

Upon my experience and observations in K-12 classrooms, knowledge of Multilingual Education and experience as a bilingual individual, I am very interested in applying the Integrated Multilingual Learner Pathway.

As a fully fluent English and Spanish speaker, the use of multiple languages in singular contexts have been present all of my life and hold great importance. I have grown up learning and speaking two languages while attending an immersion school since kindergarten, and continued classes until my last year of college. Additionally, I have a Bachelor's of Arts in Spanish Study and continue to use my second language during my day to day life. Being able to learn a second language has been very rewarding and important to me, especially living in California where Spanish is so commonly used. I have seen first hand just how crucial language can be in a school, work and community setting while growing up in Los Angeles.

As "Educating English Language Learners" by Diane August mentions, it is crucial to multilingual learners to integrate language development with content instruction and family/community engagement. One personal example I have of this includes the celebration of Dia de los Muertos at my elementary school; Edison Language Academy. Since kindergarten, we were taught about the rich culture that comes with the Spanish language, and Day of the Dead was heavily discussed and celebrated. We participated in the making of altars, were taught to bring offerings, and learnt about those who passed in our community. Here, classmates, teachers, neighbours, family and friends got together for the weekend of November 1-2, but prepared for weeks in advance. This is only one beautiful and important instance where I was taught about a culture and language through content instruction and community engagement, and I can definitely say that it was successful in my cultural and linguistic development as a Spanish speaker.

As for less personal experiences and observations within K-12 classrooms, I have seen how methods such as these can be effective for multilingual learners during my time working at University High School in Los Angeles. While Los Angeles is a very culture-rich and racially-diverse city, so are our languages and the individuals that learn them. I have been working one on one with two individuals from University High School whose first language is Armenian. Upon receiving these cases, I was worried I would not connect with my students since we did not share the same first language, yet this quickly was dismissed. There have been several opportunities such as cultural projects/presentations for these students to share their culture and language with those around them like teachers, peers and even other staff members such as myself. I have seen these students thrive in confidence and contentment while learning English due to the community around them, and methods of instruction at their school. Specifically, both students use Armenian throughout the day when talking to staff who speak this language, or when teaching those around them new words and phrases. This space allows them to be comfortable and connect with those around them. Additionally, whenever my students have

faced confusion with an English word, phrase, or instruction, I have witnessed teachers and peers consistently going above and beyond to ensure they fully grasp the material being taught. Schools such as University High School have shown me how language development and academic success are best met with inclusive content instruction while recognizing student's cultural and linguistic assets, and engaging community.

Through personal **and** distant experiences/observations in K-12 classrooms, as well as my knowledge of Multilingual Education, I am determined to learn and teach by the standards of the Integrated Multilingual Learner Pathway.