

Published
1997

Psychology and Educational Practice

Edited by
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and
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McCutchan Publishing Corporation
P.O. Box 774, 2940 San Pablo Ave., Berkeley, CA 94702

Chapter 19

Linguistically Diverse Students

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More Than a Question of Language Instruction

The language characteristics of students attending public schools in this country have undergone a dramatic change in recent years. According to one national study, the number of limited-English-proficient (L.E.P.)¹ students in grades K-12 increased by almost one million between 1984 and 1991, to an estimated 2.3 million (Development Associates, 1993). This is a conservative estimate representing an intensification of a trend that began in 1979—

¹ We are aware of the numerous objections raised against using L.E.P. to identify students who are in the process of learning English. Specifically, critics have alluded to its pejorative connotations. Nevertheless, we chose to use L.E.P. because of the familiarity among educators with the meaning of the acronym and its legal definition. Please note that we have included periods to suggest that it should be read as three separate letters and not as the unfortunately common “lep.”

from 1979 to 1989, the number of speakers of languages other than English who reported speaking English less than "very well" grew from 10.2 million to 13.9 million (McArthur, 1993). American schools face a great challenge in dealing with these changes, especially since this trend is likely to continue well into the future (Fix and Zimmermann, 1993).

A distinction should be made between issues of linguistic diversity—those concerning the education of L.E.P. students—and issues of ethnic diversity. Although we recognize that English proficiency, ethnicity, and linguistic background are complementary, we choose to center our discussion around linguistic diversity. The reason for our choice lies in the history of legislation, litigation, and policies that have addressed issues of diversity in education as a civil rights problem. From this perspective, limited English proficiency is seen as both a barrier to education and a valid criterion for special treatment. Yet, research has shown that the effectiveness of programs spurred by legislation and litigation has been limited in closing the achievement gap between L.E.P. and non-L.E.P. students, even though promising programs have been documented (see Crawford, 1995; Garcia, 1994).

Studies have also shown that the L.E.P. student population is predominantly poor, Hispanic, educationally disadvantaged, and present in over 42 percent of all school districts nationwide (Abt Associates, in press; Development Associates, 1993). Although the concentration of language groups and total numbers of L.E.P. students fluctuate greatly between districts and between schools, it is clear that the challenge has come to present itself to a substantial proportion of educators and is no longer a problem confined to specific regions of the country.

As is frequently the case with social-intervention programs, the proposed solutions to linguistic diversity in American schools have been the result of rather simplistic interpretations of the problem. As we will argue, linguistic diversity is a complicated phenomenon that requires educators to reconsider the role of all factors that contribute to the situation, not just English proficiency. Also, given the significant numbers of language-minority students present in today's schools and the projected increases in their numbers, the challenge of linguistic diversity in the classroom should no longer be the exclusive purview of teachers with specialist credentials, but a responsibility for all educators.

Who Are Linguistically Diverse Students and Who Teaches Them?

What do we mean by limited English proficient? According to the 1995 reauthorization of the Bilingual Education Act, an L.E.P. student meets one or more of three conditions: (1) the student was born outside of the United States or the student's native language is not English; (2) the student comes from an environment where a language other than English is dominant; or (3) the student is American Indian or Alaskan Native and comes from an environment where a language other than English has had a significant impact on the student's level of English proficiency. In addition, the student experiences sufficient difficulty speaking, reading, writing, or understanding the English language to deny him or her the opportunity to learn successfully in English-only classrooms.

Sixty percent of students meeting these criteria are born in the U.S. (Development Associates, 1993) and concentrated in the West (over 50 percent of them are in California) and the South (20 percent) (McArthur, 1993), with some of the most dramatic recent increases reported in states not traditionally associated with language-minority populations, such as North Carolina (32 percent increase) and Tennessee (80 percent) (U.S. Department of Education, 1991).

