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EBS 330: Ghanaian Language as MoI

Unit 3: Theoretical Concepts that Support MTB-BMoI

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Outline

- Recap of Unit 2

- Theoretical Concepts that Support MTBBMoI

- Language-Building Activities to Enrich BICS and CALP

- Benefits of MTB-BMoI in Multilingual Societies

Theoretical Concepts that Support MTB-BMoI

The Threshold Theory (T-Theory)

- A minimum threshold in the first language proficiency must be attained before a second-language speaker can reap any benefits from language learning.

- Language learner's mastery in the L1 is transferred to the learning of the L2.
    - In order to gain proficiency in L2, the learner must also have passed a certain and basic level of competence in their L1
    - If learners able to master their L1 very well to a certain level, they will transfer the skills and concepts in the learning of the L1 into the learning of the L2
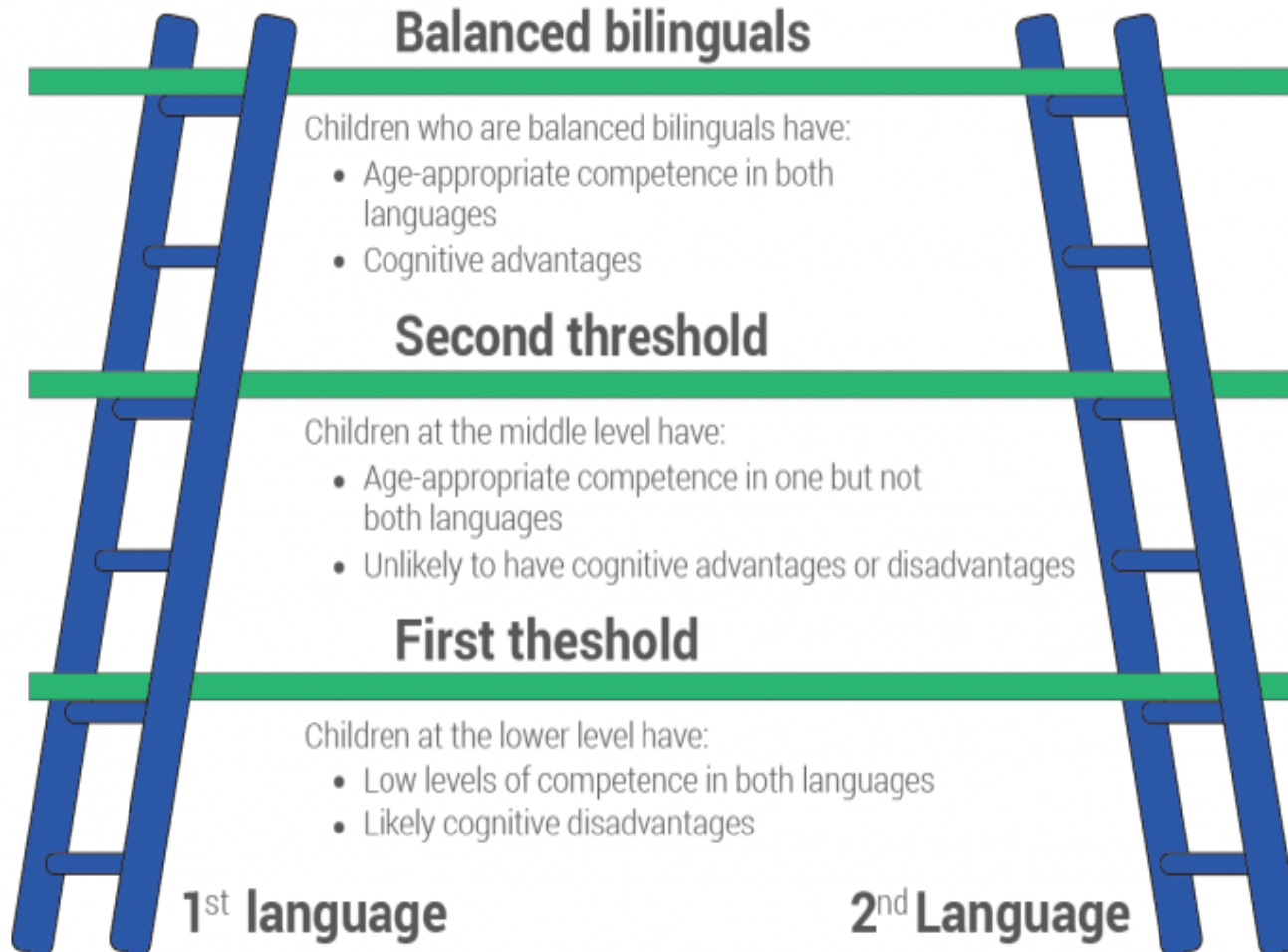
The T-Theory Cont'd

