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Master of Arts in Teaching English To Speakers of Other Languages

By
Sharon Ju-Ting Cheng
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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF ARTS

in

TEACHING ENGLISH TO SPEAKERS OF OTHER LANGUAGES

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Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this field project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

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This project carries many different roles, from something I am proud of, to being a nightmare from time to time. Nevertheless, I hope this handbook can help educators understand how to support the holistic growth of their students, especially newcomers.

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ABSTRACT

Many educators hope to give their students quality and well-rounded education while balancing all the contents they need to learn. Social-emotional learning (SEL) and culturally responsive teaching, however, are two areas that teachers seem to struggle with (Stark et al., 2021). Teachers have encountered situations where it was difficult for them to support their students due to the cultural differences between the teacher and student (Heineke & Vera, 2021). This lack of professional development in the culturally responsive aspect is concerning.

The shortfall of training leads to failure to apply these practices into schools. For newcomer students, who are usually emergent bilinguals, the transitional process of moving to a new environment is difficult enough, but with an educational system where their behaviors are judged based on the dominant culture’s norm, this can be a negative experience. The lack of a welcoming and safe space keeps them from opening up. Moreover, the pressure that comes from learning a new language while trying to grasp contents in the mainstream classroom could not only increase their anxiety, but also influence their self-confidence, motivation and attitude towards learning, which can decrease their social-emotional well-being.

The importance of combining culturally responsive practices and SEL is a way to address both the social-emotional well-being of students and the development of their culturally sensitive and empathetic skills. My field project incorporated this and focuses heavily on how educators can support emergent bilingual newcomers in elementary school through mainstream classrooms, and what strategies can be implemented to make this intervention successful for educators and students, including teachers, staff, and administrators. It is my hope that, through this handbook, educators can understand and be more aware about culturally responsive SEL and why this needs to be implemented in schools.
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

War zones. Asylum. Immigration. Better opportunities. Connection to the world. These are some of the many reasons why people resettle in other places, and they are frequently known as newcomers. When newcomers arrive, they may feel the need to learn English, whether it is for survival purposes, personal benefits, or meeting society’s expectations. English has been one of the most dominant languages in the world, with most English learners being bilingual or multilingual. Most of the time, in the United States, for example, the newcomers’ children are placed into public school’s mainstream classrooms, even if they do not have a strong foundation in English (Heineke & Vera, 2021). This makes it difficult for them to learn the contents, because everything is taught in English. In addition, in most circumstances, the learners’ background, experiences, and native language(s) are rarely considered in formal, traditional English as a Second Language (ESL) and general education mainstream classrooms, because the English-only policy is usually enforced in classrooms and schools the majority of the time (Macedo, 2000). Many teachers are concerned that if another language is used in the classroom, emergent bilingual learners (EBLs) will not be able to become proficient in English, since the learners might retreat back to the language they are comfortable with when situations get difficult. This is especially true for EBLs that are learning English within English-speaking countries, which is something that is becoming more prominent in the United States. The term EBL, which are commonly known as ELLs, is used in this paper because it refers to people who need to learn a new language due to moving and resetting to a new country that speaks a different language than their own, making them emergent bilingual learners.
According to Bialik, Scheller, and Walker (2018), research has found that in 2015, most EBLs were in grades K-5 across the United States, demonstrating that EBLs need a strong, foundational support starting from elementary school (para. 6). Early childhood is a crucial developmental period in a human’s life, since this is when learners’ brains begin to develop and slowly start to shape their lives as they learn a lot more about different emotions and social interactions. Thus, elementary students are an important age-group to address when it comes to EBLs and their education in classrooms. Speaking from my personal experience, I would have struggled to fit into my school, which followed a Western curriculum, if I had not learned English at an early age. In addition, immigration in the United States has increased to 13.7 million in 2018 from 4.7 million in the 1970s (Budiman, 2020, para. 3), meaning that more immigrant families and their children will feel the need or have the desire to learn English to adapt to the country quicker (Stark et al., 2021).

Recent research, however, has shown multiple benefits social-emotional teaching can have on general education (Heineke & Vera, 2021; Lau & Shea, 2022; Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021), especially when they integrate cultural aspects into it. The lack of cultural responsiveness in current classrooms means that emergent bilingual learners may face more difficulties than necessary, and they may feel uncomfortable or unsafe in the space, leading them to need more time than usual to understand, learn the language, and adjust to the educational and societal system.

My own process of being an emergent bilingual newcomer in an unfamiliar environment where everyone spoke a foreign language made me feel extraordinarily vulnerable. With this feeling of vulnerability and the adjustment to a new school and country where I had no friends, I felt an outlier, because no one seemed to understand what I was talking about when I
communicated to them in Mandarin. All they gave me was a confused face. This experience has led me to feel deep compassion for EBLs, as I understand some difficulties they might face, especially those who are just starting off in a new place. As a bilingual student who had to navigate through a similar environment with minimal support and seeing many current students whose native language is not English struggle in school, I hope my field project, which incorporates my experiences and research in the field, can be a resolution to what current and future educators can do to create a welcoming and culturally responsive school. This makes EBLs’ transition to the new environment more easy for them.

**Statement of the Problem**

Bilingualism and multilingualism have been on the rise as the world becomes more international. Even in countries that predominantly use English, many speak other languages or dialects besides English (Linguistico, 2022; Waddington, 2022). In the United States, a country with one of the largest immigrant populations, one of the most common languages that is spoken is Spanish (Dietrich, S., & Hernandez, E., 2022). In states such as California, where 27.2% of their population are immigrants, there are several bilingual education programs that cater to the surrounding communities (World Population Review, 2023). These help some students connect to their home language and culture, and provides equity to the immigrants who have lost their language rights and abilities due to the assimilation culture (Hurwitz, 2022). Even those who do not have a direct connection to the language, culture, and tradition that is being taught at the bilingual school can learn about the language and its culture, helping them develop cultural sensitivity skills. Furthermore, this can help EBLs feel less like an outlier during their adjustment period.
With increasingly diverse populations, mainstream classrooms can also have increased EBLs, since public schools are generally where they are sent. This means that general education classrooms need to include more culturally responsive practices in order to support marginalized populations as well as EBLs in their transitional process, which includes helping them in their language journey, making them feel valued, and having a genuine curiosity about their backgrounds, creating a holistic educational experience for them. Of the many classrooms that I have observed, one common phenomenon I have seen when it comes to the teaching and learning in the classroom is that many of them are heavily focused on academics and memorization. EBLs are usually expected to become proficient and fluent in English as quickly as they can, in order to grasp and catch up on what they are learning in class. Additionally, because most mainstream classrooms rely heavily on listening to instructions throughout the day, it can be more difficult for EBLs to follow through. The lack of cultural sensitivity and awareness of the EBLs social-emotional well-being makes the learning process more difficult and stressful for them because of the differences in expectation and styles of teaching. Stress can build on and lead to anxiety, decreased motivation, and/or self-confidence, which can impact learning (Shim & Shur, 2017).

As Pentón Herrera and Martínez-Alba (2021) expressed, “the traditional school-curriculum – focused on reproduction of content, memorization, and teacher-led instruction… - is affecting our students” (p. 10). Since many EBLs come to the United States with complex social-emotional conflicts, whether it is healing from traumatic experiences or leaving what was once familiar (Lau & Shea, 2022), incorporating culturally responsive social-emotional learning (SEL) into the education space allows the EBLs to feel welcome and safe, letting them know they are not alone in the challenges they are facing (Stark et al., 2021).
With EBLs coming from various backgrounds and cultures, the difference in their home country and the United States can be shocking to them. Therefore, having a classroom that acknowledges this conflict, welcomes different cultures, and addresses social-emotional needs of the EBLs, can help them have a more fruitful experience to become more successful in their adjustment to their new educational journey and the language learning process (Pentón Herrera & Martínez-Alba, 2021, pp. 9-10).

However, current SEL interventions in classrooms have been criticized by professionals in the field as not being culturally relevant to students. This includes “focus[ing] too much on promoting student compliance with the dominant norms of acceptable emotional expression and social behavior, at times resembling a form of policing,” which, again, emphasizes how the dominant (American) culture always overshadows the minority groups’ culture (Stark et. al., 2021, p.1). Students in a participatory study also expressed “feeling discouraged and alienated when teachers employed culturally insensitive or assimilation methods, such as enforcing an English-only classroom […] or drawing unwanted attention to student’s perceived social identity,” which can negatively impact EBLs by increasing their discomforts and anxiety in class, as well as decreasing their confidence, leading them to feel pessimistic about life and school in the United States (Stark et. al., 2021, p.7). The feeling of not being accepted by teachers and classmates when EBLs are different makes them feel the need to assimilate to the dominant culture. The lack of representation in understanding the culture of minority and marginalized groups and how that can be integrated into the current SEL interventions to make it culturally responsive to EBLs and other students is also why resources should be developed in this area.
Purpose of the Project

The aim of this field project is to provide current and future educators resources on how to implement culturally responsive social-emotional learning in mainstream classrooms, since the diversity of students are increasing across the board, including emergent bilingual newcomers. The social-emotional well-being aspect of EBLs are often overlooked in classrooms. Additionally, SEL interventions and cultural responsiveness are usually discussed as two separate concepts in literature, but it is rarely combined. Thus, I have developed a handbook that guides future educators on how to successfully integrate more culturally responsive SEL strategies into the mainstream classrooms by lowering the affective filter through decreasing anxiety, as it positively impacts the outcomes of EBLs, including an increase in their social-emotional well-being and their academic performance (Niehaus & Adelson, 2014; Niehaus et al., 2017, as cited in Heineke & Vera, 2021). The target population are educators and staff in schools, specifically those that work in elementary schools that support novice/beginner level emergent bilingual newcomers, since this level is where EBLs feel most vulnerable and struggle to situate into a new life and school. This handbook is also especially helpful for refugee or asylum learners who may need more emotional support and individualized attention. I also focus on elementary school students because most of the research on the English language learning process focuses more on English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students and teachers, or older ESL students (postsecondary and higher education), and rarely any are on elementary students. This is important to understand because many of the emergent bilingual learners will also be learning English alongside the academic contents they are learning in the mainstream classrooms, which contributes to how to make SEL interventions more culturally responsive, as this is an aspect that should be considered when implementing these practices.
For the following handbook, current SEL and culturally responsive resources, such as curriculums or activities that teachers have created based on the situations in their class, were analyzed to understand what the teacher and students’ perception on current SEL practices in the classrooms are, and how culturally responsive they think it is. Understanding students’ and teachers’ views allowed me to develop a handbook that takes a more holistic approach in addressing the learners’ needs and has more practicality, which is why I include culturally responsive SEL strategies that are beneficial to both the teachers and students.

**Theoretical Framework: Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis**

Because EBLs that arrive in the United States usually have a home language they speak with their families, English becomes a second or additional language they learn, which can make the initial stage of language learning challenging due to the possibility of the other language(s) interfering (Mohr, Juth, Kolmeier, & Schreiber, 2016). This additional responsibility of having to learn a language on top of needing to adjust to the new environment is an overwhelming process. By understanding more about the foreign language acquisition process, educators can think more about ways to overcome communication barriers with these students. A huge part of EBLs transition process relies on their English learning process. Scholars and cross-disciplinary professionals are also interested in understanding the process of second and foreign language acquisition due to its complexity. Similar to the first language acquisition, there are many perspectives that exist in second language acquisition (SLA). How each scholar defines SLA and what domains should be considered are different, especially when it comes to teaching a language.
One of the prominent theories for SLA is The Natural Approach model by Stephen Krashen (1981). He first theorized The Input Hypothesis in 1977, but he continued to build on to The Natural Approach model as new research evolved (1978, 1980, 1981, 1982). There are five hypotheses in this model, but in this paper, I focus more on the Affective Filter Hypothesis. Krashen claims that the lower the affective filter is in individuals, the more they are able to process the input they are receiving. Here, the affective filter refers to the “wall” in the language acquisition device (LAD). The LAD, developed by Chomsky (1965), is a theory that states that there is an innate knowledge or capacity that children are born with to learn language. This can be influenced by affective factors such as anxiety, motivation, or confidence (Krashen, 1981). Thus, if someone experiences high levels of anxiety, the input they are receiving will be blocked by the “wall,” and less comprehensive input will pass through and be acquired. Similarly, if anxiety is lowered, so is the “wall,” allowing more input to pass through to facilitate language acquisition.

Some scholars in the field have critiqued Krashen’s model due to the lack of clarity on the definitions of certain terminologies, as well as the ambiguousness of “whether and how a single factor or combined factors [function] as filters for second language acquisition” (McLaughlin, 1978, 1987, as cited in Wei & Lai, 2019, p.1463). Gregg (1984, as cited in Wei & Lai, 2019) had also questioned why the affective filter does not affect children’s first language acquisition “if it does for the second language acquisition, because Krashen had claimed that the language acquisition device in adults and children works in similar ways” (p. 1463). According to these critics, much of what is stated in his model lacks “credible evidence” with one of the reasons being difficulties in measuring these abstract concepts.
On the other hand, teachers in the field have seen how Krashen’s Affective Filter hypothesis has shed light on how they can better support emergent bilingual learners to become successful in their classrooms. Numerous studies (Dikmen, 2021; Ni, 2012; Velasco, 2021; Yaoqing, 2021) have demonstrated the relationship between affective factors, teaching, and language learning. Ni (2012) points out how students’ attitudes towards the teacher’s feedback could impact their emotions towards English and the learning process. Students expressed that if teachers could provide feedback in the specific method that each individual prefers, it could promote positivity towards their learning. Furthermore, “... guidance contributes greatly to students’ emotional states, especially their motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety” (Ni, 2012, p. 1512). Once these positive emotional states are increased, it not only helps with the EBLs’ language learning process, but also their social-emotional well-being, which can positively influence how much information they learn. Velasco (2021) also describes how certain instructional practices from the teacher can induce anxiety for the students, increasing the affective filter. Students have noted that classroom activities, such as going up to the board to answer questions, reporting, or analyzing difficult readings, can be overwhelming for them. This can surely be the case for emergent bilinguals that come from different cultures and educational systems. For example, based on my own experience and observations I have seen, I know that students in Asian countries' educational systems are more hesitant to speak out in class than their western counterparts due to the power distance between students and teachers and the fear of answering questions incorrectly. In other instances, if the teacher is not explaining something well or not engaging with the students (e.g., discussions), it could decrease their motivation, and in turn, affect their learning (Velasco, 2021).
Despite the criticisms of Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis, research demonstrates the strong relationship between affective factors and one’s language learning process (Ni, 2012; Velasco, 2021). Krashen’s hypothesis has guided many in understanding how these abstract, internal “filters” - from anxiety to confidence - can be a barrier to learning. Educators should consider this fact when they are teaching their students. In fact, affective factors go hand in hand with cultural responsiveness and the social-emotional well-being of the learners, because without emotional regulation, social-emotional well-being can suffer, learners can be distressed, and lack the motivation to learn the new language as well as the academic content taught in class, and they may fall behind in class (Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021). Yet, without cultural responsiveness in the SEL, EBLs may feel reluctant to learn the language or engage in class due to confusion from the western system (e.g. rhetoric devices, figurative language) and have an increase in their anxiety due to embarrassment or frustration from not understanding English and what is happening in their surrounding environment (Lau & Shea, 2022). Hence, the integration of culturally responsive SEL practices in schools and classrooms can provide EBLs with a more positive outlook on their education, language learning journey, and life, while also feeling respected and appreciated by their peers’ and educators’ from the development of SEL’s social awareness and relationship skills.

When it comes to classroom learning, teacher-student relationships are one core part of social emotional learning that determines the learners’ development and success. It has been found that “the quality of emotional support and classroom organization provided by…teachers were related to gains in DLLs’ (dual-language learners) social competence across the year,” (Downer et. al, 2012, p. 737, as cited in Halle et al., 2014). Even when SEL practices were implemented for a couple months in 5th grade classrooms, it was shown that learners had a
“decrease in psychopathological symptoms and improvement in academic performance after the implementation,” underlining how teachers' classroom organization and instruction can enhance the students' learning experience, especially when SEL is part of the process (Siqueira de Souza, Benevides Soares, & Pizarro de Freitas, 2021, p. 36). This aspect can be even more important for EBLs that are going through the different stages of acculturation.

Krashen’s theory helps professionals in the field and the public understand what characteristics language learners need in order to best acquire the target language. It is critical that educators implement these characteristics in the appropriate context and pay attention to the affective factors, since teachers are one of the most frequent contacts students have when it comes to learning. As the world becomes more complex, finding comfortable and suitable ways to help students learn could improve their language learning process and academic performance as they begin to understand more about what they are taught, which leads to an increase in their confidence. It also allows students to develop a healthy, positive, social-emotional well-being in this process, which acts like a virtuous cycle, where one feeds off another and enhances the overall experiences of the EBLs (Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021).

**Significance of the Project**

This project may be of interest to teachers in mainstream classrooms, since their roles have the most direct contact and influence on the students, specifically the emergent bilingual newcomers’ education experience and their life in the United States. Teachers in ESL programs or specific centers that offer English development services may also find this handbook to be helpful for their ESL classrooms that have a wide range of EBLs from different countries that need more culturally responsive SEL, since current ESL programs are mostly still traditional
when it comes to teaching students (Macedo, 2000). This handbook provides various comprehensive strategies on how to offer more support through culturally responsive SEL interventions.

School staff and administrators, including the principal and counselors, are also important populations that this project targets, because it is crucial for them to also support culturally responsive SEL interventions school-wide. This not only extends the welcoming climate to outside the classroom, but also gives consistency to EBLs. Such consistencies can bring more positive outcomes to EBLs, because they will be able to adjust to the new environment more quickly and comfortably. When the norms of the school for culturally responsive SEL are on par with those implemented in the classrooms, EBLs may feel more supported by everyone when they are facing challenges. This handbook discusses what school-wide strategies and resources can be implemented in order to increase the positive outcomes in the EBLs. It could also possibly prevent burnouts from teachers, because they would not feel as overwhelmed about having to face these difficulties alone.

