## Council Of Chief State School Officers

The Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) is a nationwide, nonprofit organization of the public officials who head departments of elementary and secondary education in the states, the District of Columbia, the Department of Defense Activity, and five extra-state jurisdictions. CCSSO seeks its members' consensus on major educational issues and expresses their views to civic and professional organizations, federal agencies, Congress, and the public. Through its structure of standing and special committees, the Council responds to a broad range of concerns about education and provides leadership and technical assistance on major educational issues.

## Division Of State Services And Technical Assistance

The Division of State Services and Technical Assistance supports state education agencies in developing standards-based systems that enable all children to succeed. Initiatives of the division support improved methods for collecting, analyzing and using information for decision-making; development of assessment resources; creation of high-quality professional preparation and development programs; emphasis on instruction suited for diverse learners; and the removal of barriers to academic success. The division combines existing activities in the former Resource Center on Educational Equity, State Education Assessment Center, and State Leadership Center.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

# CCSSO

# RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS
## OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS

## Elementary and Secondary Levels

December 2003

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# INTRODUCTION

Immigrant students make up a growing segment of students enrolled at the secondary school level in the United States. The difficult transitions of adolescence combined with the challenge of mastering academic content in a language they are still learning can be overwhelming for these students. Students' inability to communicate confidently can result in confusion, frustration, anger, and alienation. In addition, immigrant students must balance their native culture with that of the dominant culture. It is important for educators to help immigrant secondary school students through these critical transitions.

Educators can help in three important ways:

*Provide Access to Information.* Learning the rules and practices of a new school system is challenging for immigrant students and their parents, and they need information to become successfully integrated into the U.S. school system.

*Support English Language and Academic Development.* At the secondary level, immigrant students must learn English, master academic content, and earn high school and college credits in order to pursue challenging careers and higher education. Teachers and administrators need to help students attain these goals.

*Promote Access to Postsecondary Education.* Immigrant students face many obstacles in making the transition to higher education and need guidance to negotiate the system successfully.

To help immigrant students through secondary school, our schools need to commit to functioning as communities; building bridges to students' families and to other organizations outside the school; providing students with information about the broader U.S. culture as well as the culture of the school; and developing curricula and instruction that incorporate students' experiences, knowledge, and skills. The development of English language abilities, academic skills, and content knowledge, accompanied by support for native language development, can provide the foundation for the future success of immigrant students in secondary schools and beyond.

This guide provides resources for teachers and administrators of English language learners at the secondary school level. Part One is comprised of resources specifically intended for Grades 9-12. Part Two includes other resources for adult and K-12 learners that may be of interest to secondary school teachers and administrators. Included are print and online resources on ESL curricula and standards, classroom resources and instructional strategies, cultural orientation, and professional development.

At this point resources focused specifically on high school students are limited, and more are needed. The print version of this guide represents a first step in compiling these resources. The online version will be available January 2004. Visit www.ccsso.org for updated information.

This introduction was adapted from Lucas, T. (1996). *Promoting Secondary School Transitions for Immigrant Adolescents*. (ERIC Digest). Washington, DC: ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics.

**Obtaining ERIC Documents**

The full text of most materials in the ERIC database with an "ED" followed by six digits is available through the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) in microfiche, online, or in paper copy. Approximately 80% of ERIC documents from 1993 to the present are available for online ordering and electronic delivery through the EDRS Web site (http://edrs.com/default.cfm). You can read ERIC documents on microfiche for free at many libraries with monthly subscriptions or specialized collections.

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The full text of journal articles may be available from one or more of the following sources:
* the originating journal
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To obtain journals that do not permit reprints and are not available from your library, write directly to the publisher. Addresses of publishers are listed in the front of each issue of Current Index to Journals in Education and can now be accessed online through the CIJE Source Journal Index at http://www.ericfacility.net/extra/pub/sjisearch.cfm.

**Changes Coming to ERIC**

This year the U.S. Department of Education has decided to discontinue the ERIC system as we know it, with its 16 subject-specific clearinghouses and question-answering services, and to contract with a single company that will host the ERIC database. As a result, the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics (ERIC/CLL) and the other ERIC clearinghouses will cease to exist after December 31, 2003. For information about ERIC after that date, visit www.eric.ed.gov.

Use one URL http://www.eric.ed.gov to:

1.	search the ERIC database
2.	search the ERIC Calendar of Education-Related Conferences
3.	link to the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS) to purchase ERIC full-text documents
4.	link to the ERIC Processing and Reference Facility to purchase ERIC tapes and tools

Despite the closing of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics, the Center for Applied Linguistics will continue to make available many of the books and free publications developed by ERIC/CLL. Visit CAL's Web site at www.cal.org for more information.

## RESOURCES FOR GRADES 9–12

### Curricula and Standards: Grades 9–12

**Curricula**

Hood, B. (n.d.). *An orientation to life in the United States: A curriculum to help immigrant Latino adolescents and their parents adjust.* Unpublished manuscript. Contact Beth Hood, Washington, DC, Public Schools, Bilingual Education Department, Phone: 202-576-8850.

> Designed to help reduce the dropout rate for Hispanic newcomer students, ages 14–20, this curriculum provides the academic and social orientation they need to begin their education in the United States. The nine units of the curriculum are written in Spanish and cover topics such as orientation to the school facility, staff, and administration; strategies for achieving success in U.S. schools; setting achievable goals; dealing with culture shock; learning about the community and its laws; and the roles of family members and how they may change after emigration to the United States.

**Books**

Agor, B. (Ed.). (2000). *Integrating the ESL standards into classroom practice: Grades 9–12*. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/assessment.html#870

> This volume is a guide to good practice in using TESOL's national ESL Standards. It contains six units for Grades 9–12, some of which are designed with a particular grade and proficiency level in mind and others that span grade and proficiency levels. All of the units may be adapted to other levels and contexts and include suggestions for their adaptation.

Faltis, C., & Wolfe, P. (Eds). (1999). *So much to say: Adolescents, bilingualism, & ESL in the secondary school*. New York: Teachers College Press.
http://www.ncte.org/store/default.asp?id_product=3209

> This volume is the first to bring together new research on adolescent learners of English within the secondary school context. Some of the most influential and well-known specialists in the field of language education share their research and knowledge about a wide range of issues in bilingualism and ESL, including curriculum planning and implementation of native language literacy programs, sheltered content teaching, language teaching, demographics, discrimination, and the social realities of culturally diverse classrooms and schools.

Lucas, T. (1997). *Into, through, and beyond secondary school: Critical transitions for immigrant youths.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/immigrantseries/into.html

> Secondary school educators need principles and strategies to facilitate the difficult cultural, personal, and educational transitions that permeate the lives of immigrant children. This book outlines four major principles, gleaned from studies of excellent secondary schools and examined in light of current thinking about school reform. Strategies are provided for cultivating organizational and human relationships that will promote immigrant students' school success, provide access to the information they need, and develop multiple and flexible pathways for them to progress through and beyond secondary school. Highly effective programmatic and organizational resources are included.

Mace-Matluck, B. J., Alexander-Kasparik, R., & Queen, R. M. (1998). *Through the golden door: Educational approaches for immigrant adolescents with limited schooling.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. http://www.cal.org/ericcll/immigrantseries/golden.html

> A growing number of recent immigrant students enter middle school and high school with little or no prior formal schooling and with low literacy skills. Often referred to as "late entrant" or "low-literacy" students, they may be three or more years below their age-appropriate grade level in their school-related knowledge and skills. This book provides guidelines for school administrators and teachers with these students in their programs. The authors describe the backgrounds, educational experiences, and needs of five such students (from Haiti, El Salvador, and Vietnam), profile four programs designed to serve them (in Illinois, Texas, and Virginia), and identify the critical features of secondary school programs for these students. Program contacts and resources are provided.

Ruiz-de-Velasco, J. & Fix, M. (2000). *Overlooked & underserved: Immigrant students in U.S. secondary schools.* Washington, DC: The Urban Institute. http://www.urban.org/Template.cfm?Section=ByTopic&NavMenuID=62&template=/TaggedContent/ ViewPublication.cfm&PublicationID=7048

> The United States is being transformed by high, continuing levels of immigration. No American institution has felt the effect of these flows more forcefully than the nation's public schools. And no set of American institutions is arguably more critical to the future success of immigrant integration.

Short, D. J., & Boyson, B. (2000). *Directory of secondary newcomer programs in the United States: Revised 2000.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=23

> This directory contains profiles of 115 middle and high school newcomer programs across 196 sites in 29 states and the District of Columbia. These programs serve recent immigrant, secondary school students with little or no English proficiency and often limited formal schooling. Each profile contains information concerning program location, size, and length of enrollment; student demographics; features of instruction and assessment; program staffing; other services offered; and program contacts.

Short, D. J., & Boyson, B. (in press). *Creating access: Language and academic programs for secondary school newcomers.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

> *Creating Access* provides information for school districts that are planning to establish a newcomer program. This volume includes practical advice and recommendations as well as the results of in-depth case studies of three successful newcomer programs.

Walqui, A. (2000). *Access and engagement: Program design and instructional approaches for immigrant students in secondary schools.* McHenry, IL and Washington, DC: Delta Systems and Center for Applied Linguistics & Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence. http://www.cal.org/ericcll/LIE/access.html

> This book details the challenges faced by immigrant students of secondary school age and the schools they attend. Six immigrant high school students (from Brazil, El Salvador, Haiti, Mexico, Russia, and Vietnam) are profiled, with descriptions of their language and cultural backgrounds, frustrations, and successes. Four programs attempting to develop responsive instructional philosophies and approaches are also discussed.

**Digests and Reports**

Dropout Intervention and Language Minority Youth
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/vaznau01.html

 Qualities of Effective Programs for Immigrant Adolescents with Limited Schooling
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/goldendoor.html

Secondary Newcomer Programs: Helping Recent Immigrants Prepare for School Success
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/short001.html

# Dropout Intervention and Language Minority Youth

**Adriana Vaznaugh, Center for Applied Linguistics**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics
EDO-FL-95-06, March 1995**

Youth from non-English-language backgrounds are 1.5 times more likely to leave school before high school graduation than those from English-language backgrounds (Cárdenas, Montecel, Supik, & Harris, 1992). High dropout rates among students from economically disadvantaged and non-English-speaking backgrounds are among the major concerns of middle and high school educators in the United States. Though dropout rates have declined overall in recent years, especially among Blacks and Whites, the trend for Hispanic students is quite the opposite. According to the Census Bureau, in 1992 roughly 50% of Hispanics ages 16 to 24 dropped out of high school, up from 30% in 1990 (GAO, 1994).

By the year 2010, Hispanics are expected to be the largest minority group in the United States, making up 21% of the population (OERI, 1993). Thus, the increase in dropout rates among Hispanic high school students is cause for growing concern. Various dropout prevention programs have emerged as one response.

This digest describes three programs for middle and high school students at risk of dropping out of school. The first two programs are specifically geared toward limited-English-proficient Hispanic youth. The third, a vocational program, involves African-American students as well.

### Coca-Cola Valued Youth Program

Developed by the Intercultural Development Research Association in Texas, Coca-Cola Valued Youth Programs (VYP) have been implemented in 60 schools in 8 states. The goals are to help Hispanic middle and high school students achieve academic success and improve their language skills. Other goals are to strengthen students' perceptions of themselves and school and to form school–home–community partnerships to increase the level of support for these students (Cárdenas Montecel, Supik, and Harris, 1992).

Middle and high school students are paired as tutors with elementary school students identified as being at risk of dropping out of school. Tutors are paid minimum wage for their work. The program's philosophy is that the tutors, by being placed in paid positions of responsibility and treated as adults, will improve their self-esteem and academic performance. As one tutor claimed, "When I'm helping these kids, I'm helping myself. I'm learning things when I'm tutoring them" (Claiborne, 1994). In turn, the student being tutored will grow both academically and personally under the attention of the tutor and will be encouraged to remain in school until graduation.

Cross-age tutoring, the main component of the VYP, takes place at the elementary school one hour a day, four days a week; on the fifth day, the tutors take a class on effective tutoring strategies (Robledo & Rivera, 1990). In addition to conducting the tutoring sessions, tutors must adhere to the employee guidelines of their host school and report to a teacher coordinator, who monitors and evaluates their progress. Student tutors also attend classes in English as a second language and content areas.

Field trips, conducted at least twice a year, are designed to broaden students' horizons by exposing them to cultural and professional possibilities in their communities. A student recognition component serves to instill a sense of self-worth in both tutors and tutees. This takes the form of a celebratory lunch or dinner, media attention, or presentation of merit awards for student efforts to stay in school and help others do the same. Finally, adults who are successful in their field, have the same language and cultural background as the students, and have overcome similar obstacles act as role models and provide guidance to both the tutors and the tutees.

### Project Adelante

Project Adelante, established in 1988 at Kean College, NJ, is currently implemented in three New Jersey school districts. The project's goals are to improve the high school graduation rate of Hispanic students (especially those still learning English), increase their opportunities for college admission, and increase the number who enter the teaching profession (CAL, 1994).

Hispanic middle and high school students receive academic instruction, career and personal counseling, peer tutoring, and mentoring by Hispanic professionals. This takes place on the Kean College campus during an intensive five-week Summer Academy and at Saturday Academies during the academic year. Students usually enter the program in middle school and are encouraged to remain with it until they complete high school.

Academic courses include English as a second language, science, and math. Class size is kept at around 15 students. Teachers are free to design courses that are interesting and appropriate for the students, to use both English and Spanish in the classroom and in social settings, and to adjust their

class schedules as needed to accommodate special projects or field trips.

Personal and career counseling are key aspects of the program. Program counselors, like teachers, come from participating schools and participate in all events, so they know the students well. Students meet regularly with their counselors in one-on-one and small-group settings and take a full course taught by a counselor, which covers social and academic issues. The counselors also sponsor daytime and evening sessions for the parents to come to the campus and discuss issues selected by the parents.

Peer tutoring furthers Adelante's goal of encouraging students to enter the teaching profession. Tutors are Hispanic and African-American high school juniors and seniors and Kean College freshmen and sophomores, many of whom are former Adelante students. Each tutor is assigned a small group of students to meet with, work with in class, and interact with in written dialogue journals. The tutors serve as role models. At the same time, tutors receive intensive and ongoing training. They learn the tasks and responsibilities of teaching and are often inspired to pursue teaching careers.

The mentoring program involves a collaboration with HISPA, a service organization for Hispanic employees at AT&T committed to promoting the education of minority youth and children. Students meet with mentors regularly to socialize or to focus on academic and professional activities, such as visiting the mentor's office, doing school work, or filling out college applications.

## California Partnership Academies

The California Partnership Academies Program represents a three-way partnership among the state, local school districts, and supporting businesses. Grants from the state are matched by direct or in-kind support from the participating business and school district to set up an academy. Goals are to provide academic and vocational training to disadvantaged students and to decrease youth unemployment.

Participation in the program is voluntary. To qualify, students whose past records put them at risk of failing or dropping out of school must show that they "want to turn themselves around" (Stanford Mid-Peninsula Urban Coalition, 1990). Students apply and are interviewed in the second semester of 9th grade. Academy staff (teachers, administrators, counselors) and representatives from the participating business then meet with parents of applicants to explain the goals of the program, answer questions, address concerns, and get permission for the students to

participate. Selected students enter the program in the first semester of 10th grade.

Partnership Academies function as a school within a school (Dayton & Stern, 1990). Through block scheduling, students enroll as a group in one technical class (designed with the collaborating business) and three academic classes (English, math, and social studies or science). Students spend the morning in their vocational/technical and academic courses then join the rest of the student body in the afternoon for extracurricular activities (Raby, 1990). Teachers invite outside speakers to share information on career selection, employment skills, and the importance of getting an education.

In 11th grade, each Academy student is matched with a mentor from the business community, who serves as a role model and offers guidance and information on succeeding in the workforce. In the summer following 11th grade, Academy students in good academic standing are given jobs with the participating business, with the goal of improving their employment skills and increasing their chances for gainful employment after graduation.

Other aspects of the program are student recognition (awards for student of the month, excellent attendance, and academic and personal achievement) and parental involvement, sought through questionnaires to parents regarding meeting and workshop topics, invitations to accompany students on field trips, a newsletter, and constant personal contact with Academy staff.

California Partnership Academies have had a positive effect on participating students. They report that being able to see the connection between an education and work makes school more interesting. As one student reported, "I'm 18 and I've had three jobs—all of them at major companies. I've never tossed a fry or slapped a burger, and thanks to the Academies, I won't have to" (Raby, 1990). The goal is for 94% of Academy students to focus on long-range plans, such as continuing their education, pursuing careers, or both.

## Conclusion

Dropping out of school results from many complex factors and long-term individual experiences (OERI, 1993). Successful dropout prevention programs for language minority students, like those described here, must have the following components: respect for the language and cultural backgrounds of the students they serve and for the positive qualities students bring to school; the possibility of long-term involvement, from middle school through high school; a well-designed academic curriculum, developed by committed and

experienced professionals who facilitate movement through the program and provide assistance in pursuing academic opportunities beyond high school; substantive work experience that promotes mature choices and access to high-quality jobs; a tutoring and mentoring component that provides intense personal attention and encouragement from successful and caring role models; and family and community involvement. For language minority students, programs must also include appropriate components for native language support and English language development.

Dropout prevention demands attention from school and district staff in collaboration with local businesses, community colleges and universities, community-based organizations, and policy makers for any lasting impact to be made on reducing dropout rates among the nation's language minority students.

**Program Contacts**

**Project Adelante:** Ana María Schumann, Dean, School of Education, Kean College of New Jersey, Union, NJ, 07083.

**Coca Cola Valued Youth Program:** Linda Cantu, IDRA, 5835 Callaghan Road, Suite 350, San Antonio, TX 78228.

**California Partnership Academies:** Stanford Mid-Peninsula Urban Coalition, 430 Sherman Avenue, Suite 305, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

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# Qualities of Effective Programs for Immigrant Adolescents with Limited Schooling

**EDO-FL-98-07, November 1998**

This digest is drawn from ***Through the Golden Door: Educational Approaches for Immigrant Adolescents with Limited Schooling***, by Betty Mace-Matluck, Rosalind Alexander-Kasparik, and Robin M. Queen. The book is part of the Center for Applied Linguistics *Topics in Immigrant Education* series. It is available from Delta Systems Co., Inc., 1400 Miller Parkway, McHenry, IL 60050-7030, 800-323-8270.

Over the past decade, U.S. public schools have seen an increase of almost 1 million immigrant students, approximately 5.5% of the public school population. Providing appropriate instruction to immigrant students who are English language learners has become an issue of particular concern to educators across the country. This concern is especially acute at the secondary level. A growing number of recent immigrant students are entering U.S. middle and high schools with little or no prior formal schooling and low literacy skills. Often referred to as "late-entrant" or "low-literacy" students, they may be 3 or more years below their age-appropriate grade level in school-related knowledge and skills. For these students to succeed in school, they must learn to read, write, understand, and speak English; develop academic literacy in English to make the transition to the labor force or into other educational programs; and become socialized into American society during adolescence, a time of major emotional, physical, and psychological change. This digest discusses essential features of effective programs for these students, drawn from a study of four successful programs designed to encourage immigrant adolescents to stay in school, complete their high school education, and pursue additional education after high school.

## Program Design and Implementation

The following factors are essential in designing a program for immigrant adolescents with limited schooling.

*Program Location.* A common strategy is to place immigrant English language learners in a specialized learning environment - an all-day or half-day newcomer school or program, a special wing of a mainstream school, a separate school, separate classes taught in the native language, or classes in which content is taught in English but is adapted and sheltered. Programs vary in the types of specialized classes offered, the ways in which students are integrated with students from other linguistic and cultural backgrounds and of other ages, and the length of time students attend special programs or classes before making the transition to mainstream classes.

Some controversy surrounds the question of where to locate these programs. Separate site programs have the advantage of consolidating staff and resources, and they can serve a large geographical area while focusing on the special needs of newcomer students. In addition, because all students in the program are immigrants, no one stands out as a foreigner.

Opponents of separate-site programs believe that they deprive immigrant students of interaction with English-speaking peers and limit access to courses and activities open to students in regular schools. Opponents also argue that the transition from a separate-site school is harder than the transition from a special program within a mainstream school. To decide which option is better, local needs and resources must be considered and prior experiences with newcomer students examined.

*Program Structure.* The ultimate educational goal for all immigrant students is to perform well in regular content and elective classes. To prepare for academic success, these students need access to courses that focus on literacy and study skills, content courses that are taught through the native language, and sheltered content courses that are taught in English and adapted to make the content more accessible.

*Registration and Placement Procedures.* Intake centers should be conveniently located, be appropriately staffed, and provide essential services. For example, interpreters should be available to interview students and their families in their native languages if necessary. Programs that serve students from one particular language group should provide registration materials in that language. Information obtained from registration procedures should be used to make up a student profile, which will serve as an objective basis for determining the student's educational program. To identify students' needs, it is essential to assess both native language skills and English proficiency and to evaluate prior school experience. In addition, learning about the students' home environments, such as the educational levels of parents and siblings, can help determine the academic support the student has at home.

*Transitions to Other Programs.* Some programs for recent immigrants have come under scrutiny because of their haphazard exit policies (Collier, 1992). For example, depending on test scores and teacher evaluations, students at newcomer schools in California may be allowed to enter mainstream

classes after 8 weeks, 3 semesters, or never. Students who finally are placed in mainstream classes may not receive appropriate support or monitoring (L. Olsen, personal communication, October 1995). The majority of students move through the newcomer courses in a timely fashion, but few students complete high school in the traditional 8 semesters.

To promote successful transitions, one literacy program in Fairfax County, Virginia, allows students to complete English as a second language (ESL) and sheltered courses at a transitional high school in 1 or 2 years, and then proceed to a partial or full mainstream program to earn their diploma. This progression can be made within 5–6 years of initial registration. Students unable to finish high school by age 22 can fulfill state graduation requirements in adult education courses. Some students in these courses prepare for the General Educational Development (GED) diploma, but most choose to work toward their high school diploma.

*Comprehensive Services and Family Involvement*. To reach out to parents, schools must find ways to establish regular channels of communication. Effective communication with parents may be hindered by language barriers, parents' lack of familiarity with American schools, and different expectations concerning the appropriate roles of parents and school personnel. To break down such barriers, a program in Spring Branch, Texas, employs bilingual caseworkers who set up meetings with parents and make home visits.

Schools are increasingly coordinating community services and establishing links with the business community and other educational institutions to provide students with a variety of post-secondary opportunities.

*Staff Background and Professional Development.* Educators who work with immigrant adolescents must maintain academic standards and have high expectations of their students. At the same time, they must teach with sensitivity and compassion and be knowledgeable about their students' language and cultural backgrounds; their personal circumstances and strengths; and their language, literacy, and academic needs (Wink et al., 1994). It is important that both ESL and content teachers be familiar with the basic concepts and theories underlying ESL instruction.

Schools should make every effort to hire teachers and classroom aides who share the language and cultural backgrounds of the students or staff with cross-cultural experience and understanding. Mentoring programs can be set up for teachers and students, and immigrant adults and students who have adjusted to

life in the United States can inform teachers about the culture and language of the newcomer students.

Traditionally, professional development activities for teachers of immigrant students have been designed for teachers with ESL or bilingual certification. In recent years, however, teachers of mainstream content courses have been included as well. Often, content teachers who have received additional training to work effectively with English language learners teach sheltered content courses.

**Components of Effective Programs**

Although little research has been done on the necessary components of secondary school programs specifically for students with limited prior schooling, two studies outline features of successful high school programs for nonnative English speakers in general. Based on a study of six high schools in California and Arizona, Lucas, Henze, and Donato (1990) identified characteristics of schools that promote success among students whose first language is Spanish. These characteristics can be extended to apply to programs serving immigrant students of all backgrounds.

*Affective factors*. School staff are committed to the educational success of immigrant students, have high expectations for them, and publicly recognize their achievements. Students' native languages and cultures are valued throughout the school, and some of the staff have backgrounds similar to those of the students.

*Instruction*. A wide variety of courses are offered in the students' native languages and in English. This includes advanced content courses made available through instruction in the native language or through sheltered content instruction in English. Teachers are proficient in bilingual and ESL teaching strategies for secondary school students.

*Comprehensive services*. Counselors speak the students' native languages, have the same or similar cultural backgrounds, and are knowledgeable about postsecondary educational opportunities for immigrant students. In addition, school staff work well with parents and involve them in decisions about their children's education.

*Professional development*. School administrators provide leadership by being knowledgeable about recent research and practice in bilingual and ESL education at the secondary school level and by developing structures to strengthen curriculum and instruction. High priority is placed on professional development for all school staff, and training is

designed to help teachers and counselors serve immigrant students more effectively.

Walsh (1991) suggests that a well-designed program for immigrant adolescents with limited prior schooling and low literacy includes these components: (1) an ungraded course structure that allows students to learn at their own pace and avoid the stigma of over-age grade placements; (2) small classes that allow individualized attention from teachers; (3) literacy and content courses taught in students' native languages that are thematically coordinated and encourage transfer of learning across content areas; (4) follow-up on thematic content and skill development, provided by double-period ESL classes; (5) common planning periods that give bilingual and ESL teachers an opportunity to coordinate their work; and (6) well-defined exit criteria that measure students' readiness for bilingual or mainstream classes.

In addition, Walsh makes the following recommendations:

Individual learning plans, set jointly by teacher and student, should lead to either a regular or alternative high school diploma. Literacy and content courses should be appropriately designed and taught to enable students to earn full credit toward their diploma. Alternative means of gaining credit (e.g., independent study) and an occupational, career-awareness component that includes hands-on experience should be provided.

Flexible scheduling should be available, as it enables students to combine academic study and work or work-related experience. Students aged 18 or older can earn a high school diploma by completing at least 2 years in a high school-based program, then transferring to a GED program.

Access to a range of services should be offered, including regular, individual meetings with guidance and adjustment counselors who speak the students' native languages, group counseling, peer tutoring, mentoring by sympathetic adults, frequent meetings of counselors with teachers and parents, home-school liaisons, and links with community-based agencies.

## Conclusion

Immigrant secondary school students who are learning English and have limited formal schooling need comprehensive services to accommodate a range of needs that include schooling, socialization, and language development. An effective program must incorporate instruction, parental and family involvement, support services, and professional development. Each of these components should

include features targeted specifically to the needs of students with limited prior schooling.

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# Secondary Newcomer Programs: Helping Recent Immigrants Prepare for School Success

**by Deborah J. Short, Center for Applied Linguistics**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics
EDO-FL-98-06, March 1998**

Many school districts are facing increasing numbers of secondary immigrant students who have low-level English or native language skills and, in many cases, have had limited formal education in their native countries. These students must learn English, take the required content courses, and catch up to their native-English-speaking peers before high school graduation. How are schools meeting the needs of these students, many of whom are placed below the expected grade level for their age?

Some districts have developed newcomer programs that serve these students through a program of intensive language development and academic and cultural orientation, for a limited period of time (usually from 6–18 months), before placing them in the regular school language support and academic programs. The rationale for establishing these programs differs across sites, but many programs were set up for one or more of the following reasons:

- Students were at risk of educational failure or of dropping out of school.
- Students were over age for their grade-level placement, because of weak academic skills and limited formal education.
- Students' needs surpassed the instructional design of the regular ESL or bilingual program that was in place in the district.
- Students had low or no English or native language literacy skills.

This digest reports on data collected through a study of secondary newcomer programs, sponsored by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement, U.S. Department of Education as part of the Center for Education, Diversity & Excellence. It introduces the common factors and range of practices found in secondary newcomer programs across the United States. The information is drawn from program profiles found in *Secondary Newcomer Programs in the United States: 1996–97 Directory* (Short & Boyson, 1997).

### Who Are the Newcomer Students?

Secondary programs vary in their definitions of newcomers, but most include recent arrival to either the United States or the school district and limited English proficiency as characteristics. More than half of the programs surveyed for the study also noted that students are below grade level or have limited formal education. Some programs rely on a definition associated with federal aid: students who have been in the United States for 3 years or fewer and are limited English proficient. Almost a third of the programs restrict enrollment to students who have been in the United States for up to one year.

Newcomer students at the secondary level range in age from 10 to 22 years and come from many language backgrounds. Most of the newcomers speak Spanish, but native speakers of many other languages, including Mandarin, Filipino, Russian, Haitian Creole, Polish, Punjabi, Vietnamese, and Hindi, attend these programs as well. In fact, over half of the programs enroll students from four or more different native language backgrounds.

The number of students served by the newcomer programs ranges from 14 at one site in Connecticut to more than 740 at a high school in New York City. Almost half of the programs enroll 50 or more students, and 12 programs serve more than 200 students. Because of limited resources, not all newcomer programs are able to serve all eligible students in the district.

### Where Are the Programs Located?

Newcomer programs are located in 18 states; most of these have high rates of immigration, such as New York, California, and New Jersey. More than three fourths of the programs are in urban-metropolitan settings; the rest are in suburban areas and rural locales. More than half of the programs operate at the high school level. About one third serve the middle school level, and the remainder offer a combination of middle and high school services. Most of the schools draw from several attendance areas in one school district.

Most newcomer programs are designed as a separate program within a regular secondary school. This is usually the home school (i.e., the school in their designated attendance area) of most, if not all, of the newcomer students. The students may participate in some school activities outside of the program, such as physical education and art. Upon exiting the newcomer program, many students remain at the same school to continue their studies in the regular language support program, which may offer English as a second language (ESL) or bilingual services. Students from outside the attendance area may return to their home schools or go to other schools in the same district.

Twelve of the programs surveyed are not located in a regular school. Three are full-length high schools,

where students enter in the ninth grade and generally remain in the program until graduation. Two programs are located at district intake centers, where language minority students are assessed and placed. For those designated as newcomers, these intake centers offer special, short-term courses before the students enter one of the schools in the district. In some districts, one newcomer center has been established at a centralized site to serve, for example, all eligible middle school students.

## How Are Newcomer Programs Designed?

Program designs differ according to educational goals, site options, staff availability, and resource allocation. Most programs serve newcomer students for the full school day. This schedule provides time to offer several content area courses along with English language instruction. Other programs operate for a half day, sometimes to accommodate two groups of students at one site (e.g., middle school students in the morning, high school students in the afternoon) or to promote more interaction with the entire student body at the school. Two programs operate solely after school and students attend on a volunteer basis. Most of the programs are designed to educate students for one year, although some offer an additional summer program. Nineteen programs last more than one year; five for less than a year. One is a summer-only program. Most of the programs allow new students to enroll mid-year or mid-session if space is available.

The grade-level designation of newcomer students varies at different sites. One school, for instance, is designated as a ninth grade school. High school-aged students who enroll in the district with 8 years of schooling or fewer may opt to attend this school for a year. Afterwards, they move on to tenth grade in one of the other district high schools. Other high schools may serve all grade levels, assigning students as appropriate to their age and educational backgrounds. After one year, ninth and tenth grade students exit to attend other high schools. Eleventh grade students may elect to stay at the school to graduate.

## How Do Newcomer Programs Address Students' Language Learning and Academic Needs?

The programs offer a range of instructional activities for students that reflect the goal of developing both language and academic skills so that students may enter the regular ESL or bilingual program, or in some cases, mainstream classes. Ninety-eight percent of the programs provide a course in English as a second language. Eighty percent offer sheltered content instruction, and 73% offer content instruction in at least one of the students' native languages. (More than 10 different languages are used for content area instruction.) Forty percent have courses in native language literacy. More than half of the programs offer both sheltered instruction and native language content instruction. In some of these sites, bilingual courses may be available for one or two high-incidence language groups, while sheltered instruction is offered to low-incidence language groups. Because a large number of the students have limited educational backgrounds, many of the content classes are designed to help students learn the basic foundations of core subjects. While about half of the programs also participate in Title I or provide special education services, fewer than one fourth give newcomer students access to gifted and talented support.

Newcomer programs usually employ experienced staff trained in second language acquisition theory, ESL and sheltered instruction methods, and cross-cultural communication. Usually at least one staff member in a program is bilingual. Staff attend professional development workshops that address specific needs for the newcomer student population, like developing literacy skills, so they can improve their curricula and instructional delivery. At a number of sites, native language instruction in the content areas is provided by bilingual paraprofessionals.

## How Do Newcomer Programs Address Students' Acculturation Process?

One important characteristic of newcomer programs is the attention given to familiarizing students with their new environment: the school, educational expectations, the community, and the United States. Eighty-eight percent of the programs provide courses in cultural orientation to the United States. Many of the programs supplement their classroom curricula with field trips, cultural activities, and special events. Some provide career orientation as well.

Reaching beyond the students themselves, 43% of the programs offer classes to orient parents to the United States, and 63% offer adult ESL classes either through the program or the school district. All programs view parental involvement and communication with parents as high priorities. Some sites have a home–school liaison, and others maintain a community outreach component to share information about the program and to arrange partnerships with community organizations. Many either have social workers on site or provide assistance in helping students and their families access medical and social services in the community.

## How Do Newcomer Students Make the Transition Out of the Program?

Many of the programs that are one year in length automatically exit students at the end of the school year. A number of programs test students for language proficiency (and some test content areas as well) to determine whether students are ready to participate in other programs offered on the district or school. However, most programs allow some degree of flexibility for individual students. In some programs, students who make fast progress can exit before the end of the program. For students who arrive in the second semester of the school year, who have large gaps in their educational backgrounds, and may be illiterate in their native languages, several programs accommodate their needs by extending their stay.

Newcomer programs ease the transition process in several ways. At some sites, the newcomer courses are part of a continuum of services in the language support program, and students move on to higher ESL levels or into bilingual classes. Some sites have students sit in on regular courses before they exit the newcomer program. Many sites provide orientation to the regular school program, take students on school tours, and have students talk with guidance counselors. Some also pair newcomers with more advanced ESL students. A number of sites continue to monitor the newcomer students' progress for 6 months to a year after they have exited the program and may offer tutorials and mentoring.

## Conclusion

The newcomer directory will be updated each year through 2000, adding new programs as they become known to the researchers. In addition, case studies of selected sites will take place to further an understanding of how these programs serve recent immigrants.

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Short, D. J., & Boyson, B. (1997). *Secondary Newcomer Programs in the United States: 1996–97 Directory.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

**Online Resources**

Academic Achievement for Secondary Language Minority Students: Standards, Measures and Promising Practices
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/reports/acadach.htm

> This online report from the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition provides teachers and teacher educators insight into how mainstream classroom instruction can be designed and implemented to enhance the academic achievement of language minority students. Standards for the content areas were examined and related to what research indicates is best practice for language minority students.

Secondary Newcomer Programs in the U.S.: Revised 2000
http://www.cal.org/newcomerdb/

> This searchable database includes 115 programs in 29 states and the District of Columbia that participated in the research study, "Newcomers: Language and Academic Programs for Recent Immigrants," during the 1996-1997, the 1997-98, the 1998-1999, or the 1999-2000 school year.

# Classroom Resources and Instructional Strategies: Grades 9–12

**Books**

Burt, M., Peyton, J. K., & Adams, R. (2003). *Reading and adult English language learners: A review of the research.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=221

> Learning to read in English is difficult for adult (aged 16 and older) English language learners. This book summarizes the research on adult English language learners reading English, offers ESL teachers and administrators suggestions for instruction, and points to areas where further research is needed.

Cunningham, P. M. & Hall, D. P. (1998). *Month-by-month phonics for upper grades.* Greensboro, NC: Carson-Dellosa.

> This program is designed especially for struggling readers and students learning English. The authors promote a balanced diet of reading that includes not only phonics, but also guided reading, self-selected reading, writing, and working with words.

Short, D. J. (Ed.). (1999). New ways in teaching English at the secondary level. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/newways.html#773

> This book offers an international collection of best practices that addresses the needs of ESL and EFL educators working with students aged 12-18. The contributions to *New Ways in Teaching English at the Secondary Level* range among activities involving authentic literature, academic content, multimedia use, peer cooperation, alternative assessment, and career information.

Smallwood, B. A., & McCargo, C. (Eds.). *Integrating language and content in secondary school: Instructional strategies and thematic units.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=104

> ESL and content area teachers worked together to develop lesson plans, instructional strategies, and thematic units that make high school academic material accessible to students learning English. The book contains seven instructional strategies and nine thematic units, with detailed guidelines that can be used independently for effective lesson planning.

**Textbook Series**

*High Point ESL: Success in Language, Literature, Content*
> Hampton-Brown, Carmel, CA
> 800-933-3510
> http://www.hampton-brown.com/onlinecatalog/products.asp?subID=1

This instructional series for middle and high school ESL students offers standards-based, ESL lessons with content connections and authentic literature. Geared to national and state language arts standards with attention to math, science, and social studies standards as well, the series provides a development sequence of English language learning from low beginners through advanced levels of proficiency.

**Digests and Reports**

Adolescent Literacy and Content Area Reading
http://eric.indiana.edu/ieo/digests/d176.html

Strategies for Success: Engaging Immigrant Students in Secondary Schools
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0003strategies.html

Teaching Secondary Language Minority Students
http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/ResBrief4.htm

Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners
http://www.cal.org/ncle/digests/litQA.htm

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# Adolescent Literacy and Content Area Reading

**by Karen Grady**

In 1999 the International Reading Association issued a position statement on adolescent literacy that called for a renewed interest in and dedication to the rights and needs of adolescent readers:

*Adolescents entering the adult world in the 21st century will read and write more than at any other time in human history. They will need advanced levels of literacy to perform their jobs, run their households, act as citizens, and conduct their personal lives. They will need literacy to cope with the flood of information they will find everywhere they turn. They will need literacy to feed their imaginations so they can create the world of the future. In a complex and sometimes even dangerous world, their ability to read will be crucial. Continual instruction beyond the early grades is needed (Moore, Bean, Birdyshaw, & Rycik, 1999, p. 99).*

This digest provides a brief summary of the development of content area reading; it discusses a reconceptualization of adolescent literacy and content learning; and it offers an example of a new model for both secondary classroom practice and teacher education.

## Historical Context

For several decades educators have been concerned about literacy development beyond the early grades. As early as the 1930s, there was an emphasis on the different reading demands of various subjects and on improving the reading abilities of high school students (Moore, Readence, & Rickelman, 1986). The term "content reading" became prominent in the 1970s with the publication of Herber's (1970) book, *Teaching Reading in the Content Areas* where Herber distinguished between literacy development as reading instruction and literacy development to support subject matter learning (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994**)**; Ruddell, 2001).

Much of the work in this area was based on developments in cognitive psychology in the 1970s and 1980's, which provided insight into the relationship between a reader's background knowledge (schema) of a topic and the reader's ability to make sense of a text addressing that topic. The term "schema" refers to a set of cognitive structures of interrelated ideas and concepts built from a person's experience (see the 1989 ERIC Digest "Schema Activation, Construction, and Application"). According to some views of schema theory, a reader's existing knowledge of the subject matter is the single most influential factor in what he or she will learn from reading a text about that subject matter (Anderson, 1984; Steffensen, Joag-Dev, & Anderson, 1979). Thus, theorizing and research in cognitive psychology led to the development of many instructional strategies that secondary teachers could use to increase students' comprehension of course materials. For example, the use of a pre-reading strategy such as an anticipation guide can serve to activate students' prior knowledge to improve comprehension. It can also enable students to confront misconceptions about the topic at hand, or to arrive at new understandings by revising or constructing new schema (Dufflemeyer, 1994). Numerous content area vocabulary development strategies focus on activating students' existing word/concept knowledge so that they may build on the schemata they have, or develop new schemata for new concepts (Alvermann & Phelps, 1994; Lenski, Wham, M. A. & Johns, 1999; Ruddell, 2001).

While the focus on the cognitive dimension of reading has helped some students become more proficient readers of content area texts (Ruddell, 2001), some assessment data indicates the need to reconsider adolescent literacy and content area learning. Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, and Mueller (2001) note that there are still persistent gaps in student achievement between students who are members of the dominant culture and those who are not. They also draw on data from the 1998 National Assessment of Educational Progress Reading Report Card. It indicates that although the percentages of eighth and twelfth graders scoring above the proficient level have increased (33% and 40% respectively), these percentages still suggest that high levels of literacy are not being attained by most secondary students. Some research indicates that an emphasis on reading solely as a cognitive process has not adequately addressed the needs of adolescent readers as they face learning from texts in the various subject areas at the secondary level.

## Reconceptualizing Adolescent Literacy and Content Reading

A number of reading researchers and theorists believe the reading process to be much more complex, including not only the cognitive dimension addressed by schema theory and many existing reading strategies, but including a social dimension as well (e.g., Bloome, 1986; Goodman, 1996; Greenleaf et al. 2001; Harste, 1994). The extent to which readers are able to construct meaning with texts is also based

on the personal, interpersonal, and institutional contexts in which reading events occur. The work of sociolinguists, cultural anthropologists, and critical theorists has shown that it is not possible to separate classroom practices such as strategies for activating background knowledge from the larger social and cultural contexts in which the practices are enacted (e.g., Heath, 1983; Gee, 1996).

Drawing from some recent studies, Moje, Young, Readence, & Moore (2000) call for a conception of adolescent literacy that includes adolescents' literacy practices beyond the secondary classroom, their expanded notion of text (i.e., the Internet, television, and magazines), and the relationship between literacy and the development of identity. But they also caution that the issues of teaching and learning in the context of secondary school content areas are still critical areas for research. For example, what constitutes best practices depends on many factors: how students perceive themselves as readers, what their interests are at the time, the interactions of teacher and student, of student and student, the classroom environment in which the strategy is being used, and how institutional structures shape daily events that occur in classrooms and schools. This fertile ground of literacy as a complex process and research about adolescent literacy and learning in secondary classrooms is providing a means for reinventing ways to develop students' academic literacies (Brynildssen, 2001).

**A New Model for Classroom Practice and Teacher Education**

One model developed from the reconceptualization of content reading is Reading Apprenticeship (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999). This instructional framework is based on the dual notions of literacy as a complex cognitive and social process and of teaching as cognitive apprenticeship. In order for adolescents to move from being novices to experts in specific content area practices, an expert practitioner (the subject matter teacher) guides, models, makes explicit to, and supports the novice in his or her development. Indeed, because ways of thinking, speaking, reading, and writing vary from discipline to discipline, some believe the most appropriate place for students to learn these discipline-specific discourse practices is from teachers who are already experts in these fields.

Briefly summarized, Reading Apprenticeship involves teachers and their students as partners in a collaborative inquiry into reading and reading processes as they engage in subject-area texts. This instructional framework explicitly draws on students' strengths and abilities to provide crucial resources for the inquiry partnership… *how* we read and *why* we read in the ways we do become part of the curriculum, accompanying *what* we read in subject-matter classes [emphasis in original] (Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, & Mueller, 2001, p. 89).

The framework consists of four integrated dimensions of classroom life that teachers and students explore together: social, personal, cognitive, and knowledge-building. The social dimension centers on building a community of readers who use literacy to make connections between their interests, each other, and the larger social world they are engaged in learning about. The personal dimension of Reading Apprenticeship develops students' awareness of themselves as readers, of their purposes in reading, and of their goals for improvement. Adolescents' resources and the multiple literacies that are part of their daily lives are part of the teaching and learning that occurs. The cognitive dimension is the part of the framework that incorporates instruction in and the use of comprehension strategies, providing tools for monitoring comprehension, for problem solving to assist comprehension, and for developing flexibility in reading. The knowledge-building dimension focuses on such areas as developing content knowledge (building schemata), knowledge of the discipline-specific vocabulary, and text and language structures.

The four dimensions of classroom life are made visible to students through the metacognitive conversations that students and teachers engage in about the texts they are reading. Metacognitive conversations occur through class discussion, small group work, writing, and individual reflection. The model provides a framework and means for teachers to explicitly show students how to reflect on their own and each other's ways of using language and how to connect their knowledge and experiences to academic literacy practices. In Reading Apprenticeship classrooms, students work toward advanced levels of literacy by developing skills and strategies, as well as the necessary dispositions required for the challenge of achieving academic literacy. Students are able to move from novice to proficient performance in content area literacies by being engaged in complex academic literacy tasks with support from the teacher and peers and with the teacher making explicit the knowledge and problem-solving skills teachers call upon as readers in their disciplines.

Greenleaf, Schoenbach, Cziko, and Mueller (2001) report on the implementation of this framework in a course in academic literacy offered to ninth graders in one of the poorest neighborhoods in San Francisco for the 1996–1997 school year. Assessments of student reading development on multiple measures were not only statistically significant, but impressive overall, as students made gains of two years in reading

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proficiency in seven months of instruction. Follow-up studies indicated that students maintained their reading development and continued their growth as readers.

**For More Information**

National Research Center on English Learning and Achievement
http://cela.albany.edu/

WestEd—The Strategic Literacy Initiative
http://www.wested.org/stratlit/

National Institute for Literacy: Adolescent Literacy
http://www.nifl.gov/partnershipforreading/adolescent/

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# Strategies for Success: Engaging Immigrant Students in Secondary Schools

**by Aída Walqui, West Ed, San Francisco, California**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics EDO-FL-00-03, June 2000**

High dropout rates among language-minority secondary school students are one indication that many schools are failing to adequately support the needs of these students. The belief that student dropout is due to a lack of proficiency in English often leads educators to overlook the economic, cultural, academic, and personal issues that immigrant adolescents must confront on a daily basis. To be effective, programs must begin with a compassionate understanding of these students and recognize and build on the identity, language, and knowledge they already possess. Instruction developed for native-English-speaking students may not be appropriate for students who are still learning English. To engage immigrant adolescents in school, educators must provide them with avenues to explore and strengthen their ethnic identities and languages while developing their ability to study and work in this country.

This digest discusses 10 principles for developing effective teaching and learning contexts for immigrant adolescents and profiles one program that has been successful in promoting the academic success of its students by implementing these principles.

**Ten Principles of Effective Instruction for Immigrant Students**

**1. The culture of the classroom fosters the development of a community of learners, and all students are part of that community.**

Immigrant teenagers bring a variety of experiences to the classroom that, if tapped, can serve as a springboard for new explorations that enrich everyone's experience. In effective classrooms, teachers and students together construct a culture that values the strengths of all participants and respects their interests, abilities, languages, and dialects. Students and teachers shift among the roles of expert, researcher, learner, and teacher, supporting themselves and each other.

**2. Good language teaching involves conceptual and academic development.**

Effective English as a second language (ESL) classes focus on themes and develop skills that are relevant to teenagers and to their studies in mainstream academic

classes. Immigrant students need to learn not only new content, but also the language and discourse associated with the discipline. Therefore, all subject matter classes must have a language focus as well.

Effective teaching prepares students for high-quality academic work by focusing their attention on key processes and ideas and engaging them in interactive tasks that allow them to practice using these processes and concepts. ESL teachers need to know the linguistic, cognitive, and academic demands that they are preparing their students for and help them develop the necessary proficiencies. Content-area teachers need to determine the core knowledge and skills that these students need to master.

### 3. Students' experiential backgrounds provide a point of departure and an anchor in the exploration of new ideas.

Immigrant adolescents know a great deal about the world, and this knowledge can provide the basis for understanding new concepts in a new language. Students will learn new concepts and language only when they build on previous knowledge and understanding. Some students have been socialized into lecture and recitation approaches to teaching, and they expect teachers to tell them what lessons are about. But by engaging in activities that involve predicting, inferring based on prior knowledge, and supporting conclusions with evidence, students will realize that they can learn actively and that working in this way is fun and stimulating.

### 4. Teaching and learning focus on substantive ideas that are organized cyclically.

To work effectively with English learners, teachers must select the themes and concepts that are central to their discipline and to the curriculum. The curriculum should be organized around the cyclical reintroduction of concepts at progressively higher levels of complexity and interrelatedness. Cyclical organization of subject matter leads to a natural growth in the understanding of ideas and to gradual correction of misunderstandings.

### 5. New ideas and tasks are contextualized.

English language learners often have problems trying to make sense of decontextualized language. This situation is especially acute in the reading of textbooks. Secondary school textbooks are usually linear, dry, and dense, with few illustrations. Embedding the language of textbooks in a meaningful context by using manipulatives, pictures, a few minutes of a film, and other types of realia can make language comprehensible to students. Teachers may

also provide context by creating analogies based on students' experiences. However, this requires that the teacher learn about students' backgrounds, because metaphors or analogies that may work well with native English speakers may not clarify meanings for English language learners. In this sense, good teachers of immigrant students continually search for metaphors and analogies that bring complex ideas closer to the students' world experiences.

### 6. Academic strategies, sociocultural expectations, and academic norms are taught explicitly.

Effective teachers develop students' sense of autonomy through the explicit teaching of strategies that enable them to approach academic tasks successfully. The teaching of such metacognitive strategies is a way of scaffolding instruction; the goal is to gradually hand over responsibility to the learners as they acquire skills and knowledge.

Delpit (1995) argues that the discourse of power—the language used in this country to establish and maintain social control—should also be taught explicitly, because it is not automatically acquired. Guidance and modeling can go a long way toward promoting awareness of and facility with this discourse. For example, preferred and accepted ways of talking, writing, and presenting are culture specific. Developing student awareness of differences, modeling by teachers of preferred styles, and studying by students themselves of differences and preferred styles are three steps in the development of proficiency and autonomy that need to be included in the education of language minority students.

### 7. Tasks are relevant, meaningful, engaging, and varied.

Some research indicates that most classes for immigrant students are monotonous, teacher-fronted, and directed to the whole class; teacher monologues are the rule (Ramírez & Merino, 1990). If students do not interact with each other, they do not have opportunities to construct their own understandings and often become disengaged. Because immigrant students are usually well behaved in class, teachers are not always aware that they are bored and are not learning. Good classes for immigrant students not only provide them with access to important ideas and skills, but also engage them in their own constructive development of understandings.

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**8. Complex and flexible forms of collaboration maximize learners' opportunities to interact while making sense of language and content.**

Collaboration is essential for second language learners, because to develop language proficiency they need opportunities to use the language in meaningful, purposeful, and enticing interactions (Kagan & McGroarty, 1993). Collaborative work needs to provide every student with substantial and equitable opportunities to participate in open exchange and elaborated discussions. It must move beyond simplistic conceptions that assign superficial roles, such as being the "go getter" or the "time keeper" for the group (Adger et al., 1995). In these collaborative groups, the teacher is no longer the authority figure. Students work autonomously, taking responsibility for their own learning. The teacher provides a task that invites and requires each student's participation and hands over to the students the responsibility for accomplishing the task or solving the problem.

**9. Students are given multiple opportunities to extend their understandings and apply their knowledge.**

One of the goals of learning is to be able to apply acquired knowledge to novel situations. For English learners, these applications reinforce the development of new language, concepts, and academic skills as students actively draw connections between pieces of knowledge and their contexts. Understanding a topic of study involves being able to carry out a variety of cognitively demanding tasks (Perkins, 1993).

**10. Authentic assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning.**

Assessment should be done not only by teachers, but also by learners, who assess themselves and each other. Considerable research supports the importance of self-monitoring of language learning (O'Malley & Chamot, 1989). Authentic assessment activities engage second language learners in self-directed learning, in the construction of knowledge through disciplined inquiry, and in the analysis of problems they encounter.

**Calexico High School: Restructuring for Success**

Calexico High School in Calexico, California, is attempting to put the principles described above into practice. Calexico is a bilingual/bicultural community on the southern border of the United States; 98% of the students are Latino, and 80% are English language learners.

Once an unsupportive environment for English language learners, Calexico High School now operates with a philosophy that is based on such principles as respect for students' culture, language, and background; a strong belief that all students can learn; and equal opportunities for all students to pursue further education. Calexico staff view bilingualism as an asset for the future and strive to develop academic proficiency, regardless of language. They have eliminated the tracking system and have high expectations for all students.

An efficient system of counseling is in place that provides support ranging from interventions to sustain or improve academic success to coordination with agencies outside the school that provide social services. Groups of students are organized into academies and supervised by teams of teachers to help all students feel connected academically. In addition, the school actively involves parents by holding all school meetings in Spanish and English and by having bilingual/bicultural staff that develop and maintain connections between home and school.

Learning English is given utmost importance. However, teachers realize that developing second language fluency is a long process, and that while it is essential to continue supporting and nurturing language development, cognitive growth also has an impact on long-range academic outcomes. Strong support is given to continuous development of students' academic skills.

Three language options are available for required courses: They may be taught through Spanish, English, or sheltered English. The same number of credits are granted for all options, and all options provide academically challenging study for students that will open doors to postsecondary education and other opportunities.

Through their commitment to providing all students with more opportunities to succeed, the staff at Calexico High School have created a highly effective secondary school program for immigrant students. (For a description of other successful secondary school programs for immigrant students, see Walqui, 2000).

**Conclusion**

The 10 principles of effective programs discussed in this digest can contribute to the success of immigrant secondary school students by creating positive and engaging learning contexts. A strong commitment to the educational success of immigrant students is ultimately the foundation for all successful programs. For society, this commitment involves supporting the

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development of effective programs through resources, funding, professional development, and research.

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This digest is drawn from *Access and Engagement: Program Design and Instructional Approaches for Immigrant Students in Secondary Schools,* by Aída Walqui, the fourth volume in the Topics in Immigrant Education series.