- It is believed that the language learner moves upward through three identifiable levels, crossing two distinct thresholds in between levels.
    - The *first threshold* is a level for a child to reach to avoid the negative consequences of bilingualism.
    - The *second threshold* is a level required to experience the possible positive benefits of bilingualism.
- Each threshold is a level of language competence that has consequences for the language learner.
- According to this theory, positive cognitive advantages are only achieved when the first and second thresholds have been crossed.

- *See the visual representation of the levels on the next slide*

Visual Representation of Language Learning Threshold

The Threshold Theory

Balanced bilinguals

Children who are balanced bilinguals have:
- Age-appropriate competence in both languages
- Cognitive advantages

Second threshold

Children at the middle level have:
- Age-appropriate competence in one but not both languages
- Unlikely to have cognitive advantages or disadvantages

First theshold

Children at the lower level have:
- Low levels of competence in both languages
- Likely cognitive disadvantages

1st language   2nd Language

Theoretical Concepts that Support MTB-BMoI

Linguistic interdependence

- This posits that in bilingual education, both languages (L1 and L2) bolster each other in the learner's language acquisition.

- The import of this theoretical construct is that, in L2 learning, certain knowledge and skills in the L1 can be positively transferred during the learning of the L2.

- The L1 structures a language learner develops prior to the exposure of the L2 predicts the L2 learning outcomes.

Theoretical Concepts that Support MTB-BMoI

Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP)

- The import of the CUP is that, when a person is learning more than one language, the knowledge and abilities that he/she acquires in one language are potentially available for the development of another language.

- The CUP model shows that in learning more than one language, the languages operate from the same central operating system with the L1 providing the base for the operating system.

- The CUP gives every learner the ability to learn new languages indicating that every individual is a potential bilingual.

Visual Illustration of the Cup

Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP)

FIRST LANGUAGE FEATURES

SECOND LANGUAGE FEATURES

SURFACE LEVEL

COMMON UNDERLYING PROFICIENCY
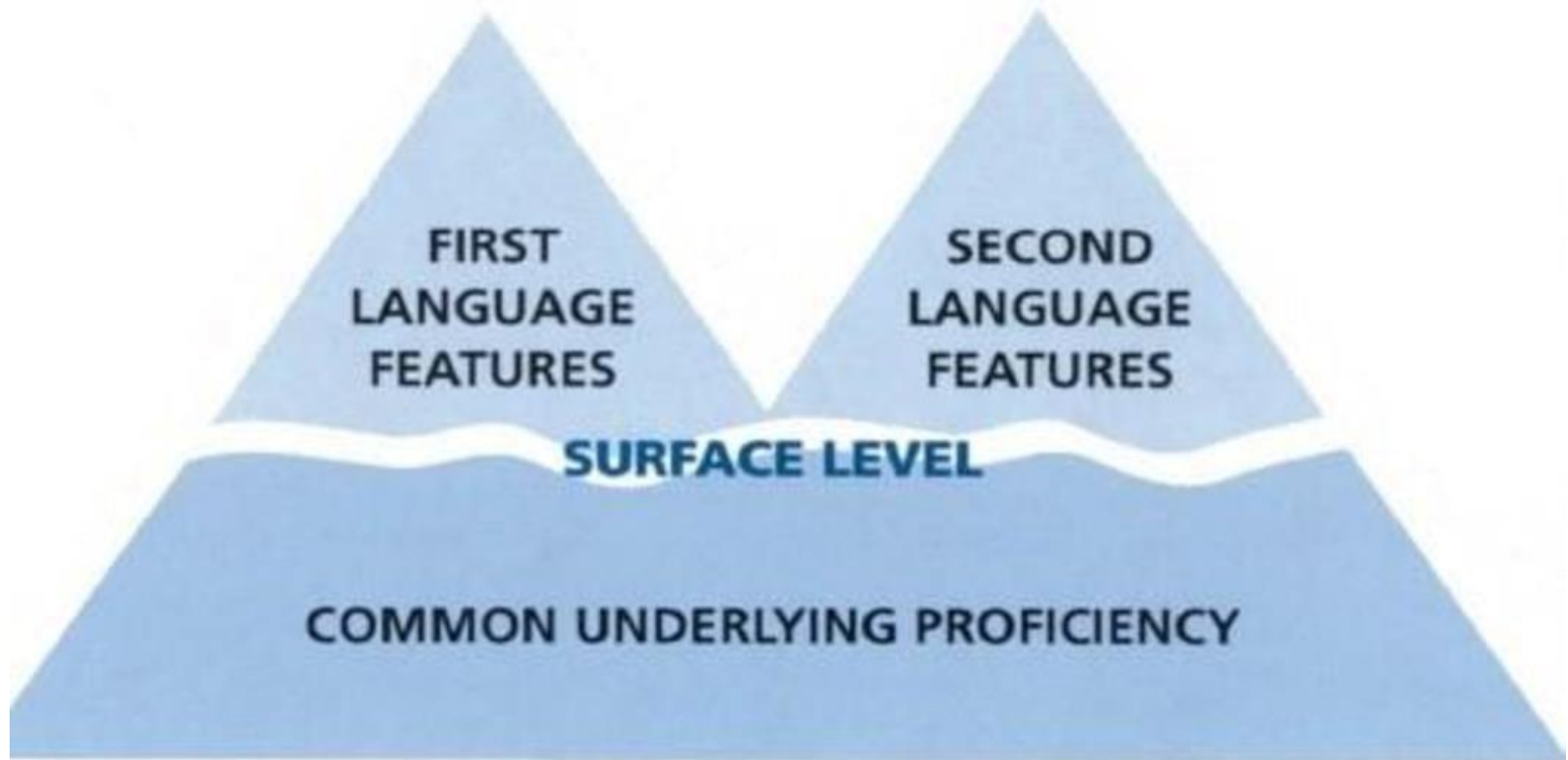
Cummins, 1980

