

LINGUISTIC AND CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

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Notes for Success: Using Music to Promote Acculturation and Language Acquisition Among Newcomer English Language Learners

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Not once in my entire schooling in the United States did I ever see anything written about or produced by a member of my culture or ethnic group. Nothing.

---Immigrant student of South Asian heritage

Linguistically diverse students attending United States public schools encounter unique school-related challenges including the need to learn the English language simultaneously with content area information. They also possess critical needs along with their culturally diverse counterparts. The more crucial needs include the invitation to participate, acceptance by teachers and other students, and seeing not only themselves, but also their experiences, cultures, languages, and traditions incorporated into the school curriculum. Additional needs consist of the desire to experience success in school and the reassurance that it is unnecessary to abandon the home culture and language in order to belong at school. Many ELLs were born into families that have lived here for

generations, including second, third, fourth, and so on generation immigrant Americans as well as some Native Americans and other indigenous minorities, while others are newcomers to this country (Ovando, Collier, & Combs, 2006). How may the tools of culturally relevant materials such as music, songs, and literature assist culturally and linguistically diverse newcomers in believing that school is a welcoming and accepting environment in which to learn?

Why specifically and intentionally focus on the use of music and other culturally appropriate materials as possible vehicles for facilitating success for newly arriving immigrant, refugee, and political asylee students? Several cities in the United States, including the Dallas-Fort Worth Metroplex, have become centers for new arrivals. In fact newcomers consisting of immigrants, refugees, and political asylees now comprise one in every seven students in the Dallas Independent School District (Hernandez & Jacobson, 2008). Certainly, strategies and materials that adeptly serve newcomer ELLs will enhance the education of all linguistically diverse students. However, as the newcomer segment of the linguistically diverse student population continues to grow, it is prudent to explore two significant issues in the effective education of linguistically diverse students: 1) What are the dimensions of the newcomer segment of the language minority student population in U.S. public schools?, and 2) How may music be utilized to enhance acculturation and language development among ELLs who are newcomers?

The ELL population –numbers and issues

The authentic school environment found in 21st century U.S. American society consists of a rapidly increasing segment of the student population whose members speak a first language other than English. Identified as English language learners (ELLs), their numbers increased by more than 100% during the 1990s (National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education, 1999). Ongoing immigration and refugee resettlement continue to add substantially to the variety of first languages represented in the public school classroom. The factors that often lead to refugee resettlement, including political upheaval, civil unrest, and civil war, also serve to contribute to a frequently changing language landscape within the school setting. Currently, the fastest growing portion of the general student population is that of ELLs (Green, 2006).

Immigrants, refugees, and political asylees

During 2006, 41,150 persons lawfully entered the United States as refugees. They arrived from many countries, including Somalia, Russia, Cuba, Vietnam, Iran, Burma, Sudan, and Ethiopia. The five states that received the greatest numbers of new arrivals were Florida, Minnesota, Texas, California, and Washington. In the same year 26,113 individuals, predominantly from China, Haiti, Columbia, Ethiopia, and Venezuela, were granted political asylum (Jefferys, 2007). Each year since the beginning of the 21st century more than one million immigrants, refugees, and political asylees have been granted legal permanent resident (LPR) status by the United States government. Their home countries include Mexico, China, the Philippines, India, Columbia,

Haiti, Cuba, and Vietnam. The principal states of residence for the new LPRs are California, New York, Florida, Texas, and New Jersey (Jefferys & Monger, 2008).

Usually the experiences of immigrants and refugees are quite dissimilar. Immigrants make the decision to immigrate to the United States for a variety of reasons, including enhanced education, economics, or family reunification, and do so with the knowledge of and permission from the home country and the U.S. They may take all of their belongings and assets with them. Conversely, refugees flee great and life-threatening upheaval within their home countries because of war, political turmoil, and racial and ethnic cleansing. The refugee's escape from the home country is frequently fraught with intense danger and mayhem, and often must occur under the cover of darkness (Coward, 2007). Paul Thai, a former refugee from Cambodia, describes his family's first disastrous attempt to escape from the war in Cambodia in *Imagining America* (Fiffer, 1991).