## Teaching Secondary Language Minority Students

**by Jana Echevarria and Claude Goldenberg, California State University, Long Beach**

**CREDE Research Brief #4, October 1999**

CREDE's Five Standards for Effective Teaching and Learning express the principles of effective pedagogy for all students. For mainstream students, the Standards describe the ideal; for at-risk students, the Standards are vital (Dalton, 1998). While the work contributing to the standards articulated in CREDE's projects comes from several theoretical systems, CREDE's Standards are stated in the language of sociocultural theory.

I. Teacher and Students Producing Together (Joint Productive Activity)

II. Developing Language Across the Curriculum (Language Development)

III. Making Meaning: Connecting School to Students' Lives (Contextualization)

IV. Teaching Complex Thinking (Cognitive Challenge)

V. Teaching Through Interactive Discussions (Instructional Conversation)

In this research brief, we focus on language development as well as academic development for English language learners. Teachers are concerned about covering content and curriculum, and they often ignore students' language development, which is critical for academic success. For secondary school learners, regardless of program (e.g., early-exit primary language, sheltered instruction), there are some features necessary for language development. Teachers should

- understand the language needs of students,
- explicitly plan to meet those needs,
- deliver instruction, and
- assess students' comprehension.

We discuss each feature, using a case study to illustrate what the teachers need to know, consider, and do.

### Understand Students' Language Needs

Tommy is a seventh grader, recently enrolled in his neighborhood middle school. He has been out of school since completing fifth grade in his native country and has been in the United States for 9

months. He and his family do not speak English at home, although Tommy hears it in his neighborhood and when watching sports or movies on TV. His parents and older siblings work long hours in service-oriented jobs. He has basic conversational abilities in English. For example, in school he can ask for a book or pencil; he can ask the attendance office for a note to get into class if he arrives late; and he can, in a general way, converse with peers about what he did over the weekend. He can understand many classroom routines, procedures, and directions, particularly when they are written on the board or an overhead transparency. In 9 months, he has developed rudimentary reading skills in English. Tommy's teacher realizes that despite his growing English competence, Tommy would have a very difficult time in a mainstream content classroom taught in English that did not provide accommodation for his limited academic English proficiency. Lectures, classroom discussions, independent reading of the textbook, and written assignments are very hard for him to accomplish without considerable instructional support. In addition, Tommy needs academic lessons that explicitly help enhance his English language skills (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000).

**Plan Lessons**

Tommy is capable of completing many required academic tasks if his teachers consider his language needs. For example, in the lesson we will describe, students are asked to read about the armor knights wore in medieval times. When planning the lesson, Tommy's teacher sets a content objective and a language development objective for Tommy and the other students in his class with similar language abilities. By thinking through and writing down both content and language objectives, the teacher is more likely to embed language development activities into an otherwise strictly content-driven lesson. In this lesson, the content objective is to name, describe, and tell the function of a knight's armor and weaponry. Students will also be able to define key terms (parades, tournaments, quests) and describe how armor and weaponry differed for these purposes and occasions. The language objective is for students to locate information in a written text and use this information to complete sentences using standard English grammar and spelling.

To facilitate note taking and the final writing task, the teacher distributes a tree diagram graphic organizer with the trunk labeled "Armor." Each branch is numbered and labeled with a category ("Uses," "Events," "Characteristics"). Smaller branches attached to the main ones are used to write notes about each category. Using the information from the graphic

organizer, students complete a worksheet, writing complete sentences.

Tommy's teacher makes the reading more accessible to students with limited English skills. She photocopies the material and identifies paragraphs containing the required information by numbering them to correspond with the numbers she put on the graphic organizer and worksheet. She modifies the worksheet so that instead of answering questions, as the fluent English speakers are expected to do (e.g., "Describe two situations in which the medieval knight wore his armor and tell how the armor he wore was specifically suited to that situation."), the English language learners (ELLs) are given sentence prompts to complete (e.g., "Medieval knights wore different armor for different situations. For parades, knights wore ____. This was good because _____. For tournaments, knights wore _____. This was good because ____.") The concept is the same for all students, but language complexity is reduced for English learners.

**Deliver Instruction**

Presentation: The teacher begins the lesson by reviewing previous lessons about the middle ages and refers to a posted list of key terms that students had generated. Using an overhead transparency, she draws students' attention to the objectives, telling the students that in today's lesson they will learn about armor worn by knights in the middle ages and they will answer questions in complete sentences about the different kinds of armor they wore. The teacher then opens a discussion about different types of clothing and their uses. She shows pictures from department store circulars depicting formal, casual, and work clothes. The teacher ties the topic to students' personal experiences by prompting them to discuss the function of different types of clothes, including what they wear to school (e.g., clothes worn in gym class, to dances, and in the classroom).

After students have expressed an understanding of clothing's various functions, she distributes the reading passage and reads the section aloud, paraphrasing as needed and drawing attention to information that may be used to complete the tree diagram. She checks for student comprehension by asking different kinds of questions, especially those that can generate elaborated answers. Students are given 10 minutes to complete the tree diagram, using information from the reading. When they finish, student pairs share their notes and several students report on their notes to the class.

Using another transparency, the teacher reviews the instructions, outlining the activity: 1) join your partner, 2) look in the reading for the number that matches the

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question, 3) read that paragraph, 4) find the answer to the question, 5) write the response, and 6) do the same for all the questions on the worksheet. Modeling and guided practice: Before starting the pair work, the teacher calls on two students to model the assignment. She guides them through steps 1-5 as the other students watch. Then all the students pair up and follow the same procedures. The teacher circulates to ensure each pair understands the instructions and is working successfully.

Independent practice and application: Students complete the worksheet in pairs and the teacher provides assistance as needed. The students will have 15 minutes to complete their worksheet in pairs, after which they will be given another worksheet to complete independently. Their grade will be based upon the second worksheet.

**Assess Results**

Throughout the lesson, the teacher informally checks the students' comprehension and performance of the task. After students have had an opportunity to finish the pair work, the teacher has them sit at their individual desks and put away the first worksheet. She distributes the second worksheet that students are to complete independently. This worksheet, which is a variation of the first, serves two purposes: as an individual check for student understanding before moving on with the unit and as data for grading. The ELLs complete a sheet showing pictures of specific pieces of armor. They are to identify the piece and tell its function, using key words such as parades, tournaments, and quests. They are to write in complete sentences.

**Conclusion**

The teacher in this scenario used a number of instructional practices that are effective for English language learners, and many reflect the CREDE Standards. These include

- Planning and incorporating language development objectives into a content lessons,
- Structuring lessons so that expectations for students are explicit,
- Providing opportunities for students to use academic language in meaningful ways,
- Using visuals (e.g., overhead transparencies, graphic organizer, pictures) to increase comprehension,
- Posting key terms for students' reference,
- Providing opportunities for students to work together in completing academic tasks,
- Promoting interactive discussions among students and teacher,

- Maintaining cognitive challenge, and
- Connecting the lesson to students' own experiences.

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For additional details on the research described in this brief, contact Jana Echevarria (Tel. 562-985-5759) or Claude Goldenberg (Tel. 562-985-4443). For more documents and a description of these CREDE projects, *The Effects of Sheltered Instruction on the Achievement of Limited English Proficient Students* and *Upscaling for Transition: Instructional and Schoolwide Factors to Support Latino Students' Transition from Spanish to English Instruction,* visit www.cal.org/crede/si.htm and www.crede.ucsc.edu.

# Working With Literacy-Level Adult English Language Learners

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**National Center for ESL Literacy Education
July 2003**

Many adult English language learners in the United States are placed in literacy-level classes. These learners have minimal or no English literacy skills and are usually minimally or not literate in their native languages. It is difficult to estimate the exact number of adult English language learners at this level across the variety of program contexts that offer adult English training (e.g., volunteer literacy groups, libraries, adult education programs, family literacy programs, community colleges, community-based or faith-based organizations). Furthermore, the percentage cited (55%) of beginning-level participants in state-administered adult English as a second language (ESL) programs include those enrolled in regular beginning classes as well as those in literacy-level classes (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

Anecdotal information, such as postings on Internet discussion lists and requests for training, suggest that teachers are not confident in their abilities to address the needs of literacy-level learners. (NIFL-ESL, 2003). Federally funded programs must demonstrate learner progress yearly, according to the National Reporting System (http://www.nrsweb.org/). Practitioners are concerned that sufficient progress is difficult to achieve with literacy-level learners; research indicates that it takes from 500-1,000 hours of instruction for adults who are literate in their native language but have had no prior English instruction to reach a level where they can satisfy their basic needs, survive on the job, and have limited social interaction in English (Mainstream English Language Training project [MELT], 1985). How much longer must it take for those without a literacy background in the first language?

Research on effective interventions with this population in the United States is limited. The American Institutes for Research and Aguirre International conducted a 6-year What Works Study for Adult ESL Literacy Students, supported by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE) and the Planning and Evaluation Service. The study focuses on adult English language learners who lack literacy skills in both their native language and English. Although, at publication date of this Q&A, the final report has not been disseminated, background information is available online (Condelli, 2001), as well

as preliminary findings (Wrigley, 2002), some of which are included in this article.

This Q&A describes who literacy-level learners are, examines what skills literacy-level learners need to develop, and discusses the appropriate scope of literacy-level classes, as well as activities and techniques to support them.

## Who Are Literacy-Level Learners?

Literacy learners are generally those with 6 or fewer years of education in their native countries who need focused instruction on learning to read and write in English. The population participating in literacy-level classes is diverse: Literacy classes may include men and women with different native languages, ages, length of time in country, life and language learning goals, and access to previous education (Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2000; Shank & Terrill, 1997). Literacy learners also have a range of oral skills in English from zero to high. (For a more detailed description of the types of first language literacy and effects on second language literacy, see Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003.) The following learners might attend the same literacy class:

**Preliterate** (native language as yet not developed in written mode). Wanankhucha, a Bantu from Somalia, entered the class as a recent refugee. She knows her native Af-Maay only orally, as the written language is being developed. Furthermore, as a refugee, Wanankhucha shows evidence of trauma.

**Nonliterate** (native language has written form, but learner has no literacy). Trang is a young woman from rural Vietnam who grew up without access to education, and because of the fallout from the Vietnam War, she lacks many of the cultural supports that helped older Vietnamese refugees prosper in the United States.

**Semiliterate** (learner has minimal literacy in native language). Roberto attended a rural school in El Salvador for 3 years, after which, although he wanted to continue, his family needed him to work on the family farm.

**Nonalphabet literate** (learner is literate in language that is not alphabetic). Xian is a senior from China. He was a minor bureaucrat who is highly literate in Chinese nonalphabetic script, but he is unfamiliar with any other alphabet, including Roman.

**Non-Roman alphabet literate** (learner's native language uses alphabet other than Roman). Khalil comes from Jordan. He completed 2 years of secondary school and is literate in Arabic.

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**Roman-alphabet literate** (native language is written with Roman alphabet). Alex is a senior from Russia. As a young man, he studied French. Even though he was a professional (engineer) in his own country, he does not want to move to a higher level class.

Others who may benefit from a literacy-level class are individuals with learning disabilities or individuals who, because of age, physical or mental health issues, or family situations, find that the slow and repetitive pace of such a class better meets their needs and goals (Holt, 1995).

**What Skills Do Literacy-Level Learners Need to Develop?**

At the most basic level, literacy learners need to understand that texts have a beginning, a middle, and an end; that English is read from left to right and from up to down; and that written words can represent a story, just as pictures do. They need to be ready to learn, to see patterns, and to associate symbols with objects.

Then, they need to be able to develop four key reading skills: phonological processing, vocabulary development, syntactical processing, and schema activation (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). Relating to these four skills, learners need to be able to do the following (Brod, 1999; Florez, 2002; Van Duzer, 1999):

> • recognize and reproduce letters and other graphic symbols related to the language;
> • manipulate sound-symbol correspondences efficiently;
> • understand and apply grammar and usage conventions;
> • develop an ever-growing vocabulary bank;
> • set and pursue a purpose for reading or writing;
> • identify and use structural and organizational features common to English; and
> • activate appropriate strategies for reading comprehension (e.g., gaining meaning from context, using pictures and other graphics, predicting, and skimming/scanning) or developing a piece of writing (brainstorming, outlining, drafting, using feedback, editing).

There are literacy learners who will need to expend time and energy mastering these very basic skills and components. Learners coming from preliterate traditions may find two-dimensional graphic literacy in general—letters, maps, graphs, charts, even pictures—difficult to interpret (Hvitfeldt, 1985). All non-English speakers will be challenged to hear and replicate the sounds of English, a necessary element in the sound-symbol correspondence skills deployed in successful reading (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003). However, it is important to balance basic skills development with fostering of higher level, comprehension-attack skills (Brod, 1999; Van Duzer, 1999).

**What Is the Scope of the Literacy Class?**

To some extent, literacy-level classes vary because of program type (general, family, workplace, or corrections); intensity; and learner needs and goals. Yet all programs for this population will need to concurrently develop the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. As research suggests, for beginning readers of a second language, oral proficiency in the target language is key to developing reading ability (Burt, Peyton, & Adams, 2003).

Also applicable to planning instruction for adult literacy learners are Malcolm Knowles' (1973) principles of adult learning: Adults are self-directed, practical, and problem solving; they have reservoirs of experience to help them learn new things; and they want to know why something needs to be learned and how it will be applicable to their lives (Florez & Burt, 2001).

Finally, learners themselves have a variety of purposes and goals for developing English literacy. Learner needs assessment assures learners a voice in their instruction and keeps content relevant and vital to their lives and goals. It also gives the teacher an opportunity to learn what skills learners bring to the classroom and which ones they feel they need to strengthen (Brod, 1999; Shank & Terrill, 1997).

**What Are Effective Activities for Literacy Learners?**

A literacy-level lesson begins with learner experiences. It integrates listening and speaking with reading and writing and balances basic skills development with development of strategies for understanding and communicating. The content is relevant, and there are opportunities to connect the learning to real-world practices. Class field trips to supermarkets or to museums provide a venue to practice speaking and reading skills, especially when public buses or metros are used (Brod, 1999; Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2000; Florez, 2002; Holt, 1995; Wrigley, 2002).

The first step, as with any instruction, is a learner needs assessment. Some suggested activities for needs assessment with literacy-level learners include the following:

• Ask learners to look through their texts and place five Post-it notes on pages with information they think is most important for them to learn.

• Practice a simple pictorial strip story about a non-English speaker who has three specific needs for learning English (*Alex needs to learn English for work, to listen to music, and to make friends*); then ask learners to brainstorm and substitute why they need to learn English.

• Have learners complete a simplified or pictorial checklist of what they want to read or write, e.g., grocery lists, job applications, notes to child's teacher, etc. (Holt, 1995; Shank & Terrill, 1997).

Once needs are determined, there are a number of activities that are used with literacy-level learners:

*Dialogues with related activities.* Oral dialogues can be springboards for literacy-oriented activities such as cloze or substitution. Learners substitute different vocabulary words in a structured dialogue, sentence strips, role plays, or dictation.

*Vocabulary-building activities.* For literacy-level learners, matching pictures to words is key for vocabulary development. Flash cards, concentration games, labeling, vocabulary journals, picture dictionaries, and bingo activities can be used to practice vocabulary.

*Conversation grids.* Grids engage learners in structured oral exchanges as well as written questions and answers.

*Language Experience Approach (LEA).* The teacher records text that learners generate around a shared picture or event, drawing out vocabulary that is relevant to the learners. Other activities based on the learner-generated text follow, such as vocabulary development, phonics exercises, choral reading, or dictation.

*Phonics exercises.* Exercises such as minimal pairs or identifying initial word sounds are important components of literacy-level lessons. Connecting such exercises to the vocabulary being taught in a lesson contextualizes the learning and makes it relevant. Whenever possible, use authentic materials (flyers, schedules, advertisements, bills) to connect literacy development to real-world tasks.

*Class surveys and dictations of students' names, phone numbers, and addresses.* These activities can provide interesting, relevant content while developing encoding skills. More tactile versions such as drawing the letters in sand with the fingers, coloring letters, or manipulating plastic cutouts of letters may offer some variety (Brod, 1999; Florez, 2002; Holt, 1995; Moss, Shank, & Terrill, 1997; Tom, Tiller, & Bigelow, 1998; Wrigely, 2002).

**What Does an Effective Literacy Lesson Look Like?**

Following is a sample lesson that employs activities to develop the four key reading skills (phonological processing, vocabulary development, syntactical processing, and schema activation):

1. As a class, learners brainstorm vocabulary on a specific topic, such as food shopping (*schema activation*).

2. Flashcard practice (whole group and pair) familiarizes learners with food vocabulary (*vocabulary development*).

3. The class groups food words that begin with similar sounds, *e.g., cheese, chicken,* and *cherries* (*phonological processing*).

4. Learners practice a three-line scripted dialogue ("I am going shopping." "What do you need?" "I need bread, beans, and chicken.") first as a whole group, then acted out by volunteers, and finally as pairs where learners substitute other food vocabulary (*vocabulary development*).

5. Learners complete cloze worksheets, inserting words that have been deleted from the dialogue or, alternately, do pair dictations of the dialogue (*syntactical processing*).

6. For homework, learners create their own shopping list of five items they actually need; they can copy new food words from packages, etc. (*vocabulary development; schema activation*).

In addition to these activities, effective lessons incorporate techniques relevant for all adult education classes: repeating and spiraling material, presenting new material in multiple ways, and establishing classroom routines (Brod, 1999; Florez & Burt, 2001; Tom, Tiller, & Bigelow, 1998; Wrigley, 2002).

**How Can Learner Progress Be Assessed?**

Assessment is an important part of any instruction, as it keeps both the teacher and learners informed of what has been achieved and what still needs work. It also provides a venue for learners to develop self-reflection and self-evaluation skills. Many of the activities described in this Q&A can be used for assessment (for example, cloze exercises, substitution

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drills, and role plays). Ongoing teacher observation is also part of assessment. Learners can engage in self-assessment by completing checklists after a set of activities or at the end of a class (Florez, 2002; Holt, 1995).

**Conclusion**

Literacy-level learners "may be beginning learners, but they are not beginning thinkers" (Brod, 1999, p. 5). Like all learners, they bring diverse strengths and needs to the adult ESL classroom. Teachers need to provide instruction that acknowledges and addresses these strengths and needs, engages learners in challenging and relevant topics, and provides them with tools they can use to meet their responsibilities and goals.

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Shapiro, N., & Genser, C. (1994). *Chalk talks*. Berkeley, CA: Command Performance Language Institute.

Silliman, A., & Tom, A. (2000). *Practical resources for adult ESL*. Burlingame, CA: ALTA Book Centers.

**The following online resources demonstrate the scope, strategies, and activities for successfully working with literacy-level learners:**

Arlington Education and Employment Program. (2003). *The REEP ESL Curriculum For Adults*. Provides information about needs assessment, goal-setting, course and lesson planning, and offers sample lessons on health and work. www.arlington.k12.va.us/instruct/ctae/adult_ed/REEP/ reepcurriculum/sitemap.htm (To find curriculum for literacy level-learners, go to "Resources," click on "Lesson Plans," and look for "Level 100.")

Centre for Canadian Language Benchmarks. *ESL for Literacy Learners* and ancillary materials. Defines ESL literacy and suggests appropriate methodology. www.language.ca/bench/literacy.html

Department of Education (MA). *Framework for Adult ESOL in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts* (1999/ 2002). Offers basic principles for working with adult learners. http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/ esol.pdf or http://www.doe.mass.edu/acls/frameworks/ esol.doc

**ERIC/NCLE Digests, Q&As, and Briefs** are available free from NCLE, 4646 40th Street NW, Washington, DC 20016; 202-362-0700, ext. 200; email: ncle@cal.org; and on the Web at http://www.cal.org/ ncle/DIGESTS.

The National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) is operated by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) with funding from the U.S. Department of Education (ED), Office of Vocational and Adult Education (OVAE), under Contract No. ED-99-CO-0008. The opinions expressed in this report do not necessarily reflect the positions or policies of ED. This document is in the public domain and may be reproduced without permission.

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Resources for Educators
of English Language Learners

Classroom Resources & Instructional
Strategies: Grades 9–12

**Online Resources**

The Help! Kit For Secondary Teachers of Migrant English Language Learners
http://www.escort.org/products/secondaryhelpkit.html

> The Help! Kit is a comprehensive resource guide that provides information to teachers who are seeking practical advice on how they can more effectively teach, evaluate, and nurture limited English proficient (LEP) migrant students. The Help! Kit provides mainstream teachers with instructional strategies and resources that will benefit all LEP migrant students and can also assist them with other students who have varying levels of English proficiency and learning styles. Research-based teaching strategies that focus on key content areas and cultural information are also provided in this site. The Help! Kit is fully downloadable from the Web.

## Culture and Orientation: Grades 9-12

**Books**

Olsen, L. (1997). Made in America: Immigrant Students in Our Public Schools. New York: The New Press.
http://www.californiatomorrow.org/publications/cts.pl?pub_id=7

This book offers a portrait of life at a public high school. Olsen spent two and a half years attending classes, observing, and interviewing teachers, administrators, students, and parents. Through their stories, Olsen discovered a contemporary version of the Americanization of immigrants. From the challenges of bilingual education to combatting cultural sterotypes, Olsen explores what it looks like and feels like to go to school and to teach in a time of increasingly complex cultural relations.

Jaramillo, A., Olsen, L., Perez, Z. M., & White, J. (1999). Igniting Change for Immigrant Students: Portraits of Three High Schools. Oakland, CA: California Tomorrow.
http://www.californiatomorrow.org/publications/cts.pl?pub_id=17

This volume offers the stories of a school change process in three high schools that partnered with California Tomorrow to demonstrate an equity-centered approach to educational improvement. This book describes California Tomorrow's process model and nine principles for school change, reflects on lessons learned about what it takes to put equity, access, language, and culture at the heart of school reform, portrays the reality of reform work in two very different school contexts, and evaluates the impact of work on the schools, teachers, administrators and students.

**Digest**

Promoting Secondary School Transitions for Immigrant Adolescents
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/lucas001.html

# Promoting Secondary School Transitions for Immigrant Adolescents

**by Tamara Lucas, Montclair State University, NJ**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics EDO-FL-97-04, December 1996**

This digest is drawn from information included in *Into, Through, and Beyond Secondary School: Critical Transitions for Immigrant Youth* (Lucas, 1997), the first title in the Program in Immigrant Education's *Topics in Immigrant Education* series.

Immigrant students constitute an ever increasing proportion of the school-age population, particularly those enrolled at the secondary school level. For students at this level, the difficult transitions of adolescence combined with the challenge of learning to express thoughts, develop a personality, and master academic content in a language they are still learning can be overwhelming (Spenser & Dornbusch, 1990). The inability to communicate ideas and feelings confidently can result in confusion, frustration, anger, and alienation. In addition, immigrant students must balance the value systems of their native culture, ever present at home, with those of the dominant culture, which prevail at school.

This digest highlights three ways educators can help immigrant secondary school students through these critical transitions and provides brief descriptions of three programs that are working to facilitate these transitions.

## Provide Access to Information

Learning the rules and practices of a new school system is challenging for immigrant students and their parents, and they need information to become successfully integrated into the U.S. school system. This information can be provided in many ways.

*Intake centers or parent information centers* are located at schools or district offices and are often staffed with bilingual professionals. These centers register, assess, and place students in programs and provide oral and written information to their parents in their native languages. Such centers may also convene ongoing parent meetings.

*Workshops and seminars* inform families about school rules, procedures, grading, extra-curricular activities, and special support services; expectations regarding attendance, homework, and family involvement; and college preparation and career guidance.

*School documents and orientation materials* should be translated into the home languages of immigrant students. However, because some students and their parents may not be literate in their native language, schools should not rely solely on written documents. In Prince George's County, Maryland, school staff have developed a video in several languages about school procedures, expectations, and opportunities, for parents to view while their children are being enrolled at the intake center.

*Structured relationships with school staff* through teams, clusters, schools within schools, student buddies, and counselors are also key for providing information to immigrant students and helping them get involved in school activities.

## Support English Language and Academic Development

At the secondary level, immigrant students must learn English, master academic content, and earn high school and college credits in order to pursue challenging careers and higher education. Schools take a number of approaches to help students attain these goals.

*Newcomer schools* are special schools for recent immigrant students (see Chang, 1990; Friedlander, 1991). A major purpose of these schools is to support the adjustment of recent immigrants into their new society and school. This includes, but is not limited to, English language development and, in some cases, continued native language development. In many newcomer schools, students attend classes for half a day and then a regular middle or high school for the other half; in others, students attend all day for 6 months before they are enrolled in mainstream schools.

*English as a second language (ESL) programs* usually consist of a series of courses designed for students with varying levels of English proficiency—beginning, intermediate, and advanced. They may also include special courses for low literate students, students with limited prior schooling, and those who are beyond the advanced level but are not ready for mainstream classes. Students may take a combination of ESL, sheltered content, and mainstream classes, depending on English proficiency, native language literacy, and academic background.

*Sheltered English content programs* teach challenging academic content (e.g., math, science, social studies) in English. Instructional materials, teacher presentations, and classroom interaction are adapted so that learners can understand them and participate. (See Short, 1991, for ways these adaptations can

be made.) The quality and effectiveness of these programs depend on the ability of teachers to provide instruction in English that is accessible to English learners without oversimplifying the academic content.

*Bilingual education programs* acknowledge and build upon students' ability to speak, read, and write in languages other than English. At the secondary level, these programs usually consist of content courses in the students' native languages, enabling them to study academic content at their appropriate grade level. Some programs emphasize continued development of the native language, but most are designed to promote the transition to English.

*Alternative schools* are designed for students who are unable to take advantage of newcomer programs or special curricula in regular schools because of factors that affect their ability to attend and complete school, such as the need to work and support families. In these schools, students can begin studying in the late afternoon and take academic classes that grant graduation and college credits.

### Promote Access to Postsecondary Education

Immigrant students face many obstacles in making the transition to higher education and need guidance to negotiate the system successfully. A number of programs provide basic information about preparing for, selecting, and applying to colleges, and help students throughout the process. Academic support services such as tutoring, summer schools, weekend programs, and academies improve students' academic and English language skills. Linkages with higher education institutions, through mentoring by college or university students and college visits, can help students learn about and envision themselves attending a university.

Because education is more necessary than ever for success in today's workforce, all students should be encouraged to pursue higher education. However, whether or not students are immediately college bound, all of them need a secondary education that is academically challenging and develops the required knowledge and skills necessary for success in the labor market. Unfortunately, many English language learners are placed in vocational education classes that are not academically challenging. Effective pathways to the world of work include career exploration, career guidance, career academies, cooperative education, youth apprenticeship, school-based enterprises, entrepreneurship education, internships, youth service, service learning, and work-based mentoring.

### Program Profiles

*The International High School* at LaGuardia Community College in Queens, New York is a 4-year comprehensive high school designed for limited English proficient students who have lived in the United States for fewer than 4 years. The school's mission is to enable all students "to develop the linguistic, cognitive, and cultural skills necessary for success in high school, college, and beyond" (International High School, n.d.). Designated as an alternative high school within the New York City school system, it is different from most newcomer schools because it is not temporary (students attend all 4 years) and does not segregate newcomers entirely. Because "all" of the students are recent immigrants, they are central, not peripheral, to the school. The school has been completely restructured to promote collaboration and develop relationships within the school community. Content is taught in 12 interdisciplinary clusters, each linking four subjects (math, science, social studies, and language arts) around a theme. Groups of approximately 75 students work together in a cluster with 4 to 8 staff members, with whom they stay for an entire trimester. Students can use their native languages socially and in class and can choose to develop them by taking courses. They have access to all of the college's facilities, can interact with college students, and can take college courses for credit. A career education program is built into 2 of the 12 interdisciplinary clusters, to ensure that students know how to make the transition beyond high school. All students go through an internship sequence during their tenure at the school.

*AVID (Advancement Via Individual Determination)*, initiated in San Diego, California, works to place under-represented students from linguistic and ethnic minority groups in rigorous academic classes while providing a system of support and advocacy, which includes explicit instruction in skills that are essential to academic success. It aims to prepare these students to perform well in high school and to pursue a college education. Students are enrolled in a course during the school day that teaches strategies for interpreting and analyzing texts, writing essays, taking tests, and approaching faculty for assistance. In addition, teachers and aides tutor students outside of class in academic subjects. School staff also provide extensive personal and social support by communicating with the parents, counseling students with personal problems, helping students through the college selection and application process, bringing college and university representatives to the school, and arranging visits to college and university campuses.

*Project Adelante* was established at Kean College (New Jersey) to inspire Grade 6-12 Hispanic students

learning English to work toward the long-term goals of high school graduation and college entry. Students are encouraged to remain in the program from the time they enter until they complete high school. Students attend a Saturday academy in the fall and spring semesters and a 5-week summer academy on the Kean College campus. The program includes academic instruction, career and personal counseling, peer tutoring, mentoring by Hispanic professionals, and family involvement. Transportation is provided for all students, and parents are encouraged to attend classes. The academic curriculum is thematically organized, based on a whole language approach, and is taught by teachers from the participating school districts. Three counselors are on the staff to teach classes and meet with students in individual and group counseling sessions throughout the summer, fall, and spring sessions. In addition, the counselors establish an important link with the parents by organizing meetings and activities to help them understand and encourage their children (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1994).

## Conclusion

To enable immigrant students to make smooth transitions into, through, and beyond secondary school, our schools must commit to functioning as communities, building bridges to students' families and to other organizations outside the school, providing students with information about the broader U.S. culture as well as the culture of the school, and developing curricula and instruction that incorporate students' experiences, knowledge, and skills. The development of English language abilities, academic skills, and content knowledge, accompanied by support for native language development, can provide the foundation for the future success of immigrant students in secondary schools and beyond.

## References

Center for Applied Linguistics. (1994). *Project Adelante: Moving onward to a better education.* Washington, DC: Author.

Chang, H. N. (1990). *Newcomer programs: Innovative efforts to meet the challenges of immigrant students.* San Francisco: California Tomorrow.

Friedlander, M. (1991). *The newcomer program: Helping immigrant students succeed in U.S. schools.* Washington DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

International High School. (n.d.). *Excerpts from Project PROPEL Handbook.* Long Island City, NY: Author.

Lucas, T. (1997). *Into, through, and beyond secondary school: Critical transitions for immigrant youth.* Topics in immigrant education series. McHenry, IL and Washington, DC: Delta Systems and Center for Applied Linguistics.

Short, D. J. (1991). *How to integrate language and content instruction: A training manual.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.

Spenser, M. B., & Dornbusch, S. M. (1990). Challenges in studying minority youths. In S.S. Feldman & G. Elliot (Eds.), *At the threshold: The developing adolescent* (pp. 123-46). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

**Online Resources**

California Tomorrow
http://californiatomorrow.org/

> California Tomorrow works with schools, family-serving institutions, early childhood programs, and communities to respond positively and equitably to diverse populations. California Tomorrow identifies and designs new models of practice for a diverse society and guides and supports the work required to implement these models.

Cultural Orientation Center
http://www.culturalorientation.net

> The Cultural Orientation Center produces monographs on the people, history, and culture of different refugee groups to help U.S. service providers understand the new refugee populations. Other orientation materials include bilingual phrasebooks, health resources guides, and a website devoted to cultural orientation.

# Professional Development: Grades 9–12

**Books**

Echevarria , J., Vogt, M., & Short, D. (2004). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The SIOP model, 2/E.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon
http://www.ablongman.com/catalog/academic/product/0,4096,0205386415,00.html

> This text describes the research-based Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model, which provides school administrators, staff developers, teachers, teacher candidates, university faculty, and field experience supervisors with a tool for observing and quantifying a teacher's implementation of quality sheltered instruction. *Making Content Comprehensible* presents a coherent, specific, field-tested model of sheltered instruction that specifies the features of a high-quality sheltered lesson that teaches content material to English learners. Each of the 30 items from the SIOP model are illustrated through vignettes. Three different lessons for each item are rated and discussed, allowing the book to be applied to a variety of content areas and grade levels.

Gonzalez, J., & Darling-Hammond, L. (1997). *New concepts for new challenges: Professional development for teachers of immigrant youth.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=37

> As the presence of immigrant students is felt in schools nation-wide, school staff are increasingly under pressure to examine their assumptions concerning their students and their own instructional practices. In this book, the authors develop a framework for considering what teachers need to understand about their students, what kinds of professional development experiences are likely to facilitate those under-standings, and what kinds of teacher education programs and school settings are able to support their ongoing learning. The authors describe promising new structures and practices for professional devel-opment, particularly those that promote community, collegiality, and collaboration. Several successful preservice and inservice programs are profiled.

Jameson, J. H. (1999). *Enriching content classes for secondary ESOL students: Complete inservice training materials for middle and high school content* (Manual, Guide, & Video). Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics and Delta Systems.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=152

> These comprehensive, inservice training materials are designed for middle and high school content teachers (teachers of math, science, social studies, and language arts) whose mainstream classes include students learning English. The training shows teachers how to teach both content and related academic language to all students, including English language learners, using techniques such as graphic organizers, scaffolded lessons, cooperative learning, alternative assessment, and multicultural activities. The trainer's manual includes a transcript and transparency masters. The participants' study guide includes handouts for participants. (Additional study guides for use by inservice participants can be purchased as well.) The 34-minute video, entitled *Communicative Math and Science Teaching*, pro-vides video observations of exemplary secondary school content classrooms.

Rosenthal, J. W. (1996). *Teaching science to language minority students.* Philadelphia: Multilingual Matters.

> Complete with a glossary of the linguistic terms used, this book, although written basically for instructors of English language learners (ELLs) in undergraduate college science courses, may be useful to high school science teachers of ELLs as well. The nine chapters of the book may be read from start to finish or as a quick reference by topic, according to the reader's needs. The author's recommendations aimed at improving science instruction for ELLs will also help native English speakers who experience difficulty learning science.

Schleppegrell, M. J., & Colombi, M. C. (Eds.). (2002). *Developing advanced literacy in first and second languages: Meaning with power.* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.

The 13 authors of this book share a view of literacy that emphasizes the importance of both the social contexts and the linguistic challenges that students face when they engage in academic tasks requiring advanced levels of reading and writing. Developing advanced literacy is particularly challenging for students who do not use academic language outside of the classroom, and although much is known about early literacy, less has been written about helping students to develop advanced literacy as they move into secondary school education. Seven of the 13 chapters in this book focus specifically on instructing English language learners.

## CD

Teemant, A., Pinnegar, S., & Graham, R. (2003). *The second language literacy case. A video ethnography of teaching second language students content through literacy development.* Provo, UT: Harris Video Cases. http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=272

A set of four CD-ROMs display video clips of university professors, teachers, students, and parents discussing the issues related to second language literacy for elementary and secondary students. The seven studies on these CD-ROMs focus on four aspects of each topic discussed. They are guiding principles, essential policy, standards, critical learning domains (cognitive), and classroom strategies.

## Conference Proceedings

Boyson, B. A., Coltrane, B., & Short, D. J. (Eds.). (2003). *Proceedings of the first national conference for educators of newcomer students*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics. http://www.cal.org/projects/NCConfPilotStud.htm

These proceedings, available online, offer summaries of more than 35 presentations from the 2002 conference that focused on newcomer program design, curriculum and instruction, and professional development for educators of English language learners—both elementary and secondary—who are new immigrants to the United States. Current research on newcomer programs and practical guidelines for establishing such a program were included in the conference program, as was a session on the *No Child Left Behind* legislation.

# Sample Search of the ERIC Database: Grades 9–12

These documents were identified by searching the ERIC database using the following combination of ERIC descriptors and keywords:

English (Second Language) or Limited English Speaking
and
High School Students or Secondary Education or Grade 9 or Grade 10 or Grade 11 or Grade 12
and
Literacy or Literacy Skills or Literacy Education or Biliteracy or Reading/DF or Reading Instruction [as major descriptors]
and
Not Foreign Countries

**Search Results**

**EJ653524**
**Title: Changing Lives: Teaching English and Literature to ESL Students.**
**Authors: Ernst-Slavit, Gisela; Moore, Monica; Maloney, Carol**
**Source: Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, v46 n2 p116-28 Oct 2002**
Provides teachers with selected background knowledge and strategies that enhance the learning process for English as a Second Language (ESL) students in secondary classrooms. Discusses the stages of language development and cultural adaptation that all second-language learners navigate through. Outlines important linguistic and cultural processes. Suggests effective activities for students in various stages within those processes.

**EJ645348**
**Title: Russian Bilingual Science Learning: Perspectives from Secondary Students.**
**Authors: Lemberger, Nancy; Vinogradova, Olga**
Source: International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism, v5 n1 p58-71 2002
Describes one secondary Russian/English bilingual science teacher's practice and her literate students' experiences as they learn science and adapt to a new school. Discusses the notion of whether literacy skills in the native language are transferable to a second language.

**EJ643220**
**Title: Teaching Reading Strategies: "It Takes Time!"**
**Author: Farrell, Thomas S. C.**
**Source: Reading in a Foreign Language, v13 n2 p631-46 Spr 2001**
Outlines a case study of how one teacher attempted to incorporate strategy training into his secondary school English reading classes. The teacher attempted strategy training in questioning, clarifying, and predicting strategies and vocabulary recognition techniques for less proficient English students with mixed success. The teacher was successful in getting students to achieve some metacognitive awareness of their reading processes.

**EJ642763**
**Title: The Process of Becoming a Participant in Small-Group Critical Discussions: A Case Study.**
**Author: Nussbaum, E. Michael**
**Source: Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, v45 n6 p488-97 Mar 2002**
Presents a case study of one classroom teacher's attempt to develop critical discourse in students, focusing particularly on the ability of language-minority students to participate in critical discussions. Suggests that allowing students to explore topics of personal relevance--as may occur in a critical literacy curriculum--is one way of stimulating motivation and therefore complex discussion.

**ED462014**
**Title: Teaching Reading to Low-Literate Language Minority High School Students.**
**Author: Thomas, Thomas**
**Publication Date: 1999**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.**

This paper, written from the perspective of a classroom teacher who is also the child of immigrant parents, examines issues related to teaching reading to low-literate minority students for whom English is not their first language. The paper presents background issues, examines the process of language acquisition, and focuses on the following: the political context (this country is in the middle of a controversy over bilingual issues, with several states arguing over how to teach new immigrants and various federal mandates about bilingual education); educational factors that affect the process of gaining English proficiency (teacher effectiveness and student motivation); cultural factors that influence immigrants' adjustment to U.S. education (including language); key principles of second language acquisition (e.g., literacy in the first language); age and second language acquisition; language and meaning (the importance of cultural relevance); and instructional strategies (environment, meaning and the language experience approach, content-centered approach, and cooperative learning).

**EJ634565**
**Title: Learning Language and Critical Literacy: Adolescent ESL Students.**
**Author: Alford, Jennifer**
**Source: Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, v45 n3 p238-42 Nov 2001**

Addresses two interrelated factors needed to be resolved at the commencement of any Critical Literacy approach in the mainstream subject classroom--the nature of the texts presented and the concept of resistance. Lists three strategies that help to build background knowledge: activating existing prior knowledge; building on that knowledge from a contemporary localized perspective; and adding new information during reading.

**EJ611091**
**Title: A Meaning-based ESL Reading Program.**
**Author: Kruger, Arnold**
**Source: Reading Improvement, v37 n2 p50-55 Sum 2000**

Outlines a meaning-based reading program for English-as-a-second-language teenagers in grades 8-12 aimed at promoting analytic thinking, cultural integration, and creative processing skills, as well as increased English proficiency. Discusses general and specific objectives, reading materials, types of reading programs, integrated and followup activities, feedback, timeframe, and manpower and funding requirements.

**ED446174**
**Title: Enabling Academic Success for Secondary Students with Limited Formal Schooling: A Study of the Haitian Literacy Program at Hyde Park High School in Boston.**
**Author: Walsh, Catherine E.**
**Publication Date: 1999**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.**

This publication documents a successful literacy program for a specific at-risk group, the Haitian Literacy Program at Hyde Park High School, Boston, Massachusetts. In operation since 1988, the Haitian Literacy Program is the longest running high school literacy program in the region for bilingual students with limited formal education. Through a case study approach, the educational success of these students and the program traits that staff and students believe have enabled academic achievement, high school graduation, and participation in higher education are examined. The program is designed for secondary school students with less than a fourth-grade level of formal education or no literacy skills in their native language or English. It is an intensive, self-contained program focused on developing the skills needed to participate in bilingual education classes. In its 9 years of operation, the program has averaged 20 students each year. Data were collected through case study and collaborative approaches from document reviews, ethnographic observations, interviews, and focus group discussions. Key elements of program success were identified as: (1) the commitment and dedication of the native language teacher; (2) the relationship between English as a second language and native language teachers and instruction; (3) the interdisciplinary, thematic, and self-contained instructional format; and (4) the self-determination of the students. Three appendixes contain discussions of data sources and initial literacy assessments and a literacy checklist.

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Resources for Educators
of English Language Learners

Sample Search of the ERIC Database:
Grades 9–12

**EJ565057**
**Title: Previewing Challenging Reading Selections for ESL Students.**
**Authors: Chen, Hsiu-Chieh Sophia; Graves, Michael F.**
**Source: Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, v41 n7 p570-71 Apr 1998**
Describes a simple previewing procedure that provides support for second-language students dealing with challenging reading selections. Describes a preview, gives an example, and suggests why they are effective. Summarizes results of a study, and concludes with suggestions for using previews in the classroom.

**EJ587441**
**Title: The Everyday Literacy Behavior of an Adolescent Mother for Whom English Is a Second Language.**
**Author: McNemar, Britta S.**
**Source: National Reading Conference Yearbook, v47 p274-84 1998**
**Availability: National Reading Conference, Inc., 122 S. Michigan Ave., Ste. 1776, Chicago, IL 60603.**
Presents a case study on the ways a low-income adolescent mother for whom English is a second language uses literacy at home, in school, and in the community. Traces her development in her interactions with her child, her transactions with texts that enabled her to fulfill responsibilities as a mother, and her use of multiple literacies to communicate with others.

**ED432147**
**Title: Academic Success for Long-Term ESL Students.**
**Authors: Newell, Jessica; Smith, Joye**
**Publication Date: March 1999**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.**
The study examines the population of long-term students of English as a second language (ESL), those who are enrolled in ESL programs for four to eight years but have not mastered the cognitive and academic skills in English to compete at grade level, in one New York City (New York) high school, and the efforts being made to address this population's needs. Background information is offered on student entry into and progress in the school system's ESL programs, and possible general factors in the lack of progress of long-term ESL (LTL) students. The procedures for identifying LTL students at the high school in question are described, using student writing samples as illustration. The program of literacy instruction designed to address these students' needs is elaborated, again using case examples. The program includes reading and writing components, note-taking skill development, native language arts instruction, several forms of assessment, and active support of this population by teachers and administrators.

**ED428578**
**Title: Creating "Vietnamerican" Discourse: Ethnic Identity in the ESL Classroom.**
**Author: Allendoerfer, Cheryl**
**Publication Date: April 1999**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.**
An ethnographic study examined how learning English and becoming more literate in the dominant discourse affects the identity or self-concept of Vietnamese immigrant students, and how new discourse may be created as students negotiate multiple literacies. It was conducted in a Seattle area high school and focused on 22 Vietnamese students in an English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) program, all of whom had lived in the United States for one to four years. Data were gathered using observation, informal conversations, a photography and writing project undertaken with the students, and formal interviews with students, teachers, and administrators. Analysis explored several issues: how students perceived their ethnic identities; what "Americanization" means to the students, their parents, and their teachers; how definitions of the concept differ among the groups, and the conflicts that may arise therefrom; and whether immigrant students need to identify with the dominant discourse or majority culture to succeed in American schools. Results challenge the assumption that assimilation means adopting elements of the new culture alongside the native culture, and suggest that a third culture is constructed with elements resembling elements of the first two but fundamentally different from either. Contains 18 references.

**EJ576198**
**Title: Language and Literacy Issues Related to Mexican-American Secondary Students.**
**Author: Perez, Bertha**
**Source: High School Journal, v78 n4 p236-43 Apr-May 1995**
**Journal availability: University of North Carolina Press, Box 2288, Chapel Hill, NC 27515- 2288 (annual subscription: $20 U.S., $15 foreign; individual issues: $6.00 U.S., $7.50 foreign).**
Reviews the limited research on language and literacy instruction of Mexican-American secondary students. Emerging themes indicate that secondary bilingual programs are few; English-as-a-Second-Language is the most widely used approach for developing language skills; schools that are effective with limited-English-speaking students use more integrated, holistic approaches. Contains 35 references.

**EJ573712**
**Title: Literature-Based ESL for Secondary School Students.**
**Authors: Custodio, Brenda; Sutton, Marilyn Jean**
**Source: TESOL Journal, v7 n5 p19-23 Aut 1998**
Describes how to use literature based instruction to develop literacy skills and to prepare secondary-level second-language learners for mainstream classrooms, focusing on advantages to a literature-based approach (it promotes literacy development, provides language models, and integrates language skills); discussing why content-based instruction is effective; and noting ways to use literature-based instruction.

**EJ573711**
**Title: Professional Development from the Inside Out.**
**Author: Jaramillo, Ann**
**Source: TESOL Journal, v7 n5 p12-18 Aut 1998**
Describes a teacher-driven, teacher-defined professional-development process designed to create an immigrant-responsive high school. The project involved English-as-a-Second-Language and content teachers who collaborated to improve students' literacy. They examined other models, their own needs, and student data, then created an accelerated literacy approach and an observation tool for monitoring each others' classrooms.

**EJ559656**
**Title: Enhancing ESL Reading Through Reader Strategy Training.**
**Author: Wright, Lora**
**Source: Prospect, v12 n3 p15-28 Dec 1997**
Seven high school students of English as a Second Language (ESL) underwent a short course of reading strategy training, including learner needs assessment, focus on why and when strategies are used, and carefully selected reading texts. Six of seven improved reading comprehension in at least one of two measures, supporting the notion that reading strategy training can be effective.

**EJ548826**
**Title: Literacy Acquisition through Literature (Literacy Issues in Focus).**
**Author: Langer, Judith A.**
**Source: Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy, v40 n8 p606-14 May 1997**
Discusses a project and study that focused on literacy acquisition among middle school students from the Dominican Republic attending a school on Manhattan's lower East Side. Describes how a book writing project focusing on "stories from home" engaged students, taught them ways to discuss and ways to think, and fostered their literacy acquisition through literature.

**ED407654**
**Title: Literacy Strategies.**
**Publication Date: 1997**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.**
The literacy strategies in this guide provide practical suggestions for teachers, regardless of discipline, to help middle school and high school students move to Levels III and IV on the North Carolina End-of-Grade Reading/Competency Tests. The strategies in the guide are designed for use with "inefficient" readers (not nonreaders). After an introduction, sections of the guide include: The Nature of Literacy; A Focus on Reading; Student Reactions to End-of-Grade Tests; End-of-Grade Testlets: Analysis; What Is Reading?; Strategies for Reading; Preparation-Engagement-Reflection; Scaffolding Reading Experiences; Prereading, Engagement, Reflection Activities for "Out of the Wild"; Instructional Activities: Prereading, Engagement, Reflection; Questioning for Comprehen-

sion; In the Classroom: Putting It All Together; Best Practices: Instructional Activities for Improved Reading; Working with Limited English Proficient Students: Strategies for Regular Classroom teachers; Students with Special Needs: Instructional Methods Teachers Can Use; and Metacognitive Strategies. Contains 51 references.

**ED406856**
**Title: The Vocational Classroom: A Great Place To Learn English.**
**Author: Platt, Elizabeth**
**Publication Date: 1996**
**Availability: NCLE, 1118 22nd Street N.W., Washington, DC 20037.**
This guide discusses the ways in which educators in technical and vocational education programs can maximize opportunities for limited-English-proficient students to learn English language skills. Vocational classrooms are viewed as potentially excellent environments for language learning because of the hands-on nature of the work, undertaken in pairs of small groups, using authentic materials and equipment, and requiring interpersonal communication. In addition, learners are often highly motivated. An introductory section reviews this approach and the literature supporting it. The second section looks at the role of the vocational curriculum in language teaching, including the types of language curricula (grammar-based, functional, and process-based) that can be used as referents in developing vocational-based language instruction, elements of vocational curricula that may be exploited for language learning, student need analysis and placement issues, and implications for implementation by vocational teachers, language teachers, and administrators. The third section offers more detailed suggestions for developing content-based language teaching activities, based on principles of scaffolding vocational instruction and fostering independent learning, at each of four proficiency levels from pre-speaking to high-intermediate/low-advanced. Examples of authentic activities are offered. Contains 63 references.

**ED399787**
**Title: Becoming Literate in English as a Second Language.**
**Author:  Goldman, Susan R., Ed.; Trueba, Henry T., Ed.**
**Publication Date: 1987**
**Availability: Ablex Publishing Corporation, 355 Chestnut Street, Norwood, NJ 07648.**
A collection of articles on English-as-a-Second-Language literacy and literacy education include: "Contextual Issues in the Study of Second Language Literacy" (Susan R. Goldman); "Mexican Adult Literacy: New Directions for Immigrants" (Concha Delgado-Gaitan); "Factors Affecting Development of Second Language Literacy" (Richard Duran); "Reading in a Second Language: Studies with Adult and Child Learners" (Barry McLaughlin); "Patterns of Performance Among Bilingual Children Who Score Low in Reading" (Mary Sue Ammon); "Oral Reading Miscues of Hispanic Good and Learning Disabled Students: Implications for Second Language Reading" (Ofelia Miramontes); "The Development of Writing Skills Among Hispanic High School Students" (Benji Wald); "Metapragmatic Knowledge of School-Age Mexican-American Children" (Louise Cherry Wilkinson, Celia Genishi); and "Organizing Classroom Instruction in Specific Sociocultural Contexts: Teaching Mexican Youth To Write in English" (Henry T. Trueba). Author and subject indexes are included.

**ED380817**
**Title: "My Trouble Is My English": Asian Students and the American Dream.**
**Author: Fu, Danling**
**Publication Date: 1995**
**Availability: Boynton/Cook, Heinemann, 361 Hanover St., Portsmouth, NH 03801-3912 ($21.50).**
Examining the learning experiences of four Laotian students at a mainstream secondary school, this book describes and interprets the students' learning situations and reveals their perspectives along with those of their teachers. The book introduces readers to the Savang family, refugees who left Laos. The book also shows how open journal writing assignments began to tap the rich stories this family had to tell. The book provides information on how students with different cultural backgrounds and learning styles react, behave, and learn in a classroom and how teachers can use that knowledge to create a community of learners. The first chapter provides background on the four siblings: their family and life in their home country, in their refugee camps, and in the United States. Chapter 2 of the book describes the four adolescents and their general situation at school. Chapters 3 though 6 are case studies of the four with a focus on their reading and writing experiences at school. The case studies in the book are organized thematically rather than chronologically (according to their ages). The concluding chapter reflects on the study and discusses issues related to literacy instruction and multiculturalism in the field of education.

**ED377742**
**Title: Leer y Escribir Hoy (Reading and Writing Today).**
**Authors: Dean, Peggy; Uribe, Teresa Figueroa**
**Publication Date: 1990**
**Availability: Linmore Publishing, Box 1545, Palatine, IL 60078.**
The literacy workbook is designed for native Spanish-speaking secondary students or adults with pre-reading skills and basic understanding of Spanish sound-symbol relationships. The materials' goals are to develop reading skills to bridge the gap between minimal reading abilities and literacy approaching the level of popular usage in newspapers and magazines, provide practice with the type of materials used in English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) and Spanish high school equivalency classes, accelerate acquisition of ESL by developing transferable literacy skills, and improve self-confidence. The book is intended for use by individuals living in North America. It is divided into three units containing a total of eight lessons. Each lesson contains vocabulary, reading passages, and skill application exercises geared to the student's own experiences. Reading for meaning is encouraged. Each lesson contains six to eight different activities. Pre- and post-unit activities are also included.

**ED376754**
**Title: Stories from LIFE at Falls Church High School. Literacy Is For Everyone (LIFE) Final Report.**
**Author: Cruz, Jane**
**Publication Date: 1993**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC06 Plus Postage.**
The report describes the development and implementation of Literacy Is For Everyone (LIFE), an English-as-a-Second-Language literacy program for limited-English-speaking immigrant families of students at Falls Church High School (Virginia). Participating families attended evening classes, groups, and workshops to develop literacy skills and become empowered to participate in their children's school and activities. Program components include 2-hour semi-weekly evening classes, access to two computer laboratories with software for language skill and critical thinking skill acquisition, peer tutoring with volunteers from the National Honor Society and Spanish Honor Society, child care provided by the high school child development program, collaborative activities for adults and high school and middle school students, and field trips. The report details program structure, student and facilitator participation, program strengths and challenges, and related resources available to instructors and participants. Anecdotes of program events and personal experiences are included throughout. Appended materials, which form the bulk of the report, contain supporting documentation for each chapter and a budget outline.

**ED366766**
**Title: ESL Resource Center. An Annotated Bibliography of Selected Resources for Vocational Preparation for Limited English Proficient Students.**
**Authors: Binder, Andrea, Comp.; And Others**
**Publication Date: April 1993**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.**
This annotated bibliography contains publication data and information on the content and availability of 58 resource materials that are recommended for use in vocational preparation programs for individuals with limited English proficiency. Descriptions of the resource materials are organized into sections on the following topics: English as a Second Language (ESL), career guidance, vocational training, vocational English as a Second Language, and workplace literacy. Each resource description contains some or all of the following: record number; title; author; editors; edition; publisher; place of publication; month/year of publication; price; location; ERIC code; format; source of information about the resource material; and description of the resource material's content, intended audience, and intended/recommended use(s). Included among the types of resource materials listed are the following: software/courseware, bibliographies, textbooks, teacher guides/handbooks, picture cards, practice books, inventories, test batteries, and videos. Materials for use in secondary-level and adult basic education programs are described. Also included is information about the ESL Resource Center database and various codes used in the database.