Increases in the proportion of L.E.P. students in states such as these are evidence that the phenomenon is not restricted to certain regions of the country. Still, the concentration of L.E.P. students varies considerably from district to district. Total district populations range from several districts with only one L.E.P. student to the case of the Los Angeles Unified School District with over 242,000 L.E.P. students. Still, a majority of districts (67 percent) report serving less than one hundred L.E.P. students (Development Associates, 1993). All these figures translate to classrooms with students at various stages of English proficiency, regardless of their ethnic or linguistic backgrounds.

Substantial increases in the numbers of L.E.P. students are but one indication that issues of limited English proficiency deserve serious consideration in discussions of student diversity. In addition to a need for redefining student diversity around issues

of language diversity, the sheer magnitude of the problem requires a new vision and shared responsibility among all teachers. One striking finding is that 15 percent of all public school teachers have at least one L.E.P. student in their classroom who is not fluent enough in English to complete most of the assigned work (Development Associates, 1993).

How prepared are the teachers assigned to teach L.E.P. students present in numerous classrooms? In 1992, only 10 percent of all teachers of L.E.P. students were certified in bilingual education and 8 percent, in ESL. Regardless of training, only 42 percent of all teachers of L.E.P. students reported sharing a non-English language with their students (Development Associates, 1993). These findings speak of a need to make training in the teaching of language-minority and L.E.P. students a regular component of most teacher education programs, especially in states with large numbers of such students. The agreement reached by the Los Angeles Unified School District with the California State Department of Education requiring all its teachers to undergo staff development in ways to teach L.E.P. students underscores the need to adjust our perception of language as a factor in student diversity.

Finally, the ethnolinguistic background and socioeconomic status of teachers and their L.E.P. students are quite different. Most teachers of L.E.P. students are from an English-speaking background and middle class. In contrast, L.E.P. students tend to be mostly from Spanish-speaking backgrounds and poor. Only 18 percent of teachers describe themselves as being Hispanic, whereas 73 percent of all L.E.P. students fall in this category (Development Associates, 1993). Regarding socioeconomic status, Abt Associates (in press) found that in a nationally representative sample of first- and third-grade students "more than one-half of L.E.P. students in both grade cohorts are in families with incomes under \$15,000" (p. 12; authors' emphasis). These findings have important implications, not only for policy, but also for classroom practice.

Inherent Tensions in Legislation and Litigation

From the late 1950s through the 1960s, a national preoccupation with civil rights reached public schools. Beginning with the

1954 landmark ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education*, schools were asked to follow mandates that guaranteed equal access to education for all students. The ruling set the tone for subsequent cases where plaintiffs demanded educational equality regardless of student characteristics.

Almost a decade later, Title VII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 aimed to help children of limited-English-speaking ability, especially poor students, to achieve full English literacy. The political atmosphere at the time prompted several politicians to sponsor a series of bilingual education² bills. Nevertheless, funding for these bills did not match the rhetoric. This would prove to be indicative of future trends. Federal expenditures on Title VII programs remain relatively low to this day, especially when compared with other compensatory programs. Title VII funding, adjusted for inflation, has been consistently between 30 percent and 40 percent below the 1980 level and only reached the \$200 million mark in 1993. In comparison, funding for Chapter 1, a program for economically disadvantaged students, totaled \$5.94 billion in 1993 (Fix and Zimmermann, 1993).

Title VII legislation functions primarily as an incentive for districts and local education agencies in the form of grants funding programs for L.E.P. students. In addition, states have adopted statutes mandating special education programs for L.E.P. students, although the severity of these laws varies from state to state. Only nine of the twenty-nine state bilingual laws currently in effect mandate bilingual education programs under specified conditions. Notoriously missing among these states is California, where more than one-half of all L.E.P. students reside (Development Associates, 1993). The absence is the more significant given that California's bilingual law at one time was considered "a virtual bill of rights for language-minority children" (Crawford, 1995; p. 152). California's bilingual law was allowed to expire in 1987 and has not been reauthorized since, a fact that underscores the political nature of the debate surrounding bilingual education.

