The learning of mathematics for limited English proficient learners: preparation of doctoral level candidates.


Summary: Across the United States, there is a growing number of students for whom English is not their first language. These students experience many challenges adjusting to new educational environments. These students are often denied access to the full curriculum in mathematics and the resulting opportunities for higher level educational experiences in mathematics and the resulting higher economic employment options. Educators need support in understanding and responding to the linguistic and cultural challenges that these students face in learning mathematics. A course entitled language, culture, mathematics and the LEP learner is part of the doctoral courses available to curriculum and instruction students at UNC Charlotte. The course focuses on theoretical and applied models of teaching and learning mathematics for English as second language learners. Research and current practice are reviewed with an emphasis on the design, implementation, and assessment of instruction for this population of learners. A qualitative analysis of students’ final research projects using narrative analysis methodologies showed that students (1) position issues within a larger sociocultural framework (2) advocate for the negotiation of pedagogical principles that blend language learning strategies with effective mathematics pedagogy and (3) identify assessment policies and processes that are supportive and limiting for these learners.

Classification: B50 C50

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