CLD
COUNCIL FOR LEARNING DISABILITIES

LD Forum

President's Message

Dear CLD Colleagues,

I hope that you are doing well in the new year! I also hope that you are planning a proposal for the 2024 conference in Charlotte, North Carolina. Please submit proposals that highlight your research results as well as proposals that translate your research for practitioners. Whether your proposal audience encompasses researchers or practitioners, continue to highlight diverse perspectives and relevance for diverse stakeholders. Our organization was founded as a group of diverse individuals who came together for the common purpose of improving services and opportunities for individuals with learning disabilities. Offering a welcoming space at our annual conference begins with proposals from diverse perspectives. The new proposal system will provide a much-improved experience over previous years. The system allows you to better communicate the focus of your proposal, and it has adequate space for your narrative and a separate space for references.

Please volunteer your time to review proposals. We need reviewers with many different areas of expertise and diverse points of view to ensure that we have a quality conference program. Thank you to all who regularly review; please consider volunteering again. If you have not reviewed in the past, contact our conference chair, Apryl Poch (**apoch@unomaha.edu**), to volunteer. Reviewers will find the new system to be streamlined and easier to access and navigate.

CLD members in your early career and in doctoral programs, be on the lookout for Leadership Institute and Leadership Academy applications this spring. These are wonderful ways to be involved in the organization, receive support for your professional growth, and expand your network. Although our mission is about supporting students with learning disabilities, these activities are not restricted to folks who only focus their work on one category of disability. Doctoral students who are exploring their interests are welcome and invited to the Leadership Institute.

Finally, for those of us who joined CLD in the winter or spring, please remember to renew your membership. Our conference budget and basic organizational functions are dependent upon your membership dues. I hear members say over and over that they like CLD because it is smaller than some other organizations, more affordable than other organizations, easy to network, and welcoming. However, we all need to do our part to keep it going. Thank you ahead of time for renewing your membership and have a wonderful spring semester!

Margaret M. Flores
2023–2024 CLD President

In This Issue . . .

New Podcast!

Our partners at Educating All Learners Alliance (ELA) invited CLD's past president, Brenda Barrio, to share more about CLD's mission and upcoming activities. You can listen to the five-minute podcast in the link below and learn more about this partnership and organization through their website. To listen, visit **https://educatingalllearners.podbean .com/e/translating-research-into-practice-5-minutes -with-cld/**

46TH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON LEARNING DISABILITIES

October 17–18, 2024 • Charlotte, North Carolina

COUNCIL FOR
LEARNING
DISABILITIES
46TH ANNUAL
CONFERENCE

October 17–18, 2024

UNC Charlotte Marriott
Hotel and Conference
Center

Charlotte, North Carolina

Save the Date

Come explore Charlotte, North Carolina, the "Queen City," for CLD's 46th Annual International Conference on Learning Disabilities. This year's conference will be held at the **University of North Carolina Charlotte Marriott Hotel and Conference Center**. Charlotte offers a number of attractions along with great restaurants. Learn more and plan your trip to Charlotte by exploring **Charlotte's Got a Lot!**

For conference updates and the Call for Proposals, visit the **CLD Website**, follow @CLDIntl on X (formerly Twitter), and "like" CLD on Facebook. For questions regarding the conference, please contact Dr. Apryl Poch, Conference Program chair and CLD vice president, at **apoch@unomaha.edu**.

Diversity Committee Updates

The Diversity Committee met in person during the CLD 2023 Annual Conference in Denver, Colorado. Nine committee members attended this meeting. The members got to know and connect with each other and shared their research interests. In particular, they shared collaborative projects and research on supporting students with learning disabilities from diverse backgrounds that they had been working on with other committee members. They also discussed some new ideas that they would like to work on in the future. We had five new members join the Diversity Committee during and after the conference. The committee planned to meet again virtually on Wednesday, January 18, 2024, to form new collaborative teams as desired by many of the new members. This meeting also provided opportunities for the members to discuss updates and connect with each other, as many were not able to make it to the Denver committee meeting in person. If you and/or others you know would like to join our committee and get involved in one of our teams, please feel free to contact me at **yhsiao@wsu.edu**. Happy 2024!