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Resources for Educators
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Sample Search of the ERIC Database:
Grades 9–12

**EJ487683**
**Title: Assessment and Teacher Perceptions of ESL Student Achievement.**
**Author: Klesmer, Harold**
**Source: English Quarterly, v26 n3 p8-11 Spr 1994**
Presents data from a study of 12-year-old English-as-a-Second-Language students in metropolitan Toronto and their significantly unsatisfactory educational development in language and literacy skills. Discusses implications of these findings, particularly with regard to educational change to help marginalized student groups. Finds that ESL students require at least six years to approach native speakers' norms.

**EJ481841**
**Title: Library Literacy Programs and the At-Risk Adolescent.**
**Author: Feehan, Patricia**
**Source: Catholic Library World, v64 n2-3 p51-56 Oct-Mar 1993-94**
Defines at-risk adolescent students, including remedial readers, pregnant teenagers, handicapped students, speakers of English as a Second Language, and public library dropouts; and describes literacy programs that enhance self-esteem and establish the library as an alternative learning source, many developed in a literacy course at the University of South Carolina.

**EJ480405**
**Title: Biliteracy Practices and Issues in Secondary Schools.**
**Author: Perez, Bertha**
**Source: Peabody Journal of Education, v69 n1 p117-35 Fall 1993**
Literacy is a major focus of attention in the education of linguistically and culturally diverse youth. The article focuses on identifying literature that impacts the literacy processes of secondary school students, highlighting studies that suggest a vision of literacy as empowerment for bilingual and limited English proficient students.

**EJ473064**
**Title: Sustained Silent Reading with English as a Second Language High School Students: Impact on Reading Comprehension, Reading Frequency, and Reading Enjoyment.**
**Authors: Pilgreen, Janice; Krashen, Stephen**
**Source: School Library Media Quarterly, v22 n1 p21-23 Fall 1993**
High school English as a Second Language (ESL) students in a 16-week sustained silent reading program showed gains in reading comprehension, reported greater frequency and enjoyment of reading, and utilized more sources of books. Results suggest that free reading is an effective means of literacy development with ESL students.

**ED353823**
**Title: Guide for Native Language and Content Area Literacy Programs for High School Haitian Creole-Speaking Students.**
**Publication Date: 1992**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.**
The guide consists of a series of sample lesson plans designed for teachers and supervisors delivering in-structional services to students with limited English proficiency and native language literacy in Haitian bilingual programs. The guides contain 14 sample lesson plans; five native language instruction sample lesson plans and nine content area (social studies, mathematics, science) sample lesson plans. Materials are based on the principle of promotion of dual literacy, and are designed to capitalize on students' prior knowledge. The guide also encourages use of the whole language approach in both native language and content area components. Lessons are designated for one of two student skill levels: (1) limited or no formal education; and (2) some basic native language literacy skills, comparable to a student in grades 3-5. An introductory section outlines the guiding principles of instruction on which the plans are based. Each lesson plan contains a topic, instructional materials needed, specific performance objectives, class activities, sample questions, and in some cases, a passage or poem in Haitian Creole. A list of appropriate instructional materials and a list of organizational, print, and nonprint resources are appended.

**ED352935**
**Title: Computer Pilot: Learning 100 On-Line System, 1991-92.**
**Publication Date: 1992**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.**
During the spring 1992 term, James Monroe High School piloted Learning 100 On-Line, a remedial reading/ literacy computer program developed by Educational Developmental Laboratories, Inc. The program, which was developed for junior high and high school students and adults reading at or below grade level, was implemented in two English- as-a-Second-Language, three Special Education, and four English classes. It is noted that Learning 100 On-Line is an integrated instruction and management system that diagnoses, prescribes, instructs, provides practice and reinforcement in, and evaluates mastery of reading, writing, vocabulary, and language competencies. It is noted further that it provides a multisensory, individualized approach which is designed to accommodate a variety of learning styles and educational backgrounds. An evaluation of the impact of the program on student attendance and academic achievement found the pilot to be successful on several levels. Several specific recommendations for schools that may wish to purchase the program are included. This report is presented in four sections: (1) Introduction--program background, evaluation methodology and scope of the report; (2) Program Implementation--use of the system, perceptions of the system and its strengths and weak- nesses; (3) Student Outcomes--reading performance and attendance; and (4) Conclusions and Recommenda- tions. Two tables present summaries of students' pre- and posttest scores on the reading comprehension subtest and spring 1992 percentage of attendance by group and gender.

**ED337055**
**Title: Discourse and Social Practice: Learning To Use Language in Bilingual Classrooms.**
**Authors: Warren, Beth; Rosenberg, Ann S.**
**Publication Date: January 12, 1991**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.**
A study of biliteracy focuses on discourse as the unit of analysis needed to understand the task facing bilingual students. It investigated the way in which 22 high school students representing six different language groups in a bilingual basic skills course struggled with scientific language in an experiment on the community's drinking water. Most students were not literate and had had no previous science experience. During the investigation, stu- dents began to appropriate the intentional possibilities of language in order to construct scientific meanings and resolve a dilemma posed by the evidence at hand. It is concluded that while in traditional book-based bilingual education, students are expected to assimilate decontextualized language, this active learning approach causes students to construct both language and content knowledge by confronting authentic dilemmas. A 34-item bibli- ography is included.

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Sample Search of the ERIC Database:
Grades 9–12

# RESOURCES FOR GRADES K–12

## Curricula and Standards: Grades K–12

### Curricula

*FAST Math Curriculum*
Fairfax County Public Schools
800-321-6223
http://www.fcps.edu/dis/OESOL/fastmath.htm

> The FAST (Focus on Achieving Standards in Teaching) mathematics program, developed in Fairfax County, VA, provides instruction to newly arrived English language learners in Grades 4–12 who are 2 or more years below grade level in mathematics. This program trains teachers to support English language learners in their acquisition of academic language as they learn the math concepts.

### Books

Buchanan, K. (2001). *School administrator's guide to the ESL standards.* Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
Available online as an Adobe PDF document (39kb).
http://www.tesol.org/assoc/k12standards/resources/copyright.html

> This guide shows administrators how to use the ESL standards to establish goals that measure compliance with federal guidelines and goals that are aligned with the school accreditation process. Examples of school-wide and classroom-based instructional approaches are included.

Cole, R. W. (Ed.). (1995). *Educating everybody's children: Diverse teaching strategies for diverse learners. What research and practice say about improving achievement.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
http://www.ascd.org/readingroom/books/cole95toc.html

> The culmination of work by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's (ASCD) Urban Middle Grades Network, a special Advisory Panel on Improving Student Achievement, and the Improving Student Achievement Research Panel, this book proposes a repertoire of tools for educators meeting the needs of an increasingly diverse student population.

Cole, R. W. (Ed.). (2001). *More strategies for educating everybody's children.* Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/2001cole/2001coletoc.html

> This book presents a collection of papers offering practical strategies that teachers can use to enhance student performance at all levels. The authors identify and describe the most effective teaching approaches for helping students learn history, civics, geography, and science. The book extends the notion of diversity by examining different populations that have been underserved by schools.

Collier, V., & Thomas, W. P. (1997). *School effectiveness for language minority students.* Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/resource/effectiveness/thomas-collier97.pdf

> This publication was written for ESL and bilingual coordinators as well as for school policy makers. It summarizes research findings from 5 large urban and suburban school districts with records of more than 700,000 language minority students collected from 1982–1996. The study makes predictions about long-term student achievement related to a variety of instructional practices.

Genesee, F. (Ed.). (1999). *Program alternatives for linguistically diverse students.* Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence: University of California, Santa Cruz.
http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/edpractice/EPR1.htm

> This report looks at programs and approaches for educating students from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds. It is intended as a guide for decision makers in schools and school districts to help them identify the instructional approaches and programs that would best serve their students, meet their goals and needs, and match local resources and conditions. An underlying assumption of this report is that no single approach or program model works best in every situation. Many different approaches can be successful when implemented well. Local conditions, choices, and innovation are critical ingredients of success.

National Study of School Evaluation. (2002). *Program evaluation: English as a second language. A comprehensive guide for standards-based program evaluation for schools committed to continuous improvement.* Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/assessment.html#602

> This volume helps school staff analyze their current ESL program from a data-driven and standards-based perspective. It encourages schools to reflect on how well they serve the academic and language learning needs of students learning English. Drawing from the best pedagogical and programmatic practice, this new resource will help schools develop the best programs so that English language learners are successful in school and beyond.

Snow, M. A. (Ed.). (2000). *Implementing the ESL standards for PreK–12 students through teacher education.* Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/standards.html#82X

> This book is a practical guide for using the ESL standards in various courses within teacher education programs, and as such, is valuable for both teacher educators and teacher learners. Most of the readings provide insights for both prospective and practicing teachers who work with English language learners in U.S. classrooms.

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (1997). *ESL standards for PreK–12 students.* Alexandria, VA: Author.
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/standards.html#714

> The standards for PreK–12 ESL students represent a starting point for developing effective and equitable education for ESOL students. These standards were developed to complement the discipline-specific standards created by other professional associations and groups. The ESL standards stand apart, however, because they acknowledge the central role of language in the achievement of content and highlight the learning styles and particular instructional and assessment needs of learners who are still developing proficiency in English. Developed through a collaborative process involving hundreds of ESL teachers, researchers, administrators, and language specialists, the standards provide national coherence for students and the educators who serve them.

Thomas, W. P. & Collier, V. P. (2002). *A national study of school effectiveness for language minority students' long-term academic achievement.* University of California, Santa Cruz: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=269

> This five-year research study (1996–2001) is the most recent overview of the types of school programs provided for linguistically and culturally diverse students in the United States, the language minority or English language learner population. The research findings includes both qualitative and quantitative data on the long-term achievement of these students in Grades K–12.

Wiley, T. (1996). *Literacy and language diversity in the United States.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=34

> Written for scholars, policy makers, and educators, this book provides an introduction to those unfamiliar with issues in literacy and language diversity and poses problems for consideration for those who work in the field. The book explores the extent of language diversity in the United States based on the best available national data; considers what we know about the extent of English literacy, native language literacy, and biliteracy; and discusses the kinds of data we need to make more informed policy decisions at the national level. The book critiques policies and practices that view language and other forms of human diversity as problems that must be remedied through education and points to recent positive developments in adult literacy that accommodate language diversity and use it as a resource. The book concludes with recommendations for policy and practice.

## Digests and Reports

ESL and Bilingual Program Models
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/rennie01.html

The ESL Standards: Bridging the Academic Gap for English Language Learners
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0013ESLstandards.html

A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement
http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/ResBrief10.htm

Recent Reading Initiatives: Examples of National, State, and Professional Organizations' Efforts
http://eric.indiana.edu/ieo/digests/d175.html

Some Program Alternatives for English Language Learners
http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/PracBrief3.htm

# ESL and Bilingual Program Models

**Jeanne Rennie, ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics September 1993**

Children from families in which English is not the language of the home represent a rapidly increasing percentage of students enrolled in U.S. schools. Language minority students can be found in schools across the country, not just those in large cities or in areas near the U.S.-Mexican border. All schools must be prepared to meet the challenge of an increasingly diverse student population, including many students who are not proficient in English.

The effectiveness of various program models for language minority students remains the subject of controversy. Although there may be reasons to claim the superiority of one program model over another in certain situations (Collier, 1992; Ramirez, Yuen, and Ramey, 1991), a variety of programs can be effective. The choice should be made at the local level after careful consideration of the needs of the students involved and the resources available.

### Factors to Consider in Selecting a Program Model

It is critical to consider several variables that will ultimately influence the type of program most likely to be appropriate and effective in a given situation.

1. **District or school demographics.** While some districts have a large population of students from a single language background, others have several large groups of students, each representing a different home language. Still others may have small numbers of students from as many as 100 different language backgrounds scattered across grade levels and schools. The total number of language minority students, the number of students from each language background, and their distribution across grades and schools will influence the selection of the type of program to meet the needs of district students (McKeon, 1987).

2. **Student characteristics.** Some language minority students enter U.S. schools with strong academic preparation in their native language that may equal or surpass that of their grade-level peers in the United States. Others, however, may arrive in this country with little or no school experience. Social, economic, and cultural factors in their home country may have interrupted their schooling—if, indeed, they attended school at all. The needs of these students are clearly much different from those of students with a solid academic background (McKeon, 1987).

3. **District or school resources.** Districts that have had a significant language minority enrollment for many years will likely have teachers, aides, and administrators trained to work with students who have limited English proficiency. They may be able to draw on a large pool of bilingual personnel in the community to staff bilingual programs. Other districts, faced with a sudden influx of students from one or more unfamiliar language backgrounds, may have to scramble to find qualified teachers or volunteers.

Material resources will also influence the type of program that a district or school may be able to provide. Districts with declining enrollments may have classroom space available for magnet programs or ESL (English as a second language) resource centers. Other districts may be so overcrowded they cannot even find a classroom to accommodate ESL pull-out classes (McKeon, 1987).

### ESL Program Models

ESL programs (rather than bilingual programs) are likely to be used in districts where the language minority population is very diverse and represents many different languages. ESL programs can accommodate students from different language backgrounds in the same class, and teachers do not need to be proficient in the home language(s) of their students.

*ESL pull-out* is generally used in elementary school settings. Students spend part of the school day in a mainstream classroom, but are pulled out for a portion of each day to receive instruction in English as a second language. Although schools with a large number of ESL students may have a full-time ESL teacher, some districts employ an ESL teacher who travels to several schools to work with small groups of students scattered throughout the district.

*ESL class period* is generally used in middle school settings. Students receive ESL instruction during a regular class period and usually receive course credit. They may be grouped for instruction according to their level of English proficiency.

*The ESL resource center* is a variation of the pull-out design, bringing students together from several classrooms or schools. The resource center concentrates ESL materials and staff in one location and is usually staffed by at least one full-time ESL teacher.

### Bilingual Program Models

All bilingual program models use the students' home language, in addition to English, for instruction. These programs are most easily implemented in districts with a large number of students from the same language background. Students in bilingual programs are grouped according to their first language, and teachers must be proficient in both English and the students' home language.

***Early-exit bilingual programs*** are designed to help children acquire the English skills required to succeed in an English-only mainstream classroom. These programs provide some initial instruction in the students' first language, primarily for the introduction of reading, but also for clarification. Instruction in the first language is phased out rapidly, with most students mainstreamed by the end of first or second grade. The choice of an early-exit model may reflect community or parental preference, or it may be the only bilingual program option available in districts with a limited number of bilingual teachers.

***Late-exit programs*** differ from early-exit programs "primarily in the amount and duration that English is used for instruction as well as the length of time students are to participate in each program" (Ramirez, Yuen, & Ramey, 1991). Students remain in late-exit programs throughout elementary school and continue to receive 40% or more of their instruction in their first language, even when they have been reclassified as fluent-English-proficient.

***Two-way bilingual programs,*** also called developmental bilingual programs, group language minority students from a single language background in the same classroom with language majority (English-speaking) students. Ideally, there is a nearly 50/50 balance between language minority and language majority students. Instruction is provided in both English and the minority language. In some programs, the languages are used on alternating days. Others may alternate morning and afternoon, or they may divide the use of the two languages by academic subject. Native English speakers and speakers of another language have the opportunity to acquire proficiency in a second language while continuing to develop their native language skills. Students serve as native-speaker role models for their peers. Two-way bilingual classes may be taught by a single teacher who is proficient in both languages or by two teachers, one of whom is bilingual.

### Other Program Models

Some programs provide neither instruction in the native language nor direct instruction in ESL. However, instruction is adapted to meet the needs of students who are not proficient in English.

***Sheltered English or content-based programs*** group language minority students from different language backgrounds together in classes where teachers use English as the medium for providing content area instruction, adapting their language to the proficiency level of the students. They may also use gestures and visual aids to help students understand. Although the acquisition of English is one of the goals of sheltered English and content-based programs, instruction focuses on content rather than language.

***Structured immersion programs*** use only English, but there is no explicit ESL instruction. As in sheltered English and content-based programs, English is taught through the content areas. Structured immersion teachers have strong receptive skills in their students' first language and have a bilingual education or ESL teaching credential. The teacher's use of the children's first language is limited primarily to clarification of English instruction. Most students are mainstreamed after 2 or 3 years.

### Characteristics of an Effective Program

Researchers have identified a number of attributes that are characteristic of effective programs for language minority students.

1. Supportive whole-school contexts (Lucas, Henz, & Donato, 1990; Tikunoff et al., 1991).

2. High expectations for language minority students, as evidenced by active learning environments that are academically challenging (Collier, 1992; Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Pease-Alvarez, Garcia, & Espinosa, 1991).

3. Intensive staff development programs designed to assist ALL teachers (not just ESL or bilingual education teachers) in providing effective instruction to language minority students (Lucas, Henze, & Donato, 1990; Tikunoff et al., 1991).

4. Expert instructional leaders and teachers (Lucas, Henze, and Donato, 1990; Pease-Alvarez, Garcia, & Espinosa, 1991; Tikunoff et al., 1991).

5. Emphasis on functional communication between teacher and students and among fellow students (Garcia, 1991).

6. Organization of the instruction of basic skills and academic content around thematic units (Garcia, 1991).

7. Frequent student interaction through the use of collaborative learning techniques (Garcia, 1991).

8. Teachers with a high commitment to the educational success of all their students (Garcia, 1991).

9. Principals supportive of their instructional staff and of teacher autonomy while maintaining an awareness of district policies on curriculum and academic accountability (Garcia, 1991).

10. Involvement of majority and minority parents in formal parent support activities (Garcia, 1991).

**Conclusion**

Successful program models for promoting the academic achievement of language minority students are those that enable these students to develop academic skills while learning English. The best program organization is one that is tailored to meet the linguistic, academic, and affective needs of students; provides language minority students with the instruction necessary to allow them to progress through school at a rate commensurate with their native-English-speaking peers; and makes the best use of district and community resources.

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# The ESL Standards: Bridging the Academic Gap for English Language Learners

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In the early 1990s, the Goals 2000: Educate America Act and other legislation that promoted high academic expectations for all students encouraged a movement among professional education associations to develop standards for specific academic content areas. The intent was for these national standards to serve as guidelines for state and local curriculum and assessment design and for the professional development of teachers.

During this same period, the number of PreK–12 students from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds enrolled in U.S. schools grew at nearly 10 times the rate of native-English-speaking students. However, English as a second language (ESL) was not a federally designated content area for standards development. Instead, federal officials indicated that other content areas, particularly English language arts, should address the needs of English language learners (ELLs). Their rationale was that the content area standards were intended "for all students." Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc. (TESOL) then established a task force to monitor the reform efforts and encourage professional groups working on content area standards to accommodate ELLs. It became evident, however, that ELLs' language acquisition and academic needs were not being reflected in the content standards' drafts. For example, ELLs were not among the students described in vignettes or learning scenarios, nor were teachers offered guidance on how to teach a content standard to students with limited proficiency in English.

To ensure that ELLs would have access to effective educational programs and the opportunity to reach high standards, the task force produced *The Access Brochure* (TESOL, 1993), an advocacy tool to help programs and schools examine and adjust the opportunities they provide for ELLs to learn to high standards. TESOL then decided to pursue the development of standards for English as a second language. A second task force was formed, and a conceptual framework that articulated TESOL's vision of effective education for ELLs was drafted. The framework calls on all educational personnel to assume responsibility for ELLs and demands that schools provide these students with access to all services, such as gifted and talented courses. The framework also lists principles of second language acquisition and explains the benefits of bilingualism and the contribution of native language proficiency to the development of English (TESOL, 1996).

## ESL Standards for PreK–12 Students

The ESL Standards and Assessment Project began officially in 1995 with a grass-roots effort involving 18 writing teams from across the United States, some representing their state, others representing an affiliate of TESOL or NABE (National Association for Bilingual Education). For models, TESOL examined content-area standards being developed in the United States and the Australian ESL bandscales and planned standards for ESL that would accommodate the multiple program models (e.g., self-contained ESL, sheltered instruction, transitional bilingual education) used to educate ELLs in the United States.

*ESL Standards for PreK–12 Students* (TESOL, 1997) was written and released for review and comment in 1996; feedback was solicited from educators who had experience working with linguistically and culturally diverse students and from representatives of other content areas that were developing standards. The draft was revised and published by TESOL in 1997.

Nine ESL content standards are organized under three educational goals. They state what students should know and be able to do as a result of ESL instruction and set goals for students' social and academic language development and sociocultural competence. The ESL standards, listed below, take a functional approach to language learning and use and allow for maximum flexibility in curriculum and program design.

## ESL Standards

### Goal 1: To use English to communicate in social settings.

Standard 1: Students will use English to participate in social interactions.

Standard 2: Students will interact in, through, and with spoken and written English for personal expression and enjoyment.

Standard 3: Students will use learning strategies to extend their communicative competence.

### Goal 2: To use English to achieve academically in all content areas.

Standard 1: Students will use English to interact in the classroom.

Standard 2: Students will use English to obtain, process, construct, and provide subject matter information in spoken and written form.

Standard 3: Students will use appropriate learning strategies to construct and apply academic knowledge.

**Goal 3: To use English in socially and culturally appropriate ways.**

Standard 1: Students will use appropriate language variety, register, and genre according to audience, purpose, and setting.

Standard 2: Students will use nonverbal communication appropriate to audience, purpose, and setting.

Standard 3: Students will use appropriate learning strategies to extend their sociolinguistic and sociocultural competence.

**What Do the ESL Standards Mean for Students and Educators?**

Although the goals and standards may look intuitive, they represent a profound shift in how English must be viewed in U.S. schools: *English is no longer just a subject.* English skills must be developed through ESL, English language arts, and all other content classes so that ELLs can learn the content while they are acquiring English. The *ESL Standards* guide teachers in new approaches for ELLs.

For the first goal, ELLs must use English for social purposes. They need to chat with peers and teachers and use English for their own enjoyment—to read a magazine or watch a movie. For the second goal, ELLs need to use English to achieve academically. Once students exit bilingual or ESL programs, they find it difficult to succeed in subject area classes without knowledge of academic English. The ESL standards indicate the type of academic language proficiency that students need. The third goal emphasizes that ELLs need to be explicitly taught the social and cultural norms associated with using English, such as when to use formal or informal language, what gestures are appropriate, and when humor is acceptable. Each goal includes one standard that focuses on learning strategies to help students extend their language development once they exit a language support program.

Each standard is explicated by descriptors and progress indicators. Descriptors are akin to curriculum objectives. Progress indicators are assessable activities that teachers can incorporate into lessons to measure student growth toward meeting a

standard. Vignettes, written by practicing teachers, further illustrate the standards and represent good pedagogical practice. They call particular attention to ways that teachers can work effectively with ELLs to help them meet the standards. The vignettes depict a wide range of school environments with ESL, bilingual, or content teachers, such as self-contained ESL, sheltered content instruction, ESL classes in bilingual programs, regular grade-level classes in elementary schools, career internship classes, and more.

The standards, descriptors, progress indicators, and vignettes are arranged in grade-level clusters (PreK–3, 4–8, and 9–12) to connect language learning with developmental learning. They describe instruction for beginning, intermediate, and advanced students. The needs of students with limited formal schooling and learning disabilities are included as well.

The intent of the *ESL Standards* was to have individual states or districts develop curricula based on the standards and describe their own proficiency levels and benchmarks of performance. Standards implementation activities are very important because the standards reform movement in the United States has spurred widespread, high-stakes assessment. In many states, all students must pass standardized tests in core content areas for grade-level promotion or for high school graduation, after a period of exemption has passed.

**Implementing the ESL Standards**

State departments of education, local school districts, and teacher education institutions have been actively implementing and disseminating the *ESL Standards for PreK–12 Students*. To inform curriculum development, assessment practice, teacher education, and classroom implementation, TESOL has developed companion products to the *ESL Standards*. *Managing the Assessment Process* (TESOL, 1998) and *Scenarios for ESL Standards-Based Assessment* (TESOL, in press-a) establish the theoretical framework for assessment and offer exemplars and assessment tools for monitoring student progress toward meeting the standards. *Training Others to Use the ESL Standards: A Professional Development Manual* (Short et al., 2000) and *Implementing the ESL Standards for PreK–12 Students Through Teacher Education* (Snow, 2000) provide training materials and practical information to enhance the professional development of preservice and inservice teachers. School leaders can increase their understanding of the ESL standards through the *School Administrator's Guide to the ESL Standards* (TESOL, in press-b). A series of classroom-focused books, *Integrating the ESL Standards into Classroom Practice* (Agor, 2000; Irujo, 2000; Samway, 2000; Smallwood, 2000), offers

thematic instructional units for teachers at different grade-level clusters demonstrating how to implement the ESL standards. Finally, to help teachers explain the *ESL Standards* to parents, the *Parent Guide to the ESL Standards for PreK–12 Students* is available on the Web (www.cal.org/eslstandards/parentguide.htm).

Other implementation activities include curriculum and professional development. Many states and districts have developed or revised ESL or sheltered content curricula based on the *ESL Standards.* Professional development for educators has been offered through conference sessions, workshops, and summer academies by TESOL and NABE and state and local education agencies. An implementation database and electronic discussion list support these activities, too (see www.cal.org/eslstandards).

One of the most important accomplishments of the project has been the increased stature of ESL professionals in PreK–12 school settings. This is a less visible achievement than the published products, but a significant one. Publication of the standards opened many doors for dialogue with educators in other content areas about how best to help ELLs achieve academically. With the *ESL Standards* in hand, PreK–12 ESL and bilingual teachers have been able to show colleagues in other disciplines what learning a second language means and what learning content through a second language requires.

**Future Directions**

While great strides have been made in improving educational opportunities for ELLs in schools, there is still work to be done. There is a need for all preservice candidates in teacher training institutions—not just those in ESL or bilingual education certification programs—to become familiar with the ESL standards and assessment scenarios as part of their general education course work. These future teachers should learn about second language acquisition, ESL methods—especially for sheltered content instruction —and appropriate alternative assessments that can accommodate students' developing language proficiencies.

Language educators need to collaborate more with content-area colleagues, using the *ESL Standards* to illustrate how to build language development into content lessons. Given the high-stakes testing programs in place across the United States, it is imperative that ELLs receive the best content instruction possible while they are learning English. The *ESL Standards* can show content teachers the functional uses of language that can be developed through content topics and tasks.

In addition, more textbook publishers must incorporate the ESL standards in their materials. Similarly, test developers need to conduct linguistic reviews of their test items and identify problematic areas such as overuse of synonyms and embedded questions. Subsequent linguistic simplification of test items can lead to a more accurate demonstration of ELLs' knowledge of the content area being assessed. *Scenarios for ESL Standards-based Assessment* (TESOL, in press-a) can be instrumental in these efforts.

Finally, ESL classes need to become more rigorous. It is vital to accelerate ELLs' social and academic English language development so they can master the grade-level content knowledge that will enable them to meet high standards and succeed on state and local assessments. The *ESL Standards* and assessment scenarios can lead the way.

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# A National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement

**by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence**

**CREDE Research Brief #10, January 2003**

**Evaluative Research of Language Support Programs**

There exists a pressing need for research that evaluates language support programs in order to understand which ones successfully promote the long-term academic achievement of English language learners (ELLs). A number of factors make this need a priority. Roughly 4.6 million ELLs were served by the U.S. K–12 educational system in 2000–2001 (Kindler, 2002). By the 2030s, language minority students are expected to comprise 40% of the school-aged population in the United States (Thomas & Collier, 2002). In addition, federal laws increasingly encourage decision making guided by "scientifically based" research. The No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and the Education Sciences Reform Act (2002) make such calls. U.S. society at large as well as today's educational policy makers and practitioners have a profound interest in the findings of scientifically based research that can recommend programs of effective instruction for ELLs.

**Study Overview**

From 1996–2001, CREDE researchers Wayne Thomas and Virginia Collier, of George Mason University, conducted the "National Study of School Effectiveness for Language Minority Students' Long-Term Academic Achievement." Built on 14 years of related research, this study documents the academic achievement of ELLs over the long term (4–12 years) and across content areas. It offers a much-needed overview of programmatic successes in the education of ELLs for policy makers.

The study collected data from five school districts throughout the United States. They included an inner-city urban district in the northwest, a large urban district in the south central United States, a mid-sized urban district in the southeast, and two rural districts in the northeast. Researchers collected records of individual ELL students for a minimum of 4 years of their education and analyzed achievement trends of those students. Records examined included those of students who remained in longer-term language support programs (i.e., 5–6 years), those in shorter-term programs (i.e., 1–3 years), and those who had

exited or never entered such programs (i.e., receiving some years of their instruction in mainstream English medium classrooms).

These data have been analyzed in order to understand how effective varying programs, implemented with theoretical integrity and established logistical support, can be in preparing students for success *throughout the duration of their academic experiences*.

**Programs Compared**

The study evaluated achievement data from all fully implemented language support programs offered by the districts' bilingual or ESL department. These included four distinct theoretical program designs. **Two-Way Bilingual Immersion** programs promote academic achievement, bilingualism, and biliteracy for ELLs and native English speakers. They typically last for at least 5 or 6 years. **One-Way Developmental Bilingual Education** programs share the goals and duration of Two-Way Bilingual Immersion programs, but offer instruction only to language minority students of one language background (including ELLs). **Transitional Bilingual Education** programs offer classes presented in the ELLs' native language for at least 2 or 3 years, after which time ELLs receive all-English instruction. **English as a second language taught through academic content** programs for ELLs integrate the teaching of English with content area instruction. For more detailed descriptions of language support programs, see Genesee (1999).

The bilingual programs were further distinguished by the amount of instructional time spent using English and the non-English language as mediums of instruction. The **90/10** programs are those in which students receive 90% of their instruction in a language other than English and 10% of their instruction in English in the early years of the program. The **50/50** programs are those in which the amount of instructional time in English is equal to instructional time in the non-English language throughout all years of the program.

Academic programming for ELLs who had either exited language support programs or who had opted out of language support programs was categorized as **English mainstream**.

**Study Design**

Researchers compiled students' records from each of the five participating districts. A student record consisted of the information formally collected by the district regarding each identified student for one school year such as grade level, programs attended, and measures of academic achievement. Researchers

used only records of students who 1) entered kindergarten or first grade with little to no English proficiency and 2) participated in programs that were being implemented by district personnel in accordance with the theoretical design features put forward by experts in the field. The findings of the study reflect analysis of 210,054 student records.

Student records were grouped into longitudinal cohorts of grades for which students attended school in the district. For example, all ELLs of similar socioeconomic and educational background who attended school in a district from kindergarten through Grade 4 constituted one longitudinal cohort, all students who attended Grades K to 5 constituted another, up through a Grades K–12 cohort. In the final stages of the study, researchers compared achievement results of all cohort groups based on program of instruction. This allowed them to draw conclusions about the academic success students had in the varying programs.

**Data Analysis**

Each district used different tools of assessment to measure achievement. In order to compare results from these assessments across districts, researchers relied on analysis of the "achievement gap"—the quantified difference in academic achievement between two groups of students. To document each district's gap, researchers evaluated the academic progress of ELLs and non-ELLs within the district over 5 years. Researchers found there to be a recurring, significant gap between the groups.

Because non-ELLs make academic progress each year, reaching achievement parity is not a fixed goal. Thus, closing the achievement gap for the ELL group means "shooting at a moving target"—making more than the average yearly academic progress of the non-ELL group for a successive number of years. Once the gap was documented, researchers examined the ability of each language support program to close that gap over the long term and across subject area.

**Major Findings**

The study findings are conclusive about academic achievement in a variety of learning areas. To gather the data for the findings, researchers used reading, language arts, and math subtests of the standardized tests (Terra Nova, Stanford 9, ITBS, CTBS, SABE, and Aprenda 2) given to students by the districts. In addition, researchers examined variables, such as socioeconomic status, number of years of primary language schooling, and gender differences, for influence on academic achievement. Study findings include the following:

The 90/10 and 50/50 Two-Way Bilingual Immersion and One-Way Developmental Bilingual Education programs are the only programs found to date that assist students to fully reach the 50th percentile (scoring above 50% of the other test takers) in both their native language and English in all subject areas and to maintain that level of high achievement, or reach even higher levels through the end of their schooling. The fewest dropouts come from these programs.

ELLs who attended only English mainstream programs because their parents refused language support services showed large decreases in reading and math achievement by Grade 5 when compared with students who participated in language support programs. The largest number of dropouts came from this group.

When ELLs initially exit a language support program into the English mainstream, those schooled in all-English medium programs (ESL) outperform those schooled in the bilingual programs when tested in English. The students schooled in bilingual programs, however, reach the same levels of achievement as those schooled all in English by the middle school years. Further, during the high school years, the students schooled in bilingual programs *outperform* the students schooled in all English.

The amount of formal primary language schooling that a student has received is the strongest predictor of second language student achievement. That is, the greater the number of years of primary language, grade-level schooling a student has received, the higher his/her English achievement is shown to be.

**Policy Recommendations**

The research findings offer a number of recommendations to policy makers including the following:

Parents who choose not to enroll their children in language support programs should be informed that the long-term academic achievement of their children will probably be much lower as a result. They should be strongly counseled against refusing language support services if their child is eligible for them. The research findings of this study indicate that language support services, as required by *Lau v. Nichols* (1974), raise students' achievement levels by significant amounts.

In order to close the average achievement gap between ELLs and native English speakers, language support programs must be well implemented, not segregated, sustained for 5–6 years, and demonstrate achievement gains of more than the average yearly progress of the non-ELL group each year until the gap is closed. Even the most effective language support programs can only close half of the achievement gap in 2–3 years.

**Conclusion**

The findings of this study are timely in light of the national focus on scientific research, especially for addressing effective education for ELLs. The study goals, research design, and analysis are clearly documented, and the conclusions can inform decision-making and policy at federal, state, and district levels. Although this brief highlights only a small portion of the findings and recommendations from the study, the full report is available to download online at http://www.crede.ucsc.edu/research/llaa/1.1_final.html. The report is available to order in hard copy from CREDE at http://calstore.cal.org/store.

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For more information on this CREDE project and other CREDE publications, please visit www.crede.ucsc.edu.

# Recent Reading Initiatives: Examples of National, State, and Professional Organizations' Efforts

**by Shawna Brynildssen**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication**
**EDO-CS-02-06, November 2002**

Statistics on the literacy skills of America's children reveal a disturbing situation. Approximately 40 percent of students across the nation cannot read at a basic level. And for low-income students, the figure is much worse (No Child Left Behind, 2002). In response to this situation, a number of efforts are underway—spearheaded by federal and state policy makers and a number of independent organizations—to remedy the situation. This digest looks at some of the most recent of those initiatives.

## Federal Efforts

In 1997, Congress asked the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development to form a panel to review and evaluate the various approaches used in reading instruction. The National Reading Panel (NRP) conducted a two-year study in which panel members reviewed more than 100,000 studies on how students learn to read. The panel also held a series of open panel and regional meetings to gather input from policy makers, educators, and parents across the nation.

The NRP's findings were published in April of 2000, and identified what the panel believed to be the most important components of reading instruction. These were alphabetics (both phonemic awareness and phonics instruction), fluency, comprehension, teacher education, and computer technology.

The findings of the NRP report were important in the development of Reading First, the literacy component of President Bush's 2001 "No Child Left Behind" Act. Reading First is a state grant program that will provide some $6 billion over the next several years to fund scientifically based reading-improvement efforts. The funds will be awarded to programs that teach the following five key early reading skills: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. The first grants were awarded in August of 2002 to be used for the 2002–2003 school year.

## State Efforts

There are many ongoing state reading initiatives. While they vary in approach, scope, and success, most share similar instructional concepts.

According to the Education Commission of the States (Fulton and Porter, 2001), the most common strategies used by state programs are "1) preventing and intervening with reading difficulties; 2) imposing consequences for students who do not meet reading standards; 3) promoting or mandating particular reading approaches or programs; 4) providing additional or better data; 5) providing teachers with skills and knowledge; 6) setting standards, developing reading plans; and 7) assessing readiness for school."

One of the state efforts is the Texas Reading Initiative. Now in its fourth year, the initiative utilizes a scientific research-based, multi-pronged approach that aims to have all children reading at or above grade level by their third-grade year. The program consists of six major components:

1. Leadership development

A key element of the state's professional development efforts is the use of Teacher Reading Academies—intensive, four-day training sessions on scientific research-based reading instruction, for kindergarten and 1st-grade teachers.

2. Diagnostic assessment

The Texas Primary Reading Inventory (TPRI) is the primary instrument used to test K–2 students. It measures ability in the areas of print awareness, phonemic awareness, graphophonemic knowledge, oral reading ability, and reading comprehension skills.

3. Comprehensive research-based programs

The state's reading instruction program focuses on oral language, reading, and writing, and emphasizes phonemic awareness, concepts of print, decoding, comprehension strategies, literary response/analysis, inquiry/research, writing to learn, and grammar and spelling.

4. Intermediate intervention

Students identified as struggling readers are placed in accelerated reading programs, and receive an additional 30 minutes of interventional instruction by specially trained teachers.

5. Progress monitoring

Teachers assess individual students' reading performance on an ongoing basis, and provide differentiated instruction that allows them to proceed and succeed at their own pace.

6. End-of-year performance analysis

Student performance is monitored annually via the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills and other district-approved assessment instruments.

Another state effort is the Alabama Reading Initiative, begun in 1997, when more than 97,000 of the state's third- through eleventh-grade students scored in the lowest quarter of the nation in reading. The resulting strategy for improvement is scientifically based and focuses on three areas. The first, Beginning Reading, emphasizes development of phonemic awareness and systematic teaching of language decoding skills. The second, Expanding Reading Power, aims to maintain high literacy levels in middle and high school students through ongoing vocabulary development, increased reading, and building explicit links between reading and writing. Alabama's third area of focus is Effective Intervention, which identifies and provides specialized instruction for children who are reading below grade level.

An evaluation of the Alabama program, conducted in its second year, showed that students in the participating schools had already made gains on the Stanford reading test. Additionally, teachers in the participating schools reported a number of positive changes—including improved student and teacher attitudes.

Other state programs include

• The South Carolina Reading Initiative. This state's program, a three-year initiative, utilizes district and regional literacy coaches to provide onsite administrators and teachers with support and direction.
• The Oregon Reading Initiative: Reading Together! Oregon's plan emphasizes teacher development, calling for higher standards to prepare new teachers and state institutes to train teachers in reading strategies. It also stresses family and community involvement and manageable class size as key factors.

**Professional Organizations' Efforts**

In addition to federal and state programs, a number of literacy initiatives have been launched by independent nonprofit organizations. Some examples are listed below.

*Success for All* is a literacy program premised on the belief that every child can read. Based on studies in reading and cooperative learning, it emphasizes oral reading by both teachers and students, discussion, story retelling, and a host of cooperative reading and writing activities. Since its inception in 1987, Success for All has grown to include some 1,500 schools in 47 states. It focuses on disadvantaged and at-risk students, serving primarily high-poverty Title I schools.

*Children's Literacy Initiative (CLI)* is also aimed at boosting the reading skills of children from low-income homes. The program centers around professional development for K–3 teachers, beginning with a three-day training institute and following up with one-on-one, onsite coaching. Some studies on the effectiveness of CLI indicate that the program results in improved reading and vocabulary test performance for participating students (Children's Literacy Initiative, 2000).

*The NCTE Reading Initiative* is an intensive, three-year professional development program offered by the National Council of Teachers of English. The initiative is based on "insights from school change research; the learning potential of inquiry-based, constructivist theories for learners of all ages; and the trans-disciplinary knowledge base on literacy and literacy instruction" (NCTE, 2000).

*Born to Read* is a three-year national demonstration project conducted by the American Library Association. It is designed to create a model for partnership between library workers and health care providers, with the goal of teaching new and expectant at-risk parents to "raise readers." There are currently five libraries functioning as demonstration sites for the program.

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# Some Program Alternatives for English Language Learners

**by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence**

**CREDE Practitioner Brief #3, September 2001**

With the increasing number of linguistically and culturally diverse students in K–12 classrooms, it is imperative that practitioners determine educational approaches that best serve these students. English language learners (ELLs) in particular face the dual challenge of mastering English and acquiring the academic skills and knowledge deemed essential for a sound and productive education. Researchers at CREDE have studied four programs that meet the diverse and complex needs of ELLs: (1) newcomer programs, (2) transitional bilingual education, (3) developmental bilingual education, and (4) two-way immersion. This brief will summarize these programs by highlighting specific features and conditions that will help practitioners determine which programs meet their needs, fulfill their goals, and match their resources.

When starting a new program or assessing the effectiveness of an existing one, it is important to consider common characteristics of all programs. Successful programs maintain ongoing and guided parental involvement and professional development for specialized and mainstream teachers. They promote proficiency in both first and second languages for academic purposes, and they use assessment methods linked to instructional objectives to inform instructional planning and delivery. Effective programs also encompass developmentally appropriate curriculum and high standards for language acquisition and academic achievement, as well as strong leadership among classroom, school, and district personnel. All programs implement sheltered instruction (SI), an approach that integrates language and content instruction. SI serves as a means for making grade-level academic content more accessible to ELLs while at the same time promoting their English language development. Academic subjects are taught using English as the medium of instruction. SI highlights key language features and incorporates special strategies to make the content meaningful and comprehensible to ELLs. In some cases, SI is used as a program option for educating ELLs. When looking at the unique characteristics of the following alternatives, educators should remember that there is no one best program. Rather, these different approaches are all successful if implemented well.

## Newcomer Programs

Newcomer programs educate recent immigrant students—who have no or very limited English language proficiency, native literacy skills, or formal education in their native countries—in a special academic environment for a limited period of time. These students' needs surpass the resources of regular ESL or bilingual programs. While such programs exist at the elementary level, CREDE focused on those at the secondary level because the students have less time to meet expectations for English and academic development before high school graduation. Newcomer programs address the pressing need for core academic skills, so that students can advance closer to age-level peers and participate in mainstream classes. They additionally provide a welcoming environment to immigrant students and their families.

All newcomer programs provide distinct, intensive courses in English language development and content instruction through ESL, sheltered instruction, bilingual, or native language literacy designs. They should also have courses that integrate students into American life and orient them to U.S. culture, their new community, and school routines and expectations. Teachers use specialized instructional strategies to address literacy because many students become literate for the first time in English or their first language, although they are beyond the normal age for initial literacy instruction. Guidance counselors assist students with placement and adjustments and connect them and their families with social and health services. It is most helpful to have bilingual staff who are familiar with students' cultures.

Newcomer programs vary widely depending on their educational goals, site options, available staff, and resources. For example, programs may be located in a school or at a separate site, and the daily program may be one period, half day, full day, or after-school. Programs may serve one or more grade levels. Students may be enrolled from one to three semesters and may be organized by English proficiency instead of grade level. Further, a newcomer program is a viable option only with the proper transition procedures in place. Since the aim of newcomer programs is to prepare recent immigrant students for success in regular ESL, bilingual, or mainstream programs, the transition is critical, especially if students switch schools. Teachers and guidance counselors must help students plan their course schedules and oversee the transition process.

## Transitional Bilingual Education

Transitional bilingual education (TBE) provides initial instruction in literacy and academic content in ELLs' native language, along with instruction in English oral language development. With the goal of English proficiency, the language in which academic subjects are taught gradually shifts from students' first language to English. Typically, instruction in the first language begins in kindergarten or first grade, basic English begins in second grade, and students are transitioned to all English instruction by third grade. However, many schools have similar 2- or 3-year programs for students who enter in upper grades.

TBE is intended to ensure the mastery of grade-level academic skills and knowledge and accelerate the process of learning English. Instruction through the native language in the early grades supports the acquisition of English because it helps ELLs progress in academic subjects at the same pace as native English speakers, provides them with knowledge and experience to facilitate learning English, eases the acquisition of reading and writing skills that can be transferred to English, and allows parents to support and communicate with their children.

Effective first language instruction and oral English language development determine successful transition in TBE. If early grade-level skills and concepts are not mastered in the first language and oral English skills are not available, then the transition to academic English is jeopardized. Because success in the later grades depends on success in prior grades, students need additional support if they are having difficulty in the early grades. Transition from instruction in the first language to English should be gradual, phasing in subjects one at a time. As early as possible, students should interact socially with native English speakers and learn along with them. TBE teachers should be certified in bilingual education for strong native language development, and mainstream teachers should be trained in sheltered instruction, so that students receive adequate and effective instruction when they make the transition to all-English classes. TBE programs require a sizeable number of ELLs who speak the same language to optimize first language instruction.

## Developmental Bilingual Education

Developmental bilingual education (DBE) is an enrichment program that educates ELLs using both English and their first language for academic instruction, promoting full proficiency in all aspects of the two languages. Typically, academic instruction in the first language, along with oral English language development, begins in kindergarten or first grade. One grade is added each year, and subjects are taught in English and the first language for as many grades as possible throughout the elementary level. Learners receive meaningful content in English, while

continuing challenging work in their first language. DBE is thus an additive approach, in which the first language is not lost, so students have uninterrupted cognitive development and accelerated academic achievement. Additionally, DBE programs provide socioculturally supportive classrooms, building on the home knowledge of students and encouraging cultural and linguistic respect.

Significant features of DBE programs include the separation of languages, the equal status of both languages, and the integration of students with different language proficiency levels. Mixing and translating languages should be avoided to maximize the development of academic proficiency in each language, but code-switching is acceptable during social times. Each language should be incorporated into the school through symbols, announcements, and services. Students should learn subjects together regardless of their level of proficiency in each language because they can learn from each other and serve as peer tutors. Staff should be proficient in both languages academically, and thus be certified in content areas and bilingual education. A feasible DBE program necessitates a sufficient number of students with the same first language for at least one class at any given grade level. It is important to ascertain whether there will be a sufficient number of students in the later years for one class to maintain the program. The language minority community must also have an interest in maintaining their first language and support the goal of high academic achievement in both languages.

### Two-Way Immersion

Two-way immersion (TWI) provides integrated language and academic instruction for native English speakers and native speakers of another language with the goals of high academic achievement, first and second language proficiency, and cross-cultural understanding. TWI programs provide content and literacy instruction in both languages, integrate language minority and language majority students for at least 50% of the day, and have a roughly equal balance of language minority and language majority students. ELLs attain high academic achievement and English language proficiency because they are taught in both languages, with skills and knowledge acquired in the first language paving the way for acquisition in English. For native English speakers, TWI enables them to develop advanced levels of second language proficiency without compromising their academic achievement or English language development. Because language minority and language majority students learn together and must communicate in both languages, TWI provides meaningful social interaction that promotes dual language learning.

Major features of TWI programs are the separation of languages, the integration of students of both language groups, and the equal status of both languages. Extended time in one language encourages native English speakers and ELLs to communicate in the language of instruction. All TWI programs require fully bilingual instructional staff and teaching materials to ensure proficiency and biliteracy. The population required is a significant number of both native English and language minority speakers of the same language. Transient populations are not ideal because long-term participation is most beneficial. Both groups of speakers must have an interest in bilingualism. There must be full district support exhibiting balanced services in the minority language, so that the TWI program is equally valued with other programs.

### Making Choices

When choosing among available alternatives, practitioners must first decide whether there is a goal to promote bilingual proficiency in addition to promoting ELLs' academic development. When bilingual proficiency is a goal, developmental bilingual education, two-way immersion, and newcomer programs with bilingual transition are appropriate choices. The next critical decision concerns the student population to be served. Two-way immersion is a viable option only if there are groups of both ELLs and native English speakers interested in bilingualism. Developmental and newcomer programs serve only ELLs, with newcomer programs serving ELLs with limited literacy and schooling.

If the goal does not include promoting bilingual proficiency, then transitional bilingual education and newcomer programs with English transition are possibilities. Transitional bilingual and newcomer programs are short-term in nature. Both must ensure appropriate follow-up so that teachers are prepared to help ELLs achieve at the same level as native English speakers. Sheltered instruction should be used in all of the programs discussed to ensure that ELLs comprehend academic instruction when it is delivered in English, especially when it is first introduced. All program alternatives should be harmonized with the mainstream program to maximize their effectiveness. And while these programs are discussed as separate options, a district can implement more than one in order to better meet the diverse needs of its student population.

Schools in the U.S. must consider how to educate linguistically and culturally diverse students in the best possible way. Newcomer programs, transitional bilingual education, developmental bilingual education, and two-way immersion are alternatives that work.

Choosing and implementing effective education for ELLs requires an understanding of the available alternatives and a careful consideration of a district's goals and resources, as well as the needs and characteristics of its students.

This brief is based on CREDE Educational Practice Report 1, *Program Alternatives for Linguistically Diverse Students,* edited by Fred Genesee. To view this report and other resources on the programs discussed, visit www.cal.org/crede/pubs/. For more information, contact CREDE Dissemination at crede@cal.org, 202-362-0700, ext. 247, 4646 40th Street NW, Washington, DC 20016.

**Online Resources**

ESL Standards for PreK–12 Students
http://www.cal.org/eslstandards/

> The Center for Applied Linguistics maintains this page, which includes links to publications; a listserv; and a searchable database that includes survey information of states, districts, and schools that are involved in using the ESL Standards for curriculum, assessment, and professional development purposes.

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
http:// www.tesol.org

> This organization developed the K–12 ESL Standards , which form the basis for many school, district, and state ESL curricula. Read the standards online at http://www.tesol.org/assoc/standards/index.html#standards

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu

> This site offers a searchable bibliographic database that includes more than 20,000 citations and abstracts dealing with all aspects of the education of linguistically diverse students. NCELA makes many important papers available online. Browse their Online Library at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/library/index.htm. See especially NCELA's resources on "Curriculum and Instruction: Reading, Writing, Literacy, and Literature" at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/library/curriculum/index.htm#READING and the section on "Education Research: Language and Literacy Development" at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/library/edres.htm#develop.

ESL Standards Implementation Database
http://www.cal.org/eslstandards/eslstdsdb/

> This searchable database includes the survey information of states, districts, and schools that are involved in using the ESL Standards for curriculum, assessment, and professional development purposes. This information is intended to facilitate communication among practitioners working on standards-based educational reforms that include English language learners (ELLs).

# Classroom Resources and Instructional Strategies: Grades K–12

**Books**

Allen, J. (1999). *Words, words, words: Teaching vocabulary in grades 4-12*. York, ME: Stenhouse.
http://www.stenhouse.com/storefront/scripts/product/ProductView.asp?prodID=0085

> *Words, Words, Words* provides educators with a strong research base, detailed classroom-based lessons, and graphic organizers to support the strategy lessons. This book offers some practical solutions for meeting content standards in ways that are meaningful and lasting.

Beers, K. (2002). *When kids can't read: What teachers can do.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

> Although not written specifically for teachers of English language learners, this book was written for teachers in Grades 6–12 who desire to help struggling, dependent readers in their classrooms become independent readers. Many of the ideas and suggestions for assisting these students are appropriate or may be adapted for English language learners. The author shares strategies for motivating students; for increasing comprehension; and for developing word recognition, vocabulary, and fluency. The appendices include many useful materials, some of which may be photocopied and used in the classroom.

Brinton, D. B., & Master, P. (Eds.). (1997). *New ways in content-based instruction*. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/newways.html#676

> This volume offers detailed activities that can be used dynamically in the classroom to enhance content-based instruction for K–12, young adult, and university English language learners. The activities are grouped into five parts of the book: information management, critical thinking, hands-on activities, data gathering, and text analysis and construction.

Celce-Murcia, M. (Ed.), *Teaching English as a second or foreign language.* (3rd ed.). Boston: Heinle and Heinle.

> This methodology resource gives both experienced and prospective ESL/EFL teachers the theoretical background and practical applications they need to decide which methods, materials, and resources can be used in their classrooms. This book was primarily designed as a textbook for preservice TESL/TEFL courses but can also be used as a reference book for individual teachers and a sourcebook for teacher trainers.

Chamot, A. U., & O'Malley, J. M. (1994). *The CALLA handbook: Implementing the cognitive academic language learning approach.* Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

> This handbook is a practical resource for teachers who are responsible for teaching the content area subjects to English language learners (ELLs). The CALLA program is introduced followed by a model of teaching that includes three main components: content topics, academic language skills, and learning strategy instruction. Four content area units and an integrated CALLA unit are outlined as a guide to implementation.

Freeman, Y. S. & Freeman, D. E. (2000). *Teaching reading in multilingual classrooms.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
http://www.heinemann.com/shared/products/E00248.asp

> This volume introduces core principles of effective reading practice. Presented as a definitive checklist, these principles form the basis of much of the book and help teachers plan their reading curriculum and assess their teaching of reading. Examples of eight teachers who work effectively with mainstream, ESL, and bilingual students are included.

Freeman, Y. S. & Freeman, D. E. (1998). *ESL/EFL teaching: Principles for success*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
http://www.heinemann.com/shared/products/E00079.asp

> The Freemans present classroom learning for English language learners in the context of learner-centered instruction that emphasizes teaching language through content and provides a meaning and purpose for learning. Social interaction in the classroom plays an important part in facilitating the students' development of both social and academic language. Both theoretical and practical, this book offers many examples to illustrate the concepts it presents.

