Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL

A RESOURCE BOOK FOR TEACHING K–12 MULTILINGUAL LEARNERS

Eighth Edition

SUZANNE F. PEREGOY • OWEN F. BOYLE • STEVEN J. AMENDUM

Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL

A Resource Book for Teaching K–12 Multilingual Learners

Eighth Edition

Suzanne F. Peregoy
San Francisco State University

Owen F. Boyle
San Jose State University

Steven J. Amendum
University of Delaware

Pearson

Content Development: Jeffery Johnston
Content Management: Rebecca Fox-Gieg
Content Production: Yagnesh Jani
Product Management: Drew Bennett
Product Marketing: Krista Clark
Rights and Permissions: Jenell Forschler

Please contact https://support.pearson.com/getsupport/s/ with any queries on this content

Cover Image by LumiNola/E+/Getty Images, FatCamera/E+/Getty Images, Turbo Vector/Shutterstock

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Peregoy, Suzanne F., author. | Boyle, Owen, author. | Amendum, Steven J., author.
Title: Reading, writing, and learning in ESL : a resource book for teaching K-12 Multilingual learners / Suzanne F. Peregoy, San Francisco State University, Owen F. Boyle, San Jose State University, Steven J. Amendum, University of Delaware.
Description: Eighth edition. | Hoboken : Pearson, 2023 | Includes bibliographical references and index.
Identifiers: LCCN 2021057226 | ISBN 9780137535477 (paperback) | ISBN 9780137535613 (ebook)
Subjects: LCSH: English language—Study and teaching—Foreign speakers.
Classification: LCC PE1128.A2 P393 2023 | DDC 428.0071—dc23
LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2021057226

ScoutAutomatedPrintCode

Rental:
ISBN-10: 0-13-753547-3
ISBN-13: 978-0-13-753547-7

Pearson's Commitment to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Pearson is dedicated to creating bias-free content that reflects the diversity, depth, and breadth of all learners' lived experiences.

We embrace the many dimensions of diversity, including but not limited to race, ethnicity, gender, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, ability, age, and religious or political beliefs.

Education is a powerful force for equity and change in our world. It has the potential to deliver opportunities that improve lives and enable economic mobility. As we work with authors to create content for every product and service, we acknowledge our responsibility to demonstrate inclusivity and incorporate diverse scholarship so that everyone can achieve their potential through learning. As the world's leading learning company, we have a duty to help drive change and live up to our purpose to help more people create a better life for themselves and to create a better world.

Our ambition is to purposefully contribute to a world where:

- Everyone has an equitable and lifelong opportunity to succeed through learning.
- Our educational content accurately reflects the histories and lived experiences of the learners we serve.
- Our educational products and services are inclusive and represent the rich diversity of learners.
- Our educational content prompts deeper discussions with students and motivates them to expand their own learning (and worldview).

Accessibility

We are also committed to providing products that are fully accessible to all learners. As per Pearson's guidelines for accessible educational Web media, we test and retest the capabilities of our products against the highest standards for every release, following the WCAG guidelines in developing new products for copyright year 2022 and beyond.

You can learn more about Pearson's commitment to accessibility at **https://www.pearson.com/us/accessibility.html**

Contact Us

While we work hard to present unbiased, fully accessible content, we want to hear from you about any concerns or needs with this Pearson product so that we can investigate and address them.

Please contact us with concerns about any potential bias at **https://www.pearson.com/report-bias.html**

For accessibility-related issues, such as using assistive technology with Pearson products, alternative text requests, or accessibility documentation, email the Pearson Disability Support team at **disability.support@pearson.com**

Pearson

About the Authors

Suzanne F. Peregoy is Professor Emerita of Education at San Francisco State University, where she coordinated her department's graduate programs including the M.A. in Language and Literacy Education and the Reading/Language Arts Specialist Credential programs. She also taught courses in language and literacy development for native English speakers and English language learners. Dr. Peregoy earned a B.A. and M.A. in Spanish literature and linguistics from the University of California, Santa Barbara. Her Ph.D. in language and literacy education from the University of California, Berkeley, focused on bilingual reading, second language acquisition, and language issues in American Indian education. Previously, Dr. Peregoy taught English as a Second Language (ESL) to adults and elementary grades in a bilingual education program, and she directed a multicultural preschool program. She was active in writing California's guidelines for preparing inservice teachers to work with English language learners. Dr. Peregoy has published articles on bilingual and second language literacy in the *Journal of the National Association for Bilingual Education*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Canadian Modern Language Review*, *Educational Issues of Language Minority Students*, *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, and *Theory into Practice*. She is fluent in oral and written Spanish.

Owen F. Boyle is Professor Emeritus of Education at San Jose State University, where he coordinated the Bilingual and ESL Program, chaired the Language and Literacy Department, and headed the Reading Specialist Credential and M.A. programs in literacy. At San Jose State, he taught courses in second language literacy, language acquisition and reading, multicultural literature, and reading assessment. Dr. Boyle received his doctorate at the University of California, Berkeley, where he was the Coordinator of the Learning from Text Program and researched and taught students. As Assistant Director of the Bay Area Writing Project (National Writing Project), he taught courses in Panama, Alaska, and California. Dr. Boyle served on the California State Superintendent's panel that developed guidelines for preparing teachers of reading and was instrumental in developing a reading instruction test required for a California multiple-subject teaching credential. He has published articles and research in *Theory into Practice*, *The Reading Teacher*, *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, *Bilingual Research Journal*, *Journal of the Association of Mexican–American Educators*, *Journal of College Reading and Learning*, and *Reading Research and Instruction*. Dr. Boyle taught elementary and secondary school where he worked with second language learners for 12 years.

Steven J. Amendum is Professor of Literacy Education in the College of Education and Human Development at the University of Delaware. He teaches courses related to literacy research, assessment, and instruction at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. He conducts research in literacy development and instruction for multilingual students, early reading intervention, and evidence-based classroom instruction as well as professional learning for teachers in each of these areas. Dr. Amendum received a M.Ed. in Reading Education along with certification as a reading specialist. His doctoral studies at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill focused on literacy-related educational reforms and literacy development and instruction for multilingual learners. To date, Dr. Amendum has served as the principal investigator or co-principal investigator on several federally funded grants to (1) investigate an early reading and teacher professional learning intervention with young multilingual learners; (2) develop professional learning to improve collaboration among classroom and ESL teachers through instructional alignment with high-impact strategies and incorporation of multilingual students' cultural wealth; and (3) conduct a large-scale study to test the efficacy of the professional learning program. His research has been published in *Reading Research Quarterly*, *Child Development*, *Elementary School Journal*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Educational Psychology Review*, *Journal of Literacy Research*, and *The Reading Teacher*. Prior to his work in higher education, Dr. Amendum was a K–2 classroom teacher and literacy coach for 9 years.

Preface
About This Book

Welcome to the eighth edition of *Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL: A Resource Book for Teaching K–12 Multilingual Learners*. Our purpose in this edition remains the same as previous editions: We wish to open a window on classrooms in which multilingual learners are actively and successfully involved in learning about themselves, their classmates, and the world around them. In these classrooms, students often engage in learning about interesting topics; use oral and written English to discuss and confer with their classmates; and read, write, discuss, report, and share ideas and learning. Gradually, they advance their English knowledge, expanding their social and academic language repertoires and refining their control of grammar, pronunciation, spelling, and mechanics. Ideally, they use their growing academic, linguistic, and sociocultural competence to make the world a better place.

Among books introducing English as a Second Language (ESL) instruction, this text is unique for two reasons. First, unlike a text that focuses on part of instruction for multilingual learners, this text provides a *comprehensive* resource. The text provides up-to-date language acquisition theory; classroom organization; a wealth of teaching strategies for promoting oral language, reading, and writing development; and assessment procedures to inform effective multilingual learner instruction. Throughout, readers will see our view of learning as a social process—a frame we argue is paramount for multilingual student learning. As such, we introduce readers to the classroom cultures and strategies of some of the most effective teachers we know—classrooms in which multilingual learners from diverse language and cultural backgrounds demonstrate success in learning. We describe various social structures and strategies that foster language and literacy development for multilingual learners, such as collaborative groups structured for different purposes. At the same time, we present specific strategies for instruction and assessment that effective teachers use to promote the language and literacy development of all students.

Second, given its comprehensive nature, this text is *ideal for ESL and bilingual methods courses* in higher education as well as for general reading/language arts methods classes in geographical areas serving multilingual learners. Along with the supplemental resources provided, this text can provide the foundational course structure as well as week-to-week and day-to-day material for teacher candidates to learn vital content and skills to support their future instruction with multilingual learners in K–12 settings. This text is also an excellent professional learning resource for inservice teachers and administrators to use within their professional learning communities.

New to This Edition

In this new edition we emphasize evidence-based practices that describe instructional strategies related to *how* to provide effective instruction for multilingual learners. However, throughout the text we also address the *why*; that is, why particular strategies are effective for multilingual learners and how they might support multilingual learners' language and literacy development. To integrate both the *how* and the *why* in this new edition we have significantly increased the emphasis on practical application; specifically, we stress how evidence-based instructional practices are applied in a classroom context. In addition, we also further address students' individual language proficiency by noting how particular instructional strategies can be adapted by language proficiency.

- *New Application Cases.* In each chapter we provide two new applied cases related to material from the chapter text. Chapters 4–11, each of which covers instruction in a selected area of language and/or literacy development and instruction, contain applied cases related to assessment, teaching, and learning. Each case represents a real-world situation experienced by teachers working with multilingual learners and is accompanied by an open-ended reflective question to facilitate learning. These cases also form the basis for some of the Application Exercises included with each chapter.

- *Updated research and theory.* Throughout the text we have updated the citations and reference lists for each chapter to reflect current research and theory. Contemporary research findings and theoretical perspectives influence the field of multilingual learner instruction. Across all the chapters within the text approximately 55% of the citations are new or updated.
- *New and updated figures.* Throughout the text we provide a selection of new and updated figures to illustrate key concepts presented. Figures are designed to supplement the content throughout the text. In addition, new figures are provided to aid reading by providing overviews of content, such as sets of strategies, and others demonstrate concepts, such as how a strategy could be adapted for different levels of language proficiency.
- *Updated chapter summaries.* We provide completely updated summaries for each chapter with greater detail. Each summary is organized by learning outcome to aid readability and comprehension.
- *Streamlined learning outcomes.* The number of learning outcomes in each chapter has been updated and reduced to four or five per chapter to maximize efficiency with other new features and support readers' comprehension and learning.
- *Updated terminology.* In this edition we move to the term **multilingual learners**, the asset and equity-based term used by WIDA (https://wida.wisc.edu), to refer to students who are, or have been, consistently exposed to multiple languages. Multilingual learners are typically learning English and speak a primary language other than English at home. Rather than focus on deficits related to English language knowledge, we highlight the remarkable assets related to multilingualism and learning a new language or languages.

Key Content Updates by Chapter

- **Chapter 1:** We have updated the demographics statistics and descriptions provided to match the current times in which we live related to schooling for multilingual learners. Likewise, we have revised the information on current policies related to multilingual learners to reflect the authorization of the Every Student Succeeds Act. We have also added a section addressing online teaching and learning for multilingual learners given the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- **Chapter 2:** In recent years, research and theory about new language learning has expanded significantly. The section on theories for new language acquisition has been expanded with a new subsection on translanguaging.
- **Chapter 3:** The topics of differentiation and Response to Intervention have been updated to reflect contemporary thought and implementation in practice. Additional updates were made throughout to enhance readability and descriptions of content and practice.
- **Chapter 4:** The section on social media was updated to include contemporary applications widely used in practice and additional information was added throughout the chapter related to digital applications, such as translation apps, as well as an expanded concept of digital devices. Finally, updates were made in the chapter to support enhanced descriptions of content.
- **Chapter 5:** This chapter was reorganized to enhance the reader's experience. A new figure was provided to give an overview of the strategies presented to promote oral language development. A second new figure was added to demonstrate how to adapt strategies based on students' oral language proficiency. Lists of resources within the chapter were updated to provide additional and contemporary resources.
- **Chapter 6:** The major sections of the chapter were reorganized and recommended resources throughout the chapter were updated to provide additional and contemporary resources. A new figure was provided to give an overview of the strategies presented to promote early literacy development. Additional new figures were added to demonstrate orthographic mapping as well as how to adapt dialogue journals based on students' oral language proficiency. The section on instructional strategies for how to read and spell words was updated to reflect current reading science.
- **Chapter 7:** Sections of the chapter were reorganized to enhance readability and information was added about electronic word corpora, three tiers of vocabulary words, a shifting emphasis from print to online dictionaries, and explicit vocabulary instruction. New figures were added to give an overview of the strategies presented to promote vocabulary for both students with beginning English language proficiency and intermediate proficiency.

Additional new figures were added to demonstrate particular strategies detailed in the chapter.

- **Chapter 8:** This chapter was reorganized to enhance the reader's comprehension and learning and integrate new content. We now include content on genre-based writing (including two new figures), an instructional framework well matched to current state learning standards. We also added new figures to give an organizational overview of instructional strategies presented to promote writing for both beginning multilingual writers as well as intermediate writers. Lists of resources within the chapter were updated to provide additional and contemporary resources.
- **Chapter 9:** The section on theory was updated to reflect current reading science and a new section was added on the role of text difficulty in reading comprehension. We also provide additional discussion of strategies widely used in practice (miscue analysis, guided reading) but with little empirical support. New figures were added to give an overview of the strategies presented to support intermediate-level readers and to demonstrate how to adapt strategies by students' language proficiency using shared reading with Big Books as an example.
- **Chapter 10:** The chapter now includes additional information about informational text structure research and instruction. We also added procedures and application of a content-area reading inventory to evaluate students' interactions with text. The section on field trips and videos was revised to include virtual field trips as a prereading strategy. New figures were also added to provide an organizational overview of instructional strategies to support multilingual readers for both prereading and during reading.
- **Chapter 11:** Updates were made throughout to enhance readability and descriptions of content and practice. The extended example of differentiated planning and instruction at the end of the chapter was updated to reflect current learning standards and English language development standards. New figures were also added to provide an organizational overview of strategies used to organize and remember information as well as writing strategies to support content-area learning.