Yun-Ju Hsiao
Diversity Committee Chair

Meet Leadership Academy Cohort 12

The members of Leadership Academy 12 are Schuyler Beecher, Jenna Gersib, Qingli Lei, Karen Omohundro, and Josh Otarola. These early career and doctoral students started their CLD leadership journey as participants at the Leadership Institute in 2022. Since that time, they have been actively involved in CLD committees.

The Academy requires a 2-year commitment. The first year the cohort works with personal mentors. Each member of this cohort has been paired with a mentor who will be able to provide guidance on mutually agreed upon topics. The cohort members will continue to serve on committees within the CLD Leadership structure and get to know each other. By the end of their first year, they will choose a group project to work on for Year 2.

Schuyler Beecher, PhD, graduated from Texas Woman's University with her PhD in special education in 2023. She is currently a special education administrator in a local school district in the Dallas–Fort Worth (DFW) metroplex. Schuyler adjunct teaches at several universities in DFW. Her research interests are teacher education and professional development, social emotional learning for educators, and technology-based learning for educators. Schuyler serves on the Board of Trustees for CLD as a co-chair for the Technology Committee. She also serves as the secretary of the Texas CLD chapter.

Jenna Gersib, PhD, is a postdoctoral fellow at the University of Texas at Austin. Presently, her research focuses on early STEM interventions for students with and at risk of disabilities. Such work includes Precision Mathematics, a Tier 2 intervention for students with intersecting mathematics needs and language needs, and Scientific Explorers, a Tier 1 science program focused on providing evidence-based science practices that meet the range of learners in Grades K–2 classrooms.

Qingli Lei, PhD, is a Bridge to Faculty Fellow in the Department of Special Education at the University of Illinois, Chicago. She earned her PhD in educational studies from Purdue University, with a focus on special education. Dr. Lei coordinated a multi-year model-based mathematics problem-solving program funded by the National Science Foundation. Her research interests include developing effective mathematics interventions for students with disabilities, analyzing teacher–student discourse to empower mathematics reasoning and problem-solving skills, and exploring cognitive and non-cognitive factors that influence mathematics learning.
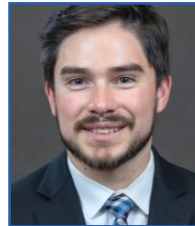
Karen Omohundro is an Office of Special Education Programs scholar and doctoral candidate in special education at George Mason University with a dedicated focus on improving literacy outcomes for adolescents with reading difficulties and disabilities. Drawing on her extensive teaching experience in justice settings, her research centers on advancing equitable literacy instruction through the application and adaptation of evidence-based strategies and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support (MTSS) tailored to the unique challenges of these and other alternative educational settings.

Josh Otarola is a doctoral candidate at the University of Maryland, College Park, where he is pursuing a PhD in special education. He and his advisor, Dr. Susan De La Paz, recently concluded a three-year research practice partnership focusing on historical thinking, reading, and writing. His research interests include disciplinary discourse, argumentative writing, and the transfer of disciplinary discourse to argumentative writing. Prior to pursuing his doctoral degree, Josh was a middle school special education and social studies teacher for eight years in Prince George's County Public Schools and District of Columbia Public Schools. He obtained an MA in special education and leadership in teaching from Notre Dame of Maryland University and a BA in political science from UNC Chapel Hill. Josh enjoys traveling, reading, and playing soccer in his spare time.

To apply for the Leadership Academy, you must have attended the Leadership Institute and served on a CLD committee to demonstrate your commitment to the organization. A call for applications for the Leadership Academy comes out in early May with a deadline of May 31st each year.

5 Ways To . . .

Use High-Leverage Practices to Support Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners with Specific Learning Disabilities

Lindsay Foreman-Murray, PhD

Department of Educational Leadership and Inclusive Teaching, Western Washington University

Schools in the United States are becoming increasingly diverse. According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), the percentage of U.S. students identifying as White decreased from 54% in 2009 to 46% in 2020 and is expected to fall to 43% by 2030. In that same period, the percentage of Latinx/Latine students increased from 22% to 28% and is projected to rise to 30% by 2030 (NCES, 2022). Multilingual learners, students of color, students who are part of immigrant communities, and students holding other minoritized identity markers are often referred to as "culturally and linguistically diverse" (CLD) students. Gaps in outcomes between CLD learners and culturally dominant students have persisted. Meaningful discrepancies remain in test scores as well as rates of graduation, suspension and expulsion, retention in grade, dropout, and college enrollment and completion (de Bray et al., 2019).

