

Linguistically Diverse Student Success: It Starts with All of Us!

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University of Wisconsin, La Crosse
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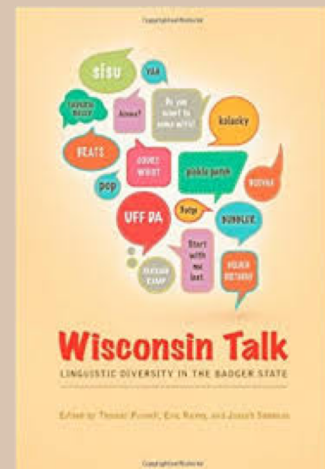
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What do we mean by “linguistic diversity?”

Simple Answer: Speaking another language.

More Complex Answer:

- We all have different ways of speaking which varies by where we are from, who we are talking to, and where the conversations take place.
- Students who are “linguistically diverse” are those whose home language differs from school language. We are mostly referring to English learners (ELs), but this includes some minoritized students as well.



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What do we know about linguistic diversity?

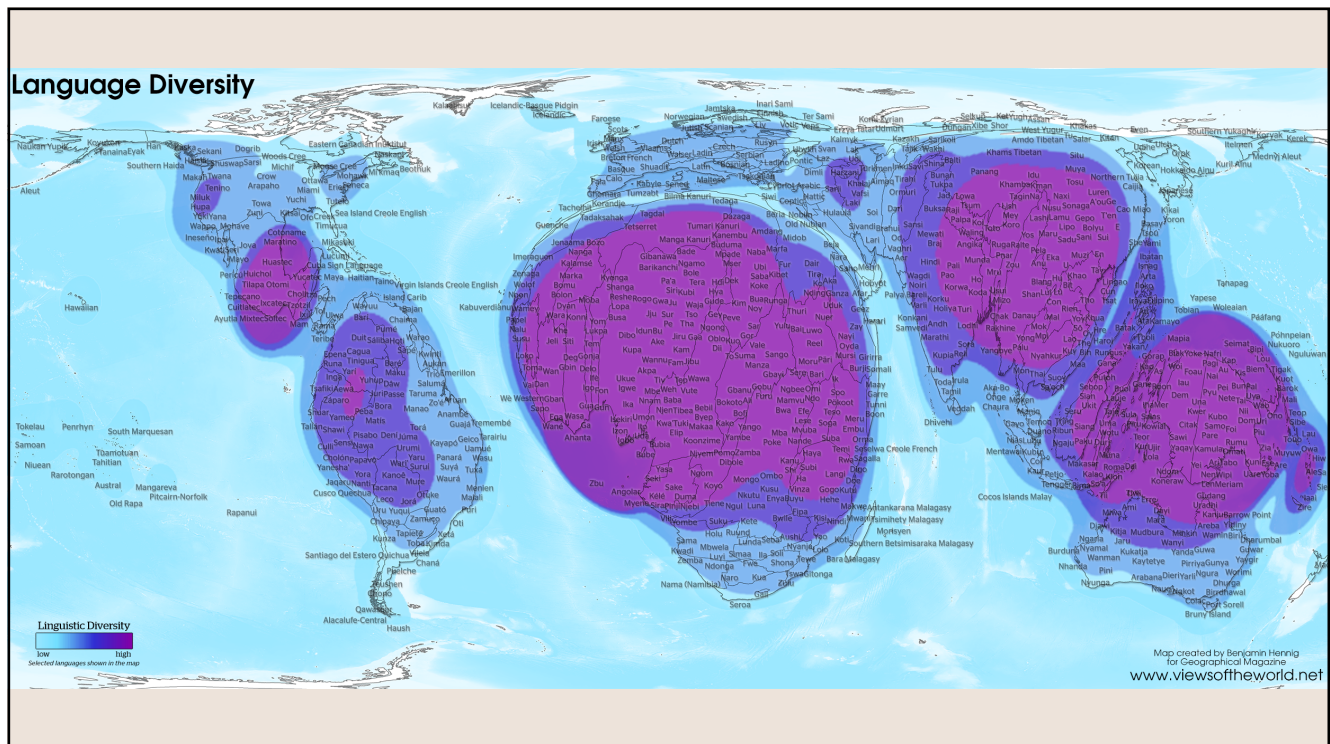
1. Over 7000 languages in the world, and 230 of them are spoken in the US.
2. The US is not nearly as linguistically diverse as Asia or Africa, the most linguistically diverse region in the world.
3. 50% of the world is estimated to be bilingual; the US is estimated to be 20% bilingual.