Pedagogical Features

Application Cases include new applied cases related to material from each chapter's text. Each case represents a real-world scenario experienced by teachers working with multilingual learners. A set of reflection questions accompanies each case and cases also form the basis for some of the Application Exercises included with each chapter.

Case 5.1

Dubbing a Video to Promote Oral Language Use

Mr. Rowe is an ESL teacher and has been searching for new strategies to support his small group of fourth-grade multilingual learners in their English oral language development. The group is comprised of students in the *late beginning* stages of English proficiency. To promote oral language use, Mr. Rowe decides to engage his group in dubbing a YouTube video that is appropriate for his students and related to their current classroom content. He explains to his students that they will be dubbing videos to practice using English. As a model, Mr. Rowe shows them a brief, engaging video and then the same video he and a friend dubbed with their own voices. His students recognize his voice on the dubbed video and are excited to begin. That afternoon Mr. Rowe selects a brief video clip to use with his students.

Over the next three class meetings, Mr. Rowe engages his students in the process of dubbing the video. He begins by showing the video to his students with no sound. At first they seem confused by the video storyline, so he plays it again with the sound and explains the storyline to his students. Next, Mr. Rowe facilitates a brainstorming session of the plot for their new, dubbed video. He provides a word bank of ideas for his students with accompanying pictures to inspire their ideas for the plot of the new video. The students agree on the plot. Mr. Rowe now shows the video (without sound) again to his students, pausing it after each character speaks to another in the video. Through this process, he is able to establish the discourse patterns among the video's characters. Using these patterns and their idea for the plot, Mr. Rowe and his students work together and draft a script for the dubbed video. As each character's lines are drafted, he engages the students in reading the lines chorally. Once the script is complete, they read through it several times, switching parts and ensuring a solid plot and appropriate dialogue. Then Mr. Rowe assigns parts to the students and plays the video without sound while

the students say their parts aloud and practice the timing of their delivery. Finally, they record the new audio while playing the video without sound. After they are finished, they view the finished video and are impressed with their efforts! Mr. Rowe provides the students with a link to share the video with their families.

- What specific steps did Mr. Rowe use to implement this strategy with his students?
- What adaptations or accommodations did Mr. Rowe make for his students' language proficiency?
- What was the impact of this strategy on the students' oral language use?

Learning Management System (LMS)–Compatible Assessment Bank, and Other Instructor Resources

LMS-Compatible Assessment Bank

With this new edition, quizzes, application exercises, and test items are included in LMS-compatible banks for the following learning management systems: Blackboard (**9780137535781**), Canvas (**9780137535811**), D2L (**9780137535835**), and Moodle (**9780137535866**). These packaged files allow maximum flexibility to instructors when it comes to importing, assigning, and grading. Assessment types include:

- **Learning Outcome Quizzes** Each chapter learning outcome is the focus of a *Learning Outcome Quiz* that is available for instructors to assign through their LMS. Learning outcomes identify chapter content that is most important for learners and serve as the organizational framework for each chapter. The higher-order, multiple-choice questions in each quiz will measure your understanding of chapter content, guide the expectations for your learning, and inform the accountability and the applications of your new knowledge. Each multiple-choice question includes feedback for the correct answer and for each distractor to help guide students' learning.
- **Application Exercises** Each chapter provides opportunities to apply what you have learned through *Application Exercises*. A model response written by experts is provided to help guide learning.
- **Chapter Tests** Suggested test items are provided for each chapter.

Instructor's Manual (9780137535897)

The Instructor's Manual is provided as a Word document and includes resources to assist professors in planning their course. These resources consist of chapter overviews, learning outcomes, guidance for using available PowerPoint® slides to promote concept development, questions for discussion, supplemental teaching suggestions, and worksheets.

PowerPoint Slides (9780137535927)

PowerPoint slides are provided for each chapter and highlight key concepts and summarize the content of the text to make it more meaningful for students.
Note: All instructor resources—LMS-compatible assessment bank, instructor's manual, and PowerPoint slides—are available for download at www.pearsonhighered.com. Use one of the following methods:

- From the main page, use the search function to look up Peregoy, *Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL, A Resource Book for Teaching K–12 Multilingual Learners*, 8th edition. Select the desired search result, then access the "Resources" tab to view and download all available resources.
- From the main page, use the search function to look up the ISBN (provided above) of the specific instructor resource you would like to download. When the product page loads, access the "Downloadable Resources" tab.

Acknowledgments

We want to thank our editor, Jeffery Johnston, for his patience, thoughtful feedback, and kind interaction style. His helpful suggestions improved this edition, and we consider ourselves lucky to have received his support throughout the process. Because this book is the result of our own collective learning experiences, past and present, we gratefully acknowledge the following individuals who played a significant role in our professional development: Marilyn Hanf Buckley, Lily Wong Fillmore, Jill Fitzgerald, Martha Haggard, Robert Ruddell, and Lynne Vernon-Feagans.

We also thank our university students, most of whom are prospective or practicing teachers. They helped us learn along the way and provided valuable information. We deeply appreciate the teachers who have welcomed us into their classrooms and shared materials with us, including Linda Chittenden, Debbie Dee Clark, Audrey Fong, Jennifer Jones, Jay Kuhlman, Anne Philips, Reina Salgado, Juana Zamora, Cathryn Bruno, Don Mar, Angela Campbell, Juana Feisel-Engle, Peggy Koorhan, Gloria Lopez-Guiterrez, Rosemarie Michaels, Elda Parise, Debi Quan, Pam Thomas, Teri Burris, Emily Edmonds-Eveland, Lyndsey Gerstle, Kristina Giordano, Kelly Carvajal Hageman, Ryan Lloyd, Jenny Markle, and Stephanie Saggione.

Brief Contents

This page intentionally left blank

Contents

Chapter 1

Multilingual Learners: An Introduction

SOURCE: Michaeljung/Shutterstock

Learning Outcomes

In this chapter, we provide you with basic information on multilingual learners in today's classrooms, including discussion of demographic changes, legislative demands, and technological innovations that impact teachers and students. *After reading this chapter you should be able to:*

1.1 Discuss the diversity of multilingual learners in K–12 classrooms and suggest ways to get to know multilingual students.

1.2 Explain how cultural differences may affect the way your multilingual learners respond to you and to your instruction and how you might ease new multilingual learners into the routines of your classroom.

1.3 Describe policy trends affecting education for multilingual learners.

1.4 Describe different program models for multilingual learners, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each.

Teaching and learning in current classroom contexts are filled with challenge and opportunity, especially when teaching students for whom English is a new language. With the evolution of the Internet and digital phone technologies, communication has become a simple matter within and across national boundaries. In addition, people are becoming more mobile in a variety of ways. For example, international migrations have changed the demographics of many countries, including the United States, Canada, and many European countries. The coexistence of people from diverse cultures, languages, and social circumstances has become the rule rather than the exception, demanding new levels of tolerance, understanding, and patience. Even as immigration has changed the face of countries such as the United States, occupational mobility has added another kind of diversity to the mix. Earlier generations planned on finding a job and keeping it until retirement at age 65. Today, the average wage earner will change jobs as a many as five times prior to retirement. These changes are due to the rapid evolution of the job market as technology eliminates or outsources some jobs while creating new ones that require retooling and retraining. Even as immigrants arrive and people change jobs, the gap between wealthy and poor continues to widen in the United States, threatening social mobility for those in poverty and the working class. These changing demographics add another element to the ever-shifting field on which we work and play. Now, more than ever, the education we provide our youth must meet the needs of a future defined by constant innovation and change.

Into this field of challenge and change, teachers provide the foundation on which all students, including multilingual learners, must build the competence and flexibility needed for success. It is our hope that this text provides you the foundations to help your students envision and enact positive futures for themselves. To that end, we offer you a variety of theories, teaching strategies, assessment techniques, and learning tools to help you meet the needs of your students and the challenges they will face today and in the future. Our focus is on K–12 students who are in the process of developing academic and social competence in English as an additional language.

There are several basic terms and acronyms in the field of multilingual education that we want to define for you here. Throughout this book we use the term

multilingual learners, the asset- and equity-based term used by WIDA (https://wida.wisc.edu), to refer to students who are, or have been, consistently exposed to multiple languages. Multilingual learners are typically learning English and speak a primary language other than English at home, such as Spanish, Cantonese, Russian, Hmong, and Navajo, to name just a few of the hundreds of other languages spoken. Multilingual learners will vary in their proficiency with their primary language as well as their proficiency in English. Language development may be envisioned along a continuum from non-English proficient to fully English proficient. Those who have English proficiency at the beginning to intermediate levels are sometimes referred to as **limited English proficient (LEP)**, a term used in federal legislation and other official documents. However, as a result of the pejorative connotation of "limited English proficient," often educators use other terms, such as **English learners**, **English language learners**, **non-native English speakers**, **dual language learners**, **heritage language learners**, and **second language learners**, to refer to students who are in the process of learning English as a new language. However, throughout this book we employ the term **multilingual learners** for the reasons noted previously.

Newcomers and **long-term multilingual learners** (Clark-Gareca et al., 2020; Samway et al., 2020) represent two important groups. Newcomers are newly arrived immigrants. Typically, they know little English and may be unfamiliar with the culture and schooling of their new country. They are often served by newcomer programs that help them adjust and get started in English language acquisition and academic development. Long-term multilingual learners, on the other hand, are students who have lived in the United States for many years, have been educated primarily in the United States, may speak very little of their primary language, but have not developed advanced proficiency in English, especially academic English. They may not even be recognized as multilingual learners. Failure to identify and educate long-term multilingual learners poses significant challenges to the educational system and to society. In this text, we offer assessment and teaching strategies for students at the "beginning" and "intermediate" stages of English proficiency. If you are teaching long-term multilingual learners, you will likely find excellent strategies described in the sections for students with intermediate proficiency. Some strategies for beginning levels of proficiency may apply as well.

The terms **English as a Second Language (ESL)**, **English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL)**, and **Teaching English for Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)** are often used to refer to programs, instruction, and development of English as an additional language. We use the term *ESL* because it is widely used and descriptive, even though what we refer to as a "second language" might actually be a student's third or fourth language. A synonym for ESL that you will find in this text is **English language development (ELD)**.

Who Are Multilingual Learners, and How Can I Get to Know Them?

Learning Outcome 1.1 **Discuss the diversity of multilingual learners in K–12 classrooms and suggest ways to get to know multilingual students.**

Multilingual learners live in all areas of the United States, and their numbers have steadily increased over the last several decades. Between 2000 and 2018, for example, the number of multilingual learners increased significantly from approximately 3.8 million to almost 5.0 million students and continues to increase (National Center

for Education Statistics [NCES], 2020a). During the same period, U.S. federal education statistics indicated that multilingual learner enrollment increased from approximately 8.1% of total school enrollment to 10.2% (NCES, 2020a). By school year 2018–19, the multilingual learner population had increased in all but seven states and the District of Columbia, with the highest numbers reported in California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois (NCES, 2020b). California had the highest percentage at 19.4%, while nine other states and the District of Columbia had percentages between 10 and 19%, and an additional 24 states had percentages greater than 5.0 (NCES, 2020b). States reported more than 460 different primary languages spoken by multilingual learners (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.), with Spanish comprising by far the most prevalent, spoken by about 75% of multilingual learners (NCES, 2020a). In short, multilingual learners in K–12 public schools represent a significant special population throughout most states. Helping them succeed educationally is of paramount importance.

It may surprise you to learn that in the United States, native-born multilingual learners outnumber those who were born in foreign countries, with 72% born in the United States and 28% foreign born (Bailik, 2018). According to one survey, only 24% of multilingual learners in elementary school were foreign born, whereas 44% of secondary school multilingual learners were born outside the United States (Capps et al., 2005). Among those multilingual learners who were born in the United States, some have roots in U.S. soil that go back for countless generations, including indigenous Native Americans of numerous tribal heritages. Others are sons and daughters of immigrants who left their home countries in search of a better life. Those who are immigrants may have left countries brutally torn apart by war or political strife in regions such as Southeast Asia, Central America, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe. Finally, there are those who have come to be reunited with families who are already settled in the United States.

Whether immigrant or native born, each group brings its own history and culture to the enterprise of schooling (Heath, 1986). Furthermore, each group

SOURCE: RyFlip/Shutterstock

You can get to know your students through their interactions in and out of class.

contributes to the rich tapestry of languages and cultures that form the fabric of the United States. Our first task as teachers, then, is to become aware of our students' personal histories and cultures, to understand their feelings, frustrations, hopes, and aspirations. At the same time, as teachers, we need to look closely at ourselves to discover how our own culturally ingrained attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and communication styles play out in our teaching and can affect our students' learning. By developing such understanding, we create the essential foundation for meaningful instruction, including reading and writing instruction. As understanding grows, teachers and students alike can come to an awareness of both diversity and universals in human experience.

