FUNDS OF KNOWLEDGE: THE IMPORTANCE OF HOW I VIEW MY ENGLISH LEARNERS

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What is your initial reaction to learning about the below student?

- Marisol arrives to your classroom two weeks into the first semester. She is clearly having difficulty working in your class because in addition to not knowing any English at all, she seemingly does not understand any of the content either. Word gets out that she is also undocumented (illegally in the U.S.).
Marisol’s story
Did your initial reaction to Marisol change after hearing the story of Marisol?
If yes, how?
Content

Perspective

Pedagogy
Funds of Knowledge vs. Deficit model
Variables Leading to Children's Academic Success

- Outside of School Variables (75%)
- Inside of School Variables (25%)
- Teachers' Role (75%)
- School (Other than Teachers--25%)
Lilly’s story part 1
Lilly

• In pairs or small groups, please discuss why you think Lilly was acting in the way she was in class.
Lilly’s story part 2

• After having heard the rest of the story, what conclusions can you come up with now?

• What actions can you as a teacher take to help Lilly be more successful in your classroom?
Leticia’s story

Leticia, a 3rd grader, scored at the 40th percentile in Spanish on LaPrueba, a Spanish-language achievement test, and at the 25th percentile in English on the Illinois Test of Basic Skills. The teacher’s conclusion was that Leticia read poorly in both languages and that biliteracy perhaps caused her confusion.

Alfredo, a monolingual English student in the same class, also scored at the 40th percentile in English. This time the teacher’s interpretation was that he was doing fine and that he was one of her better readers.

What is going on here?
Ways of getting to know your students

• Home visits (Biography Driven Culturally Responsive Pedagogy by Socorro Herrera)

• Dialogue journals (Holms, 1997)

• Essay writing as opposed to worksheets, multiple choice, and fill in the blanks assessments
Ways of getting to know your students

• Genre study (i.e. teach students how to write memoirs)

• Take advantage of parent/teacher conferences

• Call home to compliment, not just to complain
What other ideas can help you get to know your students?
ACTION PLAN

• What are some things you can **start** doing in your classroom?

• What are some things you can **stop** doing in your classroom?

• What are some things you can do **differently** starting today?