Chapter 5 Notes

I. Introduction
   a. The United States is a multicultural society
      i. Experienced teachers throughout the country report that the children they teach are more diverse in their backgrounds, experiences, and abilities than were those they taught in the past
      ii. Projections suggest that by 2025, more than half of the children enrolled in America’s schools will be members of “minority” groups, not of European American origin
   b. Early childhood programs at the preschool and elementary levels are experiencing an influx of Spanish-speaking children in areas of the country with little or no history of ethnic or racial diversity
      i. Expected to continue at an increasing rate
      ii. Barnett, Yarosz, Thomas, Jung & Blanco state that the number of children in the United States is growing rapidly, and the vast majority are from homes where Spanish is the primary language
         1. Trend is even stronger at the preschool level
         2. Hispanic children account for more than 20% of all children under five
            a. Also more highly represented in public preschool programs because they are more likely to be income eligible for such programs
            b. About 30% of the Head Start population is Hispanic
            c. About 25% of preschool children in public schools are Hispanic
            d. Head Start estimates that Spanish is the dominate language for three-quarters of these children
   c. More children enter school with addictions, diseases, and disorders, and without having had sufficient sleep, food, or supervision at home
      i. Teachers have found themselves virtually unprepared to deal with the vastly different linguistic experiences and abilities of language-diverse children
   d. Early childhood educators recognize that extra efforts made early in some young children’s lives can prevent problems with learning to read
      i. Children who are poor, nonwhite, and nonnative speakers are considered much more likely to fail to learn to read adequately
   e. Early childhood programs and elementary schools are examining older, traditional curriculum and teaching techniques because our school populations have changed
      i. Children deserve teachers and administrators who value diversity and recognize its presence in the classroom
f. For many language-limited or language-diverse young children, play opportunity opens children to expression and is an integral part of any early childhood program.

g. Barrett has reviewed research concerning preschool enrollment and later reading achievement.
   i. Summary of his findings:
      1. “Preschool programs can have an important short-term impact on general cognitive development and academic abilities including reading achievement. Effects appear to be larger for intensive, high-quality educational programs targeting children in poverty.”

   ii. His long-term findings included the following comments:
      1. School success (primarily grade repetition and special education placement) is dependent on verbal abilities
         a. Reading plays a particularly important role in accessing new knowledge from textbook readings and other schoolwork.

   iii. He concluded that preschool education in a variety of forms improves general cognitive abilities during early childhood and produces long-term increases in reading achievement
      1. Also notes that additional research on learning and teaching in the early years could provide more guidance for teachers regarding the most productive approaches to the development of abilities and dispositions that facilitate later achievement in reading and other subject-matter areas.

II. Child-Focused and Child-Sensitive Approaches

   a. Au states that the need to establish positive relationships with the children is important when children of diverse backgrounds exist in a classroom
      i. Believes that it may be helpful for the teacher to have an understanding of the students’ cultural backgrounds and the values they bring to school
         1. Once positive relationships and open communication have been established, students will accept the teacher as a role model and as a model of literate behavior

   b. Program planners are experimenting and refining instructional models
      i. These approaches are described as a child-focused and child-sensitive approaches
      ii. Safe classroom environment is one that respects differences and uniqueness
         1. Energizes young children’s ability to communicate desires, fears, and understandings

   c. NAEYC recommends that for the optimal development and learning of all children, educators must:
      i. Accept the legitimacy of children’s home language
ii. Respect and value the home culture

iii. Promote and encourage the active involvement and support of all families, including extended and nontraditional family units

d. Young children explore, question, predict, discover, and interact with their early childhood teachers, who are bent on fostering natural curiosity by serving as:

   i. Fellow co-explorers
   ii. Feedback agents
   iii. Providers of opportunity
   iv. Facilitators of children’s emerging language abilities

e. Teachers realize that children whose language skills or patterns are different are just as intelligent and capable as those who speak Standard English

   i. Purpose here is to assist teachers to:
      1. Help the children
      2. Help in such a way that it will not actually make matters worse

   ii. Teacher’s sensitivity to and knowledge of a particular cultural group and its different language patterns can aid a particular child’s growth
      1. Preserving the child’s feelings of adequacy and acceptance is the teacher’s prime goal
      2. Moving the child toward the eventual learning of standard forms is a secondary goal

f. Early childhood educators strive, through professional associations, individual efforts, and attention to standards, to increase program quality

   i. In doing so, each center needs to examine its program to ensure language learning is not seen as occurring only at language time but from the moment teachers greet each child at the beginning of the day

   ii. Every child-adult interaction holds potential for child language learning
      1. Key question is whether each child is receiving optimum opportunity during group care to listen and speak with a savvy adult skilled in natural conversation that reinforces, expands, and extends

  
g. Language acquisition is more than learning to speak

   i. It is a process through which a child becomes a competent member of a community by acquiring both the linguistics and sociocultural knowledge needed to learn how to use language in that particular community

   ii. Particularly important that every individual have equal access to educational and economic opportunity, especially those from groups who have consistently been found on the bottom of the
educational, social, and economic heap—African-American, Latino, Mexican-American, and Native American people

III. Standard English
   a. Standard English is the language of elementary schools and textbooks, and of the majority of people in the United States
      i. Increasingly, preschool programs are confronted with children whose speech reflects different past experiences and a cultural (or sub cultural) outlook that is different from the majority
      ii. When attending a preschool or center, these children, by practicing and copying the group’s way of speaking, become aware of the group’s values, attitudes, food preferences, clothing styles, and so on, and gain acceptance as group members
      iii. Some theorize that group membership influences children’s manner of thinking about life’s experiences
   b. Standard English usage is advantageous and a unifying force that brings together cultures within cultures, thereby minimizing class differences
   c. Dialect refers to language patterns that differ from Standard American English
      i. Dialects exist in all languages and fall into categories
         1. Regional and geographical
            a. Boston accent
            b. Southern drawl
         2. Social and ethnic
            a. Include African-American English, Puerto Rican English, Appalachian English, varieties and varieties of Native American English, Vietnamese English, and others
      ii. Dialect has been defined as a regional or social variety of language distinguished by pronunciation, grammar, or vocabulary, especially a variety of speech differing from standard literary language or speech pattern of the culture in which it exists
      iii. Dialects are just as highly structured, logical, expressive, and complex as Standard English
   d. Boser notes experts have been predicting the imminent demise of American dialects for decades, because of increased mass media, but the opposite seems true
      i. Atlas of North American English (2006), the first work to plot all major speech patterns in the continental United States and Canada, has found the regional dialects have become more pronounced
      ii. Boser points out that mountains of data have been collected on how dialects are changing
         1. Theory on why they change remains a challenge
e. African-American preschoolers who speak Black English (African-American English) use advanced and complex syntax such as linking two clauses, as do Standard English–speaking peers
   i. Black English is a systematic, rule-governed dialect that can express all levels of thought
   ii. African-American English, Black English, and the term Ebonics refer to a grammatically consistent speech whose key features include not conjugating the verb “to be” and the dropping of some final consonants from words
   iii. Debates in the past concerning whether African-American English is a distinct language or a dialect still exist today
      1. Elevating African-American English to the status of a language has evoked emotional reaction nationwide from both African-Americans and others
      2. Early childhood professionals have mixed opinions
         a. Many educators believe the professional teacher’s primary task is to preserve children’s belief that they are already capable speakers and also provide the opportunity for children to hear abundant Standard English speech models in classrooms
      3. Linguists and educators do agree on the desperate need to teach some African-American children Standard English, but there is little agreement on how best to do so
         a. Although it has long been suggested that the dialectic features of African-American vernacular English and its phonology create additional challenges for learning to read English, few efforts to test this hypothesis have been undertaken directly
f. Actually, only relatively minor variations in vocabulary, pronunciation, and grammatical forms are apparent in most dialects
g. Speakers of a particular dialect form a speech community that reflects the members’ lifestyles or professional, national, family, or ethnic backgrounds
   i. Certain common features mark the speech of the members, and no two members of a particular community ever speak alike because each person’s speech is unique
      1. Unfortunately, to some, the term dialect can connote less-than-correct speech
   ii. Speech accents differ from one another in a number of ways and are fully formed systems
      1. Children from other than nonmainstream groups enter school with a set of linguistic and cultural resources that
in some respects differ from, and even conflict with, rather than resemble, those of the school culture

h. Individuals react to dialects with prestige, acceptance, ambivalence, neutral feelings, or rejection based on value judgments
   i. Most Americans have but a superficial acquaintance with stereotypes of American Southern or New York varieties of English, which have been experienced while listening to advertisement or entertainment media
   ii. People make assumptions about an individual’s ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and competence based on the way someone speaks, and unfortunately, discrimination is not uncommon

i. Just as a child who meets another child from a different part of the country with a different accent might say, “You sound funny!” so others may think of dialectic speech as crude or reflecting lack of education
   i. Early childhood teachers are trained to remain nonjudgmental and accepting

j. Dialect-speaking teachers, aides, and volunteers (working with children and families of the same dialect) may offer children a special degree of familiarity and understanding

k. A Standard English–speaking teacher may sound less familiar but affords the child a model for growth in speaking the dominant language of our society, which is important to his life opportunities

l. Although a dialect (or accent) may be an advantage in one’s community, it may be a disadvantage outside of that community
   i. When someone begins to learn English, others may feel betrayed because they feel the individual has denied his or her identity and joined forces with those who are rejecting group values

m. Accented speech is defined as distinctive, typical speech habits of an individual or group of individuals associated with a geographical location or region

