

## Literacies Across Languages.

**WebQuest Description:** 000

**Grade Level:** College / Adult

**Curriculum:** Professional Skills

**Keywords:** Language Literacies Biliteracy Continua Languages

**Published On:** 2013-03-11 07:28:11

**Last Modified:** 2012-04-29 14:27:26

**WebQuest URL:** <http://zunal.com/webquest.php?w=149372>

### Introduction

"Literacy" is a term that has seen much debate in an attempt to define it, literacy is certainly not limited to reading, and writing and is not just in the cognitive realm. There are multiple and overlapping factors that help define the term including social, cultural, psychological, political and economic factors. There are also complex social interactions at play when literacy learning and use are seen. That said, what is biliteracy and pluriliteracy?

### Tasks

### Process

Hornberger article summary, made up of a collection of quotes and paraphrasing, pulling together the main ideas. The continua model of biliteracy offers a framework in which to situate research, teaching, and language planning in linguistically diverse settings; bilingual teacher education represents a conjunction of all three of these and hence, a good candidate for applying the continua. The purpose of using the continuum as the basic building block of the model is to break down the binary oppositions so characteristic of the fields of bilingualism and literacy and instead draw attention to the continuity of experiences, skills, practices, and knowledge stretching from one end of any particular continuum to the other. The model suggests that the more their learning context, and contexts of use, allow learners and users to draw from across the whole of each and every continuum, the greater are the chances for their full biliterate development and expression. Biliteracy, in this model, refers to 'any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing' (Hornberger, 1990: 213); and the notion of continuum is intended to convey that although one can identify (and name) points on the continuum, those points are connected. Refer to figure 3, page 158, for examples of the continua. Here, we will consider bilingual and language teacher education as practised at PennGSE as an instance of biliteracy and focus, for analytical purposes, on each set of three continua – contexts, media, development, and content, consecutively – as illustrated by experiences of bilingual and language educators in-the-making in the programme.

**Contexts of Biliteracy: The Global/Local Dilemma** The global/local dilemma, that is, how we as bilingual educators can respond adequately and fully to both global and local pressures on our students, is an expression of the continua of biliterate context. In every language education context, the interrelationship of dominant, standard, global English (or other dominant language) and learners' local, non-standard or non-English (non-dominant) language practices has implications for educators' programmatic, curricular, and interactional choices.

**Media of Biliteracy: The Standard/Nonstandard Dilemma** how we as bilingual educators can respond adequately and fully to both the demand for standard language varieties and the prevalence and valuing of nonstandard ones. Examples extend the standard/nonstandard dilemma beyond language varieties per se to the whole range of visual, audio, spatial, and behavioural semiotic modes and modalities available for communication in today's world. Use of all forms of literacy, including codeswitching and new, multiple forms of electronic communication.

**Development of Biliteracy: The Language/Content Dilemma** This means that educators' evaluation of learners' work must also be holistic across the continua, always taking into account that an ungrammatical expression of accurate content, or a grammatically correct expression of inaccurate content, may be just as much a sign of learning as a grammatically correct expression of accurate content.

**Content of Biliteracy: The Language/Culture/Identity Dilemma** To what degree is an understanding of the new culture a necessary part of learning a new language, and to the degree that it is, which 'culture' is needed for the full range – from minority to majority representations, vernacular to literary expressions, and contextualised as well as traditional academic decontextualised forms. Conclusion: the continua of biliteracy framework as heuristic encourages bilingual educators, in their role as teachers, to approach biliterate learners' developing communicative competence in socioculturally and sociopolitically contextualised, locally and multiply inclusive, enquiry-based, and dynamically negotiated ways.

**Links:** N. Hornberg home page  
**Critique:** Good summary of consideration to keep in mind while planning, developing and providing classes in a plurilingual context. More academic than practical, but with links between the two.  
**Leading questions:** This reads like good individualized/differentiated education; what are some good examples/demonstrations?

### Evaluation