Lastly, professional development trainers or coaches that work with schools can also benefit from the following project, because they can teach more educators across the country on how to implement culturally responsive SEL. That way, teachers can feel more prepared to teach EBLs both in or out of classrooms, and other staff and administrators can also understand why it is important for them to follow up on this process. Moreover, professionals in the field have criticized the lack of training they have received on culturally responsive SEL interventions, so this further reiterates the need on why educators should learn about culturally responsive SEL strategies, as the school solidifies how effective these interventions are for students, particularly EBLs.
Limitations

Since the creation of this handbook is based on research from SEL interventions in elementary classrooms, one limitation is that it will apply less to adult classrooms, because some of the activities designed in this handbook may not be suitable for an older age group (e.g. the reading level of the books and music used to promote learning may be too basic). Additionally, because the project also focuses on novice/beginner level EBLs, this means that it does not cover guidance on how to work with EBLs in more advanced levels, as the contents in this handbook may be too simple for them. Nevertheless, some of the contents in here can be adapted by teachers and schools to fit the appropriate level and age groups of the students.

Another limitation this project has relates to the target populations for this handbook, which are teachers and staff in schools. Thus, it does not have as many guidelines on how familial or caregivers involvement can help with the learners’ learning, which consists of a huge part of their lives. Future culturally responsive SEL projects should cover more about this topic in order to help learners grow more holistically in different environments. This allows the learner to practice their language, social-emotional, and academic skills both inside and outside of the classroom.
Definition of Terms

**Bilingualism:** This depends on how a person defines bilingualism, which can be the ability to express two languages with great fluency in their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, but for the purpose of the this paper, it is defined as “the ability to express oneself in two languages” (Byers-Heinlein & Lew-Williams, 2013, as cited in Moreno & Paz-Albo, p. 152).

**Culturally Responsive Practices:** The “emphasi[s] [of] building knowledge and awareness of various cultures and communities; lessons [incorporate] race, ethnicity, and culture; social justice and equitable practices; and supportive and reciprocal relationships” (Bennett, 2018; Gay, 2002; Iruka et al., 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Losinski et al., 2019, as cited in Goodwin & Long, 2022).

**Emergent Bilingual Newcomers:** Students who are learning a new language due to moving and resettling in another country. This can be immigrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and undocumented people, etc.

**English as a Second Language (ESL):** English is learned as a foreign language within a country that uses English as a dominant language (Brown, 2014).

**English Language Learners (ELLs):** “Students in the United States who come to school with some knowledge of two languages, but who ultimately are determined to not have sufficient English proficiency to succeed in school” (Escamilla, Hopewell, & Slavick, 2021). A more appropriate term that describes this population is emergent bilingual learners, which is used throughout this paper and the handbook.

**Funds of Knowledge:** “A theory that makes a plea for teaching that draws on students' knowledge, skills, and experiences” (Monique & Judith, 2021).
**Second Language Acquisition:** The process in which learners learn an additional language besides their home language language(s) through formal (e.g. at a language school) or informal (e.g. friends) instructions, or foreign language learning (Brown, 2014).

**Social-Emotional Learning (SEL):** “Promoting positive, supportive, engaging, and participatory learning environments that prepare learners to succeed in school and their lives” (Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021, p. 3).

“Core competencies of SEL:

1. Self-awareness
2. Self-management
3. Social-awareness
4. Relationship skills
5. Responsible decision-making” (CASEL, 2020a; Osher et al., 2016 as cited in Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021).
CHAPTER II
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

When academics become the main focus in the educational field, other aspects, such as the social-emotional well-being of students, often become less noticed by the staff and teachers, because the school and teachers’ reputation are based on how well students perform. Research reflects that focusing only on teacher-led instruction that often lack cultural relevance, listening to students, and attending only to students’ performance will, instead, drive students, such as the EBLs away from wanting to learn, especially when it comes to the language (Pentón-Herrera & Martínez-Alba, 2021; Villegas, SeizdeLaMora, Martin, & Mills, 2018). This highlights the importance of educators needing to attend to learners’ needs.

When it comes to understanding each students’ needs, it usually begins with understanding which areas and what supports they need. With emergent bilingual newcomers, as it was mentioned in Ch.1, it is important for them to learn the language in order to survive, since English is the dominant language in the United States. Thus, by breaking down their transitional process into steps, which usually begins with learning the language, it can help reduce their culture shock while allowing newcomer EBLs to have the space to explore their learning process. Incorporating social-emotional learning into mainstream classrooms can not only build a more positive, supportive environment that can enhance bilingual learners’ cognitive advantages, but it can also help decrease the EBLs’ affective filter, making the language learning process more impactful (Lau & Shea, 2022). There are many affective factors, which for the purpose of this literature review, is defined to “include emotions, attitudes, motivations, and values” and external variables that influences the learners’ language learning process, since this is a complicated system (Lin, Chao, & Huang, 2015). However, for this project, I focus on anxiety, as
this is one of the most commonly experienced effects when it comes to language learning, specifically in elementary classrooms (Ni, 2012).

With language learning, oftentimes anxiety arises within the individual due to the unfamiliarity and the lack of confidence from the new language (Liu & Huang, 2011). In many mainstream classrooms, where there are a mix of students from different cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the role of SEL can help address the internal social-emotional conflicts EBLs may be feeling, including anxiety, fear, or frustration, leading them to feel less anxious and be able to adapt to the language and country quicker. With that being said, the implementation of the SEL has to be effective in order for it to be helpful for EBLs. According to Steed, Shapland, and Leech (2021), they found that early childhood teachers expressed “the school structures, such as [having] a SEL team, time for SEL instruction, administrative support, and SEL training are…key elements need[ed] for SEL approaches to be effective in elementary school[s]” (1131). It is also important to consider how developmentally appropriate the SEL approaches schools adopt are. Some may be too advanced for younger elementary school students, and teachers would need to adapt the material in order to fit the students’ needs (Steed, Shapland, & Leech, 2021).

Yet, solely using SEL in schools may not necessarily fix the problem of cultural differences and expectations that emergent bilingual newcomers will face when they come to the United States. In Lau and Shea (2022) and Shim and Shur’s (2017) research, they found that the teachers’ lack of willingness to listen to EBLs’ concerns and what trouble they have understanding the content, on top of not understanding how to interpret social behaviors or adjusting to a Eurocentric curriculum, impacts their attitudes toward learning and the respect they felt. If schools and teachers all use standard Americanized SEL approaches in mainstream
classrooms, does that not mean that EBLs will have to assimilate to the social and emotional norms in America? For instance, when it comes to relationships with others, Americans tend to prefer more direct communication while, in my experience, in Asian cultures, people will indirectly express their main points. In this case, it could be possible that some immigrants feel reluctant to change their way of communication, since this is part of their culture and identity that they may want to keep. Thus, incorporating culture responsiveness to SEL strategies can not only empower marginalized students and emergent bilingual newcomers to engage more classes and feel connected to the contents and teachers, but also make the language learning process more beneficial by leading them to “reduced anxiety, increased motivation, and increased language enjoyment, [even] during challenging moments” (Gregersen et al., 2014; Li & Xu, 2019, as cited in Lau & Shea, 2022, p. 3).

To understand more deeply about the importance of culturally responsive SEL in mainstream classrooms, this literature review examines the following areas, 1) the advantages of the bilingual brain and how it can be enhanced through the environment, 2) anxiety and its impacts on language learning and the EBLs, 3) what current SELs look like in mainstream classrooms, and 4) how to integrate cultural responsiveness and SEL into schools. Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis, explained in Ch. 1, serves as the theoretical framework for understanding the literature, because it relates and largely influences the outcomes of each area in my project.

**Enhancing the Advantages of a Bilingual Brain Through the Environment**

When it comes to interacting with emergent bilingual newcomers, many of which are bi- or multi-lingual, since they may speak other language(s) outside of school, one of the few
aspects in the school that stands out is the environment. Thus, educators should understand: 1) how bi- or multilingual students process information related to language, and 2) how they can make the emergent bilinguals’ learning environment more effective in order to help them transition smoothly. Research surrounding bilingualism and multilingualism, especially in the cognitive aspect, has had mixed reviews in the first half of the twentieth century. Researchers were theorizing whether bilingualism was a benefit or a drawback for an individual. However, recent research has begun to shed more light on the multiple advantages of bilingualism (Moreno & Paz-Albo, 2020; Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016; Petitto, 2009). In fact, these cognitive advantages can be enhanced, but only when learners are in the appropriate environments.

What differs from a bilingual’s brain and a monolingual’s is that there is more activity in certain areas of the multilingual person’s brain, and these distinctions can start from an individual’s infant stage (Moreno & Paz-Albo, 2020). Neuroscientists found that when an infant (4-6 months) is consistently exposed to two languages in their household, their neural activities are more sensitive to phonetic sounds than that of monolinguals, since they have to differentiate between two different sounds (Petitto et al., 2012, as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016, p. 13). Depending on the age of the learners and when they are exposed to two languages, different neural networks are activated, which “changes the way that a brain processes language as well as a variety of tasks in important ways, including…opening the mind to language in general” (Petitto et al., 2012, as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016, p. 13). This illustrates how the surrounding environment influences learners’ language acquisition process, though how much the growth is depends on the quality and quantity of each language’s speech and the individuals’ age, as older students have a harder time acquiring it due
As the brain tries to acquire both languages, the physiology and the plasticity of the brain changes (Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016). Thus, even if only one language is spoken in the context, the child’s brain still processes two languages simultaneously to differentiate them. This is when co-activation happens, which is a factor that impacts the control mechanisms of bilinguals (Bialystok et al., 2012, as cited in Moreno & Paz-Albo, 2020). In past research, this was seen as a disadvantage by some due to concerns about confusion of the use of two languages and learning delays (Kroll et al., 2014, as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber). It has been shown that bilinguals do seem to have slower language processing, but they “do not persist and are not found in more-proficient bilingual adults” (Michael & Gollan, 2005, as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016, p. 13) “and may even produce long-term advantages” (Bialystok, 2007, as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016, p. 13).

Some other advantages with bilingualism include having a “[better] working memory, more flexibility in using strategies across situations,” (Adescope et al. 2010; Nayak et al., 2009, as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016, p. 13), and “greater accuracy, better reaction time in nonverbal tasks, more fluid switching, and stronger performances on the working memories” (Ransdell et al., 2001, as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016, p.12). Each of these benefits can help young EBLs learn the language more easily, since each of these characteristics may allow them to build more solid foundational skills to read, write, listen, and speak the target language. Once they have a strong foundation in English, learning the other academic contents, connecting with peers, and feeling a sense of belonging are aspects that will seem more easy to grasp for the emergent bilingual newcomers (Stark et al., 2021). This is why educators should encourage or support some use of the EBLs’ first language, as it eases the
language learning process and can possibly strengthen the neural connection between the two languages as co-activation occurs (Moreno & Paz-Albo, 2020).

With the world becoming more international, the diversity of each country’s languages increases as well, including the United States. This means that newborns and children today are more likely to hear more than one language in their surrounding environment. As different literatures have shown, the environment plays a large role in language learning, and gives EBLs a learning space that enhances the advantages of their bilingualism. Providing that “nonthreatening environment with reinforcement” while knowing that their language is accepted, can make students feel comfortable enough to imitate and practice English, especially when they are in the initial stages of learning the language (Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, Schreiber, 2016).

**Anxiety Levels and Its Impacts on Language Learning and EBLs’ Experience**

When it comes to learning a new language, people experience many feelings and emotions – whether it is having the excitement and motivation to learn, or feeling scared and anxious. Even if an individual is bilingual or multilingual, learning a new language with different rules, patterns, and writing can be overwhelming, not to mention having to adapt to a new country, too. After several decades of research, studies have found that affective factors influence how language learners learn, perform, and use the target language (Bensalem, 2017; Liu & Huang, 2011; Velasco, 2021). As Liu and Huang (2011) found in their study, “anxiety turned out to be the most powerful and negative predictor for students’ performance in English” (p. 6). Other correlations with anxiety include “confidence and self-esteem, attitude, motivation, and cultural differences,” which means that anxiety impacts these factors and leads students to develop negative feelings towards English (p. 1-2). This could lead to difficulties in “regulating
self-defeating emotions and managing the stress associated with acculturation,” steering them away from their goals (Stark et al., 2021, p. 6). Thus, teachers will need to find ways to create a space that can lessen students’ anxiety, especially for emergent bilingual newcomers in the United States, where the culture and language may be vastly different than what they were used to.

Emergent bilingual newcomers who have a strong desire to acculturate to the new culture quickly may process the new language faster than other newcomers. However, experiences in their personal lives, such as family separation or unification, cultural shock, can also influence their language learning process. This includes making EBLs feel uncomfortable or stressed as they try to juggle all their different emotions. Hence, emphasizing SEL during this transition is important because it leads other mainstream students to also empathize with the EBLs, which may make them want to offer support to EBLs. When students are anxious, particularly EBLs, they “tend to distrust social situations and feel pressure, leading them to focus more on what they believe they cannot do,” highlighting how this affect should be a factor that schools and educators should consider when working with EBLs (Oxford, 2016, as cited in Cenoz, Santos, & Gorter, 2022, p. 4). Furthermore, when anxiety is associated with languages, it can make students reluctant to communicate with others who are different from them, which can change the newcomers’ experience. When educators cultivate a welcoming climate, it can significantly increase the chance of making students feel more connected to the school, allowing them to feel more inclined to practice their SEL skills, especially among EBLs.

Additionally, Cho, Wang, and Christ (2019) also mentioned that “teachers in the U.S. might interpret some of these students’ responses to their cultures or life challenges as being aggressive, withdrawn, unable to concentrate, or anxious by United States school
standards” (Coelho, 1998; Thabet, Abed, & Vostanis, 2004; p. 42), portraying that teachers’ can have bias perceptions on how they view emergent bilingual newcomers, impacting how they learn. Teachers may treat them differently by, for example, providing them with less amount of opportunities in the classrooms, because of the deviation from their behaviors according to the social-emotional competence of the dominant culture (Cho, Wang & Christ, 2018). As a result, emergent bilingual newcomers may feel anxious about feeling left behind, being excluded, and/or have doubts about their identities (Kaveh & Lenz, 2022).

In order to ensure that EBLs’ learning and transitional process is positive and effective, it is helpful to understand what causes EBLs anxiety in classrooms, so teachers can find appropriate resources or interventions to support their students. This also connects back to the other sections’ literature on how important the environment is to bilingual students, indicating its relevance to EBLs as many speak other languages besides English. One of the first challenges that EBLs encounter when they start their lives in the States is the gap in communication due to language barrier. Another source of anxiety that language learners often experience relates to the types of skills (e.g., listening, reading, writing, and speaking) that they are faced with. According to Dikmen (2021), listening skills led to most anxiety for students while writing was the least (p. 216). Yet, other studies have shown that students have the most anxiety when it comes to the communication aspect, indicating the complexity of anxiety when it is related to foreign language learning (Lin, Chao, & Huang, 2015; Velasco, 2021). Classroom factors, such as the fear of being negatively evaluated by teachers and peers “worrying about failing English class,” or “second language learners’ [having] anxieties due to their competitive nature, and their [tendency] to when they compare themselves to with other learners in the class and found themselves less proficient," all elements that can increase students’ anxiety (Bensalem, 2017;
Dikmen, 2021; Ni, 2012, p. 1509-1510). When challenges in this aspect arise, it can also affect other areas of their educational experience. This includes the students’ motivation, confidence, and attitude towards learning and vice versa, which, in a broader sense, demonstrates why anxiety is a large affective factor that educators should be attentive to (Liu & Huang, 2011).

**What do SEL Practices Look Like in Current Mainstream Classrooms?**

With spikes in anxiety level, the social-emotional aspect of EBLs could also hinder their learning process. Since education is usually defined in terms of knowledge and academic performance, what is often left behind in that definition is the students’ social and emotional learning, especially for multilingual language learners who may need to learn English due to the unique experiences or hardships they are currently facing. This makes it

For these students, it is important to address the social and emotional learning in their language learning process.

Social-emotional learning (SEL) is a method that “aims to help students better understand their thoughts and emotions, to become more self-aware, while [simultaneously helping students] develop more empathy for others” (National University, 2022). Since a lot of EBLs may be from families that have recently migrated to a new country, some of which might be seeking asylum or safety from war, they will be adjusting to new cultures, environments, customs, and communities. Some may even carry experiences that are traumatic or can trigger strong emotions, which can be hard for them to move on from, making it difficult for them to start the learning process. Emotions they may have during this period include discouragement, alienation, or “negative self-conception [that were] sometimes tied to ongoing challenges of language acquisition” impacting the learners’ journey and how much information they internalize in
school (Pentón Herrera, 2018; Urrieta, 2019, as cited Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021, Stark et al., 2021, p.6). Thus, it is crucial for EBLs to receive social and emotional support in the schools and for teachers to incorporate this into their teaching (Lau & Shea, 2022; Siqueira de Souza, Benevides Soares, & Pizarro de Freitas, 2021).

Current practices of SEL in mainstream classrooms exist, but are not actively implemented because teachers struggle to obtain resources and adjust them to fit the learners’ needs. In Heineke and Vera’s (2022) comparative case study, “nine of the 10 participants with bilingual licensure recalled no preparation specific to supporting EBLs’ social-emotional well-being” (p. 150). Instead, many would reach out to their colleagues for interpersonal support to seek advice to deal with challenging situations related to the cultural differences between the EBLs and the teachers. Some also turned to the school social workers while others pulled from their personal experiences, such as [wisdom from] being a mother or knowledge from their prior professional role, to “shape responses to students’ social-emotional needs in the classroom,” which is why teachers’ cultural awareness and appropriate cultural responsiveness needs to be integrated into SEL interventions (Heineke & Vera, 2020, p. 151). Cho, Wang, and Christ (2019) also found that teachers criticized how SEL interventions in schools “[focus] on the quality of the classroom environments and teachers’ approach to classroom management,” which overlooks the refugees’, and more broadly, EBLs’ opportunity to share their funds of knowledge to the class, undermining their experiences and the value they bring to the classrooms (p. 52).

On the other hand, some teachers believe that it is not their responsibility to educate their colleagues on cultural awareness or remind them of how their biases can influence their teaching and their view on EBLs (Heineke & Vera, 2021). Similarly, Cho, Wang, and Christ (2019) found that “teachers’ view on refugee learners’ SEL competencies reflects the pedagogical methods”
they used with the learners, meaning that, if they viewed the learners as less SEL competent, teachers could have them work on more individualized work while other students engage in whole-class discussions (p. 52). This study shows what educators should be mindful of, and their need to constantly evaluate themselves when it comes to working with students from various backgrounds, as it can influence what learning opportunities EBLs are given and their potential to thrive further (Cho, Wang & Christ, 2018). Another challenge that comes with current SEL interventions is that what is culturally or behavioral appropriate differs from country to country, further emphasizing the significance of “cross-cultural transferability of SEL instruction,” and what should be taken into account when it comes to working with EBLs (Lau & Shea, 2022, p. 3). This brings up the question of how culturally relevant current SEL practices are.

