

Expectancy Effect on Academic Success of English Language Learners - A Literature Review

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Abstract. English Language Learners (ELLs) comprise a unique student body in the demographics of the student population. However, the innate challenge of acquiring language proficiency often reveals as an additional barrier for them to succeed early enough in their schooling; therefore, pedagogical studies derived to investigate factors that limit teachers and students from achieving their goals. Among them, teachers' expectations construct effective pedagogy that addresses both the linguistic and socio-emotional needs to succeed academically. This paper thus reviews the mechanism of expectancy effect on academic success. Specifically, this effect enacts upon intrinsic motivation, nurtured through enhanced teacher-student interaction and classroom environment, to mediate the gap of achievement due to socio-economic backgrounds. Further, professional development is implied at the end to investigate barriers of access for these students for future studies.

Keywords: English Language Learners, expectation, motivation, success, professional development.

1. Introduction

English Language Learners (ELLs) describe unique learners who acquire language while constructing academic knowledge systems; thus, diversity captures the distinct perspectives, experiences, and identities that they bring into the learning environment (PennState College of Education, n.d.). Despite their strength learning across context, they are in fact, more prone than their counterparts to experience academic failures as a result of the repercussion effect of racism sustained and perpetuated in the education system (Riley & Pidgeon, 2019). Specifically, teachers' attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors are moderated and calibrated by curriculum expectation differentiated towards learners with different backgrounds (Harris, 2012). In this process, Eurocentrism, at the expense of other non-Western ways of knowing, characterizes well-accepted curricula and practices that reinforce stereotypes and stigma attached to ELLs (Riley & Pidgeon, 2019). In addition, expectancy effect affects disproportionately students with marginalized backgrounds, compared to students with other backgrounds, to achieve learning goals. This insight is based on a shared knowledge that the demographic composition of the teaching staff also plays a role in self-perception, -expectation, and motivation of individual student to participate in the education system (Gershenson, Holt, & Papageorge, 2016).

As a consequence of systemic exclusion and marginalization, ELLs' "reading progress" (Richardson, Rocconi, & Crewdson, 2020, p. 480) and mathematics achievement (Luevano & Collins, 2020) fall behind. Further, biases in teacher's perception of ELLs reinforce existing inequity in which ELLs' identities are stereotyped and their needs are homogenized to efface learning differences. Specifically, misdiagnose with exceptionalities often characterizes experience of ELLs, although there is a difference between learning disabilities and language acquisition (Swanson, Kong, Petcu, & Asencio Pimentel, 2020), contributing to academic failures experienced by many ELLs (García & Wei, 2014).

As such, this study delves into the expectancy effect on academic achievement. Particularly, expectation enacts upon intrinsic motivation, cultivated through enhanced teacher-student interaction (Rubie-Davies, 2007) and classroom learning environment (Szumski & Karwowski, 2019), to promote success. Thus, expecting ELLs to the same degree as non-ELLs and providing them with resources and services will pave the path of success for them. Further, enhanced teacher-student interaction and inclusive learning environment transmit expectation that builds self-perception,

understanding, and motivation among individual student. This transmissive mechanism, in addition to knowledge of the strengths and needs proposed so far, imply professional development on expectation that builds self-expectancy; in this process, motivation is enacted upon as an intermediary between individual and environment to achieve learning goals. Thus, more studies on expectancy effect from professional training will add to support available to ELLs, in addition to proposals on curriculum modification and accommodation (Hakuta, Santos, & Fang, 2013), pedagogy renovation (Gee, 2012; Wei, 2018), and new framework of working with families (Souto-Manning, & Swick, 2006) that reveal the nuances of needs derived from practices.

