

# Multilingual Teacher Rachel Sharma Recently Featured on Close Up Radio

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[EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- Multilingual teacher, Rachel Sharma, says her greatest joy is teaching her students English language skills while helping them feel included, accepted, and motivated to learn. Rachel voices teaching is her calling. She recognizes one of the most important things one can do as a teacher is to create spaces of joy and transformation along with a culture that continually supports multilingual learners and wholeheartedly celebrates diversity. She is on a clear mission to ensure that all teachers do the same. The educational setting needs to be for all of our young bright-minded students for long-term success, one that



extends far beyond the classroom. Unfortunately, education is not without its challenges and setbacks and many teachers report being unprepared to support multilingual learners. From grappling with limited funding, lack of specialized curriculum, and lack of quality education, we must explore innovative solutions and respond promptly to pedagogical challenges of our interconnected world. If we fail our children, we fail our entire world.

As a dedicated teacher, Rachel is also a visionary leader with an empathetic mindset who passionately stands for a more equitable, peaceful, and just classroom culture. We live in a globalized world where today's classrooms are more diverse than ever before. Yet, inequity and injustice still persist. We need to make certain the schools create a classroom environment that ensures all multilingual students have a voice, benefit from equal opportunities of interacting with their teachers, peers, and have access to adequate learning resources.

Rachel teaches multilingual students with her main focus on students achieving a 4.8 composite

score on the WIDA English language proficiency test before leaving her school. In 2024, seven of her students successfully tested out of the multilingual program, and while she is proud of her achievements this number must be higher and without accessibility to proper resources that her and other teachers are offered, it's very challenging to achieve that.

Before beginning teaching in the U.S. school system, she spent over a decade teaching abroad, spanning continents and loving every second of her thought provoking self-affirming journey. Not only did it enhance her cultural awareness, but helped her acquire a deeper understanding of other cultures, changed her life's path, and was one of the most profound experiences of her life.

Her journey began in Japan and then took her to Turkey where she taught in an elementary immersion classroom. Then, she headed back to Japan working with students of all ages to improve their English language skills. She also taught in India at Cactus Communications, creating curriculum, promoting the company on social media, and teaching writing and language skills. During the 3 years she spent in India, she was offered a position in Saudi Arabia to be part of the opening staff to Asia's largest women's university, Princess Nourah Bint Abdul Rahman University. She was one of the first English teachers that established the English program at the university. After conceiving, she moved to India and taught English to students in the far east virtually, while being on bed rest. She also continued her role at Cactus Communications during this time. After the arrival of her son, Noah, she moved to the United States when he was one month old. She mentioned that her son is her driving force of motivation in her career.

When moving back to the states in 2010, Rachel worked as a second language English teacher and curriculum designer for a virtual company in France and continued her working for the company in India teaching resume writing, business skills, and grammar skills as a Senior English instructor. Rachel then decided she needed more American education to support her experiences abroad. At that point she held a Bachelor's in Health Care Administration and had only a certificate in TESOL (Teaching English Speakers of Other Languages).

After getting into a competitive program at the University of South Florida for her Masters, she was a full-time mom and student. She earned a Masters of Education in TESOL and in secondary education with a concentration in curriculum and instruction design. In 2014, she graduated while already starting a position with the government working at DLIELC (Defense Language Institute English Language Center).

From 2014 to 2020, Rachel was an English language instructor at the DLIELC in Texas under the United States Department of Defense. For six years she taught English to soldiers, officers and government officials from around the world, and went on MTTs (Mobile Training Teams). She mentioned that she taught the first female Major in Nigeria, who had previously won an International Women of Courage award presented by Melania Trump. Rachel helped this Major prepare to go to War College in the United States. She then went on her first Mobile Training Team (MTT) and helped launch the first-ever military English school in Qatar, where she became

one of the first female instructors to teach Qatari military in the first school in Qatar connected to DLIELC. On her second MTT, she was invited to a military graduation ceremony in Saudi Arabia, at the newest educational endeavor in Dammam, Saudi Arabia. This event became one of the most memorable moments of her life. After this trip, Rachel continued to work on a special team writing Standard Operating Procedures to apply to attend or present at conferences for DLIELC.

