The bilingual student uses his or her two languages as an interdependent system. Knowledge that is acquired in one language readily transfers to the other. However, the bilingual [student] is also able to remember the particular language in which events occurred. (p. 232)


Enrichment approaches, in which children acquire a second language without abandoning their mother tongue, lead to higher levels of bilingual proficiency, along with improved self-esteem and more favorable attitudes toward other cultures. (p. 167)


The Schoolwide Enrichment Model is one of the most successful models in developing the talent potentials of young people by: a) assessing strengths systematically; b) providing enrichment opportunities, resources, and services to develop the strengths of all students; and c) using a flexible approach to curricular differentiation and the use of school time. (p. 294)


What is the NRC/GT?
The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented (NRC/GT) is funded under the Jacob K. Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act, Office of Educational Research and Improvement, United States Department of Education. The mission of the NRC/GT is to plan and conduct theory-driven quality research that is problem-based, practice-relevant, and consumer-oriented.

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University of Connecticut
The National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented
362 Fairfield Road, U-7
Storrs, CT 06269-2007

Practitioners’ Guide – A9713
Valentina Kloosterman & Eva Díaz – Editors
Del Siegle – Series Editor
**Enrichment programs should emphasize students' strengths and allow teachers to facilitate more challenging learning experiences. Students may develop individual and group projects by selecting an interest topic or area of study.**

**Learning environments that encourage bilingualism and value cultural differences support the students' expressions of their strengths and interests. Within these enriched environments, students have the opportunity not only to develop higher levels of bilingual proficiency but also to advance their knowledge in a particular interest area. In addition, by facilitating opportunities for cognitive, affective, and linguistic growth, the learning environments also promote the manifestation and identification of high potential.**

In this respect, it is crucial that teachers show positive and high expectations of their bilingual students as well as be aware of the family culture. Teachers should be given the opportunity to improve their knowledge and skills about working with culturally and linguistically diverse students through professional development opportunities.

Flexible and diverse assessment procedures are recommended for the identification of cognitive strengths, abilities, interests, and learning styles of bilingual students. Both assessment and educational services must consider the age, cultural background, family dynamics, community context, language proficiency, and personal characteristics of each bilingual student.

Programs that provide enrichment opportunities in both languages are highly recommended to promote talent development in all bilingual students, especially high ability bilingual students.

**What a child brings to school in terms of cultural background, experiences, and abilities are essential starting points for the provision of a caring and meaningful education.**

Bilingualism is a very complex phenomenon. It involves cognitive, affective, cultural, environmental, and situational factors. Interactions among these factors cause differences in bilingual students. Hence, the range of proficiency skills in the two languages can vary widely, from fluent bilingualism to limited communicative skills in either one of the two languages. The optimal level is known as balanced bilingualism. At this level, the bilingual student shows age-appropriate abilities and feels at ease in both languages. Actually, the closer the child is to this level, the greater the cognitive and social benefits to him or her. Bilingual children may be more flexible in their thinking (reasoning and discussion) mainly because of the constant switching and the awareness of using both languages.

The development of bilingual language abilities (listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking) across the life-span involves the bilingual child alternating the use of the two languages, according to the situation and the context.

**BILINGUALISM**

"Rainbows in the sky, leaves and flowers on the trees, waves of the sea... nature as a kaleidoscope shows its beauty and total harmony in diverse forms and colors. I cannot wait for that day when human beings learn this wise lesson for themselves."

- Valentina Kloosterman