South Dakota State University

ECE 470: Early Childhood Inclusion Strategies

Concepts addressed:
Diversity and Exceptional Needs, and Supporting the Learning Environment: Students as Diverse Learners: Accommodations for students with special educational needs and for children whose first language is not English

Students should refer to:

Specifically, students should review:
I. Acronyms of learning English as a second language
   a. ELL – English Language Learner
   b. ESL – English as a Second Language
   c. ESOL – English to Speakers of Other Languages
   d. LEP – Limited English Proficiency

II. Literacy Learning in English Language
   a. Native language proficiency is the best indicator of proficiency in English Language
   b. National Reading Council Recommendations:
      i. Taught to read in native language using curriculum manuals in that language and taught English oral skills then taught to read in second language.
      ii. If no curriculum manuals, concentrate on English oral skills with supported written material, but the primary focus should be on English oral skills.
   c. Best when learn to associate words with meaning rather than recalling words.
   d. Support both languages.
   e. Build on Prior Knowledge
   f. Speaking should be first in second language and then being taught to read
   g. Need home language retained for social support and community networks

III. Successful learning of two languages – keys
   a. Continue to build on what is known already
   b. Construct knowledge of English – embedded into daily activities – constructing knowledge.
   c. Respect home culture
   d. Communicate with family as development progresses
   e. Nurture the child’s self esteem and facilitate negotiation between two cultures

IV. Second Language Acquisition and Culturally Sensitive Instruction (ERIC Digests, 1995)
   a. Bilingualism is an asset and should be fostered.
      i. Many benefits of bilingual status
ii. Maintain home language = communicate with family
iii. Important for teachers to have pre- and in-service training

b. There’s ebb & flow to children’s bilingualism; rare for both languages to be perfectly balanced
   i. First language may dominate due to usage
   ii. May be a time when not at age-appropriate level in either language: temporary, normal
   iii. Probably will reach age-level proficiency in dominant language with exposure and opportunities to use

c. There are different cultural patterns in language use.
   i. Language usage built into culture, home may conflict with school expectations
   ii. Allow gradual acclimation through daily affirmation of learning styles & communication patterns

d. Code-switching is a normal language phenomenon
   i. Young tend to switch single items from one language to another. Over age nine tend to switch at phrase or sentence level
   ii. Teachers can switch languages to accommodate culture and language of students
   iii. Rather than adhere to strict rules, focus on goal of communicating

e. Children come to learn second languages in many different ways.
   i. Most common: simultaneous or successive acquisition
   ii. < Age 3: simultaneous
   iii. Older: successive
   iv. Rate of acquisition varies depending on exposure and support
      1. Type 1: Simultaneous
      2. Type 2: Receptive
      3. Type 3: Rapid Successive
      4. Type 4: Slow Successive

f. Language is used to communicate meaning.
   i. Engage children in meaningful activities that require use of the language
   ii. Assess mastery of skills
   iii. Build understanding of why people read & write: motivation

g. Language flourishes best in language-rich environment
   i. Be a quality model
   ii. Encourage practice, provide reinforcement
   iii. Expand children’s vocabulary and speak coherently
   iv. Foster interaction with peers
   v. Expose to meaningful literacy activities: reading/writing meaningful topics
   vi. Seek both literacy & content development, teach same content to all, look beyond classroom for literacy experiences

h. Encourage experimentation with language.
   i. Some may be inaccurate, but reflect normal language development
   ii. Learning patterns & rules
   iii. Rephrase or expand on what child has said
   iv. Test chunks of language in different situations
   v. Feedback helps them determine if they’ve guessed appropriately
V. Instruction & materials for ELL
   a. Rich language environment: observe, touch, listen, talk, interact
   b. Informal writing & reading instruction, playful, based on oral language activities & personal experiences

VI. Teaching strategies for ELL
   a. Demonstrations, role-playing, modeling
   b. Present new info in context of known info
   c. Paraphrase often
   d. Use simple structures, avoid complex
   e. Repeat same sentence patterns & routines
   f. Tailor questions for different levels of language competence & participation

VII. Social language vs. academic proficiency
   a. Definitions
   b. Social language development in 2-3 yrs
   c. Full academic proficiency can take 5-7 yrs to develop
   d. Need adequate time to acquire literacy skills in English
   e. Literacy, cognitive, & conceptual development should be interlaced

VIII. Assessment reliable, valid, ongoing
   a. Variety of formal & informal tools
   b. Errors on assessments of English literacy skills may be developmental in nature and temporary
   c. Use assessments to modify instruction to individual needs
   d. Gathering data continually keeps teachers aware of student progress

Helpful websites include:
National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition: http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/
English Language Learner Program, Las Vegas, NV: http://ccsd.net/ellp/index.htm
National Council of Teachers of English: www.ncte.org/collections/elemell