During her time at DLIELC, she received numerous honors and accolades including plaques for her service from Echo Company - a unit of soldiers from Puerto Rico. She was named Instructor of the Month on more than one occasion and also was chosen as Instructor of the Quartet. During her MTTs she received awards from working in Saudi Arabia and Qatar, all of which speaks volumes of her unwavering dedication as a teacher and humanitarian.

In August of 2020, Rachel moved to Michigan with her son, where she currently resides. She has worked in private, public, and virtual schools in Michigan. She started her journey up north as an International Program Director and became an immigration officer while creating curriculum for international students in High School, being their liaison between host family and the school. She also worked with the students' families out of the country. She worked closely with the guidance counselors to ensure paths to graduation, making sure they were on target to graduate before aging out. In this position she also taught two sections of Senior English, which was a new journey for her, as well. During this time she also needed to get a teaching certificate to move her career in a different direction. She used an Alternative Pathway to obtain an interim certificate and worked in schools for three years as an elementary teacher. After three years, her certificate became standard and available to add her ESL endorsement, which she added immediately.

"Every day my teaching experience has been a learning experience," says Rachel. She stated that the more she taught in the United States, the more she learned about ELs in regular classrooms and in EL programs, all of which have empowered her to live a purpose driven life.

From her own experience abroad where she too encountered language barriers, Rachel relates so well to her multilingual students' struggles here in the U.S. education system. She recognizes that multilingualism is a superpower, that all students deserve high quality and equitable access to a full education where they are offered the most appropriate and effective tools, strategies, and skills that will truly drive long lasting impact. Differentiation in lessons, and having skills to allow the students to be successful in their mainstream classes needs to be more prevalent.

Rachel explains that she believes that all teachers should be required to go through more extensive training for ESL students, as the number of those needing specialized services continues to rise. She believes that as a whole, if we do not take the time to learn more about how to help these students reach grade level educational goals, we are failing our children. Current curricula used and movement from grade to grade with lack of understanding, is prohibiting this category of students into becoming productive, successful members of our

communities and our country.

Unfortunately, we don't have a quality system in place for these students. As an example, in Michigan, newcomers received one hour of daily instruction, and others received only 30 minutes. While some teachers are on board to co-teach which is currently best practices, most are not ready for that change and what it takes to differentiate lessons and co-plan with an EL teacher. Furthermore, these very students then go on to spend the next 6 hours in other classrooms of math, history, science, and social studies. She wonders what they are learning if they don't understand the lesson. What do they understand out of an undifferentiated lesson? Rachel points out, students are often put on computers or and are completely lost during mainstream content classes.

Moreover, Rachel explains, "It's imperative we provide a structure for students to develop their language skills that include their unique language backgrounds. Knowledge of more than one language is a superpower."

From utilizing hands-on activities, student centered strategies, visuals aids, incorporating high levels of training, language scaffolding, and making lessons that are comprehensible for the ELs is key. By weaving these strategies into teaching, we can literally unlock the potential of each and every student and inspire lifelong learning.

All teachers must keep in mind that multilingual individuals are in high demand in many fields after high school and college such as healthcare, education, international business, and technology.

Rachel continues to advocate on behalf of students and to make a real difference. Her ambition and motivation continues to grow as she seeks out professional learning to acquire as many skills as she can, and she attributes it all to her son, Noah.

On upcoming podcast Rachel shares her remarkable teaching journey, wonderful insights on fostering multilingualism that ensures equitable learning experiences, and share her insights on genuinely helping our multilingual students grow both personally and academically while empowering the next generation and leaders of tomorrow.

Close Up Radio recently featured Rachel Sharma in an interview with Jim Masters on Tuesday November 18th at 5pm Eastern

[Listen to the Podcast](#)

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