English as a Second Language: Linguistic Diversity in the Classroom

Alternate Route to Certification

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Something to think about...

When those who have the power to name and to socially construct reality choose not to see you or hear you, whether you are dark-skinned, old, disabled, female or speak in a different accent or dialect than theirs, when someone with the authority of a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing.       Adrienne Rich - Poet
Workshop Objectives

- To provide the socio-political and historical contexts for linguistic diversity in U.S. schools

- To increase understanding about the implications of linguistic diversity in school settings

- To raise awareness about the relationship between culturally responsive teaching, linguistic diversity, and overall academic success

- To support enhanced academic outcomes for non-English language students
Ground Rules

• Speak for yourself
• Participate as equals here
• Respect confidentiality
• Respect feelings and opinions
• Agree to disagree
• Participate in your own way
• Listen

http://youtu.be/5xdfVAPvv9A
Something to Think About...

“All animals are equal, but some are more equal than others”

George Orwell, Animal Farm
**ELL (English Language Learner)**
One actively learning English - primary language is not English. (also referred to as

- Language minority students
- English as a Second Language (ESL) students
- Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students
- Limited English proficient (LEP) students
- English language learner (ELL) (has started to replace LEP, to avoid the implication that nonnative English speaking students are deficient)

**ESL (English as a Second Language)**
A term often used to designate students whose first language is not English; (currently, ESL is more likely to refer to an *educational approach* designed to support ELLs)
1st (first) generation
• Foreign-born/foreign-educated ELLs

2nd (second) generation
• United States—children born of immigrants.

Accommodation
• Appropriate modifications/changes to tests and testing procedures to more accurately measure ELL content knowledge (allowing extra time for testing, providing dictionaries; changing materials, protocols, testing conditions etc.)
Parachute kids

- ELLs who come alone to the U.S. to live with family and attend K-12 schools (term has a pejorative connotation.

**Bilingual education**

- Delivers academic content student’s native and secondary languages

- Dual Language Immersion. Within each type of program model,

**Subtractive bilingualism**

- Form of bilingual education intended to replace the 1st language with 2nd language
A Definition of Terms...

English Immersion
• Type ESL which uses English exclusively to teach academic content

Linguicism
• Discrimination specifically based on language

Push-in ESL
• ESL teacher goes into the regular, mainstream classroom to work with the English language learner

Self-contained ESL
• Classroom with only ELL students/ESL students - instruction in all subject areas – typically serves a variety of first languages
Linguistic Privilege - What Does it Look Like?

Newt Gingrich on Bilingualism(1)

Newt Gingrich on Bilingualism(2)
Understanding the Socio-political Context of Language Diversity: Language and ‘Race’
“Legislation making English an official language and opposing bilingual education enforce cultural assimilation help divide "white" America from minority America. It also creates divisions within minorities between those who perceive that being "good Americans" is associated with surface features such as speaking English rather than the underlying principles of the Declaration of Independence, Constitution, and other representations of American democracy, freedom, and tolerance that can be translated into and lived in any language.

Jon Reyhner, Northern Arizona University
“Language and race are closely linked as a means of distinguishing Self and Other (Mahboob, 2006; Motha, 2006b; Pennycook, 1998). Underlying the intersection of language and race is a language ideology that Shuck (2001) calls “the ideology of nativeness,” an Us-versus-Them division where native and non-native speakers of a language are perceived as mutually exclusive, uncontested, and identifiable. Language becomes racialized as the native and non-native English speaker hierarchy maps onto existing hierarchical structures in the collective conscious. The convergence of these models construct a social order that subconsciously frames language use in connection with racial membership.”

Liggett
Understanding Socio-political Contexts: the Melting Pot Theory
• America is God’s crucible, the great Melting Pot where all the races of Europe are melting and reforming! Here you stand good folk, think I, when I see them at Ellis Island, here you stand in your fifty groups with your fifty languages and histories, and your fifty hatreds and rivalries, but you won’t be long like that, brothers, for these are the fires of God...The real America has not yet arrived. He is only in the Crucible. I tell you – he will be the fusion of all races, the coming superman.”

