Using Cognates in Spanish/English Bilingual Classrooms

Language Matters Conference
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Workshop Objectives

- Explain the benefits of explicitly teaching cognates in dual language classrooms
- Discuss next steps to teach cognates in your classroom
My goal as a Dual Language Teacher

- To promote academically bilingual and biliterate students
Spanish and English are good friends!
“The goal is for students to be aware of their own language practices as well as those of their peers as they are engaged in learning activities.”

(Garcia, & Sylvan, 2011, p.398)
Metalinguistic Focus

- Is the opportunity to focus on explicit instruction on the similarities and differences of Spanish and English.

- For example, **cognates**, prefixes, suffixes, and articles.

Beeman, & Urow, 2012
Cognates

Cognates are words in two languages that have a common origin and thus are similar or identical and have the same meaning.

de Jong, 2011
Examples of Cognates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPANISH</th>
<th>ENGLISH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sólidos</td>
<td>Solids</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color</td>
<td>Color</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Textura</td>
<td>Texture</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Did you know...

• In a study of 86 critical science words 76% of those words were Spanish/English cognates.

Bravo, Hiebert & Pearson, 2007
Cognates Wall
STOP!

KEEP CALM
AND PROCEED WITH CAUTION
False Cognates

False Cognates are words in two languages that have a common origin and thus are similar or identical **BUT DO NOT** have the same meaning.
Examples of False Cognates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SPANISH</th>
<th>ENGLISH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Embarazada</td>
<td>Embarrassed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Éxito</td>
<td>Exit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colegio</td>
<td>College</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grocerías</td>
<td>Groceries</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Let’s identify some cognates!

The work of Gabriel Villa is an exploration of individual and communal experience in the Pilsen neighborhood and beyond. The use of iconographic imagery allows for a deepened introspection of the self and the world around us in terms of issues prevalent in our society. The layering effect of such imagery in Villa’s work parallels the interconnectedness of contemporary social structures and demonstrates the imbalance and blurred lines between the individual, community, justice and injustice.

Recurring motifs throughout the artwork on display, such as the cross and other recognizable symbols, build a bridge between some of the most powerful institutions in our country and their influence on our shared experiences. Furthermore, Villa’s pieces offer a more personal and local experience of the economic disparities of neighborhoods, as well as raise questions about safety.

As such, Villa’s work is being displayed in the Kraft Gallery, a space dedicated to the work of local, emerging professional artists. His work invites us to reflect and be a part of the discourse on social inequities that exist in our complex society.

This exhibition considers some of the ills/perils engendered by the complex social, political, and religious structures that we encounter on a regular basis in our society and not only impact the self, but our local communities and the nation at large.
Group Activity

- Let’s get into small groups
- Find cognates in your books
- Watch out for those FALSE COGNATES
- Let’s create a cognates wall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Español</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CONSIDERING NEXT STEPS

- How can I get my students to be excited about cognates?
- When can I explicitly teach cognates in my classroom?
- Can I think about a way to incorporate teaching cognates during small group activities?
- Do I have a space in my classroom to include a cognates wall?
Resources

- Spanishdict
  http://www.spanishdict.com/translation

- Colorín Colorado
  http://www.colorincolorado.org/educators/background/cognates/

- Illinois Resource Center
References


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THANK YOU!