

Notes on ELL Lesson 1: Teaching English Language Learners as a General Classroom Teacher

- ELL – English Language Learners & LEP – Limited English Proficient: most commonly used names

Spanish counting video

- How much can you learn from a video in a different language?

Language Learning Facts

- Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills take 2-3 years to learn
- Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency takes 5-7 years to learn

Culture: Do Your Research!

- Share about native culture
- Students' experiences may be far different from yours
- Research native language differences
- See student as individual, not a cultural stereotype

Culture Shock

	Student	Parents	Peers	Teachers
Academic	Sudden regression	Very high expectations	Slower academic pace	Slower teaching pace
Emotional	Identity crisis	Upset	Frustration	Frustration
Cultural	Shock; conflict in values	Shock; conflict in values, family roles	Lack of understanding; non-acceptance	Shock
Social	Alienation	Isolation; demands to assume new roles	Disassociation	Difficulty in developing relationships with students and parents

Source: Helmer, S., & Eddy, C (1996). *Look at Me When I Talk to You: ESL Learners in Non-ESL Classrooms*. Toronto: Pippin. Page 15

Cultural Conventions and Expectations

- Body language
- Personal space
- Coverbal communication

- Don't expect students to immediately feel comfortable with you
- Cultural values
- Make your expectations clear

Some Tips...

- Label everything in stages (about 5 per week)
- Incorporate native languages
- Familiarity and routine
- Visuals: environmental print, pictures, videos

Reading Instruction

- Books: bilingual, multi-cultural, adapted from pop culture (TV, movies), environmental print, predictability (rhyming)
- Oral language: read out loud, audio books, acting out, play centers
- Reading: wordless books, graphic organizers, tell stories in sequence, retell in native language
- Writing: print-rich environment, model concepts of print
- Word study: start with alphabet books to interact with student and learn new words

Testing and Accommodations

- Find another bilingual or ELL student to help, but be aware of cultural differences
- Give simplified and/or oral tests
- Use more manipulatives, pictures, simple study guides, graphic organizers, etc.
- Speak slowly and clearly
- Avoid idioms
- Speak loudly or use a voice amplification system

Final Thoughts

“Picture your ELL student like a tree/sapling being replanted. If they are chopped down flush to the ground and are planted in your room they will not survive. They need their roots and all the nurturing that goes with the plant. Allow them to share and use all of their culture, language, beliefs, foods, religion, traditions.... to thrive, survive and bloom!”

~ Eileen W., ELL teacher