CALL FOR PAPERS

The Publications Officers are now accepting submissions for Volume 4, No. 1 of Texas English Language Teaching (TexELT), an online journal, a publication of Texas Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages-Region V (TexTESOL V).

This is a peer-reviewed electronic publication which will be posted on the TexTESOL V website and will be available free of charge to members through email Newsletter link and to the general public through the public access portions of the TexTESOL V website. Submissions are due March 30, 2015. It is anticipated that manuscripts selected for consideration will be sent to members of the peer jury of readers by April 5, 2015 and returned to the Publications Officers with Level One Protocol advice by April 17, 2015. Online publication is tentatively scheduled for September 2015.

All submissions should be sent electronically to ritadeyoe@yahoo.com. If you do not receive a return email confirming receipt within three days, please send a follow-up email.

If a majority of the review panel do not support accepting the manuscript in its current form for further development and publication, the author(s) will be notified accordingly.

If only minor editing is needed, the Publications Officers will make minor corrections. If substantial changes are needed or missing information is required, the author will be given the option to revise as requested or to withdraw the manuscript from consideration.

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TexTESOL V Mission and Purposes (from TexTESOL V Constitution)

MISSION STATEMENT
The mission of TexTESOL V is to provide information, direction, and support to its membership in promoting excellence in the teaching of English to speakers of other languages.

PURPOSES
1. Work cooperatively toward the improvement of instruction in all programs that seek to provide learners with an opportunity to acquire English language skills and proficiency.
2. Provide opportunities for study and research.
3. Encourage professional development, participation, and leadership at the local and state levels.
4. Promote intercultural understanding and effective cross-cultural communication.
5. Cooperate in appropriate ways with other groups having similar concerns.

Editorial Process

Manuscripts that meet the specifications listed will be reviewed by the Publications Coordinator, who will create a “blind copy” with no identification of the author(s). It will then be submitted to members of the TexELT Review Panel or the TexTESOL V Board or other qualified readers, who will be selected for relevant background and interest in the topic, and to insure anonymity of the author(s).

If approved by at least three readers, the blind-copy manuscript will be assigned to Peer Jury Reviewers for general content editing advice and review. If approved by only two readers, it will be submitted to an additional reader and the majority decision will be final.

If a majority of the review panel do not support accepting the manuscript in its current form for further development and publication, the author(s) will be notified accordingly.

If only minor editing is needed, the Publications Officers will make minor corrections. If substantial changes are needed or missing information is required, the author will be given the option to revise as requested or to withdraw the manuscript from consideration.
Publication Priorities

Action Research Reports

Brief reports on action research in which the writer has developed a plan to do something in a particular way to try to improve student outcomes, gives some evidence of having compared that approach with previous or simultaneous alternative approaches, evaluates the outcomes, and critically examines both implementation issues and outcomes. This does not need to be at the level of an experimental or quasi-experimental design, but ought to present evidence of thorough planning of details, and be based on a review of relevant available literature.

Critical Reviews of Textbooks, Teaching Materials, and Teacher Preparation Texts and Resources

Brief critical reviews of new textbooks and materials for teaching English or preparing teachers of English as a Second Language at any of the levels (elementary, secondary, adult, and higher education), in which the writer points out personal experiences in using the text or materials--positive and negative--and/or details benefits and defects, as perceived by the reviewer, for the sorts of student populations our membership serves within the North Texas context. TexTESOL V members work in both urban schools and colleges with extensive bilingual, newcomer and ESL programs and also in rural districts with limited programs and few ESL-qualified professionals. The reviewer should state clearly his/her own context and experience and the settings for which the text or materials reviewed are considered.

Research Syntheses for Application

Well-structured syntheses of the best practices for our regional needs or the needs of a particular type of situation that exists in our region, according to research from a wide variety of sources, but with critical attention to "applicability", and the perceived quality of the research.

Criteria for Consideration

1. The research topic should be of fairly general interest to practicing ESL teachers at one or more of the levels addressed by our Interest Sections: Elementary, Secondary, Adult and/or Parent Education, Higher Education. This includes post-secondary ESL students and Bilingual/ESL Teacher Preparation.
2. The manuscript should be in Times New Roman 12pt font and should follow APA format 6th edition for citing all sources. You may request information on this format from the Publications Coordinator.
3. The manuscript should be sufficiently edited with regard to errors in grammar, spelling, punctuation, idiomatic usage and document format to resolve all errors identified by Spell Check.
4. All sources should be cited properly and completely so that the reader can easily consult the original source or access it electronically if it is available online.
5. All authors are solely responsible for ensuring that no plagiarism occurs in their submissions, and authors whose work is selected for publication will need to sign a statement to that effect. At their option, the editors may submit papers to an anti-plagiarism service for originality comparisons.
6. No specific length is required because the online publication format does not create arbitrary limitations on the quantity that can be published. However, our members (and our peer jury) will prefer brevity with substance and simplicity with sufficient detail to comprehend fully the contexts and applications discussed.

Peer Reviewers and Editors for TexELT Texas English Language Teaching, Volume 3, Issue 1

Publications Coordinator for TexTESOL V; Editor, TexELT, 3(1) Rita Deyoe-Chiullán, Ph.D.
Publications Copy Coordinator for TexTESOL V; Copy Editor, TexELT, 3(1) Jey Venkatesan, Ph.D.
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Content Reviewer, TexELT, 3(1) Les Brinkerhoff, M. A.
Contents


Contents of this issue of *TexELT: Texas English Language Teaching*, 3(1), 3.


Editors’ Biographies. *TexELT: Texas English Language Teaching*, 3(1), 44-46.


Welcome to the third issue of Texas English Language Teaching (TexELT)

Two years ago, *TexELT*’s debut issue presented three articles by experienced academic writers who are all university faculty members in the United States and Canada. Last year’s six contributions included three full-length articles and three shorter papers. The six authors were far more diverse, and more than half of last year’s writers have been and continue to be English language learners themselves as well as blossoming professionals, who invigorate our academic landscape. For our third issue, the authors are experienced academics with previous publications, but both articles took their authors into new research directions as they worked with our editors to make a rich contribution to our readers.

In addition to our Publications Copy Coordinator, Dr. Jey Venkatesan, two other current or former TexTESOL V Board members volunteered to continue supporting and assisting me in this effort as reviewers, and we were fortunate to be joined by an additional reviewer who brought strengths in content and copy editing, but particularly an in-depth experience with the details of APA format. As previously, our talented and hard-working primary content reviewer, Margaret Redus, made essential major commitments early in the editing process as our primary content reviewer and as the primary content editor. She persevered through several revisions to guide the authors in shaping their manuscripts so that their messages would be clear, understandable, and useful for the professional purposes of our readership. Her work was supplemented later in the process by the efforts of our newest reviewer and content and format editor, Dr. Lana Sloan. For the always-important copy-editing issues such as spelling, syntax, redundancy, and word choice, we were fortunate to again be able to call on the expert who serves on the TexTESOL V Board as our Publications Copy Coordinator Dr. Jey Venkatesan. Thus once more, I had the good fortune to be able to bring these talented individuals together with our authors to produce a valuable contribution to our profession. --Rita Deyoe-Chiullan, Ph. D., *Publications Coordinator TexTESOL V and Editor, TexELT*, 3(1), 4.
Introduction to the contents of this issue

In education circles, we often talk about translating theory and research into practice. In the first two articles selected for publication in this issue of Texas English Language Teaching (TexELT), the authors have successfully accomplished this transition. Using two different approaches, they have established connections between the knowledge generated by the research community and practices designed to improve the performance of learners acquiring English language skills and proficiency. While synthesizing existing research and reporting original research contributions, the articles also serve as how-to guides for teacher practitioners, offering a treasure trove of best practices in curriculum design and instructional delivery. Extensive, current bibliographies provide a foundation of research support and ideas for practical application. In a third highly informative article, Dr. Rita Deyoe-Chiullán, a voracious reader on the topic of English language learning and teaching, shares a lengthy bibliography of her top picks for a summer reading list appropriate to all who share an interest in education.