Theoretical Concepts that Support MTB-BMoI

Bilingual bootstrapping

- This is a situation where bilingual children temporarily pool their knowledge across languages as resources in their language learning process.

- The import of this concept is that, bilingual learners' language development in the L2 can be advanced by the learner's L1 and as time goes on the two languages could bolster each other.

- In learning two languages, each language benefits from the other to foster their acquisition process.

- This is how bilingual learners use bootstrapping as an advantage in the learning of two or more languages.

Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS)

- This is sometimes referred to as *Playground language, Everyday language, Social language, Contextualized language,* or *Surface fluency*.

- It is the development of conversational fluency in language learning.

- BICS is the kind of language used in face-to-face interaction.

- It is the language needed for social interaction.

- Due to its nature, language learners acquire this aspect of language learning easier and faster.

- The language needed for BICS is not specialized.

***Examples of the use of BICS in the classroom include*:**

- Understanding of basic written exercises;

- understanding and using non-verbal communication;
- understanding and using simple and short texts, etc.

Key Elements of BICS

- *Context Rich*: Topics are usually concrete and easy to understand (comprehension is contextual).

- *Cognitively Undemanding*: Easy to understand everyday language, simple sentences or structures.

- *Easy to Acquire*: It takes 2 to 5 years to acquire and/or learn as a second or foreign language (L2).

- **BICS** often refers to the acquisition of the speaking and listening skills of a language under study.

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP)

- It can be referred to as *Academic Language, School Language*, or the *Language of Academic Decontextualized Situations*.

- The CALP is the language abilities L2 learners need to possess for school or academic tasks.

- It is the ability to understand and express, in both oral and written modes, concepts and ideas that are relevant to succeed in school is dependent on their level of the CALP.

- L2 learners need the CALP skills for inferring, classifying, comparing, evaluating and synthesizing language for content subjects.

Key Elements of CALP

- **Context Reduced**: Use to comprehend topics that are more abstract and need a certain level of prior knowledge.
- **Cognitively Demanding**: Needs specialized vocabulary (subject specific registers) and more complex language structure.
- It takes 5 to 7 years to acquire and/or learn L2.
- CALP is used with all language skills.

Note: Sometimes students may demonstrate strong BICS but may not have strong CALP
  - *L2 learners need both the **BICS** and **CALP** to enable them use the language effectively.*
  - Teachers using MTB-BMoI ought to employ instructional activities intended to foster L2 learners' BICS and CALP

Language-Building Activities To Foster BICS

- One of the barriers to learning the BICS of the L2 is the fear of making mistakes. Therefore, teachers ought to adopt activities that could help minimize it.

