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SHARED INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT IN BILINGUAL EDUCATION

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Abstract

Addressing the need for relevant and meaningful teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language in the 21st Century, a bilingual education program catering to Asian ESL learners, in particular, Koreans and Chinese, was the thrust of the research. Using the qualitative approach, areas of response, content, process, support, behavior, validation, credit, and acknowledgment were delved into for assessment. How these matters of immediate concern in a language academy are seriously taken and actualized were the focus in the study. Significant results produced are challenging enough for further research undertakings on educational management. The Shared Instructional Management (SIM) adopted by the administration and the teaching staff makes the present set-up attuned to bi-literacy, specific to Asians, using English, the acknowledged universal lingua-franca, to communicate in the rapidly-changing globalized world.

Keywords

Bi-literacy, Bilingual Education, Shared Instructional Management

1. Introduction

As the age of globalization continuously disarms even the most advanced and well-planned strategists in international relations, there is one element that keeps the system in check. There is a common bond that makes existence and survival manageable and that is language.

Language serves as a representation of the distinction of a people, a community and a culture where communication is basically what keeps them apart from the rest. Yet, it can be a symbol of oneness that may isolate it from the world.

Thus naturally explains how a second language becomes truly essential to be in touch with the bigger group. In addition to the native language, the mother tongue is supplemented by the second language to communicate with others. This also justifies the principle of interdependence working amidst the international community of nations. Not one nation can claim to survive detached from the rest.

The 21st century has English as the international lingua franca to make certain that interdependence works. As a universal second language, it all the more rationalizes the thrust in bilingualism, which advocates being equipped with two or more languages to effectively communicate with others. Thus has sparked too the resurgence of bilingual education, which before set controversies as to its feasibility.

In the Iceberg Analogy and the Common Underlying Proficiency(CUP) Model of Bilingualism (Cummins 1980, 1981), bilingual or multilingual education is possible because people have the capacity to store easily two or more languages. They can also function in two (2) or more languages with relative ease.

In this light, therefore, and with the increasing number of educational institutions in most parts of the world subscribing to idea of bilingualism and responding to the need for viable bilingual education programs, the researcher seriously embarks on this project.

1.1 Background of the Study

The influx of foreign language students to avail of bilingual education is no longer a phenomenon. This is especially true in the Philippines where the cost of education is cheap and the quality of instruction is not far behind from countries whose native language is English, the top in ranking among the other preferred languages to learn.

In the Philippines, Koreans outnumber the other Asian foreign language learners enrolled in schools offering bilingual education. Academies offering language programs have

similarly been accepting Koreans who are hopeful that an additional language apart from their mother tongue can widen their horizons and guarantee life survival.

To be proficient English speakers is tantamount to a solid education, promising career opportunities and economic progress. The world seems to have its arms wide open to them. To a Korean family, there is no turning back for a member packing his bags to go to the Philippines to be part of an English program. In a year or two, the basics of learning the language are likely to equip the second language learner communication skills in preparation for higher order life skills.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The issue that the paper shall focus on is the viability of the bilingual education programs offered to second language learners, in particular, the Koreans. It intends to probe into the instructional management of one such academic institution catering to Koreans.

In the analysis and discussion of the study, the research aims to determine the strengths and limitations of the existing program. In justifying its findings, it resolves to determine what may be an alternative bilingual education program to the one presently implemented.

1.3 Significance of the Study

The proposed alternative bilingual education program is presented not to replace the existing one. From the perspective of the researcher who takes an objective stand on the management of the instructional part, there may be areas for enhancement or concerns for immediate attention.

It is not a question anymore that a language program has for its ultimate aim the language proficiency of the enrollees. In the bilingual set-up, this is also true. This is not difficult to attain, banking on the Developmental Independence Hypothesis, a component of Cummins' framework that suggests that bilingual proficiency is developmentally interdependent, that is, the development of first language competence can contribute to the second language development. If it can, then does it hold true in the program formulated by the language school? That is presupposing that the students are linguistically-developed in their native languages.

The research shall delve into the current practices adopted in the program itself. It identifies those which are worth-retaining and adds those which are worth-trying. No attempts

to overhaul the present set-up are to be made. In the first place, the present implementers know best what the main stakeholders expect of them.

1.4 Scope and Delimitation of the Topic

The study is confined to the academy set-up where the school population is not as large as the regular school. It shall also just focus on its English program since the institution's thrust is English instruction.