The first article by Dr. Lauren K. Gonzalez reports further evidence of a link between the use of multicultural literature and the reading accuracy of elementary students served in English as a second language (ESL) programs. In guided reading lessons over a five-week span, Dr. Gonzalez found first grade students using multicultural literature experienced greater increases in reading accuracy than those who did not use multicultural literature. Observations made by Dr. Gonzalez during the guided reading lessons documented the value of multicultural literature in expanding students’ awareness of their own culture and engagement in learning. The study also elaborates on the significant role of multicultural literature in students’ cross-cultural understanding and their development of healthy self-concepts. Accompanying the details of the mixed methods study are an informative list of definitions, a detailed perspective on multicultural literature’s contribution to literacy development, and practical tools, including a checklist for selecting authentic multicultural literature, the book lists used in the study, and an example of a running record form.

In the second article, Dr. Ruben E. Gonzalez and Dr. Delilah Dotremon call for a new instructional leadership paradigm in the education of English language learners (ELLs), emphasizing the need to better prepare teachers. The authors stress the critical need for teachers of ELL students to employ an expansive menu of pedagogical tools and to possess deep understanding of the role of culture in learning. Citing the poor performance of ELL students on statewide standardized tests, the authors call for more innovative and robust teaching strategies and tools, improved instructional delivery models, and student-friendly testing instruments and accommodations. Dr. Gonzalez and Dr. Dotremon provide a detailed literature review supporting the need to specially prepare teachers to work with ELL students and the importance of research in their preparation. Further, the authors suggest numerous evidence-based models, strategies, tools, and resources to be used in teacher preparation or for immediate implementation in classrooms. An underlying theme in the study is the need for teachers of ELL students to embrace change and to have the courage to take a stand.

In the third article, all of us benefit from Dr. Deyoe-Chiullán’s wisdom and expertise in the ELL field as she makes recommendations for current books from her own personal reading list. The relevant bibliography covers topics ranging from language acquisition to vocabulary development to linguistics applications in multiple genres. One peer reviewer said of Dr. Deyoe-Chiullán’ summer reading list, “…as a former reader of research for my own professional needs, I think Rita's bibliography provides a valued asset to our readership. It is current and comprehensive in scope.”

--Alana (Lana) Sloan, Ed. D., Content Reviewer and Content and Format Editor for TexELT, 3(1), 5.
Using Multicultural Literature to Impact the Reading Achievement of English language learners

by

Lauren K. González, Ed.D.
Stephen F. Austin State University
Nacogdoches, Texas

Abstract

This mixed methods study investigated a possible relationship between the use of multicultural literature and the reading accuracy of students served in English as a Second Language (ESL) programs. Participants included 10 first-grade students in ESL at the same Title I public elementary school within a suburban district in Texas. Students were randomly assigned to two groups of five for guided reading instruction. One group read multicultural literature in lessons over a 5-week period, while the other group did not. Pre- and post-tests were administered to the two groups for the purpose of comparing their reading accuracy rates. Observations were made and qualitative data were collected about student engagement and interest during the guided reading lessons. Results indicated students in the group using multicultural literature experienced greater increases in their reading accuracy than students in the group that did not use multicultural literature.

Key Words: Multicultural literature, first grade, guided reading, reading achievement, English language learners, culturally relevant instruction.

Introduction

In data reported by the National Kids Count Data Center in 2011, only 37% of children in the United States met national achievement standards in literacy. Of the remaining 63%, a majority are English language learners, minorities, and/or from low-income families. Lack of literacy skills may cause these individuals to be less likely to participate fully in society throughout their lifetimes. Employment opportunities become rare for them and negative behaviors increase. In 2007, 66% of ELLs had a family income below 200% of the federal poverty level, compared to 37% of non-ELL youths (U.S. Department of Education, 2009). This problem is increasing in the United States every year. As the population of the United States becomes more diverse, there needs to be an educational system in place to meet every student’s learning needs and to help all students reach high literacy achievement rates (McIntyre, Hulan, & Maher, 2010). Many theorists have suggested that the use of multicultural literature would have a positive impact on the literacy development of diverse learners. This research addressed the question: Is there a correlation between the use of multicultural literature in the classroom and the reading accuracy rates of students served in English as a second language (ESL) programs?

Citation

Multicultural Literature and Its Value

Definitions

- Multicultural literature focuses on groups who have been previously underrepresented and often marginalized by society as a whole, especially in depictions in children’s literature in the United States (Gopalakrishnan, 2011).
- Although difficult to define, “Multicultural children’s literature is about the sociocultural experiences of previously underrepresented groups” (Gopalakrishnan, 2011, p. 5).
- Multicultural literature validates certain groups’ experiences, including those occurring because of differences in language, race, gender, class, ethnicity, identity, and sexual orientation (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 2002).
- One of the main purposes of children’s literature is to be inclusive of and provide validation for ALL children’s experiences; hence, books that portray experiences of children from many different sociocultural backgrounds should be included in the curriculum (Temple, Martinez, Yokota, & Naylor, 2002).
- In its most authentic form, multicultural literature focuses on the reality of various cultures (Lindgren, 1991; Nieto, 1992; & Rochman, 1993).
- While there are opposing views of what determines the authenticity of multicultural literature, this study relied on a checklist (Appendix B) developed by Slapin, Scale, and Gonzalez (1992).
- Some state that multicultural literature only includes texts written by a member of an ethnic group about that ethnic group, its cultural traditions, and its people (Slapin & Seale, 1992).
- Multicultural literature should be culturally conscious literature, in which the author is sensitive to aspects of the specific culture and the story consciously seeks to depict a fictional life experience of that culture. (Mikkelsen, 1998).
- Authenticity also includes the accuracy and validity of the text and the illustrations (Mikkelsen, 1998).

Understanding of Cultures

To experience literacy success, students must be able to relate to and understand literature. Multicultural literature plays a significant role in the development of children’s cross-cultural understanding (Harper & Brand, 2010). As students grow and change, their understanding becomes more complex; therefore, children need to be educated with “an integration of ethnic texture” (Dooley, 2008). According to Norton (1990), multicultural literature can also extend students' knowledge of parallel cultures by exposing them to the differences and similarities between their culture and that of other groups. Incorporating multicultural literature into the curriculum can expand students’ awareness and decrease negative stereotyping of individuals from other cultures (Litchner & Johnson, 1973). Not only can multicultural literature present students with clear contrasts in perspectives, it can help them to understand their own cultural heritages and the cultural heritages of other students in their class (Rasinski & Padak, 1990).
Improving Student Self-Concept

Multicultural literature helps to create a positive and trusting classroom environment, one in which all students feel welcome, comfortable and respected (Follett, 2014).

Multicultural literature can be important in helping diverse students develop a healthy self-concept. Self-concept is based on knowledge of and a sense of pride in family background (Hittleman, 1978). When children read literature about people from other cultures, it has a positive developmental effect. Children of a specific ethnic minority tend to have increased self-esteem and feel part of the larger society when they read positive stories about their own ethnic group (Rochman, 1993). When children of a "majority" group read stories about other cultures, it increases their sensitivity to those who are different from themselves, improves their knowledge of the world, and helps them realize that, although people have many differences, they also share many similarities (Rochman, 1993).

Multicultural Literature and Literacy Development

The use of multicultural literature has been shown to be directly related to students’ reading achievement (Schadel, Lazarowitz, & Azaiza, 2007). A variety of researchers in a variety of settings are finding the use of multicultural literature to be effective in literacy development.

• Multicultural books promote positive attitudes towards literacy and help improve reading comprehension, writing quality, and vocabulary (Schadel, Lazarowitz, & Azaiza, 2007).
• It is essential for the academic advancement of all students; particularly for at-risk students (Harper & Brand, 2010).
• Children must make connections with the meaning of the text to become proficient readers (Gangi, 2008).
• McCullough (2008) found that, when readers make connections with literature related to their culture-specific experiences, their reading comprehension increases.
• McCollin and O’Shea (2005) found that using culturally and linguistically relevant reading material improved reading comprehension, phonological awareness, and fluency rates.
• Using text students can relate to is essential to supporting their reading-acquisition skills and increasing their motivation to read (Schadel, Lazarowitz, & Azaiza; Harper & Brand; Gangi; McCullough; McCollin & O’Shea).

Methodology

Participants

The participants in this study included 10 first-grade students from a public elementary school within a suburban school district in Texas. An elementary school identified as Title I with a large population of students served in ESL was used as the location for recruitment of participants. Participants were chosen with the following criteria: (1) they were students served in ESL and (2) they were reading on an instructional reading level of H/I as determined by a running record.
An instructional reading level on a running record is when the reader has a word error range during reading of 2 to 5 word calling errors per 100 words of text (95% accuracy or better), with at least 80 percent comprehension on simple recall questions about the story. A running record was conducted by the teacher with each participant to determine each student’s reading accuracy rate within the reading level of H/I. According to the school and teacher in which the study took place, a level H/I instructional reading level is considered to be an at-risk reading level in first grade past mid-school year.

Demographic information for the students participating in this study is shown in Table 1 below. Participants were either of Latino or Mexican American ethnicity, their native language was Spanish, and they spoke English at an advanced or advanced high level. Of the 10 participants, six were males and four were females. Students were randomly assigned to one of two groups, each with 5 participants. Group 1 students read multicultural literature during their guided reading instruction. Group 2 students did not read multicultural literature during their guided reading instruction.

Table 1
Demographic Information of Student Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Native Language</th>
<th>Native Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mexican American</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Mexican American</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Mexican American</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Mexican American</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>Mexico</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Latino</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Design

This research study used a mixed methodology to investigate a possible relationship between the use of multicultural literature during guided reading lessons and development of reading accuracy rate within an instructional reading level of students served in ESL. A pre-and post-test called a running record was used to measure students’ reading accuracy during guided reading instruction. During the study, a running record was conducted by the researcher at the beginning of the study and at the end of the study, after a five-week period. Running records were conducted one-on-one with the researcher and the student in a quiet location of the classroom. Observations were also made and qualitative data collected about student engagement and interest during the guided reading lessons.

Materials

Running Records. Pre- and post-running records were given to all students to determine individual instructional reading levels (See Appendix A). A running record, a Reading Recovery assessment developed by Marie Clay, is a means of documenting a student's individual reading of a
continuous text. A running record can provide a way to assess an individual student's reading, to determine appropriate levels of text for reading, and to inform teaching. A running record assesses a student's reading accuracy rate as she/he reads from a Lexile leveled book. Leveled books are books selected for running record assessment purposes. Running record forms, with text from the books printed on the forms, accompany specific benchmark books. Only the first 100 - 150 words of the longer benchmark books are used for the upper level running records. There are different scores that correlate with the student's reading accuracy rate that are created from the running record. A score of 90% accuracy and below would be a book that is too hard for the student; a score of 90-95% accuracy would be at an instructional level, and 95-100% accuracy would be at an independent level. To determine the level of text a student should read, the reading accuracy score needs to be within the instructional level.

The first running record was given to all participants during the first guided reading lesson. After a 5-week period, a running record was conducted again with all participants.

Books used in Guided Reading Lessons. For the purpose of the study, multicultural, leveled readers were used with Group 1. The participants in the experimental group were of Latino or Mexican American ethnicity. Therefore, the researcher chose to use authentic (defined above) multicultural literature that represented characters specifically from Mexican American and Latino culture.

In order to determine authenticity of the literature, the researcher used a checklist (see Appendix B), developed by Slapin, Seale, and Gonzales (1992). The checklist was chosen as it was referenced many times in other peer-reviewed studies as being reliable and accurate.

When searching for appropriate books to use with the experimental group the researcher used the following process:

(1) Obtain children’s books related to the Mexican American and Latino cultures that were determined to be authentic according to the checklist (Appendix B) and

(2) Determine if the authentic books were written at an instructional level of an H/I using a website called Lexile Measure (https://lexile.com/findabook/). The user of the website simply types in the name of the book, and the Lexile Measure automatically determines the reading level of the text.

Using these guidelines, the following books clearly represented the Mexican American and Latino cultures of the participants in the study. The characters, settings, illustrations, and traditions in the books were familiar to those of the participants.
Book List for Group 1 (Experimental Group)

A Birthday Basket for Tía by Pat Mora
Amelia's Road by Linda Jacobs Altman
Barrio: José's Neighborhood by George Ancona
Confetti: Poems for Children by Pat Mora
Farolitos for Abuelo by Rudolfo Anaya
In My Family/En Mi Familia by Carmen Lomas Garza
Magic Windows/Ventanas Magicas by Carmen Lomas Garza
What Can You Do With A Paleta? By Carmen Tafolla
Diego Rivera: His World and Ours by Duncan Tonatiuh
The Los Gatos Black on Halloween by Marisa Montes
Holy Tortilla and a Pot of Beans by Carmen Tafolla
José! Born to Dance by Susanna Reich
A Library for Juana: The World of Sor Juana by Pat Mora
My Very Own Room/Mi propio cuarto by Amada Irma Pérez
The Three Pigs/Los Tres Cerdos: Nacho, Tito, and Miguel by Bobbi Salinas
Tomas and the Library Lady by Pat Mora
In My Family/En Mi Familia by Carmen Lomas Garza
Chato's Kitchen by Gary Soto

The books chosen for guided reading instruction with Group 2, the control group, were generic, level H/I guided reading books available to the teachers within the school where the study took place. These books ranged from fiction to nonfiction and were considered generic in that they contained neutral settings and primarily Caucasian American characters and traditions.

Book List for Group 2 (Control Group)

Allosaurus by Helen Frost
American Mastodon by Carol Lindeen
Bruises by Sharon Gordon
Captain Cat by Syd Hoff
The Clubhouse by Anastasia Suen
Come Out and Play, Little Mouse by Robert Kraus Come!
Dump Trucks by Linda Williams
George Shrinks by William Joyce
Goodnight, Moon by Margaret Wise Brown
If I Were a Penguin by Heidi Goenigel
In the Forest by Marie Ets
It's George! by Miriam Cohen
Misty's Mischief by Rod Campbell
“More, More, More, ” Said the Baby by Vera Williams
Old Hat, New Hat by Stan and Jan Berenstain
During the spring 2014 semester, the researcher contacted all the first grade teachers at the participating Title 1 elementary school to explain the study. Teachers were asked to send home letters explaining the study to parents of first-grade students who had been identified as ESL students with a reading level of H/I. The researcher collected signature pages for two weeks. Once the students were identified for the study, the researcher went to the school and met with each child individually for the pre-study assessment using the running record described in the materials section. Students’ names were replaced by letters to maintain confidentiality, and students were then randomly assigned to Group 1 or Group 2.

