Keynote speakers

Professor Stephen Krashen: ‘The Two Goals of Bilingual Education and Why They Are Both Important’

Professor Krashen’s address considered the two distinct goals of bilingual education. The first is the acquisition of the language of the country and academic success. The second is the continuing development of the heritage language. Whilst both are worthy goals, they are different and he argued that these distinct roles need to be recognised and evaluated.

Professor Krashen began by considering the first goal: the acquisition of the language of the country and academic success. He highlighted two ways by which bilingual programs help second language development and promote school success. Firstly, background knowledge gained through the first language makes second language input more comprehensible, which results in increased second language acquisition and more subject matter knowledge. Secondly, developing literacy in the first language is a shortcut to developing second language literacy. When used for this purpose, bilingual education can be defined as a method of using the first language to accelerate second language acquisition.

Professor Krashen identified three main elements in the content of good bilingual programmes. Firstly, subject matter teaching in the first language, without translation. Secondly, literacy development in the first language and thirdly comprehensible instruction in English defined as good ESL and sheltered subject matter teaching. He illustrated this by referring to an exemplar gradual exit programme. In this programme, students initially attend mainstream provision for art, music and PE, benefit from ESL instruction and receive first language instruction in all core subjects. Over time, the mainstream and sheltered instruction element expands until students attend mainstream provision for all subjects and only ‘enrichment’ in the first or heritage language.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mainstream</th>
<th>ESL/sheltered</th>
<th>first language</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>art, music, PE</td>
<td>ESL</td>
<td>all core subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>art, music, PE</td>
<td>ESL, math, science</td>
<td>soc studies, language arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>art, music, PE, math, science</td>
<td>ESL, social science</td>
<td>language arts</td>
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<tr>
<td>all core</td>
<td></td>
<td>enrichment</td>
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Professor Krashen moved on to discuss the evidence concerning the efficacy of bilingual programmes compared to second language only instruction. He referred to a number of research studies from a range of language backgrounds and contexts showing the effectiveness of bilingual education. In the first example, de la Garza and Medina (1985) found that by Grade 2 English vocabulary and reading comprehension scores for students in bilingual programmes exceeded those of students in English dominant programmes.
In the second example, Mortensen (1984) found that in a sample of students from grades 4, 5, 6, students in the bilingual programme where transition to English takes place in grade 3, had more mastery of comprehension skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Vocabulary Mean</th>
<th>Vocabulary sd</th>
<th>Reading comprehension Mean</th>
<th>Reading comprehension sd</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nursery</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>117</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 1</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>51</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade 3</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>50</td>
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de la Garza and Medina (1985)

In the third example, Appel (1984) studied Turkish and Moroccan children acquiring Dutch. Students following the bilingual programme where all academic subjects were taught in the first language during the first year and then moved gradually to Dutch, were performing better by Year 3 in both oral work and reading comprehension than the Dutch only students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year 2</th>
<th>Year 3</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BEd</td>
<td>Regular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammar/morphology (oral)</td>
<td>33.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cloze (reading comprehension)</td>
<td>52.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appel (1984)

The beneficial effects of bilingual education were not limited only to gains in second language acquisition. In this study other effects noted were that in the first three school years the mean percentage of ‘problem children’ in the regular group was nearly twice as high as in the bilingual group, 24 percent of Dutch only students exhibiting social-emotional problems including aggressive behaviour and apathy compared to 13 percent of the bilingual education students.

In the final example (Hovens, 2002) instruction in the first 3 grades was in one of five main languages. French was introduced orally halfway through grade 2 and became the medium of instruction in grades 3, 4 and 5 with the heritage language remaining as a language of study. Again students in the bilingual programme scored much more highly in French reading tests.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Bil Ed French only</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.45</td>
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(Hovens, 2002)
Professor Krashen proceeded to address some of the myths surrounding bilingual education directly. Firstly the criticism that students ‘languish’ in bilingual education for many years quoting from studies in New York City which found that three-quarters of students exited bilingual programmes after three years and that in Texas only seven percent of pupils were still in bilingual education programmes after Grade 5.

