches to ELL education. Language educators, broadly defined, need to continue to respond to these kinds of calls with professional learning opportunities for mainstream pre-service and in-service educators so that all educators are prepared to meet the

needs of the linguistically and culturally diverse students in their districts, schools, and classrooms. Dual language educators working in well-implemented dual language programs can and must respond with innovative *data systems* that rely on *multiple measures of growth and gain* that are appropriate for all learners. In this way dual language educators can help broaden our notion of accountability from the bottom up.

Broadening Notions of Assessment and Accountability on the Local Level

The BASIC model, which is an acronym for *balanced assessment* and *accountability system* that is *inclusive* and *comprehensive*, provides a concrete example of a broader notion of accountability than we have seen on the national level to date. This assessment and accountability system was developed prior to the passage of NCLB by Diep Nguyen, then Director of Bilingual/Multicultural Education in School District 54 in Schaumburg, Illinois, in collaboration with SD 54 dual language teachers and administrators under the guidance of Margo Gottlieb, a nationally recognized assessment and evaluation expert on bilingual learners in PreK–12 settings. Although the BASIC model was originally developed for use within a dual language program, this flexible model can be readily adapted to serve assessment and accountability purposes by educators working with linguistically and culturally diverse student populations in any context. The BASIC model is research-based and field-tested, and it addresses all of the guiding principles and recommendations outlined by the Forum on Educational Accountability (for all students), the Castañeda Standard (for ELLs), the guiding principles for assessment and accountability (for dual language programs), and the Obama Administration calls for innovative dual language programs that improve student outcomes as evidenced by multiple measures of growth and gain. According to Gottlieb and Nguyen (2007),

> The successes encountered in the language education programs of SD 54 are testimony to the fact that teachers and administrators can change the course of children's education and futures in a positive way when we have the political will to do so. When we build an internal assessment and accountability system that focuses primarily on the improvement of teaching and learning, we indeed can provide quality education for all students while simultaneously helping them develop bilingually. As language educators, this vision of "bilingualism for all children" is ultimately what we hold dear to our hearts (p. xi).

This section describes the features and purposes of the BASIC model with attention to the role of teachers and administrators on the local level.

I first learned about Gottlieb and Nguyen's balanced assessment and accountability system in January 2001 when Nguyen and several students presented quantitative and qualitative data on academic achievement and bilingual/biliteracy development in SD 54's first dual language program at the Illinois Statewide Conference for Teachers of Linguistically and Culturally Diverse students in Chicago. The stories that students read aloud in Spanish and English from their K–8 bilingual portfolios provided compelling evidence of student engagement, bilingual and biliteracy development, and learning through two languages, and this data gave real

meaning to the quantitative data that Nguyen presented on program effectiveness. Gottlieb and Nguyen also presented the quantitative results of the SD 54 dual language program evaluation at the International Symposium for Bilingualism in the spring of 2002 in Phoenix (Gottlieb & Nguyen, 2002). The work of these educators has guided my understanding of authentic assessment and accountability for bilingual learners since that time.

According to Gottlieb and Nguyen (2007), a balanced assessment and accountability system that is inclusive and comprehensive has the following defining features. First, it is internal to the functioning of schools and school districts while responsive to external accountability mandates. Second, it is built on consensus from both teachers and administrators. Third, it is rigorous, comprehensive, and standards-based. Fourth, it is systemic and reflective of shared educational goals, vision, and commitment. Last and perhaps most important, it is directly related to teaching and learning. At SD 54 central office administrators, principals, and bilingual teachers work in teams at various levels to establish common goals and create and adopt a common pivotal assessment plan that yields data to guide their entire decision making.

Gottlieb and Nguyen (2007) stress that a comprehensive assessment and accountability system must fulfill a range of purposes for second language (L2) learners. In a Spanish-English dual language program, L2 learners include English speakers learning Spanish and Spanish speakers learning English. Teachers and administrators working on the classroom and school level need to be able to

- document students' second language (L2) growth and proficiency, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing;
- document students' native language (L1) growth and proficiency, including listening, speaking, reading, and writing;
- document students' academic learning growth and achievement in core academic subjects;
- report student learning growth, proficiency, and achievement to parents and establish accountability;
- inform and guide classroom instruction on an ongoing basis, and shape the school improvement plan.