Having culturally responsive SEL is crucial in mainstream curriculums and classrooms, because the EBLs may all be at different stages in their lives and have different cultural backgrounds. When emergent bilingual newcomers are beginning to learn a new language in an unfamiliar environment, it may make them feel like an outlier, and stress and fear may start to build up within them. Instead of opening up, they might start to withdraw. EBLs may also be multilingual individuals who have multiple identities, and their habits and expectations surrounding all aspects of their lives can differ significantly from American standards. This cultural disparity can potentially lead them to experience an identity crisis and doubt themselves. Educators must realize this when EBLs, especially beginners, are in their classrooms, and should constantly evaluate their biases (Sciuchetti, 2017). Developing more understandings about what EBLs struggle with can not only assist teachers to create positive rapport with them when teachers support EBLs through their frustrations, but it also allow teachers to adjust their teachings and lesson plans to better fit the needs of EBLs without disengaging them from the
whole class (Lau & Shea, 2022, p. 5). Having this guidance can make EBLs feel safe and valued since they are not viewed as outliers. This sense of comfort can help them navigate the challenges in the language learning and newcomer’s transitional process, reducing self-doubts, anxiety, and increasing self-confidence and self-efficacy (Stark et al., 2021).

One other component that is often not addressed when it comes to current SEL in classrooms is that EBLs find it difficult to follow and understand American or Eurocentric curriculum. This difficulty arises from the unfamiliarity surrounding “figurative language uses, rhetorical devices, and historical settings in Western literature,” which may differ from the structure of their own language and educational systems (Lau & Shea, 2022, p. 5). In that sense, educators would need to be aware of how this can impact EBLs’ affective factors, including anxiety, confusion, and the need for instructions to be repeated, since they are still unfamiliar and trying to understand the language, and what role that would play into designing SEL classroom experiences for the EBLs. This is particularly crucial for those who are newcomers and are just starting out with the language.

Apart from helping EBLs adjust to a new environment and language through culturally responsive SEL in classrooms, teachers in Steed, Shapland, and Leech’s (2021) research voiced that it is also crucial for SEL to be implemented school-wide, and even through school districts (Heineke & Vera, 2021) in order for it to be effective with the EBLs. They noted that having one consistent SEL program throughout the school can foster a positive school climate, and make students feel welcomed, more confident and motivated to learn. In addition, the amount of resources and support schools give to the staff also determines how effective the implementation will be, which is often lacking in current schools that include SEL into their curriculum (Lau & Shea, 2022).
Adapting and Incorporating Culturally Responsive SELs into Mainstream Classrooms

Besides understanding more about what EBLs need and what SEL practices educators have been using, researchers have also been able to gain insight to students' perspectives as well. When it pertains to multilingual EBLs, the situation can be complicated due to multiple factors that affect their learning, especially because different circumstances bring them to the United States, and they are trying to resolve their social-emotional conflict while simultaneously trying to overcome the challenges of culture shock. One of the main points that students often brought up was the teachers’ characteristics - from teaching style to how empathetic they were. For example, According to Cummins, 2002, (as cited in Shim and Shur, 2017), they have found that teachers have many misconceptions about their students, believing that “English language proficiency is linked to intelligence” (p. 26). On the contrary, in the students' view, they think that the teachers’ attitude towards them is negative, which can increase their dejection and hostility, while decreasing their determination towards learning English. Some also expressed their ESL class as boring, making them not want to engage or try (Shim & Shur, 2017).

Furthermore, the lack of consideration of EBLs needing more time to understand and interpret instructions can lead them to feel frustrated or disrespected by their teachers, even when they asked for more time (Shim & Shur, 2017). Such experiences can also happen in mainstream classrooms where teachers have a larger population to accommodate. Similar to what Lau and Shea (2022) found, “teachers’ trust and investment in the [EBLs’] linguistic and cultural capital have a direct impact on [EBLs’] academic engagement.” (p. 10).

Besides the interaction teachers and students have in class, the students mentioned that they would appreciate it if teachers could get to know their families as well as what they have experienced both inside and outside of the school setting (Heineke & Vera, 2022). From the
students’ perspective, the research illustrates the immediate influence of teachers in the students’ lives – not only academically, but also with a focus on their well-being and their holistic identity (Lau & Shea, 2022; Velasco, 2021). This, again, emphasizes the importance of needing culturally responsive SEL, because their families and native language(s) are part of students’ culture, identity, and knowledge that can foster growth (Ortiz, Fránquiz & Lara, 2020). When these are affirmed in the classrooms and schools, “the cultural environments in which [learners] are reared [in] influence the specific vocabulary and linguistic structures they learn [,] and dictate social norms for communication” (Ortiz, Fránquiz & Lara, 2020, p. 1).

Many professionals in the field have shared future directions for incorporating culturally responsive SEL into mainstream classrooms. To help make the transition smoother and make a more positive experience for EBLs, Cornwell (2022) studied bilingual and dual language programs to understand the eight practices that are appropriate for these settings. This can also be beneficial for mainstream classrooms as our educational era moves towards a more diverse and inclusive experience for everyone, especially marginalized populations. These practices include “understanding the structure and goal of a class’s bilingual education,” because educators need to adjust their content and lessons to fit most of the EBLs’ needs and maximize their potential for growth (p.44). Cornwell recommends “using welcome signage and displays, rejecting common myths, scaffolding lesson and book selection, mak[ing] the most of community resources, facilitating collaboration with educators, and taking critical approach to collection development” (p. 44). With more bilingual books present in the classrooms and libraries, it gives EBLs a sense of belonging and affirms their identities (p. 44). This importance is further elaborated when Stark et al. (2021) stated that “experts argue that inattention to matters of identity, belonging, and inequality in conventional schooling and in universal SEL has a variety of negative
consequences, including acculturative stress and a compromised development of a positive ethnic-racial identity” (p. 11).

Other than classroom organization, Ortiz, Fránquiz, and Lara (2020) also state that:

“Educators must understand cultural variability and how cultural factors influence language learning and communication. They can then use this knowledge to establish culturally [responsive] classroom environments that ensure that students develop positive attitudes toward their own language and culture and the ability to function successfully across cultural contexts,” which in this case, is the acculturation to life in the United States (p.2).

Once EBLs feel these supports from educators, they will be able to feel less stressed, helping their affective filters, which may make them feel more confident to apply what they are learning to contexts outside of the school. This can help them adjust to the United States more quickly and does not force them to assimilate to American culture, because they are able to preserve their original identity. Additionally, when educators understand EBLs’ cultural variability, they “feel valued and affirmed, [and] are more likely to take ownership of their academic and social-emotional learning, develop a sense of agency, and become empowered…”(Ortiz, Fránquiz, & Lara, 2020, p.13).

In addition to their language, part of what makes EBLs unique is the variety of cultural identities and experiences they bring with them, which is valuable knowledge for mainstream classrooms. For example, having each student do a presentation on their family recipes or tradition(s) across different classes can not only expose other peers and the teacher to a new culture, but it encourages students and teachers to become more culturally aware, empathetic, and respectful for those different from them (adopted from Barbian, Gonzales, & Mejia, 2017).
This can also be a more entertaining way to teach students abstract concepts, such as morals and cultural sensitivity, which can be difficult to understand when teachers try to explain it to young elementary students. There are multiple other activities that can be done where students and educators can learn through other peers’ funds of knowledge. In this literature review, funds of knowledge is defined as “knowledge and skills that students acquire in their families and communities [that can] support academic learning” (Gonzáles, 2005; Hogg, 2011, as cited in Volman & Gilde, 2020, p.2). This approach bridges SEL interventions, culturally relevant pedagogy, and knowledge beyond the classroom together, because allowing students to share their funds of knowledge means that the class accepts their culture, language, and identity. This also cultivates EBLs’ skills on how to respect others when they arrive in a country with such diverse populations, which addresses the learners as a whole-being instead of just focusing on their academic performance.

In the bigger scope, schools and school districts should provide the resources or professional development to equip teachers with the skills they need to support these students. All stakeholders involved in the school should consider how to implement SEL, “from a social-emotional lens with regard to discrimination, marginalization, and exclusion,” that students and families might have experienced or will experience in order to give them a well-rounded support system that allow students to thrive (Heineke & Vera, 2022, p. 156). This can push schools to design new curricula and policies that address the issues with current SEL, and, instead, create ways to implement culturally responsive SELs across the school, especially for emergent bilingual newcomers (Zaimoğlu & Sahinakarakas, 2021). Furthermore, it is important that there is consistent, “joint action by all parts of the school – administrators, teachers, other school staff, and parents” because providing that helps students understand that
this skill needs to be used across different contexts (p. 9). Aside from reducing anxiety, another way to promote more culturally responsive SELs is to provide emergent bilingual newcomers with a sense of belonging or acceptance from their peers and teachers, because it not only brings positive relationships, but provides EBLs the space to freely express their cultures and be proud of their identities and native languages (Halle et al., 2014; Stark et al., 2021; Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021).

Summary

In this chapter, I have reviewed the literature on 1) the advantages of the bilingual brain and how it can be enhanced through the environment, 2) anxiety levels and its Impacts on language learning and EBLs’ experience, 3) what current SELs look like in mainstream classrooms, and 4) adapting and incorporating culturally responsive SELs into mainstream classrooms. Each of these themes supports the claim that incorporating culturally responsive SEL into mainstream classrooms can not only build a more positive, supportive environment that can enhance learners’ cognitive advantages, but it can also help decrease the EBLs’ affective filter, making the language learning process more impactful and the acculturation process less stressful. Recent decades of research have changed the public's view on bilingualism, highlighting its increasing importance in a world where bilinguals are increasingly mobile. Understanding how to effectively navigate and utilize both familiar and new environments can strengthen the cognitive advantages that bilinguals possess (Darcy, 1963, as cited in Kroll & Groot, 2005; Kroll, Bobb & Hoshino, 2014, as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kolmeier & Schreiber, 2018).

Besides the cognitive aspect, the affective factors – specifically anxiety – have always played a large role for EBLs when it comes to learning a new language. Multiple studies have shown how higher anxiety can lead to a decrease in motivation and self-confidence in a language
classroom, and the lack of cultural sensitivity, which ultimately tells professionals in the field what gaps need to be addressed in social-emotional learning when it comes to language classrooms, but also how that can seem to EBLs in mainstream classrooms (Bensalem, 2017; Dikmen, 2021; Liu & Huang, 2011; Velasco, 2021). In my handbook, I provide tools and strategies related to culturally responsive SEL interventions for different educators. These will benefit the three areas mentioned and help decrease the EBLs’ affective filters, allowing them to have a positive transitional process that can have a healthy, lasting effect on them.
CHAPTER III
THE PROJECT AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Brief Description of the Project

*When Culturally Responsive Teaching Meets Social-Emotional Learning: A Guide for Educators* is a four-section handbook that discusses how social-emotional learning (SEL) interventions can be adapted to be more culturally responsive in mainstream classrooms for educators working in elementary schools. It has a specific focus on how to use these strategies with emergent bilingual newcomers that may not know the language fluently and are going through an adjustment period. This handbook was created because mainstream classrooms today, especially in the United States, have students that speak different languages and come from various backgrounds in one class (Dietrich & Hernandez, 2022; National Center for Education Statistics, 2019, as cited in Lau & Shea, 2022; World Population Review, 2023). Hence, it is crucial for educators to consider how they can create a space that eases and enriches the learning process for all kinds of students. This project also seeks to inform educators that culturally responsive practices and SEL do not need to be two separate concepts. They can be combined to enrich the students’ educational experiences in a culturally sensitive way, while also helping them develop social-emotional competence, which can positively impact their mental health and overall growth as a person.

In this handbook, the following contents are covered: definitions of important terms and explanations of what SEL and culturally responsive practices are. Once educators understand these concepts, the handbook delves into the significance of culturally responsive SEL and why it is important. The introduction serves the purpose of providing educators and readers with background knowledge. The latter half of the handbook focuses on strategies for implementing...
culturally responsive SEL interventions in K-5 school settings. This includes understanding the stages of acculturation that emergent bilingual newcomers experience, recognizing cultural differences, and offering sample activities that enable teachers and school staff to adapt or adopt these ideas into their work with students. Moreover, the handbook provides specific culturally responsive SEL strategies for different stakeholders in the schools. Finally, it concludes with additional resources that educators and families can refer to. Many of the sources are readily available, with embedded links accessible through keywords.

Each section of the handbook was designed to connect one to another, demonstrating how the implementation of culturally responsive SEL is a collaborative effort that requires all the stakeholders to be involved. After the introduction section, the next section of this handbook focuses on culturally responsive SEL strategies that teachers can use in their classrooms. The contents range from creating a safe space to teaching emergent bilingual newcomers emotional words for them to be able to express their emotions instead of internalizing them, which could ultimately be detrimental to their well-being. The newcomers’ experiences are complex, especially during the period when they first arrive, since they might be trying to understand their new environment while simultaneously having to deal with a lot of different feelings, with some arising unexpectedly. The strategies provided in this handbook give teachers information on how to support emergent bilingual newcomers during this time period. For example, by teaching them words for emotions, the emergent bilingual newcomers might eventually start to feel more comfortable with sharing their experiences, even if the school is a new environment for them. Another significant factor that is often missed in school settings when it comes to teaching students from different backgrounds is recognizing their funds of knowledge. By emphasizing the importance of students' funds of knowledge, particularly for emergent bilingual newcomers
whose experiences from their home countries may be all they know, it empowers both students and teachers. This aspect is more extensively addressed in the handbook.

The second section focuses more on culturally responsive SEL strategies that should be implemented school-wide, and why it is important that they are part of this process. Although teachers are usually the main stakeholder that tries to implement SEL into their classrooms nowadays, many are ineffective because the skills students are learning are not consistently maintained outside of the classroom (Steed, Shapland, & Leech, 2021). This means that the development of culturally responsive SEL skills will be limited and possibly only stay in the classrooms, which is not effective. Administrators and staff in the school are also stakeholders who contribute to the success of these strategies. It is important that the overall school climate is welcoming and inclusive. In order to cultivate this in schools, the staff and administrators should also be actively practicing cultural sensitivity and awareness, and evaluating their own biases. I have included activities that staff members can use to advocate for their own cultural and ethnic identity. This also allows other staff members to learn from each other, serving as a model to students, as they see that teachers and staff are people that are learning alongside them, too. That way, the students and emergent bilingual newcomers know that they are supported outside of the classroom as well. Emergent bilingual newcomers may also feel more reassured about their identity.

The last section gives educators and families additional tips and resources. The intention behind these resources was to give educators who are ready to expand their pedagogy more content for them to learn about. Additionally, because discrimination and microagressions are challenging concepts to teach and discuss with students, especially the younger ones who might need more concrete examples, visual resources were provided to teachers for them to use in their
classrooms to help them introduce these sensitive yet important topics to students. Moreover, when students see other similar-age students talking about their thoughts about discrimination and microaggressions, it can make them feel more relatable than having an adult explain or talk about the concept without any visual information. There are also resources in this section that include information beyond the classrooms, such as how families can extend these culturally responsive SEL activities into their homes, or where to find different communities they can connect with. Many of the newcomer families may not know where to find or start looking for resources, which can be stressful, and as educators who have some contact with the families, having these readily available for them can be helpful.

Perspectives from different groups were combined in this handbook to ensure that it takes a more holistic and unbiased approach. If there was only the teacher’s section throughout the whole handbook, it could be misleading for the readers, because although teachers play a big role in executing the process, staff and administrations in the school are also critical to the success of culturally responsive SEL teachings. Oftentimes, schools do not recognize what role they play in this process, or assume that teachers are the only ones involved in the process, which is why it is less effective and less motivating for teachers to continue teaching SEL (Heineke & Vera, 2022).

**Development of the Project**

This project was inspired by Dr. Rosa Jimenez's class on Linguistic Rights and Bilingual Education. Prior to taking that course, I was not consciously aware of culturally responsive practices in classrooms. Discovering that such practices could be incorporated into schools gave me hope that minoritized groups could also be represented in educational institutions. It is common for Caucasian cultures and their perspectives on history to be heavily emphasized in
the curriculum, which can significantly shape students' perception of the world and influence their interactions with others. Hence, having stories or memoirs that focus on diverse groups in the classroom and library would be a great start to increasing that representation, but I had not deeply thought about how else that can be expanded into the curriculum or lessons that educators teach preceding this point.

On the contrary, I thought about including the social-emotional aspect of the project long before the culturally responsive teaching part, because I have always been interested in understanding more about the psychological aspects of humans from high school. This led me to pursue a Bachelor’s degree in Psychology with a minor in Child and Adolescent Mental Health Studies, which was when I learned about the developmental changes of humans in a lifespan. By learning more about how humans develop from their childhood to the elderly stages, it ignited my passion to work with children, because I started understanding more about the significance of a person’s childhood and how delicate that is. Their lifelong health is influenced in every way - from social-emotional well-being and physical health, to the values they hold (Department of Education, 2016, as cited in Seaman & Giles, 2019). This is a period of time where I want to be present for the children. I hope to guide them through the ups and downs of their lives at this juncture, as building a strong foundation, particularly in the social-emotional aspect, can pave the way for a healthier and more positive future. My intention is to emphasize the significance of children's development and shed light on the experiences of emergent bilingual newcomers to educators, because I firmly believe that there are numerous additional ways we can enhance our support for them. Additionally, I decided to target educators because education holds tremendous power in exposing students to diverse perspectives of the world. Through education, students
have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of themselves, others, global events, and the values and virtues they hold.

When I was conceptualizing this handbook and thinking about how I could incorporate the two topics — culturally responsive teaching and social-emotional learning — into my field project, I decided to begin by gaining a better understanding of the current state of social-emotional learning (SEL) practices in the field. Interestingly enough, I learned how teachers felt frustrated with the SEL implementation process, many expressing how it was difficult and not as effective due to the fact that they lack professional development they receive on how to deal with or resolve cultural or ethnic situations that are different from the teachers’ background. They were not sure what was appropriate and what was not (Heineke & Vera, 2022; Lau & Shea, 2022; Stark et al., 2021). Moreover, teachers did not feel that they had enough support from the school or district. As I learned more about what was missing in the current SEL interventions, I decided that I wanted to add the cultural responsive factor into it, because I hope to help teachers gain more knowledge and overcome these barriers. Based on the literature I was reading, the current SEL’s standards are formed around the social-emotional competence norms of the United States, more specifically from the dominant Caucasian culture. These unspoken rules and expectations are hard for emergent bilingual newcomers to grasp, since I had personally experienced this as well.

