Daniel Russell
Instructional Coach
CCRTL

How to Develop Your Students’ Linguistic Knowledge about AAVE

Cultural Responsiveness is for Everyone

The Center for Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning

Journey to Responsiveness

www.culturallyresponsive.org
Daniel Russell
Workshop Description

So, now that you have learned about Standard English Learners (SEls) and the legitimacy of the non-standard languages that they use, are you wondering how to operationalize that information in the classroom setting? This workshop will help you learn practical ideas for how to develop your students' linguistic knowledge about AAVE through contrastive analysis, educational games, culturally and linguistically responsive (CLR) literature, sentence lifting, and more.
Why did you select this particular workshop to attend?

What do you hope to learn from it?

What questions do you have about the topic?
Musical Shares
Intended Outcomes

• What are some strategies that you can use to help develop your students’ knowledge about AAVE?

• How can this be done in an additive manner that validates and affirms?

• How can this awareness about AAVE be used to build and bridge students who are speakers of AAVE to proficiency in MAE and academic English?

• What are some resources and references to extended your learning?
Do You Speak American?

- PBS
- Robert MacNeil
- First aired in 2005
- 3-part series
Introduced students to concepts of language difference, meta-linguistic awareness, and non-standard varieties of language.

Taught students about different perspectives on how AAVE came to be and various names for it.

Used contrastive analysis to teach about the specific linguistic features of AAVE that differed from standard English.

Had students practicing translating AAVE into SE and SE into AAVE.

Had students identify situations where specific languages may be more situationally appropriate or effective than others and why.

Reinforced linguistic knowledge through playing games and role play.

Additional Strategies
**Mainstream English Language Development**

**MELD Lesson**
*(Responsive Literacy & Language: 5+ Days)*

Overview: This series of MELD lessons are intended for 5-6 hours – 1 hour per day (5 days). Please adjust the time and/or number of days according to the needs of your students. You may also speed up or slow down per the needs of your students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title: California State Standards</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MELD OBJECTIVES Write to the ELA California Content State Standards (also known as the Common Core State Standards), and consider how students will use the Constructive Conversation Skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depth of Knowledge Level</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essential Question</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protocol Use the Culturally Responsive Discussion and/or Participation protocols</td>
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<tr>
<td>Materials Be sure to list all materials needed along with links to videos or webpages.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Key Vocabulary</td>
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<td>Culminating Task</td>
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</table>
How did I introduce my students to the concepts of language difference, meta-linguistic awareness, and non-standard varieties of language?
Language is power, life and the instrument of culture, the instrument of domination and liberation.

— Angela Carter —

African American Vernacular English

Chicano English is a term used to describe the English of Latin American immigrants to the United States. Most of these are from Mexico and the label probably derives from the name of that country. This variety of English shows features of Spanish, especially in phonology.
LSA Resolution on the Oakland "Ebonics" Issue

Drafted by John R. Rickford

3 January 1997: Approved by members attending the 71st Annual Business Meeting, Chicago Sheraton, Chicago, Illinois

1 July 1997: Adopted by LSA membership in a mail ballot

Whereas there has been a great deal of discussion in the media and among the American public about the 18 December 1996 decision of the Oakland School Board to recognize the language variety spoken by many African American students and to take it into account in teaching Standard English, the Linguistic Society of America, as a society of scholars engaged in the scientific study of language, hereby resolves to make it known that:

a. The variety known as "Ebonics," "African American Vernacular English" (AAVE), and "Vernacular Black English" and by other names is systematic and rule-governed like all natural speech varieties. In fact, all human linguistic systems—spoken, signed, and written—are fundamentally regular. The systematic and expressive nature of the grammar and pronunciation patterns of the African American vernacular has been established by numerous scientific studies over the past thirty years. Characterizations of Ebonics as "slang," "mutant," "lazy," "defective," "ungrammatical," or "broken English" are incorrect and demeaning.
How did I teach my students about different perspectives on how AAVE came to be and various names for it?
African American Vernacular English (AAVE)

African American Language (AAL)

Black English

Spoken Soul

Vernacular Black English

African American English

Ebonics*

What's in a name?
Ebonics Language Family

- AAVE
- Gullah
- Geechee
- Black Portuguese
- Jamaican Creole
Linguistic Perspectives on the Origins of AAVE