IV. Working with Dialect-Speaking Families

a. Many centers employ staff members who have dialects that the children can easily understand so that children feel at home
   i. Teachers who speak the children’s dialect may be eagerly sought and in short supply
   ii. Additional insight into the child’s culture and the particular meanings of their words is often an advantage for teachers who have the same dialect as the children
      1. They may be able to react to and expand ideas better than a Standard English–speaking teacher

b. Important for teachers to know whether the children are speaking a dialect and to understand dialectic differences
   i. Four most common dialectic differences between Standard English and some common dialects occur in verb forms:
1. Subject-verb agreement
2. Use of the verb “to be”
3. Use of present tense for past tense
4. Use of “got” for “have”

c. In some areas where a language other than English is spoken, part of the rules of the second language may blend and combine to form a type of English different from the standard
   i. Examples include:
      1. English spoken by some Native American children
      2. English spoken in communities close to the Mexican-American border

d. There are differing opinions about the teaching of preferred Standard English in early childhood centers
   i. In most centers, preserving the child’s native dialect, while moving slowly toward Standard English usage, is considered more desirable than providing immediate, purposeful instruction in standard forms
   ii. Joint family and center discussions can help clarify program goals

V. The Teacher’s Role
a. Understanding dialectic differences is important to the teacher’s understanding of each child
   i. To give young children the best model possible, the early childhood teacher should speak Standard English
   ii. Every attending child has been mandated to learn English in America’s public schools, and instruction in English always begins at some point during the child’s elementary school years

b. Many successful teachers have speech accents and also possess other characteristics, abilities, and useful techniques that aid young children’s development of language and literacy
   i. Matters very little to children whether the teacher speaks a bit differently from the way they speak
   ii. Teacher’s attitude, warmth, and acceptance of the dialect and the children themselves are a very important consideration

c. Teachers are in a unique position to build bridges rather than walls between cultures
   i. Teachers’ essential task is to create new and shared meanings with the children—new contexts that give meaning to the knowledge and skills being taught
   ii. Challenge is to find personally interesting and culturally relevant ways of creating new contexts for children, contexts in which school skills are meaningful and rewarding

d. Competence is not tied to a particular language, dialect, or culture
   i. Professional educators realize language instruction or any other part of the planned curriculum should not reject or be designed
to be a replacement of children’s language or culture, but rather be viewed as language expansion and enrichment.

e. Early childhood teachers may receive little instruction (teacher training) in the types of language behaviors to expect from diverse speakers or may receive little help in how to effect growth in language competencies.

i. Teachers themselves will need to do their own classroom observation and research to identify variations and differences.

ii. Young preschoolers have learned the social speech expectations of their homes and possibly their communities.

1. They know when to speak and when to be silent.

iii. At school they make inferences about what is appropriate based on what they hear and observe there.

iv. When children begin to use a second language or second dialect, they tend to use words in syntactic constructions found in their native speech or dialect.

1. Because many cultures, including Chinese, Vietnamese, and some Native American communities, expect children to learn from listening, these young children may be relatively silent compared with children encouraged to be verbal from birth.

2. Hawaiian children observed by researchers often did not like to be singled out for individual attention and tended to give minimal answers when questioned.

f. Because impact and swear words are said with emotion and emphasis, it is not uncommon for these words to be learned first and used at the wrong time.

i. In some cultures, children may be encouraged to use “yes” and interrupt adult speech to signify they are in tune with the speaker.

g. Some facial expressions or gestures acceptable in one culture may be highly insulting in another.

i. Even the acceptable distance between speakers of different languages varies.

ii. Teachers may interpret various child language (or lack of it) as disrespectful without considering cultural diversity.

iii. Misunderstandings between children, humorous as they may be to teachers, require sensitive handling.

h. A child may be a very good speaker of his particular dialect or language, or he may be just a beginner.

i. Staff members working with the young child should respect the child’s natural speech and not try to stop the child from using it.

ii. Goal is to promote the child’s use of natural speech in his native dialect.

iii. Standard English can be taught by having many good speaking models available at the center for the child to hear.
iv. Interested adults play activities, other children, and a rich language arts program can provide a setting where children listen and talk freely

v. Teachers refrain from correcting children’s oral language errors and look for meaning and intention
   1. Stress cooperation and collaboration and frequent conversation

i. Teacher should know what parts of the center’s program are designed to increase the child’s use of words
   i. Teachers can show a genuine interest in words in their daily conversations with the children
   ii. Teachers can also use the correct forms of Standard English in a casual way, using natural conversation
      1. Correcting the children in an obvious way could embarrass them and stop openness and enthusiasm

j. Delpit points out that constant teacher correction and focus on correctness impedes the child’s “unconscious acquisition” of a language by raising the child’s anxiety level and forcing him to cognitively monitor his every word

k. Careful listening, skillful response, and appropriate questions during conversations help the child learn to put thoughts into words
   i. Child thinks in terms of his own dialect or language first and, in time, expresses words in Standard English
   ii. Delpit recommends that teachers provide students with exposure to an alternative form and allow children the opportunity to practice that form in contexts that:
      1. Are not threatening
      2. Have real purpose
      3. Are intrinsically enjoyable

l. Preschool teachers must face the idea that children’s language and appearance may unconsciously affect their attitudes about those children and, consequently, teacher behaviors
   i. Teacher may tend to seek out and communicate with children whose speech and appearance is most similar to his or her own
   ii. Extra effort may be necessary to converse and instruct
   iii. Staff-parent meetings and additional planning is a must to meet the needs of children with diverse language patterns
   iv. Pronunciation guides helping teachers say children’s names correctly are gathered from families at admitting interviews

m. Working with culturally diverse children means lots of teacher observation (“kid watching”)
   i. May gives clues to each child’s preferred or learned style of language interaction

n. Sensitive, seasoned teachers will not put some children on the spot with direct questions or requests at group times
i. May include additional storytelling or demonstration activities with young children whose native cultures use this type of approach
   1. “Rappin’” and words-to-music may appear to a greater extent in some child programs
ii. Drama may be a way to increase language use in other classrooms
   o. Soto’s suggestions, though stated in 1991, and based on her own observation and review of research, are just as pertinent today:
     i. Accept individual differences with regard to language-learning time frames
        1. Avoid pressures to “rush” and “push” children
        2. Young children need time to acquire, explore, and experience second-language learning
     ii. Accept children’s attempts to communicate because trial and error are a part of the second-language learning process
        1. Children should be given opportunities to practice both native and newly established language skills
        2. Adults should not dominate the conversations; rather, children should be listened to
     iii. Recognize that children need to acquire new language skills instead of replacing existing linguistic skills
        1. Afford young children an opportunity to retain their native language and culture
     iv. Provide a stimulating, active, diverse linguistic environment with many opportunities for language use in meaningful social interactions
        1. Avoid rigid grammatical approaches with young children
     v. Valuing each child’s home culture and incorporating meaningful active participation will enhance interpersonal skills and contribute to academic and social success
     vi. Use informal observations to guide the planning of activities, interactions, and conversations for speakers of other languages
     vii. Provide an accepting classroom climate that values culturally and linguistically diverse young children
   p. Additional teacher tips
     i. A teacher should guard against
        1. Correcting children in a way that makes them doubt their own abilities
        2. Giving children the idea that they are not trying hard enough to correct or improve their speech
        3. Discouraging children’s speaking
        4. Allowing teasing about individual speech differences
        5. Interrupting children who are trying to express an idea.
        6. Hurrying a child who is speaking
        7. Putting children on stage in an anxiety-producing way
VI. Second-Language Learners
a. Many English-language learners are geographically situated in California, Texas, New York, Florida, and Illinois, but other areas are finding they are experiencing sudden growth
   i. Non-English-speaking children, like nonstandard dialect speakers, tend to come from low socioeconomic backgrounds and attend schools with disproportionately high numbers of children in poverty
      1. However, many will not fit this description.
      2. Large group of professional, foreign-born technology workers’ families reside in some urban areas
      3. In many countries, it is “natural” to grow up speaking more than one language
      4. More than 70 percent of the world’s population speaks more than one language
b. Language-minority children (second-language learners) can be defined as children who:
   i. Speak their native language in social and cultural contexts out of school and have developed the necessary communicative competence
      1. Also are being introduced in substantive ways to another language
c. Two categories of second-language learners:
   i. Those children who come to this country at a very young age or are born here to immigrants who have lived in areas of the world where language as well as the culture, systems of government, and social structures are quite unlike those of the United States
   ii. Learners who are native born, such as Native Americans or Alaskan native-born children, but speak different languages and are members of a different culture than the American culture
d. Terms that may be used in reading and research publications to describe second-language learners include:
   i. Bilingual learner
   ii. English as a second-language student
   iii. Students with limited English proficiency
   iv. Language-minority learner
   v. English-language learner
   vi. Linguistically diverse student
e. A bilingual child can be described as a child younger than three years of age who learns two (sometimes more) languages at the same time or a child who learns a second language after age three
   i. Sequential acquisition is described as occurring when children begin to learn a second language after the first language is only partially established
f. Not unusual to find enrolled preschool children who are just learning English and also possess different degrees of proficiency in two or more other languages
   i. Bilingual children initially might have smaller vocabularies when each language is considered separately
   ii. When one considers the memory capacity of young children is limited and this restricts their rate of vocabulary acquisition, it is understandable
      1. Bilingual children have two sets of vocabularies to learn
         a. Any particular point during development, one would expect them to know fewer vocabulary items in each language but approximately the same number when both languages are considered