A second myth considered was that bilingual education causes a higher dropout rate from formal education. In contrast, research studies (Curiel, Rosenthal & Richek, 1986; MacGregor-Mendoza, 1999; and Hovens, 2002) all demonstrated that students in bilingual education were less likely to drop out than those in English or second language only programmes. For example, the Hovens study found that a higher percent of students in bilingual programs continued to junior high school than students in French-only education and that this held true for both lower income families (67%/58%) and higher income families (86%/72%).

A third myth addressed was that success was equally possible without bilingual education. Professor Krashen quoted his own research findings that those who enter English only education with a better background in first language do better than those without (NYC, Krashen, 1996;1999); and argued that many English only success stories actually mask a de facto bilingual education. For example Gonzales (1989) found that 6th graders with at least two years of schooling in Mexico scored more highly in reading comprehension in English than students with all their schooling in the United States.

The final myth attacked was that bilingual education means that instruction takes place exclusively in the first language. Professor Krashen quoted a study by Mitchell, Destino & Karan, (1997) of bilingual Spanish programmes which found in contrast that by grade 3, 75% of subject matter instruction was in English and by grade 5 this figure had risen to 90%.

Professor Krashen went on to consider whether Proposition 227 limiting the use of bilingual programmes had succeeded in increasing the English language acquisition of students in California. Whilst it was clear that SAT9 scores in the state went up, he argued that scores rose for all students in all districts and that this was an example of the well documented positive effect on test scores caused by the introduction of new tests (Linn et al, 1990). Even assuming that SAT9 test is a valid measure of English language acquisition, he quoted research by Hakuta (2001) which found that test scores in districts that kept bilingual education rose as did test scores in districts that had never run bilingual education programmes. He drew attention to a WestEd study (Parrish et al, 2002) which found that there was no difference in increases in SAT9 reading scores of pupils in grades 2 and 5 between the 682 schools that kept bilingual education and the 1184 schools that dropped it. Rossell (2002) concluded in his report that Proposition 227 “may have had a small, positive effect … not likely it will be a panacea.” and that English achievement was “influenced primarily by their personal and family characteristics. The effect of the program they are enrolled in is, by comparison, small.”. Professor Krashen argued that this conclusion from one of the major critics of bilingual education was hardly convincing evidence of the need to eliminate bilingual education.

Professor Krashen then discussed the results in one particular district of California which have been consistently quoted as proving the success of Proposition 227, the
heavily Spanish speaking district of Oceanside in the San Diego area close to Mexico. He described how following the passing of Proposition 227, the new superintendent in the district, Kenneth Noonan, dismantled bilingual education and replaced it with English only. This was a particularly newsworthy as Noonan had previously been a strong supporter of bilingual education, was among the founders of the Californian Association for Bilingual Education and was the Association’s first president. Following the passing of Proposition 227 and the dropping of bilingual education, SAT9 scores increased dramatically providing a major success story for the proponents of English only education.

Professor Krashen noted the importance of research and investigation and described his careful investigation into the success of the Oceanside. In 1998, the SAT9 scores for the for the limited English proficient children in the district were well below the state average for limited English proficient children. In fact, test scores for these children were nearly at guessing/chance level. Immediately after the introduction of English only programmes, the test scores increased to just below state average where they have subsequently remained. After many unsuccessful attempts by Professor Krashen to discover the basis of the previous bilingual programme, including a confrontation with the district superintendent in a radio programme it emerged in the Washington Post that the bilingual programme running in the district had delayed introduction to English for up to 4-5 years. It was quite clear that this was not bilingual education but monolingual Spanish and that any introduction of English would have a significant effect on the performance of pupils in English tests. Not only did the district introduce English but other factors were also discovered which influenced the success of the programme. Firstly, a significant increase in funding, and secondly extensive test preparation. Professor Krashen concluded his analysis of Oceanside by noting that the increases in the district are unremarkable and in fact replicate the kind of increases seen in the rest of California and secondly that although Proposition 227 promised full English only education within one year, the Oceanside manual notes that full integration into English only programmes takes between 3 and 5 years.