After brainstorming and deciding what topic I wanted to work on, I continued to research more literature in the field that focuses on the culturally responsive teaching and SEL topic in order to try and understand 1) what needs to be addressed more in both of these concepts, or what current gaps are there, and 2) what are some common threads between them. What I started to see, through my research, was the key stakeholders that are needed in order for
social-emotional learning to be successfully implemented in schools (Heineke & Vera, 2022; Lau & Shea, 2022; Stark et al., 2021). There were three large groups that were addressed in most studies: teachers, the school itself (e.g. staff, administrators, and the environment of the school), and family/caregiver(s)’ involvement (Heineke & Vera, 2022; Lau & Shea, 2022; Steed, Shapland & Leech, 2021). Originally, I was going to create my handbook sections based off of these three groups until I started designing the layout.

As I planned out more specific details on what specific information I would like to include in each section, I realized that there was already a lot of content I wanted to cover for the teachers and school-wide section. Due to the limited amount of time I had to complete this handbook, I thought about leaving out the family/caregiver section, because it would only include a few pages of information, and that would undermine the significance it holds in the process. In actuality, family/caregiver involvement also plays a huge role in the effectiveness and success of culturally responsive SEL. Thus, I changed the third section to additional resources for educators and families. I put these in the same section because if families/caregivers as well as newcomer families do not know where to start looking for resources, schools can be a place where they can get connected with those materials and other communities. That being said, there were still some tricky times where I could not determine which information fell under which section, because, ultimately, we need the different groups to collaborate in order to have culturally responsive SEL be successful and consistent.

After settling on the layout of each section and what contents it would include, I started creating this handbook using Google Docs, but quickly noticed this platform was not something I wanted to use. I was hoping that my handbook would have high face validity and an easy-to-read aspect to it, since I would like to make it accessible to the educators. I thought about possibly
shifting to Microsoft Word to make the whole handbook, but arranging the text, pictures, graphics, and heading together seemed much more time-consuming and difficult than using Canva, where there are pre-made templates and other applications that can be embedded in the handbook. The duplicate slide feature was also helpful when it came to keeping the design uniform for certain pages. I could also find related graphics or photos through Canva and directly add it into the page(s) I was working. Being able to freely put the pictures and graphics anywhere on the page without any limits or concerns about the borders was what also allowed me to truly design it the way I wanted it to appear.

The more I worked on my handbook and looked at the information I was adding into it, the more I realized how extensive the teacher’s section is. Initially, I did think about also extending my school-wide and additional resources section, but the reason why I decided to keep the teacher section the longest was because students have the most contact with them throughout the school day, and the relationship between them can impact students’ attitude and motivation towards education. Teachers are the ones that are directly impacting and shaping the students’ educational experience, including what and how they learn, as well how they see themselves and others, to name a few. It is important that teachers are adequately prepared because we want to provide a quality but well-rounded education to our students, which should always be emphasized, because it can shape the opportunities they receive in the future. To allow that to happen, we need to provide a school climate that gives all students equal access to quality education. This is even more critical for newcomer students, because for some of them, this may be the first time they have had access to education, and their teachers may be one of the first few adults they interact with in the United States.
I decided to do a field project that focuses on creating a handbook because I, myself, who likes to teach and interact with young children, can see how educators need more support and information on how to make classrooms culturally responsive while taking care of the students’ well-being. Moreover, there are many instances where teachers lack support from the schools or do not have enough training to teach certain topics or implement interventions. Culturally responsive SEL is one example. Oftentimes, teachers are too stressed out about needing to cover materials in the curriculum and how well students perform on assessments, which can slow down the students’ overall growth because of the pressure to do well on academics. This can put a strain on the relationship between students and teachers, because students may feel that teachers only care about their academics, and that could result in a negative attitude or lack of motivation towards education and teachers. For emergent bilingual newcomer students, these challenges are even more prominent, because: 1) English may seem like a foreign language to them, 2) they are adjusting and getting used their new “home” and the new culture, 3) the educational system back home may be different from that of the United States, 4) they may not have any friends and feel isolated, and 5) they may be dealing with traumatic experience or internal emotional conflicts from moving to a new country.

In fact, I have seen this happen to students at one of the schools I work with. A couple of months ago, I started seeing a new student appear in class, and he consistently stayed throughout the weeks. Later, I learned that his family moved to the United States because his parents wanted to pursue higher education here. As a five-year-old, he did not really have a choice to decide whether he can stay in his home country or move with his parents. During the first month he was here, I could see how reluctant he was to be in a classroom, because the students and teachers were speaking a completely different language 90% of the time, while the other 10% was
Japanese, since he goes to a bilingual school. He had no friends and peers that he could relate to, because he was still trying to grasp and understand what the culture, expectations, and the educational systems were here. He often looked confused, because he did not know what was next on the schedule. I could also see how quiet he was in the classrooms, and if he did speak, it was usually in his home language. Reading, listening, and speaking were already difficult for him, let alone writing. However, as he got to know his peers and slowly understood what a school day looks like here, I saw him beginning to open up. He was more talkative and learning more English words. He was more willing to ask for help. Over the past few months, I have seen a tremendous amount of growth in him, from his pronunciations of words and letters, to reading and feeling more confident, and this gave me a stronger urge to want to focus my handbook on culturally responsive SEL pedagogy and target the educators working with emergent bilingual newcomers in elementary schools.

These are only some of the many other difficulties newcomers may face. There are many other situations they may encounter, depending on the circumstances that brought them here. Personally, as an international student that came to the United States to study who also learned English as a second language, I empathize with several of these challenges. I have had to live here independently without any families or relatives in the country after they dropped me off at college during those Welcome weeks. Thanksgiving was Friendsgiving, and the 4th of July was also about finding other ways to celebrate with others. At first, it was a struggle for me to adjust - I was homesick a lot of the time, and I had a hard time catching up with the culture and the people here. Besides academics, there was a lot more to learn about social expectations, whether it is with friends or professors, and familiarizing myself with the different federal and state systems in this country, which was extremely overwhelming. Microaggressions, such as, “you
speak really good English” happened quite often, but when I first experienced that, I did not know what that was, or why it bothered me even if the person was not intentionally saying it. This is one of the reasons why I wanted to include the culturally responsive aspect related to the social-emotional aspect in my handbook, because newcomers need to understand all of this information to reduce the culture shock they may feel when they first arrive. I always felt out of place here as an international student. Thus, when I was organizing and writing the handbook, I was constantly thinking about what information educators should know to support emergent bilingual newcomers, and how teachers can be better prepared for the newcomers’ transitional process while also considering how they are students who are also in a language learning process.

**The Project**

The project can be found in its entirety in the Appendix.
CHAPTER IV
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

Education is always a core piece of society that keeps the world moving; but it also continues to evolve with advancements and changes in the environment during a certain time period, such as progression towards less stereotypical gender roles and how that can be taught. Since educators are the ones that are directly shaping the students’ educational experiences, it is imperative for them to be adequately prepared to work with students from various backgrounds and languages. As the number of newcomer families continue to rise in the United States, the diversity in mainstream classrooms will continue to increase as well. Many of these families are coming from other countries where they were originally born and raised in, meaning that they may speak another language other than English. Thus, their children may also arrive here with little to no English foundations. In order to survive in this country, these newcomer children, along with their family members, may need to learn the local language in order to survive, especially when they are in schools that have their entire curriculum in English. This makes them emergent bi- or multi-lingual learners.

When these newcomer emergent bilinguals move to a new country, there are several challenges that they may face when it comes to learning a new language, as they can be vastly different from the languages they speak. Some of them might use other languages they speak or their whole linguistic repertoire, to make sense of the new language they are learning (Vogel & García, 2017). In the beginning, they may use grammatical patterns from other languages to understand the English grammatical rules. Nevertheless, bilinguals hold many cognitive advantages in comparison to monolinguals, including better working memory, sociolinguistic
awareness, and executive functioning, though these need to start developing when they are young or at childhood ages (Mohr et al., 2016). The cognitive flexibility that bilinguals hold can possibly help emergent bilinguals with their language learning process, and that can, in turn, help them acculturate to the new environment more quickly. These cognitive advantages they hold can be further enhanced through enriching the environment, which is something educators can provide in schools (Mohr et al., 2016; Moreno & Paz-Albo, 2020).

With the United States’ growing immigrant population, there continues to be a huge need for emergent bilinguals to have a support system. When families first arrive in a new country, they may feel an expansive range of emotions, many of which can be more pronounced for children as they are still establishing the skills to understand and regulate their emotions (CASEL, 2020a, as cited in Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021). The amount of stress and anxiety they may feel when it comes to adjusting to a new environment and learning a new language they are not fluent in can be overwhelming (Kim, 2023; Shim & Shur, 2017). The effect that this adjustment period has on younger children influences their brain development and the foundation of their well-being, which is why it is crucial for schools to implement consistent and effective social-emotional learning (SEL) into their curriculums, while also cultivating a safe environment where emergent bilinguals can utilize their bilingual cognitive advantages (Mohr et al, 2016; Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021).

That being said, there are gaps in the current educational field that need to be bridged first. Culturally responsive practices and SEL are often discussed as two separate concepts when it comes to literature in the educational field, and this combination is hardly considered when it comes to actual practice in schools. The SEL that is currently taught in schools are based off of the norms of dominant culture in the United States, meaning that if a student acts differently in
the social aspects, for example, where the person is not respecting the other’s personal space, they may be judged (Cho, Wang, & Christ, 2019; Kim 2023; Lau & Shea, 2022). For emergent bilinguals that have only recently arrived in the United States, this experience may be frustrating for them, and can also impact their self-confidence, increase anxiety, and lead them to have negative attitudes about the country as well as English and their motivation to learn the language (Shim & Shur, 2017; Stark et al, 2021). On the other hand, teachers, who can make these experiences different, also encounter many difficulties when it comes to implementing SEL. One of the biggest challenges is the lack of professional development that teachers have towards working with students that come from different backgrounds, which can even more of a case when it comes to emergent bilinguals, since the experiences they have had are complex (Cho, Wang, & Christ, 2019; Heineke & Vera, 2022; Lau & Shea, 2022; Stark et al., 2021). Many of the current SEL minimizes the minority groups’ culture. In regards to lack of cultural responsiveness, most literatures show how the teachers’ perception on students, such as interpreting refugees’ behaviors as inappropriate due to cultural and social differences, can influence the opportunities they give to the students (Cho, Wang, & Christ, 2019; Shim & Shur, 2017). Each and everyone one of these makes the emergent bilinguals’ educational experience very different, especially when they are at the beginning of the language learning process during this time.

With the lack of cultural responsiveness and the anxiousness that can follow when emergent bilinguals are adjusting to their new environment, this can increase their affective filter, since their affective factors (e.g. anxiety, fear, or confusion) can block what gets through the language acquisition device (Chomsky, 1965; Wei & Lai, 2019; Yaoqing, 2021). The blockage represents a “wall” that is built between the input and the language acquisition device, and when
this “wall” is put up due to different affective factors, it can be harder for emergent bilinguals to learn the language, because the “wall” limits the amount of input they receive and comprehend. Thus, in order to help decrease this affective filter to help emergent bilinguals’ language learning process be more successful, and make their transition to school, life, expectations, and culture in the United States smoother, it is important to have culturally responsive SEL incorporated into the classrooms. In fact, culturally responsive SEL should not be limited to emergent bilingual newcomers. It should be for all kinds of marginalized populations, including students with disabilities, those struggling with gender identity, and/or sexual orientation, to name a few.

Having culturally responsive SEL allows students to thrive when it comes to learning social-emotional skills, where they understand more about themselves and others, because their different behaviors will not be interpreted as something not acceptable. This is particularly important for emergent bilingual newcomers, because arriving at a new country with different norms can make them feel out of place, or sometimes, even ashamed of their identities because they are not “fitting in”. However, if schools and classrooms create a safe and trustworthy climate through culturally responsive SEL where the student and their families’ home language, culture, traditions, and funds of knowledge is appreciated, they will feel less anxiety and have an increase in self-confidence and motivation, which can in turn help with their education and language learning process (Bensalem, 2017; Liu & Huang, 2011; Ni, 2012). These can allow emergent bilingual newcomers to be more engaged in classrooms, as they feel more motivated to learn the language and understand the content, making the transitional process a more positive experience for them and less of a cultural shock (Liu & Huang, 2011). Other peers that are receiving culturally responsive SEL will also learn to understand that differences should be affirmed and praised more, helping them develop empathy and cultural awareness skills to
respect other peoples’ cultures (Lau & Shea, 2022; Oberle et al., 2016). Besides building cultural awareness skills, when students, especially emergent bilingual newcomers, have the opportunity to teach the classroom the knowledge and experiences about where they are from, they will feel more in control of their education (Lau & Shea, 2022). They are no longer only passively listening and absorbing the content taught in class, but are, instead, actively thinking of ways to dismantle the social inequalities of the dominant culture that still persist in the current society with the funds of knowledge they have (Lau & Shea, 2022).

**Recommendations**

The handbook *When culturally responsive practices meet social-emotional Learning: A guide for educators* was created to be a resource for educators to turn to when there is a lack of information in the educational field about discussing why culturally responsive practices should be incorporated to SEL. The purpose of this field project was to also allow educators to gain more information from various backgrounds, with a specific focus on how to make emergent bilingual newcomers’ experiences more positive when culturally responsive social-emotional learning is implemented in school. Through this handbook, I hope that educators can understand the strong impacts these practices have on newcomers in elementary schools, especially when they are in the beginning stages of learning the language and adjusting to life in the United States. I recommend current and future educators to utilize the information in the handbook, current SEL interventions are not effectively implemented in classrooms and schools, despite there being a need for it.

**Future Directions with the Project**

Although my field project covers some information on how to make SEL more culturally responsive, I hope to take it a step further to include other topics that are also significant in the
outcomes of culturally responsive SEL. Firstly, I would like to add more content on the school-home family partnership, and how they are also a crucial stakeholder that should be involved in the process. Families and caregivers are also a rich resource that educators and students can learn from, because they can share information about 1) what they learned from their experiences of immigrating to or resettling in a new country, and how that differs from today’s generation. 2) They can also teach students more about traditions and cultures that might have been lost throughout different generations 3) They can also teach their home languages to the students to normalize the cultural responsiveness in SEL (Cornwall, 2022; Lau & Shea, 2021; Stark et al., 2021). Additionally, because parents/caregivers are also the ones that spend the most time with them after school, a healthy and positive school-family relationship would help schools understand how to adapt to different students’ needs, while the family understands more about how they can support their children at home. These relationships can influence how emergent bilingual newcomers thrive both in and out of school.

Another future direction for this project is to include more strategies and discussion of other different ways we can teach discrimination and microaggressions, because what I have covered in this handbook is only the beginning of that process. Since discrimination and microaggression are large topics that should be taught with care and through multiple lessons, educators should know about and learn the various methods they can use to help every student understand this topic. Introducing discrimination and microaggressions to younger children in elementary school can initially be difficult, because there is less maturation in the brain, and children often have a harder time grasping abstract concepts (Gerdes, Durden, & Poppe, 2013). Inclusion is another topic that can be simultaneously taught with discrimination and microaggression, because that is the root of many issues. However, my future direction with the
inclusion aspect is to also include more content and strategies on how to support students with disabilities in schools. There are still many problems to work on in this area, and, with emergent bilingual newcomers coming from another country that may have a whole different system of disability policies and rights, it can be even harder for them to transition to a new country. Or, it could be more of a vice versa situation where people with disabilities are viewed more positively in the new country compared to the one they are coming from. Regardless, I believe that not enough attention and significance is given to this aspect, and it would be helpful for school staff, teachers, and administrators to understand how they can better support these students. This relates back to the students’ fund of knowledge in culturally responsive SEL, where students with disabilities can share their own struggles and experience, and what the school and their peers can do.

One last area that I hope to explore more of in the future, which is associated with the inclusion aspect of the handbook is presenting more resources and information on LGBTQ. When it comes to culturally responsive SEL, we are not only considering the cultural aspect of the intervention. It is more about a person’s whole identity, and how we can incorporate more of that into SEL in a more culturally relevant way to marginalized populations. Amongst emergent bilingual newcomers, there may be people who identify with the LGBTQ group, but it was an unacceptable topic to talk about in the country they have emigrated from. By doing more research and keeping up with the most recent theories and practices, educators may be able to find a way to break down the stereotypes surrounding the difference, but it starts with understanding how we can come together to create a space for students that allows them to comfortably be who they are.

In conclusion, the implementation of culturally responsive SEL gives students a more
well-rounded education about the world around them, while also having educators reflect on how their own bias or awareness can further perpetuate the dominant culture when it comes to teaching. This handbook did not solely focus on strategies and information that teachers can use, but it also has a school-wide and additional resource sections that accentuate the significance of both the school and family’s contribution to how emergent bilingual newcomers work through the stages of acculturation, demonstrating that culturally responsive SEL is a skill that needs to be developed in different social contexts. Through effective implementation of culturally responsive SEL from all stakeholders, students will be able to build long-term social-emotional skills that can help them problem-solve in different situations, since they should practice the culturally responsive SEL skills across different contexts. My hope is to increase more awareness in this area and also provide a resource that can make both students and teachers feel more supported in their education, especially for emergent bilingual newcomers.
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APPENDIX

When Culturally Responsive Teaching Meets Social-Emotional Learning: A Guide For Educators

BY: SHARON JU-TING CHENG, 2023
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Letter to the Readers

Hello fellow educators! Welcome to When Culturally Responsive Practices Meet Social-Emotional Learning: A Guide for Educators. I am Sharon Ju-Ting Cheng, the author of this handbook, and thank you for picking this up.

