An English Language Learner is like this picture because…

Source: Jim Cummins & Centre for Intercultural Learning (Canada)
ELL Iceberg
Who defined BICS and CALPs?

• An expert, Jim Cummins differentiated between social language (BICS) and academic language (CALP)

• ESOL students acquire BICS rather quickly (e.g., 1-2 years)

• It takes longer to learn CALP (e.g., about 5-7 years)
BICS & CALP

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency
What is BICS?

• Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) are language skills needed in social situations.
• ELLs use BICS during social interactions in a meaningful social context (e.g., party, talking to a friend).
What is CALPs?

• Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency refers to formal academic learning.
• This level of language learning is essential for students success in school.
• ELLs need time and support to become proficient in academic areas.
BICS/CALP based on graphic by Jim Cummins, Canadian Linguist and Researcher
BICS vs. CALPs

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills

- Conversational fluency: social language
- Includes “Silent Period”
- Lasts 1 – 3 years
- Early production: 1000 words (0-1 year)
- Speech Emergence: 3000 words (1-2 years)

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency

- Academic proficiency: “school” language
- Intermediate fluency: 6000 words (1-5 years)
- Advanced and continuing language development: 7000 words+ (5-7 and even 10 years)
Based on graphic by Jim Cummins

**Cummins Quadrants**

- **A** Cognitively Undemanding CALP (Easy)
- **B** Cognitively Demanding CALP (Challenging)
- **C** Context Reduced “Abstract” (No Clues)
- **D** Context Embedded “Concrete” (Clues)

**Axes**
- **Show**
- **Tell**
- **Try**
- **Do**
Cognitively Undemanding CALP (Easy)

**Show**
Model
Demonstrate
Exhibit Visuals
Diagram Chart
Media Presentation

**Skills:**
Observe
Identify differences
Identify similarities
Notice Qualities

**Context**
Embedded
“Concrete” (Clues)
Cognitively Demanding CALP (Hard)

Try (together)
Hands-on
Manipulatives
Choral response
Group Discussion
Role Play
Mapping/Clustering

Skills:
- Order
- Classify
- Test concepts
- Anticipate/Predict
- Analyze/Reason

Context
Embedded
“Concrete” (Clues)

Cognitively Demanding CALP (Hard)
Cummins Quadrants
Cognitively Undemanding CALP (Easy)

A

Tell
Read-aloud
Audio/Visuals
Guest Speaker
Reference books/
Computer
Lecture

B

Skills:
Recall
Label concrete objects
Label concepts
Label relationships

C

Context
Reduced
“Abstract”
(No clues)

D
Cummins Quadrants

A

Do
Homework
Compositions
Computer Applications
Group Discussion
Test
Worksheets

Skills:
Question
Infer causes
Infer effects
Conclude
Generalize

Context
Reduced
“Abstract”
(No clues)

B

C

D

Cognitively Demanding CALP (Hard)
Based on graphic by Jim Cummins

**Cummins Quadrants**

**A**
- **Show**
  - Model
  - Demonstrate
  - Exhibit Visuals
  - Diagram Chart
  - Media Presentation
- **Skills**
  - Observe
  - Identify differences
  - Identify similarities
  - Notice Qualities

**B**
- **Try (together)**
  - Hands-on Manipulatives
  - Choral response
  - Group Discussion
  - Role Play
  - Mapping/Clustering
- **Skills**
  - Order
  - Classify
  - Test concepts
  - Anticipate/Predict
  - Analyze/Reason

**C**
- **Tell**
  - Read-aloud
  - Audio/Visuals
  - Guest Speaker
  - Reference books/Computer
  - Lecture
- **Skills**
  - Recall
  - Label concrete objects
  - Label concepts
  - Label relationships

**D**
- **Do**
  - Homework
  - Compositions
  - Computer Applications
  - Group Discussion
  - Test
  - Worksheets
- **Skills**
  - Question
  - Infer causes
  - Infer effects
  - Conclude
  - Generalize

**Context Embedded**
- “Concrete” (Clues)

**Context Reduced**
- “Abstract” (No Clues)

**Cognitively Undemanding CALP (Easy)**

**Cognitively Demanding CALP (Challenging)**
ELL Iceberg

Cognitive Process
- Knowledge
- Comprehension
- Application

Language Process
- Vocabulary
- Pronunciation
- Grammar

- Analysis
- Synthesis
- Evaluation

Semantic meaning
- Functional meaning
How do BICS/CALPs relate to ESOL Instructional Levels?

- **BICS**
  - Beginner/Level 1
  - Intermediate/Level 2
  - Advanced/Level 3

- **CALPS**
  - Exited ESOL Student
Length of Time Required to Achieve Age-Appropriate Levels of Social and Academic Language Proficiency

ESL learners
Native English Speakers

Diversity in our classroom

• Our classrooms are becoming more diverse
  – Various gifts, talents, and learning styles
  – Different kinds of disabilities
  – Behavioral challenges
  – Different cultural and linguistic backgrounds
    • Immigrants, speakers of dialect, non-exposure to academic English
Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Learners

- 1 in 3 children nationwide is from an ethnic or racial minority group
- 1 in 7 speaks a language other than English at home
- 1 in 15 was born outside the US
- Drop out rate: 1/10 non-Hispanic white, 1/4 African Americans, 1/3 Hispanics, 1/2 Native Americans, 2/3 Immigrants
• One lesson fits all? Clearly ineffective
• Separate lesson plans? Unrealistic
• Start with Best Practices that are helpful to all learners
  – Many of which we know, but must now be intentional about using
Universal Design:
All students learn better when

• Academic content and language objectives are clearly defined
• Explanations and expectations for academic task are modeled and clear
• Visuals, graphic organizers, and supplementary materials are used
• There are opportunities for hands–on learning and inquiry
• There is task-based interaction/discussion in cooperative groups
• Thinking and learning strategies are explicitly modeled
• They can build on their background experiences, knowledge, and strengths
• Key vocabulary and concepts are emphasized
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