A Speech Community Model of Bilingual Education

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Speech community is defined as a group of people who share the same ideas and expectation regarding the language. The newly arrived immigrant in the American high school from the Latin community have limited knowledge of English or not at all. In such case, the teacher needs to prepare these students in short amount of time so that they can keep up the pace with other high school students and can prepare for challenges of English in higher education. The students of Latin origin are thought through the bilingual education, but the process of bilingual education has never found any support in America. In New York, bilingual education has not seen the same amount of opposition as other states of America. Due to this less opposition, the state of America has found effective ways of bilingual education.

Gregorio Lupero´n High School is the example of speech community which adapted to the language of bilingual education uniquely. The school involved the entire second language of students in helping them to learn more quickly. It uses the native language of students to instruct them regarding English by using the primary language of students (Garcia & Bartlett, 2007). The schools in the traditional American schooling move the students closer to English, but this school is taking the language closer to the students. The teacher in this schooling process are natives of the second language, so they know the exact requirement of students. They share the same cultural and historical background of students thus helping them in establishing a closer bond with them. Teacher and students in such setting share the same community thus forming the base of the speech community. Speech community is defined as a group of people who share the same ideas and expectation regarding the language. In the traditional speech community can be a single town, but sociologists such as William Labov explains that the speech community can be a big metropolitan city (Al Amadidhi, 1991). The effects of Labov definition can be seen in this explanation as New York is a big metropolitan city with diverse Latino community. With the rapid immigration from Latin America to the United States, more students are arriving at the united states that do not know the English language. In the schools, teachers have little time to prepare the students for the English language so that they can partake in critical subjects such as physics, chemistry, biology, and English. The students in such case are prepared through the bilingual method which enable them to understand the English language. The students are thought by presenting the English language as their second language, and they are pushed towards the language. The students teaching in such case have limited knowledge of the student's native language thus they have difficulty in conveying the proper knowledge required. The teachers have different cultural and historical background. The idea of bilingual education has never found favor by the government, but New York has some freedom regarding bilingual education.

Gregorio Lupero´n High School in New York has come up with the idea of teaching the students the English whose primary language is not English. Instead of moving the language closer to the students they are taking the students closer to the language. The school is utilizing the speech community to achieve its goals as they are teaching the students through the teachers that share the same cultural and linguistic background. Through the utilization of the speech community, the school can teach their students more effectively as these teachers know what the students require to learn the English language. The perception of William Labov can be seen in this model as the students are not from a small town, but the entire Latin Spanish community is taken into context (Al Amadidhi, 1991). Most of the student in the school are immigrants, so they know what the students are lacking and what is required for learning the English language as they had to go through the same ordeal.

In the Gregorio Lupero´n High School all of the students have to take three periods of English as their second language arts every day. Only of the teacher in the class is multilingual or bilingual, and all the other teachers are Spanish, but during the course, the teacher rarely speaks Spanish. Students also need to take part in the Spanish language arts class. The reaming subjects are all thought in English, so the students have the opportunity to experience the education in English through the teachers that share cultural and historical backgrounds with them. The speech community of Gregorio Lupero´n High School is dependent on seven factors which serve as the primary factors for the success of school:

* The school lacks students that are native to the English language
* The presence of Latin and Spanish speaking teacher serve as models
* Spanish is taken in high regards, and Targets are set for the acquisition of the English language
* Bilingual education is considered as the primary strategy
* The Spanish language enables students to educate to be educated more freely and righteously
* The Spanish language allows them to connect themselves with education more closely

The model does put the specific limitation on the students and cannot be considered flawless such as the segregation of students from the society.

Bilingual education is the most common form of the method used to educate students from a different linguistic background. In the bilingual education, most schools rely on the teachers that have no cultural or historical relation to the students (Porter, 2017). Gregorio Lupero´n High School has adopted a strategy that utilizes a different approach by teaching through the teachers that share the linguistic and cultural background with their students. The use of native teacher bring the language closer to the students instead of bringing students closer to the language. The utilization of speech community in a metropolitan city such as New York is the exact representation of William Labov perception of the speech community.

**References**

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