Walking through the jungle was very slow. No one wanted to walk in front. No one wanted to be the one to step on a mine. So we would all move forward, inching along, then someone at the front would feel like their luck was about over and would go no further and someone else would have to lead the way. I was walking near the front. The woman who had refused to give up her baby was walking ahead of me. She stepped on a mine. She heard the click and screamed for everyone to get away from her because when she moved again, it was going to blow up. But she begged for someone to come and take the baby. She had made it all the way down the mountain with the baby and now she knew she was going to die, but said she would die happy if someone would just come and take the

baby from her. Finally, after a long time, one man stepped forward and said he would.... Maybe she got excited or anxious, but she must have moved because the mine blew. (p. 67)

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a refugee is someone outside of the United States who has fled across an international border in order to seek safe haven from persecution or death because of race, religion, membership in a social group, political opinion, or national origin (U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, 2005). Refugees typically make their petition for protection from the UNHCR from refugee camps that have been set up in countries of first asylum (Portes & Rumbaut, 1996). Subsequently, they go through a lengthy processing and resettlement program that ultimately brings many refugees to the United States (Cowart, 2007).

Political asylees comprise a third group of newcomers, experiencing events that are similar to those of the refugee. However, the political asylee petitions the US government for asylum from within the borders of the U.S. rather than from a refugee camp (Portes and Rumbaut, 2006). Once asylum is granted, asylees are entitled to the same rights and privileges as refugees and immigrants.

Experiences and needs of ELLs

The newcomer student population continues to add significantly to the diversity within public school classrooms. Whether arriving as immigrant, refugee, or political asylee, newcomers arrive in the United States with distinct educational

needs and expectations. The most prevalent educational need is to learn English as a second language. In addition to learning a new language, Law and Eckes (2000) note that ELLs face major changes in adjusting to U.S. American society and culture, including:

- A change in geography or climate.
- A change in the size of the living environment and or the economic situation.
- A change in the culture of school.
- A change in social status or opportunities or goals.
- A change in the language.
- A change in their relationship with their parents.

In addition newcomer ELLs may experience what Eisenbruch (1988) has referred to as cultural bereavement. Having left behind loved ones as well as familiar ways of behaving, speaking, and carrying out daily activities, a newcomer ELL may feel separated or detached from the homeland and all that was once comfortable. Warwick, Neville, and Smith (2006) have observed that newcomers who are refugees or political asylees often begin school in the new host country with anxiety and insecurity due to emotional states that are in turmoil because of past experiences. Leaders in the area of second language acquisition have noted the power of the troubled emotional state to contribute to a high affective filter which may eventually block learning (Dulay, Burt, & Krashen, 1982). Undoubtedly, cultural bereavement, anxiety, insecurity, loss, and deprivation will lead to a high affective filter.

Embedded in the upheaval and adjustment experienced by newcomer ELLs is the pressure to either assimilate, or give up aspects of the heritage language and culture in order to gain acceptance from students, teachers, and society in general, or acculturate, balancing the heritage language and culture with the new. Specific attention to the adjustment needs of ELLs must be provided if they are to receive an equitable and effective education as they endeavor to participate in the democracy they or their families sought in coming to the United States (Green, 2006; Cowart, 2007). It is critical that teachers of culturally and linguistically diverse students possess the knowledge and skills necessary for creating a welcoming and stimulating classroom environment where all children are invited to pursue their dreams and become all that they may.

The role of music

Gay (2000) defines culturally relevant or culturally responsive teaching as utilizing students' cultural knowledge and previous experiences and knowledge to facilitate learning that is meaningful and effective for culturally and linguistically diverse students. When a child hears or sings or performs music from his or her own heritage culture, he or she senses that school in this new land and experienced in a second or third language may still become a welcoming and accepting place. As students experience acceptance their affective filters usually are lowered, and learning may take place. Music that includes rhythms, instruments, words or melodies from such countries as China, Afghanistan, Haiti, Vietnam, Burma, and Mexico will validate the heritage cultures of

ELLs, including the newest refugees and immigrants. Moreover, through the study of traditional music and instruments of different cultures, other students will have the opportunity to learn about a variety of cultures in a respectful, positive, non-threatening manner that invites every student to participate.

Thematic teaching that leads students to make cross-curricular connections is effective in building language and comprehension of related content area instruction. When language development and literacy concepts are taught in tandem with key musical concepts through the use of children's literature and related music and songs, the cognitive and linguistic results are frequently surprising. Mathis (2007) has stated that multicultural children's literature has become a well-respected and established resource for promoting culturally responsive and culturally relevant teaching and learning. The affective impact of utilizing culturally relevant literature and music woven together in interdisciplinary lessons is critical to overall school success. For example, when teaching about some of the instruments that were and still are used in music from Old China such as the arhoo, the music teacher might read aloud *Ruby's Wish*, the story of a young Chinese girl from Old China, in order to set the stage. When teaching some of the rhythms that are associated with various Latin American cultures, the music educator could read *Prietita y La Llorona*, a story of a ghostly woman who is found weeping and looking for her children near rivers and lakes. This book tells a familiar scary story that most Latino children have heard and is available in English and Spanish. In addition to the book there is also a folk song entitled *La Llorona*, which students enjoy learning and singing. When a

music educator combines the study of musical concepts with multicultural children's literature, the result is that all children, including newcomer ELLs, are able to learn musical content such as rhythm, repetition, keeping the steady beat, and high and low pitch. Simultaneously, the English language learners learn critical aspects of the English language such as pronunciation, vocabulary, idioms, and less familiar expressions while sensing that school is a hospitable place.

As a tool for the ESL and bilingual classroom, music is motivational and effective and may be used efficiently to clarify ideas and make associations between reading, writing, and music (Hancock, Turbill, & Cambourne, 1994). Zainuddin, Yahya, Morales-Jones, and Ariza (2007) have observed that regular education elementary teachers need not be musicians in order to effectively invite music into the classroom. When given a specific purpose for listening to a particular song, vocabulary development will ensue and grammatical concepts may be learned as well. Cummins (1981) has described music as context-embedded and cognitively undemanding, thereby making its use appropriate for the most beginning ELL. Noting that music is frequently a part of many oral activities in the younger grades, Ovando, Collier, and Combs (2006) state that music should be considered to be a vital feature of any curriculum for ELLs.

Music in its many forms may also assist in facilitating a positive acculturation experience. Whereas culturally relevant music from a variety of cultural groups creates opportunities for students to see their cultures and languages reflected in the curriculum, historical, patriotic, and traditional folk songs from the

United States provide multiple opportunities to learn the history, the structures, some of the values, selected memories, indeed the fabric of society that U.S. Americans hold so dear. Such songs and music would include instrumental music by American composers John Phillip Sousa and George Gershwin, as well as songs from Stephen Foster, considered to be the Father of American music. Foster's songs such as *Oh! Susanna* and *My Old Kentucky Home* serve to paint a picture of what the nation was like during the time in which he wrote music, roughly 1839-1864. There is a certain expectation that all members of a society would know the patriotic songs pertinent to a specific country. For the United States this would include learning such songs as *My Country 'tis of Thee*, *The Star-Spangled Banner*, and *America the Beautiful*. Songs such as *Johnny Has Gone for a Soldier*, and *Oh No, John!* portray in simple terms what life must have been like during the American Revolution and may assist the ELL in understanding some of the issues for everyday citizens during that time period. A study of traditional songs and music that are uniquely American affords newcomer ELLs the chance to learn aspects of American society that would otherwise remain unknown to them. Acculturation, the preferred and positive method of adapting to a new society and culture, involves learning enough about the new culture to be able to comprehend that which is meaningful and important to its participants. Every aspect of American history and culture that remains unfamiliar to ELLs will be a part of society in which they may be unable to participate.

Sample lesson plans and procedures

The following lesson plans and suggestions are appropriate for the music class as well as an ESL or bilingual classroom. Each lesson plan is fully explained and may serve to accomplish goals and objectives in both music and English language development. A discussion of the practical application of each lesson with ELLs followed by first-hand observation and reflection follows the lesson plans.

The Dinosaur Dinner

Suggested Grade Levels: 2nd – 4th

Author Unknown

Allosaurus, Stegosaurus, Brontosaurus too,

All went out to dinner at the dinosaur zoo.

Along came a waiter called Tyranosaurus Rex,

Gobbled up the table 'cause they wouldn't pay their checks!

(Hand gestures to use: 3rd line – one hand on hip, one hand above shoulder with palm up as if holding a waiter's tray; 4th line – both hands at shoulder level with palms up, pulsing to the beat of "wouldn't pay their checks.")

Learning the Poem:

1. Teacher chants the poem (with hand gestures) for students. Students listen and count the number of dinosaurs that they hear.
2. Teacher chants the poem (with hand gestures) for students. Students listen for the names of specific dinosaurs

mentioned. Students name the dinosaurs and teacher lists the dinosaur names on the board.

3. Teacher chants the poem (with hand gestures) for students. Students listen to answer these questions:
“What kind of dinosaur was the waiter?” “Why did he gobble up the table?”
4. Teacher tells students to echo her. Do this in one-line phrases with gestures.
5. Teacher tells students to echo her. Do this in two-line phrases with gestures.
6. Everyone chants the poem together, using hand gestures.

Playing the Rhythm of the Words:

1. Teacher demonstrates saying and patting the rhythm of the words on her lap. This means patting every single syllable, using a left-right-left style of patting.
2. Teacher tells students to echo her, saying and patting the rhythm of the words. Do this half of a line at a time (T: Allosaurus, Stegosaurus S: Allosaurus, Stegosaurus T: Brontosaurus too S: Brontosaurus too)
3. Teacher tells students to echo her, saying and patting the rhythm of the words. Do this in one-line phrases.
4. Teacher tells students to echo her, saying and patting the rhythm of the words. Do this in two-line phrases.
5. Everyone says and pats the rhythm of the entire poem together.
6. Using wooden rhythm sticks, teacher demonstrates how saying and playing the rhythm now looks and sounds.
7. Students use rhythm sticks to say and play the rhythm of the

words with the teacher.

8. Most students of this age group will be able to easily transfer the rhythm concept from patting their laps to playing rhythm sticks. If this is not coming easily for students, repeat steps 2 through 5, with the rhythm sticks.

Identifying and Playing the Rhyming Words:

1. Ask students, "Are there any rhyming words in this poem?" Many students will identify that three of the dinosaur names rhyme, as they end in "saurus." Praise students for identifying this and tell them they are certainly correct. However, we want to find the rhyming words at the end of the phrases; the end of the lines. As students name these words, write them on the board: too, zoo, Rex, checks. Possibly print "too" and "zoo" in one color, and "Rex" and "checks" in a different color.
2. Using a triangle, demonstrate how one would speak the poem and strike the triangle only on the four rhyming words.
3. Students use triangles as they speak the poem and play only on the four rhyming words. As the rhyming words occur, teacher points to them on the board with one hand, cuing students to play with the other hand.
4. Divide students into two groups. Group one plays the rhythm of the words on rhythm sticks. Group two plays only on the four rhyming words as they occur.

Feeling and Playing the Steady Beat

1. After students know the poem well, and can play the rhythm and rhyme, we will add movement and playing to the steady

beat. Students stand in a circle and step clockwise to the steady beat as they chant the poem. It is extra-fun if they pretend they are dinosaurs stomping to the beat. The teacher models how to strike a hand drum on the steady beat of the poem.

2. Students hold hand drums and as they step to the steady beat of the poem, they also strike the drum on the steady beat.

Putting It All Together

Divide the students into three groups and have every group stand in their own group circle. Group one can play the rhythm of the words on the steady beat. Group two can play the triangles on the rhyming words. Group three can be the “dinosaurs” stomping and striking the hand drums on the steady beat.

Using Our Inner Hearing

Inner hearing is simply hearing a song/poem/sound internally, without making any noise ourselves. For example, we all hear or sing songs “in our heads” without actually singing them aloud. This is an advanced form of mental concentration for elementary-age students, especially since we’re asking them to internally hear something that has a steady beat and to all begin and end the song/poem at exactly the same time.