CLD students have long been overrepresented within the special education population (Artiles, 2019; Voulgarides, 2022) as a whole, and they are disproportionally more likely to be identified with specific learning disabilities (SLD) (Wei et al., 2022). In the 2019 school year, 28.67% of students receiving services for SLD were Hispanic/Latinx/Latine and 18.57% were Black/African American, while these groups made up only 24.87% and 13.70% of the student population, respectively (U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Within the population of students with disabilities, Hispanic/Latinx/Latine students are 1.2 times more likely than other students to be identified with SLD; for Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander students, this risk ratio is 1.31 times (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

Culturally Relevant Teachers

The increasing prevalence of CLD learners with high-incidence disabilities like SLD necessitates that teachers consider the role of cultural identity in the classroom. In her article "But That's Just Good Teaching! The Case for Culturally Relevant Pedagogy" (1995), Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings made the foundational call for teachers to embrace and leverage their students' cultures and experiences to support their learning. Culturally relevant teachers value students' academic success and help to develop students' cultural competence and critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995), establishing equitable classrooms where students are collectively empowered. By explicitly recognizing the presence of students from CLD backgrounds in their classrooms, teachers can more effectively work to understand and incorporate culturally specific learning preferences, strengths, and funds of knowledge, making the classroom more relevant and affirming for these students and building the cultural competence of every member of the classroom community (Banks & Obiakor, 2015).

Culturally relevant teachers strive to become familiar with the cultures, families, and experiences of their students inside and outside of school, taking active steps to learn about students' lives (Kourea et al., 2018). They may spend time with students one-on-one, invite students to bring in meaningful objects from home, administer interest surveys, or assign journal prompts that encourage students to share their home lives and cultures. To build relationships with families, teachers can offer opportunities for school involvement and open communication about what is happening in the classroom and what families hope and expect for their children. Invitations to spend time in the classroom, share elements of their home culture, or participate in after-school and weekend activities create times and spaces for families to engage, share their perspectives, and build a sense of belonging with the teacher and school.

High-Leverage Practices

A set of 22 high-leverage practices (HLPs) for students with disabilities has been developed by a team assembled by the Council for Exceptional Children and the Collaboration for Effective Educator Development, Accountability, and Reform (CEEDAR) Center at the University of Florida. The practices outlined have been shown across a strong base of research to improve the outcomes of students with disabilities regardless of grade level and content area (McCray et al., 2017).

The growing population of CLD students paired with disparities in disability identification and educational outcomes indicate that teachers serving students with SLD need effective strategies to meet the needs of diverse students. There has been significant research dedicated to best practices in meeting the needs of this group of students, including leveraging HLPs to support CLD learners with disabilities (e.g. Gibson et al., 2014; Lambert et al., 2006; Saenz et al., 2005; Williams & Vaughn, 2020) .

While there is a body of evidence supporting the use of HLPs to support CLD learners, there has been limited explicit guidance about how to implement these strategies in a culturally responsive framework. This article presents five HLPs (establish a consistent, organized, and respectful learning environment; use explicit instruction; use strategies to promote active student engagement; use flexible grouping; use student assessment data, analyze instructional practices, and make necessary adjustments that improve student outcomes) with ideas to implement them in culturally responsive ways. These HLPs have been selected because, as described in each section that follows, their components have shown particular promise for improving academic and behavioral outcomes for CLD students with LD.

1 Establish a Consistent, Organized, and Respectful Learning Environment (HLP 7)

The creation of a supportive classroom environment with clear, positively stated, age-appropriate expectations, routines, and procedures is HLP 7 (McLeskey et al., 2017). Effective teachers establish classroom environments that allow students to anticipate what will happen, know what is expected of them, engage in appropriate behavior, and focus fully on instructional activities (McLeskey et al., 2017). Culturally relevant teachers of students with SLD offer explicit instruction for classroom norms and procedures, behavioral expectations, and relevant social skills (McCray et al., 2017), including authentic examples and counterexamples, peer modeling, and opportunities to practice (Wei et al., 2022). Students with SLD often need explicit instruction and repeated practice with new skills, and CLD students may be working to adjust to unfamiliar expectations or behavioral norms.