Administrators working on the program and district levels need assessment and accountability data in order to

- provide multiple sources of evidence of student growth, proficiency and achievement in language development, academic learning, and cross-cultural competence;
- monitor student and group progress to guide curricular and program decisions;
- document the effectiveness of instructional practices and program implementation for public reporting purposes;
- identify patterns of instructional challenges that shape the district improvement plan.

The BASIC model reflects pluralist discourses described by de Jong (2011), and is represented in Figure 1.

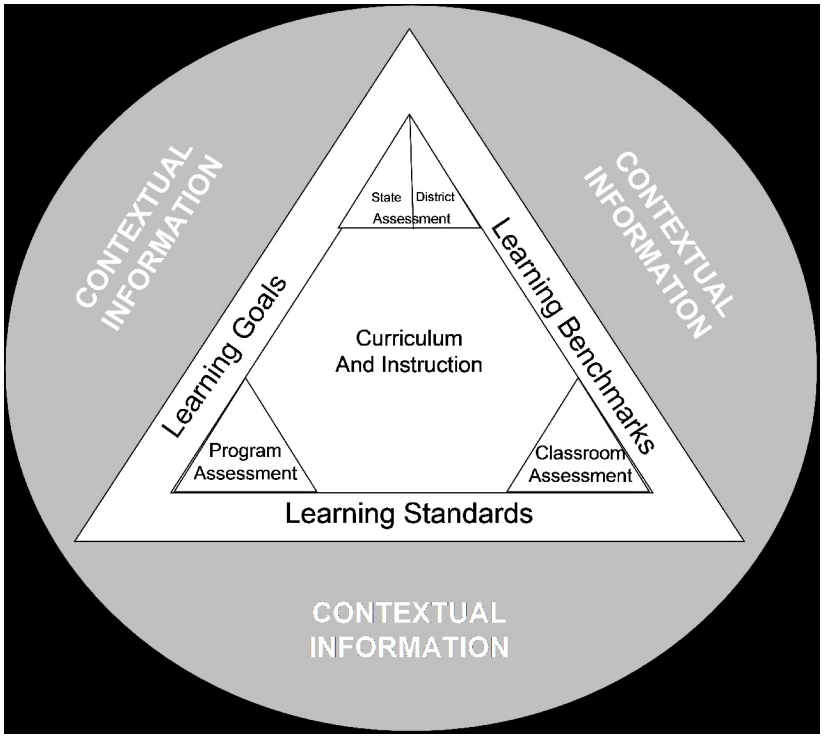

Figure 1. The BASIC Model (Gottlieb & Nguyen, 2007).

This model balances formative and summative assessments in order to produce the range of data needed for decision making within language education programs at the classroom, program, district, and state levels of implementation. Grounded in contextual information, framed by learning goals, standards, and benchmarks, and tied to curriculum and instruction, these complimentary data sources offer teachers powerful tools to measure student performance throughout the year. Implementation of the model calls for extensive planning and the development of an assessment framework that delineates the process of data collection, analysis, and reporting, all of which takes time, leadership, and collaboration. Gottlieb and Nguyen (2007) lay out a step-by-step process that teachers and administrators can use to guide their work developing a balanced assessment and accountability system in any linguistically and culturally diverse school or district.

Central to their work is the *pivotal portfolio*, which Gottlieb and Nguyen define as a hybrid of the working portfolio (students' work-in-progress) and the showcase portfolio (students' best work) with three main distinctions. First, each teacher gathers what the teachers collectively consider evidence of essential student learning and achievement. Second, all teachers use common assessments of that essential student work. And third, the pivotal portfolio follows the student for the length of the students' career in the language education program. Teachers and

administrators use their conversations around common assessments of student performance relative to all of their goals to guide everything they do.