- The use of oral activity-oriented strategies like "Role play", "Storytelling", etc. could encourage learners to use language in authentic situations.

Examples of Interactive language activities that enhance the acquisition of BICS in the L2:

Name Circle

- This is a good Introductory or Morning Circle time activity. The instructor needs to give learners few minutes discussion before they commence the activity

  - In this activity, learners sit in circle and the teacher models the activity by giving his or her name.

  - The learner next to the teacher continues by first pointing at the teacher and mentions the teachers name before she tells her own name. For

example 'This is Ms. Mensah (Teacher's name) and I am John Ansah (Student's name).

Name Circle Cont'd

- This activity continues until everybody in the circle mention their names and that of the person next to them.

- To make the activity more fun, teachers can use a toy as a changeover object for the moderation.

- With more advanced learners, more complex statements could be used, e.g.
  - The girl with the green dress is Aba.
  - The boy in spectacles sitting next to her is Kofi.

- The major rule in this activity is that those students whose names have been forgotten by the person whose turn it is, has to stand up. They may sit down again when their names have been recalled correctly.

Language-Building Activities To Foster BICS Cont'd

Grapevine (Whispers)

- This is a type of game where the teacher whispers something in the ears of a student and ask him/her to whisper what he/she heard to another student.

- This type of rumor mongering continues until every student has had a turn.

- If the class has large enrollment, form small grapevines with about 4 to 5 students per vine.

Language-Building Activities To Foster BICS Cont'd

Buddy Walk and Share: In this activity, after the question or the problem is posed, students are encouraged to be in pairs for the discussion activities.

- The buddies (paired students) walk around in pairs having a discussion on a given question, problem, or topic.

- Give ample time for the learners to think, discuss and present their opinions in the L2.

- Encourage buddies to come back and share with the class what their thoughts were about the given subject.

- To make the discussion more authentic to learners, the topic for discussion should be on areas that could expose

them to everyday expressions. Such topics motivate learners to genuinely participate in the discussion.

Language-Building Activities To Foster BICS Cont'd

Examples of topics for this BICS language activities include:

- Asking and giving directions
- Answering phone calls
- Buying from a shop/store
- Exchanging pleasantries e.g. leaving and returning from school, early morning classroom interactions, meeting a friend, meeting known elderly person, etc.
- Showing politeness e.g. thanking others, saying sorry, etc.

- Self/Friend/Item description (learners either describe themselves to their partner, describe their partner and vice versa, or describe a given object)

Language-Building Activities To Foster BICS Cont'd

Picture/Flashcard Charade Activity

- Charades is a word game played without the main player speaking.

- This game could be played anywhere, in pairs or in teams.

- In this activity, gives each of them (Learners/Teams) a picture by placing the picture face down so that partners cannot see each other's card.

- A partner describes the picture for the other partner to draw, tell or describe after which each partner tells how he/she was able to guess right or had a challenge in guessing right.

- The main player only uses hand gestures and other body movements to describe the chosen word or phrase for the partner or team members to guess what the word or phrase is.

- Learners are free to express themselves by so doing improving their BICS in the L2.
- Effective enactment of this activity could trigger even the shy learners to come out with what they have in mind thereby making the L2 learning easy and authentic.

Language-Building Activities To Foster BICS Cont'd

Word/Phrase Charades

- Word or Phrase charades is a fun, interactive game that could be used to assist learners to develop L2 oral and/or vocabulary skills.
- It could be used to make students review and practice words sets that they are learning in class, or general L2 vocabulary words.
- In this activity, learners are put in teams or groups where one of the members act out words and/or phrases for which their teammates guess what it is.

Procedure:

- Prepare some words or phrases beforehand, based on the sub-strand or topic being studied.

- Divide the class into two and let each group or team choose their first leader.

- Team A sends their leader who randomly chooses a paper and then describes by acting it out to their team to guess the chosen word or phrase.

- When the group guesses right, the leader takes another word or phrase and the game continues.

- Alternatively, the students can rotate the leadership role among themselves during the course of a single round (In this case, increase the time for a round).

- The next team takes their turn using different words.

- If possible design a prize tag to be given to the winners

Language-Building Activities To Foster BICS Cont'd

Meet my Friend

- This is an introductory activity suitable for the early days in the class.

- It assists students to develop their skill in introducing their friends to each other.

- In this activity, students role play to introduce themselves to each other after which they transition to introducing their friends (each other) to the class.

- It becomes effective when the teacher models it before asking the learners to replicate her action.