After completing all the steps stated above in “Playing the Rhythm of the Words,” many students will be able to begin hearing the poem in their heads while playing the rhythm on their rhythm sticks, without actually speaking them. It is often helpful to begin practicing this skill by asking the students to lip-sync, i.e., move

their lips with the words without letting any sound come out. It is especially important to give the students a clear and steady count-off, indicating exactly when they should begin. It is also good if the teacher lip-syncs the words with the students, as some will need the teacher's modeling to be successful. As students improve their performance of this skill, continue practicing while adding the layering of the triangles on rhyming words and hand drums on the steady beat.

Chinese Ribbon Dance

Suggested Grade Levels: 2nd – 4th

“Chinese Ribbon Dance” from Edna Doll & Mary Jarman Nelson, *Rhythms Today!* The music can be found in the 1995 edition of the Silver Burdett-Ginn music textbook series, Grade 2, page 164. Copyright 1965 by the Silver Burdett Company.

Identifying & Performing Melodic Direction:

1. Play a recording of the “Chinese Ribbon Dance” music for students. Using a ribbon stick or scarf, show the direction of the melody as the music plays. Beforehand, tell the students to watch your ribbon carefully, as you will be asking them to identify and explain how it goes along with the music. (The melody of the music moves from high to low in the first two measures. It repeats this same downward movement in the next two measures. In measure five, the pitches are high, middle, high, middle. Measure six has two repeated high

tones.)

2. Play the recording a second time, again using your ribbon stick to show the melodic direction. This time, sing along with the recording, singing the words: "High, high, high and a little bit lower, a little bit lower and a little bit lower. High, high, high and a little bit lower, a little bit lower and a little bit lower. High, middle, high, middle, high, high!" As you are modeling the ribbon dance and singing the pitch direction words, have students raise one hand in the air and mirror the movement of your ribbon.
3. Display a transparency or PowerPoint of the written music for "Chinese Ribbon Dance." Tell the students that these are the notes of the music and that we are going to listen and watch how the notes move with the tones of the melody. If the students are unfamiliar with looking at written music, I suggest playing "connect the notes"; drawing a line from each note head to the next. This allow students to more clearly see the direction of each pitch to the next. Slowly sing the pitch words (without the recording), and point to each note as you do so. Have students raise one hand in the air and mirror the movement you are modeling and singing.
4. Again referring to the written music, sing the pitch words and tell students to echo and mirror your movements, phrase-by-phrase, as you point to the notes.
5. Play the recording again. Have students sing the pitch words with you as everyone draws the direction of the melody in the air with one hand.
6. Give each student a ribbon stick or scarf. Play the recording and have them do the "Chinese Ribbon Dance" with you,

singing the pitch words and waving their ribbon at the correlating height level. Repeat.

7. Repeat step 6. However, this time everyone should sing the pitch words in their minds, using their inner hearing. Repeat.
8. Students perform the “Chinese Ribbon Dance” as in step 7, but without the guidance of the teacher.

Why follow these procedures?

The steps in these two lesson plans have a specific sequential approach. They move through the concepts in a logical order that will promote student understanding. First, the students are exposed to the foundation of the activity, which is the music or poem. They are given something to hear and something to watch. The teacher should further guide the students by giving them a specific task; something to listen or watch for. After the teacher’s example is finished, he/she should question the students about the task. As a rule of thumb, it is good to allow students at least three “listenings” before being asked to sing or repeat language. This is true for all students, not just ELL students. However, students can still participate in the early “listenings” by mirroring teacher movements or being given additional guided listening tasks.

The next logical step in the procedure is to have students begin using language to echo the teacher, in either a speaking (poem) or singing (song) voice. Begin this step with short phrases. Younger students (K-2nd grade) should start with extra-short phrases, but older students (3rd – 5th grade) might be able to handle a little more.

After students have echoed the entire poem/song, repeat the echoing activity using phrases that are twice as long. In addition, adding movements or gestures during this process (as in “The Dinosaur Dinner” and “Chinese Ribbon Dance”) will enhance student acquisition of the language, as gestures can often show the meaning of the words. For example, in “The Dinosaur Dinner,” the word “waiter” is shown by putting one hand on the hip and the other hand with the palm up, as if holding a tray of food. In “The Chinese Ribbon Dance,” moving the hand up high, in the middle, or low, is happening as students are singing the words, “high,” or “middle,” or “low.” Gestures are an excellent way to physically show the rhythm of the language as well, if the gesture is done by pulsing the beat of the words.

