



## Preparing the Way

Teaching ELs in the Pre-K-12 Classroom



*fourth edition*

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## Transforming Challenges into Opportunities: Becoming a Culturally Proficient Educator





Name: \_\_\_\_\_

X marks the spot! Where have you lived? Which countries have you visited? Draw an X on the map where you have already been. Then, draw circles where you hope to visit someday. List/name these places below.



**WHERE I'VE BEEN:**

Blank space for listing or drawing locations where the student has been.

**WHERE I'M GOING:**

Blank space for listing or drawing locations the student wants to visit.

What terms do you think of when you hear the phrase “culturally-relevant teaching?”

Activate your **prior knowledge** by brainstorming a list. Revisit this list after reading the chapter. What can you add? Delete?



- Kindergarten
- Ohio
- 7 ELs from other countries (South America, Korea, and China; other ELs in the class were born in the U.S. and speak at least one other language)
- 4 special needs students
- 9 other kindergarten students
- Note: One student, Peyton, speaks 3 languages.



*HOW can she connect students' languages and cultural backgrounds to lessons and activities?*

- Possible gaps:
  - School readiness
  - Academic achievement
  - Cultural & linguistic differences
- Factors within the school's control:
  - Teachers' experience
  - Resources
  - Schools' involvement with families
- Factors outside the school's control:
  - Students' access to health and social services
  - Family income
  - Bias



- Include sensory, graphic, and interactive supports designed to promote student engagement and interaction
- Groups ELs with native English speakers and provides visuals that match the alphabet sounds
- Incorporates videos, magazines, and realia into daily lessons
- Invites sharing of home/personal activities related to lessons
- Connects stories and events to cultural traditions
- Contacts parents to read stories related to students' cultures
- Shares songs and activities to showcase traditions
- Exposure to varied cultures of classmates in practical and relevant ways
- Builds trust
- Networks within the school and community to support her class activities



Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL) identified **five social- emotional-learning competencies**:

1. self-awareness
2. self-management
3. social awareness
4. relationship skills
5. responsible decision-making

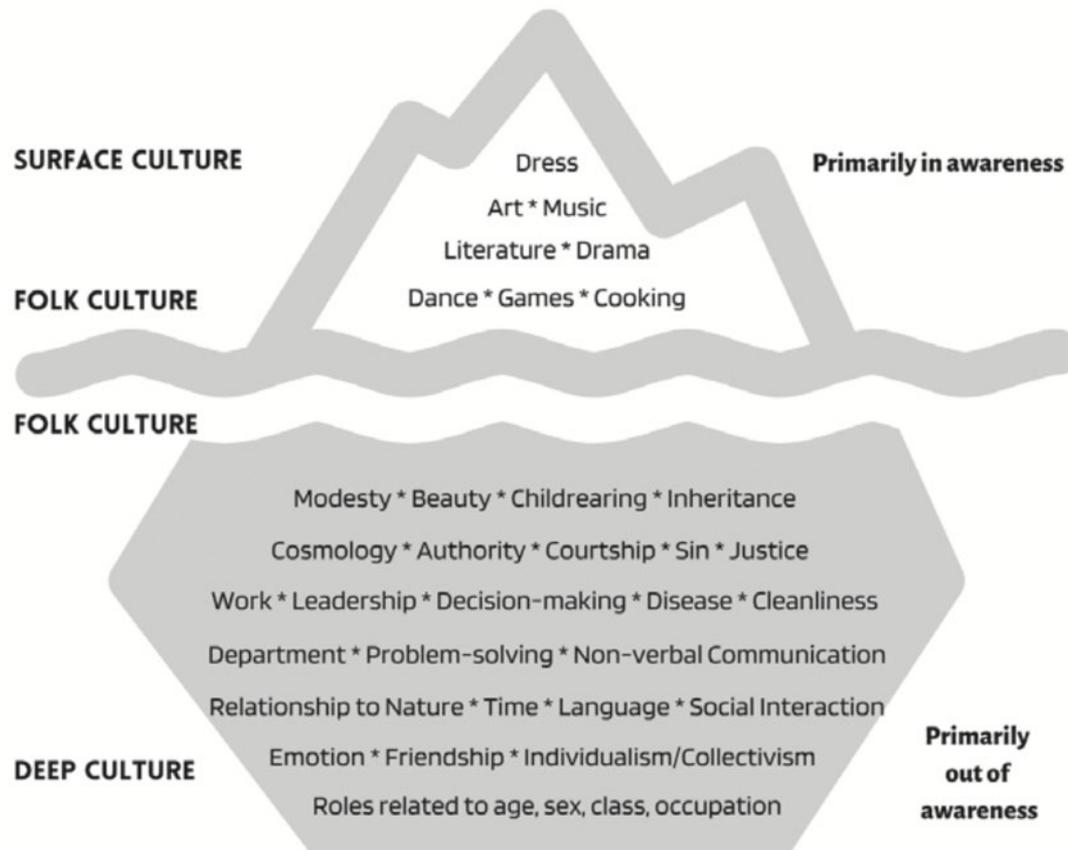


The Center for Advanced Research for Language Acquisition (CARLA) defined culture as *“the shared patterns of behaviors and interactions, cognitive constructs, and affective understanding that are learned through a process of socialization. These shared patterns identify the members of a culture group while also distinguishing those of another group”* (CARLA, 2017).



**How do YOU define culture?**

# ESOL Surface, Folk, and Deep Elements of Culture



Adapted from Gary Weaver, in R.M. Paige, ed., *Cross-Cultural Orientation: New Conceptualizations and Applications*. (Rowman & Littlefield, 1986).