During a 5-week span, in three sessions a week, the researcher conducted guided reading lessons with Group 1 and separate guided reading lessons with Group 2. A different book was used every session with each group and none of the participants had seen any of the books during previous instruction. These lessons took place in a quiet area of the school library during the students’ language arts time in the school day and lasted 30 minutes per session. For Group 1, the researcher used multicultural literature in guided reading lessons. For Group 2, students had guided reading lessons with generic materials present in their school. Sessions for both groups followed these procedures.

Before independent reading: The researcher introduced the book by engaging students in discussion about the cover and title; conducted picture walks discussing the content with the students through the pictures by building upon their background knowledge and making connections to the text, if any; introduced new vocabulary; and guided students in making predictions. All books had text on every page. The researcher did not read the text aloud to students before they read independently.

During independent reading: The researcher guided students as they read independently, provided wait time, and gave prompts or clues as needed by individual students, such as “Try that again. Does that make sense? Look at how the word begins.”
After independent reading: The researcher strengthened comprehension by asking “wh” (who, what, when, where, why) questions about the text.

**Results**

This study investigated a possible relationship between the use of multicultural literature and students’ reading accuracy within an instructional level of text. Although this was a short-term study involving a small number of students using multicultural materials carefully selected to match students’ own cultural backgrounds, results bear consideration in their affirmation of the relevance of this approach with young, early readers.

Students in Group 1, who received guided reading lessons incorporating multicultural texts, showed a 24.2% increase in their accuracy of instructional reading a level H/I text.

Table 2: *Pre -& Post Reading Accuracy Scores for Group 1*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Pre-Assessment</th>
<th>Post-Assessment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average of Student Reading Accuracy on Pre-Assessment: 54.6
Average of Student Reading Accuracy on Post-Test: 78.8
Difference: 24.2% Increase

Students in Group 2, who received guided reading lessons that did not incorporate multicultural literature text, showed a 7.4% increase in their accuracy rate of reading a level H/I text.

Table 3: *Pre -& Post Reading Accuracy Scores for Group 2*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Pre-Assessment</th>
<th>Post-Assessment</th>
<th>Difference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>56%</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>60%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>74%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Average of Student Reading Accuracy on Pre-Assessment: 49.2
Average of Student Reading Accuracy on Post-Test: 56.6
Difference: 7.4% Increase
The results show that there was a positive relationship between the use of multicultural literature and students’ accuracy of reading using an instructional level of text. Also, it is important to note that, in Group 1, the researcher found that the students’ level of engagement increased when compared to their engagement in the classroom as stated by the teacher. Students in Group 1 were engaged tentatively at first, and then their engagement increased as the sessions progressed. For example, Group 1 students asked more questions about the text, gave feedback about certain events and characters, and discussed the multicultural books with each other after lessons as observed by the researcher.

The following are illustrations of connections made by Group 1 students during guided reading lessons:

• While reading a text, Student B stated, “My grandma used to live in a house just like that one in the book.”
• Student C stated while reading a text, *Holy Tortilla and a Pot of Beans*, “My mom makes tortillas for me every day.”
• Student E commented while reading *In My Family*, “This family looks like my family when we all get together.”

Although students in Group 2 did seem to feel comfortable with the researcher after the 5-week span, the researcher did not observe the students having increased engagement while reading the guided reading books. During the sessions, the students participated; however, their engagement consisted of reading the book and answering questions asked of them by the researcher. They did not make additional connections or expand/elaborate on the text.

This research contributes to a growing literature base that suggests the use of multicultural literature contributes to improved reading achievement in English language learners.

**Discussion and Implications**

The diversity of children who attend schools in the United States is increasing every year. This means that the curriculum is diverse and represents all cultures within a school. A proven successful way to do this is by incorporating multicultural literature. As mentioned before, multicultural literature plays a significant role in the development of children's cross-cultural understanding (Harper & Brand, 2010). Students also benefit from reading literature that reflects their own ethnic and cultural background. Such literature can be an important tool in helping all students develop a healthy self-concept - one that is based on knowledge of and a sense of pride in family background (Hittleman, 1978). The observations noted in this study and documented in research support the notion that incorporating multicultural literature into the curriculum can expand students' awareness of their own culture and increase their engagement in learning.

Comparing previous research to the results of this study, the researcher arrived at the following implications.

• Instructional practices that address issues of culture and language hold the greatest promise for helping culturally and linguistically diverse learners to become successful readers (Beaulieu, 2002).
• For culturally and linguistically diverse students to become productive members of society, they need to be fully functional participants in literate communities. The most effective approach to literacy instruction requires both explicit skill instruction and engaging literacy activities such as reading children’s literature and writing for real-life purposes (Callins, 2006).

• Higher reading achievement will occur when teaching approaches with systematic skill instruction in conjunction with reading for meaning, language instruction, and connected reading are used with students from diverse populations (Callins, 2006).

• Teachers who frequently use multicultural children’s literature integrate reading and writing across the curriculum and teach skills in the context of meaningful literacy experiences (Callins, 2006).

• Students acquire comprehension, spelling, and language skills that are commensurate with students across the country (Cantrell, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1992).

• Integrating diverse cultural literature across the reading and writing curriculum helps students discover the intricacies of language as well as the histories and cultures of various ethnic groups (Callins, 2006).

• Teachers who embrace culturally responsive literacy instruction by using multicultural literature will serve as a catalyst for improved reading achievement among students who are culturally and linguistically diverse (Callins, 2006).

Choosing Quality Multicultural Literature

There are five major characteristics of high quality multicultural literature (Ada & Silva, 1997). These characteristics include the following: Accuracy, expertise, respect, purpose, and quality. These five characteristics can serve as a way for teachers to evaluate multicultural literature that should be used in the curriculum. Ada and Silva (1997) recommend asking the following questions regarding these characteristics when determining whether or not to use specific multicultural books.

1. Accuracy

• Are cultural aspects (food, dress, flora, fauna, etc.) portrayed accurately?
• Does diversity exist among the members of each cultural group portrayed?
• Are non-English words spelled and used correctly?
• Is historical information correct?

2. Expertise

• Are the author and/or illustrator qualified to write or illustrate material relating to the culture(s) portrayed? How?
• Have the author and/or illustrator conducted related research? If not, have they lived among (either as a member of or as a visitor to) the groups of people represented in the work?
3. Respect

- Do the author and/or illustrator avoid the representation of stereotypes in the characters' speech, appearance, and behaviors?
- Do the author and/or illustrator avoid using a condescending or negative tone in relation to cultural characteristics of the characters and setting?
- Are minority characters portrayed as equal in societal worth to majority characters, or are they represented in subordinate social positions? If so, is there a legitimate reason for this representation, or is it due to cultural biases of the author/illustrator?

4. Purpose

- Does the cultural setting add to the work, or does it seem superfluous?
- Could the work succeed equally well if it used a different cultural setting (or characters from a different culture)?