The fact that most of its students go to regular schools where they are enrolled in a curriculum that has English taught with math, science, and other academic subjects, the school-participant is rightly categorized as an academy. In few instances though, parents whose children have difficulties in their science and math in their regular schools make arrangements with management for tutorial sessions with selected teachers.

Research also zeroes in the instructional management of the program and doesn't look into the accompanying aspects of running the school. Incidental matters that may however be indirectly related to teaching may be mentioned.

Management of bilingual instruction is the issue at hand. Hence, the content of the program, teaching-learning strategies, learning materials, teacher effectiveness, program assessment and evaluation are the key points in the paper.

2. Methodology

2.1 Research Design

The qualitative method was used for data-gathering. Interviews with the head teacher, teacher-supervisor, and selected teachers and students were conducted from which were derived information to come up with a description of the present set-up management instruction. Student-interviewees were classified as beginners and advanced in level. The interviews were videotaped, a few footages vital to the discussion of the results accompanied with transcriptions and are included in the appendices.

Class observations were scheduled to determine teaching strategies and methods employed by the teachers in attaining desired objectives. In between class interactions were brief interviews on the language structure presented including the materials used to as teaching aids.

A recall of the researcher's stay in the school as a teacher for two summers was a privilege to being granted the permission to conduct the study as well as prepare the questions asked during the interviews. One-on-one encounters with the Koreans in her ESL teaching gave her an advantage of having a microscopic look into the system of instruction (that was, however, two years ago).

2.2 Research Locale

The school is an academy where the language students have for their native language, Korean and the target language, English. It is situated in the commercial center of Mandaluyong City which abound in condominiums whose dwellers are foreign language students, foreign businessmen and the like. Although it focuses on English program for Koreans as its clientele, non-Koreans are accepted as well, most of whom are Asians having similar language barrier difficulties in communicating. There had been Chinese, Japanese, and even Filipinos for its students.

2.3 Research Sample

Cluster sampling was used for the limited number of students available for observations and interviews. Classification into beginners, intermediate and advanced levels couldn't make it otherwise, too. It is lean season likewise, meaning most of the Koreans who were enrolled in the recently-concluded regular term (two to three months) are in Korea for vacation.

Teachers chosen for the interviews were the regular ones whose shift is the 8:00 A.M–5:00 P.M. working hours. Availability and convenience were regarded bases for selection.

2.4 Research Instruments

A letter of permission was forwarded to the Head Teacher to be granted permission to pursue the investigative study. There wasn't any resistance at all for it is wished that whatever good that may come out of the project may be deliberated upon by the management for implementation.

Instrument used to determine a profile of the language learners as participants in the study was the Needs Analysis. Administered in English, it sought personal information of the respondents, their needs and desires in learning the target second language, communication

skills preferences and extent of the use of the language. Self-ratings in terms of language proficiency were also asked in the form.

The company profile was handed for a look into its history and its Vision-Mission. Copies of the Man-to-Man Study Program for the six levels were also provided, together with evaluation tests for admission purposes. Sample lesson plans, quizzes, and drills were provided as well as the weekly lesson and evaluation reports. Pages from books on listening exercises were made available, too.

Photos of the library, bulletin board and cubicles for the classroom were taken to determine their functionality in creating an atmosphere conducive to learning. Photo sessions included the staff tasked with maintaining smooth flow of operations of the academy. Trivial these may be but they matter much in a school setting.

2.5 Data Collection Procedure

A timetable was constructed as a guide to observe process in the conduct of the research. Adjustments were made, however, due to unforeseen circumstances that prevented the activities planned to push through.

Telephone calls and visits were scheduled to make sure the documents needed were already available for pick-up. Follow-up visits had to be done to augment data collected.

2.6 Data Analysis Procedure

Owing to the qualitative method used in the study, analysis depended largely on the content in the documents obtained from the school administrators, interviews made and classroom observations conducted by the researcher. Analyses had been substantiated by sessions on “Instructional Management in Bilingual Education Programs” which is a major course in the doctoral program she was enrolled in. Journal readings, books, theses and dissertations about the subject were consulted for the added inputs.

3. Results and Discussion

The language academy has been in the educational service for nine (9) years. Founded in 2006, it has for its clientele mostly Koreans availing of the Man-to-Man Study Program to be effective users of English as an international language.