**Deficit Perspective**
- Feeble of mind
- Lips too big
- Tongue too thick

**Dialectologist Perspective**
- Dialect of English
- English with some influences of West African languages

**Ethnolinguistic Perspective**
- English vocabulary laid upon the deep structure (phonology, morphology & syntax, etc.) of West African languages
How did I use contrastive analysis to teach my students about the specific linguistic features of AAVE and how the differed from mainstream American English?
Contrastive Analysis
Linguistic Features of AAVE

Final Consonant Clusters

The /TH/ Sound

The /R/ Sound

Regularization

The /L/ Sound

Stress Patterns

AAVE Homophones

Pluralization

Possession

Habitual Be

Auxiliary Verbs

Past Tense

Multiple Negation

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Example: Pluralization

• Provide examples of pluralization in MAE.
• Provide examples of pluralization in AAVE.
• Have students discuss what they notice is different.
• Explain AAVE rule for pluralization.
• Explain MAE rule for pluralization.
• Have students discuss differences in pluralization rules.
• Have students practice.

Pluralization Cheat Sheet

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Add es</th>
<th>Add s</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Last Names Ending in ...</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>s, x, z, sh, ch*</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>All other letters of the alphabet</td>
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Example: Pluralization

AAVE Examples:
• She has twenty-five cent.
• Eight year ago I went to Disneyland.
• My sister ate five cookie.

MAE Examples:
• She has twenty-five cents.
• Eight years ago I went to Disneyland.
• My sister ate five cookies.

AAVE Rule: Nouns that refer to quantity do not require a plural marker since the quantity has already been expressed.

MAE Rule: Must add a plural marker following voiceless sounds (cent-cents), voiced sounds (food-foods), and “hissing” sounds (kiss-kisses)
How did I have my students practice translating AAVE into SE and SE into AAVE?
Had did I get my students to identify situations where specific languages may be more situationally appropriate or effective than others and why?
'Sorry to Bother You' is right — minorities are judged by the sound of their voice, and there's science to prove it

Minorities face discrimination because of the sound of their voice, as a black
Situational Appropriateness

• Had students discuss behavioral expectations for different situations.
• Connected this discussion to language to build their understanding that situational appropriateness applied to language.
• Elicited from students personal examples.
• Connected discussion to prior lesson about power of languages.
• Had students perform situation sorts.
• Had students explain rationale for decisions.
Sorting Activity Example

In your group, read each of the situations below and sort them by what language you would think is most appropriate. Be prepared to discuss your reasoning why you made your choices.

A. Eric and Raven are going to a hip hop concert.

B. Dalila is speaking to her mother who doesn’t speak English.

C. Shaquille is interviewing for a job.
How did I reinforce my students’ linguistic knowledge about AAVE through game play and role-play?
AND ACTION!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CATEGORY 1</th>
<th>CATEGORY 2</th>
<th>CATEGORY 3</th>
<th>CATEGORY 4</th>
<th>CATEGORY 5</th>
<th>CATEGORY 6</th>
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START

Name of the game

Finish

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What else did I do to help develop my students’ linguistic knowledge about AAVE?
Posted signs in the classroom that validated and affirmed language diversity.

- Home language is where the heart is.
- African American Vernacular English (AAVE)
- The way I speak is beautiful.
- Languages of Power
- Spoken Soul
- Two ways to say
- Chicano English (CE)
- Languages of my ancestors
- Mother Tongue

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Had students focus on translating AAVE in their writing during the revision stage of the writing process.
Responded to students who spoke in AAVE by rephrasing what they said in MAE.

My momma be at home.

So, your mother is usually at home.
Provided authentic opportunities to practice speaking in MAE.
Introduced students to concepts of language difference, meta-linguistic awareness, and non-standard varieties of language.

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• What are some resources and references to extended your learning?
What can you take from this presentation for work you do with your own students?

How would you adapt what was shared for your instructional context?
• Validate and affirm all languages.
• Use an additive approach.
• Eliminate deficit responses to use of AAVE.
• Use AAVE to build and bridge to MAE and academic English.
• Increase your linguistic knowledge and awareness.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SEL Strand</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kiechelle Russell presenting</td>
<td>10:30-11:45am</td>
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<td>Dr. LeMoine Featured Speaker</td>
<td>1:30-2:45 pm</td>
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<td>Dr. Jared Lancer presenting</td>
<td>3:15-4:30 pm</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr. Hollie Featured Institute</td>
<td>1:30-4:30</td>
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Friday, March 22nd, 2022
Thank You

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