

Academic and Occupational Language Development of Bilingual Immigrant Students in a Teacher Education Program

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Some bilingual higher education programs in the Netherlands are purposefully designed, e.g. international English streams. In many cases, however, higher education has turned into a multilingual setting through the growing inflow of bilingual immigrant students. Their limited academic skills in Dutch have been proven to be a crucial factor in academic success and high drop out rates in the first year of their study. Yet the way in which language demands and proficiency affect students' learning process are still unrevealed.

This case study explores the way four students function in the first year of their study when doing practices. The data were collected through participant observations, interviews, and videoregistrations. The main research questions are :

- Which problems do bilingual immigrant students have in the teacher training program connected to insufficient language proficiency?
- How do teacher educators and mentors address these needs?
- Which expertise do teacher educators need to effectively support bilingual students in their academic and professional language development?

In this presentation I will discuss the findings of the research and strategies to develop a supportive environment for bilingual students, in particular through integrating academic and occupational language skills in the curriculum and teaching practices