Materials and Language Instruction, cont.

Syntactic and Tense/Aspect Analysis of textbook:
- First 15 sentences of two sections of the textbook. The first describes the geography of northern Africa and the second outlines the history of Ancient Egypt.

- This analysis shows that this material did not provide natural opportunities for syntactic or discourse-level language instruction and the input provided by the textbook is not always as complex as might be expected.

Materials and Language Use

- When working with the textbook or associated handouts, as in the following whole-class reading excerpt, students overwhelmingly performed communicative language functions. (Excerpt was originally in Spanish.)

One-student observation of an English-Irish immersion classroom in the Republic of Ireland, in which students did not use verbal or written language in the target language because they were not proficient:

- I think that um like everyone should have link to a minimum of resources, but um some people should, if they have like a good job, they should have more resources because they are going to it that
- Yes. And it is more um, but like, if you are like in between (said in English) two
- In between two jobs uh is it like welfare, and they should have the resources if they need, but only if they need

Discussion and Implications

- The textbook as curriculum and one correct-answer instructional paradigm functioned as structures in the classroom ecology that communicated to students that their task was to find and report a correct answer rather than utilize higher order academic thinking.
- The ecological consequences of these structures included almost no intentional language instruction beyond vocabulary and a stunted range of student discourse functions, both of which could have implications for student language development and, later academic achievement.
- Given the roles these secondary materials played in the classroom ecology, future immersion materials should be designed to intentionally integrate content and language while promoting academic student discourse.
- Language-focused modifications, dialogic activities and referential questions
- Immersion teacher education needs to include training on analyzing materials' affordances and strategies for materials modification.

References:
Cammarata, L., & Tedick, D. J. (2012). Balancing content and language in instruction:

- Pathways to multilingualism: Evolving perspectives on language function, bilingualism, language contact, and language policy. Philadelphia: Benjamins.

Acknowledgments:

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