I conclude this section with an excerpt from Ms. Danette Meyer, who was a dual language facilitator in SD 54 at the time of this writing. Here Ms. Meyer explains how she uses multiple measures of student performance in two languages organized in the students' pivotal portfolios to address a difficult challenge we hear frequently from dual language educators under NCLB. That is, how can dual language educators respond to external pressures from mandated standardized testing in English beginning in the third grade when research demonstrates that it takes five to seven years for ELLs to develop academic language proficiency in well-implemented programs and Spanish-speaking students often score lower than grade level in third grade? Ms. Meyer writes:

> [Comparing] the native English speakers and native Spanish speakers in the dual language program with the performance of students at the district and state level in English, we can advocate for the continuation or expansion of the program. Third-grade scores for our native Spanish-speaking students are historically lower since they have not had adequate time to develop enough English to be successful on an all-English test. This often leads teachers and principals as well as district personnel to doubt the efficacy of the program and begin discussing using more English with students.
>
> [Our data] illustrates that once students have had the sufficient five to seven years necessary for their language abilities to develop in English, they are on par with their non-ELL peers. In fact, many exceed state standards. This longitudinal view of summative data demonstrates that, given adequate time for growth, ELLs from well-implemented dual language programs achieve high academic results in English.
>
> At the local level, in addition to state achievement tests in English, we can use the formative assessments and sample student work to paint a balanced picture of both growth and achievement of students in Spanish or Japanese[5] also. We need to be true to our goals of bilingualism and biliteracy rather than just English performance. We know that if we do not use and share assessments in other languages, our students, staff, and parents may begin to devalue that achievement. Similarly, the formative assessment adds to our program evaluation and provides us with another alternative means of gauging program effectiveness based on authentic student products (Gottlieb & Nguyen, 2007, pp. 126–128).

Ms. Meyer describes one way that dual language educators can strategically use strong longitudinal evidence of student performance in two languages to address the narrow accountability requirements under NCLB. Specifically, SD 54 educators provided empirical evidence demonstrating that bilingual learners in their dual language programs do in fact reach all program goals *when given adequate time for growth.* According to this account, SD 54 educators are not asking that the district eliminate all standardized testing in English like some of the debates about accountability requirements today seem to suggest. Instead, these educators

request the opportunity to use a broad notion of accountability that includes expectations for student performance based on research into how long it takes for ELLs to develop academic language proficiency in English. Ms. Meyer's writing also demonstrates the SD 54 assumption that formative assessments are an important complement to standardized testing in English, not a substitute. What is important to remember is that different constituents (i.e., students, parents, teachers, administrators, policymakers) need different information/data about student learning and program effectiveness at different times, and they need to use that information/data for different purposes. Any good data system must be able to respond to such diverse needs.

The specific common assessments that are included in any pivotal portfolio respond to state and local standards, goals, benchmarks, and to the particular sociocultural context surrounding the school and community. Because the pivotal portfolio is a flexible and dynamic construct, educators can make any necessary changes to their choice of common assessments to be included in the portfolio in response to changes in the larger sociopolitical or educational policy context. According to Nguyen, it was relatively easy for the dual language programs in SD 54 to respond to the narrow accountability requirements under NCLB because they already had collected the data that the state required as one part of their pivotal portfolio. If dual language educators across the country respond to the Obama administration's calls for effective dual language programs with data systems that yield evidence of student growth and gain using assessments that are appropriate for diverse learners, dual language educators can help move the conversation about education and accountability for bilingual learners forward in productive ways from the bottom up.

Building on Community Bilingualism in North Philadelphia

Both Oyster Bilingual School and SD 54 have well-established, successful dual language programs that are structured by relatively coherent multilingual pluralist discourses and supported by balanced assessment and accountability systems. However, many dual language programs in the United States are in earlier stages of development, and we will likely see more new dual language programs in the future. This section explores the early stages of dual language planning (with a focus on assessment planning) in schools serving the low-income predominantly Puerto Rican community in North Philadelphia where I had been conducting action-oriented ethnographic and discourse analytic research since 1995. The dual language initiative was funded by a 2000–2005 Title VII Bilingual Education System–wide grant that the School District of Philadelphia (SDP) was awarded, and I was hired as lead consultant. This example provides an insider's perspective on capacity building for educators who embrace the challenge to develop dual language programs, and the approach provides an insider's perspective on the functioning of an effective professional learning community. This approach to professional development is appropriate not only for dual language educators, but for educators working in any context (Hamayan & Freeman Field, in press).