Israel Zangwill (1908)
“English Only”

Politicizing Language Use

“We have room for but one language here, and that is the English language; for we intend to see that the crucible turns our people out as Americans, of American nationality, and not as dwellers in a polyglot boardinghouse.”

Theodore Roosevelt

*Patriotism* - has sometimes been measured by how quickly someone gives up his/her native language for English
“Speaking in Tongues” – a Film
Linguistic Diversity in the Classroom: Local and National Demographic Trends
• **Immigration patterns** show increasing numbers of people coming to the U.S. from Asia and Latin America.

• **Statistics** show that by 2050 Hispanics will make up 25% of U.S. population.

• **Demographic trends** show that the U.S. population will shift from majority white to non-white in the near future.
Demographic Trends - Connecticut’s Data:

- In 2002, Connecticut’s k-12 public school population spoke 140 different languages representing six continents.

- The percentage of all public school students for whom English is not their primary language rose to 12.4% in 2000.

- Spanish speakers comprise the largest language group.

- **NOTE**: Avoid seeing Spanish speakers as a monolithic, monocultural group!!
ELL’s and Federal Mandates

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. (see *Lau v. Nichols*, 1974)
In the *Lau v. Nichols* (1975) decision, the U.S. Supreme Court directed school districts to take steps to help limited-English proficient (LEP) students overcome language barriers and to ensure that they can participate meaningfully in a district's educational programs.
“Equal is not the Same”  
Lau v. Nichols

1969
• 1,800 Chinese students sued San Francisco  
• Failure to provide them with opportunity to learn (Lost)

1974
• Case went to the Supreme Court/ unanimous ruling in favor of plaintiffs  
• Court ruled that San Francisco had violated Civil Rights of students (Title VI)

1975
• Lau Remedies - required compliance  
• Identify, assess, provide appropriate educational remedies
ELL’s and Federal Mandates

**Federal law** requires Limited English Proficiency (LEP) programs to be:

- Based on a **sound educational theory**
- **Adequately supported**, with adequate and effective staff and resources
- **Periodically evaluated** and, if necessary, revised
Types of ELL Programs in Connecticut:

Bilingual Education
• Makes instructional use of both English and an eligible student’s native language
  “It’s a way out and a way in”

English as a Second Language (ESL)
• Uses only English and helps students to achieve English proficiency and academic mastery of subject matter content
“Whatever knowledge we acquire, it is always acquired through language and culture. Two interlocked symbolic systems considered essential for survival. [They] are so intricately intertwined that ... scholars find it impossible to decide where language ends and culture begins, or which of the two impacts the other the most.”

Henry Trueba
José’s ten. 
Looks six by size, 
twenty in the eyes. 
Down 
the school-morning street 
José ambles along 
dotted lines of big cheese busses 
that spit exhaust like expletives. 
José chokes 
on a few final moments of peace. 
Hand-me-downs hang 
from José’s slenderness, 
patched and stained. 
Soles flop beneath battered shoes, 
worn but hanging on, 
if only by a lace. 
José pauses in the schoolyard 
where fairer kids laugh and scamper 
unaware of this, his battle; 
of this, his burden; 
of these, his borderlands. 
Behind him: cracked sidewalks 
and frosty nights sweetened 
by the warmth of belonging. 
Before him: manicured 
playgrounds, 
colorful classrooms, 
lectures and quizzes about a world 
that doesn’t see him. 
Still, José moves forward— 
what feels in his stomach 
a regressive sort of forward. 
He straightens his shirt, 
dusting off the stains of ancestry. 
And he clears his throat, 
spitting out his Mexican voice. 
And, becoming Joey, 
he crosses into school.
Why Should You Become a Multicultural Educator?

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Linguistic Diversity
Values and respects student’s language

Language = culture; disrespecting language is disrespecting the cultural experience and identity.