The passage of the 1968 Title VII amendment to ESEA provided

² Bilingual education includes programs in which academic instruction is given in languages other than English. The extent of native language instruction varies greatly across and within programs.

funding for several experimental bilingual education programs throughout the country. Additional muscle behind the legislation was provided by a ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court and a series of legal suits in the spirit of the then recently passed Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Crawford, 1995). Up to that time, a number of cases had been making their way through the courts, arguing that schools were violating the civil rights of L.E.P. students by not providing them with meaningful education in a language they could understand. *Lau v. Nichols* became the landmark case that significantly influenced the definition of, and proposed solutions to, linguistic diversity as a civil rights problem.

The ruling in *Lau* reflected the concern for equal access to education first present in the *Brown* decision. Also, and in agreement with prior rulings on issues related to education, the Supreme Court left the solution up to the local school boards. The ruling suggested that schools either instruct students in their native language or teach English to students, but the court was explicit in stating that neither approach was required and that other approaches might be tried (Crawford, 1995; Hakuta, 1986).

To this day, Title VII grants and the court system continue to function as "carrots" and "sticks" for schools serving L.E.P. students. The prevalence of one incentive over the other has been due more to political ideology and actions from school officials and parents than to their relative effectiveness. Similarly, political ideology tends to influence whether schools' effectiveness in dealing with L.E.P. students is measured in terms of inputs or outcomes. On the one hand, people have argued that comparisons between programs and schools are meaningless unless all students enjoy equal opportunities to learn. On the other hand, it is believed that the most effective way to ensure accountability on the part of schools is to assess the skills and knowledge that every student needs. In reality, both conditions are necessary in order to guarantee that all students receive adequate instruction.

However, if the goal is equality in educating L.E.P. students, we face what Martha Minow (1990) calls a "dilemma of difference." In reference to specific programs for diverse students, Minow describes the quandary as follows:

With both bilingual and special education, schools struggle to deal with children defined as 'different' without stigmatizing them. Both programs

raise the same question: when does treating people differently emphasize their differences and stigmatize or hinder them on that basis? and when does treating people the same become insensitive to their differences and likely to stigmatize them on *that* basis? [P. 20; Minow's emphasis]

In *Brown*, racial separation was proven indefensible, and schools were ordered to move toward integration. In contrast, the ruling in *Lau* confirmed the rights of L.E.P. students to equal educational opportunities, while simultaneously validating English proficiency as a "different" characteristic in students.

Few would argue against the need for students to be proficient in the language of instruction in order to fully participate in and benefit from education. Yet, attention to English proficiency as a valid criterion of classification has also resulted in a view of limited English proficiency as a deficit rather than as a potential for bilingualism. Such a way of thinking is evidenced by the restricted choice of courses available to most L.E.P. students, especially at the middle and high school levels (see Minicucci and Olsen, 1992).

An emphasis on English proficiency has also polarized the classification of students into either proficient or limited proficient. These two broad categories ignore the complex and long-term nature of the language acquisition process. Rather than perceiving students as complex individuals with numerous strengths and weaknesses, there is a tendency to separate them into those who are proficient in English and those who are not. This classification distracts educators from appreciating each student's academic needs and abilities. Furthermore, proficiency in a language develops continuously over time and in more dimensions than simply "proficient" or "not proficient." As we will see, programs have been created for students at intermediate stages of proficiency in order to address this very aspect of the problem.

Attention to English proficiency has also resulted in policies and legislation that fail to address other important characteristics of L.E.P. students. For instance, the proportion of L.E.P. students served by Chapter 1 (now called "Title I") programs does not match the poverty levels in this student sector. This problem is due in part to wording in the law itself and in part to widespread tendencies among school officials and educators to classify students as either L.E.P. or non-L.E.P. (Fix and

Zimmermann, 1993). The latest reauthorization of Chapter 1 is clearly intended for poor students, regardless of ethnolinguistic background. It remains to be seen whether widespread beliefs will change accordingly.

Finally, framing the problem in terms of civil rights has drawn attention away from schools and onto L.E.P. students. Following the mandates of the *Lau* decision, numerous programs have been developed to assist L.E.P. students in becoming proficient in English and transitioning into mainstream classrooms as soon as possible. Fewer programs, however, have questioned social perceptions and the overall design of schools as institutions intolerant of diversity. At one end of the spectrum, we find programs that make English-language instruction their sole concern. At the other end, we find programs that begin to question assumptions about the nature of teaching and schools and attempt to develop academic skills and knowledge in all students, regardless of the language of instruction.