g. Many experts suggest that if more than one language is spoken in the home and both languages are spoken well, the infant should be exposed to both from the beginning
   i. If the first language is spoken exclusively in the home, research indicates the child should be encouraged to develop expertise in a wide range of language functions in the first language, in the expectation that these will easily transfer to the second language (English)
   ii. Snow, Burns, and Griffin point out preschool experiences in their native language allows phonemic sensitivity to develop which may allow the child to gain an alphabetic insight that is needed for learning to read with ease

h. Most immediate question the teacher of a bilingual child must face is deciding how well the child is progressing in all the languages the child is learning
   i. Full language assessment with respect to the child’s first language and with respect to the child’s knowledge of English will probably show the child’s difficulties are limited to the acquisition of English
   ii. Testing of young children in multicultural and economically diverse classrooms is a growing practice

i. Phrase “culturally sensitive” refers to whether the test is responsive to social and cultural differences among test takers
   i. Tests of language always reflect aspects of culture, so it is impossible to construct a single test that is absolutely “culturally sensitive, and,” incorporates aspects of all cultures to which children belong

j. What is very important, when working with English-language learners is that the learner receives input that is not only comprehensible but just slightly beyond his or her current level of competence

k. Knowing common strategies that young children used to learn English as a second language helps teachers
i. Identified strategies include:
   1. Children assume that what people are saying is directly related to the ongoing situation
   2. Children learn a few stock expressions or formulaic speech and started to talk
   3. Children search for patterns that recurred in the language
   4. Children make the most of the language they already have
   5. Children spend their major effort on getting across meaning and save refinement for later

ii. Most educators estimate that most second-language learning children will require 4 to 6 years to become competent users of English, and some will take as long as 5 to 8 years

l. An effective early childhood curricula for second-language should provide for:
   i. Frequent and diverse opportunities for speaking and listening that offer scaffolding to help guide the child through the learning process and encourage them to take risks, construct meaning, and reinterpret knowledge within comfortable social contexts

m. The dilemma that second-language learners may face in early school experiences is likened to a situation where you can’t win
   i. To learn a new language, one needs to be socially accepted by those speaking the language
      1. To be socially accepted, one has to be able to speak the new language
   ii. Young children often hurdle this bind using various strategies, including gestures to invite others to play and accept their company
      1. Crying, whimpering, pointing, miming, and making other nonverbal requests may also be tried
   iii. Children collect information by watching, listening, and speculating
      1. They may talk to themselves and experiment with sounds or rehearse what they have heard
      2. Telegraphic and formulaic language develops and they may say “Hey!” or “Lookit” over and over to gain attention

n. Monolingual and bilingual speakers make inferences about social and linguistic appropriateness based on continued interaction in diverse social situations
   i. Learning a second language includes a number of difficult tasks
      1. The child must:
         a. Produce sounds that may not be used in the native language
         b. Understand that native speech sounds or words may have different meanings in the new (second) language
c. Learn and select appropriate responses
d. Sort and revise word orders
e. Learn different cultural values and attitudes
f. Control the flow of air while breathing and speaking

o. Tabors identified four stages when describing the way children pursue learning a second language:
   i. There may be a period of time when children continue to use their home language in the second-language situation
   ii. When they discover that their home language does not work in this situation, children enter a nonverbal period as they collect information about the new language and perhaps spend some time in sound experimentation
   iii. Children begin to go public, using individual words and phrases in the new language
   iv. Children begin to develop productive use of the second language

p. Researchers have identified many factors that may have an impact on how quickly young children acquire a second language:
   i. Motivation
   ii. Exposure
   iii. Age
   iv. Personality
   v. Aptitude
   vi. Consistency
   vii. Attitude
   viii. Learning style
   ix. Opportunity and support
   x. Individual characteristics of the home/family environment

q. An important technique that should be utilized by educators is admitting and recognizing that a child is a classroom resource when it comes to explaining other ways of naming and describing objects or other ways of satisfying human needs
   i. Printed word cards in both languages can be added to the classroom to reinforce this idea

r. Research has promoted the idea that bilingual youngsters have not encountered a lifelong setback but instead they may be more imaginative, better with abstract notions, and more flexible in their thinking than monolingual children
   i. Have also been described as more creative and better at solving complex problems
   ii. Compared with monolingual children, bilingual children may develop more awareness concerning the nature of language and how it works
   iii. Evidence suggests that being bilingual enhances cognitive development
s. Some English-only parents, particularly more affluent ones, are either seeking tutors or early childhood programs that offer their monolingual children the opportunity to become second-language learners
   i. Nationally, many legislators believe bilingual programs should be available for all children

   t. Researchers have noticed that bilingualism improves many children’s self-esteem and strengthens family ties
   i. Other researchers state it may cause family distress
   ii. Educators have raised concerns that placing bilingual children in English-only preschools and believe this may result in loss of ability to communicate effectively in their native language
      1. Might adversely affect family relationships and conceptual development

VII. Program Planning for Second-Language Learners

a. Educators urge program planners who provide second-language learning opportunities to realize that the child’s exposure, comfort level, motivation, familiarity, and practice in real communicative contexts are all important considerations

b. Curriculum developers in early childhood programs that enroll other-than-English-speaking children will have to decide their position on the best way to instruct
   i. One end of the debate espouses native language use, native cultural instruction, and academic learning in the child’s native language before instruction in English begins
   ii. At the other end, advocates would present English on the child’s first day of schooling, with minimal use of the child’s native language
      1. This view believes the earlier English is introduced and confronted, the greater the child’s linguistic advantage

c. National Institute for Early Education Research has policy recommendations that suggest support for English language learners should be specified and provided in both the home language and English where feasible

d. Educators note of all of these points of view but may see themselves as curriculum innovators using other instructional techniques but most all educators agree that other-than-English-speaking children need to be perceived as intellectually able and their teachers should hold high achievement and academic expectations for them as they do for all enrolled children

e. Most early childhood centers adopt a variety of plans and methods to help bilingual children
   i. Techniques are often researched and studied by individual staff members and are often part of a center’s in-service education

f. Au recommends that in any curriculum approach, educators need to realize that one factor that handicaps the academic advancement of English language learners is some teachers’ tendency to be overly
concerned about the surface features of language, such as correct pronunciation of English, rather than the content of the ideas students are trying to communicate

i. Also points out that if students believe what they have to say is important
   1. They will have the confidence to learn the language needed to express those ideas

g. Most programs approach the differences existing between home and school cultures by promoting children’s biculturalism
   i. Allows children to have successful experiences in their families, where one set of values and behaviors prevails, and in school, where another set of values and behaviors may be expected
   ii. In a culturally sensitive approach, early childhood professionals would use modeling with culturally diverse children and slowly introduce and increase the practice of teaching via direct inquiry, particularly using verbal questions while they continue to use modeling
      1. This practice would help increase children’s verbal skills and their ability to follow directions

h. Padron, Waxman, and Rivera define cultural-responsive teaching as teaching that incorporates the everyday concerns of students, such as important family and community issues
   i. Goal of this type of curriculum includes helping children feel more comfortable and confident
   ii. Planned activities that relate to the experiences of children’s everyday lives are relevant and significant
   iii. Cooperative learning activities that involve a small group of young children working together can be planned
      1. Recommended so that social skills and between group relations can develop