Culturally relevant teachers recognize that different cultures have different behavioral norms (Delpit, 2006; Gay, 2002; Gay, 2023; Utley et al., 2011). They seek to learn about how cultural differences manifest in schools, consider how these differences may be reflected in their students' behavior, and plan for classrooms that, whenever possible, do not require CLD students to assimilate to the dominant culture to be successful. For example, many CLD learners grow up in cultures that expect listeners to be vocally engaged with the speaker (Gay, 2002); teachers may make use of call and response during lessons rather than expecting students to listen silently to make the classroom more inclusive of CLD students.

Effective teachers provide a clear rationale for behavioral standards and welcome student questions related to expectations. They respond to appropriate behaviors with behavior-specific praise (Green & Stormont, 2018), noting the behavior a student is demonstrating and what is desirable about it. For instance, a teacher may say, "I see that Julia is doing a great job of transitioning to the carpet quietly and with a safe body!" This feedback reinforces the individual student's behavior while offering students who may need additional support, including CLD learners with SLD, with a model of the appropriate behavior.

When students do not meet behavioral expectations, culturally relevant teachers respond with curiosity and consider that students may need more modeling, another explanation, or more practice. They also revisit their thinking about whether classroom expectations are culturally appropriate for and inclusive of CLD students. Punitive reactions are less effective in helping students develop appropriate behaviors than warm responses grounded in teaching desired behaviors and creating a learning environment in which all students can be successful (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008).

What Does It Look Like in Practice?

A culturally relevant teacher would begin their time with their students by laying out clear and explicit expectations for behavior. For instance, the teacher would explicitly teach students the procedure they will use to get students' attention during group work and the response they expect when they give the signal for attention. The teacher would provide their rationale for the procedure, demonstrate what they will say and do to signal for attention, and show students what they are expected to do in response. The teacher would offer non-examples and talk through tricky cases (e.g., What if a student is in the middle of a sentence? What if a student is coming back from sharpening a pencil?). The teacher would have peers model the procedure, then include plenty of time for whole group practice and questions. The teacher would revisit these norms and procedures regularly in the first days and weeks of the class, meeting student deviation from these norms and procedures with positive reteaching. For students who consistently struggle with these expectations, the teacher would consider what factors may be standing in the way of their adherence, including the possibility that the norms for the classroom may not be culturally appropriate for the student, that the procedures may require additional practice or explanation, or that the student may be resistant for reasons the teacher cannot anticipate. Thus, the teacher may follow up with the student individually to learn more and to problem-solve in partnership with them to find a solution.

2   Use Explicit Instruction (HLP 16)

Effective instruction underlies all academic success. For CLD students with SLD, the use of explicit instruction (EI) (HLP 16) has been shown to boost academic performance (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Green & Stormont, 2018; Kourea et al., 2018; McCray et al., 2017) while minimizing off-task behavior, which can lead to exclusionary discipline and lost learning time (Green & Stormont, 2018). EI calls for teachers to introduce new skills using a clear explanation or model presented in manageable steps, support students to practice applying the skill with ample guidance and feedback, and create opportunities for students to independently practice (McLeskey et al., 2017). While the previous section touched on the benefits of EI for teaching behavioral norms/expectations and classroom procedures, this section addresses EI for academic instruction.

Teachers using EI review what students have learned regularly, connecting new learning to what students have learned before. This approach to instruction benefits students with SLD because it breaks larger skills and chunks of knowledge into smaller and more manageable pieces, enables teachers to catch and correct student misapprehensions, and ensures that students are practicing accurately. Repeated practice supports students with SLD in retaining information. The presentation of information in manageable pieces benefits CLD students who may lack the background context to easily incorporate new information or make conceptual leaps that may be easier for students from the dominant culture.