Truly innovative approaches in dealing with linguistically diverse students also offer an opportunity to move away from a remedial mentality and enrich the instruction of L.E.P. and non-L.E.P. students alike. The tensions inherent in many of these approaches stem from perceived threats to American culture. It is precisely this perception of threat to American customs and institutions that tends to infuse politics into the quest for effective ways to educate L.E.P. students.

Making Teaching Accessible to L.E.P. Students

Assessment

Aspects of tensions associated with positive and negative incentives, criteria of selection, and input versus output measures can be found in the linguistic and academic assessment of L.E.P. students. Although most programs consist of variations or combinations of the two approaches suggested in the *Lau* decision (bilingual education and ESL), considerable variety exists in the methods and techniques used and in the emphasis of language or academic content. In contrast, little effort has been devoted

to developing appropriate assessment for the identification and evaluation of L.E.P. students.

Few would argue against the need to assess L.E.P. students in order to determine the best way to serve them. However, objections have been raised about the procedures and instruments used (see August, Hakuta, and Pompa, 1994). Most states mandating services of some kind for L.E.P. students also require assessment of the students' English proficiency before placement in a program. Similar requirements exist for federally funded programs.

A recent study of first- and third-grade L.E.P. students found that a majority of schools (about 78 percent) assess the ability of students to understand and speak their home language and English in order to decide whether or not the student should be in a bilingual or ESL program (Abt Associates, in press). Despite findings such as these suggesting that schools are not using arbitrary selection criteria, a lack of consistent and widely accepted instruments and techniques for the selection and classification of L.E.P. students persists. Just as important, a lack of adequate assessment instruments poses problems in monitoring the accountability of programs.

Lack of consistency is also reflected in the large variation among students who are eligible for special services and in tendencies by some districts to determine student eligibility based on local needs and pressures from the community. A lack of adequate assessment instruments also contributes to obscure the nature of diversity in students. It is indeed very difficult for the average teacher to determine whether difficulties experienced by an L.E.P. student are due to the student's troubles with English or her lack of subject knowledge.

Although successful programs have made language proficiency the key criterion for grouping students (Crawford, 1995, p. 126), L.E.P. status is but one of several factors considered when grouping students. Typically, the composition of linguistically diverse classrooms ranges from only one or a few to all L.E.P. students with varying levels of English proficiency, regardless of whether students are from similar or different ethnic groups.

Finally, recent trends in education toward the development and use of performance-based assessment pose particular problems for L.E.P. students. Greater demands on language associated

with authentic assessment tasks make it difficult both for students to demonstrate their skills and for teachers to assign a fair grade.

The issue of assessment and its relation to linguistic diversity remains unresolved, and a thorough discussion on the subject demands more space than is available in this chapter. In any case, teachers of L.E.P. students will have to confront equity issues with regards to assessment and make decisions that will have a profound impact on the academic future of their students. (For further reading, see August, Hakuta, and Pompa, 1994.)

Bilingual Education

The advantages of receiving instruction in a language one can understand should be obvious. Still, the issue of native-language instruction remains a contentious one among people interested in the education of L.E.P. students. A typical argument used by opponents of native-language instruction is that L.E.P. students learn English faster when "immersed" in English-only environments. Furthermore, they claim that the use of native language in school conveys "the wrong message" to students. Supporters argue that by making English proficiency a prerequisite for regular instruction, L.E.P. students are unable to maintain an equal pace with English speakers. They argue that since it takes from five to seven years to become proficient in a language, English-proficiency prerequisites tend to have profound and lasting effects on L.E.P. students' educational and professional futures. (See Minicucci and Olsen, 1992, for an assessment of differences in course offerings.)