5. Quality

- Does the work ring true to you?
- Does the dialogue sound natural, not forced?
- Is the item of high quality overall, independent of its multicultural characteristics? (Ada & Silverman, 1997).

Conclusion

The present study was designed to determine the impact of multicultural literature on the reading achievement of English language learners. The results suggest that when students participate in reading books that relate to their own culture, their reading accuracy rates increase. These increases likely occur because students can make connections to the text, can understand the vocabulary, and can apply familiar background knowledge. A growing body of research suggests that multicultural literacy will have a positive impact on the literacy development of diverse learners. This study not only presented further evidence of that result but also serves as a practical how-to guide for teachers to use or adapt approaches when teaching reading to their own English language learners.
References


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**Citation**

Appendix A (Running Record)

The specific Running Record template used in this study is not currently available online. However, it was a standard running record and had this general format:

Running Record Sheet

Name __________________________ Date_____________ Text Level

Scores: Running Words: _____ Error Rate: Acc: Sc Rate:

Errors

Easy 95-100% Instructional 90-94% Hard 50-89%

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### Appendix B

#### Checklist for Evaluating Authentic Multicultural Literature

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<td><strong>1. The story is well written.</strong></td>
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<td>• The story itself is interesting and engaging</td>
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<td>• Syntax, grammar, word usage, etc. make the story easy to read for children of the age for which it is written</td>
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<td><strong>2. There are no distortions or omissions of history.</strong></td>
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<td>• Various perspectives are represented</td>
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<td>• All cultures involved are represented accurately</td>
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<td><strong>3. There is no stereotyping in the text of the ethnic group being portrayed.</strong></td>
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<td>• There are no derogatory overtones used in the text to describe the characters and culture in the story (such as “savage,” “primitive,” “lazy,” or “backward”)</td>
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<td>• Ethnic characters are portrayed as individuals, not as combinations of culturally stereotypical characteristics</td>
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<td><strong>4. The illustrations are authentic and non-stereotyped.</strong></td>
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<td>• The illustrations do not generalize about aspects of the cultures being portrayed</td>
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<td>• Characters of the same ethnic group are depicted as individuals and do not all look alike; the illustrations show a variety of physical attributes</td>
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<td><strong>5. Lifestyles of the characters are culturally accurate.</strong></td>
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<td>• The lifestyles of the characters are not oversimplified or generalized, but are genuine and accurate</td>
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<td><strong>6. The dialogue used is culturally authentic.</strong></td>
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<td>The characters use speech that accurately represents the oral tradition from which they come</td>
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<td><strong>7. Standards of success are consistent across cultures.</strong></td>
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<td>• The ethnic characters are not portrayed as helpless, or in need of the assistance of a white authority figure</td>
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<td>• Ethnic characters do not have to exhibit extraordinary qualities to gain acceptance or approval with the majority</td>
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8. The role of females, elders, and family are culturally accurate.
   • Women and the elderly are portrayed accurately within their culture
   • The significance of family is portrayed accurately for the culture.

   Comments:

9. Effects to a child's self-image are taken into consideration.
   • There is nothing in the story that would embarrass or offend a child whose culture is being portrayed
   • You would be willing to share the book with a mixed-race group of children

   Comments:

10. The author's and/or illustrator's background is relevant to the culture portrayed.
    • The author and illustrator have the qualifications and background needed to deal with the cultural group accurately and respectfully
    • The author and illustrator are members of the cultural or ethnic group they are portraying

   Comments:

11. Relationships between characters from different cultures are relevant and authentic.
    • Whites do not possess the power while cultural minorities play a supporting or subservient role
    • The minority characters are leaders in the community and solve their own problems

   Comments:

12. Heroines and Heroes are portrayed authentically within their respective cultures.
    • Heroines and heroes are defined according to the concepts of and struggles for justice appropriate to their cultural group. They are not those who avoid conflict with and thus benefit the white male establishment

   Comments:

13. The copyright date reflects the current understanding of the dynamics of the culture being written about.
    • The book was originally written within the past decade

   Comments:

Checklist developed by
Author’s Biography

Lauren K. Gonzalez, Ed.D., is an Assistant Professor at Stephen F. Austin State University in the Department of Elementary Education. There she oversees Field Experience students and teaches Early Childhood courses. Lauren's doctorate is in Early Childhood with a minor in Gifted & Talented. She also holds a Masters and Bachelors degree in Elementary Education. Lauren is currently working on a second Masters degree in Curriculum & Instruction with an emphasis in ESL. Her research interests include literacy development in young children, parent involvement in education, and teaching methods that work for ESL children and Special Needs children.

Acknowledgements

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Citation

Improving ELL Achievement through Effective Teacher Preparation

by
Ruben E. Gonzalez, Ph.D.
Associate Professor
Alabama State University

and
Delilah Dotremon, Ph.D. & J.D.
Associate Professor
Alabama State University

Abstract

Current state mandated tests have revealed that ethnically and culturally diverse students are failing to master basic subject matter in public schools. Clearly, a new educational paradigm is needed to reach English language learners (ELL). This paradigm should encompass changes in all areas of public school education, and it is critical that all states require more preparation and higher standards to better prepare teachers to meet the needs of their charges. Teachers must have thorough, up-to-date education and an arsenal of pedagogical tools to work with ELL students. This article highlights current teaching strategies for reaching this student population.

Key Words: Multicultural teacher preparation, innovative teaching strategies, ELLs

Introduction

It is very likely that our instructional methods are faulty and that our curriculum is failing to meet the educational needs of ethnically and culturally diverse students. For example, the Texas Academic Education Indicator System (2014) shows that ELL students cannot read well enough to comprehend grade level materials, so they are performing poorly on mandatory tests.* Our instructional methods, resources, and assessment instruments must all be reviewed. The solution to educating our ethnically and culturally diverse students so that they master grade level basics requires addressing all the aforementioned pieces of the puzzle. It will not be easy, but it can be done, and it must be done. The process will require trying out innovative educational strategies and ideas and not being afraid to experiment. This paper reviews some innovative educational strategies. Educators should acknowledge their failures and resolve to implement new teaching methodologies if they truly want to reach all student populations. Educators must develop better instructional delivery methods as well as better testing methods and procedures. We must search for friendlier testing instruments and accommodations,

*We have addressed the issue of failing to educate culturally diverse students at length elsewhere.

Citation

so that our children are comfortable and can perform at their best. Being unafraid to try fresh ideas can provide the impetus educators need to meet the educational challenge of reaching all our children including ethnically and culturally diverse students in our public schools.

The question arises as to whether we can truly reach all our student populations. Some educators have called for restructuring our curriculum and our schools as part of a movement to do things differently in support of the belief that success is possible for every student (Roy-Campbell, 2013; Ruggieri, 2012; Sheng, Sheng, & Anderson, 2011). This seems to be a tall order—one might ask how it can be achieved. The focus should be on personalized learning rather than forcing children into a standardized educational system. Roy-Campbell (2013) and others argue that traditional educational practices, which focus on uniformity and conformity, do not reach students because they are not stimulating and fail to take into account differences in learning styles. It is clear that we are failing to teach ethnically and culturally diverse students the basics from the results of current standardized test scores, so it makes sense to try new strategies such as focusing on an inclusive curriculum where all differences are embraced, where respect for diversity is taught, where innovative instructional delivery methods hold student attention, where a multicultural viewpoint is a part of the learning process, where learning is centered on an interdisciplinary approach and tied into the student’s life, and where teachers are encouraged to think critically and creatively and to join forces to reach their students more efficiently.