Issues Related to Virtual Learning for Multilingual Learners

With the advent of the COVID pandemic in 2020–21 and the move to remote or virtual learning in many schools, issues of equity surfaced related to providing effective instruction for multilingual learners (Mitchell, 2020). The pandemic highlighted gaps between learning and the services provided by schools and districts and the serious challenges related to providing appropriate instruction for multilingual learners. For example, access to digital devices and the Internet was a huge challenge, with families of multilingual learners disproportionally affected (Babinski & Amendum, 2020). In fact, in our own research more than 30% of multilingual learners missed more than 2 weeks of instruction while trying to gain access to digital devices and to broadband Internet (Babinski & Amendum, 2020).

This pandemic-induced shift to virtual teaching and learning intensified some key issues related to current inequities in the education of multilingual learners (Babinski & Amendum, 2020; Babinski et al., 2020; Hartshorn & McMurry, 2020; Mitchell, 2020). As previously mentioned, one issue was the serious inequities in access to virtual schooling in terms of both digital devices and Internet access. A second issue was related to virtual learning itself, and the lack of effective partnerships in many places among schools, teachers, and families to ensure the necessary resources, routines, and lines of communication were in place. Often, assigning devices to students and providing Internet access was necessary, but not sufficient, to facilitate multilingual learners' participation, and it was clear that additional supports were needed for families of young children. A third issue was the multiple increased demands on teachers and families during online schooling. Because structures and supports were not already in place to support teachers' virtual instruction, many teachers of multilingual learners had to spend many, many hours of their own time to investigate and implement digital learning platforms, often while supporting their own families. This lack of existing support highlights the need for structured educational technology supports, plans, and equipment for teachers to provide high-quality education for multilingual students.

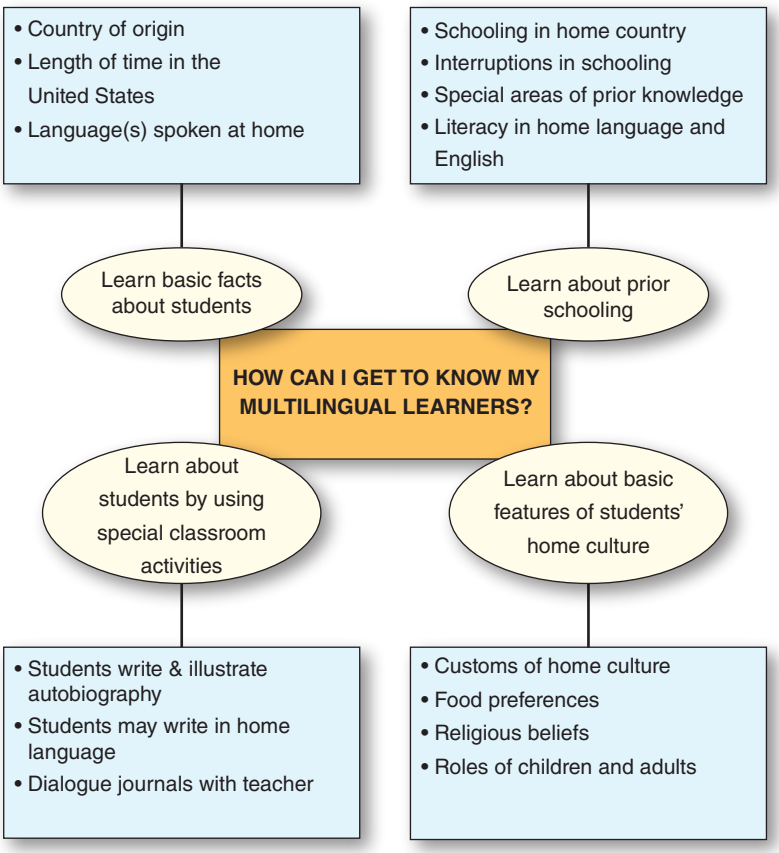
We believe that ensuring that multilingual learners receive the high-quality teaching and learning they deserve, and that is required by law, is one of the foundational issues of equity and social justice facing the education system in the United States today. Serious and fundamental questions arose about the preparation of schools to effectively educate multilingual students during remote online learning (Babinski et al., 2020; Mitchell, 2020). Some questions that arose based on the issues detailed previously included but were not limited to: (1) How well were multilingual learners served by virtual learning? (2) How many multilingual learners experienced learning loss, and how might that loss compare with that of their monolingual

English-speaking peers? (3) If students did experience learning loss, how long will it take to remedy, and what are teachers' roles in helping address this learning? and (4) Were significant numbers of multilingual learners unable to attend due to a lack of access to digital resources or other barriers? Answers to these, and other questions, are of upmost importance as we consider how to promote equity and social justice related to the education of multilingual learners.

Learning About Your Students' Languages and Cultures

Given the variety and mobility among multilingual learners, it is likely that most teachers, including specialists in bilingual education or ESL, will at some time encounter students whose language and culture they know little about. Perhaps you are already accustomed to working with students of diverse cultures, but if you are not, how can you develop an understanding of students from unfamiliar linguistic and cultural backgrounds? We recognize that this is far from a simple task, and the process requires not only fact finding but also continual observation and interpretation of students' behaviors, combined with trial and error in communication. Therefore, the process must take place gradually. Next, we describe initial steps for getting to know your students and summarize them in Figure 1.1.

Figure 1.1 Getting to Know Multilingual Learners



Getting Basic Information When a New Student Arrives

When a new student arrives, we suggest three initial steps. First of all, begin to learn basic facts about the student. What country is the student from? How long has the student lived in the United States? Where and with whom is the student living? If an immigrant, what were the circumstances of immigration? Some children have experienced traumatic events before and during immigration, and the process of adjustment to a new country may represent yet another link in a chain of stressful life events (Levers & Hyatt-Burkhart, 2012). What language or languages are spoken in the home? If a language other than English is spoken in the home, the next step is to assess the student's English language proficiency (ELP) in order to determine what kind of language education support is needed. Whenever feasible, it is useful to assess primary language proficiency as well.

Second, obtain as much information about the student's prior school experiences as possible. School records may be available if the child has already been enrolled in a U.S. school. However, you may need to piece information together yourself, a task that requires resourcefulness, imagination, and time. Some school districts collect background information on students when they register or upon administration of language proficiency tests. Therefore, your own district or school office is one possible source of information. In addition, you may need the assistance of someone who is familiar with the home language and culture, such as another teacher, a paraprofessional, or a community liaison, who can ask questions of parents, students, or siblings. Keep in mind that some students may have had no previous schooling, despite their age, or perhaps their formal schooling has been interrupted. Other students may have attended school in their home countries.

Students with prior educational experience bring various kinds of knowledge to school subjects and may be quite advanced. Be prepared to validate your students for their knowledge. We saw how important this was for fourth-grade student Li Fen, an immigrant from mainland China who found herself in a mainstream English language classroom, not knowing a word of English. Li Fen was a bright child but naturally somewhat reticent to involve herself in classroom activities during her first month in the class. She made a real turnaround, however, the day the class studied long division. Li Fen accurately solved three problems at the board in no time at all, though her procedure differed slightly from the one in the math book. Her classmates were highly impressed with her mathematical competence and did not hide their admiration. Her teacher, of course, smiled and gave her words of congratulations. From that day forward, Li Fen participated more readily, having felt that she earned a place in the class.

When you gather information on your students' prior schooling, it's important to find out whether they are literate in their home language. If so, you might encourage them to keep a journal using their native language and, if possible, you should acquire native language books, magazines, or newspapers to have on hand for the new student. In this way, you validate the student's language, culture, and academic competence while providing a bridge to English reading. Make these choices with sensitivity, though, only building on positive responses from your student. Bear in mind, for example, that some newcomers may not wish to be identified as different from their classmates. We encourage this caution because of our experience with a 7-year-old boy, recently arrived from Mexico, who attended a school where everyone spoke English only. When we spoke to him in Spanish, he did not respond, giving the impression that he did not know the language. When we visited his home and spoke Spanish with his parents, he was not pleased. At that point in his life, he wanted

to blend into the dominant social environment—in this case an affluent, European American neighborhood saturated with English.

The discomfort felt by this young boy is an important reminder of the internal conflict experienced by many youngsters as they come to terms with life in a new culture. As they learn English and begin to fit into school routines, they begin a personal journey toward a new cultural identity. If they come to reject their home language and culture, moving toward maximum assimilation into the dominant culture, they may experience alienation from their families. A moving personal account of such a journey is provided by journalist Richard Rodriguez in his book *Hunger of Memory* (1982). Another revealing account is the lively, humorous, and, at times, brutally painful memoir, *Burro Genius*, by novelist Victor Villaseñor (2004). Villaseñor creates a vivid portrayal of a young boy seeking to form a positive identity as he struggles in school with dyslexia and negative stereotyping of his Mexican language and culture. Even if multilingual learners strive to adopt the ways of the new culture without replacing those of the home, they will have departed significantly from many traditions their families hold dear. Therefore, for many students, the generation gap necessarily widens to the extent that the values, beliefs, roles, responsibilities, and general expectations differ between the home culture and the dominant one. Keeping this in mind may help you empathize with students' personal conflicts of identity and personal life choices.

Finally, the third suggestion is to become aware of basic features of the home culture, such as religious beliefs and customs, food preferences and restrictions, and roles and responsibilities of children and adults (Ovando & Combs, 2018; Saville-Troike, 1978). These basic bits of information, although sketchy, will guide your initial interactions with your students and may help you avoid asking them to say or do things that may be prohibited or frowned upon in the home culture, including such common activities as celebrating birthdays, pledging allegiance to the flag, or eating hot dogs. Finding out basic information also provides a starting point to contextualize and interpret newcomers' responses to you, to your other students, and to the ways you organize classroom activities. Just as you begin to make adjustments, your students will also begin to adjust as they grow in the awareness and acceptance that ways of acting, dressing, eating, talking, and behaving in school are different to a greater or lesser degree from what they may have experienced before.

Case 1.1

Getting to Know New Students

As a new ESL teacher in middle school, Jon Makoto wants to begin the year getting to know the newcomers who are multilingual learners that he will work with during the upcoming school year. He spends some time reviewing each student's records, if available, and school registration materials. In his review, Jon notes one student, Qasim, who recently immigrated with his family to escape civil war in Syria. In reviewing his records, Jon notes that Qasim has been in the United States for approximately 4 months, lives with his parents and sister in an apartment rented by his aunt and uncle, and that he spent 14 months in a refugee camp in Syria prior to immigrating. In addition, Jon reviewed all of the school records available for Qasim, although sparse. He noted that Qasim was literate in his native language, with strong reading and writing skills. In, addition, even though he'd only been in the United States for a short time, his English proficiency had already improved, although it still fell at the beginning level. As Jon considered Qasim and the other newcomers to the school, he was excited to help assimilate students to their new school culture and help them learn more about the United States.

- What process did Jon use to get to know Qasim and other new multilingual students at his school?
- How can the information Jon learned help him to teach Qasim in the coming school year?
- Is there additional information Jon should have learned about Qasim? What else would be important to learn?

Classroom Activities That Help You Get to Know Your Students

Several learning activities may also provide some of the personal information you need to help you know your students better. One way is to have all your students write an illustrated autobiography, perhaps titled "All about Me" or "The Story of My Life." Each book may be bound individually, or all the life stories may be bound together and published in a class book, either physical or digital, complete with illustrations or photographs. This activity might also serve as the beginning of a multimedia presentation. Alternatively, with permission, student stories may be posted in the classroom or hallway for all to read. This assignment provides insight into the lives of all your students and permits them to get to know, appreciate, and understand each other as well. Of particular importance, this activity does not single out your newcomers because all your students are involved.

Personal writing assignments like this lend themselves to various grade levels because personal topics remain appropriate across age groups and even into adulthood. Students who do not yet possess English proficiency may begin by illustrating a series of important events in their lives, perhaps to be captioned with your assistance or that of another student. In addition, there are many ways to accommodate students' varying English writing abilities. For example, if students write more easily in their native tongue than in English, allow them to do so. If needed and if possible, ask a bilingual student or paraprofessional to translate the meaning for you. Be sure to publish the student's story as written in their home language; by doing so, you will both validate the home language and expose the rest of the class to a different language and its writing system. If a student knows some English but is not yet comfortable with English writing, allow the student to dictate the story to you or to another student in the class.

Another way to begin to know your students is to start a dialogue journal with them. Provide each student with a blank journal and allow the student to draw or write in the language of the student's choice. You may then respond to the students' journal entries on a periodic basis. Interactive dialogue journals, described in detail in Chapters 3 and 8, have proven useful for multilingual learners of all ages (Kim, 2011). Dialogue journals make an excellent introduction to literacy and facilitate the development of an ongoing relationship between the student and you, the teacher.

Finally, many teachers start the school year with a thematic unit such as "Where We Were Born" or "Family Origins." This activity is relevant to all students, whether immigrant or native born, and it gives both you and your students a chance to know more about themselves and each other. A typical activity within this unit is the creation of a world map with a string connecting each child's name and birthplace to your city and school. Don't forget to put your name on the list along with your birthplace! From there, you and your students may go on to study more about the various regions and countries of origin. Students can search the Internet for information on their home countries to include in reports or presentations. The availability of information in many world languages may be helpful to students who are already literate in their home languages. This type of theme leads in many directions, including the discovery of people in the community who may be able to share information about their home countries with your class. Your guests may begin by sharing food, cultural customs, art, literature, or music with students. Through such contact, theme studies, life stories, and reading about cultures online and in books, such as those listed in Figure 1.2, you may begin to become aware of some of the more subtle aspects of the culture, such as how the culture communicates politeness and respect or how it views the role of children, adults, and the school. If you are lucky enough to find such community resources, you will not only enliven your teaching but also broaden your cross-cultural understanding and that of your students (Ada & Zubizarreta, 2001).