Language is a primary means of expressing cultural values

Language practices that children bring to school affect how and what they learn

Challenge the negative stereotypes associated with language diversity i.e. intellectual capacity, lack of language skills, academic under-performance
• Encourages teachers to maintain **high expectations** for **All** children

• Uses students’ language as a **bridge** to teach Standard English

• Affirms students’ cultural values, and **incorporates** them into pedagogical styles
• Avoids filtering all behavior through the singular lens of language, race, culture or class

• Recognizes that difference does not = deficiency; avoids a blame the victim mindset

• Extends cultural acceptance to families and communities

• Promotes family involvement and community partnerships
“Speaking in Tongues” – a Film
Educational Response to Linguistic Diversity:

Strategies to Support ELL’s in Mainstream Classrooms
- Take time to get to know the student one-on-one in the first week. If necessary, bring in another student to translate. Making a student feel comfortable with you and that you care is important.

- Teach your student to say “I don’t understand,” “Slowly,” and “Please repeat.”

- Accept one word answers, drawings and gestures. Do not overcorrect your student or it will increase their anxiety about making mistakes.

- Allow your student to use a bilingual dictionary or a same language buddy.

- Whenever possible speak to the newcomer individually rather than in front of the class. The pressure of being in the spotlight interferes with comprehension.

- Don’t insist on eye contact. Eye contact between child and adult is considered inappropriate in some cultures.

- Make your classroom as low stress as possible. Cut down class assignments and do your best not to overwhelm the newcomer.
1. Learn students’ names and pronounce them correctly.

One’s name is one’s identity. ask the student to teach you how to say it correctly. That alone sends a message to the student that you care about him/her and you are making an effort to know him/her.
2. Develop an understanding of second language acquisition

- Expect many levels of proficiency

- Education of ELLs is not the sole responsibility of the ESL teacher. Mainstream classroom teachers are still responsible for their mastery of content and also for their language development.

- Understand the difference between conversational and academic language.
3. Create class activities that promote the sharing of personal information

- **Effective teachers** create a community of learners who know, respect and support each other.
- **Effective teachers** give students the opportunity to share information about themselves and get to know one another.
4. Create welcoming and respectful environment/climate for parents

- Parents of English-language learners are:
  - concerned about the well-being of their children,
  - expect a good education
  - want children to succeed
  - want to be involved in the process

All parents must feel valued and respected.
5. Integrate the language and culture of the students

- Teachers must consider the students’ languages and cultures when planning instruction/selecting content and instructional materials

- Teachers should include relevant topics, etc. all year around (i.e. multicultural literature)

- Teachers need to evaluate teaching materials for bias
I am very proud to be bilingual and do not agree with the idea of having to give up my first language and culture. I live in a home where I eat different food, listen to different music, and speak a different language. I am my grandparents’ little angel who talked to them in Hmong everyday when I was young. At age four, I had a fever which affected my language ability. My teacher worried about me pronouncing English wrong. Mommy referred me to speech, and Daddy didn’t let me take Hmong classes. I was supposed to speak only English.

One night, I had a dream that my eighty-year-old grandmother was dying. I said I loved her; but it was in English. I struggled word by word in Hmong. She was gone before I finished saying I loved her. I cried in my dream. I told Daddy I must go to Hmong class. I was born bilingual from the beginning. My first language and culture give me strength to make up myself. How can I live in two cultures and speak only one language? My life will be more beautiful and interesting if I speak both Hmong and English.
Linguistic Diversity: Why Parents Matter
Teachers Must Understand That:

- Parents are the *first teachers*
- Parents are the *best cultural resources*
- Parents *can* and *should* support positive learning outcomes
Linguistic Diversity and Barriers to Good Parent-School Partnerships
Barriers to Good Parent/School Partnerships

- Different knowledge bases, cultures, class
- Use of “teacher jargon”
- Competing ideas about schools and parenting
- Lack of language skills on both sides
- Negative past experiences with schools
• Teachers view parents as culturally deficient because of language differences
• Teachers see themselves as having better parenting skills, and implicitly blame parents for child’s failure
• Teacher’s lack of cultural competence
• Class differences and preconceptions about poverty and poor people
This is a society that doesn't even notice there are major differences among the classes. The middle class thinks that everybody is alike in this country, that we all have the same goals and aspirations. And at the same time, the middle class knows all the hidden rules of the middle class – the unspoken understandings that cue the members of a group that someone fits or doesn't fit. There are hidden rules about clothes, food, and how to have a conversation. When the poor don't know those rules, we think there is an issue with intelligence.