i. What are some of the common characteristics of programs that aim to provide students with dual- or multiple-language proficiency and foster academic success?
   i. Papadaki- D’Onofrio lists:
      1. Development of the mother tongue is encouraged to promote cognitive development and as a basis for learning the second language
      2. Family and community involvement are essential
      3. Teachers are able to understand, speak, and use with a high level of proficiency the language of instruction, whether it is their first or second language
      4. Teachers are well trained, have cultural competence and subject matter knowledge, and continually upgrade their training
j. Within the field of early childhood education, there is a need for knowledgeable, trained, competent, and sensitive multilingual/multicultural early childhood educators
   i. Early childhood educators who speak more than one language and are culturally knowledgeable are an invaluable resource in the early childhood setting
   ii. In some instances, the educator may speak multiple languages or may be able to communicate using various linguistic regionalisms or dialects spoken by the child or family
   iii. Educator may have an understanding of sociocultural and economic issues relevant within the local linguistically and culturally diverse community and can help support the family in the use and development of the child’s home language and in the acquisition of English
k. Many experts and researchers advocate recruiting teacher assistants and classroom volunteers who speak children’s native tongue
l. The value of exposing second-language learning children to quality books cannot be overlooked
   i. Story times and one to one, adult-child book readings can supply vocabulary and meaning in a way that conversational models alone cannot accomplish
   ii. Songs and music can also present language-learning opportunities
   iii. Print use in the center environment can also promote literacy development
   iv. Above all, opportunity for abundant play and interaction with English-speaking children is critical
m. The most successful methods for teaching a second language include the same features mentioned in the monolingual child’s learning of his first language—warm, responsive, articulate adults involved with children’s everyday, firsthand exploration of the environment
n. Additional suggested teacher strategies and techniques:
   i. Provide a safe, accepting classroom environment
   ii. Listen patiently, maintaining eye contact
   iii. Give attention to child attempts
   iv. Respond to meaning rather than speech technicalities or specifics
   v. Promote sharing and risk taking
   vi. Make classroom activities inviting, interesting, meaningful, and successful
   vii. Emphasize key words in sentences
   viii. Point at objects or touch them while naming them, when possible
   ix. Learn how to correctly pronounce the child’s name
   x. Include the child in small groups where there are other child models to follow
xi. Help the child realize he is unique and special, exactly “as is”

xii. Learn a few useful words in the child’s language (for example, bathroom, eat, stop, listen)

xiii. Gesture and use objects and pictures that give children additional clues, such as a picture-based daily schedule

xiv. Provide activity choices where the child does not have to interface with others—so-called safe havens

xv. During activity times, provide enough staff that teachers can work closely with children and materials

xvi. Use a running commentary technique in interactions
   1. “Serena is painting with red paint.” “I’m pinning a name tag on your sweater.”

xvii. Choose predictable books to share

xviii. Work with a small group at story-reading times

xix. Use repeated presentations of the same songs at group times

xx. Link up English-speaking “partners” in noncompetitive games

o. When working with second-language learners, a number of sources find that teachers made adjustments similar to families when talking to their very young children, such as:
   i. Organizing talk around visual references (real objects, actions, happenings, people, and so on)
   ii. Using simple syntax
   iii. Producing many repetitions and paraphrases
   iv. Speaking slowly and clearly
   v. Checking often for comprehension
   vi. Expanding and extending topics introduced by the child

p. During planned teacher-led instruction, the recognition of the child’s presence by using his name, his needs, and other children’s positive attitude toward and acceptance of the second-language learners in the group is paramount
   i. Children’s seating in a group, ability to sit near a “translating friend,” and their participation as a co-member of the group are also given close attention

q. Professional education associations recommend that teachers faced with many different languages in their classrooms consider grouping together, at specific times during the day, children who speak the same or similar languages so that children can construct knowledge with others who speak their home language

r. Playmates of second-language learners can be encouraged not only to be aware and accepting of other children but to approach and invite them to play
   i. Through discussion, example, and modeling, children can learn to use gestures, to use simple sentences spoken slowly, and to repeat themselves or use different words when they think their “friends” do not quite understand
   ii. Teachers stress that these new classmates may need help
iii. One classroom regularly scheduled a short picture-book reading time when a family member shared a book in a language other than English.
   1. Children could choose whether to attend
   2. Book would then be repeated in English by their regular teacher, and a discussion period examined how children both attempted to understand and felt during the first reading.

s. For any child learning English as a second language, making a friend is an important developmental step.
   i. Educators often pair children with an English-speaking partner or ease children into play groups for the inherent social and language benefits.
   ii. Individual differences always exist in any group of young second-language learners, just as they do with first-language learners.

t. Second-language learners can be ignored and left out of peer play.
   i. Even when trying to communicate nonverbally, they can be treated as “babies” or as invisible.
      1. They may be cast as the infant in dramatic play situations or be the object of a mothering child’s attention—perhaps unwanted attention.
      2. Other children may speak to them in high-pitched voices and in shortened and linguistically reduced forms.

u. Reaching families.
   i. Home-school instructional support programs have provided for use in homes with limited access to English-language models and storybooks:
      1. Books
      2. Electronic media
      3. “Borrowed” materials and equipment
      4. “Take home” suggestions for homes with limited access to English-language models and storybooks.
   ii. Encouraging families to continue to maintain their first language and their home language literacy activities and perhaps increase everyday conversations is a common practice.
   iii. Schools usually ask families questions about what types of language exposure a child has had since birth and what types of literacy experiences have been associated with them.
   iv. In some cases an interpreter may be necessary.
      1. Designing room features and planning curriculum activities that welcome a family’s participation in classroom activities and show acceptance are important considerations.
   v. Behaviors teachers can expect.
i. Both teachers and children can be expected to experience some frustration
   1. Preschoolers’ language ability is amazing, and teachers will notice more and more understanding of English, then hesitant naming, followed by beginning phrases
   2. If the teacher tries to learn the child’s language, the same sequence is apparent

ii. There is usually a period of time in which they will try to use their native language with children and teachers
   1. Eventually, they discover this is not an effective technique unless other children of their native language group are present

iii. Children’s nonverbal attempts can consist of:
   1. Trying to get attention
   2. Requesting
   3. Protesting
   4. Joking

iv. They are effective in only a limited set of circumstances
v. When words are attempted, teacher can expect a Spanish speaking child to have a problem producing:
   1. Consonant sounds that do not exist in their native language, such as ‘d; ’j; ‘r; ‘v; ‘sh; ‘th; and ‘s’
   2. Beginning of word blends—such as ‘st; ‘sp; ‘sm
   3. Word endings of ‘r’ blends such as –rd, -rt, and -rs, besides a few other word sounds

vi. Second-language learners may reach a stage where they seem to repeat words, and focus intently and rehearse words
   1. Happens not to communicate, but rather to practice through repetition, which is reminiscent of younger preschoolers’ private speech or self-talk during play situations
   2. These rehearsing-like behaviors are usually done at a low volume
   3. First unintelligible utterances that second-language learners often issue may be sound experimentation

VIII. Cultural Differences
a. Cultural differences in communicating are important for a teacher to understand because cross-cultural communication abounds in many early childhood classrooms
   i. Diversity represents the richness and uniqueness of human life. It is something we value and share with the children
   ii. Word multidimensional may best describe today’s children
b. Multicultural education hopes to prepare children for a diverse society in which differing languages are spoken and customs and values differ.
   i. Its goals include:
      1. Communicating despite differences
2. Cooperating for mutual good
3. Fighting bias and discrimination
4. Respecting others’ values
5. Providing for dignity and fair treatment for all
c. Early childhood educators realize cultural differences may exist and they listen closely to families to both understand family traditions, practices and family hopes for their children and to find common ground so that enrolled children and families will feel comfortable and respected at school
   i. They:
      1. Share their school’s philosophy that each child is welcome and precious
      2. Describe state, federal, and professional standards that mandate every enrolled child should learn English when that explanation is necessary
      3. Avoid making value judgments and acknowledge they have assumptions concerning what they feel is best and right when educating children in their care
      4. Realize some differences may exist between families’ wishes and their program’s philosophy that are not negotiable, such as a families’ request that boys should be offered more access to academics or physical development than girls—are discussed but school policy does not change
d. Study of cultural differences can help teachers receive accurate messages
   i. Gestures and body language of the cultural groups attending a center may differ widely in meaning
e. Teachers interested in studying the cultures of enrolled children can start by identifying components of culture:
   i. Family structure
   ii. Definitions of stages, periods, or transitions during a person’s life
   iii. Roles of adults and children
   iv. Their corresponding behavior in terms of power and politeness
   v. Discipline
   vi. Time and space
   vii. Religion
   viii. Food
   ix. Health and hygiene
   x. History
   xi. Traditions
   xii. Holidays
   xiii. Celebrations
f. The ways in which language is used in different situations vary from one culture to another
i. People from different cultural groups:
   1. Transact business in different ways
   2. Converse with one another in different ways
   3. Praise, criticize, and greet one another in different ways
   4. Have different ideas concerning the value of education for their children

ii. Variations in the ways cultures organize the use of language reflect differences in cultural beliefs, values, and goals concerning social roles and relationships in their group

g. Some American-born Hispanic children may, like their foreign-born, newly arrived Hispanic contemporaries, have difficulty communicating in English
   i. Temporary status of some Mexican families and their determination to keep alive their non-English mother tongue may account for a lack of enthusiasm to learn English

h. In some cultures, it is believed that children are not appropriate conversational partners for adults
   i. Children may not be encouraged to initiate conversations about themselves or their interests, and adult talk may not be child-centered
   ii. Children may have learned not to look directly at adults when talking
   iii. Some children grow up learning that cooperation is more highly valued than competition, while others do not

i. Cultures are complex and changing, so understanding cultural similarities and differences can be a life’s study in itself
   i. Culture is defined here as all the activities and achievements of a society that individuals within that society pass from one generation to the next

j. Ethnic origin is often a basic ingredient in subcultural groupings
   i. Subculture is defined as other than a dominant culture
   ii. Class structure also exists in societies consisting of upper, middle, and lower income groups
   iii. Often, patterns of child-rearing vary between cultures and classes
   iv. Families may express attitudes and values peculiar to their class or culture
   v. Attitudes and feelings of an impoverished group, for instance, often include futility, anger, violence, and loss of trust in anyone or anything

k. Teachers try to determine the backgrounds of their attending families, noting the individual nature of children’s home communities in an attempt to better understand children and provide language-developing experiences
   i. Their ability to respond and relate to what attending children verbalize is enhanced.
I. What cultural differences can inhibit child speech?
   i. Adult models’ lengths of sentences or their inability to modify their speech to:
      1. Child levels
      2. Neutral or negative environments
      3. Family arrangements that require children to be alone for long periods or in which children are expected to be quiet or cannot gain adult attention
      4. Lack of books or early reading experiences are all factors that can affect speech growth
   ii. Parents are the primary language teachers in the early years, and language competence grows out of familiar situations such as seeking help or establishing joint attention—situations that provide frameworks in which children learn to make their intentions plain and to interpret the intentions of others

m. Okagaki and Diamond suggest the following teacher strategies:
   i. Have consistent routines
   ii. Learn and sing a family song with the total group
   iii. Encourage children to share their cultural ways
   iv. Encourage children to share something special in their lives with other
   v. Use photographs of the children’s and teacher’s families on a bulletin board or class book
   vi. Ask families about the children’s favorite music or stories
   vii. Invite families to classroom activities

IX. Promote Acceptance
   a. Practitioners may have to field questions from children about another child’s speech
      i. Answering in an open, honest fashion with accurate information gives the adult an opportunity to affirm diversity and perhaps correct a child’s biased ideas
      ii. Negative stereotypes can be diminished or dismissed
      iii. Before answering, it is a good idea to clarify what the child is really asking
      iv. Examples of teacher statements:
         1. “Yes, Paloma speaks some words you don’t understand. Her family comes from Guatemala and they speak the Spanish language. Paloma is learning lots of new words at school in the language of her new country—English.”
         2. “Quan doesn’t talk to you because he doesn’t know our words yet. He speaks a different language at his house. He is listening, and one day he will speak. While he is listening and learning words to speak, he wants to play. Show him with your hands and words what you want him to do. He will understand.”
b. Teachers working with culturally diverse children need to watch and listen closely
   i. Children's behavior and movements will give clues to their well-being and feelings of safety in the group
   ii. Teachers may need to ease into situations in which unpleasant remarks or actions are directed at a newly enrolled child who speaks a different language and express sadness, such as:
      1. “Ricardo has heard some unkind and unfriendly words from you boys in the loft. He is new at school and doesn’t know what our school is like. I’m going to try and help Ricardo enjoy his first day in our room.”

c. Working with culturally diverse children also means that educators will guard against alienating children from their own cultural values.
d. Teachers need to remember that the ability to learn a second language and the syntax of that language is highest between birth and the age of six
   i. Same experiences and responsive care that gave rise to language in infancy will work
      1. Lots of language activities, labeling activities, listening to picture books, musical activities, play with peers, and the adult's time and confidence in the child’s grasp of new-for-him language usage
   ii. Just as repetition of experience was needed in infancy, it will again be needed

X. Cultural Awareness Activities
a. In planning language activities of all types, every effort must be made to make children aware of cross-cultural similarities and to explore differences
   i. Language arts programming should draw on the linguistic, cultural, and personal experiences of language-diverse children
   ii. When planning instructional activities provide opportunities that are familiar to them in their family and community life
      1. Parents and extended family members can be invited to share family stories and artifacts relating to theme units, learning centers, or other program components
b. Young children can be exposed to the idea that people eat, sleep, wear clothing, celebrate, dance, sing, live in groups, and speak to one another in common languages, and that they do these things in ways that may be either the same as or different from the ways their families do these things
   i. Planned activities can make comparisons, treating diversity with the dignity it deserves
   ii. Skin color, hairstyles, food preferences, clothing, and music are starting points for study
iii. Modeling friendship and cooperation between cultures and planning activities showing dissimilar individuals and groups living in harmony is a good idea

iv. Stories exist in all languages and in most dialects

v. Some centers ask children and parents to contribute family photos to use to construct a classroom “My Family” book
   1. Each child is asked to dictate a caption for each family photo
   2. Book is permanently placed in the class library collection
   3. When a new child enrolls, new family photos are added

c. Room displays, bulletin boards, and learning centers should also reflect the cultural diversity of attending children

d. Important to plan language arts programs that incorporate different cultural styles of dramatic play, storytelling, and chanting
   i. Librarians can help teachers discover picture books and other materials written in dialects or two-language translations

e. Planning for play
   i. Unfortunately, young children who lack language and social skills may miss out on peer play interactions, which are important in language learning
      1. Educators need to be aware of those children in their classrooms who are alone and perhaps humming, singing, and/or talking to themselves and should expend extra efforts to help them become skilled play companions
      2. This can have a tremendous impact on both development and social skill growth
      3. Through play and its resultant conversations, peers are teachers
      4. Child who cannot sustain play interactions with peers needs to learn skills associated with maintaining play relationships, which is sometimes tough enough for fluent child speakers
      5. The acts of resolving conflict, sharing, cooperating, collaborating, and negotiating all involve the use of language and are typical parts of preschool peer play
   ii. Planning play opportunity and experiences is an important teacher task in program planning
      1. Involves observing individual children during play periods and promoting play groups for children experiencing difficulties

f. Families as partners
   i. Translating to families the school’s respect for the culture and language of the parent is not an easy job
      1. Knowledgeable educators realize the child’s long-range advantage as a future bilingual and bicultural job seeker
2. Every effort should be made to support family efforts to acquaint their children with the parents’ native culture and its language, literature, history, beliefs, values, and heritage

ii. When working in communities with newly arrived immigrant populations, teachers have to devote considerable time and study to understanding the families and lives of attending children
   1. Strong connection between home and school should exist, with parents playing a role in program planning and as assistants or teachers in classrooms
   2. When family literacy rates are less than desirable, teachers have to proceed carefully with suggestions concerning reading to their children
   3. Wordless books and parent storytelling are alternatives

iii. Volk and Long have suggestions that help educators honor children’s home and school literacy resources:
   1. Guard against a deficit perspective that distorts educator’s vision when working with marginalized families
   2. Gain the perspective that homes, families, cultures and communities possess “funds of knowledge” literacies and individuals with valuable skills
   3. Understand children become literate in many ways
   4. Recognize most families’ value education and believe it important
   5. Recognize families may use different yet various and effect methods to support literacy
   6. Believe children participate in many literacy interactions at home
   7. Realize children may be surrounded by abundant human and literary resources including networks of support, and people of varying ages and abilities
   8. Recognize peers help each other and may clarify the teacher’s statements

XI. Program Types
   a. Controversy exists concerning which type of program is best suited to the child learning English as a second language
      i. Commonly found programs include:
         1. Bilingual program
            a. Two languages are used for instruction
         2. Transitional bilingual program
            a. Children’s first language is used as a medium of instruction until they become fluent enough to receive all of their instruction in English
         3. Newcomer program
a. Recent immigrant children with no or limited English proficiency, native literacy skills, or formal education are provided a special academic environment for a limited period
b. Both elementary-level and secondary-level newcomer programs exist
c. Provide a “welcoming classroom”
d. Teachers use instructional strategies to orient children to American life and culture
e. Bilingual staffs familiar with the children’s cultures are secured when possible
f. Aim of this type of intense program is to prepare children for success in English as a second language, bilingual, or mainstream classes

4. Developmental bilingual program
   a. Equal status is given to English and another language, promoting full proficiency in both languages
   b. Academic instruction is given in English and the child’s first language
   c. Teachers are proficient in both languages
   d. Mixing and translating language is avoided but acceptable at social times

5. Two-way immersion program
   a. Provides integrated language and academic instruction for native English speakers and native speakers of another language
   b. Students are together at least 50 percent of the day and communicate in both languages
      i. Enables English speakers to develop second-language proficiency
   c. Both groups’ families must have an interest in bilingualism

6. Tutor-assisted program
   a. Special tutor (or teacher) works with a child for a portion of the school day
   b. A full-immersion program offers an age-appropriate curriculum in a language foreign to the child
      i. Some parents, like Wardle, believe the early years are the optimal time to learn a second language and that every child in America should learn an additional language besides English
         1. Wardle notes that most full-immersion programs in the United States start in preschool, kindergarten, or first grade and those students attending these programs are fluent in the foreign language by second or third grade
c. Some classrooms combine approaches and program types and identify elements common to successful English-language learner programs:
   i. Ongoing and guided parental involvement
   ii. Professional development for both specialized and mainstream teachers
   iii. The promotion of proficiency in both first and secondary languages
   iv. The use of assessment methods linked to instructional objectives to inform instructional planning and delivery
   v. Developmentally appropriate curriculum
   vi. High standards for language acquisition and academic achievement
   vii. Strong staff leadership
   viii. Sheltered instruction, an approach that integrates language and content instruction
   ix. Academic instruction in English
   x. Special strategies to make content (in activities) meaningful and comprehensive

d. Visuals and images (pictorial representations) used while the teacher is talking almost always improve student listening comprehension and reduce recall errors

e. Assessment
   i. Usually undertaken when teachers suspect that a child has difficulty communicating and could profit from specialized instruction
      1. Schools and programs affected by the federal No Child Left Behind Act or affected by local, regional, or state standards routinely conduct mandated, periodic testing
      2. Teachers in these programs must document each child’s progress
      3. Individual learning plans are developed that include systematic instructional strategies when children are not progressing
      4. Goal is to identify whether a child’s language is less advanced than that of other children his age (delayed language) or is deficient when compared with performance on social and/or intellectual tasks (language deficit) or whether the child fits both categories
      5. Screening tests should be conducted by trained professionals