We saw strong ideological and financial support for dual language education at the federal

level with the 1994 reauthorization of the ESEA. In a March 2000 speech, then Secretary of Education Richard Riley challenged the nation to increase the number of dual language programs to 1,000 over the next five years. Top-down ideological and financial support was complemented by bottom-up dual language program development across the country, with the number of TWI programs growing steadily. In November 2000, for example, the SDP Office of Language Equity Issues (OLEI) was awarded a five year Title VII bilingual education system–wide grant to stimulate the development of 10 dual language programs in the dominant language communities (Spanish, Russian, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Khmer) in Philadelphia.

Funding for the Bilingual Education Expansion Project that the SDP was granted is an example of top-down language planning for the schools because the federal government provided the school districts across the country with financial incentives for this type of bilingual program through Title VII of ESEA. Mary Ramirez, then OLEI Director, and Cynthia Gross Alvarez, then ESOL and Bilingual Programs Director and the Title VII grant writer, wanted to complement this top-down language planning initiative with language planning on the local school and community levels and I worked closely with OLEI to coordinate this effort. My work as a consultant reflects a sociocultural orientation as a researcher and is based on the assumption that the teachers, principals, and community members who work together every day on the local level create their educational context, and these constituents have the potential to collaborate and change that context.

We began by developing Spanish-English dual language programs in several schools in the Puerto Rican community because we had more resources to draw on (e.g., bilingual teachers and materials, professional development in and experience with bilingual education, insider's understanding of community beliefs and practices, we all spoke Spanish) in this community than in the communities serving the less commonly taught languages (Khmer, Mandarin, Russian, Vietnamese) in Philadelphia. However, these schools were all located in North Philadelphia, the region of the SDP that included the lowest-performing schools and that has undergone the most dramatic restructuring as part of the SDP's ongoing reform efforts. We developed school-based language planning teams made up of administrators and teachers, and I invited the teams to use the following set of guiding questions[6] to structure their work during the planning year:

1. Who are our target populations?
   (ELLs, heritage language speakers[7], English speakers)
2. What are our goals?
   (academic achievement, bilingual and biliteracy development, intercultural competence; i.e., the goals of the dual language grant; other goals)
3. How is our school currently addressing the language education needs of our target populations?
   (TBE, one-way DBE, ESOL; i.e., the program models currently implemented in their school)
4. How are our students performing relative to all of our goals? What evidence do we collect and

how do we use that evidence?

5. What type of dual language program is appropriate for our school and community? (dual language programs, broadly defined including TWI, DBE; i.e., the kinds of programs funded by the grant)

The language planning teams collected information about their students, goals, programs, and outcomes to address the first four questions. To answer the fifth question, team members read the literature on dual language education, visited dual language programs, and attended conferences on bilingual education. We organized monthly planning meetings with concrete tasks that would help them move their dual language program development forward. Like all complex learning situations, this was not a perfectly linear, neat process. These educators argued passionately about the need to challenge the loss of Spanish within their student and community populations, and they embraced the goals of bilingualism, biliteracy, cross-cultural understanding, and positive intergroup relations. They developed and debated dual language education plans that they believed would be appropriate for their contexts with attention to the SDP's K–3 balanced literacy initiative that had been mandated in the SDP since 1999. My role as consultant was to help them consider the pros and cons of the various options as they considered them, and to consider the implications of those choices.

Educators in three schools decided to develop TWI programs for their emergent bilingual learners (including ELLs from monolingual Spanish-speaking households, heritage language speakers from bilingual households with a wide range of expertise in oral and written Spanish and English, and English-speakers from monolingual English-speaking households). Two of the schools developed plans for 50/50 programs that provided formal literacy instruction simultaneously in Spanish and English for all students beginning in kindergarten, and one school developed plans for an 80/20 program that provided initial literacy instruction to all students in Spanish in kindergarten and first grade, with formal literacy instruction in English introduced at second grade. After the initial planning year all three programs began in kindergarten as strands in the school, and each grew one grade level per year with the goal of having a K–5 TWI program in one strand of each school in five years.

