

IRN Final Synthesis Report
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Effective Teachers' Communicative Strategies When Working
with Linguistically Diverse Learners

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Status of IRN:

In 2017-2018, we added a new partner to our research network, Dr. Funke Omidire from the University of Pretoria, Cape Town, South Africa, bringing our network to four (4) countries: Israel, United States, South Korea and South Africa. In September 2018, we participated in two sessions at the 2018 WERA World Congress Cape Town, South Africa. *Effective Teachers' Communicative Strategies When Working with Linguistically Diverse Learners* (Invited Symposium) and *Effective Communicative Strategies When Working with Linguistically Diverse Learners: A Comparative Cross Cultural Examination*. We also participated in the IRN chairs' meeting. Our IRN has a successful track record of collaboration in a variety of spaces, including virtual spaces (e.g. skype, zoom), email, conference calls, face to face at each other's institutions and at conferences where we have co-presented our work (AERA, WERA). We have convened working conferences at both Western Galilee College and William Paterson University to visit classrooms of teachers in our study, review each other's classroom videos and reach consensus on how we would code and analyze communicative interactions. We will continue to use a variety of venues and .technologies for collaboration should this IRN be renewed

Publications:

Our article entitled, “*The Use of Modern Standard and Spoken Arabic in Math Lessons: The Case of a Diglossic Language*” was published by *Cultura y Educación* (2018).

We have two manuscripts under review:

- *Primary Teachers' Use of Communicative Strategies for Linguistically Diverse Learners: A Cross-Cultural Case Study. The Language and Literacy Spectrum*
- *Effective Communicative Strategies for Linguistically Diverse Learners: A review of the Literature in Israel, South Korea, and the United States. Global Perspectives on Education Research (WERA)*

Synthesis of IRN research 2015-2018

At the 2018 WERA World Congress in Cape Town, we shared policies and practices on teaching learners from linguistically diverse backgrounds in Israel, South Korea and the United States. We also summarized our classroom-based research on communicative strategies of effective teachers' when working with linguistically diverse learners from the three countries. From our own research and a review of the literature we concluded that teachers are struggling to find ways to accommodate new and ever rising numbers of learners entering their classrooms with diverse home language experiences. Additionally, teachers are not prepared in their regular education programs to help diverse language learners and certified world language teachers are limited (Wong, Indiatsi, & Wong, 2016). Finally, we found that enhancing teachers' instructional skills needs to take place

within a school improvement framework that extends to all school staff, family and community (e.g., Cummins, 2000; Krashen, & Terrell, 1983; Sleeter, 2002).

New IRN research in 2019

Building on the results of our cross-national research and feedback received at our conference presentations, we developed a survey study to pilot in 2019 for teachers of linguistically diverse students in four countries (South Africa is now participating in our IRN). The purpose of this pilot study is to examine primary/elementary grade teachers' awareness, preparation and teaching strategies when instructing linguistically diverse learners. The four countries represented include Israel, South Africa, South Korea and the United States. Teachers in all four countries are faced with similar challenges that include the education of learners for whom the language of instruction is not their home or first language. The survey will be distributed to teachers of elementary grade students and we hope to understand the preparation they received to be successful in teaching diverse language learners and the strategies they find useful in improving student learning and engagement.

We continue to look for interested researchers from other countries to expand our investigation in other cultural contexts. Ultimately, we hope to increase the knowledge base and dissemination of on best practices on teaching linguistically diverse learner

References

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