Figure 1.2 Useful Books on Multicultural Teaching

Darder, A. (2012). *Culture and power in the classroom: Educational foundations for the schooling of bicultural students*. Paradigm.
Darling-Hammond, L. (2010). *The flat world and education: How America's commitment to equity will determine our future*. Teachers College Press.
Ladson-Billings, G. (2021). *Culturally relevant pedagogy: Asking a different question*. Teachers College Press.
Muhammad, G. (2020). *Cultivating genius: An equity framework for culturally and historically responsive literacy*. Scholastic Teaching Resources.
Nieto, S., & Bode, P. (2018). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education* (7th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
Tiedt, P. L., & Tiedt, I. M. (2010). *Multicultural teaching: A handbook of activities, information, and resources* (8th ed.). Allyn & Bacon.

Not all necessary background information will emerge from these classroom activities. You will no doubt want to investigate cultural, historical, and geographical resources available at your school, online, or in your community library. In addition, you may find resource personnel at your school, including paraprofessionals, parent liaisons, and resource teachers, who can help with specific questions or concerns. In the final analysis, though, your primary source of information should be the students themselves as you interact daily.

How Do Cultural Differences Affect Teaching and Learning?

Learning Outcome 1.2 **Explain how cultural differences may affect the way your multilingual learners respond to you and to your instruction and how you might ease new multilingual learners into the routines of your classroom.**

Teaching and learning are deeply influenced by culture in a variety of ways. To begin with, schools themselves reflect the values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices of the larger society. In fact, schools represent a major socializing force for all students. For multilingual learners, moreover, school is often the *primary* source of adaptation to the language and culture of the larger society. It is here that students may begin to integrate aspects of the new culture as their own, while retaining, rejecting, or modifying their home traditions.

Teachers and students bring particular cultural orientations to the classroom that affect how they perceive and interact with each other. As teachers of multilingual learners, most of us will encounter students whose languages and cultures differ from our own. So, we need to learn about our students and their cultures while at the same time reflecting on *our own* culturally rooted behaviors that may facilitate or interfere with teaching and learning (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2019). In this section, we define basic aspects of culture in the classroom as a starting point for looking at ourselves and our students in this light.

Definitions of Culture

Culture may be defined as the shared beliefs, values, and rule-governed patterns of behavior, including language, that define a group and are required for group membership (Goodenough, 1981; Saville-Troike, 1978). Defined in such a way, culture comprises three essential aspects: what people know and believe, what people do,

and what people make and use. Culture therefore serves to ensure group cohesion and survival and may be thought of as the acquired knowledge people use both to interpret experience and to generate behavior.

It is important to note that cultures are neither monolithic nor static. Rather, they include many layers and variations related to age, gender, social status, occupation, wealth, and power. Cultural changes occur as people encounter or develop new ideas and ways of being. Technology offers a handy example of cultural change if you consider the impact of mobile phones and social networking applications such as Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Contrast how people today keep up with each other in the United States, for example, compared to the days of the Pony Express just 160 years ago! Bearing in mind the complexity of culture, we offer some ways to consider its effects on classroom interactions, including developing your skill as an effective participant–observer.

Who Am I in the Lives of My Students?

Working effectively with students from diverse cultures presents challenges and opportunities. As the teacher, you are in a position to inspire your students and introduce them to the future in ways that no one else can. As you think back on your own schooling, you probably recall teachers who made a difference in your life. Because you have such potential impact on your students, it's important to self-reflect on your own teaching practices and relationships with students. For example, one deeply committed high school teacher undertook an action research project in which she audio-recorded her writing conferences with individual students. While transcribing her data, she discovered that she ended her conferences with white students by saying she looked forward to the next conference, but with her Black students she merely bid them good-bye. She was shocked by this clear difference in treatment and upset to the point of tears, especially because one of her stated curriculum goals was to empower *all* her students through writing. Through the process, however, this teacher was able to change her conference style to treat all students equitably ending with the same encouragement. At the same time, she gained powerful insight into how easily a teacher can unintentionally perpetuate inequalities inherent in the dominant society rather than transcending and transforming them for the better. Through her critical self-examination process, this effective teacher had attained a new level of **ideological clarity** (Bartolomé, 2004). Teaching, like parenting, allows significant opportunities for a deeper understanding of ourselves and our influence on the lives of others.

Becoming an Effective Participant–Observer in Your Own Classroom

When you make observations in your classroom, you are actually using some of the tools used by anthropologists when they study another culture through *ethnography* (e.g., introspection, interviewing, observation, and participant observation). As the teacher, you are automatically both **participant** and **observer** in the classroom culture. To learn about yourself and your students through personal interactions, you may need to hone your skills in observing and interpreting behaviors, including your own behavior. Observation skills are especially important when you first meet your students, whether at the beginning of the school year or when they first enroll in your class. One way to focus your observations is to keep a journal in which you jot notes daily concerning your interactions with students and their responses to you. Do they seem comfortable seeking help from you? Are they starting to form friendships? In which activities do your new students appear most comfortable: small-group

activities, individual seatwork, listening to stories, drawing pictures? In which activities are students reluctant? By noticing activities that are most comfortable for students, you can make sure they have frequent opportunities to participate in them. From there, you may gradually draw students into other school routines.

To make the most of your reflections and observations, you might need some concepts to guide interpretations. In other words, it's one thing to notice that Nazrene loses focus during whole-class lessons but quite another to figure out why, so that you can adjust your instruction to reach her. To provide you with some interpretive touchstones, we suggest you consider some aspects that constitute culture because these represent potential sources of overt conflict or silent suffering if your classroom rules and structures conflict with those already culturally ingrained in your students.

For a start at describing aspects of culture, we summarize in Figure 1.3 "cultural content" with questions outlined by Saville-Troike (1978) categorized into various components, including (1) family structure; (2) definitions of stages, periods, or transitions during a person's life; (3) roles of children and adults and corresponding behavior in terms of power and politeness; (4) discipline; (5) time and space; (6) religion; (7) food; (8) health and hygiene; and (9) history, traditions, holidays, and celebrations. Figure 1.3 provides several questions that you might ask yourself about these aspects of culture. As you read the questions, try to answer them for your own culture and perhaps for a different cultural group to get a sense of similarities and differences across cultures. Do you find potential points of conflict in the classroom context? How might you deal with them?

When students in our university classes discuss the questions in Figure 1.3 according to their own family traditions, interesting patterns emerge. Although many students identify with middle-class, European American cultural values, such as punctuality, some also add special traditions passed down from immigrant grandparents or great grandparents, including special foods and holiday traditions. Other students come from families who have been in this country for centuries yet maintain particular regional traditions such as herbal healing practices. In addition, some students have maintained strong religious traditions, such as Buddhist, Catholic, Greek

SOURCE: Tati Nova photo Mexico/Shutterstock

Knowing even a few things about your students' cultures can be helpful.

Figure 1.3 Cultural Content and Questions

Cultural Content	Questions
Family structures	What constitutes a family? Who among these or others live in one house? What are the rights and responsibilities of each family member? What is the hierarchy of authority? What is the relative importance of the individual family member in contrast to the family as a whole?
Life cycles	What are the criteria for defining stages, periods, or transitions in life? What rites of passage are there? What behaviors are considered appropriate for children of different ages? How might these conflict with behaviors taught or encouraged in school? How is the age of the children computed? What commemoration, if any, is made of the child's birth and when?
Roles and interpersonal relationships	What roles are available to whom, and how are they acquired? Is education relevant to learning these roles? How do the roles of girls and women differ from those of boys and men? How do people greet each other? What forms of address are used between people of differing roles? Do girls work and interact with boys? Is it proper? How is deference shown and to whom and by whom?
Discipline	What is discipline? What counts as discipline and what doesn't? Which behaviors are considered socially acceptable for boys versus girls at different ages? Who or what is considered responsible if a child misbehaves? The child? Parents? Older siblings? The environment? Is blame even ascribed? Who has authority over whom? To what extent can one person impose will on another? How is behavior traditionally controlled? To what extent and in what domains?
Time and space	How important is punctuality? How important is speed in completing a task? Are there restrictions associated with certain seasons? What is the spatial organization of the home? How much space are people accustomed to? What significance is associated with different locations or directions, including north, south, east, and west?
Religion	What restrictions are there concerning topics discussed in school? Are dietary restrictions to be observed, including fasting on particular occasions? When are these occasions? What restrictions are associated with death and the dead?
Food	What is eaten? In what order and how often is food eaten? Which foods are restricted? Which foods are typical? What social obligations are there with regard to food giving, reciprocity, and honoring people? What restrictions or proscriptions are associated with handling, offering, or discarding food?
Health and hygiene	How are illnesses treated and by whom? What is considered to be the cause? If a student were involved in an accident at school, would any of the common first-aid practices be considered unacceptable?
History, traditions, and holidays	Which events and people are sources of pride for the group? To what extent does the group in the United States identify with the history and traditions of the country of origin? What holidays and celebrations are considered appropriate for observing in school? Which ones are appropriate only for private observance?

Orthodox, Hindu, Judaic, and Muslim, as well as traditional Native American beliefs. From these discussions, we find that each individual actually embodies a variety of cultures and subcultures.

Sociocultural Factors Affecting Language Use in the Classroom

One important aspect of culture that can affect teaching and learning has to do with the ways a teacher uses language during instruction. Because teaching and learning depend on clear communication between teacher and students, the communicative success of teacher–student interactions is crucial. Early on, difficulties can arise from lack of a common language. However, communication difficulties may persist even after students have acquired the basics of English if the student and teacher are following different sociocultural rules for speaking (Cazden, 2017). For example, if the home culture values strict authority of adults over children and if children are only supposed to speak when spoken to, then these same children may be reluctant to volunteer an answer in class. You might quite logically interpret this reluctance as disinterest or lack of knowledge, when in fact the student may simply be waiting for you to invite a response. On the other hand, some students may not want to answer your questions because displaying knowledge in class amounts to showing off, causing them to stand out, uncomfortably spotlighted at center stage (Breiseth, 2013;

SOURCE: Brocreative/Shutterstock

Social interaction in school plays an important role in students' sense of belonging.

Philips, 1983). Some students consider an enthusiastic display of knowledge impolite because it might make their friends appear ignorant. These examples, summarized in Figure 1.4, illustrate how cultural values affecting language use may impede teacher–student communication in either English or the home language.

Language use differences can be especially confusing in the realm of teacher questioning. Research has shown that teachers often do not allow much *wait time* after asking a question in class (Echevarría et al., 2016; Ingram & Elliott, 2016). It turns out that what is considered enough wait time in everyday conversations varies across cultures, as do rules concerning how and when to interrupt and the number of people who may speak at once (e.g., Bazron et al., 2005; Schieffelin & Eisenberg, 1984; Scollon & Scollon, 2005). In addition, students must learn classroom rules regarding who can speak with whom and when (Mehan, 1979; Razfar & Rumenapp, 2012). These rules may vary with the activity structure (e.g., teacher-led lesson vs. small-group projects) and from one teacher to the next. Therefore, it is important to make *your* rules explicit for speaking in class and to allow sufficient wait time for students to respond. Helping students find their comfort zone for expressing themselves appropriately in class will pay off in learning, self-esteem, and social relationships.

Another potential problem area is the known-answer, display question (i.e., questions used to assess student knowledge for which the teacher already knows the

Figure 1.4 Cultural Factors That May Affect Students' Responses to Teacher Questions

Cultural Factor	Effect the Factor May Have on Student Response
Strict authority of adults; children don't speak unless spoken to	The student may be reluctant to volunteer answers in a classroom.
Displaying knowledge is seen as showing off	The student may know the answer but won't want to show off by answering a teacher question.
The teacher doesn't wait long enough after asking a question	Wait time varies with cultures and therefore some students may not get a chance to answer a question.
The teacher asks known-answer questions (the teacher knows the answer)	Some students see these questions as suspicious and will not answer such questions. When questions are authentic, students become more involved.

Two Interesting Questions

We have two questions for you to answer, share with a partner, and then reflect upon:

1. What is the average height of a male in the United States?
2. What is the most common male name?

To answer these questions, you probably followed assumptions based your own cultural prism and experience. That's natural! When working with students from different cultures, though, it's important to become aware of our own cultural perspectives and assumptions, and that's a process of lifelong learning!

(Answers: 1. The average male height is about 3 feet 8 inches because it includes all males, infant to adult. 2. The most common male name is Mohammed, worldwide, not just in the United States.)

answer). For some students, these known-answer questions might be considered odd or of dubious purpose (Heath, 1983; Mehan, 1979), and students may be reluctant to participate in such questioning. Furthermore, research has shown that when teachers ask authentic questions, those to which the answer is not already known, the length and complexity of student responses increase substantially compared to answers given to display questions (Nunan, 2005). In addition, when students respond to authentic questions, additional conversational interchanges often follow as meanings are clarified and elaborated. Such negotiation of meaning serves both learning and language development. Therefore, you might want to reflect on your own questioning practices in terms of wait time, question types, and the actual phrasing you use. If your questions are greeted with blank stares, try modifying your questioning style, or perhaps reserve discussion questions for small-group activities. Another possibility is to introduce question-and-answer sessions with a brief explanation of what you are trying to accomplish and why. That way, if students are unaccustomed to your question types, you will at least help them understand your purpose for asking them.

