

LEARNING A SECOND LANGUAGE THROUGH CONTENT INSTRUCTION

Mourad Ben Bennani*

*Sultan Qaboos University, Oman. mourad.bennani@gmail.com

Abstract

Teaching content through a second language introduces challenges for the teacher who must teach both the content of the discipline as well as the second language itself. Over the last decades, immersion programs have become increasingly popular as a way of teaching children a second language. Internationalization in politics, business, religion and culture has actually reinforced the appealing need for implementing immersion teaching at primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. Consequently many approaches to second language instruction have developed. However, teaching content through a second language introduces challenges for the teachers, learners, schools and parents as well. This presentation deals with advantages and disadvantages of immersion education, focusing on the challenges that immersion teachers encounter in attempting to teach both content and language. It also outlines effective teaching strategies with reference to their strengths and weaknesses.

The presenter will provide a short historical overview of the development of immersion programs; will examine the various approaches to second language instruction, and will explore the role of teachers in the success and failure of students in immersion education. The presenter will also explain the differences between immersion learning and content-based learning; will outline the varieties of the immersion models; and will shed some lights on the limitation of immersion education to produce learners with balanced competence in the two languages. Finally he will discuss immersion educational programs from the Arab countries perspective.

The presenter will provide opportunities for participants' interaction to reflect on their cumulative insights gained from their own experiences. Participants will also have the opportunity to design activities which integrate both language skills and content knowledge. Presentation handouts will be available to the audience.

Keywords: Immersion Learning, Dual Language Learning, Bilingual education