In trying to inform the debate, researchers have had to deal not only with political interests, but also with the many factors involved in bilingual education. Most of the evidence regarding the nature and effectiveness of bilingual programs comes from two large studies funded by Title VII. Both studies—a 1989 longitudinal study by Burkheimer and associates evaluating services for L.E.P. students and a 1991 study by Ramirez and associates comparing immersion with early- and late-exit bilingual programs—were in turn reviewed by the National Academy of Sciences in 1992. In this chapter, we are unable to review the numerous

methodological objections contained in the National Academy of Science report (Meyer and Fienberg, 1992). Nevertheless, we recommend the report to readers interested in exploring the nature of research in this field.

Due to the problems mentioned above, we chose only two findings that are both valid and relevant for our discussion. First, language of instruction did not seem to matter as much as people on both sides of the debate had hoped, although slight advantages were detected for approaches that used native language over English immersion. Second, regardless of program type, instruction consisted mostly of tasks and routines involving passive learning and low- rather than high-order thinking skills. These findings add support to our claim that problems associated with the education of linguistically diverse students are more than just linguistic.

A recently released technical report by Development Associates (1993) reports that almost all districts (92 percent) provided special services of some kind to L.E.P. students. Over 76 percent of all the districts that reported offering special services to students taught English as a second language. In contrast, 39 percent of these districts taught language arts in the students' native language. A more interesting finding for the purposes of our discussion is that 28 percent of all L.E.P. students in elementary grades did not receive any instruction in their native language. This percentage is even higher for students in junior/middle school (42 percent) and high school (46 percent).

The extent of native language instruction in these programs varied, although a majority (61 percent) were what the researchers called "intensive" services. These services consisted of either extensive ESL instruction (at least ten hours) combined with regular content instruction, or content instruction specifically for L.E.P. students, without any ESL instruction. All together, about one third (34 percent) of all L.E.P. students were in intensive programs that made "significant"³ use of native-language instruction. Researchers found that the proportion and national origin of L.E.P. students were important factors associated with the type

³ Programs with "significant" use of native language were those where 50 percent or more of the class time is in the students' native language in at least one academic content area other than language arts, or 25 percent or more time in math, sciences, and social studies combined.

of services offered (Development Associates, 1993). Thus, the fact that L.E.P. students are mostly Hispanic should figure prominently in efforts to develop programs and policy.

As this evidence suggests, most school districts report having made efforts to meet the linguistic needs of L.E.P. students. The findings also suggest that variations and combinations of the two approaches recommended in *Lau*, bilingual education and ESL, continue to be used predominantly. Similarly, programs continue to favor English transition over native-language maintenance, a consequence of the deficit mentality that dominates litigation and legislation.

Missing from the research findings mentioned above is an evaluation of particular bilingual education techniques at the classroom level. We know that providing immediate translations in the students' native language tends to minimize opportunities and incentives to learn English (Crawford, 1995). Nevertheless, "concurrent translation," as this technique is known, is sometimes the only way to ensure that students understand critical instructions. Also, translation may help teachers point out similarities across languages, so as to expand on the student's proficiency.

A recommended alternative to concurrent translation consists of teaching each day or class period predominantly in either English or the students' native language. This technique is especially effective when combined with another technique known as "preview-review." In preview-review, the teacher precedes the lesson with a preview in the other language, which provides students either with an organizer for the material to follow or with vocabulary for future use. The two techniques combined can also minimize status differences between languages.

Another set of techniques used by teachers of L.E.P. students are those involving some variation of cooperative instruction. Simply seating students in groups has the effect of increasing opportunities for oral interaction, which is effective for language acquisition, especially among young people. Seating arrangements are also a central feature of several methods and approaches in bilingual education and language instruction, especially when the latter has a communicative emphasis. Cooperative techniques are also an integral component of most constructivistic approaches to education and, as we will see, offer teachers a way to deal with heterogeneous classes (Cohen, 1994).

On the negative side, groups may contribute to the creation and maintenance of patterns of behavior and attitudes among students that are particularly detrimental to L.E.P. students. It is of little benefit for L.E.P. students to be exposed to native English language when the only words they hear are commands, put downs, and mockery. As we will see, certain pedagogical approaches rely on the power of cooperative groups to change students' attitudes and behavior.