The Need to Prepare Teachers to Work with ELL Students

English language learners (ELLs) are greatly increasing in number in the United States. Not enough is being done to prepare classroom teachers to effectively serve this population (Roy-Campbell, 2013). Sheng, Sheng, and Anderson (2011) note that most teachers have at least one ELL student in their classes but that less than one-third of public school teachers have training to work with this population. Educators are in agreement that one of the reasons for the academic failure of this population of students is that their teachers lack adequate preparation and knowledge to be effective in the classroom. Furthermore, there is a need not just to prepare public school teachers but also higher education faculty who teach public school educators. Roy-Campbell stresses the need for more formal preparation of teacher educators, so they can effectively meet the needs of English language learners (ELLs).

In reviewing teacher education policy in the United States, it is clear that preparation of teachers for teaching ELLs varies widely. While 70% of states require some ELL preparation for all general education teachers, only four states have explicit certification requirements. Arizona, California, New York, and Florida have certification programs that prepare teachers to work with English language learners. In 17 states, teacher certification standards make reference to the special needs of ELL students but fail to provide instruction on how to teach this difficult-to-serve population. Eight states refer to “language” as an example of diversity in their teacher certification requirements but do not explain some of the difficulties of learning in American classrooms when students’ first language and the language of their parents is other than English. Fifteen states require no teacher expertise or training in working with ELL students. Roy-Campbell (2013) notes that the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) outlines specific standards for teaching ELL students such as providing qualified faculty and resources to support teacher learning about this population. NCATE recommends...
that all teachers have pedagogical knowledge about ELL students and an understanding of their diversity. The Schools and Staffing Survey consistently finds that many schools have difficulty in hiring qualified ESL teachers and that most teachers receive little or no training in working with ELL students (Sheng et al., 2011). To help close the achievement gap between English language learners and English-proficient students, ELLs must be provided teachers who have the academic preparation and practical training to help them be successful. Nieto acknowledges that there is a “teacher quality gap” and a “teacher training gap” and maintains that achievement gaps for ELL students will continue as long as we fail to train teachers who can teach with commitment and joy (2012, p. 154).

Roy-Campbell (2013) stresses that it is imperative for classroom teachers to be educated to work with ELL students. It is a difficult task to learn English while at the same time one is using the language to learn school-based content. As an example of this population, Roy-Campbell specifically points to long-term English language learners (LTELs) who have been in the U.S. schools and have received English language support services for more than six years. This special group of ELL students has still not developed proficiency in English as measured by language proficiency tests. Some long-term English learners were born in the U.S. or came to this country when very young. Roy-Campbell emphasizes the point that inadequate instruction and support for such students in elementary schools is the reason so many LTELs are increasing in both middle and high schools. Sadly, 80% of ELL students struggling academically were born in the United States, which is an indication that such students failed to receive the foundational instruction they needed in the early grades to be successful in later years. Requiring training and pedagogical work in teacher certification programs can only result in producing more effective teachers who are better prepared to meet the challenges posed by ELL students (Roy-Campbell, 2013). Educators are in agreement that one of the reasons for the academic failure of this population of students is that their teachers lack adequate preparation and knowledge to be effective in the classroom.

Teachers who have had no training in working with ELL students are often unaware of the interplay between language and culture (Farr, Seloni, & Song, 2010). Students who speak other languages come to the American classroom with cultural backgrounds and understandings that impact the way they receive instruction from both textbooks and teachers. Likewise, Roy and Roxas (2011) point out that a lack of teachers’ understanding of language and literacy progression for ELL students impedes their learning. Students become frustrated, negatively impacting both their attitude and motivation. It is also important to understand that, when learning a new language, students go through a long period of silence that can last a year or longer. Roy and Roxas maintain that students are actively processing the language, even though they may be reluctant to speak it. Teachers must understand that this silent period is normal and that a welcoming classroom environment will encourage these ELLs to eventually speak English.

Teaching ELL students requires preparation in the use of a menu of pedagogical tools and a deep knowledge of the cultural background such students bring to the classroom (Roy & Roxas, 2011). Both a lack of cultural understanding and of the literacy progression of someone mastering English can result in low achievement levels. Teachers must have knowledge as well as a respect for other cultures if they are to be successful in reaching out to ELL students. Also, teachers must possess the pedagogical tools to know how to work with children who are trying to learn English yet whose parents and family speak another language at home.
Sheng, Sheng, and Anderson (2011) advocate that all teachers receive ethnic and cultural diversity preparation as part of the education curriculum to become teachers. Such training would help diverse students integrate better into their schools because they would then work with knowledgeable teachers who understand their needs. This cultural awareness must also be introduced into pedagogical practices to better serve the entire ELL population. Improving education for ELL students then requires improving education for their teachers.

In order to increase teacher sensitivity to the challenges that English language learners confront daily, Soto-Hinman (2011) urges educators to practice ELL shadowing. In this way, they can improve their teaching methodology to reach these students. Soto-Hinman believes teachers should experience the classroom from the viewpoint of their ELL charges. Increasing teachers’ understanding of the world of ELL students can only be achieved by training teachers in shadowing techniques which involve monitoring language and listening opportunities students experience in the school setting. Training in ELL shadowing involves monitoring students at five-minute intervals over a two-hour period of time. This exercise highlights how few opportunities ELL students are provided in the classroom for language development. Teachers receiving preparation in the protocol of ELL shadowing learn to identify ineffective teaching practices, and use of this method can motivate teachers to employ techniques that will increase oral language development (Soto-Hinman, 2011).

**Teacher Preparation: The Importance of Research**

To prepare teachers more effectively, we must do more research to learn what works and what does not. Student teachers must be exposed to the latest studies while their professors must produce more publications to keep teachers informed on the latest innovations. Most importantly, research findings should be employed in the classroom. Strategies derived from research can help to increase teacher effectiveness thereby boosting ELL achievement levels. We can also use research to learn which parental methods are more effective in motivating students and which do not work.

**Research and Publications.** One way to increase the knowledge of teachers in the public schools about their ELL charges is to increase research and publication on this topic. Higher education faculty and public school faculty are in need of more knowledge to confront the low achievement levels of ELL students. Research must be disseminated and used in the classroom for the benefit of all students.

University faculty must know about the latest research findings, so they can better prepare those about to embark on teaching careers while those in the field should stay abreast of the latest teaching methodologies that can achieve better results for ELL students. Roy-Campbell (2013), among others, has noted the paucity of articles on ELL students in the academic journals. Certainly, academic journals are a valuable resource in educating teachers on how to meet the needs of their students. This dearth in the literature is in critical need of being addressed.

**Using Research to Learn About Cultural Differences in Parental Styles.** More research is needed on the impact of cultural differences on achievement levels as is clear from a recent May 2014 publication. Fu and Markus, as cited in a brief research report from the Society of Personality and Social Psychology (2014), discovered that Asian American children who are high achievers have been positively supported and motivated by their mothers in their academic work so that strong interdependence results. European American mothers, on the other hand, were found to have created feelings of independence in their children with the result being that exerting pressure for academic
success produced negative feelings and less achievement. Yet, motherly pressure to succeed academically motivated Asian American children to work harder just by thinking of pleasing their mothers. The work of Fu and Markus (Society of Personality, 2014) has sparked cultural debate on how these so called “tiger mothers” manage to motivate their children to excel. More research studies are needed to discover the recipe on parental motivation to see if similar results can be replicated in other populations of diverse learners. It would also be very interesting to examine the parenting styles of Mexican and Mexican-American parents to discover whether they encourage interdependence or independence in their offspring or employ another approach to impact their children’s academic achievement.