Objectives of the company are the following:

- Teach English to non-English speaking foreign students;
- Train teachers on how to teach English to foreign nationals from non-English speaking nations;
- Produce instructional materials for the education of non-English speaking students;
- Uplift the level of learning; and
- Promote harmony and good relations among nations.

Its *Mission* is to promote, establish and maintain educational centers information and documentation facilities in the field of English education and to produce instructional materials for the education of non-English speaking nationals to improve their level of awareness and learning. In consonance with this is its *Vision* of a global community in which Effective English Education is available to all who wish to use it with assistance from competent teachers and effective instructional materials readily available and accessible.

As an educational foundation, its primary authority is the Board of Directors. The Vice-President for Operations is held exclusively responsible for the daily operations of the foundation. The main departments include the Vice-President's Office, the offline/online operations, the Human Resources, the Manager and the Academics.

Teaching professionals and academic facilitators specialized in improving the potentials and skills of the teaching staff to become competent in educating students from any part of the world form the organization whose commitment is to see English as a valuable tool and resource in building relationships among people in different nations.

The ideals are definitely there to be realized in the carrying out of the mission, vision and objectives of the company. The school policy of "No turning down of students for admission" is observed strictly in the evaluation tests given to applicants prior to their acceptance in the levels they are best fit for. In the process then, those with even near zero knowledge of the English language stand a chance of entering the school.

The six (6) levels which these students are classified are the low beginners, high beginners, low intermediate, high intermediate, low advanced and high advanced groups. The content of the exam determines their level of understanding using listening, speaking, reading and writing, as the four (4) macro skills for communication.

Identification of weak areas is a criterion used in assigning teachers to handle the students in the one-to-one study program. Practically, the program most appropriate for the second language learners is adopted.

The administration and the teachers monitor the progress of the students on a weekly basis. Teachers deliberate whether to keep one in the program for an extension or advance him/her to the next level. Consultations with the head teacher and teacher supervisor are made before a final decision is given.

The coverage of the program runs for the first part a month or twenty (20) days or so. In a two-hour session, a lot has to be accomplished by the teacher to decide how the lessons are presented and the targeted skills developed and mastered. Tough for the starters, specifically the low beginners group that must exhibit remarkable improvement in the areas they are weak at. How this is addressed is probably the teacher's coping strategy and his/her ingenuity to confront the problem. The weekly evaluation report anyway is assumed to reflect such dilemma.

With thirteen (13) teachers for the approximately twenty (20) students during a regular term (not peak or lean season), struggles may not be a grave reason for serious complaints. A teacher is said to handle three (3) to four (4) students in a day, each in a two-hour session. One-hundred twenty (120) minutes is not bad enough to budget wisely the productive use of time.

College graduates of any course are accepted though education major and English major ones are given higher priority in the hiring of the faculty. Non-language graduates are part of the group, one (1) a registered nurse who happened to be one of the teachers observed in a session. Breezing through her lesson, the student-teacher interaction was free-flowing. Her presentation of the lesson was organized and her language facility was impeccable – diction and confidence and all that bespeaks of a sophisticated non-native English speaker. With an illustration board for chalk talk (white marker), the Korean girl found it easy to understand the concept of family tree. Comprehension of the lesson was checked through personal sharing of the student's own family tree.

The same observation was true of the second session facilitated by Teacher Jun, a male teacher whose language structure for the day was about properties of nouns. The rapport between teacher and student was spontaneous and warm, a positive variable in a bilingual education class; yet, in a post-interview with Mrs. Serrano, the teacher supervisor, this can work against the pair. Too much familiarity, according to her, can impede learning the moment the student is able to influence the teacher to accede to an activity of his/her choice (e.g. free talk). The intended lesson for the day is sacrificed for the favor granted. In such instance, there is a re-shuffling of assigned teachers for such students.

Training for the faculty to maintain high quality of instruction is through continuous training taken-charge of by the head teacher or the teacher supervisor. The first in the series is immediately after hiring which runs for two weeks with pay. The ongoing seminars and workshops are year-round and based on the perceived needs of the teacher in dealing with students. Topics may range from teacher effectiveness to handling behavioral problems. The different culture of the learners can be an obstacle to fruitful sessions. Hyperactivity, extreme shyness, aggressiveness, laziness and slow learning aptitude are some of learning blocks that pose a challenge to the teachers.