Culturally Related Responses to Classroom Organization

There are other cultural differences that may interfere with student participation in learning activities in the classroom. One of these is the social organization of classroom lessons (Mehan, 1979). Within the constraints of time and adult assistance, teachers typically use whole-class, small-group, and individualized groupings for instruction. It is important to recognize that these formats represent distinctly different types of **participation structures** (Philips, 1983; Santori, 2011), each with its own rules about when to speak and how. Students may experience various degrees of comfort or discomfort with these various formats based on both cultural and individual differences (Orosco & O'Connor, 2014; Paris, 2012). For example, the use of small groups for cooperative learning is intended to increase learning for all students but especially for multilingual learners (McCafferty et al., 2006). The rationale is that many cultures instill strong values of group cooperation, and such instruction can build on familiar cultural experiences.

In addition, cooperative groups provide students with practice in getting along with people different from themselves. We are convinced that cooperative group learning is a valuable instructional tool for the reasons described. However, it is important to keep in mind that some students may feel that the teacher, as the academic authority, is the only proper person to learn from in the classroom. One way to accommodate such students is to balance your use of group work with explicit teacher-directed instruction. When you do ask students to work in cooperative

groups, you need to explain your reasons, thereby showing that group learning is valid academically. In fact, parents may need to hear your reasons as well. We knew one child who was functioning beautifully in cooperative groups, yet during parent conferences, his father politely asked when we were going to start teaching! Cultural differences in teaching practices can present challenges to teachers, students, and parents alike.

In summary, we know that different students may be more comfortable with some instructional formats than with others and that their feelings stem from both cultural and individual preferences. We suggest you *use a variety of formats to meet the multiple needs of your diverse students*. Your best route is to be aware of how you create the participation structures of learning (i.e., grouping formats) and to observe and interpret student responses with thoughtful sensitivity, making modifications as needed. In so doing, you **differentiate instruction** (Tomlinson, 2014) according to particular student needs, a topic we discuss in Chapter 3 and apply in subsequent chapters.

Literacy Traditions from Home and Community

As you approach the teaching of reading and writing to multilingual learners, you will want to be aware of the literacy knowledge your students bring with them. Literacy knowledge stems not only from prior schooling but also from experiences with the ways reading and writing are used in the home and community (Au, 2007; Heath, 1983; Reese & Goldenberg, 2006). It is helpful to become aware of how reading and writing are traditionally used in students' communities because these traditional literacy uses will influence your students' ideas, beliefs, and assumptions about reading and writing. To the extent possible, you will want to build on these ideas and make sure to expand them to include the functions of literacy required by U.S. schools and society. The following example may help clarify the idea of literacy ideas, beliefs, and assumptions among families with limited levels of literacy.

Gustavo, age 7, entered first grade in an urban elementary school in February, halfway through the academic year. He had come from rural Mexico, and this was his first time in school. He didn't know how to hold a pencil. At first, he was so intimidated that he would refuse to come into the classroom at the beginning of the school day. With persistent coaxing from the teacher and her assistant, he reluctantly complied. Once in, Gustavo was anxious to fit into the normal class routines. He loved to wave his hand in the air when the teacher asked a question, although at first he didn't know what to do when called on. That part of the school routine took some time to master.

One day, as we were chatting with Gustavo, he began to tell us all about his little town in Michoacán, about the travails of the trip *pa' 'l norte* (to the north), and then about an incident when his 2-year-old sister became critically ill. His mother, he recounted, knew what medicine the baby needed, but it was only available in Mexico. So, they had to find someone who could write a letter to send to Mexico for the medicine. They did, and Gustavo's baby sister recovered.

What does this story tell us about the concept of literacy that Gustavo offers for the teacher to build on? First, we can deduce that Gustavo has not had extensive opportunities to explore reading and writing at home. He probably has not been read to much nor has he been provided with paper and pencils for experimenting with drawing and writing—activities highly recommended today as foundations of literacy development. On the other hand, Gustavo is well aware of how important it is to be able to write—it was a matter of life and death for his sister! Furthermore, he is aware of the inconveniences, not to say dangers, of illiteracy. Therefore, at the tender age of 7, Gustavo brings a deeper understanding of the importance of literacy than many children whose rich early literacy experiences allow them to take such

things for granted. Gustavo's motivation and understanding provide the foundation on which the teacher may build. Gustavo needs daily exposure to the practical functions of print through stories, poems, plays, rhymes, labels, letters, notes, board games, instructions, and more. With practice and hard work, his proudest moment will come when he himself writes the next letter to Mexico.

In contrast to Gustavo, students who are older when they immigrate often bring substantial experience and skill in reading and writing in their home language. These experiences and skills provide a strong foundation for learning to read and write in English. Students who read in their home language already know that print bears a systematic relationship to spoken language, that print carries meaning, and that reading and writing can be used for many purposes. Moreover, literate students know that they can make sense of written language. Such experience and knowledge will transfer directly to learning to read and write in English, given ELD and appropriate literacy instruction (Cummins, 1979; Dressler & Kamil, 2006; Relyea & Amendum, 2020). Thus, when students arrive with home language literacy skills, teachers do not have to start all over again to teach reading and writing (August & Shanahan, 2006; Peregoy & Boyle, 2000). Rather, they can build on an existing base of literacy knowledge, adding the specifics for English as needed—a topic developed fully in subsequent chapters.

In addition to literacy knowledge, newcomers with substantial prior education often bring academic knowledge in areas such as mathematics, science, history, and geography. It is important to find out about such knowledge and expertise to recognize it, honor it, and build on it. You might also seek ways for your students to share their particular knowledge with the rest of the class. To conclude our discussion of culture, we suggest you take another look at your own cultural ways again to focus on how your attitudes, beliefs, and assumptions might play out in your classroom.

How Can I Ease New Students into the Routines of My Classroom?

As you begin to learn more about your students, you will be better able to offer them social and emotional support. Only when new students become comfortably integrated into your classroom's social and academic routines will optimal new English language acquisition and academic learning occur. Therefore, you'll need to give special effort and attention to new students, especially those who are newcomers to the country. Adapting from Maslow's (1968) hierarchy of human needs, we discuss basic strategies for integrating new students, especially younger children, into your classroom. Two basic needs you will want to consider are safety and security and a sense of belonging. By paying close attention to these basic needs, you lay the foundation for meeting your students' needs for self-esteem as well as for growth in language and academic abilities.

First Things First: Safety and Security

When multilingual learners first arrive in school, a "first things first" approach is helpful, following Maslow's views. The first concern, then, must be with creating a feeling of safety and security. To address this need, there are several things you can do. For example, it is helpful to assign a personal buddy to each newcomer and, if possible, one who speaks the newcomer's home language. The buddy must be a classmate who already knows the school and is comfortable there. The buddy's job is to accompany the newcomer throughout the day's routines to make sure the student knows where

to find such essentials as the bathroom, the cafeteria, and the bus stop. The newcomer needs to learn not only where things are but also the various rules for using them. For example, each school has its own rules about how to line up and collect lunch at the cafeteria, where to sit, how to behave, and when to leave. Furthermore, there are culturally specific rules about how to eat particular kinds of food—rules that we take for granted but that may be totally foreign to a new arrival. Perhaps you yourself recall feeling tentative and intimidated the first time you ate in the school cafeteria. If so, you will have some idea of the anxiety that can accompany the first days of school for a youngster who is new not only to the school but also to the entire culture it represents. The personal buddy helps the new student through these initial days, helping alleviate anxieties and embarrassments.

Another way to address the safety and security needs of newcomers is to follow predictable routines in your daily classroom schedule. Most teachers follow a predictable schedule within which instructional content varies. Stability in routine creates a sense of security for all students, but it is especially important for students who are new to the language and culture of the school. In fact, your predictable routines may be the first stable feature some students have experienced in a long time, especially if they have recently immigrated under adverse circumstances.

Creating a Sense of Belonging

An additional way to promote security and create a sense of belonging is to assign your multilingual learners to home groups that remain unchanged for a long time. In classrooms in which student seating is arranged at tables, the home group may be defined by table. The purpose of the home group is to develop mini-communities of interdependence, support, and identity. If such groups are an ongoing aspect of classroom social organization, with rules of caring, respect, and concern already in place, then the home group provides an ideal social unit to receive a newcomer.

Regardless of how you organize your classroom, it's a good idea to seat new students toward the middle or front of the classroom, in a place where you can observe them closely and where they can observe the classroom interactions of other, more experienced students. We don't recommend placing new students at the back or other far reaches of the room. Students who do not yet speak much English sometimes tend to be placed at the periphery of the classroom where they quietly blend into the woodwork. Even if you feel a student can't understand a word you are saying, you can help integrate the student into the class with a simple glance while you speak. We encourage conscious integration of newcomers into the social fabric of the classroom to avoid unconscious marginalization.

By paying close attention to the social and emotional needs of your new students, you will be laying the foundation for the early stages of language acquisition. For example, the one-on-one attention of the personal buddy offers numerous opportunities for your newcomer to learn many English words and phrases at the basic interpersonal level of communication. In addition, repetition of classroom routines provides multilingual learners with ideal language learning opportunities because the words and phrases that accompany such routines are constantly repeated within a meaningful, concrete context. If you count the number of times a child hears such functional phrases as "It's lunch time now" and "The quiet table may line up first," you will get an idea of how valuable such **context-embedded language** (Cummins, 1980) can be for rapid learning of basic English expressions. Finally, integrating newcomers into cooperative groups provides further social and academic language learning opportunities, as discussed in detail in Chapter 3. By attending to the security and belonging needs of your multilingual learners, you simultaneously lay a firm foundation for English language acquisition.

Case 1.2

Easing Students into Classroom Routines

As a former multilingual learner herself, Ms. Enyung Park is careful to gently ease her students into the routines of schooling at her urban elementary school. She knows that the norms in American schools can be literal "culture shock" to many of her multilingual learners new to the school and the United States. As such, Ms. Park is planning for the beginning of the school year with the third-grade classroom teachers because their grade level has enrolled 12 new multilingual learners for the upcoming school year.

As the group meets to plan for the upcoming year, Ms. Park tells the other teachers about her own experiences as a multilingual learner. She recounts how she often worried about what was happening in her classroom and that she often didn't understand what her teacher expected or why students reacted or engaged with each other the ways they did in the classroom. This often made her feel nervous and scared, which sometimes resulted in tears! In addition, she was the only student in her classroom with Korean as her native language, so she often felt isolated and alone. After listening to Ms. Park's experiences, the classroom teachers were empathetic and committed to supporting their new multilingual learners in their classrooms. They brainstormed potential solutions to the issues raised by Ms. Park—providing a sense of safety and security as well as providing a sense of belonging.

- What specific strategies could Ms. Park and the third-grade teachers use to support multilingual learners' sense of safety and security? Why would these specific strategies support a sense of safety and security?
- What specific strategies could Ms. Park and the third-grade teachers use to support multilingual learners' sense of belonging? Why would these specific strategies support a sense of belonging?
- How could the specific strategies to address multilingual students' needs for safety, security, and belonging support their academic learning?

As English language acquisition progresses and students begin to become a part of the social fabric of your class, they are well positioned to grow in self-esteem through successful participation in both the social and academic aspects of classroom life. Growth in self-esteem will be especially facilitated if you have found ways to recognize and honor students' home languages and cultures. Again, Maslow's theory provides a useful way to look at the initial needs of newcomers. As the social-emotional foundation is laid, all the other aspects of personal growth may begin to interweave and support each other, with social and academic competence creating self-esteem and reinforcing feelings of security and belonging. In the process, ELD will be further enhanced.

How Do Current Policy Trends Affect Multilingual Learner Education?

Learning Outcome 1.3 **Describe policy trends affecting education for multilingual learners.**

Whether you are new or experienced in the field of education, media reports have no doubt introduced you to various reform efforts in education promoted by federal and state education policy. Because disparate needs and interests are served by education policy, and because there are always divergent points of view as to how any problem may be solved, the arena of educational policy is often filled with controversy and debate. In this section, we briefly discuss education policies affecting multilingual learners across the nation and offer additional resources on this complex topic.

Academic Standards and Assessment

The implementation of academic standards and student assessment permeates all levels of education. If you are in a teaching credential program, for example, chances are your coursework addresses content standards and assesses what you should know and be able to do to be an effective teacher. Similarly, curriculum standards have been delineated for K–12 students that specifically define the knowledge and skills that students must attain for promotion and graduation in subjects such as reading, math, science, social science, and English language arts.

The standards and assessment movement traces its origins to *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983), a national report funded by the U.S. Congress that called for improvement in education across the country. Among the outcomes of the report was the development of the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), a large-scale, national assessment program that examines nationwide student achievement and permits comparisons among states in reading, writing, and mathematics. By conducting periodic assessments of students in grades 4, 8, and 12, the NAEP can provide the public with a report card on how well students are doing across the nation. The findings have been used to spur education reforms, such as the reading instruction reforms of the 1990s, aimed at increasing student achievement. The current focus on state learning standards, assessment, and accountability can all be traced back to the reforms called for in *A Nation at Risk*.

State Learning Standards

As you plan instruction, you will use sets of state learning standards specific to each content area—English language arts and reading, mathematics, science, and social studies. Typically, these sets of learning standards are presented by grade level. One example of learning standards is the Common Core State Standards (CCSS; National Governors Association & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010), which many states have adopted or adapted for their own standards. Learning standards such as the CCSS aim to prepare K–12 students for "college and career readiness" and address listening, speaking, reading, and writing with recent increased emphasis on informational texts starting in kindergarten. Often, content-area literacy standards focus on reading and writing for academic learning, typically in grades 6–12. The content-area literacy standards do *not* address academic content per se. Rather, they are intended to be used *alongside* content standards in each subject, or content area. Each content-area teacher is thus responsible for teaching students the literacy skills needed for that particular discipline.

