

Teaching in Multilingual Classrooms

Posted on October 30, 2018

Language Diversity and the Challenge of Multilingual Classrooms

In any school, several students belong to different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. In the United States, the diversity of the people is an essential factor that persists in the culture of the country. The problem occurred when a student came from a particular area, in which the schools had not the English language instructions or content of studies.

Students who come from different countries need particular attention and special care due to their lack of knowledge about the new environment and their inappropriate language skills. A teacher might misinterpret distinct cultural differences as a potential disability of the student (Dray & Wisneski, 2011). Moreover, language is an important issue that needs to be addressed due to its complex nature and the fact that students who come from different countries are not able to speak, read, or write in English. English is an international language and is used in many countries around the world. In the United States, it is a medium of instruction in all schools and educational institutes. Due to the high number of diverse people living in the country, many students in schools are the ones who are not able to understand the English language. Teachers of English language classes are the ones who pay attention to the students and work to improve their language skills. But the other subjects including science, social studies, and mathematics teachers are not able to focus more on the language skills of the students as they need to address more complicated things such as the content. Only one class of English language is not sufficient to provide proper knowledge of a language and how to deal with it in all aspects of reading, writing, listening, and speaking. It impacts on the students negatively, and they are no longer interested in their studies.

Teachers like Mr Elkind are the ones who consider this fact and believe that there should be some strategies that will improve the English language skills of the students and help them to participate like the other students in all subjects efficiently. Teaching in multilingual classrooms is not an easy task and needs many methods and strategies that impact positively the students, and they learn with their best abilities and interests. Several approaches deal with the modifications of curriculum, the content of the books, assignments, tasks, and the assessment that impact the English language learners positively. Most importantly the teachers need to change or modify their teaching behavior so that they can deal with the students passionately and appropriately. ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) is a complete program that deals with teachers who want to modify their teaching methods for English learner students and implement the methods in the classroom (Cajkler & Hall, 2012).

Cognitive Research and the Limits of Monolingual Instruction

Setati, (2008) depicts minimal support for these assumptions and they are also inconsistent with the instructional implications of current theory in the areas of cognitive psychology and applied linguistics. The major important factor in dealing with English language learner students by the ESOL strategies is to modify the content instructions. The student's level of comprehension is the most important element and little or no comprehension develops no interest of the students in the classroom. When the comprehension level is established, the interest of the students will increase, and it will grow their motivation level. When students are interested and motivated, they pay more attention to their studies, and it is easier for the teachers to deal with these students. Moreover, the strategies of ESOL help the students to develop and improve their self-confidence. When students easily understand the content instructions in every classroom, they will have the feeling that they are going to be familiar with new things and going to understand all the things. This feeling develops self-confidence level, and students start to believe that they can do it. The last significant factor of ESOL strategies is that they provide a chance to teachers they deal with students who come from different diverse backgrounds and help them to adjust to the new environment of the new country. ESOL strategies are not only beneficial for the English language learners but also helpful for the teachers. It helps the teachers to gain satisfaction and have pride in their abilities that impact their students positively.

The teachers who are not English language teachers require more learning and more practice of ESOL strategies as they are not familiar with teaching language to their students. They need to learn the basic concepts of language and how to deal with their students by using ESOL strategies and methods.

English language learners can easily learn English by the implementation of two methods including learning language as a social skill and learning language as an academic skill. Socially children learn from their surrounding environment and by communicating with other children. Children who come from different countries need to develop their basic language skills by using video games, watching English TV shows, communicating with native English speakers, and reading different content including the newspaper. In this way, they could be familiarized with basic concepts of English and learn from their environment as well as from their school. Learning the English language by participating in the social learning environment enables the children to have a basic understanding of the English language and these skills are called (BICS) basic [interpersonal communicative skills](#).

English language as an academic skill is quite different from the simple English that people use during communication and interaction with other people. Academic English is quite different than usual, and it needs proper guidance for the ones who want to learn academic-level English in the classrooms. The classroom demands are different than the outside environment, it needs proper critical thinking skills, reading and writing skills, analysis skills, comparing and analyzing skills and many other

important academic skills. These skills are different from BICS skills and are called (CALP) cognitive academic language proficiency.

CALP, Academic Language, and Inclusive Teaching Practice

CALP skills are designed to improve the social conversation of the students with the other mates and class fellows, to improve pictorial description, information handling, and reading methods, to improve the listening methods, to improve problem-solving methods, and critical thinking skills, and to improve the analysis techniques. The initial elementary years of the children in the school are considered as most important ones especially related to their language development. They learn basic language skills and learn how to act in a proper academic environment. The elementary years are the primary years of the students and need proper strategies that make the base of the children strong enough to compete in their later academic years of schooling. It is easier for children to learn the English language in their elementary school years as compared to their later years when they need more attention to the other subjects and their content rather than focus on their language development.

Dray & Wisneski, (2011) show that teachers and learners who position themselves in relation to English are concerned with access to social goods and positioned by the social and economic power of English. The three content areas of science, social studies, and mathematics are important for the teachers as well as for the students. The ESOL strategies implementation is quite easier in the subjects of science and math as compared to social studies. In math and science content, visual aids and graphic representation are more important. In science subjects, demonstrations, experiments, and activities learning is essential. In math, the numerical data and its representation are essential. These methods do not need much concern for the language as compared to the social studies content in which students need to develop their research skills. Social studies include a high level of content with high academic-level vocabulary usage, and it requires a high level of writing skills. The strategies of ESOL are compulsory for the social studies content. Moreover, children from diverse backgrounds studied different social studies content in their last academic institutions as compared to the social studies content in the United States. So, it's a challenge for them to understand the social studies content of the United States. It is crucial and essential to managing the content of social studies for English language learners.

Several essential factors could help the teachers to manage the content. It includes the selection of priority topics. The teachers need to select some critical and priority topics for the ESOL students so that they can develop their interest and easily learn the later difficult topics. Moreover, teachers need to identify the interests of their ESOL students so that they can bring something related to the topic that will be interesting for the students, such as paint or different visual aids. This will enhance the motivation level of the students and increase their interest in the classroom. Students are more

involved in the classroom when they feel that the teacher is paying special attention to them. Additionally, students take more interest in the class when they analyze that the teacher wants to encourage them and to make specific steps for their improvements. Teachers need to select practical and challenging topics for their ESOL students so that they could be able to develop their interest in the particular topics. All these methods, are important and needed for ESOL students and develop their English language skills.

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