Professor Krashen argued that a key part of improving bilingual programmes was to enrich the print environment, pointing to the overwhelming data that when children have more access to books, they read more and indulge in more recreational reading. Through recreational reading, students’ vocabulary, comprehension and writing improves (Krashen, 1993: Neuman, 1999). His current focus is increasing access to books in all languages to improve literacy development (Lance, 1994; McQuillan, 1998). He pointed out that in US elementary school libraries there is an average of 18 books per child. California is the lowest in the country with only 12 books per child, which he felt explained the reading scores. In the City of Los Angeles, the average falls to 6 per child and in the flourishing bilingual Spanish programmes prior to Proposition 227, the average was 1 Spanish book per child and much less for other languages. Even in the best programmes, there were very few books for children older than seven. He concluded by arguing that an increase in books for younger pupils in both the first language and English would be effective test preparation and would lead to an increase in achievement.

Professor Krashen moved on to consider the second goal of bilingual education: the continuance and development of the heritage language. Continuing development of the second language has obvious advantages to the individual, in terms of practical advantages and cognitive development. It also serves the national interest in terms
of international relations and economics. Contrary to popular opinion, it is difficult to maintain and develop heritage languages: input is not plentiful and heritage language speakers have extremely high standards for themselves and other heritage language speakers. He argued there were however, some painless ways of improving the situation, particularly by taking advantage of the power of recreational reading.

Continuing heritage language development also encompassed practical and intellectual advantages. Jim Cummins summary of research reads – “We know bilingualism is not bad for the brain and probably good.” There are clear advantages of bilingualism for communication with family, parents, grandparents, with people in the country of origin and in the wisdom people can gain. Professor Krashen referred to the insights of Wong-Fillimore (1991) - What happens to familiar relations when the language children give up happens to be the only language parents speak? What is lost when parents and children cannot communicate with each other? What is lost is the means by which parents socialise their children. When they are unable to talk to their children, they cannot easily convey to them their values, beliefs understanding or wisdom on how to cope with experience. They cannot teach them about the meaning of work or about personal responsibility including what it means to be a moral or ethical person in a world with too many choices and too few guidelines to follow. What is lost is the advice that parents should be able to offer to children during every day interactions.

Talk is a crucial link between parents and children so there is every reason to keep up heritage languages and develop them. Whilst politicians argue that ‘immigrants’ are restricted by their usage of family languages, there is clear evidence of language shift, where families give up languages entirely, sometimes within a generation. Children enter school at elementary level dominant in the primary language and by the time they are in high school are unable to talk to their grandparents. The public does not understand how quickly language loss can occur and how difficult language maintenance is. If heritage language input is solely parental, this will limit heritage language development unless families regularly engage on a wide range of topics.

Tse (L Tse, 1999) has discovered a further, affective barrier. In her work, she discusses the stages that visible minorities go through in an acculturation. The first stage is an unawareness, there is no perceived difference between the individual and representatives of the majority community. However, in the teenage years she identifies ethnic ambivalence or ethnic avoidance where the strong urge is to integrate, to become an English speaker, to become part of dominant society. She cites many case histories of teenagers who feign ignorance of the heritage language, will not use the heritage language in family groups and whose sole desire is to fit in to greater society in which they are living. Some individuals then enter a stage of ethnic emergence where they become highly interested in the heritage language and may go onto ethnic incorporation where they come to terms with the language of the family and the language of the country.

A further problem for heritage language speakers is the impossibly high standards they set for themselves and for others which can be a huge barrier to heritage language development. Professor Krashen argued that the answer to heritage language development does not lie in taking study classes which can be very defeating, but in reading, which is a form of language acquisition that works for shy people. Reading is a way of building confidence without risk. In studies on teaching
Spanish to native speakers at California State University, McQuillan found that following the study of popular literature, literature circles, silent reading and discussion, the students did better in vocabulary games and were far more interested in continuing studying Spanish than a comparison group in a more traditional language class. Cho found four predictors of ability in Korean for people who spoke it as a child. Two were involuntary: parental Korean use in childhood and frequency of childhood visits to Korea. The two voluntary predictors were recreational Korean television viewing and recreational Korean reading (G. Cho and Krashen 2000). Similarly recently published work by Tse noted that in every case where heritage language speakers maintained a very high level of confidence in their heritage language, there was access to books and a tremendous amount of voluntary recreational reading.

In conclusion, Professor Krashen offered advice to participants in improving their own heritage or foreign languages. He urged participants to develop recreational reading by lowering their standards and carrying a translation of a familiar book or story everywhere. Although he noted that the world conspires to prevent reading in any language, developing recreational reading develops language acquisition and ensuring that academic and challenging content becomes comprehensible.

