Chapter 6
Biculturalism

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ABSTRACT

Intercultural responsiveness in the Second Language Learning Classroom should encompass addressing bicultural education. Bicultural education must expand the spectrum of choice for cultural identity that students will eventually make, but should not make choices for them. The purpose of this chapter is to provide details, which incorporate researched-based information that will provide a deeper understanding of biculturalism. Biculturalism encompasses more than just cultural behaviors. Individuals choose aspects from their culture and receiving cultures and integrate them into one that does diminish either custom.

INTRODUCTION

Intercultural Responsiveness in the Second Language Learning Classroom should encompass addressing bicultural education. Bicultural education must expand the spectrum of choice for cultural identity that students will eventually make, but should not make choices for them. Classroom teachers must consider many factors in their pursuit of creating a culturally responsive classroom. The teacher's awareness, knowledge, and sensitivity to the cultural disposition of each student will serve as a gateway to creating a learning space for all. Students should feel safe to express their identity to be proud of themselves. It is hard sometimes to see the concerns and challenges of other groups when their predicament will never be an option for consideration for the dominant group. It is for these reasons that biculturalism and bilingualism education must be intentional.

The objective of this chapter is to provide the following components that are recommended for teachers to address in order to create an interculturally responsive classroom:

- Acculturation,
- Deculturation,
- Social Identity,

- Biculturalism and Bilingualism,
- Biculturalism and Literacy,
- Cultural Assimilation,
- Cultural Responsive Classroom.

BACKGROUND

Biculturalism encompasses more than just cultural behaviors. Individuals choose aspects from their culture and receiving cultures and integrate them into one that does diminish either custom. This includes food, language and social networks. According to Schwartz and Unger (2010), biculturalism can emerge from one or both of two factors. The first factor is a social-cultural context, which is characterized by ethnogenesis. This is where both the heritage and receiving cultural streams are emphasized and valued. The second factor comprises active and intentional efforts by parents to socialize their children toward the heritage culture. In more monocultural contexts toward the receiving culture, parental socialization energies are particularly significant, considering the larger cultural context may not promote or encourage preservation of the heritage culture (Schwartz & Unger, 2010).

Schwartz and Unger (2010) noted that biculturalism embodies security and expertise with both one's heritage culture and the culture of the country or region in which one has settled. From this viewpoint, individuals are considered bicultural if they speak both the language of their heritage cultural context and the language of their receiving cultural context, have friends from both cultural backgrounds, and watch television programs and read magazines from both cultural contexts. Authentic biculturalism involves assimilating the heritage and receiving cultures into a unique and personalized combination. Bicultural individuals select aspects from the heritage and receiving cultures and integrates them into an individualized culture that is not directly reducible to either the heritage or receiving cultural streams. When individuals are entrenched in a community that integrates the heritage and receiving cultural streams, and where comfort with both cultures is essential for daily living, then biculturalism is most likely to emerge (Schwartz & Unger, 2010).

MAIN FOCUS OF THE CHAPTER

According to Schwartz and Unger (2010), biculturalism represents comfort and proficiency with both one's heritage culture and the culture of the country or region in which one has settled. This chapter provides details, which incorporates researched-based information that will provide a deeper understanding of biculturalism. Researchers take the position that acculturation is a social process that derives in a context in which newcomers and members of the host culture are in dynamic contact with each other. If newcomers are aware that their social identity is devalued, this will affect the strategies employed in the acculturation process (Padilla & Perez, 2003).

The structure of the chapter includes the following components that are recommended for teachers to address in order to create an interculturally responsive classroom:

- Acculturation,
- Deculturation,

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