

Danielle Neill

Cultural and Linguistic Differences: What Teachers Should Know

Thoughts

What influence does culture have on a student's school success? Culture has an influence on how student interact. Also, communication can be affected when a student is from another culture or another country.

How does linguistic diversity influence classroom performance? English may be the student's second language. It may be hard for the student to understand the rules of English.

What impact do culture and language have on a family's involvement in school and on their child's education? In some cultures, it is not common to be involved in a student's school work. However, in other cultures, families are very involved in a student's school work. With the language thing, there may be a language barrier. If a family speaks Spanish and the teacher speak English in may be hard for the family to communicate with the teacher about the student's progress in school.

Assessment

1. Why is it important for teachers to reflect on cultural and linguistic diversity?

It is important for a teacher to reflect on cultural and linguistic diversity because if a student feels like the teacher wants to learn about their culture that they will feel accepted by their teacher. A student's culture is a part of the student's life or personality. If someone does not accept a person's culture then they do not accept the student as a person.

4. Mr. Stone, a teacher from a rural community where all the students share similar cultural backgrounds, relocates to a large city where the students come from a wide variety of cultural groups. He notices that many of his students are not performing well in class. Upon self-reflection, he realizes that because of cultural differences these students may not relate to his style of teaching or to the stories and examples he uses in class. What can Mr. Stone do to become more culturally responsive and meet the diverse needs of these students?

Mr. Stone can go to a workshop to learn how to make his lesson more diverse and more culturally friendly. Also, he can interview some students and/ or their parents to get some ideas on what examples or stories he should use in his class so that his students will understand what he is trying to teach them. He could ask some of the other teachers in the school what kind of examples they use in their classroom and how they are able to relate to their students in an effective manner.

Wrap-Up

Think back to your initial responses to the following questions. After working through the resources in this module, do you still agree with your Initial Thoughts? If not, what aspects of your answers would you change?

I was way off on my initial thoughts. I really did not understand how culture affected a student's success. Now, I understand it a lot more but it is still a little confusing to me.

What influence does culture have on a student's school success?

Culture can affect student's school success because the student would not know or understand the social norms of the school or even the community. For example, the model talks about how you greet others. In America, we greet people with a hand shake or a short hug. Where in other countries, they embrace and kiss, or even bow.

Culture can also influence a student's success because of how the teacher is teaching. A teacher may only teach from their cultural perspective, many without thinking about it. Like my communication class discussed if you are a white American whose ancestors came from a European country you would not have to think much about your culture because it would be considered the cultural norm. If you moved here from Africa, however, you would think about your culture more because your cultural norms would typically not line up with the cultural norms of your school or community here in America. The teacher may give examples that the student does not understand. Teachers need to make sure that they learn other culture and that they are aware of the other cultures when they teach.

Be careful not to make assumptions or generalizations when learning about students' cultures. Also, make sure that you do not ignore the fact that there are differences. Do not be afraid to encourage the student to embrace their differences.

How does linguistic diversity influence classroom performance?

What we need to realize as teachers or teacher candidates is that there are different communication styles. We need to make sure that we are conscience of that. The module uses the example of how communication styles may be different when answering a question that the teacher asks a student. In America, most teachers expect an answer that is clear, short and to the point. The student should maintain eye contact, use little body movement and have a good control on his/her emotions, while using little or no emotion, especially deep emotions. However, a student from a different culture would probably have very different ideas on what social norms would be for answering a question in the classroom.

A student may use topic association or topic chaining in order to communicate their thoughts. Certain teachers may see that as the student not completing their thoughts or ideas and being very unorganized.

If English is a second language for a student it can cause many problems. A student may be able to understand and communicate with their peers about every day things but that does not mean that they understand the language. There are basic interpersonal communicative skills and cognitive academic language proficiency skills. The basic interpersonal communicative skills are easier to develop than the cognitive academic language proficiency skills. According to the module, "teachers are often unaware of this distinction, they sometimes misinterpret the fluent English their students use when speaking to their peers as an indication that those students are English-proficient." I agree with this statement because I can understand why a teacher would think that way. It would make sense that if a student could speak fluently to their peers why wouldn't they be able to speak fluently in class? However, the type of words that are used are when with peers are often different from the words that would be used in the classroom.

Students with language differences need to feel like they can still succeed even in a classroom that does not speak their language. There are several ways in which a teacher can make a student feel like they can succeed. For example, manipulatives, word walls, small groups, etc. can be used in order to give the student the support that they need in order to succeed.

What impact do culture and language have on a family's involvement in school and on their child's education?

Family involvement is really important to the success of a student. Therefore, it is important for teachers to encourage student's parents to get involvement with their student's school work and their success academically.

Parents who are from other cultures or who speak other languages have a bit of challenge when it comes to being involved with their student's education. There are many reasons why parents find it hard to become involved. One of the first reasons is limited English vocabulary by the parents. If a parent is not fluent in English they might find it hard or even embarrassing voicing their concerns to the teacher. In certain cultures, respect authority is seen as very important. Some parents might feel like it is disrespectful to speak to a teacher about the concerns that they have with their student's education.

Research Report : Star Legacy module homework

Teacher Name: **Dr. Gust**

Student Name: _____ 12/12 This is the best one I have seen from
 you. _____

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Quality of Information	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 supporting details and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. No details and/or examples are given.	Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.
Reflective information	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It includes several insightful comments and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. It provides 1-2 insightful comments and/or examples.	Information clearly relates to the main topic. No insightful examples are given.	Information has little or nothing to do with the main topic.
Mechanics	No grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors.	Almost no grammatical, spelling or punctuation errors	A few grammatical spelling, or punctuation errors.	Many grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors.