

A Culturally and Linguistically Responsive Framework for Improving Academic and Postsecondary Outcomes of Students with Moderate or Severe Intellectual Disability

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Description

This 28-page article proposes a framework for supporting learners with intellectual disabilities (ID) who are culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD). The framework addresses the multifaceted needs of the identified learners, suggests supports to help learners cope with academic challenges, and provides educators with necessary tools in improving their instructional strategies.

Salient Points

With limited resources and lack of training, educators face challenges in meeting the needs of their culturally and linguistically diverse learners with moderate to severe intellectual disabilities. The study proposes a framework for supporting culturally and linguistically diverse learners with intellectual disabilities. This framework (see Figure 1) includes the following eight variables:

1. Universal Design for Learning
2. Establishment of a safe learning environment
3. Systematic and explicit instruction
4. The integration of culture
5. Primary language support
6. Multiple opportunities to respond
7. Technology
8. Self-determination

The first proposal for supporting CLD learners who may have moderate or severe intellectual disabilities is that curriculum must adhere to Universal Design for Learning (UDL). This helps ensure equal access to learning and meets learner needs through scaffolding, engagement, and assistive technology. Also, educators should search out strategies that promote interaction among learners. These teaching strategies and instruction must be authentic, responsive, and culturally sound. Allowing learners to have self-directed activities encourages a more independent and successful learning.

Questions for Reflection

As you examine into this document, consider the following questions:

- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) is a key component in supporting CLD learners. Are you familiar with the principles of UDL, and do you apply those

principles in your own instructional practice? What changes have you made to your teaching practice to ensure access for all?

- Page 36 lists and defines the different framework components. Which of these are already apparent in your own practice? Are there other components that you could implement if you made deliberate effort?
- One of the suggestions from the study (see page 34) is the use of technology to support CDL learners. Which of these technologies have you used? To what extent have they been beneficial? Are there ways that you could incorporate other technologies into your classes? How can you advocate for learner access to assistive technology?
- One component of the framework is to allow students multiple opportunities and ways to respond. Do you currently allow students in your class to demonstrate learning in different ways, or are they all required to respond in the same ways? What changes would you need to make to incorporate this component into your instruction?

Keywords

Culturally and linguistically diverse, intellectual disability, moderate, severe

Reference and Links

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