The school is generous to top-performing teachers. Cash prize or bonus is given to the adjudged "Teacher of the Month." An evaluation of satisfactory performance of a teacher on probation by the management and the students merits regularization after a six-month probationary period. Monetary incentives of P 50 per student are then an add-up to the basic salary. Frequent absenteeism and tardiness are not tolerated. Non-attendance in weekly meetings is a no-no.

Learning materials used are required textbooks, cassette recorders, illustration boards, powerpoint presentations, arts and crafts, films and video presentations from the net. The cubicles serving as classrooms have all personal computers to enable the teachers to use technology in delivering their lessons.

Textbooks are purchased upon recommendation of the head teacher, teacher supervisor in consultation with the teachers. There are special books exclusively for each of the macro skills for reinforcement and mastery. They are then assigned to students based on the evaluation of their progress in their levels.

Activities for oral practice are free talk, role plays and games. Resourcefulness is all it takes, according to Teacher May to turn stressful sessions to rewarding ones. Learning difficulties she found in her students' use of the English language range from correct usage of words, recognition of phrases and differentiating them from sentences, and construction of longer sentences. Translation method is her recourse to non-comprehension of a student. Lesson plans, she believes, submitted every Monday are a good preparation to have fun in the give-and-take learning between her and her students. Appreciation of her teaching is enough at times to consider a session rewarding.

To Teacher Curtis, constant monitoring of a student's progress is through the three times-a-week tests. At 22 years old, the struggle of giving support to a learning group whose culture is different from his is a significant experience. It is a personal achievement aside from doing his homework as a teacher. Reading books and using the computer for lessons are his own way of being prepared for the day as a teacher. Problematic students are referred to Teacher May, the guidance counselor, who takes-charge of talking to their parents.

The student-interviewees appeared to be placed in the right levels they belong to. With a lot of prompting, the first of these interviewees who is not going to a regular school for the meantime admitted having fun going to school. She belongs to the low beginners group that obviously still experiences the foreign language anxiety typical of second language learners.

May, the second interviewee attends sessions in the academy is also the guidance counselor in the group. Cool and calm, she doesn't exhibit any fear of using the second language. Introduced to the academy for second language learning by her sister, for eight months she hasn't seen her parents, too. She has Filipino friends with whom she communicates in English. At home, however, she goes back to speaking Korean.

Sally, the most articulate among the three, is eighteen years old. Presently enrolled in the Far Eastern University as a freshman, she is in the Bachelor of Science in Education program, majoring in English. Having stayed here for three years learning the language, she also finished secondary education in St. Gabriel International School, a regular secondary school. Conversational English is used with Filipino friends in the university but with Koreans, the mother tongue remains the language of communication. She hopes to be good in English and even in Filipino someday. Self-rating is only three out of a scale of five. Five more months and she expects to be a lot better.

It is not unusual for relatives to avail of the language program in Pioneer at the same time or after a few years. The faculty it appears is one reason for students coming back or promoting the school to others. Composed of young, energetic and personable ESL teachers, the teachers are willing to exert extra effort to provide significant learning. This was confirmed by Teacher Julie Ann, the teacher supervisor who still has a teaching load and who considers it a challenge to do well as a teacher with starters as well as with adults. She had a mother-daughter team before, both under her tutelage, the latter after the other.

A great amount of patience is necessary to deal with attitude problems of a few students. One may resort to malingering or messing around with “I don’t want to study” thing. This is true for the younger language learners. Adults (forty to fifty years old) have the drive to learn.

At the outset, it has not been quite tough for the academy to stay in the business of maintaining a language school. The late exit or developmental bilingual education type of program works to the advantage of its clientele. This goes well for the learners whose basic education is in the native language for an extended duration, accompanied by education in English.

Literacy in the child’s mother tongue makes transfer of knowledge and communication skills in a second language easier. The educational system in Korea provides such literacy. Though the dominant language inevitably remains Korean, achieved or successful bilingualism is feasible. Should the academy pursue its vision-mission-goals with ardor and remain true to its ideals, secondary bilingualism is not far behind.

Bi-literacy may not be achievable in a short period of time but it is possible with the willingness to make reforms when called for. The language program for its truly comprehensive six-level course is geared towards this bi-literacy. The learning competencies, skills, and strategies are reflective of a “full” course offered to focus on the four (4) macro language skills – listening, speaking, reading, and writing with emphasis on oral communication. This is ideal in a late exit or developmental bilingual education program. Given the profile of the majority of the students, the academy indeed has identified clearly its point of emphasis. For the Koreans, having acquired basic learning skills in their early schooling using the native language, grappling with a second language shouldn’t be hard. The capacity to acquire communication skills, with speaking as the target skill, shouldn’t be difficult following the Developmental Interdependence Hypothesis (Cummins, 1979).