Garcia, E. (1991). *The education of linguistically and culturally diverse students: Effective instructional practices.* Washington, DC: National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning and Center for Applied Linguistics
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/miscpubs/ncrcdsll/epr1/

> This report discusses common attributes of schools and classrooms where language minority students have experienced high levels of academic success.

Herrell, A. L. (2000). *Fifty strategies for teaching English language learners*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.

> Herrell begins this practical guide for K–12 teachers with a theoretical overview of second language acquisition and the underlying base of instruction for English language learners. Each of the fifty chapters discusses one of the fifty strategies (in alphabetical order) that are outlined in an introductory matrix. The appendix provides an informal survey for assessing students' multiple intelligences.

Hurley, S. R. & Tinajero, J. V. (Eds.). (2001). *Literacy assessment of second language learners.* Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

> Numerous contributors provide information that teachers will find useful for making decisions about themselves and their students with regard to meaningful assessment. Chapter topics include assessment practices for English language arts, second language acquisition, reading comprehension, and the content areas.

Kagan, S. (1994). *Cooperative learning*. San Clemente, CA: Resources for Teachers.
http://www.KaganOnline.com

> This comprehensive book on cooperative learning is suitable for teaching Grades K–12. An index at the beginning of the book lists the many groupings that can be used for the instructional purposes outlined in 24 chapters. Diagrams and charts that illustrate the groupings accompany each chapter along with implementation discussions.

Kauffman, D., & Apple, G. (2000). *The Oxford picture dictionary for the content areas.* New York: Oxford University Press.

> This picture dictionary is thematically organized around content area topics such as the science classroom and specific historical events.

Nation, I. S. P. (1990). *Teaching and learning vocabulary*. Boston: Heinle & Heinle.

> Drawing on research, experimentation, and classroom experiences of teachers, the author examines the underlying principles of vocabulary acquisition and discusses effective teaching and learning techniques relevant for listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

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Pierce, L. V. (2003). *Assessing English langauge learners.* Washington, DC: National Education Association.
http://home.nea.org/books/showitem.cfm?pubid=373

> *Assessing English Language Learners* offers advice on testing students just learning the English language from the teacher's perspective. The author stresses the appropriate use of large-scale standardized testing, but focuses on classroom assessment techniques for use with English language learners as well.

Samway, K. D., & McKeon, D. (1999). *Myths and realities: Best practices for language minority students.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
http://www.heinemann.com/shared/products/E00057.asp

> Written with mainstream educators in mind, *Myths and Realities* provides fundamental background information on issues such as second language acquisition, legal requirements for educating linguistically diverse students, and placement, program, and assessment information. This handbook debunks many common myths about language minority students and describes best practices in language minority education.

Short, D. (1991). *How to integrate language and content instruction*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=103

> This training manual helps language teachers and content teachers integrate language learning and academic content in their classes. The topics addressed in the manual include instructional techniques and strategies, guidelines for adapting materials for integrated lessons, model lessons, assessment, implementation models, and staff development models.

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages. (1998). *Managing the assessment process: A framework for measuring student attainment of the ESL standards.* Alexandria, VA: Author.
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/assessment.html#PP5

> As educators become familiar with the ESL standards for PreK–12 students, they need to know what is involved in measuring students' progress toward attaining these standards. *Managing the Assessment Process* introduces the complexities of assessment and suggests ways to think about assessing ESOL students.

Thier, M., & Daviss, B. (2002). *The new science literacy: Using language skills to help students learn science*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
http://www.heinemann.com/shared/products/E00459.asp

> This book is a practical manual for educators who teach science to students in Grades 4–10. In the foreward section, Harold Pratt, President of the National Science Teachers Association, 2001–02, points out that this book "places the development of language literacy in the context of inquiry-based, activity-oriented science instruction called for in the National Science Education Standards…[it] embraces the richness and usefulness of language as a germane aspect of students' science learning experiences."

**Textbook Series**

*Basics Bookshelf Series*
Hampton-Brown, Carmel, CA
>> 800-933-3510
>> http://www.hampton-brown.com/onlinecatalog/products

*Reading A-Z*, 27 leveled readers for ages 4–11 online
 520-327-3730
 http://www.readinga-z.com

*National Geographic/Windows on Literacy*
 National Geographic School Publishing
 800-368-2728
 http://www.nationalgeographic.com/education

*Reading Expeditions*
 National Geographic School Publishing
 800-368-2728
 http://www.nationalgeographic.com/education

*Reading Power: Rosen Series*
 PowerKidsPress
 800-237-9932
 http://www.powerkidspress.com

*Scott Foresman ESL: Accelerated English Language Learning*
 Pearson Education/Longman, White Plains, NY
 888-877-7824
 http://www.longman.com/ae/marketing/sfesl/content.html


**Software**

*ELLIS (English Language Learning Instructional System)*
 888-756-1570
 http://www.ellis.com
 ELLIS is a suite of multimedia software designed to teach learners of varying ages and levels to speak and understand English. The ELLIS curriculum combines graphics, full-motion video, digitized sound and voice recording, animation, and support for 60+ native languages.

*LightSpan Achieve Now*
 888-888-4314
 http://lightspan.com
 This research-based curriculum program includes interactive software, school and home learning activities, teacher materials, onsite and technology-based professional development, and student assessment.

*Read 180 Software*
800-234-READ
 http://teacher.scholastic.com/read180
 *READ 180* is a comprehensive reading intervention program designed to meet the needs of students in elementary to high school whose reading achievement is below the proficient level.

*Rosetta Stone Software*
 800-788-0822
 http://www.rosettastone.com
 The Rosetta Stone software provides a comprehensive curriculum for institutional language programs including course planning and management and individual student placement, tracking, and accountability.

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**Journals**

*ELT Journal*
http://www3.oup.co.uk/eltj/contents/

> The *ELT Journal* is a quarterly publication for all those involved in the field of ESL/EFL. It seeks to bridge the gap between the everyday practical concerns of ELT professionals and related disciplines such as education, linguistics, psychology, and sociology that may offer significant insights.

*ESL Magazine*
http://www.eslmag.com/

> *ESL Magazine* is a bi-monthly, color, print magazine serving English language educators and other professionals.

*Essential Teacher*
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/magz/et.html

> TESOL's *Essential Teacher* will debut in Winter 2003–2004. It is primarily dedicated to language teachers and administrators in varied ESL/EFL workplaces. *Essential Teacher* also offers guidance to mainstream teachers who work with non-English-speaking students.

*Internet TESL Journal*
http://iteslj.org/

> The *Internet TESL Journal* is a monthly Web journal that includes articles, research papers, lesson plans, classroom handouts, teaching ideas, links, and other information of interest.

*System: An International Journal of Educational Technology and Applied Linguistics*
http://www.elsevier.com/locate/issn/0346251X

> *System*, published quarterly, is an international journal that addresses the teaching and learning of all languages as well as the study and teaching of ESL/EFL. The intended audience of *System* is researchers and practitioners in the fields of educational technology, applied linguistics, and language teaching and learning.

*TESL Canada Journal*
http://www.tesl.ca/journal.html

> *TESL Canada Journal* is a fully refereed journal for practicing teachers, teacher educators, graduate students, and researchers.

*TESL-EJ*
http://cwp60.berkeley.edu:16080/TESL-EJ/

> *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language Electronic Journal* is an internationally recognized source of ESL/EFL information for people in scores of countries, from researchers to classroom teachers.

*TESOL Journal*
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/magz/tj.html

> *TESOL Journal* is a refereed publication of teaching and classroom research. *TESOL Journal* will be phased out in late 2003. Information on back issues is available online.

*TESOL Matters*
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/magz/tm.html

> *TESOL Matters*, a newspaper covering professional issues and events in the field, will be phased out in late 2003. Information on previous issues can be found online.

*TESOL Quarterly*
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/magz/tq.html

> *TESOL Quarterly* is a refereed journal concerned with the teaching of ESL/EFL and the teaching of standard English as a second dialect. *TESOL Quarterly* represents a wide range of cross-disciplinary interests, both theoretical and practical.

### Digests and Reports

Assessment Portfolios: Including English Language Learners in Large-Scale Assessments
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0010assessment.html

Creating Drama with Poetry: Teaching English as a Second Language Through Dramatization and Improvisation
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/gaspar01.html

Dialogue Journals: Interactive Writing to Develop Language and Literacy
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/peyton01.html

Educating Hispanic Students: Effective Instructional Practices
http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/PracBrief5.htm

English Language Learners with Special Needs: Effective Instructional Strategies
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0108ortiz.html

Grammar and Its Teaching: Challenging the Myths
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/larsen01.html

Improving Classroom Instruction and Student Learning for Resilient and Non-resilient English Language Learners
http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/ResBrief7.htm

Language Learning Strategies: An Update
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/oxford01.html

Online Resources for K–12 Teachers: Language and Literacy Education
http://eric.indiana.edu/ieo/digests/d162.html

Practical Ideas on Alternative Assessment for ESL Students
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/tannen01.html

Strategy Training for Second Language Learners
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0302cohen.html

Textbook Selection for the ESL Classroom
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0210garinger.html

Using Cognitive Strategies to Develop English Language and Literacy
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0205crandall.html

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Resources for Educators
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Classroom Resources & Instructional
Strategies: Grades K–12

# Assessment Portfolios: Including English Language Learners in Large-Scale Assessments

**by Emily Gómez, Center for Applied Linguistics**
**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics**
**EDO-FL-00-01, December 2000**

The current school reform effort emphasizes the need to improve the education of all students. Assessing the academic achievement of every student is an essential part of this reform, but one that presents a challenge for most schools, school districts, and states (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory and Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). Traditional assessment practices in many states and school districts have tended to exclude students who are learning English as a second language. As a consequence, many English language learners (ELLs) are denied access to important educational opportunities that are based on assessment results.

This digest focuses on one type of assessment system, assessment portfolios, and discusses the advantages and challenges of using an assessment portfolio system that includes ELLs as a district-wide assessment tool.

## What Is an Assessment Portfolio?

An assessment portfolio is the systematic collection of student work measured against predetermined scoring criteria. These criteria may include scoring guides, rubrics, check lists, or rating scales (O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996). Assessment portfolios can include performance-based assessments, such as writing samples that illustrate different genres, solutions to math problems that show problem-solving ability, lab reports that demonstrate an understanding of a scientific approach, or social studies research reports that show the ability to use multiple sources. In addition, district-wide assessment portfolios can include scores on commercially developed, nationally norm-referenced tests, such as the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, or results of state assessment measures, such as the Maryland School Performance Assessment Program, as well as other information pertaining to students' educational backgrounds.

## What Are the Advantages of Assessment Portfolio Systems for English Language Learners?

### Inclusion of English language learners

Unlike other assessment programs, assessment portfolios do not exclude certain student populations. Many states have policies that restrict English language learners from taking commercially developed, norm-referenced and criterion-referenced tests for up to 3 years after their arrival in a U.S. school system. In contrast, all students can be included in an assessment portfolio system.

### Increased school accountability for all students

At the state level, assessment information is often collected to ensure that the educational system addresses the needs of all students. Inclusion of ELLs in state and local testing programs is critical to accountability and to providing accurate data about the achievement of these students (O'Malley & Valdez Pierce, 1996). By providing systems with a richer source of information about school learning, assessment portfolios can help school systems identify and meet the needs of diverse students, including ELLs.

### A shared vision of student goals and standards

By developing an assessment portfolio system that includes English language learners, teachers, administrators, parents, and students can shape a common vision of what students should know and be able to do as a result of their course work. By clearly articulating expectations and the criteria upon which to assess attainment of these expectations, school systems help create a shared vision of the purpose of education based on the values of the community.

### Authentic picture of learning

Assessment portfolios can be designed to measure virtually any observable skill or process or content-area knowledge needed for system-wide assessment purposes. A wide range of student products can be included in assessment portfolios as long as predetermined scoring criteria are in place. Portfolios are designed to be inclusive of all students and to provide an authentic description of what students can do.

### Improved teaching and student learning

Using assessment portfolios that include English language learners not only provides improved information about student achievement but also makes a positive impact on teaching and student learning. According to Geoff Hewitt, a writing assessment consultant, when teachers are trained to use and score portfolios based on agreed-upon criteria, they tend to move toward a more learner-centered teaching model, which encourages students to take more responsibility for their own learning (personal communication, October 11, 1996). Through such training, teachers develop an understanding of the quality of student

work that meets specific achievement levels according to the scoring criteria.

### Reflection of assessment reform

Advocates of assessment reform call for new measures that provide a better understanding of student achievement, especially for English language learners. By using assessment portfolios that include ELLs, school systems could reduce the number of students excluded from system-wide assessment and possibly increase the number of teachers participating in professional development activities.

### What Are the Challenges of Assessment Portfolios That Include English Language Learners?

### Lower comparability and reliability

Many performance-based tests, including some portfolio systems, do not easily or meaningfully translate into a single score or set of scores. The public has become accustomed to single scores, such as those used to describe the results of standardized or norm-referenced tests. Single scores are comparable across systems and from one year to the next. Because some districts report the outcomes of performance-based tests in words rather than numbers, some stakeholders feel the school system is less accountable for individual students.

In addition, it is difficult to implement assessment portfolios that meet the reliability requirements many school systems want. Achieving a certain degree of reliability among raters or test evaluators is important (Novack, Herman, & Gearhart, 1996). Without high inter-rater agreement figures, the usefulness of the scores as an accountability tool diminishes, because the results cannot be used to compare scores reliably between schools or over time.

### Difficulty ensuring standardized testing conditions

Some states and districts are prevented by law from implementing performance-based assessments that include portfolios. Some state legislatures mandate the use of traditional norm-referenced tests because of the perception that standardized tests require students to perform under similar circumstances (Special Issues Analysis Center, 1995). When using portfolio assessments, performance conditions may vary, and teacher bias can affect students' performance. For example, the amount of support teachers provide to students, the amount of time students are allowed to spend on portfolio samples, and the extent to which student work is augmented by support from external sources have raised questions about the validity of inferences about student competence based on

portfolio work (Gearhart, Herman, Baker, & Whittaker, 1993).

### Cost

One hurdle to developing an assessment portfolio system is the ongoing expense of the program. Designing, implementing, and scoring portfolio items is labor intensive and therefore costly. Practitioners invest a substantial amount of time to align the assessment tasks with the curriculum and to develop the scoring criteria and scoring tools. Persuading state legislatures and school boards to agree to the additional costs involved in scoring an assessment portfolio system that includes ELLs can be difficult.

### Scoring

Portfolios pose a difficult scoring dilemma for three reasons. First, developing and using scoring criteria requires labor intensive staff discussion and training. When ELLs are included in a portfolio system, the scoring must be designed to assess content knowledge and language proficiency. Second, inter-rater agreement among teachers and other scorers requires intensive staff development. Third, scoring student work using predetermined criteria is more time consuming than scoring a single-occasion, norm-referenced test. Fortunately, these same activities also lead to improved teaching and learning.

### Steps to developing and implementing an assessment portfolio system that includes English language learners:

**Decide about goals and content.** Stakeholders in the school and school district, including those responsible for English language learners, decide what assessment information is needed and how that information can be provided. A group of teachers agree to lead the program.

**Design the portfolio assessment program.** The lead group of teachers, including English as a second language and bilingual education teachers, administrators, and parents decide on the range of products to be included in the portfolio assessment program.

**Develop scoring criteria and standards of performance.** The group decides on common goals for student learning and performance and how they will be assessed, develops scoring rubrics and checklists, and agrees on standards of performance to be attained. If possible, benchmarks that exemplify student work are articulated, including benchmarks for English language learners.

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**Align tasks to standards and curriculum.** The group aligns the assessment tasks to the district or state content standards and curriculum frameworks.

**Implement at pilot sites, provide staff development, and analyze results.** Decide on pilot sites and provide staff development on the implementation of portfolios. Following the implementation at pilot sites for at least one full school year, score the portfolios from the pilot sites. Assess the effectiveness of the program and modify the scoring criteria based on feedback from the pilot site educators and results of the scored portfolios. Study the effects of the program on English language learners in particular to determine whether improved information is available as a result of the portfolio implementation.

**Implement at all sites.** Once the program has been piloted and found to be effective, implement the portfolio program at all sites.

**Train teachers to score.** Train a team of teachers to score student work using the portfolio program's scoring criteria and benchmarks. Training should include discussion of second language proficiency and its impact on student achievement. Efforts are made to reach an inter-rate reliability level of .7-.8.

**Establish guidelines for administration.** Stakeholders develop guidelines for a standardized collection of student work and decide on the time, place, and manner in which standardized prompts will be given to assess students throughout the system. Accommodations for English language learners are delineated.

**Score the portfolios.** Teachers score the portfolios based upon predetermined criteria. This is typically done over several days in a central location by teachers who have been trained.

**Report the results.** All stakeholders receive information abo ut the results of the portfolio assessment in a timely fashion in ways that make the results meaningful to everyone, including teachers, students, parents, and other community members.

**Evaluate the program.** After one year, evaluate the effectiveness of the portfolio program and make necessary adjustments.

## Conclusion

Developing and implementing a large-scale assessment portfolio program that includes English language learners requires extensive planning and discussion and considerable resources. It also offers considerable advantages. Stakeholders within the system have a common vision about what students should learn and be able to do, how goals will be assessed, and what criteria will be used. Improved teaching and learning are natural outcomes of a well-designed, well-implemented assessment portfolio system.

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# Creating Drama with Poetry: Teaching English as a Second Language Through Dramatization and Improvisation

**by Marie Gasparro, Pelham Public Schools, Pelham, NY; Bernadette Falletta, New Rochelle City Public Schools and College of New Rochelle, New Rochelle, NY**

Creating drama with poetry is an exciting language learning experience. The technique employs a multi-sensory approach to language acquisition by involving second language learners physically, emotionally, and cognitively in the language learning process. The use of poetry as drama in the English as a second language (ESL) classroom enables the students to explore the linguistic and conceptual aspects of the written text without concentrating on the mechanics of language. Students are able to develop a sense of awareness of self in the mainstream culture through the dramatic interpretations of the poems.

Second language acquisition becomes internalized as a direct result of placing the learners in situations that seem real. The students use the target language for the specific purpose of communication. They experiment with nonverbal communicative aspects of language (body language, gestures, and facial expressions), as well as verbal aspects (intonation, rhythm, stress, slang, and idiomatic expressions), while interpreting the poems. The students begin to feel the language and gain the confidence to interact outside the classroom using the target language.

Some poems are mini-dramas, often written in dialogue form, and are suitable for dramatization because they are short and usually have one simple, but strong emotional theme. "Poems which express strong emotions, attitudes, feelings, opinions, or ideas are usually more 'productive' than those which are gentle, descriptive, or neutral" (Tomlinson, p. 36, 1986). Students become engaged in free-flowing, extemporaneous conversations as they interact with one another prior to the dramatizations and during the improvisations. The students compare and contrast cultural behaviors and attitudes, analyze and explore the linguistic and conceptual differences between the written and spoken word, and interact cooperatively to orchestrate the dramatizations and improvisations.

## The Role of the Teacher

In this technique, students have more responsibility for their own learning. However, this does not diminish the importance of the teacher in the instructional process. It is the responsibility of the teacher to guide the language learning process by:

- modeling pronunciation, intonation, stress, rhythm, and oral expression;
- facilitating comprehension of vocabulary, idioms, cultural aspects, and plot;
- stimulating interest and conversation, and interacting with the students;
- establishing an acting workshop atmosphere; and
- creating a student-participatory language learning experience.

## Implementing This Technique in the Classroom

In this approach, the teacher provides students with the background to the poem and introduces difficult or unusual vocabulary. The teacher then reads the poem aloud to the students. After the poem is read aloud, the class discusses it together. Students then listen again as the teacher re-reads the poem. In the next step, the students read the poem chorally and then take turns reading it aloud individually.

The students then prepare to dramatize the poem by selecting character roles and discussing scenery, props, lighting, and costumes. Students rehearse the dramatization of the poem and then do an improvisation based on the poem. After experimenting with character interactions and dialogues, the class discusses the improvisation.

## Examples of Poems that Have Been Used Successfully in the ESL Classroom

One dramatization of a poem that has been used successfully and is recommended for high intermediate or advanced adult ESL learners is John Wakeman's *Love in Brooklyn.* Students portray characters in a love relationship and compare and contrast cultural views [..."I love you, Horowitz," he said, and blew his nose. She splashed her drink..."]. They can experiment with colloquialisms, epithets, and slang and learn to use language appropriate for different interpersonal situations [..."The hell you say," he said.] [..."You wanna bet?" he asked.]. Dramatization also allows students the opportunity to interpret and practice using body language as a means of nonverbal communication [..."She took his hand in hers and pressed it hard. And his plump fingers trembled in her lap."].

*Why Did the Children Put Beans in Their Ears?* by Carl Sandburg is one poem that is recommended for beginning and low intermediate adolescent and adult ESL learners. Students portray a husband and wife

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who ask two rhetorical questions about why children do things that they are expressly told not to do ["Why did the children put beans in their ears..."] [..."Why did the children pour molasses on the cat..."]. Through the dramatization, students can utilize intonation, rhythm, stress, body language, facial expressions, and gestures to convey the frustrated interchange between the disgruntled and bewildered characters [..."when the one thing we told the children they must not do was..."].

*Woodpecker in Disguise,* by Grace Taber Hallock is recommended for advanced beginner and low intermediate level young children. Students take turns being the narrator ["Woodpecker taps at the apple tree."] ["...says he."] ["Little bug says..."] ["Woodpecker says..."]. Students portraying the woodpecker practice using body gestures ["Woodpecker taps at the door."] and asking questions ["...Who is it, sir?"].

*Read This with Gestures,* by John Ciardi, is recommended for advanced beginner and low intermediate level young children. During the dramatization, one student speaks to one or more people ["It isn't proper, I guess you know,..."] In the improvisation, students may cooperatively dialogue the four actions; the students read, dramatize, and improvise the poem with gestures as indicated by the poem's title ["...dip your hands—like this—in the snow..."] ["...make a snowball..."] ["...look for a hat..."] ["...try to knock it off—like that!"].

**Suggestions for the Teacher**

The ESL teacher needs to create a poetry file by carefully selecting and categorizing a substantial variety of poems. In selecting poems, special consideration must be given to appropriateness of the following:

- students' language level skills
- students' ages
- students' interests

Categorizing poems makes them easy to reference and integrate into other instructional disciplines (e.g., science, health, math, and citizenship) and themes (e.g., holidays and seasons).

To further facilitate the communicative approach to second language acquisition, the ESL teacher can record the dramatizations and improvisations. A great deal of conversation will be stimulated when the students relive their experiences through tape recordings, video recordings, and still photography.

The teacher should plan follow-up activities about the dramatizations and improvisations that allow for individual expression of the cooperative experience. The students can illustrate and write about the activity or poem. Future lessons can also include the dramatization and improvisation of short stories, fables, and plays. The same techniques and follow-up activities should be employed.

**Conclusion**

The use of poetry in the ESL classroom enables students to explore the linguistic and conceptual aspects of the written text without concentrating on the mechanics of language. The dramatization of poetry is a powerful tool in stimulating learning while acquiring a second language because the learners become intellectually, emotionally, and physically involved in the target language within the framework of the new culture.

Poetry rich in dialogue provides students with a dramatic script. Drama places the learners in situations that seem real. Learners use the target language for specific purposes, language is more easily internalized and, therefore, language is remembered.

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# Dialogue Journals: Interactive Writing to Develop Language and Literacy

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April 1993

Teachers of both children and adults often wish they had more time to communicate with their students—to learn about their backgrounds, interests, and needs; to share information; and to follow their learning. The need to communicate is intensified with students learning English as a second language (ESL), who bring to the classroom a different language and cultural background. These students may also be non- or semi-literate in their native language, have had little or no schooling in their country, and have possibly suffered considerable trauma as they left their native country to come to the United States. If they are new arrivals to the United States, they are adjusting to an entirely new way of life at the same time that they are learning a new language and beginning to function in a school or work setting. It is with these students that one-to-one communication is crucial—not only to help them adjust, but also to help the teacher understand them and address their particular language and literacy needs.

Many teachers of such students have found *dialogue journals,* interactive writing on an individual basis, to be a crucial part of their classes. Dialogue journals not only open a new channel of communication, but they also provide another context for language and literacy development. Students have the opportunity to use English in a non-threatening atmosphere, in interaction with a proficient English speaker. Because the interaction is written, it allows students to use reading and writing in purposeful ways and provides a natural, comfortable bridge to other kinds of writing.

### What Is a Dialogue Journal?

A dialogue journal is a written conversation in which a student and teacher communicate regularly (daily, weekly, etc., depending on the educational setting) over a semester, school year, or course. Students write as much as they choose and the teacher writes back regularly, responding to students' questions and comments, introducing new topics, or asking questions. The teacher is a participant in an ongoing, written conversation with the student, rather than an evaluator who corrects or comments on the student's writing.

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The first documented use of dialogue journals was with sixth-grade students, both native and nonnative English speakers, in California (Peyton & Staton, 1993). They are now being used in a range of educational settings with children and adults, with both native and nonnative English speakers, and in teacher and volunteer training programs.

The following example, excerpted with permission from the dialogue journal entries of teacher Leslee Reed and Claudia, a sixth-grade student from El Salvador, illustrates the nature of the writing (from Peyton & Reed, 1990).

**March 17**
**Claudia:** *The new teacher of helper in our class is very good. I like her, don't you like her? Today she helped me and us a lot. But Tony didn't want help. Why doesn't Tony want us to help him?*
*I will try & bring my lunch every day from now on because the turkey stew & other lunches put me sick. I hate them. When I am very hungry I have to eat them but when I get to my house my stomach hurts & I am sick for 3 days. Can't the teachers protest or say something about the food that they give here?*
*What do you feed chickens here? We have a hen that layd an egg.*

**Teacher:** *The lunches are not that bad! I've eaten them sometimes. You are wise to bring your own lunch. That is usually what I do too. You have such good food at home that nothing served here could taste so good!*
*Tony is embarrassed. He wants help, but he does not want anyone to know that he needs it. Offer to help him and if he says no, then leave him alone.*
*Chickens will eat scraps of bread, wheat, seeds, water and some insects.*

**March 18**
**Claudia:** *but the hen has wat it looks like worms, do you know how to get the hen of her stomach sickness or is it usual for her to be like that because she is laying eggs and she could even lay 30 eggs so I do not know if it is usual or if it is a sickness of her. oh poor hen she cooks & cooks when I say pretty hen in a low voice & she looks like she is used to children because she is cook & cooking when I say pretty things, oh she's so nice.*

**Teacher:** *I've never heard of a hen having worms--but it is possible. Go to a pet shop or to a veterinarian and ask them. Who gave you the hen? Maybe they will know. We say that a hen clucks. It is a pleasant little sound as though they are happy. They cackle when they lay an egg! That is usually loud! Does your hen cackle? I think hens like having people or other hens around, don't you?*

In dialogue journals, students can write about topics that are important to them in the written genre that is appropriate. They are not constrained by teacher- or curriculum-established topics or by a pre-set schedule of topics and genres that must be covered in sequence. Sometimes their concerns and interests are personal. Adults may write about family or personal identity issues. Likewise, journal entries may relate to academic or work-related issues. (See Atwell, 1987, for discussion of the use of literature-focused journals.) Students may write descriptions, narratives, complaints, or arguments with supporting details, as the topic and communicative purpose dictate.

Because the teacher is attempting above all to communicate with the student, his or her writing is roughly tuned to the student's language proficiency level. In most cases, teachers do not overtly correct errors. This is one place where students may write freely, without focusing on form. The teacher's response in the journal serves as a model of correct English usage. There are many other opportunities, on more extended assignments, in which teachers and students can focus on correct form. At times, however, students do request correction. See Peyton & Staton (1991) for strategies teachers can use to address students' errors.

With nonliterate students, there is no initial pressure to write. Students can begin by drawing pictures, with the teacher drawing pictures in reply, perhaps writing a few words underneath or labeling the pictures. The move to letters, words, and longer texts can be made when students feel ready. Alternatively, students can dictate their entries to the teacher, an aide, or another student who writes them down, writes a reply, and reads it aloud. In classes focusing on native language literacy, the interaction can be conducted in the students' native languages. The move to English can occur in line with course objectives or student readiness.

**What Are the Benefits?**

*Extending contact time with students and getting to know them in a way that may not be possible otherwise.* Through the journals, teachers may discuss, for example, the student's native culture and language, problems adjusting to the new culture, school procedures, and personal interests. This information not only builds strong personal ties, but also gives students access to a member of the new language and culture. Through this relationship, the student has regular opportunities to reflect on new experiences and emerging knowledge and to think through with another individual ideas, problems, and important choices.

*Management of classes with students of varying language, ability, and interest levels.* All students, no matter what their language or literacy level, can participate in the activity to some extent, from the first day of class. Because students' dialogue journal entries give continual feedback about what they understand in class as well as about their language progress, the teacher receives information that can lead to individualized instruction for each student.

*Optimal language learning conditions.* Dialogue journals focus on meaning rather than form and on real topics and issues of interest to the student. The teacher's written language serves as input that is modified to, but slightly beyond, the student's proficiency level; thus, the teacher's entries can provide reading texts that are challenging, but that are also comprehensible because they relate to what the student has written. Beyond the modeling of language form and structure, the teacher's writing also provides continual exposure to the thought, style, and manner of expression of a proficient English writer. As students continue to write and read the teacher's writing, they are likely to develop confidence in their own ability to express themselves in writing. Many teachers using dialogue journals report that their students' writing becomes more fluent, interesting, and correct over time, and that the writing done in dialogue journals can serve as the basis for other writing (McGrail, 1991).

The major drawback that teachers experience is the time required to read and respond to student entries. However, those teachers who have been successful with dialogue journals have worked out ways to manage the process (see Peyton & Staton, 1991) and report that the time is well spent, for the knowledge they gain about students' interests and problems and the feedback they receive about the ongoing work and activities serve as the basis for future planning.

**What Are the Logistics?**

*Materials.* Most people use bound, easily transportable (for the teacher carrying a class set) notebooks. Teachers and students in programs with easy access to computers may exchange computer disks or interact through electronic mail.

*Frequency of writing.* The writing must be done regularly, but the frequency depends on the number of students involved, the length of the class, the teacher's schedule, and the needs of the teacher and students. Most teachers prefer to give their students time to write during class—at the beginning as a warm-up, at the end as a wind-down, or before or after a break as a transition. The teacher may let the students choose a time for writing their journal entries. Ten to fifteen minutes is usually adequate to read the teacher's entry

and write a new one. Teachers usually respond outside class time.

*Length of writing.* Set a minimum (e.g., three sentences) that students must write. (This may not be appropriate for adults.) Later on, the amount of writing should be up to each student. Students should understand that long, polished pieces are not required.

*Writing instructions and topics.* Inform students that they will be participating in a continuing, private, written conversation, that they may write on any topic (unless a particular theme has been chosen by the teacher or the class), and that the teacher will write back regularly without correcting errors. The mechanics of when to write, when to turn the journals in, and when they will be returned should also be explained. When students are unable to think of something to write, the teacher might suggest one or two possible topics or hand out a list of suggestions, or the class can brainstorm topics together.

*Journal partners* do not have to be teachers. Students can write with classroom aides, with each other, or with another class of students who are older or more proficient in English. The teacher or writing partner should enter into the journal interaction as a good conversationalist and an interesting writer (and with adults, as a colleague). The goal is to be responsive to student topics and concerns, to ask questions, to introduce topics, and to write about oneself. Teacher entries that simply echo what the student wrote or that ask a lot of questions can stifle rather than promote interaction.

Finally, relax and enjoy the writing. For many teachers, reading and writing in dialogue journals is one of the best parts of the class—a wonderful time to reflect, to find out about the people with whom they are spending the term or year, and to think together with their students about where their work is taking them.

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# Educating Hispanic Students: Effective Instructional Practices

**by Yolanda N. Padrón, Hersh C. Waxman, & Héctor H. Rivera, University of Houston**
**CREDE Practitioner Brief #5, August 2002**

Effective instructional practices are crucial to addressing the educational crisis facing many Hispanic students in the United States. The number of Hispanic students attending public schools has increased dramatically in recent decades, yet Hispanic students as a group have the lowest levels of education and the highest dropout rate of any student group. Conditions of poverty and health, as well as other social problems, have made it difficult for some Hispanics living in the United States to improve their educational status. Cultural and historical practices have also placed numbers of Hispanic children at risk for educational failure. Research-based instructional practices are thus vital to improving the academic success of Hispanic students. CREDE researchers have synthesized the research on strategies that have been significant in advancing the achievement of these students. This brief presents these identified teaching practices, which can be applied in any classroom and are beneficial for all students, as well.

**Effective Teaching Practices for Hispanic Students**

Research shows that education needs to be meaningful and responsive to students' needs, as well as linguistically and culturally appropriate (Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauchi, 2000). Instruction must specifically address the concerns of Hispanic students who come from different cultures and who are often trying to learn a new language. The home and community environment must be tapped into and connected to students' learning in addition to focusing on knowledge learned in the classroom. CREDE researchers suggest five research-based practices that, while valuable for most English language learners, have been particularly successful for teaching Hispanic students (Waxman, Padrón, & Arnold, 2001). These practices are highlighted below.

**Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Culturally responsive teaching incorporates the everyday concerns of students, such as important family and community issues, into the curriculum. Teachers develop learning activities based on familiar concepts, facilitating literacy and content learning and helping Hispanic students feel more comfortable and confident with their work (Peregoy & Boyle, 2000). By working from and validating students' existing knowledge base, this teaching practice improves the acquisition and retention of new knowledge

and develops students' self-confidence and self-esteem. For Hispanic students whose experiences and everyday living may not be parallel to those experiences found in the school environment, culturally responsive teaching makes new subject matter and everyday lessons relevant and significant. It increases the transfer of school-taught knowledge to real-life situations and exposes students to knowledge about other individuals or cultural groups (Rivera & Zehler, 1991). This helps Hispanic students prepare themselves for meaningful social roles in their community and the larger society by emphasizing and connecting both social and academic responsibility.

## Cooperative Learning

Cooperative learning uses small groups in which students have specific roles in order to accomplish specific tasks and activities. This enables students to work together to maximize and stimulate their own learning as well as that of others in the group (Johnson & Johnson, 1991). By having opportunities to discuss and defend their ideas with others, students come to complex understandings. Instead of lecturing and transmitting material, teachers facilitate the learning process by encouraging cooperation among students. This teaching practice is student-centered and creates interdependence among students and the teacher (Rivera & Zehler, 1991). While cooperative learning is appropriate for all students, it is critical for Hispanic students who may face socioeconomic disadvantages. Through collaborative practices, they can develop the social skills and inter-group relations essential to academic success. Cooperative learning activities influence Hispanic students by

- providing opportunities for students to communicate with each other;
- developing social, academic, and communication skills;
- decreasing anxiety and boosting self-confidence and self-esteem through individual contributions and achievement of group goals;
- improving individual and group relations by learning to clarify, assist, and challenge others' ideas;
- developing proficiency in English by providing students with rich language experiences that integrate speaking, listening, reading, and writing (Christian, 1995; Rivera & Zehler, 1991); and
- providing skills that are necessary to function in real-life situations, such as the utilization of context for meaning, the seeking of support from others, and the comparing of nonverbal and verbal cues.

## Instructional Conversations

The instructional conversation (IC) is an extended discourse between the teacher and students in areas that have educational value as well as relevance for the students. It is initiated by students to develop their language and complex thinking skills, and to guide them in their learning processes (Tharp et al., 2000). Rather than limiting expectations for Hispanic students by avoiding discussion during instruction, instructional conversations emphasize dialogue with teachers and classmates (Durán, Dugan, & Weffer, 1997). Hispanic students may not have full control of the English language, which may prevent them from participating in classroom discussions. One major benefit of using instructional conversations with Hispanic students who are learning English is that ICs provide students with this opportunity for extended discourse, which is an important principle of second language learning (Christian, 1995).

## Cognitively Guided Instruction

Cognitively guided instruction emphasizes learning strategies that enhance students' metacognitive development. It focuses on the direct teaching and modeling of cognitive learning strategies and giving students opportunities to practice them. Through explicit instruction, students learn how to monitor their own learning by tapping various strategies to accelerate their acquisition of English or academic content (Waxman, Padrón, & Knight, 1991). This instructional approach is beneficial to Hispanic students who are not doing well in school because the students can remove some of the individual barriers to academic success by learning how to use cognitive strategies effectively.

One example of effective cognitively guided instruction is reciprocal teaching, a procedure in which students are instructed in four specific reading comprehension-monitoring strategies: (1) summarizing, (2) self-questioning, (3) clarifying, and (4) predicting. These cognitive skills can increase reading achievement and help students master their school-based knowledge.

## Technology-Enriched Instruction

Technology-enriched instruction incorporates more active student learning and is more student centered. Instead of delivering knowledge, teachers are facilitators of learning through the use of multimedia and other technology (Padrón & Waxman, 1999). Technology can be especially helpful for Hispanic students learning English. Web-based picture libraries can promote Hispanic students' comprehension in content-area classrooms (e.g., science and

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mathematics). Multimedia can facilitate auditory skill development by integrating visual presentations with sound and animation (Bermúdez & Palumbo, 1994). Digitized books are also effective tools that allow Hispanic students to request pronunciations for unknown words, request translations of sections, and ask questions. Technology-enriched instruction also helps students connect learning in the classroom to real-life situations, thereby creating a meaningful context for teaching and learning (Means & Olson, 1994). It allows Hispanic students to connect classroom instruction that may be beyond their everyday experiences to a rich and interactive medium that may be more familiar.

## Conclusion

The effective instructional practices described above can significantly improve the academic success of Hispanic students. They respect the students' desire to learn and the collective knowledge students bring to the classroom. Changes in classroom practice, however, need to be accompanied by changes in policy that reflect the diversity in classroom settings. Instructional practices are key components, but not recipes for improving schools. No single approach will be a solution for all of the educational challenges facing Hispanic students. Each school should be considered unique, and educators should choose among research-based practices according to the needs of the Hispanic students they serve. Educators should recognize the importance of family and community influences and other critical out-of-school factors that influence the outcomes of schooling in addition to integrating these practices into the school environment.

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# English Language Learners With Special Needs: Effective Instructional Strategies

**by Alba Ortiz, The University of Texas at Austin**

Students fail in school for a variety of reasons. In some cases, their academic difficulties can be directly attributed to deficiencies in the teaching and learning environment. For example, students with limited English may fail because they do not have access to effective bilingual or English as a second language (ESL) instruction. Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds may have difficulty if instruction presumes middle-class experiences. Other students may have learning difficulties stemming from linguistic or cultural differences. These difficulties may become more serious over time if instruction is not modified to address the students' specific needs. Unless these students receive appropriate intervention, they will continue to struggle, and the gap between their achievement and that of their peers will widen over time.

Still other students need specialized instruction because of specific learning disabilities. The overrepresentation of English language learners in special education classes (Yates & Ortiz, 1998) suggests that educators have difficulty distinguishing students who truly have learning disabilities from students who are failing for other reasons, such as limited English. Students learning English are disadvantaged by a scarcity of appropriate assessment instruments and a lack of personnel trained to conduct linguistically and culturally relevant educational assessments (Valdes & Figueroa, 1996). English language learners who need special education services are further disadvantaged by the shortage of special educators who are trained to address their language- and disability-related needs simultaneously.

Improving the academic performance of students who are from non-English backgrounds requires a focus on the prevention of failure and on early intervention for struggling learners. This digest presents a framework for meeting the needs of these students in general education and suggests ways to operationalize prevention and early intervention to ensure that students meet their academic potential.

**Prevention of School Failure**

Prevention of failure among English language learners involves two critical elements: the creation of educational environments that are conducive to

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their academic success and the use of instructional strategies known to be effective with these students (Ortiz, 1997; Ortiz & Wilkinson, 1991).

Preventing school failure begins with the creation of school climates that foster academic success and empower students (Cummins, 1989). Such environments reflect a philosophy that all students can learn and that educators are responsible for helping them learn. Positive school environments are characterized by strong administrative leadership; high expectations for student achievement; challenging, appropriate curricula and instruction; a safe and orderly environment; ongoing, systematic evaluation of student progress; and shared decision-making among ESL teachers, general education teachers, administrators, and parents. Several other factors are critical to the success of English language learners, including the following: (1) a shared knowledge base among educators about effective ways to work with students learning English, (2) recognition of the importance of the students' native language, (3) collaborative school and community relationships, (4) academically rich programs that integrate basic skill instruction with the teaching of higher order skills in both the native language and in English, and (5) effective instruction.

### A Shared Knowledge Base

Teachers must share a common philosophy and knowledge base relative to the education of students learning English. They should be knowledgeable about all of the following areas: second language acquisition; the relationship of native language proficiency to the development of English; assessment of proficiency in the native language and English; sociocultural influences on learning; effective first and second language instruction; informal assessment strategies that can be used to monitor progress, particularly in language and literacy development; and effective strategies for working with culturally and linguistically diverse families and communities.

### Recognition of the Students' Native Language

Language programs must have the support of principals, teachers, parents, and the community. School staff should understand that native language instruction provides the foundation for achieving high levels of English proficiency (Cummins, 1994; Krashen, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997). Language development should be the shared responsibility of all teachers, not only those in bilingual and ESL classes.

### Collaborative School-Community Relationships

Parents of students learning English must be viewed as capable advocates for their children and as valuable resources in school improvement efforts (Cummins, 1994). By being involved with the families and communities of English learners, educators come to understand the social, linguistic, and cultural contexts in which the children are being raised (Ortiz, 1997). Thus, educators learn to respect cultural differences in child-rearing practices and in how parents choose to be involved in their children's education (Garcia & Dominguez, 1997).

### Academically Rich Programs

Students learning English must have opportunities to learn advanced skills in comprehension, reasoning, and composition and have access to curricula and instruction that integrate basic skill development with higher order thinking and problem solving (Ortiz & Wilkinson, 1991).

### Effective Instruction

Students must have access to high-quality instruction designed to help them meet high expectations. Teachers should employ strategies known to be effective with English learners, such as drawing on their prior knowledge; providing opportunities to review previously learned concepts and teaching them to employ those concepts; organizing themes or strands that connect the curriculum across subject areas; and providing individual guidance, assistance, and support to fill gaps in background knowledge.

### Early Intervention for Struggling Learners

Most learning problems can be prevented if students are in positive school and classroom contexts that accommodate individual differences. However, even in the most positive environments, some students still experience difficulties. For these students, early intervention strategies must be implemented as soon as learning problems are noted. Early intervention means that "supplementary instructional services are provided early in students' schooling, and that they are intense enough to bring at-risk students quickly to a level at which they can profit from high-quality classroom instruction" (Madden, Slavin, Karweit, Dolan, & Wasik, 1991, p. 594).

The intent of early intervention is to create general education support systems for struggling learners as a way to improve academic performance and to reduce inappropriate special education referrals. Examples of early intervention include clinical teaching, peer and expert consultation, teacher assistance teams, and

alternative programs such as those that offer tutorial or remedial instruction in the context of general education.

**Clinical Teaching**

Clinical teaching is carefully sequenced. First, teachers teach skills, subjects, or concepts; then they reteach using different strategies or approaches for the benefit of students who fail to meet expected performance levels after initial instruction; finally, they use informal assessment strategies to identify the possible causes of failure (Ortiz, 1997; Ortiz & Wilkinson, 1991). Teachers conduct curriculum-based assessment to monitor student progress and use the data from these assessments to plan and modify instruction.

**Peer or Expert Consultation**

Peers or experts work collaboratively with general education teachers to address students' learning problems and to implement recommendations for intervention (Fuchs, Fuchs, Bahr, Fernstrom, & Stecker, 1990). For example, teachers can share instructional resources, observe each other's classrooms, and offer suggestions for improving instruction or managing behavior. ESL teachers can help general education teachers by demonstrating strategies to integrate English learners in mainstream classrooms. In schools with positive climates, faculty function as a community and share the goal of helping students and each other, regardless of the labels students have been given or the programs or classrooms to which teachers and students are assigned.

**Teacher Assistance Teams (TATs)**

TATs can help teachers resolve problems they routinely encounter in their classrooms (Chalfant & Pysh, 1981). These teams, comprised of four to six general education teachers and the teacher who requests assistance, design interventions to help struggling learners. Team members work to reach a consensus about the nature of a student's problem, determine priorities for intervention, help the classroom teacher to select strategies or approaches to solve the problem, assign responsibility for carrying out the recommendations, and establish a follow-up plan to monitor progress. The classroom teacher then implements the plan, and follow-up meetings are held to review progress toward resolution of the problem.

**Alternative Programs and Services**

General education, not special education, should be primarily responsible for the education of students with special learning needs that cannot be attributed to disabilities, such as migrant students who may miss critical instruction over the course of the year or immigrant children who may arrive in U. S. schools with limited prior education. General education alternatives may include one-on-one tutoring, family and support groups, family counseling, and the range of services supported by federal Title I funds. Such support should be supplemental to and not a replacement for general education instruction.

**Referral to Special Education**

When prevention and early intervention strategies fail to resolve learning difficulties, referral to special education is warranted. The responsibilities of special education referral committees are similar to those of TATs. The primary difference is that referral committees include a variety of specialists, such as principals, special education teachers, and assessment personnel. These specialists bring their expertise to bear on the problem, especially in areas related to assessment, diagnosis, and specialized instruction.

Decisions of the referral committee are formed by data gathered through the prevention, early intervention, and referral processes. The recommendation that a student receive a comprehensive individual assessment to determine whether special education services are needed indicates the following: (1) the child is in a positive school climate; (2) the teacher has used instructional strategies known to be effective for English learners; (3) neither clinical teaching nor interventions recommended by the TAT resolved the problem; and (4) other general education alternatives also proved unsuccessful. If students continue to struggle in spite of these efforts to individualize instruction and to accommodate their learning characteristics, they most likely have a learning disability (Ortiz, 1997).

**Conclusion**

Early intervention for English learners who are having difficulty in school is first and foremost the responsibility of general education professionals. If school climates are not supportive and if instruction is not tailored to meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse students in general education, these students have little chance of succeeding. Interventions that focus solely on remediating students' learning and behavior problems will yield limited results.

The anticipated outcomes of problem-prevention strategies and early intervention include the following: a reduction in the number of students perceived to be at risk by general education teachers because of teachers' increased ability to accommodate the

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naturally occurring diversity of skills and characteristics of students in their classes, reduction in the number of students inappropriately referred to remedial or special education programs, reduction in the number of students inaccurately identified as having a disability, and improved student outcomes in both general and special education.

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# Grammar and Its Teaching: Challenging the Myths

**by Diane Larsen-Freeman, School for International Training (VT)**

Grammar is often misunderstood in the language teaching field. The misconception lies in the view that grammar is a collection of arbitrary rules about static structures in the language. Further questionable claims are that the structures do not have to be taught, learners will acquire them on their own, or if the structures are taught, the lessons that ensue will be boring. Consequently, communicative and proficiency-based teaching approaches sometimes unduly limit grammar instruction. Of the many claims about grammar that deserve to be called myths, this digest will challenge ten.

## 1. Grammar is acquired naturally; it need not be taught.

It is true that some learners acquire second language grammar naturally without instruction. For example, there are immigrants to the United States who acquire proficiency in English on their own. This is especially true of young immigrants. However, this is not true for all learners. Among the same immigrant groups are learners who may achieve a degree of proficiency, but whose English is far from accurate. A more important question may be whether it is possible with instruction to help learners who cannot achieve accuracy in English on their own.

It is also true that learning particular grammatical distinctions requires a great deal of time even for the most skilled learners. Carol Chomsky (1969) showed that native English speakers were still in the process of acquiring certain grammatical structures in English well into adolescence. Thus, another important question is whether it is possible to accelerate students' natural learning of grammar through instruction. Research findings can be brought to bear on this question from a variety of sources (see Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). Pienemann (1984) demonstrated that subjects who received grammar instruction progressed to the next stage after a two-week period, a passage normally taking several months in untutored development. While the number of subjects studied was admittedly small, the finding, if corroborated, provides evidence of the efficacy of teaching over leaving acquisition to run its natural course.

With regard to whether instruction can help learners acquire grammar they would not have learned on their own, some research, although not unequivocal, points to the value of form-focused instruction to improve learners' accuracy over what normally transpires when there is no focus on form (see Larsen-Freeman, 1995).

## 2. Grammar is a collection of meaningless forms.

This myth may have arisen because many people associate the term *grammar* with verb paradigms and rules about linguistic form. However, grammar is not unidimensional and not meaningless; it embodies the three dimensions of morphosyntax (form), semantics (meaning), and pragmatics (use). As can be seen in the pie chart in Figure 1, these dimensions are interdependent; a change in one results in change in another. Despite their interdependence, however, they each offer a unique perspective on grammar. Consider the passive voice in English. It clearly has form. It is composed minimally of a form of the *be* verb and the past participle. Sometimes it has the preposition *by* before the agent in the predicate: (1) *The bank was robbed by the same gang that hijacked the armored car.* That the passive can occur only when the main verb is transitive is also part of its formal description.

The passive has a grammatical meaning. It is a focus construction, which confers a different status on the receiver or recipient of an action than it would receive in the active voice. For example, the bank in sentence (1) is differently focused than it would be in the active sentence: (2) *The same gang robbed the bank.*

When or why do we use the passive? When the receiver of the action is the theme or topic, when we do not know who the agent is, when we wish to deliberately conceal the identity of the agent, when the agent is obvious and easily derivable from the context, when the agent is redundant, and so on.
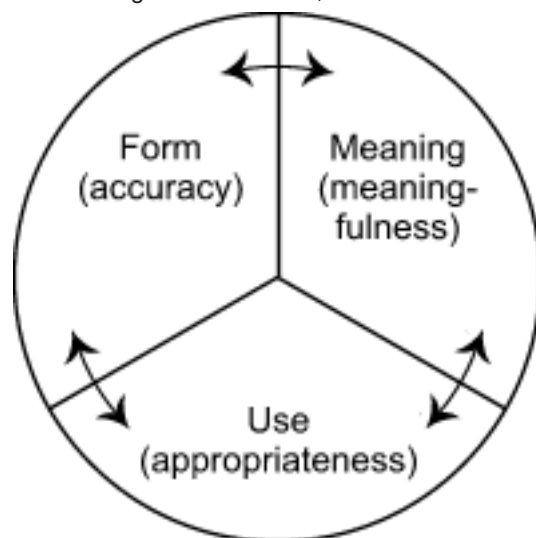


**Figure 1**

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To use the English passive voice accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately, English as a second language students must master all three dimensions. This is true of any grammatical structure.

### 3. Grammar consists of arbitrary rules.

While there is some synchronic arbitrariness to grammar, not all of what is deemed arbitrary is so. If one adopts a broad enough perspective, it is possible to see why things are the way they are. Consider the following sentences: (1) *There is the book missing.* (2) *There is a book missing.*

Grammar books will say that sentence (1) is ungrammatical because sentences with existential *there* almost always take an indefinite noun phrase in the predicate. Why? The reason is not arbitrary. *There* is used to introduce new information, and the preferred position for new information is toward the end of a sentence. A noun phrase that contains new information is marked by the use of the indefinite article, *a* or *an*, if it is a singular common noun, as in sentence (2).

### 4. Grammar is boring.

This myth is derived from the impression that grammar can only be taught through repetition and other rote drills. Teaching grammar does not mean asking students to repeat models in a mindless way, and it does not mean memorizing rules. Such activities can be boring and do not necessarily teach grammar. This does not mean there is no place for drills, but drills should be used in a meaningful and purposeful way. For example, to practice past-tense yes/no sentences in English, the teacher may ask her students to close their eyes while she changes five things about herself. She takes off one shoe, takes off her watch, puts on her glasses, puts on her sweater, and takes off her ring. Students are then asked to pose questions to figure out the changes she has made. Students may ask, "Did you take off a shoe?" or "Did you put on a sweater?" This kind of activity can be fun and, more importantly, engages students in a way that requires them to think and not just provide mechanical responses. Teaching grammar in a way that engages students may require creativity, but the teaching need not and should not be boring.

### 5. Students have different learning styles. Not all students can learn grammar.

Research shows that some people have a more analytical learning style than others. According to Hatch (1974), some learners approach the language learning task as "rule formers." Such learners are accurate but halting users of the target language. Others are what Hatch calls "data gatherers," fluent but inaccurate producers of the target language. This observation by itself does not address whether or not all students can learn grammar. While it may be true that learners approach language learning differently, there has been no research to show that some students are incapable of learning grammar. Students have different strengths and weaknesses. It is clear that all students can learn grammar as is evident from their mastery of their first language. As grammar is no different from anything else, it is likely that students will learn at different rates.

### 6. Grammar structures are learned one at a time.

This myth is demonstrably untrue. Teachers may teach one grammar structure at a time, and students may focus on one at a time, but students do not master one at a time before going on to learn another. There is a constant interaction between new interlanguage forms and old. Students may give the appearance of having learned the present tense, for example, but when the present progressive is introduced, often their mastery vanishes and their performance declines. This backsliding continues until the grammar they have internalized is restructured to reflect the distinct uses of the two tenses. We know that the learning curve for grammatical structures is not a smoothly ascending linear one, but rather is characterized by peaks and valleys, backslidings and restructurings.