The emphasis in legislation and litigation on equal access has resulted in programs that are evaluated primarily on their efficacy to teach English to L.E.P. students (The Stanford Working Group, 1993). A predominance of language over content is understandable given that, with the exception of English proficiency, most instructional issues surrounding the schooling of L.E.P. students are applicable to all students.

English as a Second Language

The history of language instruction can be thought of as a succession of methods, each influenced by contemporary popular beliefs, theories, and research. Our review of language teaching methods is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather a sampling of techniques and approaches available to ESL teachers. Readers interested in greater detail and deeper analyses are encouraged to read David Nunan's (1991) *Language Teaching Methodology*. Our discussion in this section borrows heavily from this source.

Most language teaching methods have emerged predominantly from the tradition of foreign-language instruction and applied linguistics. These teaching methods include Audiolingualism, Cognitive Code Learning, Community Language Learning, the Silent Way, and Suggestopedia. Although the creators of these and other methods commonly attribute enormous success to their way of teaching language, empirical evidence of their effectiveness tends to be mixed at best (see Bialystok and Hakuta, 1994). We should also note that these methods have been used principally to teach foreign languages to relatively successful students, not English to L.E.P. students. Significant differences exist between a foreign-language student and most ESL students, particularly in terms of motivation and objectives.

A method familiar to numerous teachers of L.E.P. students in American schools is Stephen Krashen and Stacey Terrell's Natural Approach. This method is based mostly on Krashen's Monitor Model, one of the most ambitious theories of second language acquisition. Starting from the assumption that first- and second-language acquisition are essentially the same, Krashen has developed a set of principles and concepts that have become part of ESL jargon. Krashen's ideas have received more than their fair share of criticism, especially from researchers who object to the difficulty of testing the many "slippery" concepts included in the theory.

From a more practical perspective, Nunan (1991) joins in the criticism of Krashen and Terrell's method by stating that "like most other methods, the Natural Approach contains activities which, in themselves, are generally unexceptional. It is only when they are elevated to the status of a movement, and when they are fed to learners as an unvarying diet, that they pose a problem to pedagogy" (pp. 243-244). Nunan's admonition regarding language teaching methodology is worth heeding, particularly since, despite the optimistic claims of their proponents, almost all methods are somewhat effective when teaching foreign languages to well-schooled students.

Learning a second language is not the same for everyone. Obviously, a foreign investment banker interested in attracting American investors and a tenth-grade L.E.P. student interested in passing an English proficiency test in order to take a mainstream algebra course do not share the same motivations, concerns, and resources. Although both want to be proficient in English, the needs of each learner are different.

The movement of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) was born out of the realization that the communicative needs of language learners depend on the context in which the language will be used. In our example, the investment banker would be interested in learning the jargon and appropriate sequence of utterances typical in most business transactions. In contrast, the student would be mostly interested in learning reading and writing skills. By basing their instruction on the students' needs, proponents of ESP have blurred the separation between foreign- and second-language instruction.

ESP curricula are typically organized around a communicative syllabus that specifies different functions realized by native-language

speakers, such as "Greetings and Salutations" or "Asking Questions." In response to critics who saw little difference between a syllabus organized in this manner and one organized around pronouns and verb tenses, three new organizational topics have been proposed: tasks, projects, and processes. As the terms imply, each one of the three variations consists of assigning rather specific contexts to linguistic functions.

Courses organized around tasks are based on the premise that the nature of the task dictates the linguistic needs. Also, in trying to complete a task, students are required to apply higher-order thinking skills in solving particular linguistic demands associated with the task. Closely related to task-based instruction, project-based language instruction aims at having students produce an actual final product. This requires curricula designed around units that are longer in duration than are tasks. Ideally, the finished project should have a direct relevance to the students' future needs. The last version is process-based instruction, in which the final project is the course syllabus. Although the risk exists that in the hands of an inexperienced teacher instruction might become chaotic, the main advantage of process-based instruction lies in its flexibility.