Using Research Findings in the Classroom. Yet, we do have a body of knowledge on improving teaching and increasing student achievement, especially on standardized tests. In the last 40 years, research has produced a plethora of articles on teaching techniques (Lunenburg, & Irby, 2011). While these articles have concentrated on general education teachers and not on those who teach ELL students, it would be worthwhile to employ some of these strategies with this population. Students have notoriously short attention spans, so whatever can be done to increase their engagement might serve to increase their learning.

One technique that is strongly recommended to hold student attention is called “stimulus variation.” It advocates varying learning activities and teacher behavior to increase interest. Lunenburg and Irby (2011) asked teachers to increase student attention spans by increasing their movement and their gestures, by using focusing, by varying interaction styles and using pauses, and by shifting sensory channels. These researchers noted that when a teacher moves around the room, the movement stimulates both visual and aural sensory adjustments in their students. Another recommendation is that the teacher move her/his head, hands, and body as gestural cues can help students understand content better. While ELL students are struggling to understand verbal messages, body movements can provide further clues about the content. The practice of focusing includes using both verbal and gestural behaviors such as pointing at a map. Also advised is changing the style of interaction in a single session from teacher-group to teacher-student, and some student-student exchanges. Pauses are also recommended. This tactic can allow ELL students to process information and prepare their responses to questions. Lastly, shifting the manner in which learning is occurring and which primary sensory receptors are involved can also increase attention and retention (Lunenburg, & Irby, 2011). Objects might be passed around to stimulate tactile attention by ELL students and such objects might also stimulate olfactory senses. A video can be played or a music CD turned on to capture student interest and attention through visual or auditory sensory receptors.

Another research finding is that correctness of student responses should be less of a concern, whereas praising student participation in class is critical (Lunenburg, & Irby, 2011). Teachers should reinforce their students with verbal encouragement as well as gestures such as nodding of the head and smiling. A teacher’s actions and responses can act as positive reinforcement and serve to encourage more attempts to use English and to venture answers. Students will feel more comfortable if the classroom environment is embracing. Lunenburg and Irby also recommend repetition in the classroom to reinforce skills as they believe that over-learning results in mastery of skills. English language learners can benefit greatly by the review of previous material. Improving performance on standardized tests, in fact, requires a level of mastery that is possible to achieve only with repetition for
most students. Most instructional strategies that have been proven effective in research studies on teacher behavior can ultimately help improve learning for ELL students.

**Additional Research Strategies Shown to Be Effective in the Classroom.** Rosenshine (2012) highlighted the principles of effective instruction in a piece entitled “Principles of Instruction: Research Based Strategies That All Teachers Should Know.” Having spent many years as a high school teacher of history in the Chicago public schools, Rosenshine relies on research-proven methodologies. He advises teachers to present new material in small steps with practice after each step in order not to “swamp” a student’s working memory (p. 13). Presenting too much material all at once overwhims students, so small amounts of material should be followed by extensive practice. Teachers can lecture on a mathematics concept and then demonstrate how to work problems followed by questions and more practice. This first introduction to new material is done in a group, yet Rosenshine believes that independent practice is critical to truly learn a skill. Students need extensive individual practice so skills become automatic. Questioning of students can reveal how well they understand the concept and whether they have connected new material to prior learning. To involve students in this process, an educator can ask all the students to write an answer to a question and hold it up or to raise their hands when they agree. Telling the answer to a neighbor is another effective way to encourage participation and can encourage “silent” ELL students to suddenly want to speak up. To obtain higher standardized test scores, Rosenshine (2012) recommends teaching in small steps, providing sufficient practice time on new skills, checking for understanding by questioning students on concepts, and providing students the time to correct errors. Effective teachers should be trained in research-based principles of instruction to be better prepared to meet the challenges posed by teaching ELL students.

**Teacher Preparation: Teaching Strategies**

Student teachers and even those who have worked in the teaching profession for many years need exposure to and education in new teaching strategies. To effectively reach ELL students requires introducing multicultural education into the classroom. If ethnically and culturally diverse students feel embraced, they will be less likely to disengage and drop out. Educators must create a new instructional leadership paradigm so that everyone in the school setting feels responsible for supporting and teaching ELL students. A teacher’s arsenal of methodological tools should include student-centered teaching strategies and student literacy strategies that will maximize student engagement and learning. Teachers of ELL students must receive education in the latest models of practice being used in the nation to increase achievement in ELL students. The structured English immersion model and the co-teaching model are two innovative efforts that show promise in helping ELLs achieve their full potential. Teachers must be kept abreast of the latest methodologies in education sweeping the country such as the flipped model, scriptwriting, using graphic novels, and translanguaging.

**Multicultural Education.** Nieto (2011) advocated a very specific strategy to help increase the achievement levels of ELL students and so decrease their dropout rates. In her 2011 book, Nieto calls for creating multicultural learning communities in order to help ELL students master English and learn school-based content at higher levels. Combining insights derived from multicultural education theory and research can prepare teachers to do a more effective job with diverse student populations. Nieto challenges teachers to use multicultural materials in their classrooms and to recognize students’ cultural backgrounds openly. These strategies will help diverse students take pride in identifying with their race.
and native culture. Teachers need training in order to learn empathy for people from other countries and to respect different behaviors without judgment. Nieto stresses the importance of recognizing the language or languages spoken at home by students. Teachers should praise all students and pay attention to all students equally in the multicultural classroom (Nieto, 2011). A good teacher is one who takes responsibility for acquiring ELL preparation and is someone who has a store of knowledge about the cultural backgrounds of her/his students. Culturally relevant classroom materials are especially important in urban areas due to the diversity of students (Milner, 2011).

Some educators assert that culturally and linguistically diverse students often disengage from the regular curriculum, which is one explanation for the high dropout rate of such students and their low academic performance (Jairrels, Brazil, & Patton, 2012). These educators urge teachers to include students’ cultures in the curriculum by using materials that reflect the ethnic, racial, and cultural diversity in society. Students need to identify with present-day figures as well as those from the past who are like them culturally. This technique can boost self-esteem and make students more interested in learning. Such a tactic allows students to identify with people like themselves who have been successful and have similar roots. This learning strategy helps students connect to history and to the struggles of their ethnic and/or cultural group.

Including cultural diversity in the curriculum is an excellent tactic as this strategy educates teachers on the cultural background of their students and serves to educate students about themselves (Jairrels, Brazil, & Patton, 2012). Many teachers know little about other ethnicities and cultures, and this deficiency in knowledge can prevent teachers from employing a multicultural viewpoint in their curriculum and instruction. Yet, despite this deficiency, teachers have a responsibility to incorporate cultural diversity into the curriculum as ethnic and culturally diverse students should be given the opportunity to learn about themselves. All children should be exposed to this topic as we live in a diverse society.

One very easy strategy to introduce students to topics from a cultural perspective on science, politics, business, entertainment, health, and education hinges on using popular magazines edited by people of color. These popular periodicals and magazines can help students learn about notable figures who are Black, Asian, Hispanic, American Indian and who come from a wide variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds. These popular magazines can be used for instructional purposes in the classroom. Such resources as Essence, Ebony, Hispanic Business, Canales, Hispanic Times, Latina, Asian Week, Calumet and the Choctaw Community News are just a few of the materials that can be used to grab the attention of students.