### 7. Grammar has to do only with sentence-level and subsentence-level phenomena.

Grammar does operate at the sentence level and governs the syntax or word orders that are permissible in the language. It also works at the subsentence level to govern such things as number and person agreement between subject and verb in a sentence. However, grammar rules also apply at the suprasentential or discourse level. For example, not every choice between the use of the past and the present perfect tense can be explained at the sentence level. Often, the speaker's choice to use one or the other can only be understood by examining the discourse context. Similarly, use of the definite article with a particular noun phrase after the noun phrase has been introduced in a text is a discourse-governed phenomenon. It would be a mistake to teach students grammar only at the sentence and subsentence levels. Much of the apparent arbitrariness of grammar disappears when it is viewed from a discourse-level perspective.

**8. Grammar and vocabulary are areas of knowledge. Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are the four skills.**

While grammar can be thought of as static knowledge, it can also be considered a process. Language teachers would not be content if their students could recite all the rules of grammar but not be able to apply them. The goal is for students to be able to use grammar in an unselfconscious fashion to achieve their communicative ends. As with any skill, achieving this goal takes practice.

What sort of practice is warranted? Ellis (1993) postulates that structural syllabi work better to facilitate intake than to teach learners to produce grammatical items correctly. He suggests that grammar teaching should focus on consciousness raising rather than on the practice of accurate production. In support of this assertion is VanPatten and Cardierno's (1993) finding that students' experience with processing input data is more effective than giving students a grammatical explanation followed by output practice.

**9. Grammars provide the rules/explanations for all the structures in a language.**

Explaining why things are the way they are is an ongoing quest. Because languages evolve, linguists' descriptions can never be complete for all time; they have to accommodate the changing nature of language. For example, most grammar books make clear the fact that progressive aspect is not used with stative verbs; therefore, the following would be ungrammatical: (5) *I am wanting a new car.* For some English speakers, the sentence is not ungrammatical, and even those who find it so would be more inclined to accept progressive aspect when it co-occurs with perfective aspect, as in: (6) *I have been wanting a new car* (for some time now).

The point is, languages change, and any textbook rule should be seen as subject to change and noncategorical. Just as grammar learning is a process—witness the persistent instability of inter-languages—so is grammar itself. There is little static about either.

**10. "I don't know enough to teach grammar."**

Teachers often say this when they have opted to teach one of the other language skills, or when they choose to teach a low-proficiency class. While it is true that teachers can only teach what they know, teachers who articulate the above often know more than they think they do. The pie chart introduced earlier can be a useful tool for teachers to collect what they know about form, meaning, and use of a particular grammar structure. What they don't know will become apparent from the gaps on the chart and the gaps will nominate themselves as items for the teacher's agenda for further study. After all, what better way to learn something than to teach it?

**Conclusion**

If the goals of language instruction include teaching students to use grammar accurately, meaningfully, and appropriately, then a compelling case can be made for teaching grammar. Instead of viewing grammar as a static system of arbitrary rules, it should be seen as a rational, dynamic system that is comprised of structures characterized by the three dimensions of form, meaning, and use.

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# Improving Classroom Instruction and Student Learning for Resilient and Non-resilient English Language Learners

**by Yolanda N. Padrón, Hersh Waxman, Ann P. Brown, and Robert A. Powers, University of Houston**
**CREDE Research Brief #7, November 2000**

Some English language learners (ELLs) do well in school despite coming from school and home environments that present many obstacles for learning. It is important to know why these students, who are at risk of academic failure, are resilient and successful in school while other ELLs from equally stressful environments are unsuccessful or non-resilient. This educational resiliency perspective is meaningful because it focuses on the predictors of academic success rather than on academic failure. It enables us to specifically identify those "alterable" factors that distinguish successful and less successful students. The thrust in this area of research is to extend previous studies that merely identified and categorized students at risk of failure and shift to studies that focus on identifying potential individual and school processes that lead to and foster success (Wang, Haertel, & Walberg, 1994; Winfield, 1991).

During the past 4 years of the CREDE project, "Improving Classroom Instruction and Student Learning for Resilient and Non-Resilient English Language Learners," we conducted research with approximately 1,000 fourth- and fifth-grade students from 21 classrooms in three elementary schools identified as having large proportions of ELLs (i.e., more than 80%), as well as having students from high-poverty families (about 90% received free or reduced-cost lunches). Classroom teachers were asked to identify their population of students at risk (e.g., students from families of low socioeconomic status or living with a single parent, relative, or guardian). Students identified as "gifted or talented" or "special education" were excluded from the population in order to avoid potential effects related to ability differences. From the final pool of students at risk of failure, teachers selected up to three "resilient" and three "non-resilient" students in their class. Resilient students were high achieving on both standardized achievement tests and daily school work, were very motivated, and had excellent attendance. Non-resilient students were low achieving on both standardized achievement tests and daily school work, were not motivated, and had poor attendance. The following sections briefly summarize some of the key findings from our work as we focused on the concept of resiliency.

## Classroom Observation Results

Systematic classroom observations were conducted to examine if there were differences between the classroom behaviors of resilient and non-resilient students. The observations showed teachers using whole-class instructional settings about 80% of the time. During this time, teachers generally assigned tasks in which students were required to spend large proportions of time working on passive learning activities, such as written assignments, watching, or listening. Students were observed working in individualized settings and small group settings approximately 10% of the time. Both resilient and non-resilient students were observed interacting with their teacher only about 10% of the time and with other students only about 8% of the time. Resilient students were observed being "on-task" about 83% of the time, whereas non-resilient students were observed being "on-task" only 63% of the time.

## Classroom Learning Environment and Student Interview Results

Resilient and non-resilient students completed questionnaires to determine their perceptions of their classroom and instructional learning environment. The learning environment findings indicated that resilient elementary school students perceived a more positive instructional learning environment and were more satisfied with their reading and language arts classrooms than non-resilient students. In addition, resilient students had higher self-concepts in reading than non-resilient students. On the other hand, non-resilient ELLs reported that they had more difficulty with their classwork than resilient ELLs.

In addition to the self-report questionnaires, students were individually interviewed by trained researchers. The student interview results revealed several distinctive background and attitudinal differences between the two categories of students. Resilient students, for example, reported speaking Spanish more often to their parents and friends than non-resilient students. About 44% of the non-resilient students indicated that they had repeated a grade in school, whereas only 11% of the resilient students said that they had repeated a grade. Nearly twice as many non-resilient students as resilient students listed reading as their hardest subject and indicated that they do not like reading. Furthermore, non-resilient students reported that they got in trouble in school more often than resilient students. Nearly 60% of the resilient students indicated that they had positive relationships with their classroom teachers, whereas only 28% of the non-resilient students indicated that they had positive relationships with their teachers.

Students also completed an adapted version of the Reading Strategies Questionnaire (Hahn, 1984; Padrón & Waxman, 1988), which measures the extent to which students report using a variety of "weak" and "strong" cognitive reading strategies. We found that resilient students used strong reading strategies significantly more often and weak strategies significantly less often than non-resilient students. Resilient students, for example, reported using the strong strategies of *thinking about what I am reading, focusing on the main ideas,* and *telling the story in my own words* significantly more than non-resilient students. On the other hand, non-resilient students used the weak strategy of *skipping parts of the story I did not understand* significantly more often than resilient students.

**Teacher Interview Results**

Each teacher was interviewed individually during the second year of the project. The findings revealed that each teacher could easily identify several patterns of behavior that distinguished resilient students from non-resilient students. Teachers perceived parent involvement, student self-motivation, and student self-esteem to be the major factors contributing to students' resiliency. The teachers reported that almost any instructional approach worked with resilient students, whereas they said that cooperative learning, a structured curriculum, and "hands-on" activities were the most effective strategies for non-resilient students. The teachers also reported that teacher-directed instruction was the most ineffective instructional approach for both resilient and non-resilient students.

It is noteworthy that these are the same teachers who were observed using teacher-directed instructional approaches most of the time. In other words, there is a great discrepancy between what teachers say are the most effective instructional practices and the actual instructional practices that they typically use in their classrooms.

**Discussion**

Through our observations, we found that the instructional context or culture of instruction that permeated nearly every classroom, every school, and every year was the teacher-directed instructional model where teachers actively lead and control all of the activities in the classroom, while students passively respond to instruction by merely watching or listening. Instructional activities such as small group work and independent work were seldom observed. Furthermore, we found that the intellectual level of the curriculum was low and that the culture of the classroom focused on "getting work done" rather than on more authentic or culturally relevant

learning situations. The curriculum focused on low levels of learning, and there was an emphasis on "drill and repetition" in order to prepare students to answer questions on the state-mandated assessment tests. These instructional practices constitute a basic skills, mastery orientation, or "pedagogy of poverty" approach that has pervasive, negative effects on student motivation and learning (Haberman, 1991; Padrón & Waxman, 1999).

Changing the culture of teacher-directed instruction to a more student-centered instructional model that is based on effective pedagogy standards, however, is not an easy task. We used the results from our research to develop an instructional program called the Pedagogy to Improve Resiliency Program (PIRP) to enable teachers to change their classroom practices and foster the educational resiliency of ELLs. This program incorporates generic instructional components, such as reciprocal teaching and culturally relevant instruction, along with CREDE's Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy (Tharp, 1997). PIRP focuses on providing teachers with knowledge of several resiliency-building strategies such as (a) offering opportunities to develop close relationships with students, (b) increasing students' sense of mastery in their lives, (c) building social competencies as well as academic skills, (d) reducing stress in children's lives, and (e) generating school and community resources to support the children's needs (North Central Regional Educational Laboratory, 1994). Within the PIRP design, we also present teachers with feedback based on systematic observations of their classroom instruction, the classroom learning environment, and the differences between the resilient and non-resilient students in their classrooms. The feedback is designed to help teachers understand and reflect on their current instructional strengths and weaknesses and consequently improve their instruction (Waxman & Huang, 1999).

While conducting this research, we became greatly concerned by the fact that nearly all of the teachers could easily identify the resilient and non-resilient students in their classes, yet they took little action in the areas of remediation or individualization. The teachers knew that there were differences between the two groups of students, but they were never observed adapting their instruction to accommodate the needs of non-resilient students. Furthermore, many teachers indicated during their interviews that teacher-directed instruction was the most inappropriate instructional approach for non-resilient students, yet it was the predominant approach used in most classrooms. We are optimistic, however, that programs like PIRP, that focus on improving classroom instruction, creating a positive classroom learning environment, and fostering resiliency in children, will improve the learning of all

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students and reduce the current educational gaps between resilient and non-resilient ELLs.

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For more information on PIRP and the research supporting it, contact Dr. Yolanda Padrón, College of Education, University of Houston, Houston, TX 77204-5872, or visit www.coe.uh.edu/crede.

# Language Learning Strategies: An Update

**by Rebecca Oxford, University of Alabama**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics October 1994**

Foreign or second language (L2) learning strategies are specific actions, behaviors, steps, or techniques students use—often consciously—to improve their progress in apprehending, internalizing, and using the L2 (Oxford, 1990b). For example, Lazlo seeks out conversation partners. Oke groups words to be learned and then labels each group. Ahmed uses gestures to communicate in the classroom when the words do not come to mind. Mai Qi learns words by breaking them down into their components. Young consciously uses guessing when she reads. Strategies are the tools for active, self-directed involvement needed for developing L2 communicative ability (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Research has repeatedly shown that the conscious, tailored use of such strategies is related to language achievement and proficiency.

## Good Language Learners

Early researchers tended to make lists of strategies and other features presumed to be essential for all "good L2 learners." Rubin (1975) suggested that good L2 learners are willing and accurate guessers, have a strong drive to communicate, are often uninhibited, are willing to make mistakes, focus on form by looking for patterns and analyzing, take advantage of all practice opportunities, monitor their speech as well as that of others, and pay attention to meaning.

A number of these characteristics have been validated by subsequent research. However, the "uninhibited" aspect has not been confirmed as part of all or most good language learners. Because of language anxiety, many potentially excellent L2 learners are naturally inhibited; they combat inhibition by using positive self-talk, by extensive use of practicing in private, and by putting themselves in situations where they have to participate communicatively.

Naiman, Frohlich, and Todesco (1975) made a list of strategies used by successful L2 learners, adding that they learn to think in the language and address the affective aspects of language acquisition. For additional lists of strategies used by good language learners, see Ramirez (1986) and Reiss (1985).

## Effectiveness and Orchestration of L2 Learning Strategies

Research supports the effectiveness of using L2 learning strategies and has shown that successful language learners often use strategies in an orchestrated fashion. Some findings are listed below:

• Use of appropriate language learning strategies often results in improved proficiency or achievement overall or in specific skill areas (Oxford et al., 1993; Thompson & Rubin, 1993).

• Successful language learners tend to select strategies that work well together in a highly orchestrated way, tailored to the requirements of the language task (Chamot & Kupper, 1989). These learners can easily explain the strategies they use and why they employ them (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990).

• Cognitive (e.g., translating, analyzing) and metacognitive (e.g., planning, organizing) strategies are often used together, supporting each other (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990). Well-tailored combinations of strategies often have more impact than single strategies.

• Certain strategies or clusters of strategies are linked to particular language skills or tasks. For example, L2 writing, like L1 writing, benefits from the learning strategies of planning, self-monitoring, deduction, and substitution. L2 speaking demands strategies such as risk-taking, paraphrasing, circumlocution, self-monitoring, and self-evaluation. L2 listening comprehension gains from strategies of elaboration, inferencing, selective attention, and self-monitoring, while reading comprehension uses strategies like reading aloud, guessing, deduction, and summarizing (Chamot & Kupper, 1989). See Oxford (1990b) for a detailed chart that maps relevant strategies with listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills.

• The powerful social and affective strategies are found less often in L2 research. This is, perhaps, because these behaviors are not studied frequently by L2 researchers, and because learners are not familiar with paying attention to their own feelings and social relationships as part of the L2 learning process (Oxford, 1990b).

## Factors Influencing the Choice of L2 Learning Strategies

Oxford (1990a) synthesized existing research on how the following factors influence the choice of strategies used among students learning a second language.

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*Motivation.* More motivated students tended to use more strategies than less motivated students, and the particular reason for studying the language (motivational orientation, especially as related to career field) was important in the choice of strategies.

*Gender.* Females reported greater overall strategy use than males in many studies (although sometimes males surpassed females in the use of a particular strategy).

*Cultural background.* Rote memorization and other forms of memorization were more prevalent among some Asian students than among students from other cultural backgrounds. Certain other cultures also appeared to encourage this strategy among learners.

*Attitudes and beliefs.* These were reported to have a profound effect on the strategies learners choose, with negative attitudes and beliefs often causing poor strategy use or lack of orchestration of strategies.

*Type of task.* The nature of the task helped determine the strategies naturally employed to carry out the task.

*Age and L2 stage*. Students of different ages and stages of L2 learning used different strategies, with certain strategies often being employed by older or more advanced students.

*Learning style.* Learning style (general approach to language learning) often determined the choice of L2 learning strategies. For example, analytic-style students preferred strategies such as contrastive analysis, rule-learning, and dissecting words and phrases, while global students used strategies to find meaning (guessing, scanning, predicting) and to converse without knowing all the words (paraphrasing, gesturing).

*Tolerance of ambiguity.* Students who were more tolerant of ambiguity used significantly different learning strategies in some instances than did students who were less tolerant of ambiguity.

## L2 Strategy Training

Considerable research has been conducted on how to improve L2 students' learning strategies. In many investigations, attempts to teach students to use learning strategies (called strategy training or learner training) have produced good results (Thompson & Rubin, 1993). However, not all L2 strategy training studies have been successful or conclusive. Some training has been effective in various skill areas but not in others, even within the same study. (For details of studies, see Oxford & Crookall, 1989.)

Based on L2 strategy training research, the following principles have been tentatively suggested, subject to further investigation:

• L2 strategy training should be based clearly on students' attitudes, beliefs, and stated needs.

• Strategies should be chosen so that they mesh with and support each other and so that they fit the requirements of the language task, the learners' goals, and the learners' style of learning.

• Training should, if possible, be integrated into regular L2 activities over a long period of time rather than taught as a separate, short intervention.

• Students should have plenty of opportunities for strategy training during language classes.

• Strategy training should include explanations, handouts, activities, brainstorming, and materials for reference and home study.

• Affective issues such as anxiety, motivation, beliefs, and interests—all of which influence strategy choice -- should be directly addressed by L2 strategy training.

• Strategy training should be explicit, overt, and relevant and should provide plenty of practice with varied L2 tasks involving authentic materials.

• Strategy training should not be solely tied to the class at hand; it should provide strategies that are transferable to future language tasks beyond a given class.

• Strategy training should be somewhat individualized, as different students prefer or need certain strategies for particular tasks.

• Strategy training should provide students with a mechanism to evaluate their own progress and to evaluate the success of the training and the value of the strategies in multiple tasks.

## Problems in Classifying Strategies

Almost two dozen L2 strategy classification systems have been divided into the following groups: (1) systems related to successful language learners (Rubin, 1975); (2) systems based on psychological functions (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990); (3) linguistically based systems dealing with guessing, language monitoring, formal and functional practice (Bialystok, 1981) or with communication strategies like paraphrasing or borrowing (Tarone, 1983); (4) systems

related to separate language skills (Cohen, 1990); and (5) systems based on different styles or types of learners (Sutter, 1989). The existence of these distinct strategy typologies indicates a major problem in the research area of L2 learning strategies: lack of a coherent, well accepted system for describing these strategies.

## Implications

Researchers must reconceptualize L2 learning strategies to include the social and affective sides of learning along with the more intellectual sides. The L2 learner is not just a cognitive and metacognitive machine but, rather, a whole person. In strategy training, teachers should help students develop affective and social strategies, as well as intellectually related strategies, based on their individual learning styles, current strategy use, and specific goals.

Research should be replicated so more consistent information becomes available within and across groups of learners. Particularly important is information on how students from different cultural backgrounds use language learning strategies. L2 teachers need to feel confident that the research is applicable to their students.

More research on factors affecting strategy choice would be helpful. Learning style is an important factor, along with gender, age, nationality or ethnicity, beliefs, previous educational and cultural experiences, and learning goals. Additionally, it is likely that different kinds of learners (e.g., analytic vs. global or visual vs. auditory) might benefit from different modes of strategy training.

Teachers must have training relevant to their own instructional situations in three areas: identifying students' current learning strategies through surveys, interviews, or other means; helping individual students discern which strategies are most relevant to their learning styles, tasks, and goals; and aiding students in developing orchestrated strategy use rather than a scattered approach.

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# Online Resources for K–12 Teachers: Language and Literacy Education

**by R. Stephen Stroup**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication**
**EDO-CS-01-03, September 2001**

The use of online resources in education has grown rapidly since the late 1990s. A survey (Wujcik, 2000) investigating Internet use among 30,200 public schools in the United States during the 1999–2000 school year revealed that 94% of America's elementary and secondary schools have Internet access. In addition, more than 60% of schools report that their teachers make use of the Internet for instructional purposes (Wujcik, 2000). In response to this educational trend, we have selected a list of online resources we believe most likely to help educators plan and design their curriculum. Preparation of this digest began with a retrospective review of language arts-related questions received over the last five years by the Reference Staff of the ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication. Six categories of frequently asked questions were then defined: (1) professional organizations, (2) national research and development centers and other federally funded projects, (3) listservs and online discussion groups, (4) online journals, (5) children's literature, and (6) lesson plans. Finally, using Guidelines for Evaluating Websites (Abdullah, 1998), we selected the following websites for each of these categories.

### 1. Professional Organizations

In this section, we highlight websites that inform educators of issues and news in the field of language and literacy education, and that also provide a variety of resources teachers can use to advance their careers and skills.

International Reading Association (IRA)
http://www.reading.org/

Founded in 1956, the International Reading Association seeks to promote the following three goals: (1) promoting high levels of literacy for all by improving the quality of reading instruction through studying the reading processes and teaching techniques; (2) serving as a clearinghouse for the dissemination of reading research through conferences, journals, and other publications; and (3) actively encouraging the lifetime reading habit.

National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE)
http://www.ncte.org

The National Council of Teachers of English has been dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education since its creation in 1911. It provides a forum for the profession, an array of opportunities for teachers to continue their professional growth throughout their careers, and a framework for cooperation in dealing with issues that affect the teaching of English.

National Reading Conference (NRC)
http://nrc.oakland.edu/

NRC is a professional organization for individuals who share an interest in reading research and the dissemination of information about literacy and literacy instruction.

## 2. National Research and Development Centers and Other Federally Funded Projects

Several national research and development centers inform educators of current policies and legislation related to language arts instruction. The researchers in these institutions conduct studies that support government efforts to promote literacy development for all.

Center for the Improvement of Early Reading Achievement (CIERA)
http://www.ciera.org/index.html

CIERA's mission is to improve the early reading achievement of American children by generating and disseminating theoretical, empirical, and practical solutions to persistent problems in the learning and teaching of beginning reading.

Center on English Learning and Achievement (CELA)
http://cela.albany.edu/

CELA is a national center funded by the U.S. Department of Education to conduct research dedicated to gaining knowledge to improve students' English and literacy achievement in schools across America.

National Reading Panel (NRP)
http://www.nationalreadingpanel.org/

The NRP was established in 1997 at the request of Congress to convene a national panel to assess the effectiveness of different approaches used to teach children to read.

The Reading Pathfinder (RP)
http://www.readingpath.org/

The Reading Pathfinder is funded by the U.S. Department of Education. It identifies and presents resources that answer the literacy-related questions of parents and educators working with children.

## 3. Listservs and Online Discussion Groups

Listservs and online discussion groups provide educators with a vehicle for exchanging teaching ideas as well as gaining new information and resources from each other.

Center on English Learning & Achievement Discussion Board
http://205.232.130.2:8080/~2/retry

CELA's discussion board addresses students' abilities to read and write well, to think about the information they receive from any source, and to then communicate their knowledge and thoughts to others.

CIERA Forums: Online Discussion Boards
http://www.ciera.org/ciera/forums/index.html

CIERA's forums provide parents and educators a site on which to discuss today's important issues with other supporters of opportunities for literacy development for America's children.

NCTE's Conversations: Lists
http://www.ncte.org/lists/

This site hosts a number of email lists from NCTE. Many of them are specialized, created for use by small groups focused on particular tasks and projects.

## 4. Online Journals

Free online journals provide ready access for educators who are interested in advancing their profession, understanding the most current research trends, and putting theory into practice.

Journal of Literacy Research (JLR)
http://www.coe.uga.edu/jlr/

*Journal of Literacy Research*, published quarterly by National Reading Conference, is an interdisciplinary journal publishing research related to literacy, language, and schooling from preschool through adulthood.

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Language and Literacy
http://educ.queensu.ca/~landl/

A joint venture between Faculties of Education at Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario, and the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta. *Language and Literacy* is an on-line journal for educators interested in a broad range of literacy issues encompassing research and teaching in multimedia, print, and oracy.

Reading Online (ROL)
http://readingonline.org/

*Reading Online* is a peer-reviewed journal published by the International Reading Association about K–12 practice and research in the field of reading and literacy education.

Threshold Project
http://www.ncte.org/threshold/

NCTE's Threshold Project provides online access to articles about the language arts, literacy practice, theory, research, and a vast array of other subjects that have appeared in NCTE journals.

**5. Children's Literature**

Children's literature plays a critical role in the language arts curriculum. Sipe (1997) argues that children's literature can serve as a tool for developing a variety of literacy abilities as well as the enabler for literary understanding. The website below is developed and maintained by the reference staff at ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication to help teachers design literature-based curriculum and also advance their knowledge in the field of children's literature.

Children's Literature Online Resources
http://eric.indiana.edu/www/home/childlit.shtml

From ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication, this site provides collections of links including the following categories: (1) Authors and Illustrators; (2) Resources for Writing and Illustrating Children's Books; (3) Book Prizes; (4) Book Reviews; (5) Lesson Plans; (6) Organizations, Associations, and Societies; (7) Individual Homepages on Children's and Adolescent Literature; (8) Publishers and Children's Bookstores; (9) Online Children's Stories; (10) Online Children's Magazines; (11) Online Journals on Children's Literature; (12) Special Library Collections; (13) Syllabi on Teaching Children's and Adolescent Literature; and (14) Online Discussion Groups.

**6. Lessons Plans and Teaching Methods**

A survey, entitled "Hot Spots: Picks of Language Arts Websites" (Lu & Abdullah, 1999), investigated the information needs of educators in the United States. It found that the most useful websites are those providing an array of practical teaching ideas and methods. For this section, we selected three websites that provide lesson plan ideas and materials for learners of different age groups that will meet teachers' instructional needs.

AskERIC Lesson Plans and Resources
http://ericir.syr.edu/Search/simple.shtml

AskERIC is a personalized internet-based service providing education information to teachers, librarians, counselors, administrators, parents, and anyone interested in education throughout the United States and the world.

The Gateway to Educational Materials: Language Arts Lesson Plans
http://www.thegateway.org/SubjectBrowse.htm#language_arts

The Gateway to Educational Materials is a consortium dedicated to providing educators with quick and easy access to thousands of educational resources found on various federal, state, university, nonprofit, and commercial Internet sites.

Internet School Library Media Center's English/ Language Arts Lesson Plans
http://falcon.jmu.edu/~ramseyil/lesson.htm#B

Sponsored by James Madison University, this page linking to more than forty English language arts lesson plan sites focuses on specific topics for teachers, school librarians, and college students.

A comprehensive list of online resources for language arts teachers can be found at the following website: Literacy Education Resources-Early Childhood to High School. http://eric.indiana.edu/www/home/litedres.shtml

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# Practical Ideas on Alternative Assessment for ESL Students

**by Jo-Ellen Tannenbaum, Montgomery County Public Schools (MD)**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics May 1996**

Many educators have come to recognize that alternative assessments are an important means of gaining a dynamic picture of students' academic and linguistic development. "Alternative assessment refers to procedures and techniques which can be used within the context of instruction and can be easily incorporated into the daily activities of the school or classroom" (Hamayan, 1995, p. 213). It is particularly useful with English as a second language students because it employs strategies that ask students to show what they can do. In contrast to traditional testing, "students are evaluated on what they integrate and produce rather than on what they are able to recall and reproduce" (Huerta-Macias, 1995, p. 9). Although there is no single definition of alternative assessment, the main goal is to "gather evidence about how students are approaching, processing, and completing real-life tasks in a particular domain" (Huerta-Macias, 1995, p. 9). Alternative assessments generally meet the following criteria:

• Focus is on documenting individual student growth over time, rather than comparing students with one another.

• Emphasis is on students' strengths (what they know), rather than weaknesses (what they don't know).

• Consideration is given to the learning styles, language proficiencies, cultural and educational backgrounds, and grade levels of students.

Alternative assessment includes a variety of measures that can be adapted for different situations. This digest provides examples of measures that are well suited for assessing ESL students.

### Nonverbal Assessment Strategies

*Physical Demonstration*. To express academic concepts without speech, students can point or use other gestures. They can also be asked to perform hands-on tasks or to act out vocabulary, concepts, or events. As a comprehension check in a unit on Native Americans, for example, teachers can ask students to respond with thumbs up, thumbs down, or other nonverbal signs to true or false statements or to indicate whether the teacher has grouped illustrations (of homes, food, environment, clothing, etc.) under the

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correct tribe name. The teacher can use a checklist to record student responses over time.

*Pictorial Products*. To elicit content knowledge without requiring students to speak or write, teachers can ask students to produce and manipulate drawings, dioramas, models, graphs, and charts. When studying Colonial America, for example, teachers can give students a map of the colonies and labels with the names of the colonies. Students can then attempt to place the labels in the appropriate locations. This labeling activity can be used across the curriculum with diagrams, webs, and illustrations.

To culminate a unit on butterflies, teachers can ask beginning ESL students to illustrate, rather than explain, the life cycle of butterflies. Students can point to different parts of a butterfly on their own drawing or on a diagram as an assessment of vocabulary retention. Pictorial journals can be kept during the unit to record observations of the butterflies in the classroom or to illustrate comprehension of classroom material about types of butterflies, their habitats, and their characteristics.

### K-W-L Charts

Many teachers have success using K-W-L charts (what I *know*/what I *want* to know/what I've *learned*) to begin and end a unit of study, particularly in social studies and science. Before the unit, this strategy enables teachers to gain an awareness of students' background knowledge and interests. Afterward, it helps teachers assess the content material learned. K-W-L charts can be developed as a class activity or on an individual basis. For students with limited English proficiency, the chart can be completed in the first language or with illustrations.

Sample K-W-L Chart

Before a unit of study, teachers can have students fill in the K and W columns by asking them what they know about the topic and what they would like to know by the end of the unit. This helps to keep students focused and interested during the unit and gives them a sense of accomplishment when they fill in the L column following the unit and realize that they have learned something.

### Oral Performances or Presentations

Performance-based assessments include interviews, oral reports, role plays, describing, explaining, summarizing, retelling, paraphrasing stories or text material, and so on. Oral assessments should be conducted on an ongoing basis to monitor comprehension and thinking skills.

When conducting interviews in English with students in the early stages of language development to determine English proficiency and content knowledge, teachers are advised to use visual cues as much as possible and allow for a minimal amount of English in the responses. Pierce and O'Malley (1992) suggest having students choose one or two pictures they would like to talk about and leading the students by asking questions, especially ones that elicit the use of academic language (comparing, explaining, describing, analyzing, hypothesizing, etc.) and vocabulary pertinent to the topic.

Role plays can be used across the curriculum with all grade levels and with any number of people. For example, a teacher can take on the role of a character who knows less than the students about a particular subject area. Students are motivated to convey facts or information prompted by questions from the character. This is a fun-filled way for a teacher to conduct informal assessments of students' knowledge in any subject (Kelner, 1993).

Teachers can also ask students to use role play to

| K | W | L |
|---|---|---|
| Lincoln was important. | Why is Lincoln famous? | Lincoln was President of the U.S. |
| His face is on a penny. | Was he a good President? | He was the 16th President. |
| He's dead now. | Why is he on a penny? | There was a war in America when Lincoln was President. |
| I think Lincoln was a President. | Did he have a family? | |
| | | He let the slaves go free. |
| He was a tall person. | How did he die? | |
| | | Two of his sons died while he was still alive. |

express mathematical concepts. For example, a group of students can become a numerator, a denominator, a fraction line, a proper fraction, an improper fraction, and an equivalent fraction. Speaking in the first person, students can introduce themselves and their functions in relationship to one another (Kelner, 1993). Role plays can also be used in science to demonstrate concepts such as the life cycle.

In addition, role plays can serve as an alternative to traditional book reports. Students can transform themselves into a character or object from the book (Kelner, 1993). For example, a student might become Christopher Columbus, one of his sailors, or a mouse on the ship, and tell the story from that character's point of view. The other students can write interview questions to pose to the various characters.

### Oral and Written Products

Some of the oral and written products useful for assessing ESL students' progress are content area thinking and learning logs, reading response logs, writing assignments (both structured and creative), dialogue journals, and audio or video cassettes.

*Content area logs* are designed to encourage the use of metacognitive strategies when students read expository text. Entries can be made on a form with these two headings: What I Understood/What I Didn't Understand (ideas or vocabulary).

*Reading response logs* are used for students' written responses or reactions to a piece of literature. Students may respond to questions—some generic, some specific to the literature—that encourage critical thinking, or they may copy a brief text on one side of the page and write their reflections on the text on the other side.

Beginning ESL students often experience success when an expository *writing assignment* is controlled or structured. The teacher can guide students through a prewriting stage, which includes discussion, brainstorming, webbing, outlining, and so on. The results of prewriting, as well as the independently written product, can be assessed.

Student writing is often motivated by content themes. Narrative stories from characters' perspectives (e.g., a sailor accompanying Christopher Columbus, an Indian who met the Pilgrims, a drop of water in the water cycle) would be valuable inclusions in a student's writing portfolio.

*Dialogue journals* provide a means of interactive, ongoing correspondence between students and teachers. Students determine the choice of topics

and participate at their level of English language proficiency. Beginners can draw pictures that can be labeled by the teacher.

*Audio and video cassettes* can be made of student oral readings, presentations, dramatics, interviews, or conferences (with teacher or peers).

### Portfolios

Portfolios are used to collect samples of student work over time to track student development. Tierney, Carter, and Desai (1991) suggest that, among other things, teachers do the following: maintain anecdotal records from their reviews of portfolios and from regularly scheduled conferences with students about the work in their portfolios; keep checklists that link portfolio work with criteria that they consider integral to the type of work being collected; and devise continua of descriptors to plot student achievement. Whatever methods teachers choose, they should reflect with students on their work to develop students' ability to critique their own progress.

The following types of materials can be included in a portfolio:

- Audio- and videotaped recordings of readings or oral presentations.
- Writing samples such as dialogue journal entries, book reports, writing assignments (drafts or final copies), reading log entries, or other writing projects.
- Art work such as pictures or drawings and graphs and charts.
- Conference or interview notes and anecdotal records.
- Checklists (by teacher, peers, or student).
- Tests and quizzes.

To gain multiple perspectives on students' academic development, it is important for teachers to include more than one type of material in the portfolio.

### Conclusion

Alternative assessment holds great promise for ESL students. Although the challenge to modify existing methods of assessment and to develop new approaches is not an easy one, the benefits for both teachers and students are great. The ideas and models presented here are intended to be adaptable, practical, and realistic for teachers who are dedicated to creating meaningful and effective assessment experiences for ESL students.

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# Strategy Training for Second Language Learners

by Andrew Cohen, Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition, University of Minnesota

Students of foreign language are being encouraged to learn and use a broad range of language learning strategies that can be tapped throughout the learning process. This approach is based on the belief that learning will be facilitated by making students aware of the range of strategies from which they can choose during language learning and use. The most efficient way to heighten learner awareness is to provide strategy training—explicit instruction in how to apply language learning strategies—as part of the foreign language curriculum. This digest discusses the goals of strategy training, highlights approaches to such training, and lists steps for designing strategy training programs.

## Goals of Strategy Training

Strategy training aims to provide learners with the tools to do the following:

- Self-diagnose their strengths and weaknesses in language learning

- Become aware of what helps them to learn the target language most efficiently

- Develop a broad range of problem-solving skills

- Experiment with familiar and unfamiliar learning strategies

- Make decisions about how to approach a language task

- Monitor and self-evaluate their performance

- Transfer successful strategies to new learning contexts

Strategies can be categorized as either language learning or language use strategies. Language learning strategies are conscious thoughts and behaviors used by learners with the explicit goal of improving their knowledge and understanding of a target language. They include cognitive strategies for memorizing and manipulating target language structures, metacognitive strategies for managing and supervising strategy use, affective strategies

for gauging emotional reactions to learning and for lowering anxieties, and social strategies for enhancing learning, such as cooperating with other learners and seeking to interact with native speakers.

Language use strategies come into play once the language material is already accessible, even in some preliminary form. Their focus is to help students utilize the language they have already learned. Language use strategies include strategies for retrieving information about the language already stored in memory, rehearsing target language structures, and communicating in the language despite gaps in target language knowledge.

**Frameworks for Strategy Training**

Although no empirical evidence has yet been provided to determine a single best method for conducting strategy training, at least three different instructional frameworks have been identified. Each has been designed to raise student awareness of the purpose and rationale of strategy use, give students opportunities to practice the strategies they are being taught, and help them use the strategies in new learning contexts.

One framework, proposed by Pearson and Dole (1987) with reference to first language learning but applicable to the study of a second language as well, targets isolated strategies by including explicit modeling and explanation of the benefits of applying a specific strategy, extensive functional practice with the strategy, and an opportunity to transfer the strategy to new learning contexts. The sequence includes the following steps:

> • Initial modeling of the strategy by the teacher, with direct explanation of the strategy's use and importance
>
> • Guided practice with the strategy
>
> • Consolidation, where teachers help students identify the strategy and decide when it might be used
>
> • Independent practice with the strategy
>
> • Application of the strategy to new tasks

In the second framework, Oxford et al. (1990) outline a useful sequence for the introduction of strategies that emphasizes explicit strategy awareness, discussion of the benefits of strategy use, functional and contextualized practice with the strategies, self-evaluation and monitoring of language performance, and suggestions for or demonstrations of the

transferability of the strategies to new tasks. This sequence is not prescriptive of strategies that the learners are supposed to use, but rather descriptive of the various strategies that they could use for a broad range of learning tasks.

The third framework, developed by Chamot and O'Malley (1994), is especially useful after students have already had practice in applying a broad range of strategies in a variety of contexts. Their approach to helping students complete language learning tasks can be described as a four-stage problem-solving process.

(1) Planning. Students plan ways to approach a learning task.

(2) Monitoring. Students self-monitor their performance by paying attention to their strategy use and checking comprehension.

(3) Problem Solving. Students find solutions to problems they encounter.

(4) Evaluation. Students learn to evaluate the effectiveness of a given strategy after it has been applied to a learning task.

**Options for Providing Strategy Training**

A variety of instructional models for foreign language strategy training have already been developed and implemented in a variety of educational settings. Seven of these are described below.

*General Study Skills Courses.* These courses are sometimes intended for students with academic difficulties but can also target successful students who want to improve their study habits. Many general academic skills can be transferred to the process of learning a foreign language, such as using flash cards, overcoming anxiety, and learning good note-taking skills. These courses sometimes include language learning as a specific topic to highlight how learning a foreign language may differ from learning other academic subjects. Foreign language students can be encouraged to participate in order to develop general learning strategies.

*Awareness Training: Lectures and Discussion.* Also known as consciousness-raising or familiarization training, this consists most often of isolated lectures and discussions and is usually separate from regular classroom instruction. This approach provides students with a general introduction to strategy applications. Oxford (1990) describes awareness training as "a program in which participants become aware of and familiar with the

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general idea of language learning strategies and the way such strategies can help them accomplish various language tasks" (p. 202).

***Strategy Workshops.*** Short workshops are another, usually more intensive, approach to increasing learner awareness of strategies through various consciousness-raising and strategy-assessment activities. They may help to improve specific language skills or present ideas for learning certain aspects of a particular foreign language. These workshops may be offered as non-credit courses or required as part of a language or academic skills course. They often combine lectures, hands-on practice with specific strategies, and discussions about the effectiveness of strategy use.

***Peer Tutoring.*** "Tandem" or peer tutoring programs began in the 1970s in Europe and are flourishing in many universities across the United States. Holec (1988) describes this system as "a direct language exchange" program that pairs students of different native language backgrounds for mutual tutoring sessions (e.g., an English-speaking student studying Italian and a native-Italian-speaking student learning English). Requirements of the tutoring sessions are that students have regular meetings, alternate roles of learner and teacher, practice the two languages separately, and devote equal amounts of time to each language. Often, students exchange suggestions about the language learning strategies they use, thus providing an ad hoc form of strategy training.

Another approach to peer sessions is to encourage students who are studying the same language to organize regular target-language study groups. Students who have already completed the language course may also be invited to these meetings. Less proficient students can benefit from the language skills of more proficient students, and more proficient students may yield better insights into the particular difficulties of the target language than a teacher.

***Strategies in Language Textbooks.*** Many foreign language textbooks have begun to embed strategies into their curricula. However, unless the strategies are explained, modeled, or reinforced by the classroom teacher, students may not be aware that they are using strategies at all. A few language textbooks provide strategy-embedded activities and explicit explanations of the benefits and applications of the strategies they address. Because the focus of the activities is contextualized language learning, learners can develop their learning strategy repertoires while learning the target language. One advantage of using textbooks with explicit strategy training is that students do not need extracurricular training; the textbooks reinforce strategy use across both tasks and skills,

encouraging students to continue applying them on their own.

***Videotaped Mini-Courses.*** Rubin (1996) developed an interactive videodisc program and accompanying instructional guide aimed at raising students' awareness of learning strategies and of the learning process in general, to show students how to transfer strategies to new tasks and to help them take charge of their own progress while learning the language. Using authentic language situations, the instructional program includes 20 foreign languages and offers the opportunity to select the language, topic, and difficulty level. Materials are structured to expose students to various strategies for use in many different contexts.

***Strategies-Based Instruction (SBI).*** SBI is a learner-centered approach to teaching that extends classroom strategy training to include both implicit and explicit integration of strategies into the course content. Students experience the advantages of systematically applying the strategies to the learning and use of the language they are studying. In addition, they have opportunities to share their preferred strategies with other students and to increase their strategy use in the typical language tasks they are asked to perform. Teachers can individualize strategy training, suggest language-specific strategies, and reinforce strategies while presenting the regular course content. In a typical SBI classroom, teachers do the following:

- Describe, model, and give examples of potentially useful strategies

- Elicit additional examples from students, based on students' own learning experiences Lead small-group and whole-class discussions about strategies

- Encourage students to experiment with a broad range of strategies

- Integrate strategies into everyday class materials, explicitly and implicitly embedding them into the language tasks to provide for contextualized strategy practice

Teachers may conduct SBI instruction by starting with established course materials, then determining which strategies to insert and where; starting with a set of strategies they wish to focus on and design activities around them; or inserting strategies spontaneously into the lessons whenever it seems appropriate (e.g., to help students overcome problems with difficult material or to speed up the lesson).

## Steps for Designing Strategy Training

The approaches outlined above offer options for providing strategy training to a large number of learners. Based on the needs, resources, and time available to an institution, the next step is to plan the instruction students will receive. The following seven steps are based largely on suggestions of strategy training by Oxford (1990). The model is especially useful because it can be adapted to the needs of various groups of learners, the resources available, and the length of the strategy training. See Cohen (1998) for a thorough description of these steps.

1. Determine learners' needs and the resources available for training.

2. Select the strategies to be taught.

3. Consider the benefits of integrated strategy training.

4. Consider motivational issues.

5. Prepare the materials and activities.

6. Conduct explicit strategy training.

7. Evaluate and revise the strategy training.

## Conclusion

The guidelines for implementing strategy training programs provide a variety of options for tailoring the training to meet the needs of a large number of students, as well as to the needs of the individual institution or language program. The most important considerations in the design of a strategy training program are the students' needs, the available resources (e.g., time, money, materials, availability of teacher trainers), and the feasibility of providing this kind of instruction.

When including strategies-based instruction in a foreign language curriculum, it is important to choose an instructional model that introduces the strategies to the students and raises awareness of their learning preferences; teaches them to identify, practice, evaluate, and transfer strategies to new learning situations; and promotes learner autonomy to enable students to continue their learning after they leave the language classroom.

## Note

The information in this digest was drawn from chapter 4 of Cohen (1998).

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# Textbook Selection for the ESL Classroom

**by Dawn Garinger, Southern Alberta Institute of Technology**

The question of whether and how to use textbooks in teaching English as a second language (ESL) has long been debated among professionals in the field. However, even with the development of new technologies that allow for higher quality teacher-generated material, demand for textbooks continues to grow, and the publishing industry responds with new series and textbooks each year. A textbook can serve different purposes for teachers: as a core resource, as a source of supplemental material, as an inspiration for classroom activities, even as the curriculum itself. Researchers have advocated a variety of approaches to textbook selection (Cunningsworth, 1984; Sheldon, 1988; Skierso, 1991; Ur, 1996), but in practice, the process is often based on personal preference and may be affected by factors unrelated to pedagogy. These may include limited awareness of available texts, budget restrictions, and limited availability of some textbooks. Educators may face a shortage of time and knowledge on the subject, and many previously published checklists for textbook selection are too time consuming to be feasible. Yet with a little additional consideration and attention, the selection process can be enhanced and the outcomes for learners who will use the texts improved.

## Steps in the Selection Process

A practical, thorough, and straightforward method for choosing ESL textbooks is to analyze the options according to program issues, going from broad (e.g., goals and curriculum) to specific (e.g., exercises and activities). The strategy behind this technique is to eliminate unsatisfactory textbooks at each stage of analysis so that only the most appropriate are left at the end, making the choice clear and manageable.

## Matching the Textbook to the Program and the Course

Prior to selecting a textbook, educators should thoroughly examine the program curriculum. If the goals and curriculum of the program are clear and well defined, the parallels with certain textbooks may become obvious. For example, if one of the goals of the program is to give students an opportunity to interact with authentic texts, then books that use articles written for native English speakers would be appropriate. If the program focuses on developing

reading fluency, books designed to support the development of reading skills would be appropriate.

At this point, another decision needs to be made: whether to choose a textbook series or to use individual texts for each course. There are advantages and disadvantages to each choice; educators must prioritize the factors most crucial to their situation. A series has the advantage of standardizing content and approach across levels, guaranteeing consistency of presentation of skills, spiralling of vocabulary, and reasonable progression of text difficulty. However, this regularity can become monotonous and predictable for learners and could potentially cause an increase in negative attitudes toward the textbook or even toward the course itself. Using individual textbooks allows for more precise matching with course objectives and a greater variety in design and content. Yet, there can be serious gaps in the material covered from one textbook to the next; close communication among instructors across levels is essential. If such communication is unlikely due to scheduling conflicts or heavy teaching loads, a textbook series may be a more sound choice.

The next question to consider is how well the objectives of the textbook match the objectives of the course. Ur (1996) identifies the need for thorough coverage of the course objectives in the textbook. The textbook needs to address a reasonable number of course objectives to make it a worthwhile purchase for both teacher and students. A book that addresses at least half of the course objectives is a good option. While every instructor should supplement the textbook with self-created materials or materials from other sources that reflect the unique needs of the class, a textbook that can be used consistently within that classroom seems more likely to be useful to both the instructor and students.

The next evaluation stage is identifying the appropriateness of the text for the intended learners. Some textbook authors provide a clear description of their intended audience, while others are intentionally vague to try to appeal to a wide range of situations, thereby increasing sales. The textbook should meet the needs of the learners in several ways, not only in terms of language objectives. Students and teachers both want visually stimulating material that is well organized and easy to follow, so layout, design, and organization should be considered. The learners' cultural backgrounds, ages, interests, and purposes in acquiring the second language must also be considered. For example, students in an advanced English for academic purposes (EAP) course, designed to prepare learners for university-level coursework in English, will have a very different learner profile than those in an ESL literacy program. Their purposes in studying English would be quite different, and the

textbooks chosen for their classes must reflect this. The students in the advanced EAP course require contact with authentic academic tasks and knowledge about expectations in postsecondary institutions in North America, whereas literacy students require intensive instruction at the word and sentence level. The content of a textbook should also be sensitive to a range of cultural backgrounds and allow for comfortable and safe discussion of cross-cultural experiences and concerns.

## Reviewing the Skills Presented in the Textbook

Improving learners' language skills is frequently the main purpose of ESL programs. However, which skills are taught and how they are taught differ from course to course and program to program. Therefore, the effectiveness of each textbook in helping learners acquire the necessary skills must be considered. Rating this effectiveness involves asking questions such as these:

  • Does the text focus on the skills it claims to focus on?
  • Does it actually teach these skills or does it merely provide practice in the skills students already have?

In terms of the first question, it is important to ensure, for example, that a textbook claiming to teach reading skills focuses on engaging students in critical analyses of different types of texts, rather than focusing primarily on listening or writing skills. An example of the second question would be a listening textbook that provides students ample information on how to develop actual listening skills, such as how to listen for main idea versus detail, to recognize organizational patterns, to take more valuable notes, and so forth. In order to accomplish this, there should be evidence that the text gives students adequate guidance on how to do these things. The individual selecting the textbook must scrutinize the content carefully to ensure that the publishers' assertions are validated by the actual exercises and activities contained in the book.

The importance of cognitive skills should not be overlooked when evaluating a textbook. A text should cover a wide range of these skills, especially higher order skills such as analysis, synthesis, and evaluation. Several published evaluation checklists (e.g., Chall & Conard, 1991; Skierso, 1991) utilize Bloom's (1956) taxonomy to assess the processes and skills that textbooks require learners to perform. Textbooks that challenge students and force them to analyze and synthesize information may be difficult, but they are also extremely stimulating.

## Reviewing Exercises and Activities in the Textbook

When evaluating the quality of a textbook's exercises or activities, four key questions should be answered:

1. *Do the exercises and activities in the textbook contribute to learners' language acquisition?* Many exercises included in textbooks are convenient for teachers but don't necessarily contribute to students' language development. Textbooks should include exercises that give students opportunities to practice and extend their language skills. For example, activities that require students to negotiate for meaning in English (e.g., information gaps, jigsaw activities, role plays) may support the development of speaking skills and help students negotiate for meaning in real-life contexts.

2. *Are the exercises balanced in their format, containing both controlled and free practice?* Controlled exercises refer to those that guide students to a single correct answer such as a fill-in-the-blank grammar activity, whereas free practice involves exercises in which the answers are limited only by the students' creativity and knowledge. This would include open-ended discussion questions. At times, students will require more guidance with an activity, especially when practicing a structure or function for the first time. For this purpose, controlled exercises are effective. However, students should also be given the chance to extend their experience with the language, and free exercises allow this opportunity.

3. *Are the exercises progressive as the students move through the textbook?* Exercises should build on and reinforce what students have already learned and should progress from simple—both linguistically and cognitively—to more complex and demanding. A textbook should require more from students as their language skills develop so they are continually stimulated and challenged.

4. *Are the exercises varied and challenging?* Keeping students motivated and interested as they work through a textbook is much easier if the students see something new in each chapter. Familiarity and routine can be comforting, but too much familiarity can lead to disinterest and boredom. The textbook should fulfill its role as a stimulus for communication and not be simply an organizational tool for the teacher.

## Weighing Practical Concerns

One set of considerations remains: practical concerns. These issues, which include availability and cost, are often the deciding factor in textbook selection, and they must be acknowledged. Not all textbooks can be purchased and shipped in a reasonable amount

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of time, and educators often do not have the luxury of planning months in advance. Those who work within an educational system that requires students to purchase their own textbooks should recognize the economic burden faced by students and should be responsible in their textbook choices in terms of cost.

## Conclusion

Decisions related to textbook selection will affect teachers, students, and the overall classroom dynamic. It is probably one of the most important decisions facing ESL educators. The use of an evaluation procedure or checklist can lead to a more systematic and thorough examination of potential textbooks and to enhanced outcomes for learners, instructors, and administrators. The following checklist may be used or adapted as a tool to help ESL educators who are deciding which textbooks may be most appropriate for their classes.

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**Checklist for ESL Textbook Selection**

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| *A. Program and Course* | | |
| Does the textbook support the goals and curriculum of the program? | ____ | ____ |
| Is the textbook part of a series, and if so, would using the entire series be appropriate? | ____ | ____ |
| Are a sufficient number of the course objectives addressed by the textbook? | ____ | ____ |
| Was this textbook written for learners of this age group and background? | ____ | ____ |
| Does the textbook reflect learners' preferences in terms of layout, design, and organization? | | |
| Is the textbook sensitive to the cultural background and interests of the students? | ____ | ____ |
| *B. Skills* | | |
| Are the skills presented in the textbook appropriate to the course? | ____ | ____ |
| Does the textbook provide learners with adequate guidance as they are acquiring these skills? | | |
| Do the skills that are presented in the textbook include a wide range of cognitive skills that will be challenging to learners? | ____ | ____ |
| *C. Exercises and Activities* | ____ | ____ |
| Do the exercises and activities in the textbook promote learners' language development? | ____ | ____ |
| Is there a balance between controlled and free exercises? | | |
| Do the exercises and activities reinforce what students have already learned and represent a progression from simple to more complex? | ____ | ____ |
| Are the exercises and activities varied in format so that they will continually motivate and challenge learners? | ____ | ____ |
| *D. Practical Concerns* | | |
| Is the textbook available? | | |
| Can the textbook be obtained in a timely manner? | ____ | ____ |
| Is the textbook cost-effective? | ____ | ____ |
| | ____ | ____ |

# Using Cognitive Strategies to Develop English Language and Literacy

**by JoAnn Crandall, University of Maryland Baltimore County; Ann Jaramillo & Laurie Olsen, California Tomorrow; and Joy Kreeft Peyton, Center for Applied Linguistics**

Immigrant students of secondary school age face a number of obstacles as they make the transition to schooling in the United States. In addition to adjusting to a new country and school system, they must also learn academic content in a new language. Because these students come from a variety of ethnic, educational, and economic backgrounds, representing a host of cultures, languages, and educational needs, it is often difficult to provide instruction tailored to their specific needs.

Developing the English language proficiency of these students so they can participate effectively in mainstream English classes has long been a major focus of those working with newcomers in secondary school. However, educators are also looking for ways to help them achieve at high academic levels, which involves reading English well, understanding academic discourse, writing coherently, and speaking English at cognitively complex and abstract levels. These students usually have only a few years to master these skills.

This digest describes ways to develop students' English language and literacy skills and to make academic content challenging, interesting, and accessible. They include the following: 1) building conceptual frameworks for new knowledge, 2) teaching learning strategies, 3) focusing on reading in all classes, 4) giving students opportunities to engage in free reading, and 5) helping students move beyond the text. (See Crandall, Jaramillo, Olsen, & Peyton, 2001, for a fuller discussion of these and other strategies.)

## Building Conceptual Frameworks

Teachers can employ various methods to help students see how ideas or concepts relate to one another and fit into a larger picture. Understanding the relationships among concepts helps students grasp them more quickly and efficiently and develop well-structured mental pictures about the content they are learning (Goldman & Rakestraw, 2000). Many English language learners are unable to see how the content presented from lesson to lesson is connected. They

may be able to retain facts about social studies or science, for example, but have difficulty performing more demanding cognitive tasks such as relating those facts to historical trends or relating the study of the earth's surface to the study of the moon and the solar system (Warren & Rosebery, 1995).

*Schemas* are interpretive frames that help individuals make sense of information by relating it to previous experiences (Schank & Abelson, 1977). Providing students with a *graphic organizer*—a visual aid that displays the chunks of information to be studied—gives them an interpretive frame from which to approach the information. A story map is one example of a graphic organizer (see Figure 1). A story map breaks down the components of a story—characters, setting, and dialogue in a series of events or conflicts leading to a resolution—into chunks of text that can help students organize and comprehend the events of the story. It also illustrates what the students are responsible for learning. Use of a story map repeatedly for the study of various types of literature provides a schema for the study of literature.

Graphic organizers can help teachers clarify their instructional goals. Teachers can ask themselves what they want their students to learn and how they can display this information graphically to help their students connect ideas. For example, after studying various geometric shapes in a math class, the teacher might ask the students to create a concept map showing the relationships among the different shapes and to write the ways in which they are related, moving from the general (e.g., they are made with straight lines) to the more specific (e.g., they have parallel sides). Discussions might take place as students clarify the connections, clear up misconceptions, and come to consensus on the structure of the map (Crandall, Jaramillo, Olsen, & Peyton, 2001, p. 54).

## Teaching Learning Strategies

Research has shown that all students can benefit from instruction in learning strategies. Chamot and O'Malley's (1994) work with second language learners reinforces the notion that students who learn to consciously monitor their own learning, and who have a storehouse of strategies to use when learning becomes difficult, fare better than students who do not have such strategies. When teaching a learning strategy, teachers should identify the strategy, explain why it is useful, demonstrate its use, give students practice in applying it to a learning situation, and show them how to evaluate its effectiveness and what to do if it does not work (Duffy et al., 1986).

One reading strategy that can enhance students' understanding of texts is for them to think about "under-the-surface" questions. This type of question begins with words such as *why, how, should,* and *could* and cannot be answered by pointing to an obvious fact on a page. For example, students in a literature class who have read a chapter from John Reynolds Gardiner's novel, *Stone Fox*, might be asked first to respond to questions whose answers can be found easily in the story, such as, What kind of farm do the main characters live on? Then the teacher might move to questions that do not have an easy answer (e.g., Why is Willie's grandfather not speaking? How do you think Willie could help his grandfather?). After modeling several under-the-surface questions, the teacher can ask the students to construct some of these questions themselves.

When teachers help students learn how to learn, students may examine how they think about a particular problem, think about what they know about the problem before they learn about it, think about how they are going to go about accomplishing a task, make predictions about how a lesson studied yesterday is connected to a lesson being studied today, and summarize what they have read when they have finished a particular section in a text.

### Focusing on Reading in All Classes

Because academic and cognitive demands increase with every grade level, the need for continual improvement in students' reading ability becomes especially urgent for students struggling to achieve at the same levels as their native-English-speaking peers.

Teachers can use a variety of strategies to ensure that students are actively engaged in reading. They can explicitly teach what good readers do and give students opportunities to interact with both teacher-selected and self-selected texts. For example, in *reciprocal teaching* (Palinscar & Brown, 1984) teachers instruct students in four distinct reading strategies: questioning, predicting, clarifying, and summarizing. A well-designed unit might include practice in all four reciprocal teaching strategies. For example, students might practice predicting by creating questions about a text based on reading the first paragraph. They can learn how to summarize by looking at a series of statements and deciding which are necessary for the summary and which can be omitted. The teacher can model how to create questions about what is happening in the text, how to hypothesize what might happen next, how to ask for clarification, and how to state the most important ideas in what has just been read. When students gain sufficient skill, they can work in groups on selected portions of text and take turns using the four strategies.

Teachers can also give students opportunities to respond to reading texts using a number of teacher-designed tasks. These may include reading logs, in which students copy quotes from the text and then write their own response; "first-response writes," in which students read and then quickly write about the ideas that came to them as they were reading; or graphic logs, in which students write quotes from the text and respond with a drawing or symbol that corresponds to the quote.

### Giving Students Opportunities for Free Reading

Free voluntary reading and sustained silent reading can build students' vocabulary and develop reading habits that extend beyond the classroom (Cho & Krashen, 1994; Coady, 1997). In a voluntary reading program, English language learners have something they may not have at home: access to books.

Teachers who want to implement a voluntary reading program can use a variety of methods to heighten students' interest. They can conduct research on what their students would like to read by asking other teachers, seeing what kinds of books students check out on their own, or asking students themselves. The idea is to get students to read so they will want to read more.

It is best to make reading time extended and consistent. For example, reading may take place at the beginning of class every day for 15 minutes. Students may need to be taught how to select an appropriate book. When teachers see students struggling to maintain focus on their reading, they should help them select a book more appropriate to their reading level or interest.

### Helping Students Move Beyond the Text

At the end of a unit, lesson, or theme, teachers can plan tasks that move students back to the text or content to reexamine, reconnect, and rethink the major ideas or concepts. Students have the chance to gain deeper understanding of the content by representing the text in new and different ways. At this point, the classroom may be filled with posters, drawings, and writings that students have created after studying a particular piece of literature, historical era or figure, scientific concept, or thematic unit incorporating several subject areas. A good end-of-the-study task builds on students' strengths by giving them the chance to express themselves in a variety of formats.

"Beyond-the-text" tasks force students to go back to the text, reflect on its meaning, clarify and question, and reread with a different purpose in mind. One type of beyond-the-text task has students transform a piece

of writing from one genre to another (e.g., rewrite a short story as a poem or play). Another is an "open-mind" activity to help students understand what a character is thinking or feeling. In this activity, students draw or are given a picture of an empty head. Inside the head, they can draw pictures of what the character sees, write questions the character might be wondering about, or write key words that show the character's feelings or ideas.

**Conclusion**

In the recent past, the focus of education for newcomers to U.S. schools was primarily the mastery of English. By extending this focus to include the development of literacy and higher order skills and the belief that these students can achieve at high levels in school, we come closer to ensuring that no child is left behind. The strategies described in this digest are designed with this new focus in mind.

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Resources for Educators
of English Language Learners

Classroom Resources & Instructional
Strategies: Grades K–12

**Online Resources**

Resources for Mainstream Teachers of English Language Learners
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/faqs/rgos/mainstream.html

>   This Resource Guide Online from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics includes links to articles, digests, books, Web sites, and ERIC documents that offer information on the teaching of English language learners in mainstream classes.

Internet Resources for Teachers of English as a Second Language
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/faqs/rgos/eslint.html

>   This Resource Guide Online from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics includes links to articles, digests, books, Web sites, and ERIC documents that offer information for Teachers of English as a Second Language.

Second Language Teaching Methodologies
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/faqs/rgos/methods.html

>   This Resource Guide Online from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics includes links to articles, digests, books, Web sites, and ERIC documents that offer information on second language teaching methods.

Directory of ESL Resources
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/ncbe/esldirectory/

>   The ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics offers this searchable online directory of ESL resources that includes links to teaching approaches, lesson plans, and other materials.

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/

>   On this Web site, you'll find a wide variety of resources such as the "In the Classroom Toolkit" at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/classroom/toolkit/index.htm. See also their Online Library resources on Curriculum and Instruction at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/library/curriculum/index.htm.

Gateway to Educational Materials
http://www.thegateway.org/

>   The Gateway to Educational Materials (GEM) is a searchable collection of lesson plans and curriculum units. Searches can be done by grade level, and can also be conducted to include only free, Web-based materials. Although there is not a category for ESL/EFL, some helpful resources may be found under "Language Arts" or "Foreign Languages" and "Speaking" or "Listening Comprehension."

EverythingESL.net
http://everythingesl.net/

>   EverythingESL.net includes lesson plans, teaching tips, resource picks, and online bulletin boards and discussion forums.

Dave's ESL Café
http://www.eslcafe.com/search/Lesson_Plans/

>   Dave's ESL Cafe maintains a collection of ESL lesson plan resources.

ESL Home Page
http://www.rong-chang.com/

> This Web site has many useful links for both ESL learners and teachers.

EFL/ESL Lessons and Lesson Plans from the Internet TESL Journal
http://iteslj.org/Lessons/

> The Internet TESL Journal maintains an exhaustive list of links to lesson plans, categorized by subject.

Karin's ESL Partyland
http://www.eslpartyland.com/

> This is a comprehensive source of lesson plans and reproducible materials to use in the ESL classroom. This Web site also includes more than 75 interactive quizzes, a discussion board, a chat room and job board for teachers, and chat room for students.

AskERIC
http://ericir.syr.edu/cgi-bin/lessons.cgi/Foreign_Language/English_Second_Language

> The AskERIC Internet-based service provides lesson plans for teaching ESL.

EnglishCLUB.net Teachers' Room
http://www.englishclub.net/teachers/index.htm

> This site provides activities, handouts, and lesson plans for ESL teachers.

Teacher's Guide to International Collaboration on the Internet
http://www.ed.gov/Technology/guide/international/index.html

> This Web resource sponsored by the U.S. Department of Education offers teachers ideas for lessons that use the Internet to connect with other students. Click on "Foreign/Second Language" to see ESL examples.

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Resources for Educators
of English Language Learners

Classroom Resources & Instructional
Strategies: Grades K–12

# Culture and Orientation: Grades K–12

**Books**

August, D. (2002). *Transitional programs for English language learners: Contextual factors and effective programming.* Center for Research on the Education of Students Placed At Risk, Johns Hopkins University. Available online: http://www.csos.jhu.edu/crespar/techReports/Report58.pdf

> This report examines how the development of literacy in the native language plays a role in the acquisition of second language literacy, and how educators may determine when a student is ready to transition into English-only literacy programs by assessing the transfer of skills. This paper highlights school-age children who are acquiring English as a second language, where English is the societal language.

August, D., & Hakuta, K. (Eds.) (1998). *Educating language minority children.* Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
 http://www.nap.edu/books/0309064147/html/

> This book summarizes for teachers and education policy makers what has been learned over the past three decades about educating language minority students. It discusses a broad range of educational issues: how students learn a second language; how reading and writing skills develop in the first and second languages; how information on specific subjects (e.g., biology) is stored and learned and the implications for second-language learners; how social and motivational factors affect learning for English language learners; how English proficiency and subject matter knowledge of English-language learners are assessed; and what is known about the attributes of effective schools and classrooms that serve English  language learners.

Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom.* New York: New Press.

> This collection of nine essays suggests that many academic problems attributed to children of color actually stem from a power structure in which the worldviews of those with privilege are taken as the only reality, while the worldviews and culture of those less powerful are dismissed as inconsequential or deficient. Part 1 discusses controversies about the relative merits of skills-based and process-based literacy instruction for Black children. Essays in part 2 describe village primary schools in Papua New Guinea that give children a solid base in their own language and culture while preparing them for later Western-based schooling in English. Part 3 comments on issues of cultural difference and equity in new performance-based teacher assessment.

Fantini, A. E. (Ed). (1997). *New ways in teaching culture.* Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/newways.html#706

> This collection of essays and ideas for exploring culture in the ESL classroom begins with an introductory section that offer a theoretical and conceptual framework for including culture and intercultural dimensions in ESL instruction. The subsequent sections contain 50 classroom activities grouped in four areas: activities to explore the nexus of language and culture; activities for sociolinguistic exploration; activities for culture exploration; and activities for intercultural exploration.  Each includes information about appropriate instructional level, instructional aims, and needed class time, preparation time, and resources as well as specific procedures.

Henze, R., & Hauser, M. (2000). *Personalizing culture through anthropological and educational perspectives.* Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence: University of California, Santa Cruz.

> This report shows teachers and teacher educators how to gain specific knowledge about the cultures of their individual students and their families. Through this personalization of culture, teachers can use students' prior knowledge and skills as rich resources for teaching and learning, and help create culturally responsive schools.

Holt, D. D. (Ed.). (1993). *Cooperative learning: A response to linguistic and cultural diversity.* McHenry, IL and Washington, DC: Delta Systems and Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/LIE/cooplearn.html

> Essays on cooperative learning focus on the use of this strategy to address the special needs of linguistically and culturally diverse student groups in elementary and secondary education. This volume contains several essays on theory, principles, and techniques of cooperative learning and a series of model instructional units for a variety of grade levels and subject areas.

Kugler, E. (2003). *Debunking the middle-class myth*: *Why diverse schools are good for all kids.* Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.
http://www.ScarecrowEducation.com/Catalog/SingleBook.shtml?command=Search&db=^DB/CATALOG.db&eqS KUdata=0810845113

> This book provides guidance on how schools can nurture the unique opportunities that diverse schools offer. In addition to sharing real life experiences from an array of school communities, Kugler offers specific strategies for dealing with diversity challenges and opportunities for each of the key stakehold-ers—school boards, superintendents, principals, teachers, parents, students, and community members.

McIntyre, E., Rosebery, A., & Gonzalez, N. (Eds.). (2001). *Classroom diversity: Connecting curriculum to students' lives.* Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
http://www.heinemann.com/shared/products/E00332.asp

> This book draws from nine different CREDE research projects and presents both the theoretical frame-work for linking students' lives with curriculum and specific strategies from teachers who have done so successfully.

Ovando, C. J., Collier, V. P., & Combs, M. C., (2002). *Bilingual and ESL classrooms: Teaching in multicultural contexts.* (3rd ed.). New York: McGraw Hill.
http://www.mhhe.com/catalogs/0072407379.mhtml

> Demographic predictions are that students with close connections to their bilingual/bicultural heritages (now labeled language minority students by the federal government) will be very large in number in the near future, becoming the majority in many states over the next three decades. This text integrates theory and practice and provides comprehensive coverage of bilingual, ESL, and multicultural education issues. It provides rich examples of effective practices and their underlying research knowledge base.

Tse, L. (2001). *Why don't they learn English? Separating fact from fallacy in the U.S. language debate.* Oakland, CA: CES National.
http://www.essentialschools.org/cs/resources/view/ces_res/293

> Through a synthesis of recent research and individual stories, Lucy Tse debunks persistent, widespread misconceptions about immigrants' language use patterns in the United States. Tse demonstrates that, on the whole, adult immigrants and their children learn English rapidly, but as they do, they lose facility with heritage language use, often putting family and community connections at risk.

Weinstein-Shr, G., & Quintero, E. (Eds.). (1994). *Immigrant learners and their families: Literacy to connect the generations.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=32

> Scholars and educators are discovering what children, parents, and grandparents have known all along: Families and communities have a profound impact on the language and literacy acquisition of their members. Drawing on the experiences of learners and educators across the country, this collection pro-vides examples of innovative models of intergenerational programs, curricula, and program evaluation.

**Journals**

Language & Intercultural Communication
http://www.multilingual-matters.com/multi/journals_laic.asp?TAG=BAKL8X8X1X79168567DULU&CID=

> This journal aims to promote an understanding of the relationship between language and intercultural communication. *Language & Intercultural Communication* seeks to disseminate new ideas and examples of good practice in educating students in language and intercultural communication.

Language, Culture and Curriculum
http://dandini.ingentaselect.com/vl=4012969/cl=66/nw=1/rpsv/catchword/mm/07908318/contp1-1.htm

> *Language, Culture and Curriculum* provides a forum for the discussion of factors that are relevant to the formulation and implementation of language curricula. Second languages and minority and heritage languages are a special concern.

Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development
http://www.multilingual-matters.co.uk/multi/journals_jmmd.asp?TAG=BLWRAXXX481X18396IPZGM&CID=

> The *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development* is published six times per year by Multilingual Matters. This international journal includes articles on multilingualism and multiculturalism and covers a wide range of topics, including contributions to theory, research studies, educational policies and systems, teaching and learning strategies, and assessment procedures.

Teaching Tolerance
http://www.tolerance.org/teach/expand/mag/index.jsp

> This online magazine is published twice a year and profiles educators, schools, and programs that promote diversity and equity in replicable ways.


**Digests and Reports**

Building Partnerships with Latino Immigrant Parents
http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/PracBrief6.htm

Cultural Learning Styles
http://www.ericsp.org/pages/digests/cultural_learning.html

Hispanic Parental Involvement in Home Literacy
http://eric.indiana.edu/ieo/digests/d158.html

Language Learning in Social and Cultural Contexts
http://eric.indiana.edu/ieo/digests/d131.html

Parent Involvement in Culturally Diverse Classrooms
 http://www.ericsp.org/pages/digests/parent_involvement.html

School/Community Partnerships to Support Language Minority Student Success
http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/ResBrief5.htm

Valuing Diversity in the Multicultural Classroom
http://www.cal.org/ncle/digests/QUINTERO.HTM

# Building Partnerships with Latino Immigrant Parents

**by Shannon Fitzsimmons, Center for Applied Linguistics**

**CREDE Practitioner Brief #6, July 2003**

Presenting new concepts to learners in meaningful contexts is an effective instructional strategy for all students (Tharp, Estrada, Dalton, & Yamauchi, 2000). Qualitative and quantitative findings support that linking new academic material to students' prior knowledge, often gained through life experiences, is an especially effective feature of instruction for English language learners (ELLs) in PreK–12 schools (August & Hakuta, 1997; Doherty, Hilberg, Pinal, & Tharp, 2002; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000). A major challenge for educators seeking to develop these conceptual links for ELLs has been the practical task of identifying prior knowledge that students may have without relying on assumptions or stereotypes (Civil, Andrade, & González, 2002). It is becoming increasingly clear that parents of ELLs can play a crucial role in this identification process.

Parents possess invaluable insight into their child's prior knowledge because of the intimate and long-term nature of the relationship they hold with each other. Parents' thorough understanding of their child's household, community, and cultural environments also contributes to this expertise. Unfortunately, many barriers can exist between educators and parents of ELLs that inhibit sharing this understanding and applying it to the classroom. Roughly 80% of ELL parents are Latinos and more than 25% are immigrants (Kindler, 2002). The oft-held perception by educators that Latino immigrant parents hold low educational aspirations for their children or are uninterested in participating in the children's education is therefore one of these barriers (Azmitia & Cooper, 2002; Moles, 1993).

Contrary to such perceptions, emergent findings from the growing body of relevant research point to high aspirations on the part of Latino immigrant parents for their children's educational attainment and an interest and willingness on the part of these parents to become involved in the schooling of their children. This brief will synthesize lessons learned from CREDE projects and discuss the potential for strengthening the role of Latino immigrant parents in the education of their children.

## High Aspirations

One longitudinal study, conducted from 1989–1995, sought a better understanding of how parents' aspirations for their children evolve over time. The study tracked the academic progress of 81 children of Latino immigrants, who were enrolled in ESL or bilingual instruction. Researchers examined parents' beliefs about their children's education from Kindergarten through the first semester of Grade 6 using phone interviews conducted each semester, three face-to-face interviews, annual teacher ratings of student academic performance, and school records. At the outset of the study, the majority of parents held aspirations for their children to pursue education beyond high school. These aspirations remained largely constant throughout the study. Further, these hopes did not change in relation to the number of years parents were exposed to U.S. culture and were not related to measures of student performance. That is, neither the challenges of immigrant life in the United States, nor the children's academic performance in school affected parents' educational hopes for their children (Goldenberg, Gallimore, Reese, & Garnier, 2001).

Evidence from CREDE Project 3.3, "Navigating and Negotiating Home, School, and Peer Linkages in Early Adolescence," supports this finding. The majority of Latino parents who took part in the project, from June 1996 to July 2002, were immigrants to the United States. Sixty-six percent of the participating Latino parents reported aspirations for their children to attend college (Azmitia & Cooper, 2002).

## CREDE Projects Involving the Voluntary Participation of Latino Immigrant Parents

Project 3.3 "Navigating and Negotiating Home, School, and Peer Linkages in Early Adolescence"

Project 3.4 "Developing Immigrant Parents' Computer Literacy in Partnership with Students' Learning"

Project 4.2 "Linking Home and School: A Bridge to the Many Faces of Mathematics"

Project 4.3 "At-risk Preschoolers' Questions and Explanations: Science in Action at Home

## Facilitating Involvement

Latino immigrant parents tend to be interested in participating in their children's schooling. That willingness, however, does not immediately translate into involvement. Rather, participation seems to be contingent upon schools creating opportunities that are readily accessible to Latino immigrant parents (WestEd, 1998). Schools facilitate access when educators and parents share an understanding of what "involvement" entails and parents feel prepared for such participation.

As part of several CREDE projects (see inset), researchers developed and refined strategies for promoting the involvement of Latino immigrant parents. Successful strategies included 1) use of Spanish in addition to English to create a comfortable cultural setting; 2) development of *collegial* relationships between parent, educator, and researcher; and 3) careful consideration of site logistics (e.g., place and time of meetings, provision of childcare).

## Implications for Instruction

Parent, educator, and researcher collaboration on CREDE projects revealed knowledge held by Latino immigrant families that could be used immediately to contextualize classroom instruction. Educators participating in Project 4.2, for example, visited student households where they discovered that family members knew a great deal about cultivation and construction. Based on this discovery, teachers developed thematic units about gardening and "dream homes" that incorporated cognitively challenging, grade-level appropriate mathematical concepts. Because assignments involved subject matter about which family members were knowledgeable, they supported student work at home (Civil, Andrade, & González, 2002).

Data from Project 4.3 made apparent the nature and frequency of science-related conversations between Latino immigrant parents and their children. When researchers shared the content of these conversations with teachers, many educators utilized children's questions to develop lessons (Callanan, 2002). One teacher, for example, derived a lesson on plant nutrition from a question that a student asked his parent. Educators could directly gather such information (in this case conveyed from researcher to teacher) during parent–teacher conferences, home visits, and parental surveys.

## Conclusion

Carefully planned collaboration between parents and educators can improve instruction for ELLs. Findings show that Latino immigrant parents, whose children are often ELLs, hope their children will attain high levels of education and want to participate in that process. CREDE projects serve as examples of how to promote such involvement and translate it into meaningful instruction. Below is a list of references and additional resources on research and practices for building relationships between teachers and Latino immigrant parents.

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Azmitia, M., & Cooper, C. (2002). *Navigating and negotiating home, school, and peer linkages in adolescence: Final report Project 3.3.* Retrieved December 4, 2002 from www.crede.ucsc.edu/research/sfc/3.3_final.html

Callanan, M. (2002). *At-risk preschoolers' questions and explanations: Science in action at home and in the classroom: Final report Project 4.3.* Retrieved December 5, 2002 from http://www.crede.ucsc.edu/research/sc/3.4_final.html

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Echevarria, J., Vogt, M. E., & Short, D. (2000). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The SIOP model.* Needham Heights, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Goldenberg, C., Gallimore, R., Reese, L., & Garnier, H. (2001). Cause or effect? A longitudinal study of immigrant Latino parents' aspirations and expectations, and their children's school performance. *American Educational Research Journal, 38*(3), 547-582.

Kindler, A. (2002). *Survey of states' limited English proficient students and available educational programs and services: 2000–2001 Summary report.* Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition.

Moles, O. (1993). Collaboration between schools and disadvantaged parents: Obstacles and openings. In N.F. Chavkin (Ed.), *Families and schools in a pluralistic society* (pp. 21-49). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Tharp, R. G., Estrada, P., Dalton, S., & Yamauchi, L. (2000). *Teaching transformed: Achieving excellence, fairness, inclusion, and harmony.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

WestEd. (1998). *Bridging cultures between home and school: A handbook with special focus on immigrant Latino families.* San Francisco: Author.

**Additional Resources**

Callanan, M., Alba-Speyer, C., & Tenenbaum, H. (2000, December). *Linking home and school through children's questions that followed family science workshops* (Research Brief No. 8). Santa Cruz, CA and Washington, DC: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Caplan, J., Hall, G., Lubin, S., & Flemming, R. (1997). *Literature review of school-family partnerships.* Retrieved January 7, 2003 from http://www.ncrel.org/sdrs/pidata/pi01trev.htm

Chang, J. (in press). *Family literacy nights: Transferring teachers' reading-literacy intervention knowledge beyond the classroom.* Santa Cruz, CA and Washington, DC: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Durán, R., Durán, J., Ramirez, R. S., & Romero, D. P. (in press). *Strategies guide for implementing immigrant family computer projects.* Santa Cruz, CA and Washington, DC: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Kyle, D. W., & McIntyre, E. (2000, October). *Family visits benefit teachers and families—and students most of all* (Practitioner Brief No. 1). Santa Cruz, CA and Washington, DC: Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

Kyle, D. W., McIntyre, E., Miller, K., & Moore, G. (2002). *Reaching out: A K–8 resource for connecting families and schools.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

For more information on this CREDE project and other CREDE publications, please visit www.crede.ucsc.edu.

*This work is supported under the Educational Research and Development Center Program (Cooperative Agreement No. R306A60001-96), administered by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), U.S. Department of Education. The findings and opinions expressed here do not necessarily reflect the position or policies of IES.*

# Cultural Learning Styles

**by Al Heredia**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education**
**EDO-SP-1999-10**

Cultural learning styles are those learning styles of an individual that are the product of his or her cultural background and upbringing. In this digest, we review the theory on learning styles, the role culture plays within the theory, and the advantages and disadvantages of using culture as a means of understanding learning styles and their impact on the education of minority students.

**Learning Styles Theory**

The concept of cultural learning styles finds its basis in learning styles theory. Learning styles theory states that students prefer one way or style of learning over another. The theory suggests that designing educational experiences, curriculum, and instruction that match student learning styles may improve academic achievement (Irvine and York, 1995). The cultural learning styles concept goes a step further by stating that cultural upbringing plays a decisive role in determining a student's learning style.

More than 30 learning style testing instruments have been developed to measure different learning styles along a meaningful and reliable continuum. Examples of instruments include the Swassing-Barbe Modality Index and the Group Embedded Figures Tests. The Swassing-Barbe Modality Index categorizes learners as preferring visual, auditory, or tactile/kinesthetic styles (Barbe and Swassing, 1979). The Group Embedded Figures Test categorizes students as being field-dependent or field-independent (Witkin, 1971) by having them find geometric figures that are embedded in patterns of figures (Irvine and York, 1995). Field dependence/independence refers to "the ways individuals respond cognitively to confusing information and unfamiliar situations," and the behaviors that the responses produce (Irvine and York, 1995). Field-dependent individuals are considered to be more group oriented and cooperative and less competitive than field-independent individuals (Dunn and Griggs, 1996).

**Culture and Learning Style**

Culture consists of values, beliefs, and ways of perceiving (Irvine and York, 1995). Cultural differences in children's learning styles may develop through their early experience (Guild and Garger, 1998). A cultural group's values and traditional lifestyle may, through

child-rearing practices, influence the learning styles the individual will develop (Worthley, 1999).

Numerous studies have attempted to identify learning style preferences among students from a variety of cultures and ways to use the preferences to enhance learning. Dunn and Griggs have reviewed research on Hispanic students' learning styles. The research shows that Mexican American students seem to require a higher degree of structure than other groups. They prefer to work alone more than African American students, but less than Caucasian students. Nor are they as auditory and visual as Caucasians and African Americans. Hispanic middle and high school students are more field-dependent than Anglo students.

Based on these research conclusions, they advise teachers and counselors to expect a large number of Hispanic students to prefer 1) conformity, 2) peer-oriented learning, 3) kinesthetic instructional resources, 4) a high degree of structure, and 5) a field-dependent cognitive style. Ramirez and Castaneda (1974) recommend cooperative learning; the use of humor, drama, and fantasy; modeling; and a global rather than analytic approach to understanding concepts.

Research on African American students demonstrates that they tend to prefer inferential reasoning, to focus on people rather than things, to prefer kinesthetic learning, and to be more proficient in nonverbal communications (Irvine and York, 1995). Gilbert and Gay recommend a loosely structured classroom environment for African American field-dependent students. Teachers should work together with such students (Gilbert and Gay, 1989). In contrast, Clarkson recommends techniques such as highly structured presentations of material and proximity to the teacher in order to reduce distractions from other students (Clarkson, 1983).

Research on Native American students demonstrates that they tend to be field-dependent, like African Americans and Hispanics. They tend to prefer visual to verbal information, prefer learning in private rather than in public, prefer learning by watching and doing, and tend to value concise speech communication (Irvine and York, 1995). Sawyer recommends that teachers not focus on individual achievement, minimize lecturing, place less emphasis on competition, and minimize teacher directions (Sawyer, 1991).

The research in general tends to describe minorities as more field-dependent than nonminorities (Dunn and Griggs, 1996). Cooperative learning tends to be the most recommended technique for students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Irvine and York, 1995)

**The Debate Over Styles**

Learning style theory continues to be the subject of debate. Instruments that measure learning style are popular, but research does not fully support either their use or the underlying theory behind them (Irvine and York, 1995). Problems with making learning style theory the basis of educational practice have been identified. One problem is that different learning style theories and instruments use different style categories to define learning style continuums (Curry, 1990).

Evidence for the reliability and validity of learning style instruments is weak. Several learning style tests–like the Rod and Frame Test and the Group Embedded Figures Test–designed to measure the same construct have shown low correlations when given to the same subjects (Witkins, Dyk, Faterson, and Karp, 1962). Some tests are not sensitive to the small differences between individuals' best and able learning styles and most cannot differentiate between auditory, tactile, visual, and kinesthetic strengths (Hilliard, 1988). Some researchers argue that cognitive style instruments measure cognitive ability rather than style preference (Irvine and York, 1995).

A third problem is identification of changes in educational practices that complement particular learning styles. Changes that teachers make in their practice already reflect the recommendations of the learning styles literature (Curry, 1990). Achievement gains based on the implementation of learning style theory may simply be the result of explaining a task with such detail that both student and teacher can adapt to complete it successfully (Levine, 1982).

The application of learning styles theory to identify preferences of different cultural groups presents a further complication. The information obtained from learning styles assessments of specific cultural groups is based on different ways of assessing and describing style. Yet, results of different studies are often compared with little or no consideration of the types of assessment instruments used when reporting findings. The use of different instruments often leads to reports of contradictory information about groups of learners (Guild and Garger, 1998). The data conflict because of a number of flawed practices, including inappropriate statistical designs, poor analyses, misinterpretation of the findings, and/or faulty conclusions (Hilliard, 1988).

A number of issues that deal directly with the relationship of culture to learning in our society today also complicate the use of the concept of cultural learning styles. The concept is linked with efforts to improve the academic achievement of minority groups. In an effort to explain why these students underachieve, the distinction between differences in

learning style and the lack of abilities can be blurred. We must decide whether or not "equality of instruction (is) synonymous with equity of educational opportunity for all" (Guild and Garger, 1998). Do our instructional practices support all students' learning equally? Educational practices in the traditional classroom may then be pushed to the front of the debate.

Where does the incongruity between learning styles of minority students and traditional classroom practice originate? According to a New York State Board of Regents' report on learning styles, the traditional school curriculum follows a "linear, step-by-step approach to learning" (Martel, 1998). Ogbu (1988) states that the traditional curriculum reflects "the middle class cultural values, beliefs, and norms of schools." Such an approach focuses on linguistic and quantitative strengths. It limits learning by limiting instructional strategies that can successfully address student learning styles. The conclusion for researchers is that students of color who fail academically do so because of their differences in learning style when compared to mainstream students (Irvine and York, 1995).

Dunn warns that cultural learning styles should not be used to establish limited style categories for members of any cultural, national, racial, or religious group. Students who do not perform as well as their peers in traditional American classrooms tend to differ from them in learning style even when they share the same cultural background (Dunn, 1997). Dunn and Griggs caution teachers to emphasize learning style strengths of the individual rather than his or her culture and to match instruction to individual preferences (Dunn and Griggs, 1996).

Nonetheless, there may be benefits to increasing the knowledge base on the relationship between culture and learning style. The large achievement gap between minority and non- minority students suggests a need for as much information as possible to help all students succeed. If learning style tests do show that instruction is not compatible with student learning styles, such results may be the necessary motivation that compels us to reexamine educational practice at the classroom level (Irvine and York, 1995). Hilliard suggests that the question that needs to be asked "is how a given style user will approach the (learning) task and whether the approach that a given style user uses is compatible with that of the teacher or the institution which provides instruction" (Hilliard, 1988).

## Cultural Learning Styles and Teaching Styles

Teaching style categories that may be useful in examining our instructional practices have been developed. Fischer and Fischer (1979) have defined six categories for teaching styles. They are

- Task Oriented
- Cooperative Planner
- Child Centered
- Subject Centered
- Learning Centered
- Emotionally Exciting and its Counterpart

Teaching styles are distinct from methods of instruction such as lecturing or cooperative learning. Teaching styles are supposed to define the behaviors that teachers exhibit as they interact with learners. In applying teaching style categories to their practice, teachers should strive to identify the categories that best characterize them regardless of the methods that they use. Like students and learning styles, teachers may exhibit a teaching style preference while being able to teach in a number of different styles. Teachers tend to teach to their preferred learning style (Bennett, 1995). So, they may find it helpful to identify their own learning style to help understand their practice.

Bennett identifies steps that teachers can take to make learning a success for all students regardless of their cultural backgrounds. They are

- Know our own teaching and learning styles.
- Determine how far we can stray from these strengths and preferences and still be comfortable.
- Begin with a few students, those who are having difficulty in our classes.
- Know the learning style patterns that seem to characterize various ethnic groups.
- Build classroom flexibility slowly, adding one new strategy at a time.
- Use all modes (visual, auditory, tactile, and kinesthetic) when teaching concepts and skills.

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# Hispanic Parental Involvement in Home Literacy

**by Nancy Hyslop**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication**
EDO-CS-00-09, December 2000

People of Hispanic origin represent one of the largest minority groups in the United States. For Hispanic students, success in school is a complex process, dependent on both the actions of parents and teachers separately and also on their interactions (Paratore, Melzi, and Krol-Sinclair, 1999).

The purpose of this digest is to provide an overview of

1. problems Hispanic parents encounter as they become involved in their children's literacy development

2. programs that help Hispanic parents become more effective partners with their children and their children's school

3. resources that provide useful information for parents, teachers, and administrators.

## Problems Encountered by Hispanic parents

Hispanic parents are frequently unaware of practices essential to helping their children develop academic skills. They may be confused about what the school expects from their children and feel uncertain about how to help their children. Several recent studies address the effects of cultural differences, parents' lack of self-esteem, and a host of misconceptions, discussed below.

### Low Self-esteem
Recent studies by Hughes, Schumm, and Vaughn, (1999), Kelty (1997), and Paratore, Melzi, and Krol-Sinclair, (1999) explore reasons why some Hispanic parents are hindered by low self-esteem. They found that some parents have been unsuccessful in school, and therefore the entire school experience causes anxiety. Some feel that because of the language barrier, they are powerless to make a difference in their children's education. And some view teachers as the experts and do not feel comfortable questioning them.

### Culture Shock
The process of acculturation, internalizing a host culture's identity, is more acute for some immigrants than others. Lambourne and Zinn (1993) found immigrant families may go through psychological adaptations such as culture shock as they encounter a new culture. Kelty (1997) found that because the Hispanic culture emphasizes obedience and respect for adult authority, many parents are more likely to communicate with their children in a direct style than to engage their curiosity by talking with them and reading to them. Consequently, the parents fail to lay a strong foundation for building academic skills.

### Misconceptions
Although it is true that culture shock and low self-esteem play an important part in understanding the problems Hispanic parents face, the literature suggests that many other factors are also at work. Moles (1993) reported that in a recent national survey of teachers, Hispanic parents' lack of interest and support was the most frequently cited educational problem. However, according to Snow et al. (1991) "even children with nurturing home literacy environments did poorly in reading if school practices were inadequate."

Paratore, Melzi, and Krol-Sinclair, (1999) found evidence suggesting that despite limited English proficiency, low levels of education, and few economic resources, when parents were provided opportunities to learn from and collaborate with teachers, all were willing and able to do so consistently and effectively. Yet in some cases children still failed.

Kelty (1997) found evidence that Spanish speaking parents are comfortable with parent conferences, interactive workshops and, to an extent, home visits. These findings contradict previous research indicating that parent involvement programs do not reach Hispanic parents.

Moreno and Lopez (1999) found the relationship between acculturation level and personal, contextual, and involvement factors to be complex. They found that although less acculturated Hispanic parents reported less knowledge about school activities and more barriers to involvement, they had high levels of perceived efficacy relevant to parent involvement, educational expectations and spousal support.

The study by Paratore, Melzi, and Krol-Sinclair, (1999), conducted in conjunction with their Intergenerational Literacy Project, found that in all the Latino families studied, the practice of family literacy was in an important and integral part of family life long before parents joined the project. These researchers concluded that "looking to family literacy interventions as the primary solution to the problems of school failure for many Latino children is to dismiss the complexity of challenges they face both inside and outside of school."

**Effective Programs that Have Helped Hispanic Parents**

Two ESL teachers looked at parent involvement and culture traits of Hispanics to better incorporate Hispanic families into the school system. The project helped teachers realize that cultural differences effect the ways in which students and parents react to the school system. (Rodgers and Lyon, 1999)

Short (1998) reports that 18 states, most with high rates of immigration, have developed Newcomer Programs for students who are recent arrivals to the United States and have limited English proficiency. Forty three percent of the programs offer classes to orient parents to the United States, and 63% offer adults ESL classes either through the program or the school district.

Parents of prekindergarten students in one public school in Texas received instructions in developing a portfolio of their child's literacy development which reflected literacy behavior at home.

The parent/child workshop offers parents specific ways to help their children at home and allows parents to be active participants in their children's education. (Williams and Lundsteen, 1997)

The Intergenerational Literacy Project began in 1993 and is now in its sixth year. This project is one component of a partnership between a local university and an urban community where the majority of families are new immigrants to the United States. The project has three goals:

1. to provide opportunities for adults to read and respond to literacy materials of personal interest;

2. to provide a selection of books, strategies and ideas for adults to share with their children in order to support their literacy learning;

3. to provide a forum through which adults can share their family literacy experiences. (Paratore, Melzi, and Krol-Sinclair, 1999)

Project FLAME (Family Literacy: Apprendiendo, Mejorando, Educando [Learning, Improving, Educating]) is a family literacy program developed in 1989 by Rodriguez-Brown and Shanahan to train parents in different strategies to help their children's literacy learning at home. The objectives of this program are to (1) increase the ability of Hispanic parents to provide literacy opportunities for their children; (2) increase parents' ability to act as positive role models; (3) improve the Hispanic parents' skills so that they can more effectively initiate, encourage, support, and extend their children's literacy learning, and (4) increase and improve relationships between Hispanic families and the schools. (Rodriguez-Brown, Li, and Albom, 1999)

AVANCE is a preschool parenting program in San Antonio that incorporates family culture to achieve significant success with recent and second-generation Mexican-immigrant families. The program targets low-income mothers with young children. Infants and toddlers accompany their mothers to the program and are placed in day care that provides developmental and educational activities. (Romo, 1999)

**Information Resources for Parents, Teachers, and Administrators**

*Home Literacy Activities: Perceptions and Practices of Hispanic Parents of Children with Learning Disabilities* (Hughes, Schumm, and Vaughn, 1999) investigated Hispanic parents' perceptions and practices with respect to home reading activities. Parents in this study reported using a wide variety of reading activities on a regular basis, but experienced frustration in helping their children at home.

*Involving Hispanic Parents in Improving Educational Opportunities for Their Children* (Sosa, 1996) discusses logistical barriers such as time, money, safety and child care; attitudinal barriers such as disagreements, dissatisfaction and communication problems; and expectations barriers as forces which hinder involvement of migrant/immigrant parents. This study provides alternative ways to involve these parents as well as strategies to cultivate more successful experiences.

*Exploring Home-School Connections: A Family Literacy Perspective on Improving Urban Schools* (Nistler and Maiers, 1999) contributes an understanding of what constitutes family literacy and discusses family literacy programs in terms of three very distinct categories of approaches: Parent Involvement Programs, Intergenerational Programs, and Research on Naturally Occurring Family Literacy programs.

*An Examination of Hispanic Parent Involvement in Early Childhood Programs* (Kelty, 1997) developed a bilingual survey to register the feelings of parents toward involvement in their children's preschool and kindergarten and to determine the unique needs of parents during interactions with the schools. The survey was tested with 50 parents, and the results were tabulated to determine differences between the feelings of Hispanic and non-Hispanic parents.

*Latina Mothers' Involvement in their Children's*

*Schooling: The Role of Maternal Education and Acculturation* (Moreno and Lopez, 1999) investigated the influence of language proficiency and family socio-economic status on Latina mothers' involvement in their children's schooling. This study specifically investigated the influence of sociocultural factors on (1) personal and psychological factors, (2) contextual factors, and (3) levels of involvement.

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# Language Learning in Social and Cultural Contexts

**by Mei-Yu Lu**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading, English, and Communication**
**EDO-CS-98-4, September 1998**

In her book *Ways with Words*, Heath (1983) writes "the different ways children learned to use language were dependent on the ways in which [members of] each community structured their families, defined the roles that community members could assume, and played out their concepts of childhood that guided child socialization" (p. 11). According to Heath, children learn language, be it spoken or written, through the process of socializing in the specific society they are in. Heath (1983) observed ways that three groups of children acquired and used language, and she discovered that children exhibited language behaviors in accordance with the values of their respective families and communities.

## Language Learning at Home

Language learning takes place at least partly as a means of social participation (Goodman & Goodman, 1990), which usually begins at home. From birth, children are engaged in various interactions with family members. Infants learn the social function of language long before they are able to utter any intelligible words. During daily routines, parents and caregivers often talk with children in a special type of utterance called motherese. Motherese contains short, repetitive phrases with exaggerated intonation and clear pronunciation (Snow & Ferguson, 1977), such as "dada" for "daddy" and "bibi" for "baby." Weaver (1994) suggested that such parent–child interaction facilitates the process of communication, the social function of language. In the process of acquiring oral language, young children are active agents. They not only receive language input from others, but they also generate hypotheses about rules of language use through social engagement with other more competent language users (Newman, 1985). Lindfors (1987) believes that even very young children are able to hypothesize, trying out language as they encounter it in particular contexts. Through feedback from parents and caregivers as well as further exposure and interaction, children eventually modify or confirm their hypotheses.

## Language Learning in Communities

In addition to their experiences at home, children also interact with community members. Such interaction contributes to children's overall language learning.

Heath (1983) found that for children to get along with people and to accomplish social goals, they need to learn their community's ways of language use, and they also acquire those ways of using language through experiences in various community activities and interactions. Heath suggests that each community has specific ways of socializing members and helping them function in the community. In addition, there are several features in children's social and linguistic environments which vary strikingly from one community to the other. These features include ". . . the boundaries of the physical and social communities in which communication to and by children is possible; the limits and features of the situations in which talk occurs; the what, how and why patterns of choice which children can exercise in their uses of language; and the values these choices of language have for the children in their communities and beyond." (p.144)

For example, Heath found that children from Trackton and Roadville exhibited very different storytelling behaviors. The Trackton children were encouraged to exaggerate and to fantasize when telling a story, whereas children from Roadville, who were expected to recount factual information, interpreted that behavior as lying. These differences had an impact on how the children performed in school, at which another set of expectations prevailed.

## Language Learning Among Linguistic Minority Children

In the past two decades, the number of children from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds in the United States has increased. Many of these children enter schools with little or no English. However, they bring into classrooms the knowledge of their mother tongues and their cultural and linguistic values. Schools need to encourage linguistic minority children to maintain the use of their mother tongue while learning a new language. Heath (1986) also proposes that in order for all children to achieve success in school, the ways children use language to learn must be given as much consideration as the specific language they speak. Information about their previously acquired "ways with words" can be used to facilitate their learning in school.

Researchers (Heath, 1986; Wong-Fillmore,1983, 1989) have studied how linguistic and cultural minority children in America use language in the classroom. Their findings suggest that linguistic minority children have different ways of using language than their mainstream American peers and teachers. Both Wong-Fillmore (1983, 1989) and Heath (1986) studied children from Chinese-speaking and Spanish-speaking, mostly Mexican, families. Their research has shown that Chinese-speaking children

tend to be adult oriented. They appear to interact frequently with adults and to be concerned about meeting the teacher's expectations. By contrast, Hispanic children are more peer oriented in seeking assistance. Wong-Fillmore (1983) suggests that the class context strongly influences these children's learning in American schools. When in a classroom where students are mostly second language learners, the teacher becomes the main resource of English. In order to interact with each other, the students need to use English as the primary means for oral communication. It follows that they supply each other with less conventional versions of English. Under these circumstances, adult-oriented second language children tend to receive richer English input from their teacher and learn more than their peer-oriented counterparts. In a classroom where native English speakers outnumber linguistic minority children, peer-oriented second language learners will have more opportunities to interact with native speakers, thus receiving more English input than their adult-oriented counterparts. It is, therefore, important that educators be aware of the cultural and linguistic differences among children of different groups in order to design a conducive learning environment for all learners.

In sum, language learning is a socio-cultural process. To fully function in a particular language, one not only needs to understand the mechanics, such as the grammar, but also to apply that language across various contexts, audiences, and purposes. It is through meaningful interaction with others as well as functional use in daily life that children develop competence, fluency, and creativity in language. With the increasing number of linguistic minority children in the United States, the school system needs to take into consideration the linguistic knowledge these children possess in their mother tongues in order to design a conducive learning environment. The linguistic resources these children bring into classrooms not only provide a foundation upon which to learn English but they also offer schools and society multicultural perspectives on learning.

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# Parent Involvement in Culturally Diverse Classrooms

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**EDO-SP-2000-8**

The positive effects on students of parent involvement in the schools are well documented (Fan and Chen, 1999). As schools become more culturally diverse, parent involvement can be particularly beneficial for teachers as well as for students. Parents from diverse cultures can help teachers better understand and communicate with their students, thereby reducing teacher frustration and improving student learning. As an added benefit, involving parents in the classroom can help transform an isolated, unwelcoming school building into a valued institution reflective of and respected by the wider community. This digest examines how teachers can work with parents from diverse cultures to improve student learning.

## What Teachers Can Learn From Parents

Parents can play a vital role in educating teachers about the aspects of culture that have a direct impact on learning. For example, Perry (1993) suggests that "African American students are faced with racial and cultural dilemmas in terms of school achievement. In order to succeed in school, African American students must negotiate membership in at least three, often conflicting, communities: mainstream society, the Black community, defined as a racially discriminated group, and a socially constructed cultural group." By working with African American parents who have experience in negotiating all three of these communities, teachers gain a deeper understanding of the conflicts faced by students in this cultural group.

Working with parents of diverse cultures allows teachers to gain a greater appreciation for students' experiences outside of school in their homes and communities. In examining literature on Puerto Rican families and academic achievement, Hildago (1992) concludes that "the educational attainment of Puerto Rican students will be enhanced if children are taught the rich traditions of culture and if home and school partnerships are developed that help families understand the schools and help teachers understand the culture, history, and strengths of Puerto Rican families."

## Involving Parents in the Classroom

Teachers should clearly inform parents of the value of parent involvement in the classroom and offer specific suggestions for how parents can be involved. Opportunities for parent involvement include the following:

• Helping their children with homework, both to stay informed on what their children are learning in school as well as to reinforce their children's learning
• Talking with their children's teachers at open houses or parent–teacher meetings
• Volunteering to assist with special projects at school
• Visiting the classroom to observe activities

## Involving Parents in Education Standards

With the escalating trend toward standards-based teaching and testing, the pressure is on! Academic standards can potentially equalize the playing field for students from diverse cultures. It is important that both the school and community promote the belief that academic standards can and will result in educational equity for all students. To achieve this, parent-teacher training on academic standards is an essential first step. Training programs can

• Ensure that both parents and teachers receive the same information regarding academic requirements, forms of assessments, the meaning of test scores, and promotion and graduation requirements
• Allow teachers to clarify parent and student questions regarding the relationship between classroom instruction and assessment measures
• Serve as the basis for parent–teacher advocacy to promote the need for increased resources to support students in reaching higher academic requirements
• Inform both parents and teachers of community resources (programs, activities, special events, internships) that will allow students to engage in educationally rich experiences in the home and the community

## Facilitating Parent Involvement

The following suggestions can help ensure the participation of all parents in culturally diverse schools:

• Produce parent communications in the languages spoken by the parents.
• Schedule parent workshops and meetings during the evenings and Saturdays to encourage working parents to participate.
• Consider holding parent workshops or meetings in community settings such as public housing community facilities, churches, or community organizations.

• Coordinate work-site training programs with community organizations and local businesses. Parents employed in large local corporations, factories, and other businesses often welcome lunch time training workshops at the business location.
• Do not forget to address the needs of homeless parents. Shelters will frequently assist in coordinating parent workshops for residents on-site or elsewhere in the community.

**Learning Effective Communication Strategies**

Whether working with parents in the classroom or in school-wide standards workshops, it is important that teachers and parents understand and appreciate the cultural aspects of communication. Gaining knowledge about the verbal and nonverbal communication mores of culturally diverse groups allows teachers and other school personnel to interact more effectively with parents and students. Common sense communication strategies apply to all cultural groups, but some groups have particular customs it is helpful to understand. Parents who have established comfortable relationships within a school community can help teachers understand communication styles of their cultural groups.

An example of the kinds of resources available on learning communications styles of cultural groups is *The Guide to Communicating with Asian American Families* (Schwartz, 1995). The guide includes the following suggestions for communicating with Asian American parents:

• Respect Asian and Pacific Islander (API) cultural beliefs.
• Be patient at meetings and do not interrupt periods of silence.
• Watch for nonverbal cues.
• Be sensitive when asking for information about API's children, because some individuals may have had bad experiences with authoritarian systems. Also, many do not like to talk about themselves.
• Reach agreement by compromising.

*Community-Based Organizations*

Community-based organizations can play a helpful role in bridging the communications gap between parents and teachers. These groups can

• Assist in developing culturally responsive parent/teacher training curricula and materials
• Identify culturally based community organizations and institutions (e.g., Urban Leagues, ASPIRA, Chinese American Planning

League, Jewish Board for Children and Family Services, Native American tribal councils) as potential school-community partners
• Provide community-based venues for parent/teacher workshops, forums, and conferences
• Assist in parent recruitment
• Facilitate work-site parent–teacher training programs
• Assist in translating school notices and publications for diverse language populations
• Facilitate student involvement in community-based education activities

*Sample Opening Exercise*

The following activity can be used as an ice-breaker for parents and teachers to begin a meeting or a workshop that focuses on parent–teacher communication.

Participants are seated in an enclosed circle. Each person provides the group with his or her first name only. The facilitator asks the members of the group to close their eyes for one minute and reflect on the following:

• Most pleasant memory of school
• Most pleasant childhood memory

After reflecting for one minute, participants are asked to volunteer to share their reflections with the group. (Remember, in some cultures adults are reluctant to talk about themselves.) The facilitator highlights the following observations for discussion:

• Similarities in experiences regardless of cultural background (e.g., memories of performing in a school play, recital, or May Day program)
• Experiences that are unique to particular cultures
• Common words/emotions that participants, regardless of cultural background, used to describe an experience

This exercise is designed to illustrate the similarities among people of diverse cultural backgrounds in spite of their different experiences. The exercise also allows parents and teachers to share common experiences and discuss how those experiences were influenced by their diverse cultures.

*Sample Training Resource*

One example of a cultural diversity training program is the *Parent Empowerment Manual and Training Program: Meaningful Involvement Strategies in Changing Times.* Developed by the Urban League of Greater Cincinnati, it is a comprehensive training

program designed to prepare parents and teachers to collaborate more effectively in order to positively impact student learning (McKinney and Camblin, 1992).

## Conclusion

As communities become more racially, ethnically, and economically diverse, the culture of schools and the culture of communities sometimes collide. Parents may feel shut out of schools while teachers and administrators feel overburdened and ill-prepared to respond to the complexities of teaching large numbers of students from many diverse backgrounds. All teachers must be aware of the cultural communication styles represented in their classrooms. Teachers and parents can help one another bridge the gap between cultures, thereby improving the learning environment in the classroom.

## Resources for Teachers

*Web Sites*

ERIC Clearinghouse on Urban Education Web - http://eric-web.tc.columbia.edu

Johns Hopkins, Center on School, Family and Community Partnership - http://www.csos.jhu.edu

National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education (NCPIE) - http://www.ncpie.org

National PTA - http://www.pta.org

National Urban League - http://www.nul.org

*Publications*

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# School/Community Partnerships to Support Language Minority Student Success

**Carolyn Temple Adger, Center for Applied Linguistics**

**CREDE Research Brief #5, January 2000**

On their own, schools and families may not be able to support the academic success of every student (Kirst, 1991). In particular, language minority students, including immigrants and the U.S.-born children of immigrants, may not receive appropriate educational services due to a mismatch between the languages and cultures of the schools and those of their communities. To enhance support for these students, many schools have partnered with community-based organizations (CBOs)–groups committed to helping people obtain health, education, and other basic human services (Dryfoos, 1998). The programs they operate promise to assist students in ways that lie beyond the schools' traditional methods (Dryfoos, 1998; Heath & McLaughlin, 1991; Melaville, 1998). This research brief will provide some findings of a national study of school/CBO partnerships.

Researchers from the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE) collected descriptive data on partnerships that promote the academic achievement of language minority students. After a nomination process, 62 of 100 identified partnerships were selected to study. Thirty-one completed a survey, and 17 of these partnerships were visited. Survey and site visit data indicate that the majority serve clients who are all or nearly all English language learners. One third of the 31 serve only Spanish speakers. The others serve multilingual populations in which speakers of Spanish are most numerous, followed by Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, Chinese languages, Lao, and Tongan. Typically, students are referred to the programs based on teachers' concerns, grade point average, testing results, limited English proficiency, attendance, or personal and family problems–but students also enroll voluntarily.