- *Example:*

- Hello my name is _____.

- I would like you to meet my friend _____.
- He/she is in class _____ and s/he likes to _____.

Language-Building Activities To Foster CALP

Alphabet Hunt

- This CALP activity is appropriate to enable students identify and write the letters of the alphabet of the L2.
- In this activity, the teacher creates a column on the left side of a big cardboard and tells learners to identify the letters of the alphabet of the assigned rows or column.
- For example, in English language, learners are made to write all the 26 letters of the alphabet in that column starting from A in the first row and ending with Z in the last row.
- The teacher then gives the students the available children's books with images, and ask them to hunt for a picture which begins with each of the

Language-Building Activities To

letters of the alphabet e.g. learners are asked to find a picture which begins with the letter "**b**" like *bag, ball, boy*, etc.

- When they are able to point out the right picture or pictures, write the name of the picture or image by the letter written on the cardboard.

- To make the activity more interesting and authentic, help learners paste match the cut out picture by the letter or the name.

- ***In upper classes, have learners play vocabulary or terminology hunt where learners either explain and/or make sentence with the found word.***

Foster CALP Cont'd

Pick from the Cup

- In this game, instructional sticks or cutout papers with different inscriptions are kept in a clean and dry container.

- This activity could be a whole class or small group activity.

- It could also be a good brain break activity.
- The writings (inscriptions) on the sticks/papers could vary from daily routine through favourite food and games to a topic under study.
- Depending on the focus of the activity, have learners pick a stick and follow the instruction on the selected stick or cutout paper.
- This activity assists learners to practice verbal skills by sharing their responses to the requirement on the selected sticks.

Language-Building Activities To Pick from the Cup Cont'd

- Teachers can let learners write the requirement on the selected stick e.g. learners could be asked to talk or write about their favourite food or game. i.e. after picking a stick bearing a "favourite game" by a learner. (*this depends on learner's ability level in the L2*).

▪ This activity could be used teach different subject or concepts in the L2.

- Teachers can use this activity for different groups to work on different aspects of the topic under discussion.

Foster CALP Cont'd

Verb in a Bag

- Despite the name, the activity could be used to teaching the different aspects of language (e.g. Word Classes).

- Therefore, the name could be modified to reflect the focus of the lesson.

- It is also a good revision activity. For example, the current sub-session is tagged "Verb in a Bag" so it is to be used for the teaching of verbs. However, the procedures are the same or similar.

- Prior to the activity, the teacher prepares word cards according to the focus of the lesson (Tenses-Regular Verbs). Here, learner could be made to give the past tense of the

Language-Building Activities To

chosen verb, another group member makes a sentence with it, etc.

- Students could be asked to make (write) a sentence each for the chosen verb(s) in their respective groups.

Language-Building Activities To Foster CALP Cont'd

Object Description Game

- This is a strategy or activity used to review adjective lessons where learners are given an object to describe.

- No learners is allowed to show their object to the group before the description game begins.

- Students use their adjective skills by writing their description of their object on a card.

- Learners then place their description card on the table for the teacher to read their cards to the class.
- The rest of the students guess what object is described.
- Teachers could have a concrete focus for the activity, e.g. colour & shape adjectives, personality adjectives, character adjectives, emotion adjectives, etc.
- Teachers can make learners use the accordion template to do the description.

Benefits of MTB-BMoI in Multilingual Societies

Academic Benefits of MTB-BMoI To Multilingual Societies

- MTB-BMoI creates conducive learning environment and maximizes students' class participation.
- It fosters non-native L2 teachers' instruction thereby enhancing students' academic achievement.
- It scaffolds the learning of the L2.
- There is positive health implication in bilingualism.

- Bilingualism enhances the executive functioning of learners.
- It helps lay solid academic foundation for future learning since learners comprehend concepts taught from the beginning of their schooling

Benefits of MTB-BMoI in Multilingual Societies Cont'd

Social Benefits of MTB-BMOI To Multilingual Societies

- There is a strong relationship between socio-emotional skills and students' academic achievement.

- Strong socio-emotional skills lead to positive self-esteem and identity which are vital components to students' success.
- Bilingualism supports learners to maintain strong ties with their extended family members.
- It bridges the language gap between the home and the school due to the use of the child's L1 as medium at the early years.
- It prepares the products of education for the global market.

Wrapping up

- Two Stars and a Wish

- **<u>For Next Class</u>**

The use of Ghanaian language as a resource