From the beginning, these TWI educators had serious questions about biliteracy development, assessment, and accountability. They requested ongoing professional development to support their early implementation efforts, and we launched a monthly professional development series that we called "dual language teachers talking," a name that highlights the importance of dialogue. Following Fullan (2001), our work was informed by the assumption that school improvement occurs when

- teachers engage in frequent, continuous, and increasingly concrete talk about teaching practice;
- teachers and administrators frequently observe and provide feedback to each other, developing a shared language to describe their practices; and

- teachers and administrators plan, design, and evaluate teaching materials and practices together (pp. 84–85).

Our monthly meetings provided a space for the dual language teachers to become a community of practice (Wenger, 1998). As a professional learning community (DuFour & Eaker, 1998), we reflected on classroom practices and research findings, shared successes, identified common ideological and implementation challenges, and collaborated to meet those challenges.

In the first dual language teachers talking meeting in September 2001, the teachers and I agreed to focus our attention during Year 1 on the following questions:

1. How does your TWI program encourage English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students to become bilingual and to develop literacies in Spanish and English?

2. What evidence do you have of students' bilingual and biliteracy development over time?

The meetings over the fall 2001 semester covered a range of topics that the teachers selected and facilitated based on their work in their classes (e.g, how to use the SDP mandated K–3 assessments in two languages to guide literacy instruction within and across languages; how to use centers as contexts for second language/bilingual acquisition, biliteracy development, and content area learning through two languages in their classes; how to read big books in Spanish to a heterogeneous group of students in ways that involve the English speakers and challenge the Spanish speakers; how to promote students' negotiation of meaning in Spanish within cooperative learning groups). The teachers embraced the opportunity to look closely at their own and each others' practice, and they drew on each others' expertise and on the literature to answer their questions and to help them make sense of their observations.

Two professional learning opportunities in the spring of 2002 strongly influenced the TWI teachers' beliefs about biliteracy development and assessment. First, the National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE) held its 2002 annual meeting in Philadelphia, and many of the TWI teachers attended sessions that broadened their thinking about some of the challenges they faced. For example, many of the TWI teachers realized that although they had initially been more concerned with English speakers and English language and literacy development, the national-level concern in the TWI field was with Spanish and Spanish speakers. Elizabeth Howard shared findings from the joint Center for Applied Linguistics/Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CAL/CREDE) longitudinal study on biliteracy development in TWI programs that highlighted this concern (Howard, 2000). Her analysis demonstrated that although English-speaking and Spanish-speaking students in TWI programs were consistently performing at or above grade level in Spanish and English, Spanish-speaking students' performance was generally lower than English-speaking students' performance on writing tasks in both Spanish and English (note that this important finding would be missed under an accountability system that relied exclusively on the results of standardized test scores in English). This finding echoed Valdés's (1997) cautionary note about power relations in dual language education, where she warned that if TWI educators do not provide high-quality Spanish components of their programs, and if they do not closely monitor their Spanish-speaking

students' performance in English and in Spanish, TWI programs may actually end up perpetuating the kinds of inequities between Spanish and English speakers that these programs are intended to address.

The second professional learning opportunity was offered by the SDP and it addresses Valdés's concern. The Title VII grant funded a Temple University graduate course on Spanish literacy development in the spring of 2002 that Aida Nevárez-La Torre (now at Fordham University) taught. Although I did not attend the course, the teachers informed me that it was taught entirely in Spanish, the majority of the readings were in Spanish, all of the students' oral and written presentations were in Spanish, and the teachers looked critically at a range of approaches used to promote literacy development in Spanish. Unlike many of their earlier professional development experiences, this course did not see Spanish in relation to English or as subordinate to English. This course had a pluralist perspective, and looked at Spanish literacy development as the primary focus. Many of the TWI teachers who took this class became concerned that the frameworks and assessment tools that the SDP used were biased toward English (reflecting a monolingual perspective on literacy that we see reflected in most research, policy, and practice today). These teachers began to question whether the SDP assessment tools allow for an accurate assessment of literacy development in Spanish, and they began to demand the development of more valid assessments.