2. Expectancy Effect Enacts Upon Intrinsic Motivation to Succeed

Teachers' expectation comes from perceptions of learners' attitudes, propensities, and attributes to succeed in the classroom (Timmermans, de Boer, & van der Werf, 2016). This expectation is also perceived and referred by students to predict their academic success. Specifically, ELLs actively incorporate teachers' feedback into constructing their own perception of success (Gentrup, Lorenz, Kristen, & Kogan, 2020). This self-perception also links to self-esteem that builds self-efficacy in subjects, particularly in mathematics and literacy (Trusz, 2018). Therefore, expectation transmits from teachers to students to construct perceptions, perspectives, and values in motivation. Since constructive feedback identifies gaps of support for both teachers and students to achieve academic goals (Johnston, Wildy, & Shand, 2019), destructive or absent feedback de-motivates by misconstruing beliefs, perspectives, and perceptions of learners. This situation often leads to low self-efficacy among students who are expected low by both their teachers and themselves (Gentrup, Lorenz, Kristen, & Kogan, 2020).

Thus, self-perception, attitude, and esteem construct intrinsic motivation that promotes success. This motivation then helps students with historically marginalized backgrounds, to achieve both academically and socio-emotionally (Riley & Pidgeon, 2019). To understand its effect, historic colonialism is identified as the factor for disproportionate low self-perceptions, -esteem, and -expectancy among ELLs and their families on their success in the education system (Riley & Pidgeon, 2019). This reason implies that motivation plays a role in mitigating differences due to socio-economics backgrounds between students. Success therefore, only depends on motivation that constructs self-expectancy to mediate challenging environment (Kuklinski & Weinstein, 2001).

In addition, self-expectancy also needs to be nurtured through enhanced teacher-student interaction and inclusive learning environment to enact upon motivation. Specifically, enhanced interaction and environment produce expectation for every student to succeed with sufficient resources and support. Personal beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives are more easily to be nourished under this environment to achieve goals. The environment leaves an impact on individual's success (Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Sibley, & Rosenthal, 2015). Thus, approaching students' learning by addressing the needs in the practice is conducive to promoting success in the classroom (Szumski & Karwowski, 2019).

2.1 Motivation Nurtured Through Enhanced Student-Teacher Interaction

High expectation manifests itself through teacher-student interaction. Specifically, behaviors, monologues, and attitudes of teachers (un)intentionally reflect their expectations and can be perceived by their students to construct their ideas of academic success. For example, Rubie-Davies (2007) explores that expectation changes the dynamics of teacher-student interaction, classroom discourse, and affects socio-emotional aspect of learning. For example, oral academic feedback enacts upon intrinsic motivation to construct self-concept for students to succeed in Taiwanese schools (Chen, Thompson, Kromrey, & Chang, 2011).

Expectation also promotes socio-emotional aspect of learning because students (un) consciously take their teachers' expectation as their own to refer social success. Specifically, teachers' expectation plays a role in shaping students' understanding and competence in communication, conflict-resolution, and problem-solving with their peers and other teachers (Trang, Kim, & Hansen, 2021).

This relationship thus implies that enhanced student-teacher interaction indicates success beyond academics that leaves an impact on a student's perspectives, values, and attitudes to construct their well-being beyond school.

Further, while teachers' reveal their expectation through attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors, students also take in this expectation and their affected response indicates the efforts, engagement, and motivation that they will show in their academic endeavor. Specifically, they are prone to high expectation to change behaviors, moderate expectation, and reflect experience to reduce the achievement gap between themselves and others. Therefore, Johnston, Wildy and Shand (2019) find out that this affected response will address the barriers faced by ELLs to achieve the learning goals. Therefore, teachers' response to ELLs becomes vital to build self-perception, expectancy, and motivation to succeed in the classroom.

2.2 Motivation Nurtured Through Enhanced Classroom Learning Environment

Other than student-teacher interaction, Szumski and Karwowski (2019) point out that an inclusive learning environment motivates both individuals and groups to succeed beyond academics. Specifically, expectation for the group transmits itself to individuals who learn within the environment. In addition, teachers' practices also become more inclusive, grounded, and reflexive in an inclusive environment in which different perspectives, identities, and values are validated and embraced to reflect differences among learners; therefore, expectation for the community yields success among individuals thrived in the environment (Karabenick & Noda, 2004).

In addition, creating this inclusive learning environment challenges deficit thinking of ELLs who are often excluded or marginalized to participate in the schooling system. Reflecting their needs and strengths in the approaches thus expands access to resources and services necessary enough for success. As a result, educators need to challenge ideals of ideal teaching based on monolingual or monocultural curriculum. Success then becomes an outcome of collaborative work rather than a lonely endeavor. An inclusive learning environment thus integrates success as students' daily experience into the activities to enhance confidence, motivate individuals, and support one another.

2.3 Paradoxical Effect of Expectation

Even though expectation enacts upon intrinsic motivation to promote academic success, distilling it as a separate entity from effective pedagogy and inclusive curriculum in the practices create a false image for students to reach their goals. Specifically, inaccurate expectation discourages, rather than encourages students to give efforts, reach out for resources, and reflect on their own experience. It also leads to misconception, confusion, and low self-esteem for repeated failures in academic work. For example, Goldenberg (1992) argue that inaccurate expectation yields controversial outcomes among students whom teachers fail to provide with adequate resources and services for their success. Therefore, expectation itself can't decide success for students, although it largely indicates success when support is given for the students.

3. Construct Expectation Through Enhanced Professional Development

Since ELLs bring diverse backgrounds into the classroom, viewing ideal student-teacher interaction, classroom learning environment, and personal attributes through a western perspective biases teachers to expect ELLs in ways that don't reflect their strengths and needs in the classroom; as such, Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Sibley, and Rosenthal (2015) propose professional development to challenge pre-conceived notion on language and academic ability to address systemic barriers on language that excludes ELLs form participating in the education system.

In addition, Murdock-Perriera and Sedlacek (2018) investigate the impact of stereotypes on individual student's success, implying that misconception contributes to biases that unfortunately enlarges the achievement gap in the schooling system. In another study, Van den Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, and Holland (2010) argue that teachers' attitudes, constructed through pre-

conceived notion of students with ethnic backgrounds, account for the susceptibility of these students to low self-efficacy and –expectancy in their learning. Thus, Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Sibley, and Rosenthal (2015) propose a more specific training on supporting ELLs to address the gap of support ELLs face in their schooling experience. This specialized training will also improve teaching efficacy that ultimately challenges inequity in the system. What becomes important is teachers' reflexive approach to improving pedagogy and supporting ELLs based on their needs.

Further, when teachers receive more training on support, they also become more reflexive and willing to advocate for the needs of their students (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). This impact thus implies that expectation is malleable and can change with new ideas and perspectives brought to the teachers (Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Sibley, & Rosenthal, 2015). When teachers become the best advocate for their students, they expect highly of them to succeed beyond the classroom. This also what Goldenberg (2008) proposes earlier as to specialize training for supporting ELLs to reflect the range of needs within this group.

3.1 Construct through Building New Paradigm of Home-School Communication

Another stream of research identifies gap of home-school communication that contributes to low expectation of teachers and students in their academic achievement. Particularly, students' family backgrounds, practices, and ideas may conflict with that of teachers, creating barriers of communication to help students succeed beyond classroom. This barrier also hinders students from transferring ideas across context. The gap of ideal communication with families with diverse backgrounds is particularly evident in system in which monolingualism is upheld (Hakuta, Santos, & Fang, 2013), even though more studies find out that “funds of knowledge”, first identified by González and Amanti (2006), connects students with the classroom when their backgrounds are reflected in the learning community (p. 5).