Three types of CBOs join with schools to support language minority students:

> • Ethnic organizations. For example, the Filipino Community of Seattle partners with the Seattle Public Schools to operate the Filipino Youth Empowerment Project.
> • CBOs whose only function is a school partnership. The Vaughn Family Center in Pacoima, CA, was established to partner with one elementary school.

> • Multi-purpose service organizations. The Chinatown Service Center operates the Castelar Healthy Start program at a Los Angeles elementary school with tutoring for students as well as health and other family services.

Most of these CBOs are nonprofit organizations.

## Inside School/CBO Partnerships

School/CBO partnerships are highly variable in terms of who the partners are, how they relate to each other, and what contributions each brings. They may include one or more schools and one or more CBOs. Many partnerships responding to the survey also included colleges or universities (58%) and businesses (29%). Sometimes federal, state, and local government agencies provide funds or services–health, social, and other–at the program site. California's Healthy Start initiative funds programs that integrate the education, health, and social service systems for the benefit of children and families.

School/CBO partnerships tend to be fluid. Often, a single project brings organizations together, but over time, new partners offer new services and programs evolve. Groups may leave the partnership as funding runs out. Each partnership studied had a history of changing partners and/or programs. The dynamic nature of these partnerships allows them to take on new functions as needs and opportunities appear.

Relationships among partners vary (Crowson & Boyd, n.d.). Sometimes one organization hires program staff, and another provides funds and specialized resources. In 32% of the cases studied, the school led the partnership, and in 25%, a partner outside the school took the lead. In other partnerships, frequent contact–in regular meetings and informal interaction–allowed shared decision making.

Partners bring a range of resources to the programs. Often schools refer students, and CBOs bring tutoring, health, and social services, community outreach, and mentoring. Other contributions come from both the schools and partners: staff, space, funding, political support, volunteers, program direction, evaluation, skills, training for students, access to the workplace, and transportation.

## Functions of School/CBO Partnerships

The school/CBO partnership movement is far-reaching. It touches students of every age and fulfills a broad range of functions. At the preschool and elementary levels, programs offer a range of services to parents and families so that children are prepared

for and supported through school. At the secondary level, programs often provide academic tutoring in the students' first language. The programs promote leadership skills and higher education goals, but they also address social factors that may interfere with student achievement (e.g., pregnancy, gang involvement).

School/CBO partnerships adapt to the schools' academic programs. Some partnerships lead full service schools with educational programs for students and families as well as comprehensive health and social services. Some operate alternative academic programs. Dade County (FL) Public Schools contracts with ASPIRA, an organization serving Latino youth, and with the Cuban-American National Council to run small, preventative middle schools for at-risk students. Other school/CBO programs augment the school's academic program. At the South Bronx High School in New York City, the South Bronx Overall Economic Development Corporation runs a program for students having trouble with the academic demands of high school.

**Program Success**

School/CBO partnerships and programs that effectively help language minority students achieve school success are distinguished by adequate resources, partnership and program flexibility, responsiveness to the clients, and provisions for evaluation.

**Resources.** Although funding is a required resource for all programs, a central, defining element of successful programs is high quality staff. In each site visit, CREDE researchers met skilled and committed staff members who were very knowledgeable about their programs and the clients. Often their professional expertise was amplified by an affiliation with the client population, such as shared language and culture and similar immigration experiences.

One program in San Jose, CA, employs immigrant women who have overcome many of the same social and educational challenges as the parents and children with whom they work. In addition to demonstrating how parents can support their children's school success and helping connect parents with teachers, these women serve as role models for clients with few contacts outside the immigrant community. Because they share clients' backgrounds and understand their experiences in and out of schools, staff develop trusting relationships with clients that promote program effectiveness. These relationships are more personal than typical teacher–student–family relationships, but they are similar in that program staff take an authoritative stance toward

the client based on experience, cultural knowledge, and training.

**Flexibility.** Another defining attribute of successful school/CBO partnerships is structural and programmatic flexibility. The freedom to take on new partners and new programs enhances partnerships' responsiveness to clients.

**Responsive Program Design.** Successful partnerships offer appropriate programs that build on clients' needs (NCAS, 1994). Program designs respect clients' linguistic and cultural identity. Successful programs are also accessible both physically and psychologically. In other words, they operate where and when the clients need them and in ways that seem familiar. All of the programs studied show clients that school success is possible–clients can achieve.

**Evaluation.** Effective partnerships monitor their programs and use what they learn to improve their services. High quality programs have clear goals for their work and they record their progress in reaching them.

**Conclusion**

In their traditional configuration, schools cannot take on all of the work that is essential to supporting academic achievement. School partnerships with CBOs and other organizations help to broaden the base of support for language minority students. Partnerships support academic achievement not by "mimicking schools," (C. Collier, personal communication, November 1998) but by filling in and reinforcing the supports that schools often assume students already have. Broadly viewed, they focus on helping students achieve school success, a construct composed of behaviors such as understanding instruction, attending school regularly, taking leadership in the school and community, and more. Supporting school success may require tutoring in the student's first language or services that have traditionally been viewed as secondary to academic achievement, such as health care and advice on pregnancy prevention so that students can come to school, and parent education programs so that parents can help children with school work. The partnerships understand that these services are not secondary at all. Schools that act on this view can move toward more successfully retaining and educating language minority students who are at-risk.

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For additional details on the research described in this brief, contact Carolyn Temple Adger (202-362-0700). For more documents and a description of this CREDE project, *A National Survey of School/Community-Based Organization Partnerships Serving Language Minoirty Students At-Risk,* visit www.cal.org/crede/cbo.htm or www.crede.ucsc.edu.

# Valuing Diversity in the Multicultural Classroom

**by Elizabeth Quintero, University of Minnesota, Duluth**

**National Center for ESL Literacy Education
EDO-LE-94-05, November 1994**

Educators of children and adults are increasingly aware that learners within a classroom represent a complex array of personal experiences, values, and intentions that can inform curriculum development and classroom instruction. In adult English as a second language (ESL) and family ESL literacy classrooms, learners' ways of understanding and acting in the world may differ radically from those of the mainstream population. Educators respect and honor their learners' *ways of knowing* when they create and work from curricula that emerge from issues of importance to them. (See Auerbach, 1992; Nash, Cason, Rhum, McGrail, & Gomez-Sanford, 1992; and Wrigley & Guth, 1992, for discussion of programs and activities.)

However, too often teachers let their learners' knowledge and views of the world slip by unnoticed. Kingston (1977) tells a personal story about cultural knowledge that was not attended to by an elementary school teacher.

When my second grade class did a play, the whole class went to the auditorium except the Chinese girls. The teacher, lovely and Hawaiian, should have understood about us, but instead left us behind in the classroom. Our voices were too soft or nonexistent, and our parents never signed the permission slips, anyway. They never signed anything unnecessary.... I remember telling the Hawaiian teacher, "We Chinese can't sing 'land where our fathers died'." She argued with me about politics, while I meant because of curses. (p. 194)

The Chinese families' way of knowing and speaking about ancestors was overlooked by the teacher when she did not try to learn why the Chinese girls could not sing a verse from "My Country 'Tis of Thee." The teacher's political argument was totally out of context for the Chinese children.

Robert Coles (1990) gives an example of how Hopi children's way of knowing God directly conflicted with the knowledge of their teachers and therefore was discounted by these teachers.

Here, for example is what I eventually heard from a ten-year-old Hopi girl I'd known for almost two years: "The sky watches us and listens to us. It talks to us, and it hopes we are ready to talk back. The sky is

where the God of the Anglo lives, a teacher told us. She asked where our God lives. I said, 'I don't know.' I was telling the truth! Our God is the sky, and lives wherever the sky is. Our God is the sun and the moon, too; and our God is our people, if we remember to stay here. This is where we're supposed to be, and if we leave, we lose God."

[Coles asked if she had explained the above to the teacher.]

"No." "Why?" "Because she thinks God is a person. If I'd told her, she'd give us that smile." "What smile?" "The smile that says to us, 'You kids are cute, but you're dumb, you're different, and you're all wrong!' " (p. 26)

As these examples suggest, when learners' ways of understanding the world are not heard and accepted, everyone loses—the learners, who bring this knowledge with them to schools; the parents, who want to pass on cultural traditions but find themselves fighting both the school information and their children's perceptions of the value of their own cultural beliefs; and the teachers, who could be opening new worlds of exploration to children and themselves while providing a bridge between the culture of the school and the culture of the home.

**Multi-Directional Learning**

In effective family ESL literacy programs—where literacy needs of children and their parents are addressed through instruction in English, native language literacy, cross-cultural development, self-esteem, family learning, and home school relations (Holt, 1994)—diverse ways of knowing are explored and valued. In these programs, it is especially important that learning be multi-directional: Children, parents, and teachers all learn from one another as they share their experiences.

For example, some family literacy projects use elders' storytelling as a basis for lessons. Other projects encourage children to discuss and value their cultural traditions and family routines. A teacher in a literacy program for immigrant parents and children in a rural area along the Rio Grande River in Texas used information about his learners' worlds and ways of knowing in a lesson he developed on Halloween in the United States. He provided materials and assistance in making costumes, and he compared the origins and cultural traditions of the U.S. holiday with the Day of the Dead holiday traditions in Mexico and Central America (Quintero & Macías)

**Uncovering Ways of Knowing**

Elementary school educators and researchers have done much to inform the field about the importance of valuing families' ways of knowing. One research study shows that classroom practice can be "developed, transformed, and enriched" when researchers and teachers who have received training in interviewing techniques visit minority student households to discover the "historically developed and accumulated strategies (skills, abilities, ideas, practices) or bodies of knowledge that are essential to a household's functioning and well-being" (*Funds of Knowledge*, 1994, p. 1).

In participatory adult ESL programs, teachers conduct informal research in the classroom itself using dialogue journals, family trees, life journeys, class newspapers, and speaking and writing assignments from learners' photos (Auerbach, 1992). Designed to elicit issues and concerns of importance to learners, these activities also serve to uncover learners' ways of knowing the world.

One example of such an activity comes from a program for American Indian parents in Minnesota. Learners demonstrate the richness of their alternative knowledge by comparing parenting styles and family values of Indian parents to those of mainstream culture. Below is an excerpt from a list of differences they developed.

**Native American Indians**

1. Happiness—this is paramount. Be able to laugh at misery; life is to be enjoyed.
2. Sharing—everything belongs to others, just as Mother Earth belongs to all people.
3. Tribe and extended family come first before self.

**Anglo-Americans**

1. Success–generally involving status, security, wealth, and proficiency.
2. Ownership–prefer to own an outhouse rather than share a mansion.
3. "Think of Number One!" Syndrome

(Richardson, in Stuecher, 1991, pp. 8-9)

Similarly, in an ESL literacy class for Southeast Asian adults, also in Minnesota, during a lesson regarding family values and childrearing practices, learners juxtaposed their views and cultural values with those of many Americans:

**Asians**

Asians live in time
Asians like to contemplate
Asians live in peace with nature
Religion is Asians' first love
Asians believe in freedom of silence

**Americans**

Americans live in space
Americans like to act
Americans like to impose their will on nature
Technology is Americans' passion
Americans believe in freedom of speech

(Weinstein-Shr & Quintero, 1995)

Activities like these, which involve comparing ways of viewing and acting in the world, have several benefits: They tap and provide a forum for discussing learner knowledge; they do not force the learners to abandon or devalue their own cultures; and they provide valuable information for teachers about learners' worlds, experiences, and perceptions of American culture.

**"I make myself visible..."**

The benefits of respecting learners' ways of knowing can be seen in comments of parents in intergenerational programs. A Mexican woman sums up her feelings at the close of a series of family literacy classes with her daughter: "I feel content, I can help with something worthwhile" (translated from Spanish, Project FIEL, El Paso, Texas). Another writes, "I notice now that Grissel communicates more and she likes to write for herself. Before, Grissel wanted me to write everything because she would say she didn't know how to write" (translated from Spanish, Project FIEL, El Paso, Texas).

An Ojibwa mother and university student in Minnesota has become a teacher and vocal advocate for her culture's way of knowing. She speaks and performs for school children, preserving, honoring, and imparting her way of understanding the world. She describes the newfound self-confidence that has changed her life:

I am a Native American and a member from the Red Lake Indian Reservation. I'm proud of who I am and proud of what I stand for. I believe Indian people are very special people with a lot of special abilities. But there were times when being an Indian was painful. Sometimes I would wish that I could have washed off the color of my skin or changed my hair color because of all the racial remarks that I encountered. It hurt me as a person and my self-image, and self-esteem. It

was difficult to go to school because I was an Indian. I think all I did was fight. Now I'm using other means to fight with. Instead of physical violence, I use methods, such as my mind. Instead of letting the anger control me and my actions, I use the anger.... I find ways to educate non-Indians, by going to my daughter's classroom and explaining about our culture. My family and I dance at schools to show the non-Indian students what the meaning of dances are about. I make myself visible instead of invisible.
(Weinstein-Shr & Quintero, 1995)

**Conclusion**

In adult ESL and ESL family literacy programs, teachers can provide cultural and linguistic bridges to connect the worlds of the home and the classroom by recognizing, honoring, and building on students' ways of looking at and understanding the world and by building curricula and classroom learning around this knowledge. As educators learn to value and build on learners' ways of knowing, learners will in turn value and benefit from the education experience of the classroom.

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This digest was adapted, with permission, from *Immigrant Learners and Their Families: Literacy to Connect the Generations.*

Center for Applied Linguistics/Delta Systems books are available from Delta Systems at 800-323-8270.

**Online Resources**

Foreign Language and Culture
http://www.speakeasy.org/~dbrick/Hot/foreign.html

> This site offers many links to sites combining culture and language learning and teaching.

Culturegrams
http://www.culturegrams.com/

> Several companies have produced educational or classroom aids called variously "Culturgrams" or "Culturegrams." They offer an introduction to the cultures of many areas of the world.

Krannert Memorial Library
http://kml.uindy.edu/reference/culturalanthropology.html

> This site offers reference books with information on specific areas. The section on Cultural Anthropology could prove useful in learning about students' cultural backgrounds.

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/

> This site provides useful information about language and culture. For example, see "Culture as a Contextual Variable" http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/miscpubs/jeilms/vol13/cultur13.htm. For a list of links to resources on teaching language and culture, go to http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/library/langcult/index.htm.

Looking at Ourselves & Others Teachers Guide
http://www.peacecorps.gov/wws/guides/looking/index.html

> This publication of the Peace Corps World Wise Schools introduces students to the concepts of perspective, culture, and cross-cultural relations. The guide is designed to help students recognize and appreciate differences in perception among individuals and cultures, define culture and recognize its role in developing perceptions of ourselves and others, challenge assumptions, promote cross-cultural awareness, and provide opportunities to practice the behaviors that make cross-cultural communication possible.

# Professional Development: Grades K–12

**Books**

Fillmore, L. W., & Snow, C. (2000). *What teachers need to know about language*. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=168

> This paper lays out a rationale for why current and prospective teachers need to know more about language, and what specific sorts of knowledge they need. Requisite knowledge about oral language, oral language used in formal and academic contexts, and written language is discussed. In the final section, courses are suggested that teacher preparation programs should offer to teacher candidates. This course list may also be seen as specifying aspects of an integrated, in-depth professional development program for inservice teachers.

Echevarria, J. & Graves, A. (2003). *Sheltered content instruction: Teaching English language learners with diverse abilities.* (2nd ed.). Allyn & Bacon.
http://www.ablongman.com/catalog/academic/product/0,4096,0205168744.html,00.html

> This book sets out to clearly define sheltered instruction and to provide strategies for its successful implementation in the classroom. This book speaks specifically to instruction in the content areas, confronting the fact that students learning English might struggle in those subjects. The authors provide practical methods that demonstrate how to implement this type of instruction with the full range of learners.

Marzano, R. J., Marzano, J. S., & Pickering, D. M. (2003). *Classroom management that works: Research-based strategies for every teacher*. Alexandria VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.
http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/103027/

> With classroom behavior a growing concern in today's schools, this book provides a guide to the role of classroom management in student learning and achievement. The authors provide stories of real teachers and students to illustrate how action steps can work successfully in different classroom situations. Orientation to U.S. classrooms and school expectations is critical to the academic success of English language learners.

Short, D., Gómez, E., Cloud, N., Katz, A., Gottlieb, M., & Malone, M. (2000). *Training others to use the ESL standards: A professional development manual.* Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages.
http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/standards.html#TOTmanual

> Developed over the course of 4 years, this manual was created for staff developers, teacher trainers, teacher education faculty, and others who deliver pre- and inservice programs to practicing teachers. It contains the tools that will prepare ESL, bilingual, and content teachers and curriculum and assessment specialists to incorporate ESL standards in their programs.

Short, D., Hudec, J., & Echevarria, J. (2002). *Using the SIOP model: Professional development manual for sheltered instruction.* Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=141

> This manual is designed for teacher educators and professional developers who wish to teach others to use the SIOP Model of sheltered instruction in their classrooms. It is a companion piece to the video The SIOP Model: Sheltered Instruction for Academic Achievement. In 11 sections, the manual presents strategies, tools, and activities for instruction of the SIOP components.

Ur, P. (1996). *A course in language teaching: Practice & theory.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
http://publishing.cambridge.org/ge/elt/booksforteachers/26827/32188/

> This book provides a comprehensive basic introduction to teaching languages, for use in preservice or early experience settings. It can be used by groups of teachers working with a trainer or as a self-study resource. It consists of modules on key topics, arranged into sections covering: The Teaching Process, Teaching the Language, Course Content, Lessons, and Learner Differences. Modules can be used in sequence or selectively. Each module presents practical and theoretical aspects of the topic, with tasks. Suggestions for classroom observation and practice, action research projects and further reading are included. Notes for the trainer with stimulating insights from the author's personal experience complete the course.

## Videos

Center for Applied Linguistics. (2002). *The SIOP model: Sheltered instruction for academic achievement* [Video]. Washington, DC: Author.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=144

> This professional development video illustrates a research-based model of sheltered instruction, known as the SIOP Model, that has raised achievement levels of English language learners. The video is a valuable resource for teacher educators and staff developers to provide ongoing development to teachers of content subjects in strategies and techniques for adapting instruction to the academic needs of these students.

Cicala Filmworks. (Prod.). (2000). *Student voices: English language learners* [Video]. Providence, RI: The Northeast and Islands Regional Education Laboratory at Brown University LAB.
http://www.alliance.brown.edu/programs/eac/sped_voicvid.shtml

> This 30-minute video and three discussion booklets were created to enhance the relationship of language, culture, and schooling, better equipping educators to develop strategies for making learning environments more welcoming and hospitable to linguistically and culturally diverse groups.

Hudec, J., & Short, D. J. (Prods.). (2002). *Helping English learners succeed: An overview of the SIOP model* [Video]. Washington, DC: Center for Applied Linguistics.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=145

> Filmed in six classrooms, this video illustrates the eight components and 30 features of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol Model for teaching English language learners both language and content. The documentary style is interspersed with scenes from elementary, middle, and high school classes in which the teachers employ a wide range of teaching strategies to engage their students in mathematics, science, and social studies lessons.

## CDs

Pinnegar, S., Teemant, A., & Harris, R. C. (2002). *The assessment literacy case: A video ethnography of formal and informal assessment practices.* Provo, UT: Harris Video Cases.
http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=124

> This CD-ROM presents an investigation of assessment practices for those interested in expanding their knowledge of assessing the literacy of culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Pinnegar, S., Teemant, A., Mason, B., & Harris, C. (2003). *The adolescent literacy case: A video ethnography of teaching second language students content through literacy development.* Provo, UT: Harris Video Cases. http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=271

> This CD-ROM displays video clips (closed captioning at bottom of screen) of teachers providing literacy instruction in five different content area classrooms (science, social studies, English language arts, mathematics, and psychology). Study texts for each clip include instructional comments in three areas: adolescent literacy, second language literacy, and CREDE's Five Standards of Effective Pedagogy. Texts with teachers' and students' comments on the lessons are also provided.

Pinnegar, S., Teemant, A., Tharp, R., & Harris, R. C. (2002). *The Craig Cleveland case: A video ethnography of Mexican American history in a Spanish/English bilingual classroom*. Provo, UT: Harris Video Cases. http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=125

> This CD provides instruction of high school Mexican American history in a Spanish/English bilingual classroom.

Tharp, R., Hilberg, S., Dalton, S., & Teemant, A. (2002). *Teaching alive for the 21st century: The five standards for effective pedagogy in secondary settings*. Provo, UT: Harris Video Cases. http://calstore.cal.org/store/detail.aspx?ID=130

> This CD-ROM is an ethnography of CREDE's *Five Standards for Effective Pedagogy*, featuring real-life examples from secondary school settings and expert commentary. The video clips illustrate collaboration, language development, and contextualization of content lessons. Commentary includes a pedagogical perspective, a bilingual/bicultural perspective, and additional insights.

**Digests and Reports**

Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0107demo.html

Implications of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 for Teacher Education
http://www.ericsp.org/pages/digests/implications_of_NCLBA.html

The Preparation and Professional Development of Teachers of English Language Learners
http://www.ericsp.org/pages/digests/ppdtell.html

Professional Development for Language Teachers
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0303diaz.html

Professional Development for Teachers in Culturally Diverse Schools
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/profdvpt.html

Programs That Prepare Teachers to Work Effectively With Students Learning English
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0009programs.html

The Role of Metacognition in Second Language Teaching and Learning
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0110anderson.html

Standards for Professional Development: A Sociocultural Perspective
http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/ResBrief2.htm

Teaching Educators About Language: Principles, Structures, and Challenges
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/0008teaching.html

# Discourse Analysis for Language Teachers

**by Douglas A. Demo, Center for Applied Linguistics**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics EDO-FL-01-07, September 2001**

## What Is Discourse Analysis?

Discourse analysis is the examination of language use by members of a speech community. It involves looking at both language form and language function and includes the study of both spoken interaction and written texts. It identifies linguistic features that characterize different genres as well as social and cultural factors that aid in our interpretation and understanding of different texts and types of talk. A discourse analysis of written texts might include a study of topic development and cohesion across the sentences, while an analysis of spoken language might focus on these aspects plus turn-taking practices, opening and closing sequences of social encounters, or narrative structure.

The study of discourse has developed in a variety of disciplines—sociolinguistics, anthropology, sociology, and social psychology. Thus discourse analysis takes different theoretical perspectives and analytic approaches: speech act theory, interactional sociolinguistics, ethnography of communication, pragmatics, conversation analysis, and variation analysis (Schiffrin, 1994). Although each approach emphasizes different aspects of language use, they all view language as social interaction.

This digest focuses on the application of discourse analysis to second language teaching and learning. It provides examples of how teachers can improve their teaching practices by investigating actual language use both in and out of the classroom, and how students can learn language through exposure to different types of discourse. Detailed introductions to discourse analysis, with special attention to the needs and experiences of language teachers, can be found in Celce-Murcia and Olshtain (2000), Hatch (1992), McCarthy (1992), McCarthy and Carter (1994), and Riggenbach (1999).

## Discourse Analysis and Second Language Teaching

Even with the most communicative approaches, the second language classroom is limited in its ability to develop learners' communicative competence in the target language. This is due to the restricted number of contact hours with the language; minimal opportunities for interacting with native speakers; and limited exposure to the variety of functions, genres, speech events, and discourse types that occur outside the classroom. Given the limited time available for students to practice the target language, teachers should maximize opportunities for student participation. Classroom research is one way for teachers to monitor both the quantity and quality of students' output. By following a four-part process of Record-View-Transcribe-Analyze, second language teachers can use discourse analytic techniques to investigate the interaction patterns in their classrooms and to see how these patterns promote or hinder opportunities for learners to practice the target language. This process allows language teachers to study their own teaching behavior—specifically, the frequency, distribution, and types of questions they use and their effect on students' responses.

**Step One:** Videotape a complete lesson. Be sure to capture all of your questions and the students' responses. (Opportunities to speak the target language are often created by teachers' questions.)

**Step Two:** Watch the videotape. As you watch it, think about the types of questions you asked. Look for recurring patterns in your questioning style and the impact it has on the students' responses.

**Step Three:** Transcribe the lesson. A transcript will make it easier to identify the types of questions in the data and to focus on specific questions and student responses.

**Step Four:** Analyze the videotape and transcript. Why did you ask each question? What type of question was it—open (e.g., "What points do you think the author was making in the chapter you read yesterday?") or closed (e.g., "Did you like the chapter?")? Was the question effective in terms of your goals for teaching and learning? What effect did your questions have on the students' opportunities to practice the target language? How did the students respond to different types of questions? Were you satisfied with their responses? Which questions elicited the most discussion from the students? Did the students ask any questions? Focusing on actual classroom interaction, teachers can investigate how one aspect of their teaching style affects students' opportunities for speaking the target language. They can then make changes that will allow students more practice with a wider variety of discourse types.

Teachers can also use this process of Record-View-Transcribe-Analyze to study communication patterns in different classroom activities, such as student-to-student interactions during a paired role-play task and during a small-group cooperative learning

activity. Communicative activities are expected to promote interaction and to provide opportunities for students to engage in talk. Teachers are likely to discover that students produce different speech patterns in response to different tasks. For example, a map activity is likely to elicit a series of questions and answers among participants, whereas a picture narration task requires a monologue developed around a narrative format. Given that teachers use communicative tasks to evaluate learners' proficiency, a better understanding of the influence of specific activities on learner discourse will likely lead teachers to use a greater variety of tasks in order to gain a more comprehensive picture of students' abilities. By recording, transcribing, and analyzing students' discourse, teachers can gain insight into the effect of specific tasks on students' language production and, over time, on their language development.

A discourse analysis of classroom interactions can also shed light on cross-cultural linguistic patterns that may be leading to communication difficulties. For example, some speakers may engage in overlap, speaking while someone else is taking a turn-at-talk. For some linguistic groups, this discourse behavior can be interpreted as a signal of engagement and involvement; however, other speakers may view it as an interruption and imposition on their speaking rights. Teachers can use the Record-View-Transcribe-Analyze technique to study cross-cultural interactions in their classrooms, helping students identify different communication strategies and their potential for miscommunication.

Although some variables of language learning are beyond the control of second language teachers, discourse analysis can be a useful analytic tool for making informed changes in instructional practices. Mainstream teachers, especially those with second language learners, can also use this technique to study classroom interactions in order to focus on the learning opportunities available to students with limited English proficiency. In fact, discourse analysis can be an integral part of a program of professional development for all teachers that includes classroom-based research, with the overall aim of improving teaching (Johnson, 1995).

### Discourse Analysis and Second Language Learning

Language learners face the monumental task of acquiring not only new vocabulary, syntactic patterns, and phonology, but also discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence, strategic competence, and interactional competence. They need opportunities to investigate the systematicity of language at all linguistic levels, especially at the highest level

(Riggenbach, 1999; Young and He, 1998). Without knowledge of and experience with the discourse and sociocultural patterns of the target language, second language learners are likely to rely on the strategies and expectations acquired as part of their first language development, which may be inappropriate for the second language setting and may lead to communication difficulties and misunderstandings.

One problem for second language learners is limited experience with a variety of interactive practices in the target language. Therefore, one of the goals of second language teaching is to expose learners to different discourse patterns in different texts and interactions. One way that teachers can include the study of discourse in the second language classroom is to allow the students themselves to study language, that is, to make them discourse analysts (see Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2000; McCarthy & Carter, 1994; Riggenbach, 1999). By exploring natural language use in authentic environments, learners gain a greater appreciation and understanding of the discourse patterns associated with a given genre or speech event as well as the sociolinguistic factors that contribute to linguistic variation across settings and contexts. For example, students can study speech acts in a service encounter, turn-taking patterns in a conversation between friends, opening and closings of answering machine messages, or other aspects of speech events. Riggenbach (1999) suggests a wide variety of activities that can easily be adapted to suit a range of second language learning contexts.

One discourse feature that is easy to study is listener response behavior, also known as backchannels. Backchannels are the brief verbal responses that a listener uses while another individual is talking, such as mm-hmm, ok, yeah, and oh wow. Listener response can also be nonverbal, for instance head nods. Research has identified variation among languages in the use of backchannels, which makes it an interesting feature to study. Variation has been found not only in the frequency of backchannels, but also in the type of backchannels, their placement in the ongoing talk, and their interpretation by the participants (Clancy, Thompson, Suzuki, & Tao, 1996). Students can participate in the Record-View-Transcribe-Analyze technique to study the linguistic form and function of backchannels in conversation.

**Step One:** Ask to video or audiotape a pair of native speakers engaging in conversation, perhaps over coffee or lunch.

**Step Two:** Play the tape for students. Have them identify patterns in the recorded linguistic behavior. In this case, pay attention to the backchanneling behavior

of the participants. Is the same backchannel token used repeatedly, or is there variation?

**Step Three:** Transcribe the conversation so that students can count the number and types of backchannel tokens and examine their placement within the discourse.

**Step Four:** Have students analyze specific discourse features individually, in pairs or in small groups. These are some questions to consider: How often do the participants use a backchannel token? How does backchanneling contribute to the participants' understanding of and involvement in the conversation? How can differences in backchannel frequency be explained? How does backchanneling work in the students' native language?

Students can collect and analyze data themselves. Once collected, this set of authentic language data can be repeatedly examined for other conversational features, then later compared to discourse features found in other speech events. This discourse approach to language learning removes language from the confines of textbooks and makes it tangible, so that students can explore language as interaction rather than as grammatical units. Teachers can also use these activities to raise students' awareness of language variation, dialect differences, and cultural diversity.

### Conclusion

In sum, teachers can use discourse analysis not only as a research method for investigating their own teaching practices but also as a tool for studying interactions among language learners. Learners can benefit from using discourse analysis to explore what language is and how it is used to achieve communicative goals in different contexts. Thus discourse analysis can help to create a second language learning environment that more accurately reflects how language is used and encourages learners toward their goal of proficiency in another language.

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# Implications of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 for Teacher Education

**by Christopher Trahan**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Teaching and Teacher Education**
**EDO-SP-2002-10, December 2002**

### Purpose of the Act

First enacted in 1965, and last reauthorized in 1994, the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2002 (P.L. 107-110). Since its inception, as part of President Lyndon B. Johnson's "Great Society" programs, it has been reauthorized (or amended) approximately every five years. Each of these reauthorizations have given the Administration and Congress the opportunity to add, delete, or modify provisions in the law in response to current demands and expectations.

As the latest incarnation of ESEA, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) amends and changes in many ways programs in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. Although the main component of this bill is Title I, the government's flagship aid program for disadvantaged students, section II of NCLB focuses on teacher education quality.

NCLB was also accompanied, for fiscal year 2002, by the largest increase ever in federal education aid. The 18 percent increase means that for the 2002–2003 school year, money the federal government is investing in educating America's youth increased from $18.6 billion to $22.1 billion. The bulk of the appropriated $22.1 billion, roughly 40 percent of the entire U.S. Department of Education's budget, was sent to states and school districts according to a detailed formula that reflects the number of school-age children and families living in poverty. NCLB targets federal resources to support state and local school improvement efforts for children most at risk, with an emphasis on reading instruction.

Although most federal dollars in NCLB are directed to high-poverty local schools through Title I, part of the school improvement plan will focus on enhancing the quality of teachers and administrators. Language in the bill states that all Title I schools are expected to hire only "highly qualified" teachers, and within four years, ensure that all teachers are assigned to teach in their field, are fully licensed, and meet other criteria outlined in the law.

### Definitions

Definitions used throughout the law are found in Title IX. Some of the most important of these for the teacher education community are highly qualified teachers, beginning teacher, professional development, core academic subjects, and scientifically based research. (Title IX)

**Highly Qualified Teacher**—NCLB, for the first time since the original enactment of the ESEA, defines a highly qualified teacher. In order to be identified as a highly qualified teacher, new elementary or secondary teachers must have full state certification and/or pass the state's licensing examination. Those at the public elementary level must demonstrate, by passing rigorous state tests, subject knowledge in reading/language arts, writing, mathematics, and other areas of the basic elementary school curriculum. Elementary level teachers must have at least a bachelor's degree. Those beginning teachers at public middle and high school levels must pass a rigorous state test in each academic subject in which they teach or hold a bachelor's degree in the particular subject

**Beginning Teacher**—NCLB defines a beginning teacher as an educator who has been teaching no more than a total of three complete school years. Practicing teachers must also meet the states "highly qualified" standard with emphasis on holding full certification and demonstrating subject-matter competency. States are to develop systems to assess the qualifications of practicing teachers, but these criteria remain undefined.

Congress expected that in 2002, beginning teachers in schools receiving funds under this law would meet certain standards and that by 2006, all teachers, including existing teachers, will meet these standards.

**Professional Development**—Under this expansive definition, professional development includes activities that

- improve teachers' knowledge of academic subjects they teach;
- are part of school-wide educational improvement plans;
- will help them teach students to meet challenging standards;
- improve classroom management skills;
- are high quality, sustained, intensive, and classroom focused;
- support teacher recruitment, hiring, and training;
- are connected to effective instructional practices based on scientifically based research;
- substantially increase the knowledge and teaching skills of teachers;

• are aligned with state standards;
• are developed with participation of K–12 educators and parents;
• assist teachers of limited English proficient (LEP) children;
• provide training in the use of technology as it relates to improving performance in core academic subjects;
• are regularly evaluated for impact;
• provide instruction in methods of teaching children with special needs;
• include instruction in the use of data and assessments;
• may include instruction in working with parents;
• may involve partnerships between K–12 schools and institutions of higher education to provide prospective and beginning teachers with an opportunity to work under the guidance of experienced teachers and college faculty;
• and may help paraprofessionals—teaching or classroom aides who assist teachers with routine activities—meet state standards.

Unless otherwise stated in the law, this definition applies to any professional development reference in NCLB.

**Core Academic Subjects**—As defined in Title IX of NCLB, the term core academic subjects include English, reading or language arts, mathematics, science, foreign languages, civics and government, economics, arts, history, and geography. (U.S. Department of Education, 2002)

**Scientifically Based Research—**Virtually all school improvement activities in NCLB are to be founded on "scientifically based research," which is defined as research that involves the application of rigorous, systematic, and objective procedures to obtain reliable and valid knowledge relevant to education activities and programs. (NCLB, 2001) The research may use measurement or observational methods, but must employ rigorous data to analyze and test the stated hypothesis. Unless otherwise noted in the law, this definition applies to all references to scientifically based research.

Definitions of highly qualified teachers, professional development and scientifically based research all hold implications for the preparation of teachers for Title I schools. It remains to be seen if the funds available will be sufficient to help states, schools districts and schools, meet the goal of having highly qualified teachers in each classroom by 2006.

**Accountability**

As required by law, States receiving Title I aid through this act must develop yearly report cards documenting the success of their students in meeting achievement goals outlined in NCLB.

By the 2005–2006 school year, states must begin testing students in Grades 3–8 annually in reading and mathematics. The tests must be aligned with state academic standards. A representative sample of students in the 4th and 8th grades in each state must also participate in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) testing program in reading and mathematics every year to assure alignment of the state assessment process with national standards. States will use information gathered from these tests to determine whether a school is failing. Schools and districts that do not show adequate yearly progress will be described as low performing. Title I schools who fail to meet Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) for two years in a row will be identified as requiring corrective actions. Struggling schools could receive extra resources, but also could be reorganized, or even abolished.

Additionally, in this progress report, states must also advise the federal government of the number of teachers who are not fully licensed, who are teaching under an emergency credential or license waiver, and who are not teaching in the field in which they were prepared and have demonstrated competence.

In addition, at the beginning of each new school year, school districts must provide to parents of students attending Title I schools, information regarding the professional qualifications of the student's classroom teacher. This information includes whether the teacher has met State qualifications and licensing criteria for the grade levels and subject areas in which the teacher provides instruction.

Parents are also entitled to know whether the teacher is teaching under emergency or other provisional status through which State qualification or licensing criteria have been waived, and whether the teacher assigned to the students' classroom is a "highly qualified" teacher.

**Final Regulations for NCLB**

In August 2002, the Department of Education released proposed regulations on part A of Title I of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (PL 107-110) and invited the public to submit comments regarding the proposals.

On November 26, 2002, after reviewing over 700 comments, the Department of Education released its

final regulations regarding the No Child Left Behind Act. The 377-page document covers most aspects of Title I including accountability, school choice, and teacher quality. Other provisions in the proposed regulations include Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP), School-wide Programs, Local Education Agency (LEA) and School Improvement, Allocations to LEAs, and Fiscal Requirements. The final regulations are in effect as of January 2, 2003 (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

The final regulations clarify that states can integrate AYP—the formulas by which they define failing schools—into their existing accountability systems. It is likely that some state officials will have to revisit accountability systems that have been developed in recent years to meet the new law's AYP requirements.

The final regulations maintain that all teachers of core subjects must be highly qualified by 2005–2006. Because students with limited English proficiency and students with disabilities must meet the same standards as all other students, their teachers must meet the same standards for content knowledge as other teachers. However, special educators who do not directly instruct students on any core academic subject, or who only provide consultation to highly qualified teachers of core academic subjects in adapting curricula, using behavioral supports and interventions, and selecting appropriate accommodations, are not subject to the same requirements that apply to teachers of core academic subjects (U.S. Department of Education, 2002).

While building on the foundation of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and retaining the prior legislation's basic framework of standards, assessments, and accountability, NCLB implements some significant changes in the way schools will go about educating our nation's youth, particularly in regard to increased accountability for states, school districts, schools and our nation's colleges of education.

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# The Preparation and Professional Development of Teachers of English Language Learners

**by Beth Antunez**

The population of school-aged English language learners (ELLs) has consistently and significantly increased over the past decade, transforming America's public schools, the instruction of its students, and the preparation of its teachers. The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 requires that there be a "highly qualified" teacher in every classroom by the end of 2005, and school districts and teacher preparation institutions across the nation face the challenge of preparing and hiring large numbers of teachers while retaining a focus on quality. This digest will discuss the need for increasing the numbers of teachers of ELLs and the particular linguistic and academic characteristics of ELLs.

### The Supply and Demand of Teachers for ELLs

During the 1999–2000 school year, 4.4 million students were identified as English language learners (ELLs) in preK through 12 public schools. This number represents 9 percent of public school enrollment and a 27 percent increase over the 1997–1998 enrollment (Kindler, 2002). In urban school districts, ELLs account for 21 percent of students (Recruiting New Teachers, 2002).

ELLs are defined as students whose first language is not English and who are in the process of learning English. According to a 1999–2000 survey, over 400 native languages are spoken by the ELL school-age population (Kindler, 2002). The term ELL is often used interchangeably with "limited English proficient" (LEP). Implicit in the definition is that ELLs' English language proficiency is insufficient to academically succeed in English-only classrooms (Lessow-Hurley, 1991). Also implicit is that ELLs have different linguistic and academic needs from the mainstream school population, and that ELLs require teachers qualified to address these needs.

Within the context of the nation-wide need to hire teachers, which is projected at 2.2 million or more over the next decade (Hussar and Gerald, 1996; National Center for Education Statistics, 1998; The White House, 2002), the need for teachers of ELLs is particularly acute due to this population's rapid increase and the additional qualifications required of these teachers. According to the Urban Teacher

Challenge Report (Recruiting New Teachers, 2002), 73 percent of the urban districts surveyed had an immediate demand for bilingual education teachers, while 68 percent had an immediate demand for English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers.

Currently, 41 percent of teachers in the United States have taught ELLs, while less than 13 percent of U.S. teachers have received any training or professional development on teaching these students (National Center for Education Statistics, 2002). These figures are alarming in light of the fact that researchers and teacher educators have agreed that teachers of ELLs need at least the following knowledge and skills in order to effectively meet the needs of their students:

• understanding of the basic constructs of bilingualism and second language development;
• understanding of the nature of language proficiency;
• understanding of the role of first language and culture in learning;
• understanding of the demands that mainstream education places on culturally diverse learners;
• awareness of the capacity to make academic content accessible;
• ability to integrate language and content instruction;
• respect for and incorporation of students' first language in instruction;
• understanding of how differences in language and culture affect students' classroom participation;
• understanding of the needs and characteristics of students with limited formal schooling;
• understanding and ability to address students from families with little exposure to the norms of U.S. schools; and
• belief in students as individuals for limited English proficiency and limited academic skills are not deficiencies

(Clair, 1993, 2000, Menken & Look, 2000, p. 22-23, Walqui, 1999).

**Requirements for Preparing Teachers of ELLs**

Programs through which ELLs are currently being served can be divided into bilingual education, ESL, and mainstream education. Requirements for teacher preparation within each of these programs can differ depending on a variety of factors. However, bilingual education programs generally require teachers trained in and competent to teach students through their native language as well as English; ESL programs require teachers trained to teach English reading, writing, speaking and listening skills to ELLs; and mainstream programs conduct all instruction in

English and do not, normally, require teachers to be trained to teach ELLs. For more information on the characteristics of bilingual education and ESL programs, see http://www.ncbe.gwu.edu/askncela/22models.htm.

Preparation is further complicated in that not all states provide certification in bilingual education and/or ESL. According to a 1999 survey of State Education Agencies, 39 states and the District of Columbia offer ESL teacher certification or endorsement, while 24 states and the District of Columbia offer bilingual/dual language teacher certification or endorsement (McKnight & Antunez, 1999). In states that do not offer bilingual education or ESL certification, it is unclear what sorts of preparation teachers of ELLs are receiving to enable them to meet the linguistic and academic needs of their students.

**Addressing the Need Guidance**

Several national organizations have addressed the issue of teacher preparation by creating standards to delineate what teachers of ELLs should know how and be able to do. The following organizations have all developed such standards:

• Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE): Standards for Effective Teaching Practice (1998)

• National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE): Professional Bilingual/Multicultural Teachers (1992)

• National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS): English as a New Language Standards (1998)

• Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL): PreK–12 ESL Teacher Education Standards (forthcoming)

Understanding of the basic constructs of bilingualism and second language development

These standards include such elements as proficiency in two languages, an understanding of the impact of students' cultures on their learning, and how to assist students in the development of their language abilities. Increasingly, standards are being used as the foundation for state licensure, teacher preparation and professional development programs to ensure that these programs are inclusive of the ELL population (Menken & Holmes, 2000).

In addition to these organizations' standards, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher

Education (AACTE), an organization of colleges and universities with teacher preparation programs, has adopted a resolution entitled *Preparing Teachers for Second Language Learners*. Intended to guide its member colleges and universities, the resolution addresses the preparation of all teachers for second language learners. To read the resolution, go to: http://www.aacte.org/Multicultural/bilingual_resolution.htm.

Another guidance instrument, from the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) is *The National Directory of Teacher Preparation Programs (Preservice and Inservice) for Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Studen*ts. This directory identifies exemplary programs of professional teacher preparation that address, promote, and implement professional preparation for teachers in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. It includes a typology that divides and provides characteristics of the range of programs that prepare teachers for linguistically and culturally diverse classrooms into the following seven categories:

- General education with a multicultural emphasis
- Multicultural education
- English as a second language
- English language development and multicultural education
- Bilingual/bicultural education
- Bilingual/multicultural education
- Bilingual/biliterate/multicultural/bicultural education

To access the directory, go to http://www.Colorado.edu/education/BUENO/crede/intro.html.

**Conclusion**

While the ELL population rapidly and steadily increases, so too does the need for a teaching force prepared to effectively meet the linguistic and academic needs of this population. The unique knowledge and skills needed in the successful preparation of teachers for this population have been identified. Efforts are now being concentrated in the implementation of programs that incorporate the elements of effective preparation and professional development of teachers of ELLs at the state, university, and district level.

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# Professional Development for Language Teachers

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**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics EDO-FL-03-03, August 2003**

### Defining Professional Development

Professional development is an elusive term in education. To many, the term conjures up images of inservice days and workshops. To others, it refers to a process in which teachers work under supervision to gain tenure or to enhance their professional practice. In this paper, professional development is defined as an ongoing learning process in which teachers engage voluntarily to learn how best to adjust their teaching to the learning needs of their students. Professional development is not a one-shot, one-size-fits-all event, but rather an evolving process of professional self-disclosure, reflection, and growth that yields the best results when sustained over time in communities of practice and when focused on job-embedded responsibilities.

### The Need for Quality Professional Development

School reform and accountability initiatives call for a new role for professional development in the career paths of teachers. Current research shows a strong correlation between teachers' teaching and students' school success (Darling-Hammond, 1998; Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Sparks, 2002). Professional development has become increasingly important as a way to ensure that teachers succeed in matching their teaching goals with their students' learning needs. In the case of second language teachers, professional development is needed to enable them to help their students develop proficiency in the target language and an understanding of the cultures associated with that language.

Professional development differs from other professional endeavors, such as teacher supervision and evaluation, both in purpose and procedures. Supervision recognizes four basic categories of teachers: preservice, novice, tenured, and veteran (Nolan & Hoover, 2003). Supervisory activities are aimed at certification in the case of preservice teachers; induction in the case of novices; and maintenance, improvement, or remediation in the case of tenured and veteran teachers. Evaluation, on the other hand, places a strong emphasis on judging teachers' competence or teaching quality and does not necessarily focus on their growth as teachers. Professional development focuses specifically on

how teachers construct their professional identities in ongoing interaction with learners, by reflecting on their actions in the classroom and adapting them to meet the learners' expressed or implicit learning needs. The ultimate purpose of professional development is to promote effective teaching that results in learning gains for all students.

**Effective Professional Development**

In order for professional development to be successful, it must be in line with research on teachers' career development and patterns of adult learning. According to Huberman (1989), teachers' careers are characterized by cycles of conflict/resolution that lead to growth and development. His research describes at least five stages in the professional lives of teachers: exploration and stabilization, commitment, diversification and crisis, serenity and distancing, and conservatism and regret. Teachers have different needs as they progress through these stages, and professional development needs to target their specific needs at each stage. For example, there is a high attrition rate among certified language teachers, many of whom leave the profession after only a few years. According to Huberman's conceptualization, this is most likely to happen at the diversification and crisis stage. Appropriately timed participation in professional development activities such as peer coaching, mentoring, or study groups (described below) may help retain these professionals.

An important consideration in professional development is the educational context in which it is carried out. Pontz (2003) highlights minimum conditions that education for adults (including education for teachers) should meet in order to be effective: clarity of goals, adequate levels of challenge, capitalization on previous knowledge, sustainability over time, organizational support, and alignment of achievement with the goals set.

Professional development models are differentiated by the degree of involvement of the teachers themselves in planning, delivering, and evaluating the activities in which they are involved. Sparks (2002) argues that professional development should be embedded in the daily lives of teachers, with strong administrative support and use of strategies that are tailored to their specific needs. These needs may incorporate issues of language, culture, or pedagogy.

**Professional Development Strategies**

Given the diversity of teachers' needs, a differentiated approach to professional development is needed. A number of school districts are engaging teachers in the professional development strategies described below as a way to address diverse teacher needs, skills, and knowledge.

**Peer coaching**

Peer coaching is based on the three-phase model of Planning— Observation—Feedback known as clinical supervision (Cogan, 1973). Pairs of teachers, who have been trained to do so, visit each other's classes and provide each other with insights and advice on their teaching. Teachers themselves decide on the focus for observation and the observation instrument, and reflect on the results of the observation based on their development needs. Standardized instruments can be used to guide observation. Typically, these instruments help teachers look at their use of the second language, their planning, their instructional delivery, the methods they use for assessment, and their involvement in other professional responsibilities, such as communicating with parents and keeping records of students' progress. Peer coaching is particularly suitable for teachers who need to learn new ways to use the target language or to implement new language and cultural practices in the classroom.

**Study groups**

Study groups involve teachers in reviewing professional literature or analyzing samples of student work. Groups structure their interactions around scripts or agendas called protocols (Birchak et al. 1998) and use lesson plans or samples of students' work as input for discussion. In the case of foreign language teachers, these meetings provide opportunities for them to interact in the language they are teaching. Leadership in meetings is shared, with leadership roles rotating among members. Study groups are suitable for teachers who need a better understanding of research and knowledge in the field or of ways to analyze their students' work and for those who need to develop a more reflective stance toward their teaching or their students' learning.

**Dialogue journals**

According to Peyton (1993), dialogue journals are conversations in writing. Although they have been widely used in language and literacy classrooms since their first documented use (Staton, Shuy, Peyton, & Reed, 1998**)** they have only recently found a place in the professional development field. Teachers who cannot meet with colleagues for reasons of time or distance may choose to keep a written conversation with a mentor or peer in order to share expertise and reflections on their instruction. Dialogue journal writing helps extend interaction time between colleagues and is particularly suitable with teachers who have different levels of expertise or different needs. For foreign

language teachers, dialogue journals can also provide an opportunity to practice and hone their writing skills in the target language.

**Professional development portfolios** Although portfolios were originally developed for use in student assessment, professional development portfolios provide a way for professionals to focus on and document their own development in specific areas. A portfolio is a systematic collection of teaching artifacts and reflections. A portfolio can have four main components: a statement of the teacher's educational platform or philosophy, a goal statement, samples of teacher or student work with reflective captions that describe why they were included, and concluding reflective statements. Portfolios can showcase a teacher's development (showcase portfolios) or document a teacher's progress toward a goal (product portfolios). Most portfolios also include a rubric, developed by the teacher or others, that can be used by peers to assess congruence between a teacher's goals and the pieces included.

### Mentoring

Mentoring brings together a more knowledgeable professional with a less experienced colleague for collaboration and feedback on teaching and learning. Mentors provide advice, support, encouragement, and modeling for their mentees, who, in turn, provide mentors with opportunities to use and reflect on their expertise. Mentoring relationships work best when structured and developed over time. They are particularly suited to beginning teachers, who need to understand issues such as school culture and climate and their impact on student learning. Mentors can be instrumental in helping novice teachers enhance their proficiency in the language as well as their cultural knowledge and pedagogical competence. Mentors also help novices reflect on the efficacy of their language use and the pedagogical strategies they use in class by modeling the thinking processes and communication processes required of professionals in the field.

### Participatory Practitioner Research

Generally known as action research, participatory practitioner research involves groups of colleagues in diagnosing a situation, reflecting on that diagnosis, and planning and carrying out an intervention in order to improve current conditions. The focus for this inquiry can range from students' learning, to school culture and climate, to teachers' own individual issues (language proficiency and use, handling of classroom procedures, etc.). The intrinsic value of this strategy lies in the opportunity for teachers to examine their

teaching situations in order to better understand and improve them.

### Conclusion

Traditional professional development strategies such as one-shot workshops can be useful for delivering information, but the opportunities they provide for teachers to translate theoretical knowledge into effective classroom practices are limited. Effective professional development calls for adequate support structures and opportunities for teachers to select, plan, carry out, and evaluate the professional development activities in which they are involved. When teachers have the chance to participate collegially and collaboratively in the creation and implementation of professional development activities, they develop ownership over the learning process, and their learning is more likely to promote student success.

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# Professional Development for Teachers in Culturally Diverse Schools

**by Nancy Clair and Carolyn Temple Adger, Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory at Brown University**

The changing face of the U.S. student population is well documented. Over the last 10 years, the population of English language learners has increased by 1 million students. English language learners now comprise 5.5% of the total school-age population, with a disproportionate number of these students in California, Texas, Florida, New York, and Illinois (Fleishman & Hopstock, 1993). And if demographic trends persist, the numbers of English language learners will continue to grow. These students are not a homogenous group. They enter U.S. schools at different ages and at different times during the school year. They come to school representing a diversity of languages, cultures, experiences with school, and economic and social power.

At the same time, school reform efforts demand that schools become places of excellence for all students. Educators committed to these reforms face enormous challenges, not the least of which is the education of teachers. Although the responsibility for improved schooling must be shared among administrators, teachers, parents, and students, school reform efforts place a tremendous weight on teachers (Clair, Adger, Short, & Millen, 1998), especially those who have received no preparation for teaching English language learners (Clair, 1995, 1998; González & Darling-Hammond, 1997). Clearly, professional development plays a role in equipping schools to meet the challenges facing them.

This digest focuses on professional development for teachers in culturally diverse schools. It summarizes what is known about effective professional development and the conditions that allow it to succeed. It provides three examples of professional development that are grounded in the academic achievement of English language learners as a fundamental ingredient to overall school success.

## Promising Professional Development

There is a growing consensus in the literature regarding the elements of effective professional development for teachers. It incorporates principles of adult learning: Adult learners need to be self-directed; they display readiness to learn when they have a

perceived need; and they desire immediate application of new skills and knowledge (Knowles, 1980). Effective professional development is embedded in the reality of schools and teachers' work. It is designed with teacher input. It fosters critical reflection and meaningful collaboration. It is internally coherent and rigorous, and it is sustained over the long term (Little, 1993; Renyi, 1996; Sparks & Hirsch, 1997). Promising professional development is aligned with effective teaching and learning: "Principles that describe effective teaching for students in classrooms should not differ for adults in general and teachers in particular" (Rueda, 1998).

These elements underlie various professional development structures such as university—school partnerships (Darling-Hammond, 1997), teacher networks and collaboratives (Little, 1993; Renyi, 1996) and teacher study groups (Clair, 1995, 1998), to name a few. What these structures have in common is opportunities for teachers to take ownership of the professional development process to be knowledge creators as opposed to mere receivers of information.