The dual language educators and I decided to develop a balanced assessment and accountability system that would yield the evidence they needed to answer their questions and drive their decision-making. With the expert advice of Gottlieb and Nguyen and the assistance of several graduate students from the University of Pennsylvania where I was teaching, the dual language educators and I developed a TWI assessment system that would yield (a) formative evidence (e.g., oral language and writing samples in Spanish and English) of every student's bilingual and biliteracy development (i.e., student learning and outcomes) to inform instruction and drive program and professional development; (b) formative and summative evidence of reading development, including reading scores in English (to respond to program and district accountability requirements) and in Spanish (to answer teacher questions and respond to program accountability requirements); (c) standardized test scores on state-mandated tests of every child's proficiency in reading and math (i.e., academic achievement) and every ELL's English language proficiency (to respond to federal and state accountability requirements).

We created an Excel database that included every child who had participated in the dual language program by grade-level cohort, and we began by keeping track of every student's reading scores in both languages over time. Because we assumed there may be important differences in students' trajectory of biliteracy development (Luis Moll and his graduate students, personal communication) that might be related to language use patterns at home, we noted which students came from monolingual English-speaking households, monolingual Spanish-speaking households, and bilingual households. Each student also had a pivotal portfolio that followed him/her over time in the program in which we kept samples of student writing in two languages that we collected before each report period. We also began to develop writing

rubrics that would be appropriate assessment tools for these bilingual learners, and we planned to keep track of writing scores in both languages over time.

Since student mobility is regularly cited as a challenge in this low-income, predominantly Puerto Rican community, we kept track of which students started the program in kindergarten, which students left the program, and which students joined the program late. We kept track of every student's growth and achievement because teachers need that information to guide their instruction and professional development. However, we knew that we could only use data from students who had begun the program in kindergarten and continued to fifth grade to make claims about program effectiveness (you cannot say a program is not effective if a student has not participated in the entire program). We also never took a student off of the cohort list because many students in this highly mobile neighborhood who leave a school may return to the same school at a later date.

Our dual language program development efforts faced many challenges, which most of the dual language educators in the School District of Philadelphia that I was working with embraced. With respect to the accountability demands imposed by NCLB, dual language educators confronted two major challenges related to the issue of *time*: (a) the *time* it takes for educators to develop a comprehensive and effective dual language program and (b) the *time* it takes for students to develop bilingual proficiency and learn academic content through two languages.

First, it takes time for teachers and administrators to work together and develop coherent pluralist dual language programs. It takes time for educators to develop balanced assessment and accountability systems for their language education programs. Educators need to determine whether their program is pedagogically sound, well-implemented, and delivers results, which means they need to understand the research on different types of programs for bilingual learners and they need to develop assessment literacy (e.g., understanding what formative and summative assessments are, why teachers need common assessments to show evidence of student growth, what kinds of data can legitimately be used to make what kinds of decisions). Dual language educators need to review and critique the assessments that they currently use in their district or program, and identify gaps and redundancies in their system. They also need to identify appropriate common assessments that are aligned with their program goals and structure, which means that they need to learn about different types of formative and summative assessments in English and the partner language. The Title VII grant allowed SDP to support the development of dual language programs for five years. The initial four years of the grant were used to begin to create programs, become informed of best practices that are research-based, pilot test some of the assessment practices, and align practices to standards and curriculum. However, more time was needed to document students' growth in language and content learning.

As we saw in our discussion of SD 54, *time* presents another kind of challenge for dual language programs under current accountability requirements. Dual language educators often argue that they do not have enough time to ensure that their ELLs demonstrate proficiency on standardized academic achievement tests that are given in English. Although research suggests that children in dual language programs may need *five to seven years to reach grade level norms*

for English speakers in English (Lindholm-Leary, 2000), local interpretations of the accountability requirements of NCLB often mandate standardized testing of all students exclusively in English beginning in Grade 3. This narrow notion of accountability challenges the integrity of dual language programs, and we see educators across the country respond to this pressure by increasing the quantity of English in the early years of their dual language program, or by ending their dual language programs altogether.