It was clear from the reaction of conference delegates that Professor Krashen's stimulating address had reinforced the dedication of many to the expansion of bilingual education, whilst inspiring others to examine much more closely the implications of bilingualism within their own work.
**Professor Viv Edwards: 'Is life really too short to learn German?'**

Professor Edwards began by quoting Richard Porson, the eighteenth century classicist, who is reputed to have said that life is too short to learn German, implying that some languages should take precedence over others. She noted that within the UK, the overwhelming emphasis on English has often blocked serious discussion of the use of other languages.

In her presentation, she looked at attitudes to bilingual education past and present, paying particular attention to inconsistencies in policy which, on the one hand, have endorsed the use of Welsh, Gaelic and Irish medium education but which, on the other hand, have, until quite recently, dismissed the use of other languages as divisive. However Professor Edwards detected a changing climate of opinion among mainstream educators and policy makers which was leading to an enormous change in policy and provision attested to by the increase of Welsh, Gaelic and Irish medium mainstream provision within the UK. The success of these initiatives can be seen in the 2001 census data showing for the first time an increase in the proportion of the population speaking Welsh which now stands at over 22% demonstrating the effectiveness of bilingual education in reversing language slip. She also noted how the political will which informed the Good Friday agreement in 2000 had increased the provision for Irish from subject teaching only within a small number of Catholic schools in Ireland to include 10 Irish leading secondary schools and 5 Irish leading primary schools within a three year period.

Professor Edwards noted that formal evaluations of bilingual education are problematic as the DfES does not currently publish comparative data for children in different counties and schools. It has been suggested that government action on this front is due to concern that analysis will show bilingual education in a favourable light which would create pressure for resources to be removed from English only speaking schools and so requires a certain sensitivity.

Turning to the issue of education for speakers of newer minority languages, Professor Edwards argued that UK attitudes towards bilingualism are clearly inconsistent, with official support for the medium of Welsh in Wales, Gaelic in Scotland and Irish in Ireland, the aim of these programmes being balanced bilingualism and full bi-literacy. Professor Edwards noted that while changes in attitudes towards more established languages have gone hand in hand with changes in attitudes to speakers of newer minority languages, these still fell some way short of support for balanced bilingualism and bi-literacy. Tracing the history of educational provision for speakers of newer minority language, she noted that in the 1950’s and 1960’s it was assumed that children would pick up English in the playground and during this period far too many pupils who were immersed in English sank rather than swam. The provision of Section 11 funding in 1966 to address the language study needs of New Commonwealth pupils emphasised the learning of English and assimilation. This was followed by the Bullock Report in 1975 which required schools to respect the linguistic and cultural diversity of their students, presenting bilingualism as an asset to be nurtured. The Swann report in 1985 effectively marked the end of language maintenance programmes which were viewed as potentially divisive. First language maintenance was seen as the responsibility of ethnic minority communities themselves except for transitional bilingual support and the inclusion of minority languages in the modern language curriculum of secondary schools.
Professor Edwards also referred to the unfortunate consequences of the lack of status accorded to other ‘contested’ languages with no formal schooling. She argued that unlike Canada, it is symptomatic that by the time that British educators had recognised distinctively Black speech practice, African Caribbean people had already acquired local British speech and were simply using Black speech as a marker of identity. Sign languages were treated with even greater contempt, resulting in a devastating report in 1979 which showed that deaf 16 year olds had an average reading age of less than 9 years and much of their spoken English was unintelligible, a clear consequence of the energy expended in eliminating sign language from the classroom.

Professor Edwards argued for the need to reconsider bilingual education in light of the changing climate of opinion among mainstream educators and policy makers. Significant developments included the Content and Language Integrated Teaching Project (CLIP), the development of specialist language colleges and the DfES acceptance of the inclusion of community languages as part of the primary entitlement within the National Languages Strategy. She also alerted her audience to the dangers of complacency, making reference to the BNP’s 2003 election manifesto pledge to end the teaching of Asian languages within state schools. She called for a reconsideration of developments such as the 1960's French experiment, the 1999 Welsh for Adults programme and the Bradford Mother Tongue experiment. In conclusion Professor Edwards noted that not only is life is quite long enough for us to acquire German but also to acquire a collective knowledge of German, Chinese, Urdu and many other languages.

