

*Making Content Comprehensible
for Culturally and Linguistically
Diverse Students*

Karla Garjaka Ed.D

Karla.garjaka@nl.edu

National Louis University

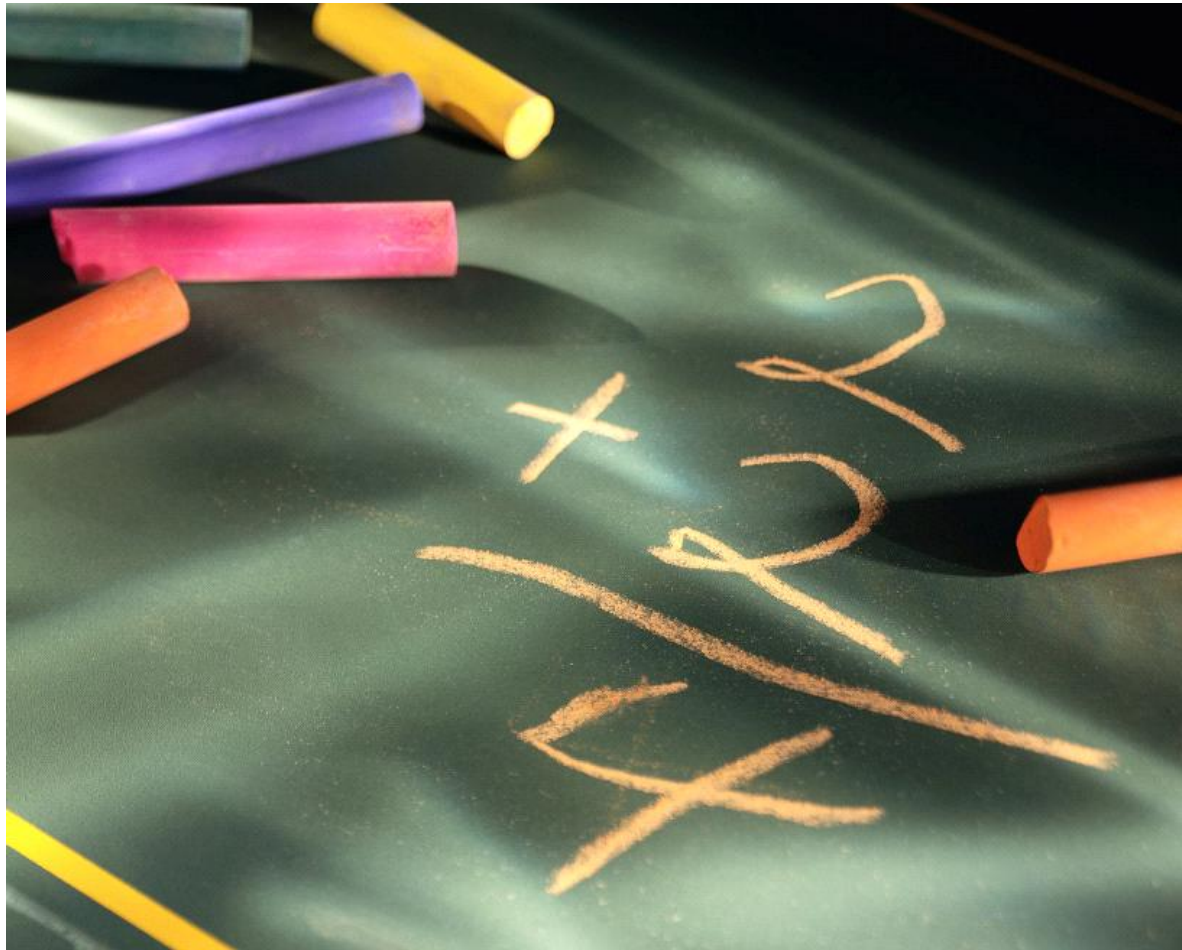
ESL/Bilingual Professor and Educational Consultant

- 1. What advance preparation is necessary before instruction?**
- 2. What teaching techniques best serve second language learners?**
- 3. What learning strategies do ESL students need to develop?**
- 4. How can teachers accurately monitor the comprehension of English language learners?**
- 5. How can a classroom be more effectively organized for content instruction ?**
- 6. How can teachers design realistic assessment for ESL students to match their developing comprehension?**

CLD Challenges...