Ms. Meyer from SD 54, mentioned above, was able to respond effectively to this time-related challenge with longitudinal evidence of student learning in their dual language program. This type of evidence allowed SD 54 dual language educators to maintain the integrity of their dual language programs and expand this program option district wide. When dual language educators choose to respond to accountability demands by increasing the amount of time dedicated to English and decreasing the amount of time dedicated to Spanish to the point that students receive less than 50% of their instruction through Spanish, programs become dual language *in name only*. These programs cannot be expected to deliver the same results as well-implemented dual language programs, and they threaten our collective understanding of what dual language education means in practice. Dual language educators must be mindful of this challenge.

Unfortunately, in the case of the SDP, the TWI programs were eliminated by new district leadership after four years of program development, before they had enough time to develop a longitudinal database of student learning through two languages. With just four years into program development, these educators did not have the evidence they needed to pose a viable challenge to new district administrators with different beliefs about educating bilingual learners in a newly restructured SDP under the narrow accountability requirements of NCLB.

Interestingly, this did not stop the development of other dual language programs in this North Philadelphia community. ASPIRA, a Puerto Rican community-based activist program, opened one dual language charter school around this time and I worked with them on the early years of program and professional development with attention to assessment and accountability. Many of the dual language teachers and administrators who had participated in the Title VII dual language initiative in the SDP public schools took jobs at the charter school as an alternative means of providing dual language education to students and the community. Since that time, ASPIRA has opened several other dual language charter schools in the area.

My experience with SDP teachers and administrators illustrates possibilities and challenges that are faced by educators working with ELLs/bilingual learners on the local level in any language education context. When teachers and administrators work collaboratively through the process to develop educational programs for diverse learners with balanced assessment and accountability systems to drive their decision making, they do not see accountability as a top-down, one-size-fits-all process that relies exclusively on the results of standardized test scores. Furthermore, they do not see accountability as something that they are not involved in themselves. Instead, when teachers and administrators participate in the development of their programs and accountability systems with attention to the implications of their choices for

ELLs/bilingual learners, they take ownership of and responsibility for student learning as well as for their own program and professional development. This bottom-up educators' response provides authentic accountability for all students, particularly bilingual learners. An approach that emerges from and is led by informed educators who are invested in quality dual language education, is also consistent with the U.S. Department of Education calls for collaborative professional learning opportunities, and the use of data to drive decision making.

Striving for Equity for Bilingual Learners From the Bottom Up

We need to get beyond polarizing debates that are framed in terms of simple binary oppositions. When we step back and analyze how education and accountability for ELLs/bilingual learners are framed in national and local debates, we often find evidence of competing discourses. On one hand, we find strong evidence of an assimilationist perspective in which linguistic and cultural diversity is seen as a problem to overcome, particularly among students from low-income households or who have had interrupted prior schooling. Even within the bilingual education and English-as-a-second-language fields, the debate has most commonly been framed in either/or terms with a primary focus on the best or most effective model of bilingual education without paying close attention to how the sociocultural context influences teaching and learning on the local level. However, educating an increasingly linguistically, culturally, and socioeconomically diverse PreK–12 student population in U.S. public schools in rural, suburban, and urban communities in states across the United States is too complex a challenge to realistically believe that this narrow approach will work.

On the other hand, when we analyze the spoken and written texts/discourses of policymakers, administrators, teachers, parents, community members, we also can find evidence of more pluralist discourses at every level of decision making. For example, the Obama administration emphasizes that education is the civil rights issue of our time. As previously stated, the U.S. Department of Education articulated calls for more dual language programs, flexibility and fairness, data systems that provide evidence of student growth and gain, using data to inform instruction, and using data to drive a wide range of decision making. When we look locally, we also find numerous examples of successful programs in which students from linguistically and culturally diverse programs are demonstrating the kinds of growth and gain that research leads us to expect, not only in dual language programs but in all types of programs for bilingual learners. In order for these kinds of innovative programs to thrive and spread, we desperately need to adopt a broader notion of accountability than what we currently see under NCLB and in the meaning of "data-driven decision making" evidenced under Secretary of Education Arne Duncan today.