For CLD learners with SLD, EI is most effective when it is designed with students' cultural and linguistic backgrounds in mind, using examples and explanations that are relevant to students' lives and avoiding references that are difficult for students to connect with. Teacher knowledge about students' lives is critical to ensure that classroom instruction is relevant to their experiences and reinforces their belonging. Relevant examples are easier for students to remember and connect to their prior knowledge and promote engagement. For instance, teachers working with students who live in dense urban areas may use examples related to playing in parks rather than back yards and riding the bus rather than driving in cars. If students come from varied religious backgrounds, teachers may theme their lessons with elements representative of different holidays and avoid putting undue emphasis on Christian holidays. The teacher may also choose a scenario specific to a CLD student in their class who they want to feel an increased sense of belonging and connection, highlighting a tradition specific to that student's culture or an interest particular to that student.

What Does It Look Like in Practice?

A teacher using EI to teach word problem solving with subtraction might introduce a schema to recognize and solve subtraction word problems using an example with the names of two students from the class reading a comic book the teacher knows they love. The teacher will explain how to identify the minuend and subtrahend, model finding the minuend and subtrahend, apply those numbers to the relevant equation, demonstrate how to solve the subtraction problem, and introduce a final check that the answer is reasonable. They will connect these elements to related work students have done before, perhaps comparing the schema with the one students used when solving word problems with addition. Students will engage in practice with plenty of teacher support and feedback at each step of problem identification and solving, moving on to independent practice when the teacher determines that they are ready based on evidence from students' work. The teacher will revisit this content regularly, linking it to later content in the course.

3   Use Strategies to Promote Active Student Engagement (HLP 18)

Effective teachers of CLD students with SLD plan to build and sustain student engagement (HLP 18) in individual lessons and the classroom as whole (McLeskey et al., 2017). Student engagement is critical for learning and can be more difficult for students who are maintaining attention across a cultural or linguistic divide. Engagement is also more difficult for students with SLD, as their disability may impact attention and information processing speed. To deliver lessons that are consistently engaging for CLD students with SLD, culturally relevant teachers work to make students active partners in learning. One engagement strategy that has shown promise for CLD learners and students with SLD is the use of frequent opportunities to respond with the provision of timely and clear feedback to student responses (Green & Stormont, 2018).

These opportunities include asking students to think through a problem or question and then demonstrate their knowledge, with ample time to think in between, with the goal of increasing engagement for all students in the classroom. These opportunities may come in the form of prompting students to answer oral questions individually or chorally (Menzies et al., 2017), complete problems on white boards, or indicate an answer using hand signals. In addition to building engagement, each opportunity to respond gives teachers insight into student learning, enabling them to adjust instruction as needed. A rate of three opportunities to respond per minute has been linked to improvements in both learning and

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behavior for CLD students and students with SLD (Green & Stormont, 2018; Menzies et al., 2017) while giving teachers the chance to catch and correct misunderstandings.

What Does It Look Like in Practice?

The culturally relevant teacher working on subtraction word problems would start by designing a problem that connects to student culture, interests, and/or something in their community. The teacher may ask students to sequentially identify, write, and show the minuend, then the subtrahend, and finally the difference on white boards. Students will be engaged by the relevant premise of the problem and held accountable for maintaining attention via the activity while providing the teacher with information about their understanding of the content and current skill level. Clear directions for what students should be doing minimize misbehavior. Recruiting students to be partners in their learning in this way builds classroom engagement and belonging for CLD students with SLD (McLeskey et al., 2017).

4   Use Flexible Grouping (HLP 17)

The use of small-group learning with the strategic composition of groups varying by instructional goal is HLP 17 (McLeskey et al., 2017). There are many benefits to implementing small groups with CLD learners with SLD, as there are for all students (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Hunter et al., 2021; Kourea et al., 2018; McCray et al., 2017; Utley et al., 2011). Teachers use strategic grouping to provide leveled instruction and target common areas of need for students who are grouped homogeneously by skill level (McLeskey et al., 2017), while heterogenous skill grouping enables students to share their strengths and ideas with peers while building community and connection (Kourea et al., 2018; McLeskey et al., 2017; Utley et al., 2011). Leveled and targeted instruction in homogenous groups benefits students with SLD who may need additional practice with content to achieve mastery or higher levels of continued support than peers, while CLD students benefit from practicing language and social skills with diverse peers in both homogenous and heterogenous groupings (Hunter et al., 2021; Kourea et al., 2018; Utley et al., 2011). CLD students with SLD in both types of groups gain low-stakes practice and targeted instruction while deriving social benefits from cooperative learning, practicing language and social skills, and building students' sense of belonging in the classroom.