Math



Challenges for CLDs in Mathematic



- Use of decimal **point and comma** vary from culture to culture
- Students have no experience with the **U.S. measurement system**, It is an abstract to them.
- **Math is not spirally taught** in many cultures. So students may not know a lot about geometry, for example.
- **M**any students have never seen or worked with **manipulatives**. They may not take a lesson using manipulatives seriously.
- Students learn math **by rote memory**.

Challenges for CLDs in Mathematic



- **M**ath curricula in their countries may be **primarily calculation**.
- **W**ord problems may not be introduced until much later.
- **E**stimating, rounding, and geometry are not often taught as early in other cultures.
- Some students learned how to **divide** differently
- **M**ental math may be the norm. Students may not show work in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division or they may show work in a different way

Websites for Teaching Secondary Mathematics to CLD

1 - <http://matti.usu.edu/nlvm/nav/vlibrary.html>

This site provides manipulative as a visual demonstration of concepts taking place in the class

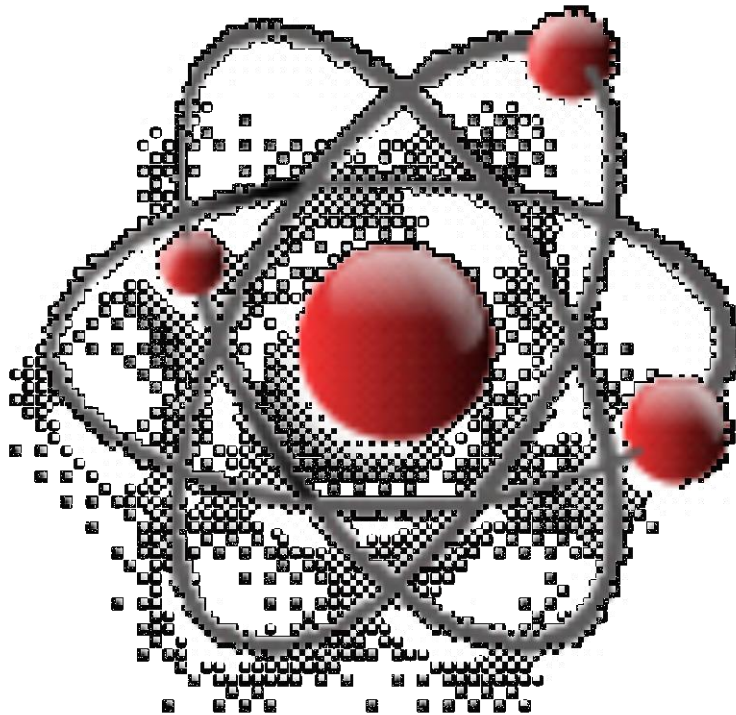
2 - www.purplemath.com/modules/tranlat.htm

This site translates word problems into algebraic expressions

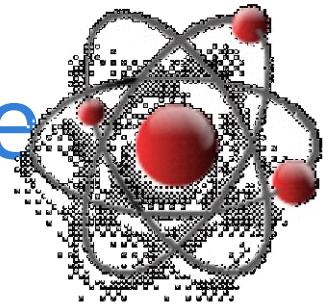
3 - www.enc.org/topics/equity/articles

This site addresses the cultural aspects of teaching mathematics

Science

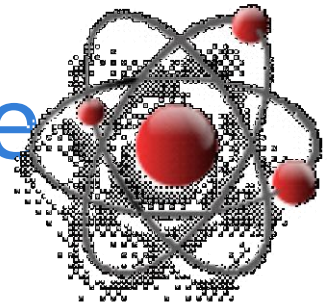


Challenges for ELLs in Science



- **The vocabulary of science** presents a huge difficulty. There are a special set of terms for the student to learn. Even simple words that the student may know, could have another meaning in science.
- **Material is covered very fast**
- **Directions are often multistep** and difficult.
- There are too **many concepts** explained on each page of a science text.
- **Cooperative learning** may not fit in with students experiences in learning.

