

Jerell Hill, Ed.D.

Administrative Faculty Pacific Oaks College, School of Education

55 Eureka Street. Pasadena, CA 91103

Supporting students from diverse learning backgrounds is a dilemma that many classrooms are facing today, specifically, English language learners (ELLs). Moreover, educators need explicit training and professional development to work with these learners, which is the fastest-growing population in the United States. ELLs who attend college have diverse learning needs and various educational experiences. The need to prepare educators and support schools to create supportive spaces for ELLs is becoming increasingly important. The creation of culturally responsive learning environments will help ELLs to thrive but will require collaboration, and a shared sense of responsibility between institutions and educators. Despite the changes in accountability, the need for evidence-based practices, and the redesign of data collection for language acquisition is vital to addressing academic and linguistic support. This responsibility can be overwhelming and is heightened due to the immense need for training and professional development to drive learning for ELLs in different subject areas. Consequently, the need to understand the dimensions of cultural and language acquisition has been lost due to competing priorities. Teachers need to critically evaluate the trends and current thinking about ELLs to maximize their learning opportunities.

Further, research acknowledges that there are great differences, values, and worldviews, which serve as a foundation for the specific conditions that embrace an intercultural mindset. Current research from Bennett (2016) describes three factors; intercultural mindset, level of sensitivity, and skillset, which can be developed systematically through training and educational efforts showing the potential for intercultural competence. Moreover, Bennett (2016) describes the ability to use learning-to-learn frameworks to identify potential areas of misunderstanding

and to increase one's repertoire of behavior appropriately as being equally important to developing intercultural competence.

The complexity of the issues regarding ELLs cannot be fully addressed within this brief article. Nonetheless, the article will explore the aspects of ELLs and how the curriculum plays a significant role in building bridges for ELLs in all subject areas and produces culturally-informed educators.

Teachers, Power, and Influence

The ethnocentric curriculum wants to demonstrate cultural competence by implying that different cultural traditions have equitable educational significance. Expanding this idea to the next level would mean elevating student voice and choice by affirming a multitudinal view of the world as diverse and inclusive. The curriculum, from this perspective, would empower students to believe they can experience success and get a jumpstart in the global economy.

Additionally, assessments are a source of controversies which serve as a means to maintain power and influence over the curriculum, how it is taught and tested. Since high-stakes testing tends to amplify the disparities between authority and accountability, the teachers' power is minimized. Bergey and colleagues (2018) imply, "There is no single process for assessing and identifying ELLs in colleges or universities. Students often are asked on their applications if they are an ELL, but some applicants may view this question as stigmatizing and elect not to self-identify" (Bergey, Movit, Baird, & Faria, 2018 p.8). This disparity does not provide programs with guidance to fully understand language and literacy to support the diverse population of English Learners. Furthermore, this implies the need to consider additional methods to capture additional data points to create effective programs, increase persistence, and retention.

Educators are becoming more aware of the impact that culture plays within the learning environment. De Vita (2001) evaluated dimensions of culture and concluded that culture influences how learning is processed, organized, and ascertained. Moreover, teaching and learning are conditioned by the culture, which is rooted in different value systems driven by behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, and actions (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). To know and understand the influence culture has on learning is important, and how this can create conflict to those students being educated in a multicultural context not aligned with their own culture. The educators that incorporate an anti-bias approach when working in various learning environments will maintain sufficient presence and high levels of student engagement (Parrish & Linder-VanBerschoot, 2010) that improve learning outcomes.

To conclude, the implications from the disparity between research and practice magnify the need to reimagine education for ELLs, the importance of globalization, and multilingualism. Language acquisition is going far beyond protecting language minorities and helping newcomers learn English. The limited research on post-secondary outcomes for ELLs, the lack of state and federal guidance on how to assess and monitor progress continues to create systemic challenges (Harrison, & Shi, 2016). However, building bridges for English language learners will require educators to prepare instructional activities that allow students to demonstrate their understanding of the connections that language has to culture. Colleges and universities need to collect data beyond native speakers' abilities to include supports and language proficiency. The pendulum is swinging toward practice. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion (DEI), and social justice will play a significant role in reimagining education, scholarship, and practice. Effective teachers embrace DEI by creating spaces that facilitate learning and design participation structures in the classroom to position students competently that create authentic engagement to meaningfully

understand the content (McDonald, Kazemi, & Kavanagh, 2013). This approach to conceptualized practice-based programs could potentially create a culturally responsive learning environment that helps English Language Learners thrive.

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