States also have assessments used to measure student achievement of the standards. Some states with common sets of standards, (e.g., CCSS), created multistate consortia such as the SMARTER Balanced Assessment Consortium and the Partnership for Assessment of Reading of College and Careers to assess student achievement of the standards. These assessments are administered primarily online and have steep technological demands for test administration. Among other guidelines, the federal government requires test-taking *accommodations* to help multilingual learners and students with disabilities. For example, extra time or large-print versions of a state test might be made available.

In addition, it is important to note that state learning standards are incremental, each grade level presuming the knowledge and skills described for previous grade levels. Certainly no one opposes the notion of setting rigorous goals and high standards for our students. Difficulties emerge, however, when you try to apply the standards' elegant staircase of knowledge and skill attainment to students with diverse developmental profiles, prior educational experiences, varied English language

proficiencies, and other individual and group differences. As a simple example, consider a sixth-grade, Spanish-speaking student who has been in the United States for 3 years and has not yet achieved intermediate proficiency in English. Which English language arts standards and at which grade level should this student be required to achieve? Which test will the student be required to take? Will any testing accommodations be made for the level of ELP? How do this student's test scores figure into the overall assessment results by which the school will be evaluated? These questions often lie beyond the scope of state learning standards. Fortunately, ELD standards exist, and considerable effort has been made to align them with the state learning standards, topics we turn to next.

English Language Development Standards and Assessment

In order to address the specific needs of multilingual learners, ELD standards have been developed by individual states, multistate consortia, and professional organizations such as TESOL (2006). Informed by second language acquisition theory and instructional practice, ELD standards consider different levels of English proficiency, which is essential for promoting optimal content and language learning for multilingual learners. Subsequent to the advent of the CCSS, ELD standards have been analyzed, and sometimes modified, to show their alignment with state learning standards. For example, the WIDA standards (WIDA Consortium, 2020) address social language and academic language development, including performance expectations for listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition, WIDA has developed ELP measures, the ACCESS suite, that test how well the standards have been met (WIDA Consortium, 2021). WIDA offers many additional resources, including curriculum standards and corresponding tests in Spanish. As examples of individual states, California (California Department of Education, 2012) and New York (Engage NY, 2014) have developed their own ELD standards, assessments, CCSS alignments, and teacher resources. Chapter 3 in this book offers further discussion of ELD standards as applied to instruction.

Curriculum Standards, High-Stakes Testing, and "Every Student Succeeds"

Standardized testing that measures student achievement has been in place for decades. However, as curriculum standards have become more demanding, the tests that measure their achievement have increased in difficulty as well, and that includes tests of state learning standards, such as the CCSS. Much is at stake for students and schools when test scores are not sufficiently high (Ananda & Rabinowitz, 2000; Nichols & Berliner, 2007). For example:

- Performance on a high school exit exam may determine whether a student will receive a high school diploma, regardless of passing grades in all required high school coursework.
- Standardized test performance may play a part in deciding grade retention or promotion of students in elementary, middle, and high school.
- School funding may depend on raising test scores.
- Teachers and principals may be held directly accountable for student achievement (Afflerbach, 2005).
- Low-achieving schools may be subjected to re-staffing measures, in which teachers and principal are moved elsewhere and a totally new staff brought in.

High-stakes testing continues to be included in the Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015 (ESSA), federal legislation reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) and the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The ESEA was originally passed in 1965 to improve academic performance among lower-achieving, "economically disadvantaged" students. Standardized test scores have long been used to identify individuals, schools, districts, and other entities that qualify for special assistance and funding. However, ESSA (and NCLB) raised standardized testing to a higher level, requiring states, for example, to do the following:

- Implement "accountability systems" covering all public schools and students.
- Test reading and math each year in grades 3 through 8 and at least once in high school.
- Report test scores for subgroups based on poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency.
- Implement punitive measures for low-performing schools, such as transferring teachers and principals to other sites.

Many consider the ESSA requirement to report test results for subgroups based on poverty, race, ethnicity, disability, and limited English proficiency a positive outcome of ESSA and NCLB (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). With test scores highlighted by subgroup, schools must focus efforts on the achievement of students in those categories. As a result, ESSA creates a focus on improving instruction for multilingual learners and others in the affected subgroups. Unfortunately, funding for federal legislation has been limited, leaving schools in the precarious position of trying to increase test scores without meaningful support. Nonetheless ESSA (and NCLB) impose **negative sanctions** when achievement goals are not met, including moving teachers and principals to other schools, thereby re-staffing schools. Yet there is no evidence that such re-staffing ever improved teaching or test scores.

Socioeconomic Status: A Predictor of Standardized Test Scores

With standardized test scores at the forefront of education policy, it is important to note that **socioeconomic status** has proven to be the strongest predictor of standardized test scores. As a group, students in low-income neighborhoods consistently score lower than those in more affluent circumstances; and students from racial, ethnic, and language minority groups are overrepresented in the lower income brackets. With 52.3% of public school students receiving free and reduced-price lunch (NCES, 2020c), the high poverty rate alone puts public schools in a difficult position, placing an undue burden on teachers and principals to meet mandated test score targets. The punitive consequences of low test scores, such as transferring teachers out, create high anxiety for all, including the students themselves. We have heard young children voice concern that their test performance might cause their favorite teacher to be moved to another school. Such anxiety during test taking can itself lower scores.

Equally problematic is the danger that test scores may be used inappropriately either to retain students or to sort them into less challenging instructional programs. Even worse, high-stakes testing may actually increase the already high dropout rate among racial, ethnic, and language minority students. Such outcomes are ironic, given that the whole purpose of ESSA (and all iterations of the ESEA) is to improve educational outcomes for these very students. Because of the lifelong consequences of educational decisions based on high-stakes testing, it is essential that tests be proven both *fair and valid for all students*, especially those living in poverty. Therefore, constant scrutiny is needed to monitor the effects of high-stakes testing to ensure that

all students are provided meaningful and equitable access to a high-quality education, one that welcomes them in rather than pushing them out and one that broadens their life choices rather than narrowing them (Escamilla et al., 2003; Irby et al., 2007).

In addition to issues related to socioeconomic status, testing and progress mandates such as those in ESSA pose special problems for many students new to English. First, *English proficiency* itself affects student performance and may render test results inaccurate if not totally invalid (Sotelo-Dynega et al., 2013). If performance is low, it may not be clear whether the cause is English proficiency, insufficient content knowledge, or a combination of both. Second, in addition to ELP, other factors may affect multilingual learners' preparedness for successful performance, including the amount, quality, content, and continuity of prior schooling relative to the content and format of the test (TESOL, 2006).

Finally, an important element missing from the ESSA legislation and testing are technological skills in digital literacies. As we have seen, federal laws like ESSA drive the curriculum, with support and punishment doled out based on standardized test scores. With silence on technology skills, ESSA has further neglected students living in poverty because they are the ones most likely to be without computers or devices with high-quality Internet access both at home and at school (Leu et al., 2011). As federal education laws are updated and revised, technology skills must be addressed and financial support allocated to equip schools and prepare all students to effectively use digital tools for learning and testing.

In summary, in recent decades we have witnessed a tidal wave of calls for high educational standards and rigorous assessments. In the past, curriculum content has been generally similar in schools across the country, but states and local communities have always retained control over the specifics, even with the introduction of standards such as the CCSS. More problematic is the implementation of high-stakes testing, the effects of which have the potential to create larger divisions between rich and poor and between those with power and those without. Future reauthorization of the ESEA currently enacted in ESSA must address its shortcomings and ensure that the law fulfills its mission to provide equal educational opportunities for the groups it was designed to serve.

Education Policy Specific to Multilingual Learners

Although multilingual learners are affected by general education policy, they are also subject to policies specific to their English proficiency status. Federal law requires schools to identify and serve students in need of educational support based on ELP. The purpose of such educational support is twofold: (1) to promote ELD and (2) to provide meaningful instruction so that students may learn academic content appropriate to their grade level. Schools are free to choose the kind of program they believe will best meet the needs of their students, including whether students' primary language will be used for instruction or not. Since 1968, when the ESEA Title VII Bilingual Education Act was passed, bilingual education programs have been developed throughout the country, using languages such as Spanish, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, French, and Portuguese. In addition, bilingual programs have served numerous Native American languages such as Navajo, Cherokee, and Crow. However, with the passage of NCLB in 2001, the bilingual education provisions of ESEA Title VII were *not* reauthorized for the first time in history. Therefore, NCLB and ESSA effectively eliminated federal support for (but does not prohibit) bilingual instructional programs.

Instead of supporting bilingual instruction, the ESSA emphasizes ELP and use of statewide entrance and exit exams. In addition, monitoring of multilingual learners improved under ESSA because schools can include reclassified multilingual

learners (those exiting school-provided services for ELD) for up to 4 years (instead of only 2) in the multilingual subgroup. Although it allows schools their choice of program type, ESSA requires schools to use instructional methods that research has proven effective. To increase accountability, ESSA requires states to establish their own accountability systems, including measures of ELP and academic content. Academic content standards are to be aligned with those established for the general K–12 student population.

The elimination of federal financial support for bilingual education in 2001 was the culmination of several decades of heated debate, not just among lawmakers and educators but among the general public as well. Arguments against bilingual education have often centered on the effectiveness of bilingual instruction in teaching English, with no attention given to potential benefits of bilingualism or primary language use and maintenance. Proponents and opponents both cite research and statistics to support their cases regarding the effectiveness of bilingual instruction (Lessow-Hurley, 2013; Ovando, 2003; Ovando & Combs, 2018). Research seldom provides absolute, unequivocal findings, however. Instead, results must be interpreted based on the research method, including background information on students and teachers in the study, the type of program implemented, the extent to which teachers follow the program model, and many other variables. Because it is difficult to control for these variables, research results are usually open to criticism on either side of the debate. In the final analysis, research findings tend to play a smaller role than attitudes, values, beliefs, and ideology in the debate over effectiveness. We offer additional resources on bilingual education in Figure 1.5.

In addition to the effectiveness issue, anti–bilingual education sentiment is fueled by the belief that to unify diverse groups, English should be used exclusively in public settings. The use of languages other than English in hospitals, social service agencies, schools, voting booths, and other public venues is considered anathema by members of the "English-only" movement, promoted by groups such as U.S. English and English First. Resentment against immigrants and resources allocated to serve them adds fuel to the English-only movement. These sentiments have found their way into a variety of ballot initiatives in states such as California and Arizona, aimed at (1) eliminating bilingual education, (2) restricting public services to immigrants, and (3) requiring English as the "official language" to the exclusion of all others. Whether such initiatives are upheld in the courts or not, they send a chilly message that finds its way into our classrooms while we attempt to create positive learning environments for multilingual learners (Gutierrez et al., 2002).

In summary, multilingual learners are subject to both *general* education policy and policy *specific* to their multilingual status. Educational reform in the United States has become extremely politicized in recent decades. Now, more than ever, state and federal legislators are mandating not only the content of the curriculum

Figure 1.5 Useful Books on Bilingual Education

Baker, C., & Wright, W. E. (2021). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (7th ed.). Multilingual Matters.
Brisk, M. E. (2006). *Bilingual education: From compensatory to quality schooling* (2nd ed.). Erlbaum.
Cummins, J. (2001). *Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society* (2nd ed.). California Association for Bilingual Education.
Faltis, C. J., & Coulter, C. A. (2008). *Teaching English learners and immigrant students in secondary schools*. Allyn & Bacon.
Lessow-Hurley, J. (2013). *The foundations of dual language instruction* (6th ed.). Addison-Wesley Longman.
Ovando, C., & Combs, M. (2018). *Bilingual and ESL classrooms: Teaching in multicultural contexts* (6th ed). Rowman & Littlefield.

but also the method of instruction. Greater and greater emphasis is being placed on English as the exclusive language of instruction. These trends lead to greater uniformity and standardization in both curriculum and instruction. The current emphasis on detailed and specific curriculum standards and concomitant high-stakes testing places tremendous pressure on students, teachers, and principals to get students to test well. These trends existed before the passage of ESSA and are likely to continue with subsequent reauthorizations of ESEA. Now, as never before, educators need to form a strong voice in the political processes that create education policy.

Newer Technologies: Purposes, Policies, and Assessments

Many students, including multilingual learners, in K–12 classrooms have substantial experience with computers, tablets, smartphones, the Internet, and other digital technologies. Other students may not have such experience. In any case, all your students will need to become proficient with digital technologies for academic learning. The fact that in many states standardized testing is conducted online means that all students must be fluent in using digital devices. For academic and social purposes in and out of school, students will need to learn safe, efficient, and critical use of online resources and content. Students will also need to acquire the *flexibility* to adapt to new and emerging applications, given that there exist thousands of educational web tools, a number that multiplies daily even as digital technology continues to evolve (Leu et al., 2004; Solomon & Schrum, 2010).

To best serve all students, we are challenged to teach curriculum essentials in ways that are coherent, relevant, and technologically current. To assess students, NAEP has developed a technology and engineering literacy framework along with test item specifications (https://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/tel/). It is not simply a matter of transmitting information and skills (Cummins, 2009). With so much information available online and elsewhere, we are challenged to help students make sense of large quantities of data, to critically evaluate ideas and assertions, to analyze and solve problems, and to synthesize and communicate their own conclusions and recommendations. In addition to helping students think critically and problem-solve effectively, we need to promote their ability to work well with others as they do so. These cognitive and social processes depend on effective communication skills, including oral, written, graphic, and digital communication. Moreover, knowledge of multiple languages and cultures is more important than ever as globalism increases our mutual interdependence. Finally, we need to create classrooms that offer students opportunities to exercise their creativity and imagination. All these goals must involve the use of current technology, including emerging digital tools.