XII. Children with Special Needs
   a. Special language-development preschool centers with expert personnel are available in most communities for children with easily identifiable communication deficiencies such as hearing loss, visual impairment, and obvious speech impairments
i. Other children in need of special help may not be identified at the preschool level and may function within the wide range of children considered to be average or typical for preschool ages.

ii. In language arts, learning disability is a term that refers to a group of disorders manifested by significant difficulties in the acquisition and use of listening, speaking, reading, or writing.

iii. Most programs are reticent to label children as having language learning problems because of their lack of expertise to screen and evaluate children in a truly professional manner.

iv. Referral to speech-language pathologists or local or college clinics is suggested to parents when a question exists concerning a particular child’s progress.

v. Early childhood teachers are not speech or language pathologists and therefore should not be expected to diagnose language problems or prescribe therapy.

b. Communication disorders into two main categories:

i. Hearing disabilities
   1. Characterized by an inability to hear sounds clearly
   2. May range from hearing speech sounds faintly or in a distorted way, to profound deafness
   3. In the United States, approximately 1 out of every 300 children is born with permanent hearing loss.
   4. Estimated that by school age nearly 3 out of every 300 students have permanent sensorineural hearing loss.
   5. Undetected hearing loss often results in language delay and language deficits
      a. Not only can affect literacy, but also school achievement, degree of socialization, and readiness for both school and reading instruction.
   6. Identification of hearing loss and appropriate intervention before a baby is six months old can significantly improve language and cognitive development.

ii. Speech and language disabilities
   1. Can affect the way people talk and understand; these range from simple sound substitutions to not being able to use speech and language at all.

XIII. Speech-Language Disabilities and Problems

a. More than 13 million people in the United States have some kind of expressive speech disability.

i. Most common problem involving articulation—affecting an estimated 75 percent
   1. The rest, approximately 25 percent, have language, voice, and fluency disorders, or a combination of these.

ii. Most articulation problems not caused by physical, sensory, or neurological damage respond to treatment.

iii. Non-organic causes of problems can include:
1. Lack of stimulation
2. Lack of need to talk
3. Poor speech models
4. Lack of or low reinforcement
5. Insecurity, anxiety, crisis
6. Shyness or lack of social confidence

b. Language Delay
   i. May be connected to one or more of the following areas:
      1. Syntax (putting words together to create sentences)
      2. Semantics (using words and understanding their meanings)
      3. Morphology (using word endings, given the language context)
      4. Pragmatics (using social language)
      5. Sequencing (recalling and relating events in the correct order)
      6. Vocabulary (comprehending and using new words)
   ii. Characterized by a marked slowness in the development of the vocabulary and grammar necessary for expressing and understanding thoughts and ideas
      1. May involve both comprehension and the child’s expressive language output and quality
      2. Wise for families to consult a speech-language pathologist if the delay is more than six months so language therapy if recommended can commence
   iii. A complete study of a child includes first looking for physical causes, particularly hearing loss, and then examining other structural (voice-producing) conditions
      1. Neurological limitations come under scrutiny, as do emotional development factors
      2. Home environments and family communicating styles are also examined
   iv. Language-delayed child may have a small vocabulary, and use short and simple sentences with many grammatical errors
      1. He may have difficulty maintaining a conversation, and often talk about the immediate presence rather than future happenings
      2. He can have difficulty in understanding others and in making himself understood
   v. Besides linguistic problems, language-delayed children may have problems classifying objects and recognizing similarities and differences
      1. May ignore opportunities to engage in dramatic play with others
   vi. Additional behaviors a teacher might notice include:
      1. Less variety in sentence structure
2. Simple two- and three-word sentences
3. Less frequent speech. U frequent occurrence of playing alone
4. Less adept participation in joint planning with classmates
vii. Early childhood educators concerned about “late talkers” speech and socialization should discuss their suspicions with their teaching team and supervisors
viii. Tabors points out that preschool educators are often called upon to assess whether a child’s behavior warrants further investigation for intervention
1. Because communicative factors related to language affect children’s social behavior, it is often difficult for preschool educators to know where certain behaviors in second-language-learning children are indicative of true developmental delay or are merely due to the pressure of the new social environment to which the children are being exposed
ix. Researchers studying differences in the quantity of parent talk with their young children may find a wide disparity between two families one child hearing 700 utterances each day while another child hears 11,000
1. Children in the first category can seem to possess lower-level language skills not caused by any innate problem but rather an environmental situation
x. Teachers working with language-delayed children use the following interactive techniques:
1. Gaining attention with tempting, interest-catching activities
2. Being at eye level, face-to-face, if possible
3. Establishing eye contact
4. Displaying enthusiasm and playfulness
5. Establishing a play activity involving “my turn, your turn” interaction
6. Verbalizing single words, short phrases, or short sentences depending on the child’s verbal level
7. Pausing, waiting, and looking expectantly, encouraging the child’s turn to talk
8. Repeating teacher statements and pausing expectantly
9. Copying the child’s actions or verbalizations
10. Following the child’s focus of interest with joint teacher interest
11. Probing the child’s interest with logical questions
12. Maintaining close, accepting physical contact and a warm interactive manner
xi. A few children may make a conscious decision not to try to learn Standard English or a new language when they are confronted with a language other than their native language or dialect
   1. A number of reasons for their choice are possible
   2. If others enrolled or teachers speak their native language, they may believe it is not necessary or simply not worth the effort
   3. Families may not give a high priority to learning the new language, or children’s enrollment may consist of only a few mornings a week
   4. A child’s decision can be temporary or long term

c. The cloistered child
   i. Some teachers and educators describe children with inadequate language due to lack of human interactive environments
      1. To be “cloistered” connotes:
         a. Isolation
         b. Separation
         c. Limited experience
         d. Meager human contact
         e. A narrow view of the world
         f. Small or sparsely furnished living quarters
         g. A time-consuming devotion to spiritual contemplation and prayer
      2. In the cloistered child, the spiritual contemplation and prayer have been replaced with the passive pursuit of hours and hours of never discussed television and/or other electronic media watching
   ii. Cloistered child is thought to display one or many of the following characteristics:
      1. Limited attention span
      2. Inability to express ideas
      3. Limited language and vocabulary
      4. Inability to draw on past knowledge
      5. Inability to listen
      6. Impulsiveness (says first thing that pops into mind)
      7. Lack of perseverance (“it’s work. It’s too hard.”)
      8. Blunted interest and curiosity
      9. Disorganization
      10. Impatience, inability to wait
      11. Poor conversation skill
   iii. Curriculum recommended to develop what is seen as “missing language and missing experience” includes lots of talk, active involvement, time and play with other children, and exposure to literature
      1. Some educators would recommend opportunities to play with peers and plan actions, which facilitates the child’s
seeing himself in control, along with the promotion of child resourcefulness in seeking help from others.

d. The overstressed child
   i. There are many different reasons why some children have stressful living situations
      1. When young children’s stress is connected to new adults, new situations, groups of peers, books and book-reading times, or conversations with an adult, teachers will notice child anxiety and aversion behavior
      2. O’Leary, Newton, Lundz, Hall, O’Connell, Raby, and Czarnecka describe degrees of stress and possible causative factors teachers should avoid
         a. State that mild stress enhances conscious learning, but too much stress, especially for too long a time, prevents it
            i. Stress speaks primarily to the emotional learning system, and there it works primarily in a negative way
         b. Believe that extreme stress, caused by too much different information, unrelated information, or information too rapidly introduced or presented within too short a space of time, adds to a negative emotional reaction and clicks in a fear response
            i. This memory is engraved below the level of awareness and becomes conscious as an attitude toward or feeling about the situation or topic
   ii. When no pressure and stress exist, and safe school environment is experienced, many children who display an initial aversion to certain school activities, including language arts activities, venture forth slowly and their attitudes change
      1. Most early childhood teachers have been acquainted with children who avoid book-sharing times yet listen from another area in the classroom
      2. After a period, they move closer, and eventually they join the read-aloud group
      3. Their former avoidance and what seemed to be apathy becomes anticipation and enjoyment
      4. These children often do not avoid social contact with peers but rather the newness of the group book-reading experience
   e. Expressive and receptive language difficulties
      i. Educators begin suspecting problems in language development when they observe attending children in a variety of classroom
situations, including group times, play times, adult-child exchanges, and social interactions

