

Chapter 11

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students: (Re)imagining Multilingual Education

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ABSTRACT

The structure of American public schools has altered within the past 30 years due to receiving extensive number of linguistically diverse students. The fact that culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) students often experience academic failure within the U.S. public schools creates a subgroup of students who cannot achieve their educational goals. The purpose of this study is to explore ideal practices in order to enhance teachers' and policy makers' perceptions and awareness on the unique needs of CALD students. The findings of this study reveal the fact that ineffective methods for teaching CALD students and short-term goal-oriented educational policies fall short of meeting the academic needs of CALD students, and this research offers a conceptual framework that could contribute to CALD students' intellectual growth through effective and constructive language learning practices.

INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century is the age of information and computer-based technological advancements, and the world has become more global and diverse than before for today's digital learners. Since the internet has become a focal point in educating new generations across developed countries, reaching out to knowledge within seconds has become possible. In this computer age, curriculum planners realized that simply transferring technologically and readily available information within active but interdependent global societies is no longer considered as effective or desirable learning (Kuzmenko, Skorodumova, & Melikov, 2018). New educational paradigms and models are needed to filter essential knowledge among many resources to motivate today's learners and help new-age learners become critical and inspirational knowledge seekers. Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) students within a global world are no exceptions to this rule. The structure of American public schools has altered within the past thirty years

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due to receiving a vast number of diverse students whose language background is other than English (Howard & Navarro, 2016). Unfortunately, policymakers often suggest impractical educational policies that are not suitable to be applied within real classrooms to accommodate the unique academic needs of CALD students. What is even more crucial, this conflict creates undesirable educational outcomes for CALD students, which is not parallel with the idea of supporting a diverse and global educational system across the United States (U.S.).

This research study expands the scientific discussion on the growing and diverse population of language minority students within the U.S. public schools by focusing on the relationship between diversity and curriculum development. This study is an attempt to effectively represent the possible instructional techniques that can promote second language acquisition of language minority children while enhancing teacher education. The term “Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD)” is used to refer to language minority students within the scope of this study. This study aims to bridge the intellectual gap between curriculum development policies and what is happening in English language-learning environments within the U.S. public schools for CALD students despite preventive measures. Perhaps the most obvious example of one politically and socially influential policy on language minority education in the U.S. is the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act (Reback et al., 2014), which will be discussed briefly in this study.

It would be an understatement to say that necessary precautions should be considered as CALD students continuously exemplify a risk for failure in regular U.S. mainstream classrooms, where foreign languages are not widely being taught (Samson & Lesaux, 2014; Stanford & Muhammad, 2018). The cognitive and academic perspectives of CALD students in mainstream classrooms are explored within this chapter to express the language minority students’ specific needs in terms of the relationship that occurs among language learners and teachers during the curriculum development process. This conceptual and theoretic study suggests creative solutions for teachers to promote English language learning experiences of CALD students and along with a brief overview of the programs that are currently being promoted and used within the U.S. public schools. Thus, this chapter discusses how teachers can address the academic needs of CALD students in multiculturally sensitive classrooms by answering the following research questions:

- What does the curriculum historically and contextually mean?
- Who are Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) students in American public schools?
- What challenges are there in American public schools for CALD students?
- Which educational philosophical approach highlights the needs of CALD students the most?
- Which English teaching programs are being used for advancing the intellectual growth of CALDs?
- Which professional attitudes are ideal and required to accommodate the unique needs of CALDs in schools?

The Conceptual Understanding of Curriculum Development

As a scientific field of study, the history of curriculum development is vital to focus on long-term educational goals for educators. To create an ideal society through education, early scholars had significant attempts to modify the ideology of curriculum development; however, their attempts were mostly focused on the subject matter as a discipline rather than implementing a progressive curricular renewal. On the other hand, curriculum reformers seek answers for similar educational questions for decades to provide steady achievements that are commonly shared by all educational institutions for society’s

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