I have created this handbook to help all educators, from teachers to administrators, understand more about what cultural responsive practices are, how that can be incorporated into the social-emotional learning (SEL) interventions, and why it is important to combine them instead of having them as two separate concepts. What makes this handbook different from other ones is that it targets elementary educators that work with newcomers, many of whom, are emergent bilinguals (also known as English language learners), in their mainstream classrooms. Newcomers are people who have recently arrived and moved, in this context, to a new country/place, such as refugees or immigrants. Many of these newcomers may feel confusion and fear due to not knowing the in’s and out’s of the country’s system when they are first settling down, and educators are usually one of the most frequent people they will be in contact with, especially if they are students at the school. I have decided to focus on newcomer elementary students in mainstream classrooms because I have personally seen many of them struggle, not only with the academics, but also with language, people, and the culture. These rough transition they experience may further impacts their mental and emotional health. As educators, we know that what a child experiences at this stage of their lives is one of the most important periods that allows them to build strong, healthy foundations of their emotional, physical, and mental health that has long-lasting effects. However, I do want to emphasize that there are many areas I hope to develop more in the future, specifically related to the topics of discrimination, LGBTQ, and students with disabilities.

The materials in this handbook are split into three sections: the teacher’s section, the school-wide section, and an additional resource section. I have specifically focused more on discussing culturally responsive SEL in school settings because in many mainstream and ESL classrooms, this is lacking. In each of the sections, I included what strategies each stakeholder could utilize in their roles. In the introduction section, I explained the connection between emergent bilinguals, many of which may be young children, anxiety, and SEL in order to help you understand, in more detail, the background behind these concepts and why I have specifically chose certain strategies for each stakeholder. In order to allow you to see how you can implement these strategies into real-life situations, I have also included several sample activities that you can try out. I also emphasize the families/caregiver(s) role at the very end in the additional resources section, because they play a significant role in the success of the culturally responsive SEL and it is strongly recommended that you collaborate with them as well.

Overall, I made this with hopes that it will give you support and the resources that you currently don't have, and I would love to make this transition process easier for both newcomers and you.

Thank you, wonderful educators! Best of luck to you!

Sharon Ju-Ting Cheng
**Important Terms**

**Bilingualism**
“The ability to express oneself in two languages.” Depending on how a person defines bilingualism, this can be the ability to express two languages with great fluency in their reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills.

(Byers–Heinlein & Lew-Williams, 2013, as cited in Moreno & Paz-Albo, p. 152).

**Culturally Responsive Practices**
The “emphasi[s] [of] building knowledge and awareness of various cultures and communities; lessons incorporate race, ethnicity, and culture topics into t; social justice and equitable practices; and supportive and reciprocal relationships into the curriculum.”

(Bennett, 2018; Gay, 2002; Iruka et al., 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Losinski et al., 2019, as cited in Goodwin & Long, 2022).

**Emergent Bilinguals**
Also widely known as English language learners. “Students in the United States who come to school with some knowledge of two languages, but who ultimately are determined to not have sufficient English proficiency to succeed in school.”

(Escamilla, Hopewell, & Slavick, 2021)

**Emergent Bilingual Newcomers**
Students who are learning a new language due to moving and resettling in another country. This can be immigrants, asylum seekers, refugees, and undocumented people, etc.

**English as a Second Language**
English is learned as a foreign language within a country that uses English as a dominant language.

(Brown, 2014)

**Funds of Knowledge**
“A theory that makes a plea for teaching that draws on students’ knowledge, skills, and experiences.”

(Volman & Gilde, 2021)

**Second Language Acquisition (SLA)**
The process in which learners learn an additional language besides their home language language(s) through formal (e.g. at a language school) or informal instructions (e.g. through friends), and foreign language learning.

(Brown, 2014)

**Social–Emotional Learning (SEL)**
“Promoting positive, supportive, engaging, and participatory learning environments that prepare learners to succeed in school and their lives.”

(Pentón Herrera & Martínez-Alba, 2021, p. 3)
What is the Relationship?

The world is becoming more diverse as more people move and settle in different countries besides their home one. In the United States, one of the countries with the highest immigration rate, different minority groups are starting to grow as well (Dietrich & Hernandez, 2022). Often times, the families that arrive will speak a different language or dialect than the one they move to, meaning that they would have to learn or become fluent in a new language in order to survive or get better opportunities. In that case, the newborns of the family, whom is born in the country their family emigrated today, or their children may be exposed to two languages at the same time. This means that some of the adults as well as most of their children will be emergent bi/multilinguals. In this handbook, we will focus on talking about bilinguals and the literature surrounding it. Some of them may already have some knowledge of English, but others may struggle through this process as they are just starting to learn the language the foreign place they moved to. Additionally, many of these newcomer children will probably be going to public school (since it is free), and join the mainstream classroom full of other children from various linguistic and cultural backgrounds where the curriculum is mostly taught in English, unless the school(s) has requirements on new students needing to be at a certain English-proficiency level. Since most of the teachers teach in public schools, they will more likely encounter these emergent bilinguals that are in the midst of transitioning to a new environment.

Importance of Bilingualism

Bilingualism is important in today’s world because of society’s expectations for people to use dominant and common languages to work and communicate with others. Unlike monolinguals, however, the language learning process is different for bilinguals. That being said, their age also plays a role in how they learn the language (Brown, 2014). Those that learn it before age 11 won’t have any accents, allowing to sound more like a native, as the other language(s) they speak have less of an influence, (Brown, 2014). It is important to remember that when bilinguals are learning a new language, it is possible that they might substitute the grammatical patterns with that of their home language or dialect(s) in the language learning process. It may seem grammatically incorrect, but this is one way they use to understand the content (Moreno, Seltzer, & Woodley, 2014). In other words, they may use their whole linguistic repertoire (all the languages they know) to make sense of the new language they are learning. More of this aspect will be explored in the next few pages.
Students' Surrounding Environment

Whether schools have bilingual or multilingual programs or not, there will always be a population of students that are bilingual or multilingual, even if they are not emergent learners. On the other hand, when it comes to working with emergent bilingual newcomers in schools, one of the few aspects that they will have immediate and direct interaction with is the environment - both in the classroom(s) they are learning in, and the climate of whole school. The environment students are exposed to will influence their learning and how information is processed, because the more welcoming and safe the emergent bilingual newcomers feel, the more likely that they will feel less anxiety, allowing them to comprehend more of the input they are receiving (Wong et al., 2016, as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016). Thus, as educators, it is important for us to understand what bilingualism is, and how we can best support them in school settings. In this handbook, we will explore more on strategies educators can use to help emergent bilingual newcomers in mainstream classrooms.

The Brain Structure of Bilinguals

With bilinguals, studies have found that their brain structure as well as which areas of their brains are activated, is different from that of monolinguals, when they are using one of the languages.(Moreno & Paz-Albo, 2020; Pettito, 2009). Again, this depends on the age they started getting exposed to the one or multiple languages in their environment. Pettito et al. (2012) mentioned in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, and Schreiber's (2016) study that the age of when students were exposed to two different languages, and when they start the language learning process, "changes the way that a brain processes language as well as a variety of tasks in important ways...," such as attentiveness, demonstrating the impact of the environment (p. 13). This is particularly young students that are still forming their understanding toward their first language, as these changes start as young as infants where they start differentiating sounds (Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016).

Brain Co-Activation in Bilinguals

Studies (Moreno & Paz-Albo, 2020; Pettito, 2009) have also shown that even when bilinguals are in a context where one language is used, co-activation in the brain still happens. This means that even when the bilingual person has no intention of using the other language, their brain will still activate it, which can be mentally taxing. Hence, when you see students, especially emergent bilinguals, taking some time to respond to your question, understand that they are trying to process everything simultaneously, while dividing their attention to different functions in the brain from listening, understanding, comprehending, and producing their answer. Or, it may be caused by other factors, such as learning difficulties. As you will see in one of the later section, one strategy to work with emergent bilinguals is to not expect them to respond immediately.

The Advantages of Bilingualism

The complication of processing language may, at first, seem like an disadvantage, because this can cause learning delays based on society's "standardization", but in actuality, it brings tremendous amounts of advantages to the bilinguals, including a “[better] working memory, more flexibility in using strategies across situations,” (Adescope et al. 2010; Nayak et. al., 2009 as cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016, p. 13), and “greater accuracy, better reaction time in nonverbal tasks, more fluid switching, and stronger performances on the working memories,” (Ransdell et al. 2001 as in cited in Mohr, Juth, Kohlmeier, & Schreiber, 2016, p.12) which is why we should encourage our emergent bilinguals to maintain their home language.
Classroom Culturally Responsive Practices

First and foremost, we see the connection between one's environment and how that impacts students' academic and language learning process. In order to better support students in mainstream classrooms, you can encourage students who feel more comfortable using their home language to translate or understand what they are learning (e.g. vocabularies or literacy), especially for emergent bilingual newcomers. This helps them use their entire linguistic repertoire to learn the language and content (Vogel & García, 2017). This will also allow them to feel more at ease with the language learning process, enhance the cognitive skills they have developed from bilingualism, and use that to build a solid foundation for the target language.

Increase in Social-Emotional Wellbeing

When emergent bilinguals feel supported and reassured, they might open up more and feel more integrated to the community. This not only helps them manage the emotions they might be feeling from other aspects of their lives (e.g. anxiousness), but also allow them to learn, develop and maintain relationships more, since they are able to communicate with others more easily. Furthermore, "these cognitive abilities are reinforced when there is a big exposure to both languages," meaning that when newcomer students are more exposed the languages they use, the more advancement it gives to their brains (Craik, Bialystok, & Freedman, 2010, as cited in Moreno & Paz-Albo, 2020, p 154). The quality and quantity of such exposures are still crucial, however (Mohr, Juth, Kolmeier, & Schreiber. 2016). Hence, it is important that educators provide that enriching environment to help students, especially newcomers, reach their full potential.

Other sources: García & Wei, 2015; Stark et al, 2021
BENEFITS OF SEL AND CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS

Social-Emotional Learning (SEL)

- Helps boost academic performance
- Develops empathetic skills, and allows students to see in others' perspective
- Students will know how to:
  - 1) Recognize emotions and thoughts
  - 2) Manage emotions (e.g. stress), and,
  - 3) Regulate it when needed
  - 4) Recognize their strengths and weaknesses
  - 5) Control their impulses, which helps with decreasing their anger and aggressive behaviors
  - 6) Learn to develop and maintain relationships
- Helps students set and work towards their goals
- Creates an enriching and safe learning environment

What about Cultural Responsiveness?

- Cultivates students to have respect for self and others
- Promotes difference as something beautiful
- Affirms the different identities and cultures that children have
- Builds on to students' cultural awareness and sensitivity
- Empowers students to challenge structural inequalities, helping them gain confidence
- Learn contents other than academic knowledge that can be applicable to their lives
- Establishes a positive connection between caregivers and the school, making caregivers feel valued for their identities

Sources: Barbian, Gonzales, & Mejía, 2017; CASEL, 2020a; Osher et al., as cited in Penton-Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021; Will & Najarro, 2022
WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT CURRENT SEL

Lack of Professional Development
Teachers have expressed that they felt unprepared to implement SEL in their classrooms, especially when it comes to more cultural specific situations. Additionally, teachers felt that they do not have enough time to teach it. Students have also said that they had a lack of cultural and linguistic connection with White teachers.

Lack of Cultural Responsiveness
Often times, many classrooms lack cultural responsiveness. Students of different backgrounds are mostly expected to “conform” to the dominant culture, lacking the appreciation for the students fund of knowledge. Many of the school’s curriculum don’t go deep in the contents of racial and cultural history of minoritized and marginalized groups.

Not Enough Funding for Resources
Not every school or district has enough funding to invest in more quality professional developments to help teachers and staff have successful implementation on SEL. The lack of an SEL team, such as having SEL specialists and counselors that can serve the students needs, leads to more teacher burnout as they feel overwhelmed.

Difference in Expectations
Many students come from various backgrounds, as well as cultural traditions. Thus, newcomer students that are unfamiliar with the United States might not understand what expectations and the social norms are appropriate. Conversely, teachers and staff in schools may wrongly interpret students’ behaviors that may seem appropriate in their culture, but not in the U.S. culture.

Lack of Safe Climate
Students may feel like they cannot fully be themselves because they are expected to conform to the dominant culture. Some may not feel respected by the teachers (e.g. refugees), or they may feel uncomfortable using their own language in classrooms. There are often not enough multilingual books or signages in the classroom and school. This can be difficult for those who do not know any English.

Sources: Cho, Wang, Christ, 2019; Heineke & Vera, 2022; Penton-Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021
COMBINATION OF SEL AND CULTURAL RESPONSIVENESS EQUALS (=) THE STRONGEST

When schools and classrooms are culturally responsive, students, especially newcomers who are still feeling foreign to the place, will be able to trust you more. When they see that you care about their cultures, language(s), traditions, and your recognitions to all those aspects, they will feel less conscious and anxious, helping them increase their social-emotional well-being. They may feel more willing to learn, and are more likely to believe that they have an equal amount of opportunities as their peers, even though they may have came in later. When you also add in social-emotional learning, it teaches other mainstream students why it is crucial for them to understand others and their perspectives, and this can help with the relationship they form with the newcomers. It may be a hard process, but most importantly, we want to have respect for other people and their backgrounds, even if they are vastly different. By helping students develop these skills, it further contributes to the cultivation of a safe classroom, which helps the newcomer students reach their potentials more quickly.

- **Benefits for students** include:
  - Better academic performance
  - Reduced anxiety
  - Increased motivation
  - Increased self-confidence, which can lead to increase in self-efficacy (Volman & Gilde, 2021)
  - **Relatable** contents and applicability to real-life for students
    - Using students' fund of knowledge is an enriching lesson for others
  - Grow holistically by integrating skills and contents learned in school to their personal lives (e.g. homes and communities)
  - The empowerment to contribute to their communities (Lau & Shea, 2022)
  - **Affirmation** for their racial, gender, and cultural identities in mainstream settings
    - Affirmation for disable students
    - Allows them to believe they have the same chance to be successful (Lanson-Billings, 2014 as cited in Lau & Shea, 2022)

- **Benefits for teachers** include:
  - Better student-teacher relationship as teachers share care and concern for their students, decreasing bias towards students (Whitford & Emerson, 2019, as cited in Lau & Shea, 2022)
  - Developing different perspectives to look at the world (Yeh et al., 2022)
  - Can increase teachers' emotional intelligence, allowing them to have more positive attitudes in their classrooms, when given the appropriate trainings (Lau & Shea, 2022)
    - This can help with the overall climate of the classroom, which influences the newcomers' education
  - Helps "maintain their health, well-being, and emotional resilience" (Donahue-Keegan et al., 2019, as cited in Yeh et al., 2022)
    - Prevents teacher burnout
AFFECTIVE FILTERS AND ANXIETY

KRASHEN’S THEORY
As educators, you may have heard of Stephen Krashen’s second language acquisition theories. To give a brief overview, this theory includes 5 hypotheses related to second language acquisition:

- The Acquisition–Learning Hypothesis
- The Monitor Hypothesis
- The Input Hypothesis
- The Affective Filter Hypothesis
- The Natural Order Hypothesis

THE AFFECTIVE FILTER
In this handbook, we will be focusing on the affective filter hypothesis. The affective aspect in this hypothesis refers more to emotional factors an individual may experience in a context or situation, such as anxiety, self-esteem, and motivation, to name a few. Krashen has stated that if a person's affective filter (their "wall/barrier" is high), then less of the input they are receiving will be acquired. This means that with higher affective factors, the learners will not be able to acquire as much of the new language’s input (as the diagram shows), demonstrating how this impacts learning (Lai & Wei, 2019).

AFFECTIVE FACTOR: ANXIETY
Anxiety is one of the most significant affective factors that "predict[s] students' performance in English," which is a part of the language learning process, meaning that when the newcomer students are starting off their language learning process, they might be particularly conscious about how well they do (Liu & Huang, 2011, p. 6). Additionally, several researches have shown how anxiety is correlated with people’s motivation and self-confidence, indicating that anxiety can impact a student's attitude towards English (e.g. positive or negative) and how anxiety can increase or decrease motivation and self-confidence, which changes the language learning process, including how they learn, perform and use the language (Benasalem, 2017; Liu & Huang, 2011; Velasco, 2021).

Hence, educators will need to find the most appropriate ways to help students, especially emergent bilingual newcomer, in the mainstream classrooms, so they will be able to thrive in school.
The Role of Anxiety in Language Learning

Stress Factors
- Adapting to the country
- Lack of familiarity
- Cultural differences
- Different curriculums
- Not understanding the language
- Different expectations
- Changes in lifestyle

Consequences
Emergent bilingual students can have decreased motivation, feel discouraged, lack self-confidence, reject learning the language, feel isolated... to name a few.

What Teachers Can Do
- Create a safe space
- Give encouragements
- Check in with your bias
- Have newcomers work in groups or with partners
- Share your difficulties with others; your vulnerability shows that you trust them, and they might be more willing to share their stories

Sources: Pentón Herrera, 2018; Urieta, 2019, as cited in Pentón Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021; Stark et al., 2021
Factors Correlated With Anxiety

**ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE**

With anxiety, it can be hard for learners to focus on the course content, and that limits the amount of input they can process from the English-language learning process, which then impacts academic performance. Many of the learners’ focus more on how they will perform in classes.

**WELL-BEING**

What learners experience in their personal lives (e.g., familial situations, immigration) can influence their language learning because this can become a stress factor that increases their anxiety and how present they are in the language learning journey.

**CONFIDENCE**

Some studies have shown that when one’s self-confidence towards the language is low, they experience anxiety and negative thoughts about the language (Ni, 2012).

**TEACHER-STUDENT RELATIONSHIP**

How teachers interact with the learners in the classroom and how much support they get can either be motivation, or it may create anxiety for them due to the teacher’s style of teaching and attitude they have towards students.

**MOTIVATION**

Motivation is one of the biggest factors that guides language learners through the process, and it ‘interacts with language anxiety, self-confidence, self-efficacy...’ to ensure the learners’ success.

**ATTITUDE**

The learners’ attitude towards how they feel towards learning English can impact 1) their motivation, 2) their engagement in the class, 3) how they interact with the teacher, and 4) how anxious they can feel towards learning English.