Collaborative learning approaches make classrooms more culturally responsive, as many CLD learners come from backgrounds that value collectivist and communal learning rather than teacher-directed or individualistic learning approaches (Gay, 2002). The opportunity to discuss the material with peers, problem-solve together, act as experts in the classroom, and critically engage with the class content makes learning more personal, relatable, and culturally relevant. In small groups, students support each other in making connections to the learning, creating an opportunity for students to recognize the relevance of class content in ways that may surpass those the teacher can make on their own.

What Does It Look Like in Practice?

For the culturally relevant teacher and their class learning about subtraction word problems, students may work in small groups to identify subtraction word problems from a sheet of different types of problems in groups that are homogenous by reading level, enabling the teacher to provide greater support for students who may be more challenged by the reading aspect of the task. In this activity, groups may work with problems written at different reading levels so that all students can apply the schema to solve problems. Later, students may practice identifying the minuend and subtrahend in groups that are heterogenous by reading level, with roles assigned to students capitalizing on their strengths and supporting all students to participate. One student who is a strong reader may be assigned to read the problem aloud, another assigned to identify the minuend, another the subtrahend, and the fourth to write the problem out and then subtract. These groups may be heterogeneous by cultural and linguistic background, with care taken to place CLD students with peers who share their interests, who will allow them to build new connections, or who are most likely to be inclusive. Working in different groups gives students opportunities to build relationships with many students across the classroom, and varying group composition reduces stigma related to academic ability.

5   Use Student Assessment Data, Analyze Instructional Practices, and Make Necessary Adjustments That Improve Student Outcomes (HLP 6)

Regular and strategic collection of data related to teacher effectiveness and student progress is HLP 6 (McLeskey et al., 2017). As for all students at risk for academic difficulty (McCray et al., 2017), effective teachers of CLD students with SLD monitor their students' academic progress carefully, using measures that are (a) responsive to students' languages, experiences, and cultures and (b) sensitive to students' learning levels and goals (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Lavín et al., 2021). Teachers must regularly collect data reflecting progress towards IEP goals for students with SLD, both because it is a right guaranteed by IDEA and to ensure that students' needs are being met. However, cultural differences, teacher misunderstanding of language learning stages, undiscovered gaps in knowledge and skill, and bias all have the potential to derail a teacher's assessment of the academic readiness and progress

of CLD students with SLD (Lavín et al., 2021). To prevent ineffective assessment and instruction, timely and culturally appropriate assessment should be a core part of teachers' strategy to meet the needs of CLD learners with SLD.

Teachers who use assessment effectively establish a baseline for progress monitoring using benchmark or screening assessments that can surface knowledge or skills gaps and prevent students' academic difficulties being overlooked. Assessment instruments must be culturally appropriate for the student and conducted in the student's home language when appropriate (Utley et al., 2011). Thereafter, teachers should regularly monitor all students' learning using a range of formative assessments, including monitoring students' work, classroom observations, and curriculum-based measures (CBMs) (McLeskey et al., 2017).

Culturally relevant teachers engaging in classroom observation of CLD learners leverage their knowledge about their students in evaluating their engagement, communication, behavior, and learning, with the understanding that these might look different for students from different cultural backgrounds. When looking at student work to evaluate student progress, culturally relevant teachers keep in mind cultural differences in styles of relaying information, dialects, language learning stages, and students' experiences and points of reference. CBMs (brief, targeted, and valid assessments focused on the knowledge and skills students are learning) (Lavín et al., 2021) allow teachers to monitor student learning regularly and make timely changes to instruction as needed. CBMs do not replace other forms of assessment, but they can add valuable insight into student knowledge, skill, and progress when delivered regularly.