At this juncture, we want to underscore that as exciting as they are, the technologies we use in class are only tools that can mediate and enhance learning (Parker, 2008). They constitute a means to an end, not the end in itself. Furthermore, as you choose these tools, you will need to consider the English proficiency required for students to benefit from them and the kind of help you might offer to help them get involved. Some online and communication technologies can provide assistance and support themselves, such as pictures, photos, print-to-speech capability, translation, and relevant websites in a student's primary language. As you begin to consider new technologies to support your classroom instruction, we recommend the following questions in Figure 1.6 as a guide for evaluating their potential benefits (Cummins et al., 2007, p. 109). The more "yes" answers you have to these questions, the better the tool!

Figure 1.6 Guidelines for Evaluating Technology Use in the Classroom

1. Does the technology-supported instruction (TSI) provide cognitive challenge and opportunities for deep processing of meaning?
2. Does the TSI relate instruction to prior knowledge and experiences derived from students' homes and communities?
3. Does the TSI promote active, self-regulated, collaborative inquiry?
4. Does the TSI promote extensive engaged reading and writing across the curriculum?
5. Does the TSI help students develop strategies for effective reading, writing, and learning?
6. Does the TSI promote affective involvement and identity investment on the part of the students?

In this edition we integrate the use of digital tools that can motivate, support, and enhance students' content learning and language development. We also offer numerous online resources you can access to further your own learning. We encourage you to consider the six questions in Figure 1.6 to evaluate each technology-mediated strategy we recommend. Finally, it is important to underscore the importance of teaching students how to use online resources and applications safely and ethically. Therefore, it is essential that you check with your administration to find out district policies regarding safe, ethical, and appropriate use of the Internet and other digital tools. You can find examples of such guidelines online yourself by typing in the key words "Internet safety." To highlight its importance and to promote deeper understanding, why not guide your students in developing their own rules for online engagement using the process writing strategies detailed in Chapter 8?

What Kinds of Programs Exist to Meet the Needs of Multilingual Learners?

Learning Outcome 1.4 **Describe different program models for multilingual learners, discussing the advantages and disadvantages of each.**

If you are fairly new to the enterprise of educating multilingual learners, you might be interested in the kinds of programs commonly used to serve them. The information in the following sections offers an idea of what some school districts are doing. If your school has just begun to experience growth in multilingual learner populations, these general descriptions may provide a starting point for considering a more formalized support program for multilingual learners. It is important to reiterate that federal law requires that all multilingual learners be provided with an educational program that provides them (1) access to the core curriculum and (2) opportunities for ELD. Districts are given substantial leeway in selecting program types and choosing whether to use students' home language for instruction. However, all schools are required to have ELD standards for their multilingual learners, and these standards must be aligned with the English language arts state learning standards, such as the CCSS, that apply to all students. In addition, student progress must be assessed with appropriate instruments to hold schools accountable for student achievement as required by ESSA. State laws govern program requirements at a more specific level. Therefore, as you consider program development for your multilingual learners, it's important to seek information and guidelines from your state and local offices of education.

Multilingual learners find themselves in a wide variety of school programs, from those carefully tailored to meet their specific linguistic and cultural needs, to programs in which little is done differently to accommodate them. Perhaps the

simplest distinction among programs is whether two languages or one is used for instruction. *Bilingual education programs* are defined as educational programs that use two languages, one of which must be English, for teaching purposes. Bilingual education programs have taken many forms, but two goals are common to all: to teach English and to provide access to the core curriculum through the home language while students are gaining ELP (Lessow-Hurley, 2013). Bilingual programs vary in primary language use, ranging from using it as an initial bridge to English to aiming for full bilingualism and biliteracy for every student. In addition to bilingual programs, there are program models that use only English for instruction (Herrera & Murry, 2016). Like bilingual programs, these programs are required to teach English while providing access to the core curriculum. To meet these two requirements, substantial support for multilingual learners is essential, which may include sheltering techniques for content instruction and special ELD instruction. Chapters 3 through 11 offer many strategies for such instruction.

Multilingual Learner Program Models

Before discussing program models (Figure 1.7), we need to say a little about immersion programs because the term *immersion* has been used in different ways. The earliest immersion program model, developed in Canada in the 1960s and in use today, was designed to teach a minority language to native English speakers. For example, in Ontario, native English-speaking students learn French as an additional language. In the United States, native English-speaking students learn languages such as Spanish or Cantonese. In immersion programs, teachers use the new language for instruction as a means of new language development for their students. Teachers modify both their language use and their instruction to help students understand, participate, and learn—even though their proficiency in the new language is limited. Language, content, and literacy instruction take place in the students' new language in the early grades, with the gradual introduction of English (native language) language arts as they progress up the grades. The ultimate goal is full bilingualism and biliteracy in English and the new minority language. Programs following the Canadian model are therefore *bilingual* programs designed to serve *language majority* students.

The Canadian immersion model has also been adopted by some Native American tribes as a way of reviving or saving tribal languages that are threatened with extinction. In these programs, students are immersed in the tribal language, with the gradual addition of instruction in English. Full bilingualism in the tribal language and English is the goal. Another variation on the Canadian model is "two-way immersion," or dual-language programs, which aims for bilingualism and biliteracy for *both* multilingual learners and native English speakers. Dual-language, or two-way immersion, programs have been extensively studied and evaluated in Canada, the United States, and elsewhere with consistently positive results (e.g., Alanís & Rodríguez, 2008; Lindholm-Leary & Genesee, 2014; Marian et al., 2013; Umansky & Reardon, 2014).

In addition to its use in bilingual instruction, the Canadian immersion model has influenced the development of sheltered English teaching strategies, which form the basis of some monolingual, English-only program models, including structured English immersion. We discuss sheltering strategies in Chapter 3. In Figure 1.7, you will find a chart of program models that describes eight different program types, the program focus, the students involved, and how the program uses the primary language. The models are sequenced according to the extent of primary language use, from *none* in the English-only mainstream model to *balanced use and development* of the primary language and English in the dual-language program model. As you read the brief descriptions, think of them as skeletons that may vary considerably in implementation as differences in communities, students, teachers, and administrators affect program enactment.

Figure 1.7 Multilingual Learner Program Models

Program Type	Language(s) of Instruction and Language Development Goals	Students in Classroom	Use of Primary Language (L1)
1. **Mainstream** or General Education	Instruction in English Goal: English proficiency	English dominant and multilingual K–12 students	No L1 support provided to multilingual students
2. **Structured English Immersion**	Instruction in English; ESL instruction provided in class or as pull-out Goal: English proficiency	English dominant and multilingual K–12 students in mainstream classroom	L1 may be used for support, if feasible
3. **Sheltered Instruction** or Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE)	Instruction in English with sheltering support for academic content learning Goal: English proficiency for academic use	Multilingual K–12 students	L1 may be used for support, if feasible
4. **Newcomer Program**	Intensive instruction in English for 1 year or less; students separated from mainstream classrooms Goal: Transition to English instruction in sheltered or mainstream classrooms	Multilingual K–12 students who are recent immigrants and those with interrupted schooling	L1 support for multilingual learners, if feasible; acculturation and family/community component; students provided with modified classroom instruction and support primarily in English
5. **Early-Exit Transitional Bilingual Program**	L1 used to teach literacy and academic content as a bridge to English; English used increasingly in 2nd or 3rd grade or for 2–3 years in grades 7–12 Goal: Transition to English instruction	Multilingual K–12 students	Students taught in both L1 and English; transfer to English-only programs after 2–3 years
6. **Late-Exit Transitional Bilingual Program**	L1 used to teach literacy and academic content; English used increasingly to 5th or 6th grade or for 4–5 years in grades 7–12 Goal: Transition to English instruction	Multilingual K–12 students	Students transfer to English-only programs after 4–6 years
7. **Maintenance Bilingual Program**	L1 used to teach literacy and academic content along with English. Goal: L1 maintenance and English proficiency	Multilingual and monolingual English-speaking K–12 students	Primary language receives sustained focus along with gradual development of English
8. **Dual Language Program**	L1 and English used to teach literacy and academic content Goal: Full bilingualism and biliteracy for social and academic purposes	Multilingual and monolingual English-speaking K–12 students	Students use both languages to learn language and academic content

Research on Bilingual and ESL Programs Serving Multilingual Learners

We have seen that programs for multilingual learners vary widely. Which programs are best and why? These questions are addressed in a comprehensive review of more than 200 research articles on such programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Results were presented in relation to two general approaches, bilingual and ESL, based on whether two languages or one (English) was used for instruction. A number of studies showed that the bilingual approach led to more positive outcomes than the ESL approach. However, a large-scale, longitudinal study (Slavin et al., 2011) found that instructional practices were more important to student achievement than the language used for teaching. After 5 years of instruction, students reached comparable levels of English reading performance whether taught by a structured English immersion approach or a Spanish transitional bilingual education approach. Comparisons were possible because students in both approaches were taught using the same curriculum and instructional practices in English. In other words, high-quality teaching produced positive student outcomes in English regardless of whether one language or two were used for instruction. Several important conclusions were drawn in the overall research review:

- When tailored to the fit needs of multilingual learners, special instruction and services can offer academic benefits regardless of the program type, bilingual or ESL.
- Program success depends on specialized instruction aimed at meeting multilingual learners' unique needs, whether instruction is focused primarily on content learning or language acquisition.
- Successful programs focused on both English literacy and oral language development.
- Successful programs were characterized by teacher preparation and attitudes specific to understanding and teaching multilingual learners, including attention to language acquisition and cultural traits.
- An open and respectful school culture was a common trait of successful programs, whether bilingual or ESL.
- Parent and community involvement were often cited as features of high-quality programs.

As we conclude this chapter, an experience comes to mind that happened many years ago during the summer after Suzanne's first year of teaching second grade in a Spanish/English bilingual maintenance program in Guadalupe, California. I (Suzanne) had gone to my mother's home reservation, the Flathead Indian Nation in northwestern Montana, to visit relatives and enjoy the summer celebrations. From there, we proceeded to the Crow Fair in southeastern Montana, where people gathered from all over the United States and Canada for singing, dancing, stick games, fry bread, beadwork, turquoise jewelry, and festivities at what is billed as the "biggest tipi encampment in the world." You meet a lot of new people at Crow Fair. One afternoon while relaxing in the shade with my relatives near the Little Bighorn River, we met a family from Canada: mom, dad, and three teenagers. The father, a lanky, long-haired man in his late 40s, asked me what my work was. I replied that I was a bilingual teacher in California and that my second-graders were mostly immigrants from Mexico. I was proud of my work. He paused reflectively and then asked, "Why aren't you helping your own people?" These words stunned me. My words stuck in my throat and would not form themselves into a meaningful reply. Into the silence, my grandmother intervened, "They are *all* her children."

In today's world, these words take on even greater meaning, as the diversity among our students increases daily. Few teachers will go through their careers without encountering students different from themselves in language, culture, race, religion, social class, or land of birth. For teachers of multilingual learners, such differences are a given, representing the challenge and reward inherent in our professional lives. Facilitating multilingual learners to speak, read, write, and learn in a new language has become the task of an increasing number of teachers each day. Without a doubt, it is a task that calls for new learning, not only about theories of language and learning but also about other people and cultures and about ourselves.

The essence of our message throughout this book calls for creating a welcoming classroom climate, one that provides each student with a variety of ways to be an active participant and successful contributor. We do not downplay the challenge of creating classroom unity out of student diversity, but we believe strongly that it can be done. Teaching linguistically and culturally diverse students presents an exciting learning opportunity for all of us. Is it easy? Certainly not! The opportunity for any learning and growth—our own and that of our students—is accompanied by great challenge and risk. Successful teaching of culturally diverse students calls for a willingness to go the extra mile, to observe ourselves critically, to question our assumptions, and perhaps to try doing things a little differently: teachers continually learning with open eyes, open minds, and open hearts!

Summary

Learning Outcome 1.1

- Multilingual learners live in all areas of the United States, and their numbers have steadily increased. In the United States, native-born multilingual learners outnumber those who were born in foreign countries.
- Each group of multilingual students brings its own history and culture to the enterprise of schooling and contributes to the rich tapestry of languages and cultures that form the fabric of the United States.
- As teachers, we must become aware of our students' personal histories and cultures, to understand their feelings, frustrations, hopes, and aspirations. We also need to examine our own culturally ingrained attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and communication styles.
- Learn basic information about new multilingual learners in your classrooms using three initial steps:
  - Learn basic facts about the students.
  - Obtain as much information about the student's prior school experiences as possible.
  - Become aware of basic features of the home culture.
- Different classroom learning activities may provide some of the personal information you need to help you know your students better such as illustrated autobiographies, dialogue journals, or a relevant unit or theme to begin the year.
  - Illustrated autobiographies can be titled "All about Me" or "The Story of My Life." Students who are early in the process of learning English can illustrate a series of important events from their lives.
  - Dialogue journals, detailed in Chapters 5 and 7, make an excellent introduction to literacy and facilitate the development of an ongoing relationship while allowing students to write in the language of their choice.