Sources: Bensalem, 2017; Cenoz, Santos, & Gorter, 2022; Dikmen, 2021; Liu & Huang, 2011; Ni, 2012
Language Learning Anxieties

01 Communication Anxiety
- Fear of being judged by peers and teachers when speak
- Fear of not being understood by others, and overcorrected by 'fluent' speakers
- Competition from others that are learning the language
- Difficulties in capturing meanings of words, such as idioms

02 Negative evaluations
- Students might feel embarrassed when they are directly corrected in front of the class, especially newcomers that are just starting off, because they feel as if they did something wrong
- Negative evaluations are associated with negative language performances

03 Unfamiliarity With...
- Western/Eurocentric curriculums
- Culture (e.g. food, community, language, fashion habits)
- "Normative" expectations (socially)
- Collectivism vs. individualism, depending on where they are from and where they move to, there might initially be a conflict

04 Feeling of Falling Behind
- Some students may fear that if they can't learn the new language fast enough, and continue to use their home language due to it being easier for them, bullying can happen
- Realizing they might be less proficient, or learning at a slower rate might make them doubt themselves, particularly newcomer students

05 Teachers' Attitude
Each of these aspects influences the factors that was mentioned above (e.g. motivation, anxiety, etc.)
- Attentiveness to students (e.g. listens to students' concerns)
- Showing respect and affirmation for their identities, and is curious about students'
- Engaging students in classrooms
- Pace of the instruction and explanation of the content

Note: Depending on the school and the school district, English Language Development classes can look different. Some schools have it every day for ~40 minutes. For an emergent bilingual newcomers, this might not be enough support, since they may need more time to learn and process everything in another language before they understand the content. This factor can also contribute to their language learning anxiety.

Sources: Bensalem, 2017; Cho, Wang, & Christ, 2019; Ni, 2012; Stark et al., 2021; Velasco, 2021; Volman & Gilde, 2021
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SEL

As you continue reading this handbook, you might be wondering why the terms 'culturally responsive teaching' and 'social-emotional learning' are combined throughout the guide. In the current research for the educational field, culturally responsive teaching and social-emotional learning are often put as two separate ideas.

Main Ideas of SEL

With social-emotional learning, the main idea is to help students foster healthy and positive relationships with themselves and those around them. This starts with developing self-awareness skills, in regards to their own emotions and identities, to empathy and respect for others. The social-emotional learning, however, in the United States is based on the norms of the dominant culture. The minority’s collectivism culture, for example, which is prominent in many countries across the world, is usually not considered as appropriate. Thus, anything out of this “standard” is considered questionable or, sometimes, even deemed as problematic.

Main Ideas of Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teaching, on the other hand, has the main idea of building awareness, having appreciation and respect for students’ rich experience by bringing that into the classroom and school to share with others. What cultures, traditions, and gender roles they have at home, or back in their country, are deemed as important. If they are uncomfortable with something that is taught or certain behaviors, educators and students should respect that. Teaching in a culturally responsive way in the classroom is extremely crucial, since everyone has something(s) they are uncomfortable with. This also affirms the students’ different identities, fosters a sense of social justice and promote equitable opportunities, which can in turn, increase social-emotional well-being.

Culturally Responsive SEL and Anxiety

However, if you incorporate both of these practices together, it can have a more complete effect on the children’s well-being, especially for emergent bilingual newcomers, who may have a mix of emotions and internal conflicts within themselves as they settle down in the new environment. With these emergent bilingual newcomers, many of them may have increased levels of fears and anxieties due to the places they are coming from (e.g. Afghanistan, Syria, Turkey), or experiences they may be going through (e.g. leaving one’s home country with reluctance). And, as research has shown (Liu & Huang, 2011; Stark et al., 2021; Volman & Gilde, 2019), increased anxiety impacts various aspects of language learning, from motivation, to self-confidence and efficacy, decreasing social-emotional well-being. Yet, a large population of these emergent bilingual newcomers need to learn and become proficient in English in order to more easily transition and survive in the United States. When the social-emotional learning has cultural relevance to the minority students and the classroom they are learning in, they will feel more safe, less anxious and stressed, and more willing to open up themselves, making the language learning process more influential for these emergent bilingual newcomers, as well as how they interact with their peers, teachers, staff at schools, and the communities they live in.

Sources: Cho, Wang, & Christ, 2019; Kim, 2023; Lau & Shea, 2022; Lindholm & Myles, 2019
SECTION ONE: TEACHERS

CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SEL STRATEGIES
# Teachers' Section

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**Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT)**

*Culturally responsive teaching* is a newer teaching method that focuses more on student-led instructions and incorporating the knowledge of the students' cultures, identities, perspectives, and experience, specifically those that were traditionally marginalized, into lessons, since schools are still predominantly functioning under White norms (Will & Najarro, 2022).

### What Does It Entail?

#### Student Learning
Promotes the students' knowledge through learning from each other as part of the intellectual growth process, "including their ability to problem-solve" (Will & Najarro, 2022, paragraph 15).

#### Cultural Competence
The environment created is one where all cultures, traditions, and identities are valued, allowing students to not only respect and understand more about their own culture, but also that of others.

#### Critical Consciousness
"Teaching students how to identify, analyze, and solve real-world problems, especially those that result in social inequities against marginalized groups" (Will & Najarro, 2022, para. 15).

### Classroom Scenarios
- Encouraging students to use their prior knowledge when it comes to writing, artworks, or crafts
- Welcoming different perspectives when there is a discussion
- Having school projects be based on communities or families they live in

### Asset-Based Pedagogies

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**Culturally relevant teaching:**
A focus on student learning, Cultural competences, Critical consciousness

**Marginalized communities**

> “What lies beneath the surface is what the traditional educational system has ignored: the rich wealth of knowledge of those communities, their ways of thinking and being in the world, the languages they speak, and their ways with words.”

—Teddi Beamer-Connors, University of Washington associate teaching professor

They go hand in hand and share the same goal of uplifting and emphasizing the assets of the student of colors, and the communities in school. This is particularly important to emergent bilinguals when they are first arriving, since this is what they feel connected to: their culture, their identity, their homes.

### Characteristics of CRT
- Expectations for every student is the same (high)
- Curriculum and lessons are culturally relevant and sensitive
  - "Contextualize the issue within race, class, ethnicity, and gender" (Will & Najarro, 2022, para. 16).
- Instructions are not only focused on the dominant culture, but of many other cultures and factors including socio-economic, disability status, etc.
- Educators should have multicultural knowledge
- Respect and affirm different communication styles
Working with Emergent Bilingual Newcomers: Cultural Differences

**Power Distance**
Different cultures can have different equality status between two people, with one being more powerful than the other – whether it is in school, within the family, or other social settings. An example can be the power distance between a boss and an employee. In the United States, this tends to be more flexible than in Asia. This can impact how students from different backgrounds interact with teachers and school staff. Those from high power distance cultures will tend to be more formal with their teachers, and have a sense of respect for them.

**Social Expectations**
How intimate, how much personal distance one should give to another, and what topics can be talked about with others all differs based on one’s culture. Some topics might be more sensitive in individualistic cultures, while it’s common in collectivist cultures. Be sure to understand where your students’ comfort level is, especially emergent bilingual newcomers that are just adjusting to the new culture.

**Emotional Expression**
What emotions or feelings people are comfortable expressing would not only depend on their personalities, but also their cultures. For example, some countries express love for their family more openly than others, while some believe actions speak louder than words. This is important to take into consideration when working with students. With emergent bilingual newcomers, it may take a while for them to open up, as they may be experiencing social-emotional conflicts.

**Communication Style**
How direct or indirect one tries to convey something (e.g. how confrontation one is when a conflict arises) is also an important factor to consider when talking to students, because they might want you to help them with something, but not know how to directly communicate with you about that.

Sources: Brown, 2014; Kim, 2023; Peterson, 2018
Working with Emergent Bilingual Newcomers: Cultural Differences (Continued)

Religion
In some countries, there may be a dominant religion most of the population practices, which could mean that other religions are less accepted in that culture. On the other hand, there may also be students coming from countries where they can practice religion freely. It is important to remember to respect students’ religion and be open-minded.

Academic Expectations
Many students have previously expressed that they are unfamiliar with Eurocentric or Western curriculums, including what classes they have to take and using figurative language in English. This is especially important in an emergent bilingual newcomers’ language learning journey, as they not only needed to learn all the parts of speech of English, but also slowly figure out what the educational system is like.

Diversity in the Population
Many western countries, such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia, will have more immigrants that come from various backgrounds than other countries. Thus, some people might experience cultural shock with the diversity in the population and how to appropriately interact with other people of other ethnicities, since back home, they might be the majority of the population.

Socioeconomical differences
Every classroom is bound to have various socioeconomic classes. Be sensitive when it comes to what you say or do. There may be certain activities or events that may be hard for some students to participate in. Be there so that you can support them, or be creative! You can come up with alternative activities that includes everyone.

Sources: Cho, Wang & Christ, 2019; Lau & Shea, 2022; Peterson, 2018
# STAGES OF CULTURAL ACCULTURATION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>EUPHORIA</strong>&lt;br&gt;A sense of excitement to everything due to the new environment and culture that one is in.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>CULTURE SHOCK</strong>&lt;br&gt;When an emergent bilingual newcomer tries to &quot;understand a new culture, [it] can clash with a person's worldview, self-identity, and systems of thinking, acting, feeling, and communication. When that disruption is severe, the learner may experience cultural shock...ranging from mild irritability to deep psychological crisis&quot; (Brown, 2014, p. 187).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>GRADUAL RECOVERY</strong>&lt;br&gt;The disruption is gradually subdued because the emergent bilingual newcomers are getting used to new culture, language, and the environment. They are able to navigate this world more easily as they start adjusting better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>FULL RECOVERY/ADAPTATION</strong>&lt;br&gt;In this stage, there are two separate adaptations that people usually adjust to:&lt;br&gt;- <strong>Assimilation</strong>: Abandoning one's original identity and culture to adapt to the dominant culture that one lives in.&lt;br&gt;- <strong>Acculturation</strong>: When one integrates their original values and culture with parts of the dominant culture.&lt;br&gt;Ideally, we want emergent bilingual newcomers to acculturate to the environment because we should accept and validate students and their families' identities and cultures, as it helps them thrive in all aspects. Additionally, it has been found that assimilation has led to &quot;negative effects on sense of belonging and academic success&quot; (Stark et al., 2021, p. 10) to the students. Having them assimilate is, in and itself, a type of discrimination.</td>
</tr>
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**Sources:** Brown, 2014; Stark et al., 2021
SMOOTH TRANSITIONAL TIPS FOR EACH PHASE

**Euphoria**
- Introduce the emergent bilinguals to the classroom arrangement (e.g. where stationaries, scratch papers, and books are)
- Explaining the norms (social and academic) of the U.S., and have their peers chime in
  - This can help them reduce cultural shock when they know what to expect
- Introduce them to the communities near the school (e.g. a mini field trip during the school day to show them what’s near)
- Provide resources they can refer to (cultural centers)

**Culture Shock**
- Have the safe space in your classroom be readily available. Some students might be going through something outside of school
- Remind them that what they are feeling is normal
  - Ask them what you or their peers can do to help (e.g. is there someone they want to talk to)
  - Introduce students from similar backgrounds to them (e.g. cultural, racial, religion) so they have someone they can relate to
  - Help them understand and express their feelings
- Let them know you’ll be there to support them every step of the way
- Tell them they can seek for professional help

**Gradual Recovery**
- You can encourage them keep in touch with their home country (if appropriate, some may still be recovering from trauma)
- Create a plan with them that incorporates different strategies on how to help them bridge the gap of confusion they may feel to help them into fully adjusting to the new environment

**Fully Recovery**
- Continue to help them develop their cultural competence
- Encourage them to connect with different people that helps them understand their identity
- Continue to help emergent bilingual newcomers develop the language they need to communicate
  - Help them feel comfortable about using their own language in the classroom as well. It can help them process the new language

Sources: Stark et al., 2021; University of Illinois, (2017); University of California, Berkeley, (n.d.); Zielinska, 2020
**DISCRIMINATION & MICROAGGRESSIONS**

**Discrimination as a New Concept**

It is possible that newcomers and students of color will experience microaggressions or discrimination throughout their life. For many, these might new concepts, because back home, they may have been part of the majority group. However, after moving to a new country, especially to the United States where it is very diverse, it can be frightening and overwhelming to suddenly become a minority. Additionally, with discrimination being such a complex and foreign concept, it can be difficult for newcomers to grasp, particularly in the beginning of their adjustment period. However, as a teacher, when you introduce this concept to the newcomers, it can allow them to know what to expect, and understand different ways they can react or protect themselves. It also prevents them from possible traumatic experiences. Make sure that students also feel like they are in a safe space when they are learning about discrimination!

**Explaining Microaggressions**

Let's first start off with specific definitions that we can use to explain to elementary students, since this can give them a quick idea of what it looks like. One straightforward and simple definition for **microaggression** is "everyday insults that sends a negative message that" communicates a bias towards a particular group (Limbong, 2020; Jean-Francois, 2021, as cited in Wells, 2021). However, the person carrying it out might often not be aware of their bias.

To introduce this abstract concept, teachers can start with literature related to this topic. Often times, explaining microaggressions through stories may allow student to picture or grasp it better, which is particularly the case for emergent bilinguals, as they can understand the big picture through the drawings in the book (Wells, 2021). In addition, giving your personal experiences (if you have any) or other general examples can also be helpful. One example can be someone complimenting Asian or Asian Americans about how well they speak English - you can explain why that would be a microaggressions - that whoever says this internally has a certain idea or stereotype about a particular group.

**Explaining Discrimination**

A simple definition for **discrimination** is "unfair treatment to one particular person or group of people" (Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., n.d.). With younger students, there might be a possibility where they think discrimination is similar to microaggression, but be sure to explain the differences and give contrasting examples for each of them, because with microaggression it can often come across as unnoticeable, but it still makes the person receiving it uncomfortable. With discrimination, it restricts people's freedom to do certain things, depending on the country's law, such as receiving education or getting a job.

**Note:** It is also important emphasize that discrimination does not only happen to race and ethnicity, but it can also happen to people with disability, those with specific religions, people from different social class, LGBTQ people, or different sexes.

**Sources:** Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc., n.d.; Kim, 2023; Wei, 2017; Wells, 2021
Acculturation Sample Activity: The Name Game

In the beginning of the school year, start off the first class with the name game pronunciation, so everyone in the class can:

- understand how to pronounce each others’ name correctly
- understand the origins behind students’ names as well as what the name means in their language
- what special meaning it signifies for their family/caregivers (if there is/might be one)
  - e.g. some caregivers or parents might combine part of their name together to represent that this is their child

This can be done during circle time or morning routine. You can first model the activity for the students. Then, each student can go around, clockwise, and say their name.

- If a language’s alphabet letter(s) have a different pronunciation, they can write the approximate sound on the board
  - This depends on what grade you’re teaching. It might be hard for kindergartens to do this step.

Lastly, have them write their name down on the desk name tag, with their desired pronunciation in brackets. For example, I would write (sher-en).

*Note: If new students arrive in the middle of the semester or year, please have them do this activity during the new student’s very first class in order for you and their peers to be able to pronounce their name correctly. For some, this may be their only connection with their home country.

Source: Adapted from Essa, 2016, as cited in Eastman, 2023
Acculturation Sample Activity: The Cultural Profile

At the beginning of the school year, in order to have students get to know more about each other, you can have them introduce themselves, as an icebreaker. For emergent bilingual newcomers, it can be hard for them to follow along if their peers are speaking at a faster pace, so be sure to remind them to slow it down a little. This activity also allows students to understand more about each other’s culture, which helps them develop their cultural awareness and respect for others and their differences.

Some topics that students can cover are:
- The pronunciation of their name
- Languages spoken at home or with others
- Their community
- Their family
- Their education
- Their beliefs/religion
- What non-verbal communication looks like in their culture?
- What is their sense of space?
- What customs do they have in their culture?
- Their favorite tradition

*It is important to note that some students might not feel comfortable sharing certain things (e.g. family, since it might remind them of some hardships that they faced). I strongly encourage you to let the students know that it is perfectly fine if they do not want to talk about something. They should only talk about what they feel comfortable disclosing.

Source: Adopted from Lindholm & Myles, 2019
Teaching Newcomers  
EMOTIONS

For many students, transitioning to new environments is a difficult process, especially for younger emergent bilingual newcomers. They may also be in the process of, or just beginning to learn a new language and not know how to express some of what they are thinking. It is possible that some students who are not sure how to communicate in the language they are learning can lead to frustration that may or may not lead to external behaviors. To help them develop healthy ways to express what they are feeling, you can:

1. Teach them a lesson that explains stages of acculturation, so all the students in the classroom can understand what the new student is going through, and also help the emergent bilingual newcomers see where they are at in the different stages.

2. Include an activity that allows students to practice labeling emotions:
   - Emotion charades
     - Create a stack of cards that includes all the different emotions
     - Have students take turns being the person that has the label on their head
     - Have the other students act out the emotion, so the presenter can guess.

3. Give students that need the resource a tip sheet that labels the emotions, which will be provided in the next step.

4. Scan here for an emotion chart:

- Please note that not every grade will need to work on this activity, because the older emergent bilinguals might already have the skills and knowledge to name or express their emotions. Please evaluate based on your classroom’s need! Activities can also be adapted to fit the appropriate age group.

Sources and Emotional Chart Credit: Uplift Kids (n.d.)
Building a SAFE Space in the Classroom

AFFIRMATIONS
- Cultivate a sense of community through understanding the students' different culture and affirming it
- Recognize that differences are not threatening
- When students' identities are affirmed, they will feel seen and valued, which increases their self-esteem
  - This allows students to trust us, helping them become more comfortable in the language learning process
  - When teachers provide these spaces, it is possible that students can also imitate this climate for other people
- Hang up students' work and art pieces, including some that may be in another language

LISTEN AND RESPECT
- Listen to students' concerns and incorporate their feedback into our lessons
  - e.g. if student feels that the pace of the class is too fast, slow down
- Encourage open-mindedness and positive attitude in the class instead of questioning someone's culture; be curious
  - e.g. the appropriate language might be: "could you tell me more about ....?"
- Give students enough time to think and process their answer instead of expecting an immediate answer, especially for emergent bilingual newcomers, because it takes them more time to process the information

PROVIDE RESOURCES
- Have multilingual books in different languages or books that have a religious protagonist available in your class for students to feel included
  - Categorize your books intentionally; it's easier for students to find what they want
- Have multilingual signs/display in your classroom
- Hang up landscapes of different countries to make students feel more connection to their home language
- Using visual aids and graphic organizers when teaching the language can be very helpful for emergent bilinguals, and for regular students that are trying to learn difficult concepts

Sources: Barbian, Gonzales, & Mejía, 2017; Cornwall, 2022; Lau & Shea, 2022; Volman & Gilde, 2021;
TEACHING STRATEGIES

AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR, ASK STUDENTS WHAT THEY DO FOR WELLNESS

When wellness is introduced in the beginning, it conveys to your students that wellness (mental and physical health) is an important aspect that should be taken care of regularly. Listen to what students have to offer about what they do, and provide some of your own ideas on what you do. Maybe end the day off with a wellness activity, so students who don’t have a chance to practice it outside of school can have that experience (e.g. meditation, yoga, etc).