As the lesson continues, students are constantly repeating the language of the song or poem. This repetition is reinforcing the pronunciation, rhythm and understanding of the words. Calling attention to rhyming words is also an important language concept for all students, ELL students especially. In “The Dinosaur Dinner,” identifying the rhyming words is a main part of the lesson. Students hear the rhymes, say the rhymes, see the rhymes and play the rhymes on triangles. Doing this helps to not only develop the pronunciation, rhythm and understanding of the rhyming words, but also the visual identification and spelling of the rhyming words. In “The Dinosaur Dinner,” there is even an example of rhyming words with the same sounds, but different spellings, “Rex” and “checks,” which is a good example of how words with different spellings can rhyme in the English language.

Adding instruments or props to the activity increases student excitement about the activity and certainly adds a more artistic and

aesthetic value to the activity. During this time, musical concepts can be slowly introduced and practiced: playing rhythm, playing the steady beat, performing melodic direction, and using the inner hearing, to name a few. It is important that the children are allowed adequate time to hear and see the modeling of these concepts, and then afforded plenty of time to practice each concept before moving to the next. Therefore, any of these lesson steps can be repeated, as many times as needed, before continuing forward in the lesson. The lessons provided are flexible in such a way that the entire lesson can be accomplished either in one class session, or, divided into segments, completed in two or even three class sessions.

Adding the use of inner hearing, as discussed earlier, advances the level of concentration in an activity. This should only be integrated when the majority of the students are very comfortable speaking or singing the poem or song. For many students, it is a welcome challenge and enhances their learning and musical appreciation. For other students, it may be too much of a challenge at first, especially if their English language is still developing. It is still beneficial for ELLs to experience watching their classmates perform, because it is only a matter of time before they, too, will be ready to demonstrate this skill.

Towards the end of the lesson, students should be given the opportunity to show independence in performing the activity. During this time, the teacher can observe and see which students have accomplished the lesson goals and which students need more repetition and reinforcement.

A first-hand observation of ELL student responses

Upon reflecting on implementing the “Dinosaur Dinner” lesson, it became clear that identifying rhyming words independently and saying the list of dinosaur names presented the bigger challenges for the ELLs. Because they had difficulty keeping up with the English-speaking students in repeating the poem in its entirety, their playing of the rhythm suffered. This was much easier for them in short phrases. With additional support, practice and a bit of patience from the teacher, they were still able to actively participate.

One of the authors recalls a 3rd grade student, Jesus, who began to really shine during the “Dinosaur Dinner” lesson. His comprehension seemed to take off during the rhyming section of the lesson. After a few rounds of practicing, it was evident that he was feeling the timing and beat of the phrases, correctly tapping his triangle on the rhyming words every time. He was a very beginning newcomer ELL at the time, but he played and spoke every rhyming word with confidence.

Upon completing the lesson of “The Chinese Ribbon Dance” with several groups of students, one of the authors observed that the ELLs experienced the most difficulty in understanding the directions upon their first listening and viewing of the ribbon dance. They also had a degree of trouble during demonstration when students were asked to identify and explain how the movements go with the song.

Another student, Reina, simply loved the “Chinese Ribbon Dance.” She learned the words, “high,” “middle,” and “low” that day. It was so rewarding to see her dancing with her ribbon and

showing the melodic direction of the music while singing the new language she had acquired.

With the substantial amount of repetition, rhythm, rhyme, movement and instruments and props utilized in these two lessons, it does not take long for ELLs to feel comfortable participating and to begin attaining the language of the poem or song. Even if the language of the activity comes slowly, ELLs are still able to enjoy the experience as they continue practicing the language. Their expressions of comfort, belonging and happiness are priceless.