1. In lower elementary school grades, including kindergarten, the following characteristics are cause for concern
2. They are seen as behaviors indicating expressive-language difficulties:
   a. Limited use of language
   b. Trouble starting and/or responding to conversation
   c. Heavy reliance on gesture or nonverbal communication
   d. Limited or nonspecific vocabulary
   e. Inappropriate grammar
   f. Difficulty in sequencing rhymes or stories

ii. Teachers handling preschoolers may think many of these characteristics are typical of younger preschoolers and that they will be corrected as the child approaches kindergarten age
   1. Their program planning and teacher-child interactions aim to erase difficulties, and they would be concerned if growth in a preschooler’s language ability and skill was not observable and apparent over time

f. Articulation
i. Articulation disorders involve difficulties with the way sounds are formed and strung together, usually characterized by substituting one sound for another, omitting a sound, or distorting a sound

   ii. If consonant sounds are misarticulated, they may occur in the initial (beginning), medial (middle), or ending positions in words
      1. Prudent to point out again that normally developing children do not master the articulation of all consonants until age seven or eight

iii. Most young children (three to five years old) hesitate, repeat, and re-form words as they speak
   1. Imperfections occur for several reasons:
      a. Child does not pay attention as closely as an adult, especially to certain high-frequency consonant sounds
      b. Child may not be able to distinguish some sounds
      c. Child’s coordination and control of his articulation mechanisms may not be perfected

iv. Articulation characteristics of young children include:
   1. Substitution
      a. One sound is substituted for another, as in “wabbit” for “rabbit” or “thun” for “sun.”
   2. Omission
a. Speaker leaves out a sound that should be articulated. He says “at” for “hat,” “ca” for “cat,” “icky” for “sticky,” “probly” for “probably.” The left out sound may be at the beginning, middle, or end of a word.

3. Distortion
   a. Sound is said inaccurately but is similar to the intended sound.

4. Addition
   a. Speaker adds a sound, as in “li-it-tle” for “little” and “muv-va-ver” for “mother.”

5. Transposition
   a. Position of sounds in words is switched, as in “hangerber” for “hamburger” and “aminal” for “animal.”

6. Lisp
   a. The s, z, sh, th, ch, and j sounds are distorted
   b. There are 2 to 10 types of lisps noted by speech experts.

v. Articulation problems may stem from a physical condition such as a cleft palate or hearing loss, or they can be related to problems in the mouth, such as a dental abnormality.
   1. Many times, articulation problems occurring without any obvious physical disability may involve the faulty learning of speech sounds.
   2. Some children will require special help and directed training to eliminate all articulation errors, and others seem to mature and correct articulation problems by themselves.
   2. Teacher behavior that aids the situation includes not interrupting or constantly correcting the child and making sure that others do not tease or belittle the child.
      1. Modeling misarticulated words correctly is a good course of action.
      2. Simply continue your conversation and insert the correctly articulated word in your answering comment.

f. Voice quality
i. Teachers sometimes notice differences in children’s voice quality, which involves pitch, loudness, resonance, and general quality (breathiness, hoarseness, and so on).

ii. Intelligibility of a child’s speech is determined by how many of the child’s words are understandable.
   1. One can expect 80 percent of the child’s speech to be understandable at age three.

h. Stuttering and cluttering
i. Stuttering and cluttering are categorized as fluency disorders.
1. Stuttering involves the rhythm of speech and is a complicated many-faceted problem.
2. Speech is characterized by abnormal stoppages with no sound, repetitions, or prolonged sounds and syllables.
3. May also be unusual facial and body movements associated with efforts to speak.
4. This problem involves four times as many males as females and can usually be treated.
5. All young children repeat words and phrases, and this tends to increase with anxiety or stress.
   a. Simply typical for the age and is not true stuttering.
6. Teacher should wait patiently for the child to finish expressing himself and should resist the temptation to say “slow down.”
7. An adult talking at a slow, relaxed rate and pausing between sentences can give a child time to reflect and respond with more fluency.
8. Keeping eye contact and not rushing, interrupting, or finishing words is also recommended.
9. Classmates should be prohibited from teasing a peer who stutters.

ii. Trautman identifies the following causes of stuttering:
   1. Genetics (approximately 59% of all people who stutter have family members who stutter).
   2. Child development (children with speech, language, cognitive or development delays are more likely to stutter).
   3. Neurophysiology (research has shown that some people who stutter process speech and language in different areas of the brain than people who do not stutter).
   4. Family dynamics (fast-paced lifestyles and high expectations can contribute to stuttering).

iii. Trautman notes that most stuttering starts between the ages of two and four, and about 20 percent of children in that age group are affected.
   1. Many others in this age group go through a temporary lack of fluency and outgrow it.
   2. Points out that if stuttering lasts longer than 3 months and begins after the age of three, the child will likely need therapy to correct it.

iv. Teachers need to listen patiently and carefully to what the child is saying, not how he is saying it.
   1. A speech-language pathologist is the appropriate person to evaluate and plan improvement activities.

v. Cluttering is more involved with the rate of speaking and includes errors in articulation, stress, and pausing.
1. Speech seems too fast, with syllables and words running together
2. Listener reaction and good speech modeling are critical aspects in lack of fluency
3. Adults who work with a young child:
   a. Refrain from criticizing, correcting, acting negatively, or calling a speech problem to the child’s attention
   b. Need to:
      i. Create a warm adult-child relationships if possible
      ii. Try to eliminate any factors or conditions that increase problems in fluency
      iii. Protect the child’s expectation of normal fluency
      iv. Build the child’s self-confidence as a speaker
   vi. Approximately 25 percent of all children go through a stage of development during which they seem to stutter (or clutter) when excited or are searching for a word to express their thoughts
      1. Child who appears to be having a problem may be going through a temporary lack of fluency associated with learning to speak
   vii. Only a minority persists in early childhood stuttering, whereas in the majority of cases, stuttering is temporary and an often short-lived disorder that disappears without formal intervention, apparently on its own
   viii. Females evidence a higher recovery rate than do males.
   i. Selective (elective) mutism
      i. Occasionally, early childhood teachers encounter silent children
         1. Silence may be temporary or lasting and will be a matter for teacher concern
         2. Children with selective (elective) mutism are described simply as children who can speak but do not
            a. They display functional speech in selected settings (usually at home) and/or choose to speak only with certain individuals (often siblings or same-language speakers)
   3. Researchers believe selective mutism, if it happens, commonly occurs between ages three and five years
   4. Because child abuse may promote delayed language development or psychological disorders that interfere with communication, such as selective mutism, teachers need to be concerned
   5. School referral to speech professionals leads to assessment and individual treatment programs
6. School administrators prefer that families make appointments and usually provide families with a description of local resources

ii. Teachers can help professionals by providing observational data to describe the child’s behavior and responses in classroom settings
   1. Many factors can contribute to a particular child’s silence or reduced speech
   2. Consequently, teachers are cautioned to avoid a mutism diagnosis
   3. A child’s teasing or any other action that causes the embarrassment of a child with language or speech diversity should be handled swiftly and firmly by preschool staff members

iii. At the beginning of the school year or a child’s enrollment, some children may prefer to watch and observe rather than interact
   1. Speakers of languages other than English may choose to play and speak only to those children and adults who understand their language
   2. These behaviors change as English usage grows and the child feels comfortable and secure at school

XIV. Other Conditions Teachers May Consider Problems
   a. Frequent crying
      i. Occasionally, frustrated children will cry or scream to communicate a need
         1. Crying associated with adjustment to a new situation is handled by providing supportive attention and care
         2. Continual crying and screaming to obtain an object or privilege, on the other hand, calls for the following kinds of teacher statements:
            a. “I don’t understand what you want when you scream. Use words so I will know what you want.”
            b. “Sara does not know what you want when you cry, Ethan. Saying ‘Please get off the puzzle piece’ with your words tells her.”
         3. Lets the child know what is expected and helps the child see that words solve problems
   b. Avid Talkers and Shouters
      i. Occasionally, children may discover that talking incessantly can get them what they want. In order to quiet children, others give in
         1. Somewhat different from the common give and take in children’s daily conversations or children’s growing ability to argue and state their cases
      ii. Language becomes a social tool
1. Child may find that loudness in speech can intimidate others and will out shout the opposition
2. Also prudent to have the child’s hearing checked
c. Questioners
   i. At times, children ask many questions, one right after another
      1. May be a good device to hold or gain adults’ attention:
         a. “Why isn’t it time for lunch?”
         b. “What makes birds sing?”
         c. “Do worms sleep?”
      2. The questions may seem endless to adults
      3. Most of the questions are prompted by the child’s natural curiosity
      4. Educators help children find out as much as possible and strive to fulfill the needs of the individual child
         a. Along the way, there will be many questions that may be difficult or even impossible to answer
d. Learning disabilities
   i. Estimated that over 5 percent of the nation’s students are served in publicly funded learning-disabilities programs
      1. The following signs may indicate a learning disability during preschool years:
         a. Starts talking later than other children
         b. Has pronunciation problems
         c. Has slow vocabulary growth; is often unable to find the right word
         d. Has trouble learning numbers, the alphabet, days of the week
         e. Has difficulty rhyming words
         f. Is extremely restless and easily distracted
         g. Has trouble with peers
         h. Displays a poor ability to follow directions or routines
         i. Avoids puzzles, drawing, and cutting
   ii. Experts point out the sooner a problem can be identified and treated, the better the outcome is likely to be
   iii. Most all programs handling children with learning difficulties strive to pinpoint causative factors, and assess children’s present level of functioning.
      1. Then programs and professional consultants develop individual learning plans (IEPs)