CBMs can also be less susceptible to cultural bias than assessments over which teachers have less control (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008). Because CBMs are narrow in scope, teachers can often exert influence to ensure that those administered in their classrooms are culturally relevant to their students. For instance, a teacher can ensure that the Oral Reading Fluency (ORF) text students engage with is about a topic that is familiar and meaningful to them. Because CBMs are often administered and scored by school personnel who are familiar with the students, these scorers can also ensure that they are accounting for cultural context when evaluating students' knowledge and skill. For instance, a teacher administering ORF to an individual student can account for dialectical differences in the student's day-to-day speech when evaluating their pronunciation of words in the text. Used in conjunction with other forms of assessment, CBMs can thus provide a powerful culturally informed data point about student skills and knowledge.

All strong teachers regularly review data and adjust their teaching. Culturally relevant teachers ensure that the data they review are informed by students' cultural background and context and make adjustments to best support the whole student.

Teachers may use this information to create groups that are homogenous or heterogenous by instructional level, student interest, or language (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008); to adjust the pacing of their instruction; or as a trigger to modify their instructional strategies for the whole class or a small group of students (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; McLeskey et al., 2017).

What Does It Look Like in Practice?

Before beginning instruction, the teacher reviews data about student proficiency with subtraction, word problems, and reading. For instance, they might look at previous subtraction assessments or assignments, examine scores on reading benchmark assessments or CBMs, or review student work from a unit about addition word problems. To monitor student progress, they may administer an informal word problem assessment every week, providing all appropriate accommodations for individual students, in which students solve a set number of culturally relevant word problems in a set time period, identifying the minuend and subtrahend, writing out the equation, and solving for the answer. The teacher uses data from these assessments in addition to previous rounds of CBM, observations, checks for understanding, and in-class work products to drive the pace of instruction, plan to review or reteach skills, strategically group students, provide small-group or individual support, and as the indicator of when students have mastered the skill.

Conclusion

As U.S. classrooms become increasingly diverse, it is critical that educators consider culture when planning for their classrooms. The overrepresentation of CLD students identified with disabilities, including SLD, makes this awareness of the influence of culture on students' learning and behavior especially important for teachers of students with disabilities. Effective teachers of CLD students with SLD maintain supportive classrooms in which students feel a sense of belonging and ownership for learning is shared (Banks & Obiakor, 2015). They know that relationships with students underpin all of the work they do, and they plan to learn about those students, their families, their communities, and their lives (Kourea et al., 2018). They design classrooms in which norms, rules, and expectations are explicit, and they approach deviations from desired behavior with curiosity and a readiness to reteach if necessary and adjust if possible (Wei et al., 2022). They present content clearly (Cartledge & Kourea, 2008; Green & Stormont, 2018; Kourea et al., 2018), giving students plenty of structured practice, and take active measures to promote engagement during class. They group their students thoughtfully, engaging cooperative learning to support all students to meet their goals (Kourea et al., 2018; McLeskey et al., 2017; Utley et al., 2011). Finally, they monitor students' academic progress to ensure that all students are on track for success (Lavín et al., 2021).

Perhaps most importantly, these teachers believe deeply in the academic potential of all of their students, maintaining high expectations and a commitment to provide all students with the support they need to learn. By harnessing strategies that have been proven effective for students with SLD and implementing them with an eye to CLD students' linguistic backgrounds, interests, cultural norms, learning preferences, and home lives, teachers have the potential to create academically transformative educational experiences for their students who are at greatest educational risk.

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CLD Mission & Vision

Mission Statement: The Council for Learning Disabilities (CLD), an international organization composed of professionals who represent diverse disciplines, is committed to enhancing the education and quality of life for individuals with learning disabilities across the life span. CLD accomplishes this by promoting and disseminating evidence-based research and practices related to the education of individuals with learning disabilities. In addition, CLD fosters (a) collaboration among professionals; (b) development of leaders in the field; and (c) advocacy for policies that support individuals with learning disabilities at local, state, and national levels.

Vision Statement: All individuals with learning disabilities are empowered to achieve their potential.

Diversity Statement

The Council for Learning Disabilities is committed to celebrating and enriching the field of special education through its diversity. As a group, we pursue the best practices, research, and policies that exemplify enhancing the lives of individuals with learning disabilities, including those from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. As a diverse group of professionals in the field of special education, we believe that this work cannot be completed in a silo, but rather, it must be embedded within every part of what we do. As an organization, we are committed to welcoming, understanding, learning about, and honoring individual diversity.