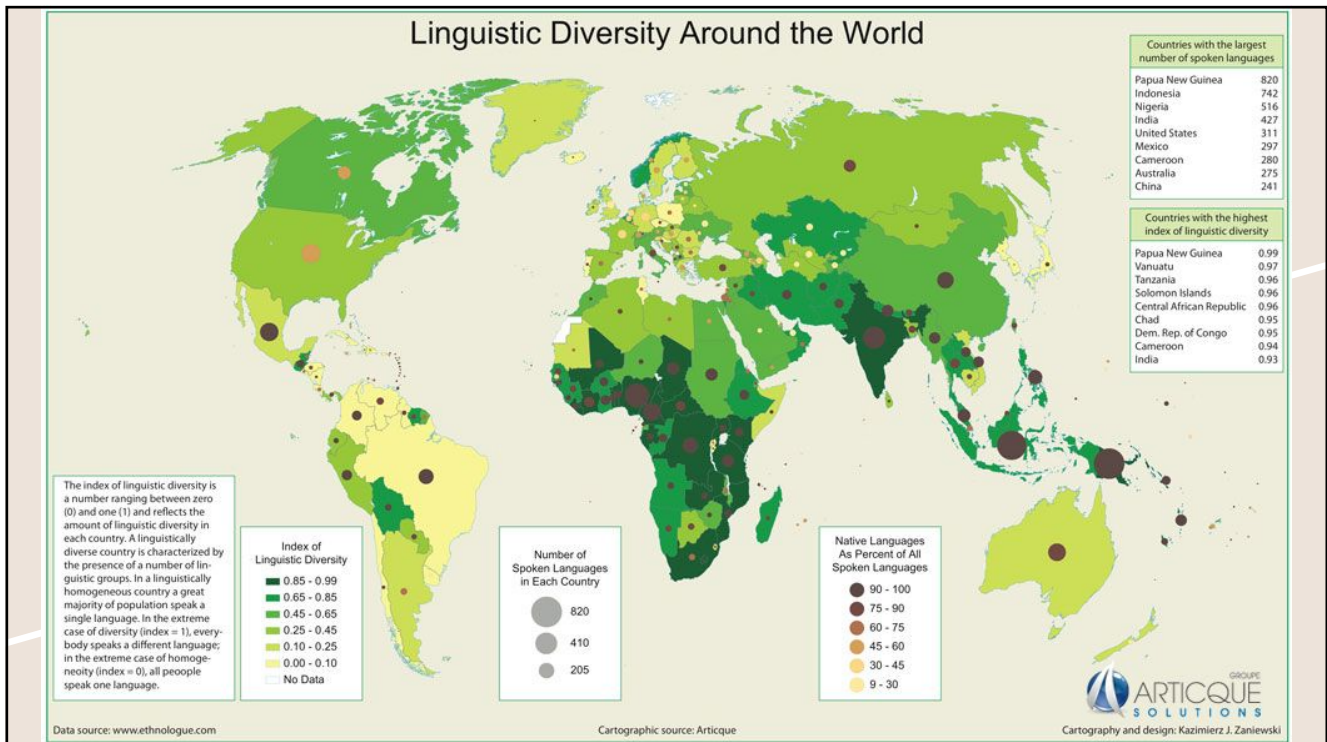
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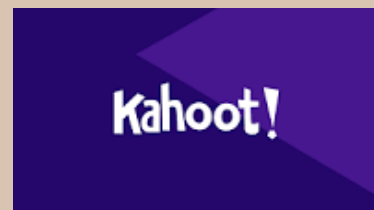
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3. 50% of the world is estimated to be bilingual; the US is estimated to be 20% bilingual.
4. 22% of U.S. school children speak a language other than English at home (8% in Wisconsin).
5. Besides English, Spanish is the most widely spoken language in the U.S. In Wisconsin, the 2nd most widely spoken is Hmong.
6. The U.S. does not have an official language!



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Why is this important?

Students whose home languages and cultures are valued in the education setting do better socially and academically (Hollie, 2017; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2014; Paris & Alim, 2017)

- English Only vs. English Plus
- Seal of Biliteracy (<https://sealofbiliteracy.org/>)

We are a multilingual nation and this is normal.

Bilingualism has many individual and societal benefits:

- Improves cognitive functioning
- Improves national defense and security, and international relations
(American Academy of Arts & Sciences, 2017)

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What do we know about language and learning?

True or False?

- a. Total English exposure/immersion leads to greater and faster learning of English.

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What do we know about language and learning?

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For English learners (ELs) in the United States, it is better to maintain and strengthen the home/native language rather than insisting on full exposure to and immersion in English.

Benefits include:

- Continued cognitive development while learning English
- Better relationships with family and community members
- Emergent bilinguals rather than emerging monolinguals

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True or False?

- a. Total English exposure/immersion leads to greater and faster learning of English.
- b. Speaking another language interferes with the learning of English.

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What do we know about language and learning?

True or False

- a. Total English exposure/immersion leads to greater and faster learning of English. False
- b. Speaking another language interferes with the learning of English. False

For most, the first language is a tremendous resource on how languages work and for expression while learning the new language.

Similar to the previous slide, on-going support in the first/home/native language benefits English learners.

English learners who continue learning in their first language outperform monolingual ELs and non-ELs in high school (Cummins, 1999).

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What do we know about language and learning?

True or False?