Most communicative approaches, especially ESP, require that teachers have a clear understanding of their students' needs. This is perhaps the greatest weakness of ESP as far as ESL teachers are concerned. It is difficult to imagine the future linguistic needs of students who themselves are not sure of their own futures, let alone convince them of learning a dialect of English that is useful only in school.

Factors Related to Linguistic Diversity in Schools

The relevance of dialects in education became clear in a 1979 landmark case in the U.S. District Court from the East District in Detroit, Michigan. In what later would become known as the Ann Arbor Decision, Judge Joiner ruled in favor of the plaintiffs, a group of parents suing the Ann Arbor School Board. The court sided with the parents in stating that Afro-American students did not enjoy equal access to educational opportunities as

specified in Title 20 of the Equal Educational Opportunities Act (the same as that used in linguistic-diversity cases) (Vaughn-Cooke, 1980). After extensive testimony by linguists and educators, Judge Joiner ordered the Ann Arbor School Board to submit to his court a plan to train teachers in identifying students who spoke Vernacular Black English (VBE) and in teaching such students how to read "standard English."

The court ruling in Ann Arbor rested on notions of linguistic deficit common to most Title VII legislation and related litigation. Similarly, the solution mandated by the court favored a transitional approach. In this case, however, the target was literacy in "standard English."

The Ann Arbor case is evidence of the specialized nature of the language needed to succeed in American schools. As most teachers of L.E.P. students will assert, oral proficiency in playground English does not necessarily translate to proficiency in reading or language arts. This observation could be extended to include other aspects of schooling, so that we might think of schooling as involving very specific behavior that reflects societal values and norms.

The problem of linguistic diversity for educators is not restricted to language and academic skills. Intertwined with these two groups of skills are social aspects of the problem that tend to surface in status differences among students. As it soon became evident, race-related problems did not disappear instantaneously with school integration. Moreover, integration appeared to exacerbate interracial differences under certain circumstances. These observations led Elliot Aronson, a social psychologist, to develop the Jigsaw Method of cooperative learning.

Students in a Jigsaw activity are each accountable for making a necessary contribution toward a final product. The idea behind this method is that by making the contributions of each and every member necessary for the final outcome, attitudes toward all members improve, especially attitudes toward minority students.

Elizabeth Cohen (1994) has expanded on Aronson's ideas and designed what she calls "status expectation treatments" for students. A status treatment consists of carefully training low-status minority students to become experts in a high-profile, academic task. Once the student becomes an expert, he or she teaches fellow students the task. Cohen's evaluations of the treatment

support its effectiveness. Cohen is careful to point out, however, that teachers must be trained to carry out expectation treatments. Unless the teacher carefully prepares the low-status student to minimize his chances of failure, negative attitudes about the student's ability may be reinforced by any lack of success.

Status treatment is but one component of several in Complex Instruction. According to Cohen (1994), Complex Instruction offers teachers a way to deal with academic heterogeneity, a feature common to linguistically diverse classrooms. Complex Instruction, as with most group work, requires that students learn to cooperate with each other. To the extent that cooperation may or may not be an accepted and valued form of behavior among certain groups, the institution of cooperative norms in the classroom is likely to favor some groups over others. The problem for teachers is in deciding which norms other than cooperative norms to include and which to exclude, given the multiple cultures at work in their classrooms.

Effective Programs for L.E.P. Students

As a research strategy, it makes sense to determine what makes a program for L.E.P. students effective. After all, most of the loudest objections regarding bilingual education come from its apparent failure to produce expected student outcomes. Several researchers have attempted to determine the effect of bilingual programs on L.E.P. students' English proficiency and academic performance and have concluded that these programs are not effective. Studies such as these have been severely criticized for assuming that individual bilingual programs are comparable simply because of their funding source. In reality, no standard model exists. (For a review of research, see Hakuta, 1986.)

Effective schooling of L.E.P. students includes both classroom and schoolwide characteristics. At the classroom level, and in addition to some of the techniques reviewed in the previous section, effective schools are characterized by teachers who do not simply challenge their students with tasks requiring high-order thinking and language processing, but also do this in a non-threatening environment. Also, clear and explicit instruction is

especially helpful for L.E.P. students who may not only have difficulty understanding English, but also come from cultures where school behavior differs greatly from that of students in most American schools.