**Professional Development for Teachers of English Language Learners**

The above elements and structures are crucial for designing professional development, but they are insufficient for educating teachers in culturally diverse schools. Any professional development in culturally diverse schools must address specific knowledge and attitudes that are relevant to teaching English language learners. Teachers need to understand basic constructs of bilingualism and second language development, the nature of language proficiency, the role of the first language and culture in learning, and the demands that mainstream education places on culturally diverse students (Clair, 1993). Teachers need to continually reassess what schooling means in the context of a pluralist society; the relationships between teachers and learners; and attitudes and beliefs about language, culture, and race (Clair, Adger, Short, & Millen, 1998; González & Darling-Hammond, 1997). Moreover, teachers need a "vision of students as capable individuals for whom limited English proficiency does not signify deficiency and for whom limited academic skills do not represent an incurable situation" (Walqui, 1999). Finally, promising professional development in culturally diverse schools assumes that combining content, ESL, and bilingual teachers would make complementary knowledge and perspectives available to everyone (Adger & Clair, 1999; Clair, 1998; González & Darling-Hammond, 1997).

**Conditions for Professional Development**

Professional development to improve schooling for all students requires a minimal set of conditions (Adger & Peyton, 1999; Clair, Adger, Short, & Millen, 1998; Darling-Hammond, 1997; González & Darling-Hammond, 1997; Nadelstern, Price, & Listhaus, 1999).

**District and school policies must support coherent and integrated professional development.**

Many districts and schools have competing initiatives that drain their resources and dilute their efforts. It is not uncommon to see lists of district- and school-sponsored workshops tacked on school bulletin boards on topics as diverse as cooperative learning techniques, meeting the needs of at-risk students, and Internet training for teachers. Unless there is a coherent and integrated professional development plan that grows out of a district and school vision for student success to which teachers and administrators are committed, workshops will lack meaning.

**District and school leadership must make student, teacher, and organizational learning a priority.**

District leaders and building principals must have current substantive knowledge about effective teaching and learning for students and adults. They must have knowledge about trends in effective professional development and the education of English language learners. In order to make teaching and learning a priority, principals must safeguard teacher and student time, engage the entire staff in taking responsibility for the education of English language learners, model collegial relationships with teachers and students, and participate actively in the learning community of the school.

**There must be sufficient time and resources for promising professional development to take hold.**

Promising professional development is about improvement and change. The more complex the change process, the more unpredictable it is (Fullan, 1999). Introducing professional development calls for teachers to work together in new ways in order to improve schooling for all students. Learning new ways of working together and tackling the complexities of teaching in culturally diverse schools takes sustained time, focus, and resources.

**Examples of Professional Development for Teachers in Culturally Diverse Schools**

Although different in form and focus, the following examples highlight ongoing professional development that promotes school-based inquiry and continual

improvement. Each example brings together ESL, bilingual, and content teachers or interdisciplinary teams of teachers to support the academic success of all students.

### The International High School at LaGuardia Community College (Nadelstern, Price, & Listhaus, 1999)

This alternative high school serves students who are recent U.S. arrivals and who have varying levels of English language proficiency. Professional development is built into the governance and instructional organization of the school. The over-arching goal is to guarantee that all staff have the tools to support students in meeting rigorous graduation requirements. All staff must continually improve their ability to manage a student-centered classroom, accommodate heterogeneous arrangements, and integrate first and second language into the content areas. Interdisciplinary teacher teams work collaboratively to develop and revise curriculum, plan schedules, discuss student learning, and share successful practices. Staff members hold each other accountable through peer coaching, peer evaluation, and teacher portfolio presentations.

### California Tomorrow and Alisal High School (Jaramillo, 1998)

Alisal High School is an urban school with 1,800 students, 94% of whom are Latino. More than half of the student population is classified as limited English proficient. Constituting themselves as the Working Group on Race, Language, and Culture, a group of teachers set out to explore language and language development issues that helped to explain their students' performance. Professional development involved looking at research and school-based professional development models, examining student achievement data and school progress, creating a plan to improve students' literacy, peer coaching, and reporting findings to the greater school faculty.

### The Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory and The Lowell (MA) Public Schools (Clair & Adger)

The Lowell school district is highly culturally diverse with approximately 60% of the student population speaking languages other than English. Partnering with researchers from the Regional Laboratory at Brown University, ESL, bilingual, and content teachers explored the problem of standards implementation in classrooms that include English language learners by drawing upon knowledge and experience of standards and education reform, second language development, and effective educational practices for English language learners. An essential aspect of the professional development involves four sustainable strategies: standards analysis, student work, peer visitation, and discussion of professional literature. These strategies hold promise for ongoing reform at the school level, because with practice they can be used independently. The goal is for teachers to adapt these strategies for use in school-based study groups.

### Conclusion

Demographic trends suggest that the profile of U.S. public school students will continue to be diverse. Education reform requires that educators provide quality schooling for all of their students. Clearly, professional development must equip teachers for this challenge. There is growing evidence that professional development approaches that are guided by teacher input and that view teacher learning as continual and transformative make schools a better place for students and staff.

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# Programs That Prepare Teachers to Work Effectively With Students Learning English

**by Josué M. González and Linda Darling-Hammond**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics EDO-FL-00-09, December 2000**

Schools and teacher education programs have begun to rethink preservice and inservice professional development to take into account the need for teachers to work effectively with students learning English. New approaches to teacher education are based on the belief that English language learners' access to challenging content can be enhanced through teaching strategies that provide multiple pathways to the understanding of language and content. Because students must use language to acquire academic content in mainstream classes, second language teaching must be integrated with the social, cultural, and political contexts of language use.

This digest provides a summary of some of the problems associated with traditional teacher education and describes preservice and inservice programs that prepare teachers to work effectively with English language learners.

## Traditional Teacher Education Programs

A number of problems have traditionally plagued second language teacher education programs, including those described below.

### Failure to see the interconnectedness between first and second languages and cultures

Schools and teacher education programs often focus on pushing students to work rapidly and unrealistically to acquire fluent English without attention to continued first language development. This approach minimizes the connections between first and second language development and reduces the potential for advancement in both languages. Inattention to the first language development of non-English speakers is also detrimental to their academic achievement. Teacher preparation programs should help future teachers to integrate second language development with first language development and to recognize the uniqueness and value of specific languages and cultures.

### Fragmentation and isolation of language teaching and learning

In many schools and teacher education programs, English as a second language (ESL), bilingual, foreign language, and language arts programs are the responsibility of distinctly separate administrative departments. This fragmentation isolates teachers and makes it difficult for them to communicate across programs and to benefit from communication across disciplines.

### View of language

Teacher education programs often focus on the components of language, such as phonology, morphology, syntax, and lexicon. This narrow view overlooks the social nature of language as a tool for communication and a mechanism through which content can be explored and examined. Language study is generally decontextualized and unrelated to the lives of students, their school, or the community, and much of language instruction is grammar driven.

### Paralyzing focus on methodology

Historically, preparation programs for foreign language and ESL teachers have placed emphasis on instructional methods rather than on the what, why, and who of second language instruction. Tedick and Walker (1994) argue that this concentration on methodology has made second language instruction teacher centered, because it focuses on the ways in which the teacher best organizes, presents, and assesses success with lessons. Such a narrow focus has insulated second language teachers from the growing knowledge about language in the fields of adult education, literacy development, and early childhood education. This knowledge supports a view of language development as "an integrated, generative process in which the learner is an active agent" (p. 306).

### Disjuncture between language and culture

Prospective second language teachers need to have knowledge about language development, but they also need a clear understanding of themselves and their students as cultural beings. They should be aware of the variety of world views espoused by participants in the target culture and the native culture, and of the need to view both cultures from a number of perspectives. Such insights cannot be achieved by simply adding more culture courses to the teacher education curriculum. Instead, just as culture must be an integral part of second language pedagogy, it must also be an integral part of teacher education programs, including attention to school culture and classroom ecology (Tedick & Walker, 1994, p. 309).

Resources for Educators
of English Language Learners

**Preservice Teacher Education Programs**

Two preservice programs designed specifically to prepare teachers to work effectively with immigrant students are the Second Languages and Cultures Education Program at the University of Minnesota and the Cross-Cultural Language and Academic Development Program at San Diego State University.

**Second Languages and Cultures (SLC) Education Program, University of Minnesota**

This postbaccalaureate program encompasses both foreign language and ESL teacher preparation. The combination seeks to lessen fragmentation in the field of language learning and isolation of language teachers.

The SLC program is based on the philosophical tenets that "teachers and students both act as knowers and learners in an active, experiential, and integrative process; that teaching is context sensitive; and that reflection is a cornerstone in teacher development" (Tedick & Walker, 1995, p. 503). Students begin their field experiences in classrooms while continuing to take courses on campus. Students explore issues and questions in 10 areas: language and culture; the language learner; integration of curriculum, instruction, and learner characteristics; theory and research bases for second language teaching and learning; school culture and second languages; personal development as a teacher; assessment; language and cultural diversity; research; and intensive classroom experience at both the elementary and secondary levels.

Students in the SLC program are organized into cohort groups, referred to as "a community of developing teachers," where they work together and share experiences. These cohort groups are further divided into "base groups" and "feedback session groups." A graduate assistant usually facilitates the base group and keeps close contact with teaching candidates through conferences, journals, and on-site visits and observations. Through base groups, students are able to share their experiences with one another and get feedback on their work. In the feedback sessions, developing teachers view microteaching videos (focused on one element of their own or others' classroom practice) and more globally oriented videos of their actual teaching in the schools. In addition, students participate in work days set aside for group projects. Graduates continue to be members of cohort groups for their first year of teaching, participate together in monthly seminars at the university, and engage in action research projects leading to their Master's degree in education.

**The Cross-Cultural Language and Academic Development Program (CLAD), San Diego State University**

This preservice teacher education program seeks to prepare teachers to work with English language learners where bilingual programs are not available or to work in the English component of a bilingual program. Pedagogical strategies include Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE), also called sheltered instruction. Instruction in a subject area is delivered in English by a content-area-certified teacher using techniques designed to provide English learners access to the curriculum. This is increasingly important at the secondary school level, where students may otherwise be denied access to core academic instruction.

Content courses in mathematics, social studies, science, reading, and language arts include attention to culture and pedagogical methods for new English language learners. Other requirements include a course on the psychological foundations of education, with an emphasis on culture, language, and language acquisition, and student teaching experiences and seminars. Students are placed in a school for at least one semester with a master teacher who has obtained a Language Development Specialist certificate or credential and has a significant number of new English learners in class.

The CLAD program aims to develop future teachers' knowledge in the following areas:

*Cultural awareness*. This component focuses on issues of cultural diversity; assimilation; and relationships among cultural diversity, educational equity, academic achievement, and socioeconomic status.

*Theoretical knowledge*. Students learn about language phonology, morphology and syntax, first and second language acquisition, the structure and role of language in social settings, philosophy and theory of bilingual and bicultural education, techniques and materials in ESL instruction, and the effects of attitudes and motivation in learning.

*Content knowledge*. Students complete an undergraduate major in an academic content area before being admitted to the preservice program.

*Knowledge of pedagogical methods*. This includes learning about Total Physical Response, the Natural Approach, content-based instruction, cooperative learning, and whole language teaching strategies.

*Fieldwork*. This includes practice teaching, classroom observations, and community ethnographies.

**Inservice Teacher Development**

**The International High School, New York City**

This school serves recent immigrants to the United States and accepts only students who have been in the country for 4 years or less and who score in the lowest 21% on the English Language Battery Exam. The school is small, with approximately 460 students from over 50 countries, speaking over 35 languages. The program emphasizes interdisciplinary team teaching, small-group student collaboration, and English and native language learning through study of academic content. Four fundamental building blocks make up the school's philosophy: (1) a linguistic methodology that assumes that language skills are best learned through the use of content material in context; (2) a commitment to both English and native language development; (3) heterogeneous small-group student collaboration on experiential, activity-based projects; and (4) small-group faculty collaboration on both instructional planning and school-wide governance.

The last building block—institutionalized collaboration among teachers and administrators—led to the faculty's willingness to take collective responsibility for their own professional development. Staff committees oversee a process of planning school-wide colloquia, seminars, and peer review. Teachers write their own self-evaluations periodically, which are added to peer and administrator assessments.

Exchanges such as faculty presentations, summer staff development institutes, and informal visits among classrooms have benefited from the varied experience of the faculty. Teachers with backgrounds in ESL, bilingual education, and other content areas complement each others' strengths. The school has an explicit policy to document its practices and approaches in writing. Proposals, handbooks, curriculum guides, and a school journal provide other means of sharing ideas about teaching and learning among the staff.

The staff development process follows a few rules of thumb to guide teachers in their instructional planning and delivery.

*Start at the beginning*. This suggests that assignments not assume student familiarity with matters that would be obvious to U.S. students, such as how to use a book to find information.

*Break down the task*. This implies that longer (e.g., 2- or 3-week) projects be broken down into smaller segments, each of which is demonstrated with an example before students themselves carry out the task.

*Use models*. This includes modeling examples of finished assignments as well as the process that leads to the finished product.

**Conclusion**

The programs described in this digest illustrate several principles for the professional development of teachers working with English language learners. They need occasions to connect theory and practice in tightly integrated ways; support in learning how to understand what students bring to the classroom; concrete strategies that shape collaborative learning environments and build on students' language, culture, and experience; ongoing opportunities for collaboration and collective problem solving; and experiences that allow them to learn and work professionally in the same ways that they hope to teach. Building teacher preparation programs and school learning communities that provide these kinds of opportunities for language teachers is one of the most important investments that society can make in the education of immigrant youth.

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For a more detailed discussion of the issues and a more in-depth description of these and other preservice and inservice programs, see *New Concepts and New Challenges: Professional Development for Teachers of Immigrant Youth,* by Josué M. González and Linda Darling-Hammond. The book (ISBN 1887744045) is available from Delta Systems Co., Inc., 1400 Miller Pkwy, McHenry IL 60050-7030, 800-323-8270, www.delta-systems.com.

# The Role of Metacognition in Second Language Teaching and Learning

**by Neil J. Anderson, Brigham Young University**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics
EDO-FL-01-10, April 2002**

During a National Public Radio broadcast in the United States in March 1999, a sixth grader explained what she was learning from playing the Stock Market Game, an activity designed to help children become familiar with how the stock market functions. She said, "This game makes me think how to think" (Prakash, 1999). What this statement reveals is that this young learner was beginning to understand the real key to learning; she was engaged in metacognition.

Metacognition can be defined simply as thinking about thinking. Learners who are metacognitively aware know what to do when they don't know what to do; that is, they have strategies for finding out or figuring out what they need to do. The use of metacognitive strategies ignites one's thinking and can lead to more profound learning and improved performance, especially among learners who are struggling. Understanding and controlling cognitive processes may be one of the most essential skills that classroom teachers can help second language learners develop. It is important that they teach their students metacognitive skills in addition to cognitive skills.

The distinctions between cognitive and metacognitive strategies are important, partly because they give some indication of which strategies are the most crucial in determining the effectiveness of learning. It seems that metacognitive strategies, that allow students to plan, control, and evaluate their learning, have the most central role to play in this respect, rather than those that merely maximize interaction and input … Thus the ability to choose and evaluate one's strategies is of central importance. (Graham, 1997, pp. 42-43)

Rather than focus students' attention solely on learning the language, second language teachers can help students learn to think about what happens during the language learning process, which will lead them to develop stronger learning skills.

## A Model of Metacognition

Metacognition combines various attended thinking and reflective processes. It can be divided into five primary components: (1) preparing and planning for learning, (2) selecting and using learning strategies, (3) monitoring strategy use, (4) orchestrating various strategies, and (5) evaluating strategy use and learning. Teachers should model strategies for learners to follow in all five areas, which are discussed below.

## Preparing and Planning for Learning

Preparation and planning are important metacognitive skills that can improve student learning. By engaging in preparation and planning in relation to a learning goal, students are thinking about what they need or want to accomplish and how they intend to go about accomplishing it. Teachers can promote this reflection by being explicit about the particular learning goals they have set for the class and guiding the students in setting their own learning goals. The more clearly articulated the goal, the easier it will be for the learners to measure their progress. The teacher might set a goal for the students of mastering the vocabulary from a particular chapter in the textbook. A student might set a goal for himself of being able to answer the comprehension questions at the end of the chapter.

## Selecting and Using Learning Strategies

Researchers have suggested that teaching readers how to use specific reading strategies is a prime consideration in the reading classroom (Anderson, 1999; Cohen, 1998; Oxford, 1990). The metacognitive ability to select and use particular strategies in a given context for a specific purpose means that the learner can think and make conscious decisions about the learning process.

To be effective, metacognitive instruction should explicitly teach students a variety of learning strategies and also when to use them. For example, second language readers have a variety of strategies from which to choose when they encounter vocabulary that they do not know and that they have determined they need to know to understand the main idea of a text. One possible strategy is word analysis: for example, dividing the word into its prefix and stem. Another possible strategy is the use of context clues to help guess the meaning of a word. But students must receive explicit instruction in how to use these strategies, and they need to know that no single strategy will work in every instance. Teachers need to show them how to choose the strategy that has the best chance of success in a given situation. For example, unfamiliar words that include prefixes or suffixes that the student knows (e.g., *anti-*, *-ment*) are good candidates for the use of a word analysis strategy.

## Monitoring Strategy Use

By monitoring their use of learning strategies, students are better able to keep themselves on track to meet

their learning goals. Once they have selected and begun to implement specific strategies, they need to ask themselves periodically whether or not they are still using those strategies as intended. For example, students may be taught that an effective writing strategy involves thinking about their audience and their purpose in writing (e.g., to explain, to persuade). Students can be taught that to monitor their use of this strategy, they should pause occasionally while writing to ask themselves questions about what they are doing, such as whether or not they are providing the right amount of background information for their intended audience and whether the examples they are using are effective in supporting their purpose.

### Orchestrating Various Strategies

Knowing how to orchestrate the use of more than one strategy is an important metacognitive skill. The ability to coordinate, organize, and make associations among the various strategies available is a major distinction between strong and weak second language learners. Teachers can assist students by making them aware of multiple strategies available to them—for example, by teaching them how to use both word analysis and context clues to determine the meaning of an unfamiliar word. The teacher also needs to show students how to recognize when one strategy isn't working and how to move on to another. For example, a student may try to use word analysis to determine the meaning of the word *antimony*, having recognized *anti* as a prefix meaning against. But that strategy won't work in this instance. *Anti* is not a prefix here; antimony is a metallic chemical element that has nothing to do with being against or opposed to something. When the student finds that word analysis does not help her figure out what this word means, she needs to know how to turn to other strategies, such as context clues, to help her understand the word.

### Evaluating Strategy Use and Learning

Second language learners are actively involved in metacognition when they attempt to evaluate whether what they are doing is effective. Teachers can help students evaluate their strategy use by asking them to respond thoughtfully to the following questions: (1) What am I trying to accomplish? (2) What strategies am I using? (3) How well am I using them? (4) What else could I do? Responding to these four questions integrates all of the previous aspects of metacognition, allowing the second language learner to reflect through the cycle of learning. Preparing and planning relates to identifying what is to be accomplished, while selecting and using particular strategies relates to the question of which strategies are being used. The third question corresponds to monitoring strategy

use, while the fourth relates to the orchestration of strategies. The whole cycle is evaluated during this stage of metacognition.

For example, while teaching the specific reading skill of main idea comprehension, the teacher can help students evaluate their strategy use by using the four questions:

1. *What am I trying to accomplish?* The teacher wants students to be able to articulate that they are trying to identify the main idea in the text they are reading and that they are doing so because understanding the main idea is key to understanding the rest of the text.

2. *What strategies am I using?* The teacher wants the readers to know which strategies are available to them and to recognize which one(s) they are using to identify the main idea.

3. *How well am I using the strategies?* The teacher wants the students to be able to judge how well they are using the strategies they have chosen, that is, whether they are implementing them as intended and whether the strategies are helping them achieve their goal.

4. *What else could I do?* If the strategies that students are using are not helping them to accomplish their goal (i.e., identifying the main idea), the teacher wants them to be able to identify and use alternate strategies. Teachers need to make students aware of the full range of strategies available to them.

Research shows that learners whose skills or knowledge bases are weak in a particular area tend to overestimate their ability in that area (Kruger & Dunning, 1999). In other words, they don't know enough to recognize that they lack sufficient knowledge for accurate self-assessment. In contrast, learners whose knowledge or skills are strong may underestimate their ability. These high-ability learners don't recognize the extent of their knowledge or skills. Kruger and Dunning's research also shows that it is possible to teach learners at all ability levels to assess their own performance more accurately. In addition, their research showed that for tasks involving logic and grammar, improved self-assessment corresponded with improvement in the skills being assessed.

### The Interaction of Metacognitive Skills

Each of the five metacognitive skills described in this digest interacts with the others. Metacognition is not a linear process that moves from preparing and planning to evaluating. More than one metacognitive process may be occurring at a time during a second language learning task. This highlights once again how the

orchestration of various strategies is a vital component of second language learning. Allowing learners opportunities to think about how they combine various strategies facilitates the improvement of strategy use.

## Conclusion

The teaching of metacognitive skills is a valuable use of instructional time for a second language teacher. When learners reflect upon their learning strategies, they become better prepared to make conscious decisions about what they can do to improve their learning. Strong metacognitive skills empower second language learners.

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# Standards for Professional Development: A Sociocultural Perspective

**by Robert Rueda, University of Southern California**

Much research and theory has focused on improving the academic success of students at-risk for failure due to poverty, limited English proficiency, and/or background knowledge and experiences that do not map easily onto school expectations. Several studies have led to significant advances in understanding basic learning processes, including the social and cultural foundations of cognitive development. Rather than focusing on presumed student deficits, researchers have focused on ways that schools can scaffold learning, build on student characteristics as resources, and mitigate risk factors. The Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE) has synthesized this work with five standards for effective teaching: joint productive activity, language and literacy development, contextualizing teaching and learning, complex thinking, and instructional conversation (Dalton, 1998).

These standards can also be applied to professional development activities. Of course, adults and children learn differently. For example, adults have more extensive and more organized background knowledge than young children. They may be more strategic in how they learn, may have different motivations for learning, and may be more aware of their learning so that they monitor and self-regulate their learning better. However, the principles that describe effective teaching and learning for students in classrooms should not differ from those for adults in general and teachers in particular.

Some of the research studies on improving educational outcomes for students and improving schooling have concluded that effective instructional environments depend upon well-trained, reflective teachers who are adequately supported in terms of professional development. Rather than trying to develop teacher-proof curriculum and teaching practices, recent work has focused on fostering professional communities of learners and lifelong support programs. The current emphasis is to embed knowledge and skill acquisition within a framework of teacher growth and development, collaborative programs, and interactive research within a community of learners (see Sprinthall, Remain, & Thies-Sprinthall, 1996, for a recent review).

This Research Brief discusses the five standards in terms of sociocultural theory and explains how each

standard can support the learning process underlying professional development efforts.

### 1. Facilitate learning and development through joint productive activity among leaders and participants

One distinguishing feature of sociocultural theory is the view that teaching and learning are social, not individual activities. Learning takes place when novices and experts work together to solve a common problem or produce a common product (Rogoff, 1991; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988). A sociocultural model for professional development therefore involves assisted performance by a more competent other. In this model the roles of student and teacher are more permeable and flexible than in models of professional development practice which rely on outside experts. Thus a one-shot workshop provided by an expert will not be as effective as a collaborative effort to solve a common problem.

When thinking about professional development in terms of joint productive activity, joint refers to who is allowed to participate and how, while productive refers to what counts as a legitimate collaboration. It may help to make the rules for participation explicit. For example, should paraeducators, who are normally accorded low status in the school hierarchy, have equal status as collaborators in tackling instructional issues? Should controversial issues such as using Ebonics in teaching standard English or whole language pedagogy count as legitimate topics for collaborative development efforts? It is important to consider the differential power relationships in schools and communities when defining what is legitimate.

### 2. Promote learners' expertise in professionally relevant discourse

Language and discourse are a critical part of the professional development process. A fundamental premise of sociocultural theory is that language is an important tool that helps mediate interaction with the world. In this view, thinking takes place through the medium of language, and language helps frame problems in new and important ways. Special discourse can be a central part of the professional development process, as long as it helps to frame a problem, capture a phenomenon with more precision, or reconceptualize it in a more useful or accessible way. Professional development should not involve jargon if it does not contribute to meaningful problem solving, or if it has no connection to practice. Rather, professional development should work to create a common community of discourse. The leader needs to understand participants' discourse and vice versa.

### 3. Contextualize teaching, learning, and joint productive activity in the experiences and skills of participants

Another premise of sociocultural theory is that teaching and learning must be contextualized, or situated in meaningful activities connected to everyday life (Forman, Minick, & Stone, 1993). This means that teaching and learning activities and joint problem-solving tasks should focus on authentic issues and problems encountered in participants' daily practice. Both the problems addressed as well as the teaching and learning processes in these contexts are certain to be "messier" than those typically encountered in more controlled or artificial situations, but more meaningful to participants.

Professional development should be flexible–to allow for local differences and diversity–and concrete–to avoid the syndrome of "that sounds good, but it won't work here." Innovations and school reform initiatives that rely upon rigid replication of a model or set of practices fail to account for the individual circumstances found in specific schools. They should be addressed through collaborative work.

### 4. Challenge participants toward more complex solutions in addressing problems

There are many examples of teachers collaboratively addressing complex problems in innovative and successful ways (e.g., Clark, Hong, & Schoeppach, 1996). However, some school reform mandates have become more restrictive, constraining the ability of educational practitioners to develop locally meaningful solutions. Yet, the same high standards and meaningful feedback on efforts that are critical to students' success should be accorded to teachers. Professional development activities are better conceptualized as sustained problem-solving opportunities rather than short-term exercises designed to address simple issues. These are opportunities for members of professional development teams to seek responsive assistance as needed, either internally or from more competent others.

### 5. Engage participants through dialogue, especially the instructional conversation

Instructional conversations are useful for creating responsive learning environments and should be utilized in professional development activities. The instructional conversation (IC) is a blend of deliberate, planned teaching with more interactive, responsive conversation. The instructional aspects of the IC are related to the opportunities for responsive assistance in the ongoing interactions among participants. The

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conversational aspects of the IC provide the hook that facilitates the connection of formal schooled knowledge to practical knowledge, including that which comes from teaching and being immersed in a community of teachers. In an important sense, this is at the heart of professional development: connecting the streams of classroom culture and knowledge with more formal knowledge and theory around collaborative problem solving, that is, joint productive activity.

**Conclusion**

True teaching and learning take place only when these principles are in place, and professional development is a special case of teaching and learning. There may be a wide range of implementation options that may be faithful to these principles in ways that look very different from each other but may still be effective in the local ecology in which they develop. This should be seen as a natural outgrowth of the sociocultural emphasis on context as a major determinant of behavior.

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For further details on Robert Rueda's CREDE project, *Latino Paraeducators As Teachers: Building on Funds of Knowledge to Improve Instruction,* contact Robert Rueda at 562 -740-2311. For more information and additional CREDE research documents on professional development and preservice teacher education for diversity visit www.crede.ucsc.edu.

# Teaching Educators About Language: Principles, Structures, and Challenges

**by Nancy Clair, Center for Applied Linguistics**

**ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics**
**EDO-FL-00-08, November 2000**

The promise of education reform is that all children will receive a quality education. But there are enormous challenges to reform, including resource inequities, an aging teaching force, and public doubts about school effectiveness. Moreover, school reform policies place enormous strain on teachers and students: Teachers need to implement new curricula and ensure that they are providing appropriate instruction. Students—including English language learners—must learn challenging content and pass statewide assessments in order to graduate in many states.

These new demands coincide with the well-documented changing face of the U.S. student population. More teachers are responsible for the education of children from diverse backgrounds—children who speak little or no English upon arrival at school, children who may have had interrupted schooling in their home country, and children whose families may have had little exposure to the norms of U.S. schools. In general, the U.S. teaching force is not well prepared to help culturally diverse children succeed academically and socially, because preservice teacher preparation programs have not offered sufficient opportunities for learning to teach culturally diverse students. As a result, many teachers have been learning on the job (Clair, 1995).

Fillmore and Snow (2000) assert that teachers need an understanding of educational linguistics—how language impacts teaching and learning—to do their work well. They argue that knowledge about language will enhance teachers' practice in general, and in particular, it will aid them in teaching literacy (Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998) and in working with English language learners (August & Hakuta, 1998). This digest focuses on principles and structures for professional development of practicing teachers that can help them gain the knowledge they need about language and on some challenges to overcome for providing good professional development opportunities.

## Language: A Central Component of Teachers' Work

Fillmore and Snow (2000) distinguish five teacher functions in which language is central. *Teachers are communicators*: They need to be able to communicate effectively and have strategies for understanding what students are saying. *Teachers are educators*: They are responsible for subject area instruction. They must also select educational materials and provide learning opportunities that promote second language acquisition for students who are learning English and that promote language development for native English speakers. They need to be able to distinguish language behavior that is developmentally predictable from that which is not and provide appropriate instructional intervention. *Teachers are evaluators* and their decisions have important consequences for students. There are far too many instances of students being placed in inappropriate educational programs because judgments of ability are influenced by misunderstandings of language behavior. *Teachers are educated people*: Information about language is essential to being a literate member of society. *Teachers are agents of socialization*. They play a central role in socializing children to the norms, beliefs, and communication patterns of school—and for immigrant children and native-born children from nonmajority backgrounds, to the patterns of mainstream U.S. culture. Basic knowledge about language and culture and how these systems can vary is fundamental to helping diverse students succeed in school.

Fillmore and Snow (2000) suggest that teachers should have knowledge of a number of topics regarding oral and written language, including the basic units of language, regular and irregular forms in English, vocabulary development, dialect regularity, academic English, language acquisition, the complexity of English spelling, patterns of rhetorical structure, quality and correctness in writing, and text comprehensibility. They suggest courses or course components that would allow teachers to learn essential information about language: language and linguistics, language and cultural diversity, sociolinguistics for educators in a linguistically diverse society, language development, second language teaching and learning, the language of academic discourse, and text analysis in educational settings.

## Professional Development

What kinds of professional development experiences can help practicing teachers learn more about language and apply that knowledge to improving classroom practice? Clearly, short-term professional development experiences are inadequate: Teaching and learning are complex, and teachers need time to learn and experiment with new concepts in the classroom, just as their students do. Principles of effective teaching and learning for students extend to effective professional development for teachers

(Rueda, 1998). To be successful, professional development must be long term, and it must incorporate opportunities for learning that center on teachers and students. Hawley and Valli (1999) suggest eight principles of effective professional development: It should be driven by an analysis of teachers' goals and student performance; it should involve teachers in the identification of what they need to learn; it should be school based; it should be organized around collaborative problem solving; it should be continuous and adequately supported; it should be information rich; it should include opportunities for the development of theoretical understanding; and it should be part of a comprehensive change process. Because inservice teacher education on language in teaching and learning must address teachers' attitudes toward language and toward students who speak languages other than English and dialects other than Standard English, it calls for extensive commitments of time. Teachers need time to reflect on the meaning of education in a pluralistic society, on the relationships between teachers and learners, and on social attitudes about language and culture that affect students (Clair, 1998; Gonzalez & Darling-Hammond, 1997).

There are a number of professional development structures that can incorporate these principles, including teacher networks and collaboratives (Renyi, 1996), university-school partnerships (Darling-Hammond, 1994), action research groups (Check, 1997), and teacher study groups (Clair, 1998). What these structures have in common are opportunities for teachers to learn together in coherent and sustained ways.

### Challenges for Improving Professional Development

Designing opportunities for teachers to learn about language must link three essential elements: principles of effective professional development, appropriate content, and skilled professional developers. Integrating these elements presents significant challenges. First, understandings of effective professional development have changed much faster than practice. Many professional development experiences continue to be short term and disconnected from the reality of teachers' work. Second, under pressure to raise test scores, administrators and other educators may have trouble understanding how knowledge about language will help students succeed in school. Finally, identifying qualified professional developers with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to provide effective professional development on educational linguistics is daunting. These professionals need to have extensive knowledge about language and school reform

and experience providing long-term professional development in schools. One way to overcome this challenge is teaming school personnel who provide professional development with university faculty or others with expertise in applied linguistics. Working together in schools, these teams can explore how language affects learning in particular contexts and build knowledge about language and education.

### Conclusion

The demands of school reform and the changing face of the U.S. student population require that all teachers learn more about the role of language in teaching and learning. This knowledge can enhance their practice overall, improving their ability to teach literacy, and it can increase their effectiveness with students who speak languages other than English and dialects other than Standard English. Long-term professional development that views teacher and student learning as paramount must play a central role. The challenges are real but worth confronting, because high-quality education demands a well-educated teaching force.

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**Online Resources**

TESOL Certification
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/faqs/rgos/tesol.html

> This Resource Guide Online from the ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics includes links to articles, digests, books, Web sites, and ERIC documents that offer information on TESOL Certification.

Second Language Teaching Methodologies
http://www.cal.org/ericcll/faqs/rgos/methods.html

> This Resource Guide provides links to digests, journals, books, and Web sites that offer information about second language teaching methods and approaches.

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)
http://www.tesol.edu

> This professional organization has a wealth of information regarding teacher training and professional development for ESL/EFL teachers on their Web site. They offer a publication series on professional development at http://www.tesol.org/pubs/catalog/careerresources.html and sections on the their site on starting your career in TESOL at http://www.tesol.org/careers/index.html and advancing your career in TESOL at http://www.tesol.org/conv/index.html.

Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL)
http://www.cal.org

> This site offers information on various aspects of professional training and language teacher education in its professional development section at http://www.cal.org/services/profdev.html.

National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA)
http://www.ncela.gwu.edu

> NCELA has many resources for just about every kind of language situation, including materials for professional development. See: http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/library/profdev.htm.  Also the NCELA Program Information Guide, "School Based Management: What Bilingual and ESL Program Directors Should Know" by Denise McKeon and Lynn Malarz is available online at http://www.ncela.gwu.edu/ncbepubs/pigs/pig5.htm

TESL-L

> TESL-L is a discussion group for teachers of English as a second or foreign language around the world. TESL-L members discuss many interesting topics relating to EFL teaching on the listserv, and many people seem to get good ideas for improving their classroom teaching from the discussion.

> To subscribe, address an email message in the following manner:
> To: listserv@cunyvm.cuny.edu [leave subject line blank]
> In the message body type: subscribe TESL-L Your First and Last Name

National Directory of Teacher Preparation Programs (Preservice & Inservice) for Teachers of Linguistically and Culturally Diverse Students
http://www.colorado.edu/education/BUENO/crede/index.html

> A product of CREDE's National Study of Effective Teacher Education for Diverse Student Populations project, this directory represents a nation-wide investigation of the teacher education programs that prepare educators for the linguistic and cultural diversity of U.S. classrooms. The directory is hosted online by the BUENO Center for Multicultural Education.

National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE)
http://www.cal.org/ncle

The National Center for ESL Literacy Education is the only national information center focusing on the language and literacy education of adults and out-of-school youth learning English. NCLE provides information on adult ESL literacy education to teachers and tutors, program directors, researchers, and policy makers interested in the education of refugees, immigrants, and other U.S. residents whose native language is other than English.

# Sample Search of the ERIC Database: Grades K–12

## Search Results

**ED397548**
**Title: School Reform and Student Diversity, Volume II: Case Studies of Exemplary Practices for LEP Students. Studies of Education Reform.**
**Authors: Berman, Paul; And Others**
**Publication Date: September 1995**
Solving the challenges of educating language-minority students to the high standards expected of all children requires a willingness to reform the usual practices at many of today's public schools. This volume, the second in a series of three, presents findings of a study that examined exemplary school-reform efforts involving the education of limited-English-proficient (LEP) students. The study focused on language arts in grades 4 through 6 and mathematics and science in Grades 6 through 8. The volume describes eight schools with exemplary approaches to the education of language-minority students. The schools were selected through a nomination process, telephone screening interviews, and two site visits to each of the eight schools. The case-study summaries briefly describe the school and community context; portray a scene from one or more exemplary learning environments; identify the strategies and learning models that work for LEP students; highlight structural innovations; identify supportive factors at the district or state level; and outline key findings. The strategies included accelerated learning environments, cooperative learning, long-term teacher–student cohorts, critical thinking, material presented in a meaningful context, and respect for students' cultural backgrounds.

**ED449263**
**Title: Helping Hispanic Students Reach High Academic Standards: An Idea Book.**
**Authors: Weiner, Lisa; Leighton, Mary; Funkhouser, Janie**
**Publication Date: September 01, 2000**
**Availability: ED Pubs, P.O. Box 1398, Jessup, MD 20794-1398. Tel: 877-433-7827 (Toll Free); Tel: 800-872-5327 (Toll Free); Fax: 301-470-1244; e-mail: edpubs@inet.ed.gov. For full text: ttp://www.ed.gov/offices/OUS/PES/evallibrary.htm#ideabooks.**
This report is part of a series of Idea Books designed to help schools and communities work together to strengthen education so all students can achieve high academic standards. It is specifically designed to help administrators and teachers seeking to understand how Title I, Title VII, and other programs assist educators in helping Hispanic students and Spanish-speaking English language learners achieve high standards. It describes promising practices that have been proven effective, illustrating how they can operate in schools and other community settings with Hispanic students. The book describes how effective schools serve Hispanic students in four ways: implementing effective, aligned, standards-based programs; building teacher and organizational capacity to serve Hispanic students; using family and community resources; and building firm foundations for postsecondary education. Each section of the book ends with a checklist that educators can use to see how well their schools and districts are meeting the needs of Hispanic students. A final chapter presents lessons learned from experience based on the four methods of serving Hispanic students. The three appendixes present an overview of profiled programs, resources for serving Hispanic students and their families, and additional resources.

**EJ646522**
**Title: Curriculum Development for Multicultural and Multilingual Students.**
**Author: Andrews, Lanna**
**Source: Multicultural Education, v9 n3 p15-18 Spr 2002**
Addressed the need to train teachers to work with culturally/linguistically diverse students, using a classroom case and online feedback from the case teacher and building a database of adapted lessons. Although cases were useful in promoting application of knowledge and skills, feedback and opportunity for reflection were essential. Computers facilitated teacher training and expanded their use of new skills.

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Sample Search of the ERIC Database:
Grades K–12

**EJ606649**
**Title: Curriculum Innovations in Intensive English Programs: An Update.**
**Author: Casey, Judy**
**Source: Journal of Intensive English Studies, v13 p79-97 Spr-Fall 1999**
Discusses curriculum design and development for intensive English programs (IEP). Describes a study on recent and future curricular innovations in IEP programs. Makes suggestions for successful IEP programs, including useful orientations, accurate assessment and bridge programs, faculty and staff training in diversity awareness, better student advising, and scholarships.

**ED465310**
**Title: Gallery of ESOL Lesson Plans.**
**Pages: 23**
**Publication Date: 2001**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.**
**Availability: For full text: http://www.lacnyc.org/resources/workshops/adultinstruction.htm.**
This collection of lesson plans for teaching English as a Second Language includes the following: "You Scratched Me!" which has students examine verbs in three forms (base, past, and progressive) together with questions, accelerating the memorization and understanding of verb forms and tenses; "Getting Acquainted/ Inferential Thinking," which provides an exercise in inference and has students apply the knowledge to how body language, words, and actions help people understand what is happening in a play even if they do not understand the language well; "Let's Create Job Biographies," which helps adult learners relate their knowledge of work in their home countries to a workplace in the United States; "Let's Talk about Work!" which helps adult learners explore career options through oral interaction with peers after a visit to a work place; "Student-Generated Sentences," which encourages students to use and internalize grammatical structures in English; "Community Language Learning," which encourages and promotes real conversations in English with beginning language learners; and "Where Is the Monkey?" which has students answer yes/no questions using the verb "be" with prepositions.

**ED458843**
**Title: Make It and Take It: Computer-Based Resources for Lesson Planning.**
**Authors: Brown, Tasha; Cargill, Debby; Hostetler, Jan; Joyner, Susan; Phillips, Vanessa**
**Publication Date: August 01, 2001**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC02 Plus Postage.**
This document is part lesson planner and idea resource and part annotated bibliography of electronic resources. The lesson planner is divided into four parts. Part one, "Tables to Go," contains different tables that can be used for a variety of exercises at all levels of the English-as-a-Second-Language (ESL) classroom. Part two, "Exploring the Internet for Conversation Ideas" provides many ideas for subjects of conversation practice, including mock job interviews and news reporter interviews of newsmakers or witnesses, and can be used at any level of instruction and learner proficiency. Part three provides a number of activities designed to engage students directly in the target language, including such games as "Alphabet Soup," "Grammar Bingo" and "Vocabulary Journal." The final part introduces creative and innovative ways to use student writing to enhance student oral skills. An annotated bibliography of Internet resources is listed by subject.

**ED442306**
**Title: Project-Based Learning and Assessment: A Resource Manual for Teachers.**
**Publication Date: 1997**
**Availability: Virginia Adult Education Resource Centers, Oliver Hall, VCU, 1015 W. Main Street, P.O. Box 842020, Richmond, VA 23284-2020.**
The idea behind this guide is that assessing student performance through projects not only allows for the observation of affective behaviors and cognitive strategies that affect learning, but also helps to make instruction fully responsive to students' needs. This resource kit was developed to assist teachers in understanding the purpose of project work as a practical and meaningful way of learning and assessing the progress of learning English. The main focus of this kit is to guide teachers in developing projects for learning and assessment of their adult students. The kit includes an introduction, a guide for developing and implementing projects (including background information, project framework, pre-project activities, assessment, and sample projects), abstracts of projects for different levels, and a bibliography. Numerous diagrams, figures, charts, rubrics, checklists, and lesson plans are included.

**EJ595067**

**Title: Same Old Dog, New Tricks: Lesson Planning as Friend Not Foe.**

**Author: Propst, David**

**Source: Forum, v35 n4 Oct-Dec 1997**

Presents a lesson-planning instrument for English-as-a-Second-Language courses to help clarify the role of lesson planning in teaching. The instrument can be used by teacher trainers to introduce trainees to lesson planning or by teachers looking for a change of pace.

**EJ595059**

**Title: Into, Through, and Beyond. A Framework to Develop Content-Based Material.**

**Authors: Brinton, Donna M.; Holten, Christine**

**Source: Forum, v35 n4 Oct-Dec 1997**

Describes a lesson planning framework that content-based instruction teachers can adapt to their instructional materials, student populations, and classroom settings. Applying the framework to an authentic reading passage, the sample lesson illustrates how teachers can develop activities that supplement the content, increase student access to and comprehension of core materials, and foster students' linguistic skills.

**EJ577584**

**Title: Planning Successful Writing Lessons.**

**Authors: Lederfein, Batya; Karhash, Ayellet; Guetta, Arianna; Cohen, Mira; Dey, Dafna; Azaria, Galia; Ellen, Ruthie; Komarovsky, Sharon**

**Source: English Teachers' Journal (Israel), v52 p21-29 Oct 1998**

Presents nine tips for planning effective second-language writing lessons. Tips are based on three principles (writing is a means of communication, writing is a process, and eliciting oral or written production of foreign language varies according to the degree of guidance teachers give to students). The paper offers six sample writing lessons for elementary and junior high school students.

**EJ568771**

**Title: Planning a Computer-Assisted Lesson.**

**Authors: Mor, Nili; Bracha, Tamar; Heilweil, Ida; Freidenreich, Orit**

**Source: English Teachers' Journal (Israel), p6-10 Mar 1997**

Describes how to plan computer-based activities for second-language classrooms, noting ways that computer use differs in such classrooms. Explains how to plan a lesson, focusing on the activity, grade level, time requirements, software, preparation time, teaching method, pre- and post-computer work, skills used, and teacher's role. Sample lessons and units are provided.

**EJ653849**

**Title: The Effect of Culture on the Teaching of English.**

**Author: Lawrence, Brian**

**Source: English Teacher: An International Journal, v4 n1 p18-30 Oct 2000**

Describes the nature of culture, and examines the cultural and learning differences between Japan and Great Britain in relation to the communicative approach. Warns of stereotyping that ignores sub-cultures and individual personality.

**EJ652266**

**Title: The Cultural Conundrum: Cultural Literacy in the Classroom.**

**Author: Malone, Stephen**

**Source: English Teacher: An International Journal, v5 n3 p277-82 Jul 2002**

Focuses on the potential pitfalls of exposing students from a non-Western culture, such as Thailand, to literature in English with its accompanying baggage of cultural references. Referencing Ed Hirsch, Jr.'s, "Cultural Literacy—What Every American Needs to Know," the importance of cultural literacy as opposed to mere lexical literacy is emphasized.

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**EJ652264**
**Title: Cultural Isolation and Cultural Integration: A Communicative Language Activity.**
**Author: Courtney, John**
**Source: English Teacher: An International Journal, v5 n3 p256-64 Jul 2002**
Provides a theoretical grounding to an activity that follows a communicative language teaching approach to teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language. The activity, cultural isolation and cultural integration, motivates learners to relate their experiences and feelings in regard to diverse cultures.

**EJ651357**
**Title: Tending School: A Forum on the Experiences of Refugee and Immigrant Students in the United States System.**
**Authors: Roberts, Amy; Locke, Steven**
**Source: Interchange: A Quarterly Review of Education, v32 n4 p375-93 2001**
Discusses refugee and immigrant students' education, highlighting three high school students' experiences based on the notion that such students' school life can be examined from a critical and political perspective. Face-to-face encounters in school settings made possible a new politics of truth for these students by their assumption of control over personal interpretations of the U.S. system.

**ED464503**
**Title: Cross-Cultural Varieties of Politeness.**
**Authors: Hondo, Junko; Goodman, Bridget**
**Source: Texas Papers in Foreign Language Education, v6 n1 p163-170 Fall 2001**
The treatment of politeness features is particularly revealing of the complex dynamics that language teachers face given the cultural variety present in schools and colleges. Along with its positive contributions to the learning environment, the growing student diversity poses a significant challenge for both students and educators. This paper explores the culturally based variations of a particular speech act (the compliment). A review of current literature on the subject among the speakers of five languages (American English, Chinese, Japanese, Egyptian Arabic, and Spanish) illustrates contrasting patterns of discourse. The review indicates that if communicative competence is a learning objective, the language curriculum needs to include direct treatment of such sociolinguistic features. Implications for today's classroom include the important role teachers play in implementing the use of compliments in the target culture.

**ED464066**
**Title: Reflecting Latino Culture in Our Classrooms: A Quick Start for Teachers.**
**Authors: Canning, Christine; Salazar-Guenther, Mary; Polanco-Noboa, Julio**
**Publication Date: February 2002**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.**
This paper describes how the University of Northern Iowa's San Antonio Regional Student Teaching Program developed a course to provide cultural information on Hispanic Americans for its predominantly white student teachers. The course was delivered over 2 semesters, with students doing most work in five 2-hour meetings on campus. During the student teaching semester, they implemented the ideas and activities that they had created during the course. The paper presents the course syllabus, which offers a background on Hispanics and five sessions that emphasize how to reach Hispanic students; Mexican and Mexican American culture (holidays, food, art, and music); literature for students and teachers/exemplary authors, books, and activities; Mexican American historical perspectives and Mexican American heroes; and bilingual education and other critical issues. The sessions include strategies, field trips, handouts, and assignments.

**EJ646959**
**Title: Problems and Recommendations: Enhancing Communication with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students.**
**Authors: Kader, Shereen Abdel; Yawkey, Thomas D.**
**Source: Reading Improvement, v39 n1 p43-51 Spr 2002**
Notes that communication between teachers and culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students need serious consideration especially in recognizing potential sources of miscommunication and misinterpretation. Considers sources of miscommunication within verbal and nonverbal communication. Discusses each element and offers examples in CLD classroom settings.

**EJ645913**
**Title: A Good Start: A Progressive, Transactional Approach to Diversity in Preservice Teacher Education.**
**Authors: Arias, M. Beatriz; Poynor, Leslie**
**Source: Bilingual Research Journal, v25 n4 p417-34 Fall 2001**
A study examined what three English-as-second-language preservice teachers learned in a progressive, trans-actional methods course about teaching culturally and linguistically diverse children. Although the course did not instill the deep cross-cultural understanding necessary for bicultural competence, it did cultivate the student teachers' desire to value and respect other cultures.

**EJ645350**
**Title: A Cross-Cultural Study of Mexico and the United States: Perceived Roles of Teachers.**
**Authors: Nelson, Gayle; Lutenbacher, Cindy; Lopez, Maria Elena**
**Source: Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development, v22 n6 p463-74 2001**
Investigated one area that may affect Mexicans' performance in American schools: cultural differences in appro-priate school behavior. Interview data were collected from 40 students and 20 teachers in Mexico in Spanish by native Spanish speakers, and from 20 native English-speaking students, 20 Mexican English-as-a-Second-Lan-guage students, 20 content area teachers, and 20 native English speakers in the United States.

**EJ645243**
**Title: A Critical "Checkbook" for Culture Teaching and Learning.**
**Author: Guest, Michael**
**Source: ELT Journal, v56 n2 p154-61 Apr 2002**
Attempts to offer insight that will help teachers bring a balanced awareness of the role and usage of culture into the English-as-a-Foreign-Language classroom.

**ED462865**
**Title: U.S. Culture: What You Need To Know To Survive.**
**Author: Sjolie, Dennis**
**Publication Date: October 2001**
**Available from: EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.**
This paper addresses the issue of encouraging students to read and experience culture first hand, rather than read about culture as defined by or channeled through textbooks. Students new to the United States learn about the culture through a variety of publications: "Sun," "The National Enquirer," "People Weekly," "Newsweek," and "Time." Utilizing this series of print media, students touch the pulse of mainstream U.S. culture and understand that a large percentage of U.S. citizens believe "first hand accounts" of UFO abductions, "learn about the future" through fortune tellers, and discover what their favorite Hollywood celebrities eat for breakfast. Likewise, students learn how a large percentage of U.S. citizens focus on world events, global political situations, and hard news that bears consequence to all. As the broad and varied aspects of U.S. culture reveal themselves to students, follow-up language/culture learning activities are limited only by the creativity of the instructor.

**EJ642306**
**Title: LEARN: A Community Study about Latino Immigrants and Education.**
**Authors: McLaughlin, H. James; Liljestrom, Anna; Lim, Jae Hoon; Meyers, Dawn**
**Source: Education and Urban Society, v34 n2 p212-32 Feb 2002**
Examines the perceptions of parents, educators, and students regarding the educational needs of new English learners, particularly Latinos. Overall, foreign-born students may not know how to relate to American teachers and peers, and educators may not understand students' prior educational experiences and cultural influences. Language is a frequently noted barrier to teacher–student–family communication and educational quality.

**EJ641205**

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**Title: A Lesson in Culture.**
**Author: Tseng, Yueh-Hung**
**Source: ELT Journal, v56 n1 p11-21 Jan 2002**
Argues for a new interpretation of culture that potentially challenges traditional views of the culture common in discussions of foreign and second language learning. Proposes ways to restructure curriculum around this new interpretation. Suggestions for creating a classroom environment consistent with these new views are explored.

**EJ637375**
**Title: Cultural Awareness and the Negotiation of Meaning in Intercultural Communication.**
**Author: Littlewood, William**
**Source: Language Awareness, v10 n2-3 p189-99 2001**
Focuses on a number of episodes in intercultural communication in which there is some degree of mismatch between the intentions and interpretations of the interlocutors. Three concepts are used to illustrate the nature of these mismatches: the concept of common ground, the principle of indexicaity, and the concept of cultural models.

**EJ632810**
**Title: Handling "Culture Bumps"**
**Author: Jiang, Wenying**
**Source: ELT Journal, v55 n4 p382-90 Oct 2001**
Reviews Archer's and Thorp's ideas about the most frequently encountered culture bumps or "confused encounters," and offers alternative ways of perceiving and handling them. Also stresses that the fundamental values of a nation should be considered in dealing with these cultural variations and suggests six principles for perceiving and handling them.

**EJ621483**
**Title: Teaching English as an International Language: Implications for Cultural Materials in the Classroom.**
**Author: McKay, Sandra Lee**
**Source: TESOL Journal, v9 n4 p7-11 Win 2000**
Explores the link between culture and international language and examines what is meant by international language. The role of culture in language teaching is discussed. and a description of the various levels of culture that can be included in teaching materials is provided. Concludes by suggesting that there are many benefits to including a variety of cultures, not just Western cultures, in classroom materials.

**EJ605135**
**Title: Project Homeland: Crossing Cultural Boundaries in the ESL Classroom.**
**Author: Ortmeier, Christina M.**
**Source: TESOL Journal, v9 n1 p10-17 Spr 2000**
Describes how a writing project and oral presentation engage middle school English-as-Second-Language students in collaborative activities that develop their understanding of and respect for one another's heritage and an appreciation for their valuable cultural contributions to the greater community.

**EJ599393**
**Title: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages and Culture.**
**Author: Atkinson, Dwight**
**Source: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages Quarterly, v33 n4 p625-54 Win 1999**
Looks at the question of how culture is understood in the Teaching English as a Second/Other-Language (TESOL) profession. Examines the perspectives toward culture implicitly or explicitly expressed in recent "TESOL Quarterly" articles, and concludes that different views of culture exist in the field.