Language and Educational Equity: New Mexico & New Brunswick

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Educational Equity: Global and National Strategies
May 2, 2009
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Research Question

In regions of language contact, what policies promote educational equity among the constituent language groups?

Language Contact
The presence of more than one spoken language in a geographic area.

Educational Equity
(1) Elevating status of both languages (language planning)

(2) Promoting individual bilingualism
Why Language?

- “…people in collectivities pick up on the slightest sign of…the way a person uses language—and reads all sorts of things into it…” (Lambert, 1981)
- “[a language with preferred status] gives those who use it certain social advantages; and it increases their life chances. [Low status] varieties tend to produce the opposite effect” (Wardaugh, 2006)
Article 29
1. States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to: (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own;

Article 30
In those States in which ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities or persons of indigenous origin exist, a child belonging to such a minority or who is indigenous shall not be denied the right, in community with other members of his or her group, to enjoy his or her own culture, to profess and practise his or her own religion, or to use his or her own language.
## Language Contact

- Two dominant language populations
- Atypical linguistic / ethnic proportions relative to country as whole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Native French Speakers, 2006</th>
<th>Percent of People 5 Years and Over Who Speak Spanish at Home 2006</th>
<th>Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2006</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Canada 21.8% +/- 0.0%</td>
<td>US 12.2% +/- 1.0%</td>
<td>US 14.8% +/- 0.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NB 32.4% +/- 0.0%</td>
<td>NM 28.8% +/- 0.6%</td>
<td>NM 44.0% +/- 0.0%</td>
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Methods

Interviews:
- Students (university)
- Parents
- Teachers
- Administrators
- Policy informants (academics)
- Policy makers/overseers (legislators & Education dept./ministry)

- Classroom observation
New Mexico

- History
  - Spanish rule (1598 – 1821)
  - Mexican rule (1821 – 1846)

- Constitution (1912)

- Article XII, Section 8:
  “The legislature shall provide for the training of teachers in the normal [public] schools or otherwise so that they may become proficient in both the English and Spanish languages, to qualify them to teach Spanish-speaking pupils and students in the public schools and educational institutions of the state, and [my italics] shall provide proper means and methods to facilitate the teaching of the English language and other branches of learning to such pupils and students.”
New Mexico

- **English-Plus State (Legislative) (1989)**
  - “Proficiency in English plus other languages should be encouraged throughout the state”

- **Multicultural State (Executive) (2006)**
  - “urge all citizens to reflect on the valuable contributions…made by New Mexicans of diverse cultures…”
New Mexico

- Bilingual Programs
  - Maintenance
  - Transitional
  - Enrichment
  - Heritage
  - Dual Language

- Bilingual and Multicultural Education Department - Public Education Dept (PED)

STATE BILINGUAL MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

GOALS: The commitment of Bilingual Education programs is for all students to: (1) become bilingual and biliterate in two languages: English and a second language, which could be Spanish, a Native American language or another language; and (2) meet state academic content standards and benchmarks in all subject areas.
New Mexico

- **Dual Language**
  - Two-Way
  - Language is medium of instruction - not content
  - Funded up to 3 hours per day
  - 50-50 or 90-10 (Spanish-English)

- Most common in Elementary School (K-5)

- When implemented as intended, results in bilingual speakers

- Anecdotally, children in Dual Language have higher academic achievement than students in English-only (Student achievement aggregated by ELL/FEP status, not by program)
New Mexico

Key Issues

- Student achievement aggregated by ELL/FEP status, not by program
- No Cap on Funding
- Decision Making Decentralized
- Broad Goals
- No Child Left Behind (NCLB)
New Brunswick

- **History**
  - Settled by French in 1604
  - Came under British rule in 1713
- **English lingua franca through 1950s**
- **Official Languages of New Brunswick Act (1969)**
- **Principle of Duality adopted in 1971**
  - Intended to Valorize and Insulate the French language
  - Created parallel Francophone and Anglophone sectors in Ministry of Education (and other ministries)
New Brunswick

  - Core: Intermediate French
    - 45 Minutes/day
  - Early French Immersion (EFI): Advanced French
    - Similar to 90-10 beginning Grade 1
  - Late French Immersion (LFI): Intermediate Plus French
    - 70-30 beginning Grade 6
- Minister Lamrock Decision (February – March 2008)
  - Core and EFI result in streaming
  - Failure of Core
  - High cost of EFI
- Anglophone District French (2008 - )
  - No Core
  - EFI Grade 3
  - Intensive French Grade 5
  - Grade 6-12 Post-Intensive or LFI

One-Way Programs
New Brunswick

- Key Issues
  - Decision making centralized
  - Articulated Goals
  - One-Way
  - Nature of Bilingualism
  - Educators purposefully avoid advising parents about language education
« Il se peut très bien qu’on pourrait [au Nouveau-Mexique] maintenir la langue espagnole. Parce qu’entre la langue hispanique et la langue anglaise, le Nouveau-Mexique, avec le Mexique qui n’est pas très loin également, il y a un équilibre. Donc le fait pour les Espagnols ou les Mexicains d’apprendre l’anglais ne leur fait pas perdre nécessairement leur langue espagnole. [En Ontario ou en Louisiane] les francophones seraient submergés par les anglophones qui sont tellement nombreux…il n’y a pas cet équilibre-là entre les deux communautés…qu’elle [la langue française] ne peut pas survivre dans un contexte de bilinguisme. À moins qu’on lui donne un milieu qui est proprement sien, comme on l’a fait au Nouveau-Brunswick»

-Michel Doucet, Professeur de droit, Université de Moncton

“It is very possible that in New Mexico the Spanish language can be maintained because with Spanish and English, Mexico is not very far and there is an equilibrium. So the task for Spanish speakers to learn English doesn’t necessarily make them lose their Spanish. [In Ontario or Louisiana] francophones would be submerged by the number of anglophones…there is not the same equilibrium between the two communities…so that the French language can not survive in a bilingual context. At least we give French a properly healthy environment, as we do in New Brunswick.”

–Michel Doucet, Professor of Law, University of Moncton
Discussion | Populism vs. Power

- Gaarder & Kjolseth vs. Lewis

NM:
“only a strong popular movement…can put bilingual education in the hands of the parents whose children will be most affected by it, and only such control is either educationally effective or morally defensible” (Fishman, 1977)

NB:
Language is so vital that only gov’t can be entrusted with overseeing the associated power dynamics
Conclusions

- Dual Language
  - Pluralistic
  - Achieves Additive Bilingualism when implemented as intended

- French Immersion
  - Not Pluralistic
  - Achieves Additive Bilingualism (Through target language paradigm)
Conclusions

- Policies intended to promote equity among language groups must account for the presence or absence of equilibrium between the language groups.
- Societal bilingualism can only be promoted when an equilibrium is attained.
- Neither New Mexico (through voluntary and inconsistent implementation of programs) nor New Brunswick (by virtue of Duality) maintains a culture of educational equality.
- Can educational equity exist where there is no educational equality?