Conference delegates were appreciative of Professor Edwards’ perspective on the development of bilingual education policy in the UK.

**Plenary Session**

**Discussants** - Mohammed Abdelrazak, Stephen Krashen, Terry Lamb, Raymonde Sneddon, Amy Thompson, Chair - Hugh South

The DfES in its National Languages Strategy and in its recent consultation ‘Aiming High: Raising the achievement of minority ethnic pupils’ expressed interest in some aspects of bilingualism notably that:

*Proficiency in the English language is the most effective guarantee that pupils will achieve well in school and succeed in later life. It is important that we also recognise and value the skills which many minority ethnic pupils have in speaking a range of community languages and understand how continuing development in one’s first language can support the learning of English and wider cognitive development.*

*Many bilingual pupils continue to develop oral and written skills in their mother tongue by attendance at supplementary or complementary schools and we will continue to encourage mainstream schools to make meaningful links with supplementary schools which recognise the value of the educational contribution made by these organisations.*
The importance of continuing to develop oral and written skills in pupils’ mother tongue is underpinned by the proposals outlined in the National Languages Strategy. This strategy provides accreditation for newly acquired language skills but also recognises proficiency in mother tongue and other community languages.

Plenary discussants contributed key points they wished to inform current DfES thinking and touched on three significant issues: the role of supplementary schools in supporting the development of community languages; the teaching of community and heritage languages in school and the role of bilingual staff in primary schools in promoting and developing community languages.

Mohammed Abdelrazak, as director of Resource Unit for Complementary and Mother Tongue Schools, put forward a strong case for developing a more equitable and constructive relationship between complementary and mother-tongue schools and the state education sector. He argued that the use of complementary rather than supplementary was a significant indicator of the rightful consideration of the role of these schools to complement state schooling. He noted that for many schools it was not realistic, nor economically viable to teach all the first languages of their pupil population and that this task could be more effectively supported by the supplementary sector. He noted that the question which should be asked concerned the role of mainstream schools in supporting the development of community languages and lobbied for the development of a clear policy statement in each school and LEA outlining their responsibilities in supporting community languages.

As a lecturer in the Department of Educational Studies, Terry Lamb urged the DfES to consider a clear long and short term strategy to develop the teacher education of community language teachers. In the short term this would mean; the recognition of overseas qualifications; the development of incentives for schools to offer teaching practice placements and the encouragement of flexible teaching qualifications. In the longer term, there should be; a strategic mapping of needs; partnerships developed to provide routes into teaching; and the expectation that community language teachers would come through the same routes as Modern Foreign language teachers which had implications for access to qualifications in schools and universities. He noted the opportunities presented by the National Languages Strategy for accreditation of pupil proficiency in community languages. A second opportunity was the current support for the development of language partnerships which had led to the founding of a Partnerships for Languages in Sheffield and London. He also argued that there was a need to reconsider the educational position where policy decisions appeared not to be grounded in appropriate research. Although much evidence was submitted to the National Languages policy steering group, only a little appeared to inform the final document and the new KS3 MFL strategy appeared posited on research carried out with only 80 children in one LEA.

Raymonde Sneddon made reference to the work of the Community Languages Research group which investigates the educational achievement of bilingual children growing up in Britain (from Gujerati, Urdu, Chinese, Arabic, Bosnian, Spanish and Portuguese communities), whose mainstream provision is complemented by attendance at community language classes. She noted that their research indicated that attendance at complementary schools appeared consistently to enhance mainstream educational achievement. Whilst calling on the DfES to consider the
implications of these findings, she further argued for the need to provide additional research funding to support work in this under-researched educational area. She shared the findings of her research project involving 18 complementary school teachers who were asked to consider whether their language should be taught in mainstream schools. 94% of the teachers felt it should be recognised as a mainstream subject but all then noted a continuing role for complementary schools in extending their work to focus on the cultural and creative use of the first language.