Learning Outcome 1.2

- Schools reflect the values, beliefs, attitudes, and practices of the larger society and represent a major socializing force for all students. For multilingual learners school is often the primary source of adaptation to the language and culture of the larger society.
- Teachers and students bring particular cultural orientations to the classroom that affect how they perceive and interact with each other. Teachers of multilingual learners need to learn about our students and their cultures while at the same time reflecting on our own culturally rooted behaviors that may facilitate or interfere with teaching and learning.
- Culture may be defined as the shared beliefs, values, and rule-governed patterns of behavior, including language, that define a group and are required for group membership. Culture comprises three essential aspects: what people know and believe, what people do, and what people make and use.
- Working effectively with students from diverse cultures presents challenges and opportunities. It is important for teachers to self-reflect on their own teaching practices and relationships with students. Teaching allows significant opportunities for a deeper understanding of ourselves and our influence on the lives of others.
- As a teacher, you are both *participant* and *observer* in the classroom culture. To learn about yourself and your students through personal interactions, you may need to hone your skills in observing and interpreting behaviors by using a framework with guiding questions like those contained in Figure 1.3.
- Teaching and learning depend on clear communication between teacher and students and difficulties can arise from lack of a common language. Communication difficulties can persist if the student and teacher are following different sociocultural rules or there is a cultural mismatch of *participation structures*.
- Teachers should be aware of the literacy knowledge multilingual learners bring to school. Literacy knowledge stems not only from prior schooling but also from experiences with the ways reading and writing are used in the home and community.
- It is important to consider two basic needs for new multilingual learners in your classroom: safety and security and a sense of belonging.
  - To address the need for safety and security, you can assign a personal buddy.
  - To create a sense of belonging, you can assign your multilingual learners to home groups to develop mini-communities of interdependence, support, and identity.

Learning Outcome 1.3

- The implementation of academic standards and student assessment permeates all levels of education today. Curriculum standards have been delineated for K–12 students that specifically define the knowledge and skills that students must attain for promotion and graduation in various content areas.
- States also have assessments to measure student achievement of the standards. Some states created multistate consortia to assess student achievement of the standards. Among other guidelines, the federal government requires test-taking accommodations to help multilingual learners.
- To address the specific needs of multilingual learners, ELD standards have been developed by individual states, multistate consortia, and professional organizations such as TESOL and WIDA.
- The Every Student Succeeds Act was passed in 2015 and is federal legislation that reauthorized the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA; passed in 1965) and the No Child Left Behind Act. The ESEA was originally passed to improve academic performance among lower-achieving, "economically disadvantaged" students.
- *Socioeconomic status* is the strongest predictor of standardized test scores, and students in low-income neighborhoods consistently score lower than those in more affluent circumstances. Students from racial, ethnic, and language minority groups are overrepresented in lower income brackets.
- Multilingual learners are subject to policies specific to their English proficiency status and federal law requires that schools identify and serve students in need of educational support based on English proficiency.
- Bilingual education has been heavily debated historically. Arguments against bilingual education have often centered on the effectiveness of bilingual instruction in teaching English, with no attention given to the potential benefits of bilingualism or primary language use and maintenance.
- All students need to become proficient with digital technologies for academic learning. For academic and social purposes in and out of school, students will need to learn safe, efficient, and critical use of online resources and content.

Learning Outcome 1.4.

- Districts are given substantial leeway in selecting program types and choosing whether to use the students' home language for instruction. However, schools are required to have ELD standards for their multilingual learners, and these standards must be aligned with the English language arts state learning standards.
- Multilingual learners attend a wide variety of school programs across different states and districts.
  - *Bilingual education programs* are defined as programs that use two languages, one of which must be English, for teaching purposes.
  - *English-only programs* (ESL) are required to teach using English while providing access to the core curriculum. Substantial support for multilingual learners is essential, which may include sheltering techniques for content instruction and special ELD instruction.
- Immersion programs use the new language for instruction as a means of new language development for students.
  - Language, content, and literacy instruction take place in the students' new language in the early grades, with the gradual introduction of English (native language) language arts as they progress through the grades.
- A number of studies showed that the bilingual approach led to more positive outcomes than the English-only (ESL) approach. However, one large-scale, longitudinal study found that instructional practices were more important to student achievement than language of instruction.

Internet Resources

Classroom 2.0

By typing "Classroom 2.0" into your web browser, you will access a site that describes itself as "the social network for those interested in Web 2.0, Social Media, and Participative Technologies in the classroom." You can sign up with the group and participate in forums and join different special-interest groups. This is an award-winning site.

Education World

Type "Education World" into your web browser to access a treasure-trove of resources in categories such as Teacher Essentials, Administrators, Lesson Plans, Professional Development, and Tools & Templates.

TESL

Type in "Internet TESL Journal" to find resources maintained by the journal, including links for teachers as well as students. Under teacher links are articles, lesson plans on a wide variety of subjects, and blogs of ESL teachers.

Virginia Department of Education

Type the words "Virginia Department of Education" to access this site containing specific step-by-step instructional lesson plans in English and reading, mathematics, science, social science, fine arts, and foreign language, among many others. Alternatively, go to your own state's department of education to find requirements and resources for teaching multilingual learners for your content area and grade level.

Activities

1. As you look at Figure 1.3, try to answer as many of the questions as you can regarding your own family traditions. For example, when you think of *family*, are you thinking about your mother and father and perhaps a sister or brother, or are you thinking of hundreds of cousins, uncles, and aunts who get together every year for the holidays? Compare your answers with those of another adult. What are the similarities and differences?
2. Take the opportunity to visit a school near you that enrolls newcomer students from other countries. Obtain permission from the principal to visit one of the classrooms. As you observe, try to find out where the students are from and what kinds of special help they are receiving. Use a checklist containing questions such as: What language(s) do the students speak? What assistance are they receiving? Is there a paraprofessional who speaks the students' language(s) or does the teacher use the language? Are there special materials available in the students' home language? What kind of program would you design for these students to promote language development and content-area learning if you were the teacher?
3. Meet with a teacher who specializes in teaching English as a new language. Ask about the teacher's views on the effects of students' cultural and prior educational backgrounds on their school performance. What accommodations does the teacher make to help students adjust? What kinds of programs does the teacher consider best for multilingual learners and why? What kinds of materials or activities has the teacher used with success with multilingual students?
4. Interview a child who is learning English as a nonnative language. Ask what it is like to learn English in school; what the hardest part is; what has been fun, if anything; and how long it has taken so far. Ask the student to tell you what program, materials, and activities seem to work best.
5. In a group, read sections of your state learning standards that relate most to your own content area or grade level. How will you teach them? Do they make sense in terms of teaching multilingual learners? If so, how will you teach multilingual students at beginning levels, at intermediate levels, or at advanced levels?

Chapter 2

Language and Language Acquisition

SOURCE: Rido/Shutterstock

Learning Outcomes

In this chapter, we describe theories about language and language acquisition, including how children and young people acquire a new language in school. *After reading this chapter you should be able to:*

2.1 Explain how language proficiency, communicative competence, and academic language are defined and why they are important for multilingual learners.

2.2 Discuss how language functions as a symbol and instrument of power, social standing, and personal identity.

2.3 Discuss theories that have been proposed to explain first and second language acquisition.

2.4 Describe language traits and developmental sequences for English language acquisition and how different factors interact to influence English language development in school.

We know a young Nicaraguan girl, Judith, who came to the United States at the age of 7. Her parents struggled to make a living for their seven children, and Judith was very protective of them, always looking to lighten their load. Judith spoke very limited English at the beginning of the third grade. Her English grew slowly in the fourth and fifth grades, while her native language remained fluent. She could make up extensive and complex Spanish stories on the spot, given a patient audience. For a long while we didn't see Judith, but then we happened to visit her school one day. Checking in at the main office, we were surprised to see Judith answering the telephone. Now a sixth-grader, she had earned the prestigious job of student assistant. What a transformation!

We greeted her at once and complimented her on her efficient office management skills. "Your English is so good! How did you learn it so well?" With hardly a moment's reflection, she replied, "I waited." And wait she had, a good four years, though much more went into the process than her answer implied. In this chapter we elaborate on the work that goes into learning a new language, especially the kind of language required for school success.

How Have Language Proficiency and Communicative Competence Been Defined?

Learning Outcome 2.1 **Explain how language proficiency, communicative competence, and academic language are defined and why they are important for multilingual learners.**

Human language is a marvelous achievement so ancient that we do not know when or how it originated. We do know that all human beings, with rare exceptions, acquire

the language spoken around them during infancy and early childhood and that this achievement has been going on for thousands of years. We also know that language is functional in that it serves the communication needs of individuals and groups for a variety of purposes and across a variety of social situations. As children acquire language, they are simultaneously socialized into the norms of the society in which they are born. Language and culture are therefore tightly interwoven. Interestingly, language varies in that an individual may use different styles or registers according to the social situation. For example, you use a different register when speaking to a young child than when you are being interviewed for a job. In addition, a single language may have several national varieties, such as British English, American English, and Australian English. The language(s) you speak and the varieties you use also function to announce your identification with associated social and ethnic groups. Language also varies in that it evolves and changes over time, resulting, for example, in the evolution of Latin into the Romance languages. Finally, language may be oral, written, or gestural (e.g., sign language), adding more variables into the mix. In short, language is a dynamic and complex symbol system that functions for communication and group identity. We discuss language variation and change in a subsequent section, but first let's examine language proficiency.

In general, *language proficiency* may be defined as the ability to use a language effectively and appropriately throughout the range of social, personal, school, and work situations that comprise daily living. In literate societies, language proficiency includes both oral and written language. For our purpose as educators, we want our students to become competent in four interrelated language processes: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Furthermore, we want our students to acquire the sense and sensibility to choose the best words and phrasings to achieve whatever purpose they wish as they speak and write. Finally, we want them to be familiar with various genres of extended discourse such as stories, newscasts, textbooks, and essays. Let's take a moment to elaborate on our definition of language proficiency.

Language proficiency is comprised of five related components: phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics, and vocabulary/semantics (Lesaux & Harris, 2015; Moats, 2020). It includes knowledge of the structural rules governing sounds, word forms, and word orders (*phonology*, *morphology*, and *syntax*). These structural rules work together along with *vocabulary* choices to convey meaning (also called *semantics*). Language proficiency also includes pragmatic knowledge. *Pragmatics* refers to the social conventions of language use, such as how to start and end a conversation smoothly; how to enter a conversation without interrupting others; how to show politeness; how and when to use informal expressions such as slang as opposed to more formal ways of speaking; and how, whether, and when to establish a first-name basis in a formal relationship. The term *communicative competence* is often used instead of *language proficiency* to emphasize that proficient language use extends beyond grammatical forms and meaning to include social conventions required for successful communication (Savignon, 2017).

Experts have made a distinction between **communicative competence** (knowledge of the linguistic and social rules of communication) and **communicative performance** (the ability to apply those rules during any communicative act) (Savignon, 2017). Although we aim to teach our students all they need for communicative competence, we are never able to observe competence directly. We must *infer* competence based on instances of communicative performance. The more performance examples you have, the better able you are to make sound judgments of a student's competence. The competence/performance distinction is, therefore, especially relevant to assessing and evaluating student knowledge of their new language, both oral and written. Specific assessment strategies are discussed in subsequent chapters for emergent literacy, oral language, reading, and writing.

Language Use in Social Context: A Classroom Conversation

We have discussed how effective communication requires people to coordinate language subsystems (i.e., phonology, morphology, and syntax) simultaneously in a way that conveys meaning (vocabulary or semantics) while adhering to conventions appropriate to one's communicative purpose and situation (pragmatics). Let's look at a brief classroom conversation as an example. In Ms. Baldwin's second-grade class, the children have planted a vegetable garden, and a group of eight students is now getting ready to go outside to care for their plants.

Ms. Baldwin:	Let's get ready to go out to the garden. Who remembers what our vegetables need?
Students:	Water.
Ms. Baldwin:	That's right. So I will turn on the hose and each of you will get a turn to water one row. What else do we have to do?
Students:	Pull the weeds.
Ms. Baldwin:	OK, anything else?

With this brief example, we can examine how various language subsystems operate simultaneously for successful communication. First, a second-grade classroom provides the social context, with the teacher in charge of a group of students. The social situation constrains how talk will occur. For example, the conversational structure in this exchange is particular to classroom settings, with the teacher initiating the dialogue and the students responding, often as a group. The children know from experience that in this situation they are free to call out their answers. They are not required to raise their hands to be called on, even though they are at other times. The teacher initiates the conversation with two utterances that serve to organize and regulate the behavior of the children as they get ready to go out into the garden. When the teacher asks, "Who remembers what our vegetables need?" her question serves two pragmatic functions. First, the question focuses children's thoughts to regulate their behavior when they go out to the garden. At the same time, the question serves an academic teaching function, which is to review plant knowledge learned recently. We have therefore defined the **social context** and examined the **pragmatics** of the utterances in the conversation. All the teacher's utterances are aimed at essentially the same two functions: organizing the children's behavior and reviewing content, specifically plant care concepts. The children's responses serve to display their knowledge of what to do when they go outside. This sequence, teacher initiation–student reply–teacher evaluation, is typical of many U.S. classroom conversations (Friend, 2017; Lloyd et al., 2016).

Now let's look at how these utterances are formed to convey meaning. Languages convey meaning by the systematic and coordinated use of rules governing sounds, including intonation, pitch, and juncture (**phonology**); word formation, including prefixes, suffixes, and root words (**morphology**); and word order (**syntax**). Each language in the world uses a finite set of sounds that makes a difference for meaning: **phonemes**. Phonologists identify phoneme differences by examining word pairs with minimal sound differences, such as *pin/bin*. A pin is different from a bin; that is, the words have different meanings. We can therefore conclude that the two sounds, /p/ and /b/, are distinct phonemes of English because the sound differences affect meaning.

In the previous classroom conversation, the children respond that they are going to "pull the weeds." If they had said "pull the seeds," varying the response by only one phoneme, it would still make sense but would change the meaning completely, in a way that would be disastrous for the garden! If the children had said "pull the