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EDG 652

Final

Teaching English Language Learners & Bilingual Students has taught me strategies to use with English Language learners and the educational challenges they face. Language acquisition, strategies, assessments and placement methods were introduced in this course to show us the means of effective teaching. As an educator, it is my responsibility to take ownership of my English language learners academic skills and to not let them fall through the cracks.

English language learners face many challenges socially and academically. Unfortunately, many ESLs go through a culture shock from losing familiarity of what they know. Language barriers, social isolation and a different educational setting can result in a student experiencing culture shock and withdrawal. English language learners may also struggle academically. For example, topics that are covered may not always spark interest which causes students to become disengaged in content. ELLs also lack vocabulary, this raises concern because it can lead to poor communication and comprehension skills. It also leads to a lack of motivation and class participation.

It is essential for teachers to have background knowledge on their ELL students in order to create a positive and effective learning environment. When teachers take time to learn their students, it helps to fill learning gaps which makes content easier to teach. Also, having background knowledge on your students will let you know their interest which ultimately sparks motivation for engagement and learning. Overall, knowing your students and interests makes all the difference in learning, especially with English language learners.

Language acquisition is the process in which individuals gain the capacity to comprehend and communicate language. This is why it is essential for teachers to help ELLs to develop strategies for decoding and comprehension of new vocabulary words. Being knowledgeable of best practices and purposeful planning is also important. Purposeful planning implements intentional learning and best practices like scaffolding, using visuals and activating prior knowledge supports students with making connections and assists teachers with closing learning gaps. Assessments assist with assessing an English language learners' proficiency and academic growth through oral reports, documentation and student portfolios. Placement methods are implemented to determine English language learners that may need additional instructional services.

In addition to using best practices and strategies, there are a number of things teachers can do to enhance ELLs engagement. Teachers should encourage interactions between ELLs and their peers because it enhances language production and relationship building. Something else teachers can do is support ELL parents, it's important for the child's parents to be involved because they know their child best and can inform the teacher of any trends they're observing at home.

My view of language has evolved because I now understand that language for ELL's may be viewed as a challenging class. Taking this course will benefit my career because it gave me perspective through an English language learner's eyes. The strategies and knowledge that I've gained from this course are informative and effective which inspires me to give all of my students the best education possible. Therefore, it is essential for me to apply what I learned in this course in my own classroom to ensure that I'm building relationships and making sure I'm meeting the academic needs of all students, which includes English language learners.