Further, parental involvement is also perceived by teachers to indicate dedication or engagement students will demonstrate towards their academic work. Whereas parental involvement is centered in the schooling of the student, this value is less pronounced in paradigm flourished in other cultures (Souto-Manning & Swick, 2006). In fact, families might encounter negative home-school communication that they construct parental involvement differently from teachers. Some may even involve less in the schooling of their students due to ritual practices, customs, and traditions; therefore, conscientiousness of working across differences with families mitigates conflicts due to gaps of knowledge. This understanding will add to existing literature on culturally relevant pedagogy to leave a long-lasting impact on a child's well-being at schools (e.g., Gay, 2002; Luevano & Collins, 2020). Therefore, considering diverse family backgrounds and their communication styles constructs expectation that meets the needs of students in the classroom.

3.2 Construct Through School Leadership Support

System-wide, McGee, Haworth, and MacIntyre (2015) suggest that school leadership becomes key to support teachers to explore effective pedagogy when working with their students. Particularly, teachers rely on resources and services provided at the school to address language and cultural barriers for their students to integrate successfully into the schooling system. Further, their self-efficacy suffers for being under-supported to meet the learning goals. It thus implies that a supportive leadership team will finally makes a difference in a child's learning experience.

In addition, Harris (2012) points out that curriculum constructs expectation for different groups of students. When there is a differentiation on curriculum implementation based on language, ethnicity, and socio-economic backgrounds, expectation is perceived differently by students and therefore contributes to different outcomes. Even though teachers expect highly of each of their students, their approaches may still be limited by the differentiation of expectation; as a result, reflecting students' lived experience in pedagogy challenges systemic barriers that hinder students from reaching their goals.

Further, Gershenson, Holt, and Papageorge (2016) identify that the demographics mismatch, based on ethnicity and gender between students and teachers, mediates the expectancy effect on academic achievement. Specifically, teachers of different ethnicity and gender expect differently of students' achievement, thus disproportionately affecting the propensity of students, especially those with marginalized backgrounds, to succeed. Thus, teachers' identities indicate future success by constructing self-expectancy based on shared language, knowledge, and experience. This insight thus reveals a more subtle and nuanced impact of demographics composition on perception, engagement, and motivation.

4. Conclusion

Since Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) propose that teacher's high expectation produces a more favorable outcome among students, many studies replicate the study, either quantitatively or qualitatively, to measure expectancy effect on students' well-being both inside and outside of classrooms (e.g., Rubie-Davies, 2007; Van den Bergh, Denessen, Hornstra, Voeten, & Holland, 2010; Timmermans, de Boer, & van der Werf, 2016). As more students bring their linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds into the classroom, teaching becomes more individualized, grounded, and reflexive to meet the wide range of needs in the classroom. As such, expecting highly of ELLs advocates for the needs to overcome language and cultural barriers to integrate successfully into the schooling system. Motivation in this process thus becomes key to construct self-expectancy that mediates differences of outcomes due to socio-economic backgrounds.

The other aspect of literature considers professional development as an important way to address innate systemic barriers for ELLs to succeed academically. Particularly, teachers' self-perception, understanding, and belief change as a result of upgraded knowledge and skills on supporting ELLs. While teachers' expectation changes, students' expectation will also change, enacting upon motivation as an intermediary to reach the learning goals. Therefore, future studies on the transmissive effect of expectation between teachers and students contribute to understanding mechanisms of impactful learning in the classroom. Two mechanisms, enhanced relationships and inclusive learning environments, are identified in this paper to explore infrastructure that cultivates expectation; as a result, future studies on properties and attributes of expectation on academic success will bridge the gap of support beyond classroom.

Further, given teaching becomes more complex to reflect the diverse needs, a focus on home-school communication and advocacy from the leadership team enhances self-efficacy of teachers in their practices. Specifically, through challenging pre-conceived notion of ELLs, teachers become advocates for their students to serve their best interest to thrive in the schooling system. Thus, supporting ELLs also means supporting teachers to become effective practitioners to promote equity in the educational system. In other words, when expecting ELLs highly, teachers are also expected highly to leave an impact on students' learning experiences.

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