- a. Total English exposure/immersion leads to greater and faster learning of English.
- b. Speaking another language interferes with the learning of English.
- c. If a student speaks English very well, they will do fine academically.

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What do we know about language and learning?

True or False

- a. Total English exposure/immersion leads to greater and faster learning of English. **False**
- b. Speaking another language interferes with the learning of English. **False**
- c. If a student speaks English very well, they will do fine academically. **False**

Academic language (the language of schooling) is learned more slowly than social language. Social, oral language is generally learned first and easiest (within 2-3 years) while academic, especially written language generally takes longer to learn (5-7 years).

--Just because a child "sounds" proficient in English, they might still need support.

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- d. Non-standard dialects of English are less correct versions of English.

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What do we know about language and learning?

True or False

- a. Total English exposure/immersion leads to greater and faster learning of English. False
- b. Speaking another language interferes with the learning of English. False
- c. If a student speaks English very well, they will do fine academically. False
- d. Non-standard dialects of English are less correct versions of English. False

All dialects of English (or any language) are rule-governed and as “correct” as any other language. Standard English is more accepted, but not more correct.

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- a. Total English exposure/immersion leads to greater and faster learning of English.
- b. Speaking another language interferes with the learning of English.
- c. If a student speaks English very well, they will do fine academically.
- d. Other dialects of English are less correct versions of English.
- e. Students whose home language/dialects are recognized and reinforced in the classroom do better at learning.

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What do we know about language and learning?

True or False

- a. Total English exposure/immersion leads to greater and faster learning of English. False
- b. Speaking another language interferes with the learning of English. False
- c. If a student speaks English very well, they will do fine academically. False
- d. Non-standard dialects of English are less correct versions of English. False
- e. Students whose home language/dialects are recognized and reinforced in the classroom do better at learning. **True**

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Valuing linguistic diversity in our classrooms and schools

Some simple (and not so simple) ways to increase the emphasis put on other languages in your classrooms and schools in order to demonstrate that we **value** linguistic diversity.

1. Ways to include other languages in the **classroom** and within instruction
2. Ways to bring linguistically diverse (and other) **parents** into the classroom and school
3. Ways to demonstrate the value of other languages at the **school** level



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In the classroom...



We want to...

- Empower and include ELs
 - Lower the affective filter (Krashen, 1984)
 - Make learning personally meaningful (Dornyei, 2018)
 - Connect learning to ELs' prior knowledge and experiences (Moll, 1992)
- Enhance instruction
 - Use all linguistic resources to support English language development
 - Foster interactions amongst all students (Long, 1996)

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In the classroom...



1. Create a multilingual tone
2. Use the home language

"Identifying Words While Reading" (modified from the book, *The ELL Teacher's Toolbox*, by Ferlazzo & Hull Sypniewski)

Paragraph Number	Word	Definition in English Using My Own Words	Definition in Home Language and/or Picture	My Own Sentence

*Note that not all ELs are fluent in their L1 or will feel comfortable using it.

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In the classroom...



1. Create a multilingual tone
2. Use the home language
3. Make it personal and relatable
4. Make it culturally relevant

What ideas do you have?

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With families...



We want to...

- Enhance connections and relationships
- Empower EL families

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With families...



1. Facilitate communication and understanding
2. Find opportunities for sharing
3. Seek out opportunities for connections

What other ideas do you have?

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In the school...



We want to...

- Empower and include ELs as part of the school community
- Demonstrate values

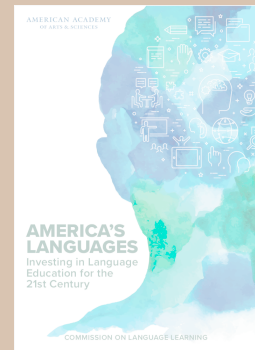
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In the school...



1. Seek out opportunities to raise awareness of linguistic diversity
2. Seek out opportunities to highlight linguistic diversity

What other ideas do you have?



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In conclusion

- Valuing and highlighting linguistic diversity in our classrooms and schools is crucial
- Even simple actions can have a big impact
- Which way(s) do you think you will do this?
- Do you have other ideas?



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More resources

<https://blog.ixl.com/2017/03/23/4-ways-to-celebrate-linguistic-diversity/>

Empowering ELLs:

<https://www.empoweringells.com/home-languages/>

<https://www.empoweringells.com/ell-voices/>

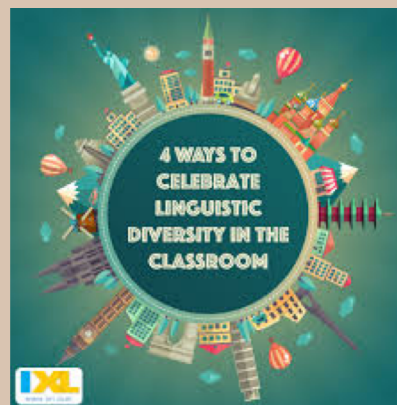
<https://www.empoweringells.com/talking-points/>

Cult of Pedagogy:

<https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/voice-of-witness/>

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