

Fostering Inclusive Learning: The Role of Intercultural Communication in Multilingual Primary Education

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Abstract : Intercultural communication is crucial in the education of multilingual learners in primary grades, significantly influencing their academic and social development. This study explores how intercultural communication intersects with multilingual education, highlighting the importance of culturally responsive teaching practices. It addresses the challenges and opportunities presented by diverse linguistic backgrounds and proposes strategies for creating inclusive and supportive learning environments. The research emphasizes the need for teacher training programs that equip educators with the skills to recognize and address cultural differences, thereby enhancing student engagement and participation. This study was completed in an elementary school in a city in the Midwest, USA. The data was collected through observations and interviews with students and teachers. It discusses the integration of multicultural perspectives in curricula and the promotion of language diversity as an asset. Peer interactions and collaborative learning are highlighted as crucial for developing intercultural competence among young learners. The findings suggest that meaningful intercultural communication fosters a sense of belonging and mutual respect, leading to improved educational outcomes for multilingual students. Prioritizing intercultural communication in primary education is essential for supporting the linguistic and cultural identities of multilingual learners. By adopting inclusive pedagogical approaches and fostering an environment of cultural appreciation, educators can better support their students' academic success and personal growth.

Keywords : diversity, intercultural communication, multilingual learners, primary grades

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