XV. Hearing
a. Screening of young children’s auditory acuity may uncover hearing loss
   i. Rones estimates 2 to 3 infants of every 1,000 are born with significant and/or permanent hearing loss and about 70 percent get their ears checked before leaving the hospital
ii. Seriousness of hearing loss is related both to the degree of loss and the range of sound frequencies that are most affected.

iii. Because young children develop ear infections frequently, schools alert parents when a child’s listening behavior seems newly impaired.

b. Otitis media is a medical term that refers to any inflammation of the middle ear.

i. Two types of otitis media:
   1. Fluid-filled middle ear without infection
   2. Infected middle ear

ii. Researchers believe that otitis media may affect babbling and interfere with an infant’s ability to hold on to a string of utterances in working memory long enough to draw meaning.

iii. Many preschoolers have ear infections during preschool years, and many children have clear fluid in the middle ear that goes undetected.
   1. Even though the hearing loss caused by otitis media may be small and temporary, it may have a serious effect on speech and language learning for a preschool child.
   2. Common cold outranks child ear infection, and a teacher can expect one child in three to be affected on any given day during some seasons of the year.

c. If undetected hearing distortion or loss lasts for a long period, the child can fall behind.

i. One of three children enrolled in speech and language special treatment therapy is estimated to have a history of middle ear disease.

ii. General inattentiveness, wanting to get close to hear, trouble with directions, irritability, or pulling and rubbing of the ear can be signs a teacher should heed.

iii. Other signs to look for include:
   1. Difficulty hearing word endings such as -ed, -ing, and -s.
   2. Problems interpreting intonation patterns, inflections, and stress.
   3. Distractibility.
   4. Inattentiveness.
   5. Asking adults to repeat.
   6. Confusion with adult commands.
   7. Difficulty repeating verbally presented material.
   8. Inappropriate responses to questions.
   9. Watching for cues from other children.
   10. Complaints about ears.
   11. Persistent breathing through the mouth.
   12. Slowness in locating the source of sounds.
   13. Softer or “fuzzier” speech than others’.
15. Loss of temper
d. Hearing loss can be temporary or permanent
   i. Early detection and treatment are important
e. Preschool staff members who notice children who confuse words with similar sounds may be the first to suspect auditory processing difficulties or mild to moderate hearing loss
f. Mild hearing impairment may masquerade as:
   i. Stubbornness
   ii. Lack of interest
   iii. A learning disability
g. With intermittent deafness, children may have difficulty comprehending oral language
h. Severe impairment impedes language development and is easier to detect than the far more subtle signs of mild loss
   i. Most infected ears cause considerable pain, and parents are alerted to the need for medical help
   ii. If the ear is not infected or if the infection does not cause pain, the problem is harder to recognize

XVI. Seeking Help
a. If a child’s speech or language lags behind expected development for the child’s mental age (mental maturity), school staff members should observe and listen to the child closely to collect additional data
   i. When speech is unusually difficult to understand—rhythmically conspicuous, full of sound distortion, or consistently difficult to hear—this indicates a serious problem
   ii. Professional help is available to parents through a number of resources
   iii. Most cities have speech and hearing centers and public and private practitioners specializing in speech-language pathology and audiology
   iv. Other resources include:
      1. City and county health departments
      2. Universities and medical schools
      3. State departments of education offices
b. Experts give the families of hearing-impaired children the following advice:
   i. Help the child “tune” into language
   ii. Talk
   iii. Provide stimulation
   iv. Read picture books
   v. Enroll the child in an infant-stimulation program during infancy
   vi. Schedule frequent doctor examinations
   vii. Join parent organizations with a hearing-impairment focus
viii. See the child simply as a child rather than “a hearing-impaired child”

XVII. General Suggestions and Strategies when Working with Child Disabilities and Special Needs

a. Investigate whether a child is receiving supportive services at school and/or at an out-of-school location
b. Investigate equipment and media used or developed for specific problems or needs
c. Create and provide visual aids that depict or clarify instructional intent such as posters, signs, etc. with pictures, drawing or photographs
d. Use gestures that clarify words
e. Place children next to others who can provide help
f. Use cues such as a flashing light or music to gain attention, if necessary
g. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, through federal and state mandates, ensures that children, who have educationally significant hearing loss and certain other disabilities, receive free, appropriate, public education
   i. Programs develop a team approach that includes families or others familiar with the child’s personality and interests, and professionals who are knowledgeable
   ii. This group creates individualized learning plans
   iii. Classroom environments are designed to promote learning and child comfort

XVIII. Advanced Language Achievement

a. Each child is unique
   i. A few children speak clearly and use long and complex sentences at two, three, or four years of age
   ii. They express ideas originally and excitedly, enjoying individual and group discussions
   iii. Some may read simple primers (or other books) along with classroom word labels
   iv. Activities that are commonly used with kindergarten or first-grade children may interest them
   v. Just as there is no stereotypical average child, language-talented children are also unique individuals. Inferring these language-precocious children are also intellectually gifted is not at issue here
   vi. Young children with advanced language development may exhibit many of the following characteristics
      1. They:
         a. Attend to tasks in a persistent manner for long periods
         b. Focus deeply or submerge themselves in what they are doing
c. Speak maturely and use a larger-than-usual vocabulary
d. Show a searching, exploring curiosity
e. Ask questions that go beyond immediate happenings
f. Demonstrate avid interest in words, alphabet letters, numbers, or writing tools
g. Remember small details of past experiences and compare them with present happenings
h. Read books (or words) by memorizing pictures or words
i. Prefer solitary activities at times
j. Offer ideas often and easily
k. Rapidly acquire English skills, if bilingual, when exposed to a language-rich environment
l. Tell elaborate stories
m. Show a mature or unusual sense of humor for age
n. Possess an exceptional memory
o. Exhibit high concentration
p. Show attention to detail
q. Exhibit a wide range of interests
r. Demonstrate a sense of social responsibility
s. Show a rich imagination
t. Possess a sense of wonder
u. Enjoy composing poems or stories
v. Use richly descriptive expressions in talking
w. Are highly attentive listeners who remember exceptionally well
x. Read print in the classroom environment
y. Write recognizable words or combinations of words
z. Have sophisticated computer skills
aa. Express feelings and emotions, as in storytelling, movement, and visual arts
bb. Use rich imagery in informal language
c. Exhibit originality of ideas and persistence in problem solving
dd. Exhibit a high degree of imagination

b. Preschoolers may recognize letters early and show an early focus on printed matter
   i. May be interested in foreign languages and also exhibit correct pronunciation and sentence structure in their native language
   ii. Young children may show an advanced vocabulary and may begin reading before they start preschool

c. Unfortunately, young children may not be identified as gifted or talented if they:
i. Are quiet, noncompetitive, and nonassertive
ii. Are slow to openly express feelings
iii. Rarely make direct eye contact, ask questions, or challenge something they know is incorrect
iv. Are acting appropriately according to their home culture may not be identified as gifted or talented
d. Most experts recommend planning activities within the regular curriculum that promote advanced children’s creative thinking
i. Suggestions include providing:
   1. Fluency opportunities
      a. Promoting many different responses, for example, “What are all the ways you can think of to . . .”
   2. Flexibility opportunities
      a. Having the facility to change a mind-set or see things in a different light, for example, “If you were a Christmas tree, how would you feel...”
   3. Originality opportunities
      a. For example, “Make something that no one else will think of.”
   4. Elaboration opportunities
      a. Embellishing of an idea or adding detail, for example, presenting a doodle or squiggle and asking, “What could it be?”
ii. Some educators believe that teachers can help ward off problems for advanced students by grouping language advanced children with others of high ability or shared interests
   a. Other educators feel doing so robs peers of the sparkle and insight some peers possess
iii. Arranging situations in which the child’s gifts or talents are seen as a group asset is another tactic, as is
iv. Promoting individual special assignments and varied projects
e. If teachers believe as does Gardner in the theory of multiple intelligences (one of which is linguistic intelligence) and in the occurrence of “crystallizing experiences,” they will notice the young children who take particular interest in and react overtly to some attractive quality or feature of a language arts activity
i. These children will tend to immerse themselves and focus deeply
   1. May be the child who loves to act roles in dramatic play, collects words, is fascinated with books or alphabet letters, creates daily rhymes, or displays similar behaviors
   2. Child may persist and spend both time and effort on his chosen pursuit and displays a definite intellectual gift
f. Renzulli defines the talented child’s behavior as “evident when a child displays three basic characteristics . . . above-average ability,
creativity, and “task commitment,” that special drive and motivation that causes some individuals to persist at something when others would quit.”