


# Chapter 16

## Teaching Verbal Operants for Neurotypical and Neurodiverse Children in Developing Bilingualism

**Gina Luna Bermudo**

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0001-2003-0026>

*Shapes International School, Philippines*

**Maria Rosario Yumul Florendo**

 <https://orcid.org/0009-0007-8768-1513>

*University of the Philippines-Baguio, Philippines*

**Marie Grace Avelino Gomez**

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0180-9875>

*University of the Philippines, Philippines*

### ABSTRACT

*Effective bilingual instruction integrates immersion, dual-language programs, translanguaging, code-switching, and direct teaching strategies to foster language development. For neurodiverse learners, Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and verbal operants: mand, tact, echoic, and intraverbal, facilitate structured, meaningful bilingual communication. Bilingualism enhances cognitive flexibility, academic success, cultural inclusion, and social-emotional development. Contrary to past assumptions, research supports bilingualism as beneficial for children with autism, intellectual disabilities, and learning disabilities. With visual aids, routines, and*

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3373-1752-6.ch016

Copyright © 2026, IGI Global Scientific Publishing. Copying or distributing in print or electronic forms without written permission of IGI Global Scientific Publishing is prohibited. Use of this chapter to train generative artificial intelligence (AI) technologies is expressly prohibited. The publisher reserves all rights to license its use for generative AI training and machine learning model development.

*inclusive practices, bilingual education empowers neurodiverse students by respecting their linguistic identities, supporting their capabilities, and promoting lifelong opportunities for connection, learning, and well-being.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Teaching bilingualism effectively to children requires strategies that promote language development in a structured yet natural way (Tang et al., 2022). The strategies include immersion programs, dual-language programs, translanguaging, code-switching, and direct instruction in both languages (Zoeller & Briceño, 2022; Kong & Hurlless, 2023). Contextualized instruction and effective home-school collaboration are essential for successfully teaching bilingualism (Ling et al., 2023).

Full immersion programs entail using the target language 100% of the time (Serafini et al., 2022). There is very minimal or no use of the native language. Through this program, the learners can hear, speak, and learn the language in an authentic, everyday context. They experience the language in familiar surroundings (Hamman-Ortiz, 2023). The teachers are native or fluent speakers of the target language and must commit only to using that language throughout the lessons (Woolard, 2023). In instances of play time or supervised recess, the teacher also uses the target language. On the other hand, the partial immersion program only entails that the target language be taught as an elective or a portion of the school curriculum (Hill, 2022). The native language is maintained in other subjects taken in the school setting.

In dual-language programs, the learners must develop proficiency in both the native and target languages (Delavan, 2021). This involves teaching academic content and core subjects in both the learners' native and target languages (Brutt-Griffler & Jang, 2022). Dual language instruction fosters academic achievement and promotes understanding of diverse cultures related to the language studied (Paradis, 2023).

Translanguaging encourages students to use both languages flexibly and enhances comprehension and expression (Bosma et al., 2023). This approach is applied to classrooms with learners from diverse language backgrounds (Mac Swan, 2022). It enables the learners to think in multiple languages simultaneously and use the language spoken at home to learn the target language.

Code-switching is shifting from one linguistic code (or language) to another (Kroff & Dussias, 2023). This lexical practice occurs both by accident and on purpose for various reasons. It allows people to express how they see fit in a given scenario. It is a mechanism to allow people to express their authentic selves (Yim & Clement, 2021). For example, when speaking in English, a person might revert to speaking in the native language when they feel comfortable. Code-switching happens naturally, often at a subconscious level of cognition. It also helps people find the right words.

26 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: [www.igi-global.com/chapter/teaching-verbal-operants-for-neurotypical-and-neurodiverse-children-in-developing-bilingualism/393114](http://www.igi-global.com/chapter/teaching-verbal-operants-for-neurotypical-and-neurodiverse-children-in-developing-bilingualism/393114)

## Related Content

---

### The Effects of Technology Integration in the Classroom for Students With ADHD

Aleen Kojayan, Aubrey L. C. Stattiand Kelly M. Torres (2022). *Research Anthology on Inclusive Practices for Educators and Administrators in Special Education* (pp. 553-563).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-effects-of-technology-integration-in-the-classroom-for-students-with-adhd/292903](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/the-effects-of-technology-integration-in-the-classroom-for-students-with-adhd/292903)

### Perspectives on Career Transition Counselling Services for Students With ASD

(2026). *Perspectives on Career Transitioning of Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders* (pp. 275-316).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/perspectives-on-career-transition-counselling-services-for-students-with-asd/403926](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/perspectives-on-career-transition-counselling-services-for-students-with-asd/403926)

### Rethinking School Principals' Leadership Practices for an Effective and Inclusive Education

Ahmed M. Alkaabi, Asma Khaleel Abdallah, Hosam R. I. Badwy, Hesham R. I. Badawyand Suhair A. Almammari (2022). *Rethinking Inclusion and Transformation in Special Education* (pp. 53-70).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/rethinking-school-principals-leadership-practices-for-an-effective-and-inclusive-education/307841](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/rethinking-school-principals-leadership-practices-for-an-effective-and-inclusive-education/307841)

### Hidden Disabilities: Nonverbal Learning Disabilities

Cheryl Irish (2022). *Advising Preservice Teachers Through Narratives From Students With Disabilities* (pp. 104-114).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/hidden-disabilities/288106](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/hidden-disabilities/288106)

## Increasing Knowledge of Autism Spectrum Disorders Among Urban Special Educators in Tanzania: Results From Three Teacher Training Workshops

Nilofer C. Naqvi, Sarah J. E. Wong-Goodrich, Amanda Martinage, Sarah L. Gordon, Jacqueline A. DeCuffa and Martha Collins (2022). *Research Anthology on Inclusive Practices for Educators and Administrators in Special Education* (pp. 880-898).

[www.irma-international.org/chapter/increasing-knowledge-of-autism-spectrum-disorders-among-urban-special-educators-in-tanzania/292921](http://www.irma-international.org/chapter/increasing-knowledge-of-autism-spectrum-disorders-among-urban-special-educators-in-tanzania/292921)