

ENGL 7/8590: Appl/Theory Linguistics
Dr. Ronald Fuentes
T 5:30

Bilingualism and Bilingual Education: Theories and Politics

Bilingualism/multilingualism is an increasingly common feature of contemporary nation-states. Yet, bilingualism and bilingual education is a controversial and oftentimes misunderstood field in many monolingual-oriented countries such as the United States. This course focuses on the basic theories and concepts of bilingualism, the role of schooling in the development and educational possibilities of bilingual learners, and the practical implications these have for social and educational policy, both in the United States and elsewhere.

The course is divided into four areas: (1) basic theories and concepts of bilingualism; (2) multilingual and multicultural identities; (3) bilingual education; and (4) politics of bilingual education. This class course is designed to assist students in understanding how the multiple realities of bilingualism interact with the educational context and therefore may influence the academic performance, identity and assessment of bilingual students, and what role schools play in increasing or limiting the educational possibilities and bilingual development of language minority students. Course participants will better understand the issues pertaining to the historical, legal, cognitive, social, and theoretical foundations of bilingualism and bilingual and multicultural education.