Multilingual Education Policy and Practice: Ten Certainties
(Grounded in Indigenous Experience)

Multilingual education – an instance of biliteracy

What do we know about contexts – and spaces – for multilingual education?

Certainty one: National multilingual language education policy opens up ideological and implementational spaces for multilingual education.

Certainty two: Local actors may open up agentive spaces for multilingual education as they implement, interpret, and perhaps resist policy initiatives.

Certainty three: Ecological language policies take into account the power relations among languages and promote multilingual uses in all societal domains.

What do we know about media – and modalities – of multilingual education?

Certainty four: Language status planning and language corpus planning go hand in hand.

Certainty five: Models of multilingual education instantiate linguistic and sociocultural histories and goals in each context.

Certainty six: Communicative modalities encompass more than written and spoken language.

What do we know about the development – and transfer – of language and literacy in multilingual education?

Certainty seven: Classroom practices can foster transfer of language and literacy development along receptive-productive, oral-written, L1-L2 dimensions and across modalities.

What do we know about content – and identities – in multilingual education?

Certainty eight: Reclaiming the local.

Certainty nine: Reaffirming our own.

Certainty ten: Revitalizing the Indigenous.

Indigenous experiences in multilingual education

Kayarani School and Bolivia’s 1994 Education Reform (Cochabamba, Bolivia 2000)
VII-EIB Congress and Bolivia’s 2006 Proposed Education Law (Cochabamba, Bolivia 2006)
Kura kaupapa Māori in Aotearoa/New Zealand (Hamilton, New Zealand 2002)
Amazonian Professores Indios’ course in Acre, Brazil (Rio Branco, Brazil 1997)
PROEIB Andes Workshop with Indigenous Educators (Cochabamba, Bolivia 2004)
Continua of Biliteracy

traditionally less powerful <----- traditionally more powerful

Contexts of biliteracy
micro <----------------------------------------------> macro
oral <-----------------------------------------------> literate
bi(multi)lingual <--------------------------------------------> monolingual

Media of biliteracy
simultaneous exposure <--------------------------> successive exposure
dissimilar structures <-----------------------------> similar structures
divergent scripts <-----------------------------> convergent scripts

Development of biliteracy
reception <-----------------------------------------------> production
oral <-----------------------------------------------> written
L1 <-----------------------------------------------> L2

Content of biliteracy
minority <-----------------------------------------------> majority
vernacular <--------------------------------------------> literary
contextualized <-----------------------------------> decontextualized

Hornberger, N. H., & Skilton-Sylvester, E. (2000). Revisiting the continua of biliteracy: International and