MAKE COMMUNITY AGREEMENTS TOGETHER AS A CLASS

Creating this helps all the students in the classroom know what the rules and expectations are, which allows them to hold themselves and their peers accountable. This fosters a space where team collaboration and letting yourself be responsible is encouraged.

EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANCE OF THE STUDENTS’ FUND OF KNOWLEDGE

Every students’ fund of knowledge is valuable and a great lesson for them to learn from each other. Some examples of funds of knowledge activity include: a discussion of what food they eat at home, what family traditions they have, teaching math with different currencies, giving a presentation about their home countries/origins, or having disabled student teach the class about universal access for those with disabilities. Allowing students to share their knowledge makes them feel more appreciated and confident, as they don’t feel the "shame" of not fitting in to the "standard" norm.

INCREASE STUDENT-LED INSTRUCTION

This strategy ties in closely with the one above, because essentially, having a student-led instruction means that students in the classroom are teaching the knowledge that they have to everyone. It’s not just students listening to teachers teach or following what the teachers ask them to do. **Giving a presentation about their home countries/origins** is an example of both students' fund of knowledge and student-led instruction, because they are teaching others about their culture and experiences, but also leading the group and lesson. Their knowledge can be incorporated into the social studies or history aspects of the curriculum.

Sources: Barbian, & Gonzales, 2017; Eastman, 2023; Mahmoudi, 2017; Durán, Hikida, & Martínez, 2017
TEACHING STRATEGIES: CONTINUED

Study books by non-white protagonists for literacy time or have these readily available for students in classrooms

Often times, a lot of what is taught in the curriculum or social studies focus on dominant cultures. The other racial groups' history is more often than not only briefly touched upon when certain holidays come up (e.g. Martin Luther King Jr. Day). Teaching students about stories and facts by non-white protagonists on a regular basis can help those with similar backgrounds relate to the protagonist, AND it also lets them know that their culture and identities are valued by everyone - that it is "worth" studying. Incorporating these contents develop all students' cultural competence skills, allowing them to be more open-minded and the importance of looking from other people's perspectives. It also gives minority groups a sense of empowerment.

Have more advanced students scaffold those that need help

When more advanced students scaffold students that need support, it can foster a positive relationship between the two, because it allows the struggling student to feel cared by others, especially if the students come from the same backgrounds. When this happens, the more advanced students may have gone through some of the same struggles, and they could possibly share how they overcome the struggles. Or, even talk through the situations together so they can talk about different approaches on how to solve the problem. This also builds the students' leadership and empathy skills, which are both crucial components for culturally responsive SEL, allowing students to put those in practice.

Increase engagement through group, pair, or large discussions/work

Pair, group, or discussion works can let students feel less targeted, because some individuals may not feel comfortable answering in front of a whole group, but also they may be afraid of being judged or for saying the wrong answer. This can be the case for emergent bilingual newcomers. Furthermore, when students all share their ideas, it helps them see the issue or question in different perspectives that they have not thought about, which widens their horizon. It may also feel less intimidating for students to work in groups instead of sharing it in front of the whole class (e.g. shy students, newcomers, or emergent bilinguals).

Sources: Palmer, 2017; Penton Herrera & Martinez-Alba, 2021; Volman & Gilde, 2021
TEACHING STRATEGIES: CONTINUED

SHARING YOUR EXPERIENCE WITH THE STUDENTS AT THE BEGINNING OF THE YEAR, OR WHEN NEWCOMERS ARRIVE

When you share some of your personal experiences or even challenges you have had, as a minority individual living in a dominant culture, can make students feel like they can relate to you, since you are showing a vulnerable side of you. This also helps with building a positive teacher-student relationship due to the sense of trust that is coming from both sides. You are trusting them to respect and listen to your experiences, while the students internalize the information and relate it to their experience, if applicable. It can be very helpful for emergent bilingual newcomers to receive this information, and it also builds a safe and trustworthy environment for both you and the students.

CELEBRATE DIFFERENCES

Dedicate some time to having discussions on how we define culture. Sometimes, students might not understand what culture is or what that consists of, particularly if they are young. Celebrate different holidays, gender, religions, disability, and cultural events - on each of the day(s) this happens, you can have students that practice these traditions briefly explain what they do at home, or even bring something simple from home that relates to the event. You can also do the same! It can help other students understand and respect others, dismantling the different discriminations and inequalities in society. Additionally, it demonstrates that everyone is accepted for who they are, and helps students with identity formation, especially for those who are just arriving in this new country and trying to understand where they stand.

INVITE PARENTS OR CAREGIVERS IN FOR TALKS OR ACTIVITIES

Parents or caregivers usually have a very different story to tell in terms of their experiences. For those who have immigrated as a first generation, they can share some of their experiences of how they learned to shape their identities. They can also share a bit of history on what immigration was like during that time. On the other hand, we can also invite parents in to talk about their family traditions, cultural practices, or even have a cooking day where students and the parents/caregivers make a home-made recipe that has been passed down from their family. This signifies a long history of possible cultural stories, socioeconomic class successes, or other home specialty.

Sources: Durán, Hikida, & Martínez, 2017; Lau & Shea, 2022; Lindholm & Myles, 2019; Mahmoudi, 2017
PRACTICALITY
HOW TO INCLUDE CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE SEL IN THE CURRICULUM

1. ENHANCING RELATIONSHIP THROUGH DEBATES
   When students debate about a current issue that they are concerned about or something that matters to them, they are not only developing their research skills (from preparing all the points), but also building relationship skills with diverse team members, since they are collaborating, and problem-solving. Additionally, when students’ are in a debating context, they also develop communication and negotiating skills, since they are arguing for their point of view.

2. USE COMMUNITY-BASED PROJECTS TO DEVELOP DECISION-MAKING SKILLS
   Turning community problems into projects for students can be a great hands-on experience while getting them engaged in the academic context. Have them identify a community problem that they want to solve, where they have to simultaneously consider the resources, social norms, and ethics” that they have (para 11). This should be done in groups. In each of the steps, students are developing decision-making and interpersonal skills while creating change to the communities.

3. FOSTERING SOCIAL AWARENESS THROUGH CURRENT ISSUES
   It’s important for students to have social awareness of their surroundings and the world. When they study about a current social issue they are passionate about, it allows them to foster social awareness skills because it involves “appreciating diversity, building empathy, and respecting others” (para 12). With more students being able to do this, it could help create social change, and cultivate responsible citizens of the world.

4. CHALLENGING MISCONCEPTIONS - A TRICKY ONE
   We want to find a balance between this as educators because, we want to understand where their misconceptions are coming from and where they are getting the information, but we don’t want make them feel threatened.

5. EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR SELF-MANAGEMENT
   By understanding and investigating the relationship “between [one’s] emotions, race, gender, or other aspects of a person’s identity” (para 13), students can gain more perspectives on different expectations and normalities for “marginalized groups’ self-management,” since self-management is about relegating one’s emotions, and behaviors.

SOURCE: SIMMONS, 2019
NEW PEDAGOGICAL APPROACH - CULTURE SEL

Care
by having high expectations for students’ academics while caring for their well-being.

Understand
The emergent bilingual newcomers’ “attitude towards learning, values, and habits”, and how that is “shaped by their experiences and worldview” (p. 8).

Listen
to what the students have to say and do so in a way that “promotes openness and [acceptance] to diverse experiences and expressions of emotions” (p. 8).

Trust
“[emergent bilinguals] competence and empower them with strength-based approach” (p. 8).

Unite
“Help [emergent bilinguals] connect with their identities, as well as resources and assets in their communities” (p. 8).

Reflect
“Critically reflect on one’s teaching and learning practices to enhance cultural responsiveness and to model SEL competencies” (p. 8).

Empathize
“Validate [emergent bilinguals’] perspectives and feelings” (p. 8). Be open-minded and have no judgement when relating to them.

Source: Lau & Shea, 2022
Culturally Responsive SEL Activity: Cultural Show & Tell

Introduction
As data have shown from 2015, 2/3 of the emergent bilinguals were in K-5, while the other portion were in 6-12 grade. Additionally, emergent bilinguals make up 9.6% (~5 million that are in public school) of the nationwide population - a stunning number that shows why elementary emergent bilingual newcomers need more support (Bialik, Scheller, and Walker, 2018).

The increase in diverse student population in public school means that:
- a. students will come from different cultural backgrounds
- b. there may be new students that recently arrived and are finding ways to settle down

Thus, it is important for educators to help students transition and adapt to these new experiences.

Activity
Cultural show and tell is a simple activity where each student in the class takes turns sharing something from their culture that is significant to them some time during class (e.g. morning circle). This can be in any form - from family recipes, art pieces, some form of writing (e.g. letter or poeties) to musical instruments or songs.

Next, the student should share what this item is and why it is important to them. Perhaps, there could be a history that comes with it. These can span from 5-10 minutes for each student. The main point is to have students respect and appreciate others' culture.

Example:
Bubble tea, which originated in Taiwan, is a drink that is usually made with tea, and some sort of topping, with tapioca being the most popular. That is a core part of my identity, because as a young child, my grandma would occasionally take us to get these drinks to lightening our moods on a bad day.

* Student can bring in a picture of a sample drink, for instance.
Culturally Responsive SEL Activity 2: Hidden Talent

**Content**
Have students think about what some of their hidden talents may be - from being a good listener to being a good thumb wrestler - it does not have to be something big or useful.

**Procedures**
After having the students brainstorm about some of their ideas, plan to carry out the activity in these steps:

1. Demonstrate your own hidden talent to the students in your class. It gives students a sense of closeness.
   i. Some students, particularly those that are new to the country, may feel vulnerable or shy. Thus, when you model the activity, it may give them a sense of comfort. It also allows them to know what the expectations for the activity are.

2. After your modeling, have students split into small groups to share, discuss, and ask questions about each other’s talents. Let them know that they will have to report back to the class afterwards. Allocate about 7-10 minutes for this part, in order to give everyone a chance to share.

3. Have every student briefly share or act out, if he/she/they have are some difficulties communicating it, one thing they learned from another student, if there are some difficulties about how to communicate it. Remember to remind them that their answer does not have to be complicated or long.

4. Give them some time to reflect on why they think this activity is important. Some sample answer can include:
   i. It makes us realize that everyone has something they are good at, and that may look different for everyone.
   ii. We are unique in our own ways.

*Source: Adapted from Eastman, 2023*
Culturally Responsive SEL
Activity 3: The Iceberg

Objectives
This activity is to help students develop their self and cultural awareness, allowing them to reflect on their experiences and identities. Additionally, students will also be able to understand more about their peers, and not label them with bias and stereotypes, which creates community-based environment. Since icebergs have many layers, it can help students think about the different layers of their own identities, and understand others’ identities and thought process.

Note: This activity can be adapted based on the grade that teachers are working with, since higher grade students might have a more understanding about their own identities.

Procedure:
1. Introduce the activity by showing students a picture of an iceberg and explain how they work.
2. After explaining the concept, check in with the students to see if they understand. Then, pose the question of "how do you think think icebergs are similar to people?"
3. With the brainstorming session fresh in mind, explain how people are similar to icebergs:
   ○ Most of the time, the tip of the iceberg is the surface level of what people see about a person (e.g. appearance and accents, to name a few). What’s underneath the iceberg is a deeper layer that isn’t seen until you get to know more about the person.
4. Have students draw their own iceberg and put down what they think is appropriate on each section of the iceberg (~20 minutes).
5. Have students share their icebergs with partners, so the students can get to know their peers more. However, be sure to ask every one of your students to see if they are comfortable sharing their iceberg, since some may include sensitive information.

Sources: Lindholm & Myles, 2019; SAMH Scottish Association for Mental Health, 2022
Sample of the Iceberg Activity

Source: SAMH Scottish Association for Mental Health, 2022
Culturally Responsive SEL
Activity 4: Aquí y Allá

**WRITING & SPEAKING SKILLS**

**Objectives**
This activity helps students analyze, think, and compare two cultures (or possibly more if they identify with multiple ones) based on their own experiences, which lets students become the conversation. Such an activity also activates both the students' linguistic repertoire and their cultural knowledge, helping them understand more about each students' personal experiences.

**Procedures:**
1. Pick a poem that demonstrates a comparison between two things (e.g. places, contexts, traditions), but is something relatable to the students. For example, Elizabeth Barbian uses Argüeta's poem "Wonders of the City/Las maravillas de la ciudad."
2. Next, the class reads aloud the poem together. You can also read it to the class a few times before engaging in a discussion with them on what they think about the poem, its meaning, and the language the author uses.
3. After the discussion, students will get to pick a topic (e.g. current house vs. grandma's house, or one country vs. another country) and compare and contrast these aspects in their own lives.
4. When they have decided on a topic, ask them to make two columns, Aquí y Allá, meaning here and there, in order to help them brainstorm ideas for the poems they will create.
   - This will be the **prewriting** stage in the activity, and encourages them to critically think about each aspect - what are your critiques for both? What about the value? How will you convey what you are thinking to the readers? What literary device will you use (only if your students are at this level)! As they create the draft, walk around to see what feedbacks or concerns students have about their draft of the poem.
5. After the **initial drafting** section, students can gather in a circle and share ideas on their poem and their favorite part about their pieces.
6. As they hear about other students' ideas, it could inspire students with other ideas they have not thought about, and they can learn to "borrow and adapt ideas from others," (p. 65) and continue to modify or refine their drafts.
7. When they get to the **final draft**, student will share their poems in small groups (or pairs).
8. Each student should write down one of their favorite lines from each, and what they learned from each other's poem.

**Source:** Adopted from Barbian, 2017
Precaution For Teachers

- It is important for educators, especially teachers, to constantly evaluate their own perceptions and bias, and understand how “that influences their values, beliefs, customs, behaviors, communication styles, and teaching practices,” because their perspectives can impact the opportunities they give to emergent bilingual learners, or even to students with special needs (Ortiz, Fránquiz, & Lara, 2020, p. 2).

- Always be self-aware and consider how your own cultural, ethnic, or socioeconomic class can influence your interaction with the students and your perception with them as well (Cho, Wang, & Christ, 2019)
  - How does that impact your teaching on all or some subjects?

- Continuously educate yourself on cultural, ethnic, socioeconomic and equity issues. It is important to be updated in these aspects in order to stay culturally and socially relevant. It also increases your cultural competence and cultural sensitivity, which in turn, helps with the social-emotional learning that you and the students are practicing.
  - Being updated in this aspect, especially with understanding news from students' home countries and understanding how that impacts the students, is crucial. When you know international events, it can help with knowing when and in what context it can be appropriate to ask students about what they are feeling.

- Have high levels of expectation for all students - none of the students should need to have an individualized activity because they seem to struggle with it. Everyone needs to have equal opportunities (Lau & Shea, 2022). If a student is struggling, figure out what it is that's difficult for them, and work together to think about what supports they can use to help them complete the activity.
Activities That Bring Out Students' Fund of Knowledge

- **Geography/social studies**: This would be a group activity - have a large map prepared and have a group of students (3) come up to the map, and identify where their country is (for those that just moved) or where their ancestry origin. Each student should color their country(ies) in a different color.
  - If students are born/raised in the United States, they can identify that as their country, but have them tell us a fact about that place. If a student identifies as two different ethnicities, have them identify and color both of them! You can even have them share about which family members relate to that, if they feel comfortable sharing.

- **Science**: This can be an individual activity where students briefly write about what the weather/climate is like back in their home country or ancestry origin (or if they identify as American, have them describe their climate back home). Or, you can have them identify a special plant or fruit that their home/state is known for, and have students do a mini presentation.

- **Writing**: Have students bring in a poem or short literature from their home language, and have them translate it to English to the class. For those that are monolingual English speakers, also bring one an English books or poems, etc. Instead of translating the text, however, they would explain how they interpreted the literature or poem.

- **Politics**: For schools that have this as a subject, students can find news related to their homes and briefly write about their feelings or thoughts toward this event (this can just be a writing practice. It doesn't have to be shared with anyone, because we want to respect their privacy. However, they can share the news they found with their classmates in small group discussion).

*Sources: Flores & Early, 2017; Lau & Shea (2022); Stanford, 2017*
References for Educators

SECTION TWO

SCHOOL-WIDE PROTOCOLS
WHY SCHOOL-WIDE?

The Role of Schools in Culturally Responsive SELS

Impacts on Students

While students can learn and apply the skills they have learned into the classroom, if those skills are not generalizable across different settings, they could miss out on opportunities to grow, whether it is academics or developing prosocial behaviors. For example, if the school environment does not promote the same kind of culturally responsive SEL environment, students may feel that the school is not genuine, because the positive and safe climates only exists in the classroom. This may lead them to distrust schools, be disengaged in classrooms, and have a lack of motivation to learn especially if educators in the school are not modeling empathy, care, and respect to others (Yang, Chang & Ma, 2020). Furthermore, if extracurricular activities and other school events do not reflect inclusiveness for newcomers, their mental health may be damaged, they might feel rejected, isolated, and, perhaps, even anger, and they can either internalizing or externalize these emotions, leading the possibility of being bullied (Marcelo & Yates, 2019; Weeks & Sullivan, 2019 as cited in Goodwin & Long, 2022).

Impacts on Teachers

School climate can also influence the teachers' motivation to promote and teach culturally responsive SEL, as they may not see a purpose if it does not reflect what it promotes. Additionally, not having a supportive SEL team in school (e.g. administrators, principal, SEL specialists, and counselors) can make teachers feel overwhelmed, and lead them to burnt out more quickly.

Building a Positive School Climate - What Can You Do?