Speaking, however, is closely related to listening. For it to be honed, listening comprehension is worked on first. A conduct of a study on the listening problems that the learners have can be a starting point in addressing this concern. Phonemic awareness is a key factor to effective listening. It makes articulation of sounds later required in speaking more comfortable to deal with.

Traditionally viewed as a passive process, listening is recognized today as active. It involves making sense of spoken language. Active listening also involves subtle interpretation, long recognized in reading, which eventually is carried on into writing.

The unique features of listening should be a valid reason for it to be a skill that accompanies speaking. The presence of a rich prosody (stress, intonation, rhythm, loudness and the like) is worthy to be learnt to be effective English speakers. Prosody likewise is contributory to the unlocking of meanings in a discourse. In a two-hour session, how much of the teaching-learning time given to the development of oral communication matched with listening is essential.

Confidence of the language learners in speaking the target language is dependent, too on how well they rate their proficiency in it. Lessened foreign language anxiety (FLA) is certainly what ESL teachers have strived to do as evidenced in their teaching methods and strategies. Motivation, related to language achievement (Pascasio, 1977), which these teachers have a lot similarly can help to lower this FLA. The student-teacher interaction is a variable to building the confidence of use of the language by the learner. The age difference between the two may have made a difference in the rapport established to create the said interaction.

Translation still is a compensatory strategy in desperate moments of comprehension. In this area, teachers who resort to it when exasperated finding themselves understood, have managed the situation well. In the long run, the teacher realizes that in a particular 'teaching moment' that she is directly the only one who decides what is best for the students.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Instructional management of a bilingual education program recognizes the development of a human network where leadership is as critical as management. Management is not relegated to the background as it has its primary function in terms of organizing and

staffing. On the other hand, leadership is aligning people to produce the change needed to cope with a changing environment (Kotter,1990).Both have multiple roles to assume ascribed to their respective primary coordinating mechanisms and processes by which such mechanisms work. They can't exist without the other.

In the perceived hierarchical system of an organization that offers programs, accountability is foremost. In the educational set-up, when this concept is made clear, there is less likely to be hitches in the planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluation phases of the program. Conflicts may arise but the delineation of roles of the identified management and leaders resolves such. Evidence of compatibility is manifested in seeking to compromise and coordinate with the teaching staff on what may satisfy best the main stakeholders, the students and their parents.Management has, without doubt, adhered to the principles of shared management-leadership of the academy. It is open to better improve its service to its target clientele.

In this regard, therefore, are recommendations to further the vision and mission, and live up to its goals as a language school with a predominantly Korean student population.

1. Identify response areas where instructional impact produces extremely useful change.
 - Conduct a Needs Analysis as a pre-admission requirement to determine the expected learning outcomes of the learner (administered in Korean and English languages).
 - Develop listening as a communication skill foremost to other skills in the learners.
 - Require journal and parallel writing to enhance writing skills.
 - Include read-aloud method to develop reading skills.
2. Involve the teachers in syllabus designing, writing of in-house learning materials as modules, or evaluating textbooks for the four (4) macro skills in focus for the six (6) levels. This teacher empowerment which in itself involvement in curriculum leadership (Law et al., 2010) is to keep areas of content and process in place.
3. Create committees with a management representative (head teacher or Teachersupervisor), teacher and student-representatives for its members to

strengthen areas of support and behavior. E.g. bulletin board displays as instructional aids and peer tutoring.

4. Beef up area of validation through periodic assessment and evaluation of learning activities, learning materials, facilities and the like on the part of the students. Include number of hours per session (perhaps reduce the number of hours to one hour or one-and-a-half hour).
5. Provide incentives for area of credit and acknowledgment to student achievers just as teachers have. E.g. Best Reader of the Month.

Instructional management of a bilingual education program must have for its ultimate goal bi-literacy. Lessow-Hurley (2005) prescribes promoting maintenance bilingual education for language minority students besides enrichment language instruction for native English speakers. Literacy and bi-literacy must go hand-in-hand for the latter is anchored on the former to guarantee its success.