The music class offers every child the opportunity to participate in a safe environment where the expectations for everyone are similar and, more importantly, attainable. It is not obligatory for students to understand each word of a song that is being learned. In fact in many instances, even children whose first and only language is English who are learning some of the more traditional tunes will not grasp all of the words and their meaning. Children learn to sing the traditional Christmas carol *Silent Night* without fully understanding the line "Round yon virgin..." and are still able to sense the overall essence of the song, while happily participating with their peers. ELLs have a similar experience. A former teacher of English as a second language recalls the story of an ELL who kept asking to sing the song about "Round John." Eventually, with a bit of questioning, the teacher learned that the student was requesting to sing *Silent Night* and had simply misunderstood the memorable line mentioned above. However, with adequate modeling and guided practice of first the entire song, and then small segments of the song, the ELLs will be able to sing and participate even when much of the language is not yet understandable. Visual aids will further support the students in

learning music and musical concepts together with important language concepts and vocabulary.

It is essential to assert that the suggestions in this section can be utilized by every teacher, not only a music teacher. If the music teacher is actually the regular classroom teacher who teaches music in addition to reading, science, social studies and math, musical concepts and aspects of the English language may still be taught simultaneously. Using the same strategies, the regular education teacher can use instruments and recordings along with culturally relevant children's books to achieve the same results.

Recommendations

- Embark on a journey of learning about and valuing the distinct cultures of your ELLs.
- Discover the traditional music and musical instruments found within the heritage cultures of your ELLs.
- Use music as part of your daily routine for lowering sometimes high affective filters.
- Avoid the temptation to allow your own inhibitions about music to prevent you from experimenting with this very good tool for the classroom.
- Find some of the out-of-adoption elementary music textbooks to use as resources for appropriate songs and music.
- Collaborate. The music teacher should work with the ESL or bilingual teacher to select music that will support language growth, the development of content area knowledge, and positive acculturation. Likewise the ESL teacher may use the music teacher as a wealth of resources for practicing important concepts.

- Begin collecting instruments that are representative of other cultures. Newcomers such as the Karen Burmese who were targeted for extinction by the ruling party in what was formerly known as Burma, will be thrilled to see a *se*, (like a triangle) or a *hne* (a type of oboe) or a *saung* (a boat-shaped instrument that sounds like a harp) in their classrooms in the new host country. The instruments will be as a beacon, welcoming the newcomer Burmese students to school in the United States.

Conclusion

An investigation of the numbers and sources of newcomer ELLs reveals that the variety of heritage languages and cultures represented in the public school classroom will continue to increase. Students who are immigrants, refugees, or political asylees possess substantial acculturative and adjustment needs, some of which must be met if academic achievement is to proceed. By incorporating culturally relevant music from the heritage cultures of all three groups and by also teaching historical and patriotic songs that tell the story of the United States, the effective teacher assists the newcomers in balancing a knowledge of and respect for both cultures, thereby encouraging acculturation. It is noteworthy to mention that seeing and hearing elements of the heritage culture may elicit memories of a happier time for refugee students, thus enabling them to be open to learning aspects of the new target culture.

In order for culturally and linguistically diverse newcomers to experience success in school, they must feel included in the school setting. The knowledgeable and caring educator of immigrants,

refugees, and political asylees will embark on a journey of discovery of the diverse cultures and component languages, values, and beliefs of their ELLs, and in so doing, develop a sense of intercultural understanding that guides perception and critical educational decisions. When students perceive that a teacher has elected to learn about his or her unique life experiences and to incorporate them into the curriculum, they sense that they are welcome in the classroom. Similarly, students who see themselves and their experiences meaningfully integrated into the school curriculum tend to believe that school is a place for them. The hope is that as intercultural understanding increases for both teacher and newcomer ELLs, academic achievement in music as well as English as a second language will be enhanced. Opportunities to explore music in both the music class and the ESL or bilingual classroom offer an excellent opportunity to promote intercultural understanding while accomplishing curricular goals and objectives. When asked what advice she would give to teachers of newcomers, a young ELL who was an immigrant from China stated the following:

Try to understand the background of the individual students, because each country teaches the students to act in certain ways. I think that if I were an elementary school teacher and I had kids coming in from other countries, I would try really hard to understand their background first and somehow need to realize that it's different, of course, a lot different here than in their old country and it's a whole different environment.

--Cindy, Immigrant student from China
(Igoa, 1995)

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