Finally, effective teachers of L.E.P. students tend to draw from their students' background in planning and teaching lessons. This practice has several advantages, including enhancing the students' ability to relate new material to previous information, thereby improving recall. Given the importance of culture in the education of linguistically diverse students, the integration of the students' culture into classroom and school norms offers a way for educators of linguistically diverse students to begin addressing the more difficult aspects of the problem.

Prominent among the schoolwide characteristics is the presence of a school culture that favors linguistic and ethnic diversity and appreciates the resources within this diversity (Minicucci and Olsen, 1992). Also, school districts must contend with linguistically diverse student populations who are not only at various levels of English proficiency, but also from diverse language backgrounds. Thus, effective schools must be sensitive to context in their design and implementation of programs and curricula. In other words, there is no "formula for effectiveness" to be applied everywhere. Instead, each school's mission and cultural norms must emerge from the meeting between the concerns and interests of the entire school community.

Eugene Garcia (1994), in his review of the literature on effective schools for L.E.P. students, includes studies that rely on different ways to assess school effectiveness. Some studies have relied on conventional measures of effectiveness such as proficiency tests. We have discussed many of the difficulties in assessing L.E.P. students that make this task especially difficult. As a way around this obstacle, other researchers have asked teachers, staff members, students, and parents to nominate "effective" schools. Although the majority of studies reviewed by Garcia were conducted at schools with a majority of Mexican-American students, Garcia's conclusions help us understand the intricacies associated with teaching linguistically diverse students.

Effective schools in these studies are characterized by classrooms that, among other things, promote functional communication in all media and favor collaboration in an informal, "almost

familial" social setting. Instruction in these schools included tasks and activities that required students to think and use language in abstract, academic ways.

Most effective schools displayed a trend toward English instruction in the upper grades. Students are allowed to progress in reading and writing from their native language to English. Garcia also reports that effective schools have both attributes that have been found to be effective in schools generally and attributes that are specifically appropriate for linguistically diverse classrooms. Thus, to the frequently heard opinion that effective teaching for diverse students is nothing more than good teaching, Garcia's work suggests the following answer: "Yes, and more."

Conclusion

The relevance in effective programs of a school culture reflecting the values and concerns of the school community speaks of a need for inclusion in the creation of this culture. However, in order for all members of the school community to participate in the creation of a positive school culture, we must abandon the current deficit mentality that dominates discussions and policy. Minow (1990) proposes questioning the validity and usefulness of existing norms as part of the solution to the "dilemma of difference." American schools stand to gain in questioning their current beliefs and practices and creating cultures that contain the best characteristics of those sectors of the population they serve.

Just as we argued for the need among teachers to share in the responsibility and the discussion regarding L.E.P. students, a similar movement is necessary in the funding of special services for educationally disadvantaged students. The high poverty levels among L.E.P. students make it necessary to redefine the problem as involving more than simply limited English proficiency. In doing so, we should be careful not to adopt a "one size fits all" approach to the problem (Reyes, 1992), but instead evaluate the effect on educational outcomes of each and all relevant factors.

We would like to be optimistic and believe that in moving away from a categorical approach to student diversity problems,

educators as a whole have an opportunity to contribute to the solution. We realize that, given the very nature of the problem, decisions regarding programs and levels of funding are likely to eventually take place in political circles. Nevertheless, it behooves teachers to participate in the discussion, especially since they will be asked to actually implement the policies in their daily practice.

As is frequently the case with educational problems, linguistic diversity has turned out to be more complex than first thought. Undoubtedly, language proficiency is an important factor. However, as studies have demonstrated time and again, other factors seem to be contributing to L.E.P. students' poor academic performance and low graduation rates. Crucial among these other factors are L.E.P. students' socioeconomic level and particular ethnolinguistic background. Research findings suggest that the solution to the problem involves more than simply finding the "right" language teaching method or the best combination of native-language and English instruction.

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