"School factors, such as "consistent and clear rules, having a positive, supportive and caring school climate, and having family and community partnerships" can influence the effectiveness of a school's SEL approach (Steed, Shepland & Leech, 2021). When there's an effective SEL implemented across the school, it can enhance students' mental health and well-being (American Psychological association, 2017, as cited in Goodwin & Long, 2022). The list below are some ideas on how to create a positive school climate:

- Having bilingual/multilingual counselors or psychologists, so students feel more comfortable sharing and talking to those that may have similar experiences
- Hiring and having bilingual/multilingual staff across the school; this allows families to communicate more easily with them, and they would also feel welcomed (Wei, 2017)
- The signs, arts, and staff and students' works that are multilingual should be displayed (Cornwall, 2022)
- Library should also include book from multiple languages (Cornwall, 2022)
- Having both gender bathrooms, but also gender neutral ones. Bathrooms should also be accessible for disabled students.
- If possible, have translators ready on standby. Documents should also be translated into the appropriate language (Wei, 2017)

Other sources: Oberle et al., 2016; Heineke & Vera, 2022; Steed, Shapland, & Leech, 2022
CONSISTENT SCHOOL-WIDE STRATEGIES

Training on Cultural Awareness and Sensitivity
Across different studies (Cho, Wang, & Christ, 2019; Najarro, 2022 as cited in Goodwin & Long, 2022; Stark et al., 2021), teachers have expressed the lack of professional trainings they receive to assist students from different personal and linguistic backgrounds. Having consistent trainings on the following topics for teachers and staff at the schools will allow them to support diverse student in more appropriate and effective ways, which helps the students grow more holistically.

Having Everyone on the Same Page
Although having culturally responsive SEL in the classrooms are ideal, we also do want those expectations and skills to be consistently used outside of the classroom (Oberle et al., 2016), so students not only know that they have a well-rounded support system, but also understand that this should generalized across situations, and, hopefully, become their values.

Speaking Mannerisms
Some of the students in the school might have gone through traumatic experiences and are currently healing through those, or are going through a difficult time in their lives. It is important that when teachers and school staff talk and interact with students, that we are speaking in a trauma-informative and culturally sensitive way. This can make students feel more safe with us, and they will be more willing to build a positive and trustful relationship with us.

Implement Interventions for Bullying
When emergent bilingual newcomers or students that act or look different from the norm are enrolled in schools, it is possible that they may face discrimination and situations that lead up to bullying. The school should have interventions that prevents the bullying from happening in the first place, BUT also have reactive interventions so that when such situations occur, teachers and staff are using the same interventions to help the students that are being bullied, instead of being inconsistent and giving contrasting advice, which can be confusing for them.

Providing Resources
Giving newcomers and their families a broach about what the social norms, school rules, and operations of the educational system here, when the family first arrives can be helpful for them. Other resources that can be helpful included guidelines on how to find housing and other communities that they can join so they can acculturate to more quickly and comfortably. Perhaps having an orientation day before they start school can be ideal, if plausible.

Announcements
If your school does announcements for teachers and the students, be sure to not only announce it in English but also in some of the most used languages the students speak, so they don’t feel like they are submerged in a dominant language and culture that they have to assimilate to.

Sources: Barbian & Gonzales, 2017; Eastman, 2023; Oberle et al., 2016; Stark et al, 2021; Steed, Shapland, & Leech, 2022; Wei, 2017
**SCHOOL-WIDE STRATEGIES (CONTINUED)**

**Reflection Sessions/Check Ins**
Having bi-weekly or monthly reflection sessions or check-in's with your colleagues (e.g. groups of teachers or a mix of school staff and teachers) can be a healthy way for them to seek advice from each other or approach different problems they might have in different perspectives. Most importantly, this can be a space where school staff and teachers check in with each other to reflect together and see if their own biases have impacted their work (Heineke & Vera, 2022). This can also be a space for them to support and encourage each other.

**Well-Being and Mental Health Support**
Sometimes, everyone thinks they might be suffering alone with their issues, such as stress, anxieties, and depression, but in reality, many people are experiencing the same feelings. Having group therapy sessions can allow students to feel less alone in dealing with their challenges, give and receive support from others and learn from each other that can otherwise be hard to when they are alone. This may also be a helpful way for emergent bilingual newcomers to start therapy (if they want to), as students from different cultures might not be comfortable with therapy or 1:1 therapy.

**Staff Community**
Depending on where schools are located (e.g. which state), some teachers/staff from different ethnicities and races might feel like it is difficult to be open or completely comfortable with others, and this sort of environment can be tense. Encourage your staff and teachers by giving them a voice in certain decisions, such as taking the lead on the planning of cultural events so they feel empowered (Barbian & Gonzales, 2017).

**Inclusive Events**
Holding family/caregiver(s) nights where they can receive updates on what the school has recently been working on, and also receive information on events that are happening in nearby communities is a great opportunity for them to feel more connected to and involved in their child/children's life. In addition, family nights can possibly help foster friendships between different families, which can also be another resource for them. This was inspired by the interview with Pilar Mejía (Barbian & Gonzales, 2017).

Having multicultural days where students and staff celebrate different cultures can be a special event where both students and staff can learn more about other cultures and appreciate them. Each culture can be set up as individual booths, that people can stop by. It would be great to have cultural performances, too. This was inspired by Durán, Hikida, & Martínez, 2017. Disability awareness days can also be another event that relates to social-emotional learning.

**Weekly Cultural Themes**
Another way to grow cultural awareness is highlighting a country and its specialty each week. This can include information about major traditions there, holidays, and a brief history. Your school can first start with every students’ origin, and then move on to other countries that they might have lived in. During this week, you can have students that speak the country’s language teach their peers, teachers, and staff how to greet in that language (Durán, Hikida, & Martínez, 2017). If we support the holistic education of the student, we should affirm their heritage language (Wei, 2017).

Sources: Barbian & Gonzales, 2017; Durán, Hikida, & Martínez, 2017; Heineke & Vera, 2022; Wei, 2017
**ACTIVITIES FOR UPLIFTING SCHOOL ENVIRONMENTS**

- **Teachers’ and staffs’ welcome/cultural profile**
  When teachers and staff also work on cultural profiles and hang it up across the school, students can not only see it as a sample, but also feel less of a power distance with the adults. This can foster more trust between students and staff.

- **Growth Circles (DeFlitch, 2022)**
  Having a space where teachers and staff can reflect on themselves, set goals, and work on their self-efficacy demonstrates a sense of vulnerability, because it shows how they are not perfect beings. They are also working on themselves. This sets the teachers and staff up as role models for the students. It is also recommended that educators in the school start with non-professional goals to help model it for the students. An example of this activity will be on the next page.

- **Game of Feelings or Feelings Thermometer (WEBB, 2022)**
  Sometimes students are sent to the office for various reasons (e.g. early parent/caregiver pick up, needing behavioral support, or other issues). In certain situations, students may be feeling frustrated, upset, sad, and/or other emotions. As educators, we could present a feelings thermometer or play a game of feelings with the student, because it indirectly conveys what they are feeling, when they may not feeling like speaking. It could also help them label their emotions, and open up to us about what happened (if there is an incident). This also helps educators understand how we can better support our students.

- **Multilingual Poetry Activity (WEI, 2017)**
  This activity is something that all staff can do together if you wanted to have a team event at school. Every staff can write poetry in a language they feel comfortable with, "and then translate their final products so others can also understand as well" (Wei, 2017). The staff’s poetry can then be hung up around the school walls to show that different languages, culture, and people are welcome.
First, you would create a statement that explains your general and overall goal. Then, you can move on to break down the goal into more detailed steps. As you can see, there are two rings involved in the growth circle: one is the "can do" ring, which stands for all the thing you can do that’s related to the goal" and "not yet" is for "all the things you cannot do yet, but is related to the goal" (DeFlitch, 2022).

This is an example of what an educator's growth circle can look like:

**Example**

**Goal Statement:** I want to be able to dribble a basketball between my legs

**Can Do**
- dribble the basketball with both hands
- dribble the basketball with one hand
- look at the ball while dribbling
- dribble the ball without looking
- bounce the ball from one hand to the other

**Not Yet**
- walk and dribble at the same time

**Strategy Statement:** This week I will try walking back and forth down the block while dribbling at the same time

Photo credit: DeFlitch, 2022
SECTION THREE

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES (FOR EDUCATORS AND PARENTS)
TIPS FOR EDUCATORS

REMOVE THE “SPEAK ENGLISH ONLY” RULE
Forcing students to only speak English in the classroom can not only influence their attitude towards English, the teacher, and the educational space, which can all be negative, but it can also symbolize rejection of the students' home language or identity. When students are able to use all of their linguistic abilities to make sense of a new language they are learning, it can help them learn more easily.

EDUCATORS CAN LEARN, OR BE TAUGHT, THE STUDENTS’ HOME LANGUAGE
When students are given the opportunity to teach some simple words in their home languages, it exposes everyone to different languages and culture, which cultivates a climate that is safe and open for everyone. Students will learn to respect others instead of judging emergent bilingual newcomers, and foster kindness within them. It also helps educator check in with their biases.

TURN-TAKING PATTERNS IN CLASSROOM
In some classrooms, there are students that are more outspoken than others, which can be unfair to some student that have thoughts, but are shy to speak up or may have struggles communicating those needs. Having a turn-taking system, such as drawing a random name from popsicle sticks that has everyone's names, gives everyone a chance to share their thoughts, and have the attention of the whole class.

PROVIDE TRAUMA-INFORMED RESOURCES TO CAREGIVERS
Many of the students’ learning is impacted by COVID-19, from social anxiety to lack of motivation. Additionally, for students that have previously experience something traumatic, having a culturally responsive SEL and trauma-informed teaching can help students understand more about how to navigate the situation to allow learning to happen while working on themselves.

MODEL ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS
Sometimes when activities are explicitly said as instruction, it can seem abstract to students, especially for those that are emergent bilinguals who may have difficulties grasping a chunk of English. By giving an example or working through the activity with the students, it can lead them to feel less frustrated and approach the activity with an optimistic attitude.

Sources: Barbian, Gonzales & Mejía-Barrera, 2017; Eastman, 2023; Kim, 2023; Stark et al, 2021
FAMILY/CAREGIVERS

It is important to know that parents' involvement in the culturally responsive SEL process is also a crucial part that leads to the students' success, especially for emergent bilinguals. Families/caregivers are other stakeholders that shape their children's development and character, and a lot of times, children might feel more comfortable sharing the difficulties or challenges they are experiencing to families than to teachers. Thus, practicing those culturally responsive SEL outside of schools, demonstrates that students are utilizing these skills across different settings, which creates a connection between home-school when it comes to what they are learning. Students, themselves, even explicitly expressed the importance of family by wishing that teachers would understand more about them and their backgrounds. Additionally, as mentioned earlier, having parents share their knowledge and background is enriching for students.

CARGIVER AND EDUCATOR RELATIONSHIP

Parents/caregivers are ones that knows that students' needs, most of the time. Thus, when they can't communicate or feel comfortable enough to tell the educators about their child's needs (e.g. if they have specific learning difficulties), it can impede the students' growth or opportunities to flourish in their education. When educators know the specific needs of their students, they can find more appropriate ways to support the students. For families and children who have newly arrived in a country, communication barrier such as these can be an another important factor to how they adjust to the new environment, and the children's attitude towards school (Isik-Ercan, 2012; Matthiesen, 2016; Szente et al., 2006, as cited in Cho, Wang, & Christ 2019).

SUPPORTIVE PEERS

When students are surrounded by classmates that are open-minded, accepting, and affirming of others' identities despite everyone's differences (in whatever form that may be), it can increase their social-emotional well-being. Emergent bilinguals may feel more welcome, which allows them to adjust to the new environment more quickly. Having peers that understand some of what they have gone through makes the emergent bilinguals more reassured. Students can also receive guidance or support from each other, whether it's in the non-academic or academic aspect, scaffolding each other, or learning to see in different perspectives.

Sources: Goodwin & Long, 2022; Heineke & Vera, 2022; Oberle et al., 2015
IN VOLVING PARENTS/CAREGIVERS

AFTER-SCHOOL FAMILY WRITING PROJECT

The idea of this activity is to give the parents/caregivers of the students a space to come together to write and share their stories, and have a community that parents/caregivers can turn to when they need support with the challenges they are facing. Most importantly, it also allows parent/caregivers to bring their home languages into the school and classrooms, and that acknowledgement can empower them.

Implementation steps:

1. Recruit students and parents/caregivers. Discuss and pick a time and place that works best for everyone.

2. Every session starts with a mini-lesson where everyone analyzes a specific part of a literature or arts, which can be their own writing samples or from other authors, such as bilingual pictures books or artworks. In addition to the analysis, the group will also pick a writing strategy to learn about, if they do not already know it.

3. After modeling the writing strategy to the parents/caregivers, the group can practice using the new skill together. This can be done through giving them time to do some individual writing.

4. Lastly, parents/caregivers would share their writings (if they feel comfortable doing so). The session would end with a reflection of what they heard or of what they experienced through this process.

5. Students are also welcome to join in the process as well - this gives them the opportunity to write in their home language and may also let them feel more connected to their roots and parents/caregivers.

Mini Activities

- Map of stories:
  During the first few sessions, parents might feel uncomfortable with sharing their experiences or writing, so teachers can start the first session by having them draw a map of the story they want to tell (e.g. house they grew up in, or school they went to) to break the ice. Afterwards, they can use this to tell their story.

Mini Activities (continued)

- Learning through text, in this case, poems:
  Teachers can pick a text and have students and caregivers translate it to their home language to create that safe space. Afterwards, everybody can discuss more about the text through discussion questions and how that relates to their daily lives (e.g. how do you want to become famous?)

Source: Adopted from Flores & Early, 2017
IN Volving Parents/Caregivers

School-Home Interactive Curriculum
The idea of this activity is to find ways to combine the school curriculum with activities that students or caregivers can do at home as a way to tie in student and caregivers' fund of knowledge into their education. Additionally, this also advocates for the students and caregivers in minority groups, whom may not always receive acknowledgement due to their cultural background or social class, by letting other understand more about knowledge that can be learned from caregivers of various backgrounds, challenging the inequalities in society through what you are teaching. This specific activity is supposed to be a project that last a few weeks, since it takes time to collect some information. It should also be adapted based on what the students are currently learning, and what age group they are in.

Procedure
Here is an example of how a bilingual teacher incorporate this into the curriculum.
She had student learn about the life cycle of strawberries, which relates to science, and implemented it in the following steps:

1. Gather information from their homes and communities.
2. Through the gathering of these data, their home knowledge is shared, and the information is organized and synthesized at school.
3. Based on the previous step, students will then create a literary product by incorporating the home knowledge into their academic work.
4. After creating the product, students will take home their work to share with their caregivers/families, and they would respond or give some feedback.
5. Those responses will will become part of classroom learning, or there may be an extension lesson from it. For example, a caregiver may be interested in coming to her class to show the students what the seeds look like.

* To keep the parents/caregivers involved, remember to give bilingual instructions/information so they understand what is happening and how they can support in the process.

Additionally, during this process, teachers can learn more about their students and families’ lives at home, and how that can influence learning in the classroom.

Mini Activities
During this process of finishing up the project, teachers can also include supplementary work that can help students understand more about the information, such as, a crossword puzzle to practice the new vocabularies they learned in this process. Or, they can create a short bilingual picture book.

Mini Activities (continued)
Another great practice is to put students in different groups each week, and have them update each other on their process of gathering information about the strawberry’s life cycle. They can find the similarities and differences, and go home and share it with their families.

Source: Adopted from Morrison, 2017
**Resources For Parents**

**Note:**
This page is being added into this section because, as educators, we often interact with the parents/caregivers of the students. This may also be the first point of contact that families have when it comes to knowing or seeking out for resources.

**In the United States**

**For New Immigrants & Refugees**
- Child Welfare Information Gateway - Resources for Immigrant & Refugee Families:
  - Articles include "Detained or Deported: What about my children," "Mental Health for immigrants: Taking care of yourself and loved ones"
- Bridging Refugee Youth & Children Services
  - Articles include how to deal with bullying, refugee resettlement and dealing with misconceptions
- Bridging Refugee Youth & Children Services
  - A handbook for families and teens in a new country
- Immigrant Legal Resource Center
  - Immigration Preparedness Toolkit (in Spanish and English)

**For All Communities** (e.g. asylum seekers, refugees, immigrants)
- USAHello
  - An online center for information, education, and job seeking process (available in different languages)
- UCSF Weill Institute for Neurosciences
  - Practical Resources for Low-Income and Other Groups (e.g. insurance, internet services, food pantry access, and available in Spanish as well)
- Aliento
  - Guide & Resources for DACA/Undocumented/and Mixed Status Families in Times of Covid-19 (e.g. mental health practices, community resources, etc.) available in Spanish as well
- APIC Spokane
  - For Asian & Pacific Islander immigrants to find information in their languages (e.g. housing/rental assistance, mental health services, discrimination assistance, etc.)
Visual Resources for Educators

Resources for Culturally Responsive SEL in Classrooms

1. The following video discusses different strategies a teacher can use to teach ESOL students, with a specific focus on adults. This video can be helpful for teachers working with emergent bilingual newcomers in the mainstream classroom because they may also have students that arrived with little or less fluency in English. It introduces three concepts: culturally responsive practices, social-emotional learning, and growth mindset to the teachers and instructors, and why it is important to have those implemented in the classroom. After that, it provides some demonstration or sample activities to let instructors have an idea of how they can include this in their classroom.

Although this video is targeted at ESOL adult students, teachers can adapt this activity to fit the appropriate age. For example, the empathy task card and emotional check-in activity can be helpful for newcomer students.

2. Another helpful resource to read more about is translanguaging. For newcomer students, this is really helpful teaching method, because it allows them to use their whole linguistic repertoire to make sense of the world, including the new language they are learning. To read more about background behind translanguaging, and how to use it in classrooms, the following can be helpful:

- Vogel and García (2017) - Journal article
- Zheng (2021): Translanguaging in a Chinese immersion classroom
- Translanguaging guides and resources:
  - https://www.cuny-nysieb.org/translanguaging-resources/translanguaging-guides/

21 Anti-Racism Video Appropriate for Children

This website is a resource that educators can refer to when teaching children about discrimination and microaggressions. Since this is always a difficult and complex topic to talk about, sometimes showing students a visual video can help them understand the concept in a more concrete way, especially for those that are younger or newcomers that might have a hard time keeping up with all the different expectations in a new country.

One video has different children talking about segregation in New York and how that relates to their education. Some children talk about the reasons why this happens and what they think about it. You can use videos that you feel is most appropriate for your students!


Other Resources

- Working with multilingual students
- Creating an inclusive environment (specific practices for gender fluidity)
- Tips for elementary teachers on reacting to discriminatory comments or behaviors

Sources: Croteau, 2020; Massey, 2021


Jimenez, R. M. (2022, September). Cultural share. Language as a human right and transnationalism. San Francisco; University of San Francisco.


A Place for Everyone

Create that Space