Amy Thompson encouraged the DfES to examine the role of bilingual support staff. Whilst bilingual staffing has been in place for more than 20 years, she argued that there had been little serious thought given to what constitutes effective transitional support and even less attention as to how bilingual teaching approaches can move beyond the transitional support model for the benefit of pupils. She urged the DfES to give serious consideration and research into both what is effective transitional support and also how bilingual teaching approaches can move beyond this for the benefit of pupil achievement. As the current chair of the Education Committee of the UK Federation of Chinese School she also noted the importance of establishing effective training and support for teachers working within the complementary sector. She noted that although Chinese schools had traditionally focussed on reading and writing, they were now finding that the speaking and listening skills of many pupils needed much greater support, possibly an indicator of language loss. In their teacher training for complementary school teachers, they were now concentrating on the development of listening and speaking skills, which included learning from some aspects of MFL methodology.

Hugh South noted that in the ‘Aiming High’ document there appeared to be encouragement to forming closer links between mainstream and complementary schools, but suggested that there needed to be some consideration of the tension between encouraging closer links and the desire of complementary schools to maintain their independence. He reinforced the references made by panel members and the audience for further investment in research in this area.

One contributor wondered whether MFL methodology was a useful model for community language teaching or whether a primary teaching model may be considered more effective, commenting that Camden had piloted joint LEA training with community language teachers so that they became more aware of the primary school methodologies framing pupil learning within mainstream schools. Another contributor noted how her LEA had consistently developed partnership work and training between complementary and mainstream schools in order that teachers from both types of schools could benefit from the distinctive techniques and expertise contained in both.

The plenary discussants then considered the current emphasis on the role of bilingual staff in primary schools on supporting children to learn English and considered the scope to promote the maintenance and development, rather than the loss, of the home languages. It was noted that very little serious consideration had been given to any aspect of bilingual teaching and support over the past 20 years. Terry Lamb noted that the current focus on teaching assistants and workplace reform required everyone to reconsider models of effective learning. Coupled with developments in e-learning and the possibilities provided by ICT for sharing of practice and teaching between schools and sites, He felt that this would lead to a
major change in the models of MFL learning that were developed and models of learning more generally and that more autonomous learning would become an issue for pedagogical consideration particularly in respect of community language learning. He saw a developing role for bilingual assistants within this more individualised learning. Raymonde Sneddon commented on the need for training for those responsible for the management of bilingual assistants, quoting a recent visit to a school whose bilingual assistants were forbidden to use Sylheti with pupils. She also argued for flexible action research projects which responded to individual situations rather than a perfunctory pilot followed by a national strategy which appeared to have become the ‘English’ educational tradition. This point was echoed by Terry Lamb who warned of the dangers of ‘pilotitis’ which from the audience reaction was clearly a commonly shared belief.

Points were made from the floor concerning enumerating the purposes, pedagogy and curriculum aims of bilingual education and other forms of language teaching. In addition it was argued that the current pedagogy in complementary classes warranted further examination in terms of the links between the culture and identity of setting and the prevailing pedagogy. It was argued that caution may need to be exercised in terms of changing pedagogy where this could be interpreted as an assault on culture and identity. A further point was made that mainstream settings should not seek to undermine the skills of complementary teachers, but that many teachers in complementary settings did not have teacher training and were keen to widen their professional training and experience. Many complementary class teachers wished to develop the ways in which they were able to teach pupils but opportunities for professional development were severely limited. A further point was made that the current focus on literacy through the national strategy had led to the neglect of oracy and also the development of a rather submissive classroom pedagogy. It was argued that cross sector training may encourage the development of this model of pedagogy which additionally devalued the oral skills and oral needs of teachers and pupils. Tim Brighouse was quoted emphasising the importance of teacher cultural knowledge and the value of partnerships between mainstream teachers and assistants in schools.

Professor Krashen (www.sdkrashen.com) concluded the plenary session by arguing for further consideration of the factors of library and print environment on bilingual learners. He argued that there is now overwhelming evidence that wide reading improves academic performance. Many of the bilingual learners under discussion at the conference were economically disadvantaged. He argued that whilst exposure to books cannot overcome the impacts of poverty on attainment, it can help to redress the balance. He compared the print environment of children in Beverley Hills where books averaged 200 per child with the environment in Watts where the average was only 0.4. Rather than redressing this inequality, schools in the region compounded it, the typical classroom library in Beverley Hills containing 400 books compared to the 50 books in the Watts class library. He referred briefly to research correlating the spending on library facilities (professional librarians and books) with pupil reading scores. He concluded that wide reading (in conjunction with oral development) had a profound impact on every aspect of language development and that the one element missing from the discussion to date was ‘pure and simple access to books’.