Ruby Payne
Linguistic Diversity and Cultural Conflict: How to Connect With Parents
“From my point of view, there is no more complex and tender geography than the borderlands between families and schools”

Sara Lawrence-Lightfoot
Research on Parents’ Lack of School Involvement Shows -

- **50%** parents have other commitments (i.e. work)
- **35%** parents struggling to provide basic needs for family
- **18%** parents have difficulty with language
- **18%** parents are undereducated and insecure about it in presence of teachers
- **18%** parents have difficulty understanding school culture
• Don’t assume that you know what parents feel, need or want

• Be aware that teachers and parents have preconceptions about each other that could inhibit open communication

• Don’t equate low-income with lack of interest
• Connect to other community resources, i.e. civic organizations, businesses etc.

• Teachers should be visible in students’ community

High Expectations for All Students
Linguistic Diversity and Cultural Conflict: How to Connect With Parents

Teachers who have a negative attitude toward students will likely have a negative attitude toward their parents as well.
There is a relationship between Culture, Dominant Privilege and Language Diversity

Dominant Privilege influences
* Attitudes
* Biases
* Assumptions about linguistically and culturally different children

Dominant Privilege can influence your ability to maintain High Expectations for All Children
“Speaking in Tongues” – a Film
Linguistic Diversity in the Classroom—What Teachers Should Avoid:

Teachers should not:

• **Devalue** any students’ native language and culture

• **Equate English language proficiency** with economic and social mobility

• **View Language Minority Students as “handicapped” or deficient** and lower academic expectations

• **Urge Language Minority Students to abandon their native language** through subtle and direct means

• **Promote Bilingualism for college bound mainstream students** while discouraging bilingualism for Language Minority Students
Approaches to Teaching Language-Minority Students: Additive Bilingualism

Teachers Should:

• Encourage Language Minority Students to add a new language instead of subtracting existing language

• Foster Native-Language Literacy

• Always validate the importance of Culture
“That our society continues to be ignorant of other languages and cultures is self-evident. That it is now jeopardized by this mono-lingualism and mono-culturalism in a world becoming increasingly interdependent is also becoming more and more apparent.”

Sonia Nieto, Affirming Diversity
“If you can show me how to cling that which is real to me, while teaching me a way into the larger society, then I will not only drop my defenses and my hostility, but I will sing your praises, and I will help you to make the desert bear fruit.”

Ralph Ellison
Plato on Education…

Education isn’t what some people declare it to be, namely, putting knowledge into souls that lack it, like putting sight into blind eyes…

Education takes for granted that sight is there but that it isn’t turned the right way or looking where it ought to look, and it tries to redirect it appropriately.
In conclusion...there is no magic, just Good Teaching and

- **Culture Matters**
- **Collaboration matters**
- **High expectations matter**
- **Disposition matters** – Teachers must *care* about their students
- **Persistence matters** - Successful educators refuse to give-up on their students
- **Good Teaching can Change the World**
A Final Message to Teachers:
I am only one person...

I am only one person.
I am only one person.
What can one person do?
Rosa Parks was just one person.
She said one word.
She said it on December 1, 1955
One person
said one word.
She said it one bus.
She said it to the bus driver
on the Cleveland Street bus in
Montgomery.
The bus driver said, “Stand up,
Nigger woman, and give up your seat to that white man!”
Rosa Parks, one person, said one word…
that word was “NO!”
One woman said one word
and the nation blushed.
One woman said one word
and the world talked.
One woman said one word
and the Supreme Court acted!
One woman said one word
and the buses were desegregated.
I am only one person…
what can one person do?