**Figure 2.1** Cultural Iceberg.

- **Culture is learned.** Cultural attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and values are learned through experiences, communication, media, the Internet and in the classroom. Cultural connections between students, parents, and teachers, and both teaching and learning styles are interrelated and intertwined.
- **Culture is shared.** Members of a cultural group share patterns of artifacts, attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and values. In the classroom, shared values and beliefs are essential in establishing rules and effective communication.
- **Culture is used to predict people's behaviors.** It is natural to categorize people, as members of a cultural group share similar patterns (i.e., artifacts, behaviors, values). For teachers and students to achieve success, an understanding of the cultural value of an education is essential.



- **Cultural Pluralism** refers to a *process of compromise and communication* characterized by mutual appreciation and respect between members of two or more cultural groups.
- **Multicultural Education** involves the practice of cultural pluralism, which means that in multicultural learning environments, there is a *mutual appreciation of and respect for all diverse cultural groups*.
- **Cultural Proficiency** builds upon the aspects of multicultural and culturally-relevant teaching. *Diversity is perceived as an opportunity, a benefit,* and having the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of culturally-relevant teaching. A culturally-proficient educator honors the differences between and among cultures leading to informed and respectful interactions with and instruction of ELs.



- **Hidden curriculum** is defined as a set of rules that teachers think students know, but never truly take the time to teach. One example is expecting students to be quiet when the teacher is talking or waiting to ask the teacher a question if the teacher is attending to a student.
- **Null curriculum** is what teachers omit. This could be due to a lack of time, a personal bias, or a district policy. What might be left out that could significantly impact ELs in negative or positive ways?



- 1) **Contributions** focuses on cultural heroes and heroines, holidays (e.g., Cinco de Mayo, Thanksgiving).
- 2) **Additive** integrates themes and concepts into existing curricula (e.g., Thanksgiving story from Indians' perspective).
- 3) **Transformation** fundamentally changes the structure of existing curricula to view concepts from multiple cultural perspectives (e.g., create a Westward Expansion unit exploring cultural conflict using critical thinking and diversity as a basic premise).
- 4) **Social action/decision-making** enables students to make decisions and take developmentally-appropriate actions to resolve important social issues (e.g., register people to vote, write a letter to a legislator about an issue).



**Race:** “any one of the groups that humans are often divided into based on physical traits regarded as common among people of shared ancestry”

**Ethnicity:** “of or relating to large groups of people classed according to common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background”

(Merriam-Webster)

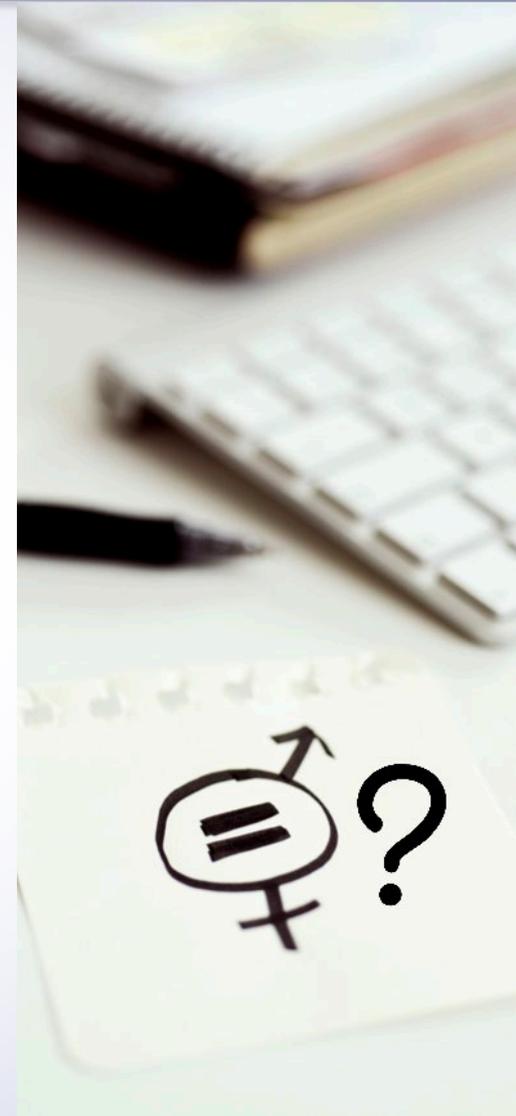


**Sex:** “either of the two major forms of individuals that occur in many species and that are distinguished respectively as female or male especially on the basis of their reproductive organs and structures”

**Gender:** “the behavioral, cultural, or psychological traits typically associated with one sex.”

**Sexual Identity/Orientation:** “a person’s sexual identity or self-identification as bisexual, heterosexual, homosexual, pansexual, etc.: the state of being bisexual, heterosexual, homosexual, pansexual, etc.”

(Merriam-Webster)



*Culture extends into other areas of life. Many children have or have had an incarcerated parent. That is a unique culture, but it is shared by many children. Politics, health, illness, and even intellectual abilities and disabilities are aspects of culture. Too often, educators limit their thinking about culture to heritage, race, ethnicity, and language. This fails to take into consideration other powerful elements that comprise a child's world and create that child's worldview. Poverty and homelessness are elements of culture. If you and your family live in a gated community, your personal culture varies tremendously from someone who lives with their family in a car. Being able to appreciate and respect students and colleagues who are culturally diverse should be the aspiration of every educator. This requires honest self-reflection.*

***How will you make this happen for both ELs and non-ELs?***

# Review these resources:

Cultural Relevance Rubric

Learning for Justice

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