

Chapter 1

Educating Racially, Culturally, and Linguistically Diverse Children in a Global Era: The World at Home and at Home in the World

Kim H. Song

University of Missouri-St. Louis, USA

Shea N. Kerkhoff

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-0052-4923>

University of Missouri-St. Louis, USA

Alina Slapac

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2210-1959>

University of Missouri-St. Louis, USA

ABSTRACT

This chapter explores the intersection of race, culture, and language, so teachers can provide racially, linguistically, and culturally responsive teaching for diverse learners, as classrooms around the world are increasingly diverse. There has been an urgent call for teacher training to move beyond colorblindness to serve racially, linguistically, and culturally diverse learners in an equitable, antiracist, and socially-just climate. The purpose of this chapter is to present teaching materials framed by a cosmopolitan lens that help teachers examine who they are as a racial, linguistic, and cultural being to help super diverse learners in this global era.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-6386-4.ch001

INTRODUCTION

What Does It Mean to Be at Home in the World?

To be “at home in the world” may seem like an oxymoron or even paradoxical. How can one be “at home” and “in the world” at the same time? Home is a place where one feels comfortable, feels a sense of belonging, and feels safe. “In the world” means new or other places, places that by definition are outside of one’s home. So how does that work? Being “at home in the world” means being okay with paradox, being comfortable with being uncomfortable. In other words, it means navigating places and spaces that are different from one’s home, and doing so without fear or judgment, but with a sense of open mindedness and equality. Educators of racially, culturally, and linguistically (RCL) diverse learners need to explore their “home” or local mindset toward their learners and develop their “world” or global mindset to connect to learners from around the world and learners to the world, so learners can be citizens of “home” and “world.”

Being at home in the world is called *cosmopolitan* or *global citizen* in education theory. Cosmopolitan is an ancient Greek word that roughly translates to citizen of the world. A cosmopolitan person has a global mindset and is open-minded. A cosmopolitan is open to new people, experiences, and ideas, both by being hospitable to new people and ideas in one’s home spaces and experiencing other cultures by journeying across borders. Borders can be political, like the lines that create counties, states, and nations. Borders can also be metaphorical, like differences in religion, race, or language. A cosmopolitan goes beyond their comfort zone and crosses borders to learn about different perspectives. A cosmopolitan person does not replace their local identity or national citizenship with global citizenship (e.g., inner circle), but rather adds a global identity to their sense of self (e.g., outer circle). They see themselves as a part of a global community in addition to their local and national affiliations (Kerkhoff, 2022; Kerkhoff & Cloud, 2020; Kerkhoff & Ming, 2022; Slapac, 2021).

Why Is It Important to Be Cosmopolitan in English Language Education?

Cosmopolitan may sound like an elitist word. However, in education, cosmopolitanism is open to all people from all walks of life. Teachers, students, principals, family members, and anyone else can be cosmopolitan if they care about other people regardless of whether they are local or global. This means that people care about others across political and metaphorical borders, such as cultural, racial, and linguistic. From a cosmopolitan worldview, diversity is valued, and diversity of race, culture, and language is seen as an asset to our world. A cosmopolitan view extends social justice in education from a concern of local issues to a global worldview (Kerkhoff et al., 2021).

Caring about people like oneself is much easier than relating across differences. Psychologists call the propensity to associate with people who are like oneself “affinity bias.” Affinity bias refers to the unconscious propensity to relate to someone with similar characteristics or resembles oneself. For example, suppose one walked into a cafeteria full of people one did not know. In that case, one may gravitate towards a table of people of the same gender, ethnicity, age, or other similar characteristics. Affinity bias can lead to implicit bias, which is also unconscious and refers to acting on one’s assumptions about people based on their visible characteristics, such as sociocultural, linguistic, or racial backgrounds. Being aware of biases can help a person relate to others with more hospitality and empathy, rather than assumptions and generalizations (Song et al., 2021).

20 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/educating-racially-culturally-and-linguistically-diverse-children-in-a-global-era/316845

Related Content

Minecraft Server Project: Designing Synchronous Blended Learning Environments to Support Distributed Mentorship

Ugochi Acholonu, Jessa Dickinson, Dominic Amato and Nichole Pinkard (2017). *Moving Students of Color from Consumers to Producers of Technology* (pp. 197-219).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/minecraft-server-project/173056

Employee Welfare Measures: The Impact on Employees' Efficacy and Organizations Productivity

Chandra Sekhar Patro and K. Madhu Kishore Raghunath (2022). *Research Anthology on Changing Dynamics of Diversity and Safety in the Workforce* (pp. 1141-1160).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/employee-welfare-measures/287979

Discourse Analysis for Intercultural Competence Development

Phyllis Bo-yuen Ngai (2021). *International Journal of Bias, Identity and Diversities in Education* (pp. 17-30).

www.irma-international.org/article/discourse-analysis-for-intercultural-competence-development/281659

French Immersion "So Why Would You do Something Like That to a Child?": Issues of Advocacy, Accessibility, and Inclusion

Renée Christine Bourgoin (2016). *International Journal of Bias, Identity and Diversities in Education* (pp. 42-58).

www.irma-international.org/article/french-immersion-so-why-would-you-do-something-like-that-to-a-child/145338

Transformative Learning: Positive Identity Through Prison-Based Higher Education in England and Wales

Anne Pike and Susan Hopkins (2019). *International Journal of Bias, Identity and Diversities in Education* (pp. 48-65).

www.irma-international.org/article/transformative-learning/216373