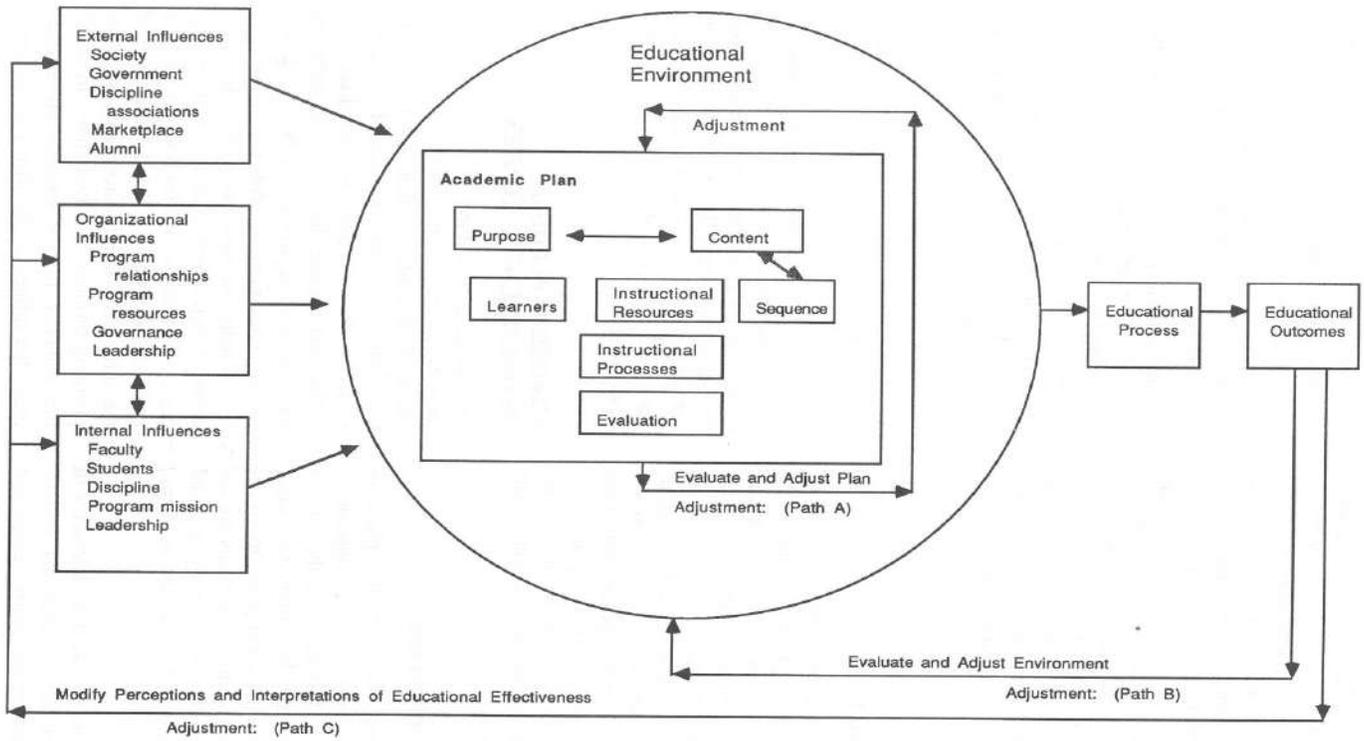
In the Shared Instructional Management of a bilingual education program meant for bi-literacy, the educational environment is subject to analysis for eventual curriculum redesigning (Stark and Lattuca, 1997). Curriculum planning is not a process of haste and disorder. It is best to check factors critical to implementation of a program that is academic in nature. All the educational sectors involved which may be internal, organizational, and external influences in the educational environment or landscape might have to be consulted before an academic plan is implemented (Netzer, 1979). Where more than one educator is involved in curriculum development, concept mapping may be a venue to facilitate shared and collaborative perspectives enhancing accountability to peers, professional bodies, students and other stake holders (Simon, 2009). In curriculum designing, for one, the potential diverse nature of the students as not all students are likely to have the requisite prior knowledge (Vitale, 2010) must be determined. Adjustments are considered after ongoing assessment and evaluation. A system open to flexibility then will likely have substantive results, a product of collaborative efforts of both leadership and management. Thus can only Shared Instructional Management function effectively in bilingual education.

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APPENDIX

THE SHARED INSTRUCTIONAL MANAGEMENT SET-UP



Source: Stark and Lattuca, 1997