Challenges for ELLs in Science



- **Visuals may be confusing** and difficult to understand.
- **Sentence structure is complex** and the passive voice is used in textbooks.
- **CLDs** are not used to **science labs** or equipment
- Students **lack background in scientific method**

Websites for Teaching Science to CLD

- <http://csmp.ucop.edu/csp/initiative.html>

This site has many resources for teaching science to CLD students. Materials are grounded in research and filled with practical tips for teachers.

- www.region10.org

This site contains specific lesson plans in various content areas and downloads in areas such as sheltered instruction for secondary math and science.

Social Studies



Challenges for ELLs in Social Studies



- Use of **higher level thinking skills** for reading and writing.
- **Lack of familiarity with historical terms, government processes, and vocabulary.**
- Social Studies text contains **complex sentences**, passive voice, and extensive use of pronouns.
- **CLDs** may not be **used to expressing their personal opinions.**
- Concepts which **do not exist in all cultures** are difficult. This includes privacy, democratic processes, rights of citizens, free will.

Challenges for ELLs in Social Studies



- **CLDs** are seldom asked **to contribute an alternate view** that reflects conditions in other countries.
- Use in **U.S. schools of “timeline”** teaching vs. learning history by “dynasty” or “period.”
- **Difficulty with understanding what is said by the teacher** and being able to take notes.
- **Amount of text covered** and the CLDs’ inability to tell what is important in the text and what is not important.

Websites for Teaching Secondary Social Studies to CLD

- www.DiscoverySchool.com

An excellent supplement to world history videos. This site offers vocabulary words and terms used in the videos, rubrics, and a list of additional resources

- <http://atozteacherstuff.com>

This site contains many CLD lessons specifically designed for all content areas.

- www.tolerance.org/teach/about/index.jsp

A user-friendly site for teachers founded by the Southern Poverty Law Center provides an extensive free educational materials that promote equity and social justice.

Wrapping it up!



Preparing yourself to teach at a multilevel classroom!

- **D**etermine the **language level** of instruction appropriate for the CLD students in your classroom
- **E**valuate their second language learners' **listening comprehension skills**. How much do they understand?
- **S**implify the **language of instruction**, not the concept being taught.
- **W**ork toward **depth**, not breadth of **information**.
- **P**resent materials in a **clear, concise, comprehensible manner** and eliminate all peripheral, nonessential information.
- **C**onvey information through **oral, visual, auditory, and kinesthetic** learning modalities.

Preparing yourself to teach at a multilevel classroom

- Use **graphic organizers**, such as webs, Venn diagrams, and charts, to make information more accessible to second language learners.
- Present content area vocabulary and concepts using **realia, picture files, and hands-on activities**.
- Examine their **CLD students' backgrounds** and learn how their past experiences will effect learning. The impact of students' backgrounds on learning will depend on the their previous schooling, home languages and cultures, and the concepts important to those cultures.
- Understand that ESL students **may not have experience** with all of the **concepts being taught in American schools**.
- Build **background knowledge** before teaching a lesson.

Preparing yourself to teach at a multilevel classroom

- **Actively help students build connections and associations** in order to access background knowledge or previously taught information. This can be accomplished through teacher-prepared outlines and study guides.
- **Provide students with written as well as aural messages.** Outline what you are saying on the chalkboard or have a classmate take notes for second language learners.
- **Always write assignments on the chalkboard.** This will ensure that your ESL students know what the homework is.
- **Modify the assignments for newcomers.**
- **Techniques such as marking essential concepts and vocabulary with a highlighter, labeling diagrams, using word banks, and organizing information** on various types of graphic organizers, maps, graphs, time lines and flow charts, are important skills for second language learners to acquire.

Preparing yourself to teach at a multilevel classroom

- Provide **concrete examples** of vocabulary words through the use of visuals, such as flash cards, games, and puzzles.
- Model "**Think-Alouds**" to increase student comprehension.
- Directly teach **learning strategies**.
- Always **connect** what was taught in class to the **assignments/tests/homework**
- Demonstrate how **to organize information** in outline form, how to select the main idea and supporting details, and how to sequence and summarize.

Are you ready for the challenge?