I have argued in this paper that dual language educators can be important agents of change from the bottom up. Dual language educators who work in pedagogically sound, well-implemented dual language programs that deliver results, broadly defined, may find openings in these kinds of federal calls from the top. Established dual language programs should have the

evidence they need to demonstrate that all of their students achieve academically at or above grade level on standardized tests in English *after five or more years.* Many, if not most, of these programs also use multiple measures of student growth and gain in English and Spanish to guide their bilingual instruction and drive dual language program and professional development. Following the example of Ms. Meyer in SD 54 and numerous other knowledgeable program coordinators, dual language educators can use their multiple measures to (1) demonstrate program effectiveness to external district, state, and federal officials using the results of standardized academic achievement tests in English; *and* (2) demonstrate different pathways to biliteracy using strong longitudinal data in two languages. If dual language educators across the country take up this call, we may see the emergence of a powerful empirical argument for the need to relax standardized testing requirements in earlier years of program implementation not only in dual language programs but in all programs for bilingual learners.

As Gottlieb & Nguyen (2007) also demonstrate, dual language educators can use their multiple measures of quantitative and qualitative data to evaluate their programs and show how ELLs and English speakers perform in TWI programs in comparison with their peers in other types of district programs. This is a research-based approach to understanding biliteracy development and program effectiveness for students from diverse backgrounds, and can contribute to the spread of dual language programs as the federal government seems to be advocating.

I conclude with a cautionary note. Although dual language educators may find ideological space under the Obama administration, this space is not likely to remain open forever. Dual language educators who are working in new dual language programs, or in struggling dual language programs, or who plan to start new dual language programs in the future all need to take steps to build capacity, strengthen their programs, and develop balanced data systems that yield strong longitudinal evidence of student learning in two languages and demonstrate program effectiveness. The guiding questions, principles and frameworks presented throughout this paper are intended to help in these efforts.

We educators and researchers have choices in the ways that we respond to accountability requirements under NCLB. We can react to enormous pressure of NCLB by increasing attention to English, decreasing attention to languages other than English, and paying attention only to the state-mandated standardized test scores. Or we can take action by developing pedagogically sound, well-implemented dual language programs with authentic accountability systems that rely on multiple measures of student learning. Equipped with such systems, we can use data, broadly defined, to improve our programs, practices, and policies, and get involved in the larger conversation about promoting equity and multilingualism to the greatest degree possible for all learners.

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Notes

1 I use the term *bilingual learner* to refer to any student who is learning through two languages regardless of program type, including English language learners (ELLs), heritage language learners, and English speakers learning a language other than English. I use the term *ELL* when referring exclusively to students designated as ELLs at school. I also use the term ELL at times to facilitate communication with those who use the term ELL and are not yet aware of the implications of these different labeling practices. See García (2009) for discussion of implications of this important point.

2 Go to www.cal.org/twi/directory for updated numbers of two-way immersion (TWI) programs in the United States and a searchable database.

3 Following the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), I use the term *dual language program* as an umbrella term that refers to three types of programs: (1) *two-way immersion* (TWI) programs for integrated groups of English speakers and speakers of a partner language (e.g., for students from Japanese and English speaking homes); (2) *one-way developmental bilingual education* (DBE) programs for students who speak a language other than English at home (e.g., Spanish and English for Spanish speakers; and (3) foreign or second language *immersion* programs for students from English-speaking homes (e.g. French and English for students from English speaking homes).

4 There were three Oyster principals during the course of my study, and there have been several others since then.

5 SD 54 also implements a Japanese-English dual language program.

6 I use these same guiding questions and approach with leadership teams in any linguistically and diverse school context. However, we do not focus narrowly on dual language program goal or dual language program options. When I work with most schools, we focus more broadly on critical features of effective programs for ELLs/bilingual learners and with a range of options that would be appropriate for their contexts given consideration of local resources and constraints. See Hamayan & Freeman Field (in press) for details.

7 Heritage language speakers are individuals who have some expertise in their home or heritage language. A heritage language is not the dominant societal language and is part of the individual's linguistic repertoire.