These resources can give students a cultural perspective on issues, introduce them to successful role-models in their ethnic and cultural community, and increase their learning (Jairrels et al., 2012). Many teaching methodologies, such as peer learning, cooperative learning, team teaching, and thematic and interdisciplinary school-wide lesson plans, can all be carried out using popular periodicals and magazines.

Teachers need practical suggestions on how to introduce multicultural education into their classrooms. Simple and inexpensive strategies can help teachers transform their curriculum and instructional methods, so they can offer an inclusive education by giving all students a curriculum that is rich in materials, methods, and strategies that open up the world of cultural diversity. These strategies
can also motivate ethnically and culturally diverse students to emulate successful role models who are like them. Introducing cultural diversity into the curriculum may decrease the dropout rate and increase academic performance.

**Responsible Instructional Leadership.** Providing better preparation for our teachers as well as introducing multicultural education into the classroom will not solve all the challenges related to educating ELL students. Exploring new teaching methodologies will also not likely be enough to fully serve ELL students more effectively. Schools are struggling to support their needs, so Brooks, Adams, and Morita-Mullaney (2010) recommended changing the instructional leadership of schools as well. Brooks et al. maintain that due to the shortage of qualified ESL teachers, administrators and general educators must actively promote the learning of ELL students. In many schools, ELL students are viewed as the responsibility of the ESL teachers, yet Brooks et al. acknowledge that other teachers and administrators also have a responsibility to support and teach these students. Small learning communities are recommended so that teachers and administrators can talk about their work with ELL students. Such a project will allow educators to deal with pressing issues, heighten awareness of other cultures, and help all involved to better reach ELL students and their parents. Creating a learning community can help all educators come to view English language learners as valued community assets. Discussions in these groups can help educators find more effective ways to teach and support ELL students. The integration of culture into the curriculum can be a topic of such discussion, and such collaboration can build trust and greater understanding among faculty and between students and their teachers. Brooks and her colleagues advocated using these professional learning communities to help increase learning and standardized test scores.

Soltero (2011) also focuses on the school climate in her book entitled, *Schoolwide Approaches to Educating ELLs: Creating Linguistically and Culturally Responsive K-12 Schools.* This author calls for a schoolwide framework that provides full support for ELL student achievement. Soltero argues that bilingual and ESL programs and teachers need schoolwide support in order to meet all the challenges of helping ELL students master basic subject matter. School administrators must be effective ELL advocates, so they can provide the qualified and trained teachers needed as well as provide an embracing school environment to encourage sustainable and comprehensive improvements in the education of English language learners. Furthermore, Soltero calls for school-family engagement, since parental support and interest in their child’s learning is a pivotal part of the achievement equation.

**Student-Centered Teaching Strategies.** Maloy and LaRoche (2010) note that teachers tend to teach as they were taught, but they argue that lectures often do not reach students. They also point out that rote memorization of facts, focusing solely on textbooks, and emphasizing the dominant White culture also serves to disenchant students with learning and excludes minority students. Teacher-centered instructional approaches should be de-emphasized in favor of student-centered teaching strategies. Maloy and LaRoche advocate the use of primary source analysis and historical role-playing. They lament that due to mandatory tests, traditional modes of teaching have become entrenched, yet these methods do not promote students’ critical thinking. All teaching strategies have complications, so teachers themselves must learn as they explore student-centered strategies. They must adapt strategies to the needs of their students and even discard what does not work in their classrooms.
Some techniques that Maloy and LaRoche urge teachers to try to include using videos, photographs, audio recordings, primary and secondary sources, and interactive websites. They also encourage changing instructional delivery regularly during a class period to hold student attention. By using primary source analysis students can read and explore material written by people who dealt with problems in their times. They receive a first-person point of view that invites them to analyze that time-frame and the issues of that period. Textbooks can be boring and they may be “unfaithful to history” (Maloy, & LaRoche, 2010, p. 53). Reading a firsthand account then provides a richer understanding of a historical time period. One big problem that students may confront is becoming bogged down in the syntax, and so they end up frustrated with documents that are difficult to read. Yet, Maloy and LaRoche advise that frequent forays into primary sources can help students increase their ability to interpret such sources. Another teaching method that can be quite enjoyable for students is role-playing, as key historical events can be dramatized. This instructional method allows students to perform for an audience and immerse themselves in a role. Because role-playing brings material to life, Maloy and LaRoche believe that visualizing events can help students remember the material longer. Using primary sources and role-playing in the classroom will likely push teachers into areas they are not comfortable with, but these methods will capture student interest and promote learning.

The Flipped Learning Model. Flipped learning is a model of instruction that moves instruction from a group learning space to the individual’s space. This pedagogical approach encourages a more interactive learning environment according to the educational technology company Knewton Learning (2014). This model focuses on both technology and active learning as students watch lectures on videos at their own pace and then communicate with teachers using online discussions. Class time is then used for collaborative work and exercises for concept mastery. Students who do not have Internet access can watch the videos at school and then engage in interactive activities that illustrate the concept. Knewton Learning specializes in personalizing courses while using teacher input so that gaps in knowledge can be detected while differentiated instruction is provided. This type of instruction can result in closer monitoring of student performance so that learning can be adapted to each ELL student. The use of specialized technology then enhances learning according to educators who use the Knewton flipped learning model.

Student Literacy Strategies. Ruggieri (2012) praises the ingenuity of Ben Franklin in using his wisdom to become successful. She calls on English teachers to use online sources and modify them to meet the needs of diverse learners such as ELL students. Using online lesson plans and handouts can enrich the curriculum and still allow teachers to make the material their own. Too many students struggle with literacy, yet Ruggieri points out, “Highly effective English teachers know that literacy is the core from which all learning must radiate” (p. 9).

Ruggieri recommends that students be taught how to make text-to-self, text-to-text, and text-to-world connections. Comprehension of material will be greatly enhanced as students understand how the material they are reading applies to them and their environment. Also, recommended for those struggling with reading is having students read short articles and asking them to examine cause and effect or to compare and contrast scenarios. To help students learn how to think critically, they can be asked to engage in a writing activity by taking on a particular role or character from an assigned text. Teachers can push students beyond minimal efforts to force them to think. Ruggieri admonishes teachers not to be “the sage on the stage” (p. 11). This boring lecture format puts students to sleep.
Teachers should be facilitators and focus on improving students’ learning experiences. Using mini-lessons and encouraging class discussion are also ways to maximize student engagement and growth. Another idea offered by Ruggieri is to allow students to peer review each other’s work using a model paper as a guide. Helping diverse students increase their literacy and maximize their learning is the goal of excellent teachers who must continually search for teaching methods that actively engage students in the learning process.

**Scriptwriting and Graphic Novels.** Gutierrez (2014) advocates the use of scriptwriting by educators in his new book. This author offers teachers strategies to support literacy skills that align with the English language arts curriculum. What sets this book apart are the tips and strategies offered for English language learners so that they can immediately engage in writing their own scripts using real or fictional events and characters. One way to employ these scripts would be to use them in graphic novels. Brozo, Moorman, and Meyer (2013) advise educators that there are many misconceptions as to what graphic novels encompass. They are similar to comic books, yet they do not necessarily include sexual escapades or violence. The authors of Wham! Teaching with Graphic Novels Across the Curriculum urge teachers to use graphic novels in the classrooms as they offer educative potential. These novels can be used in any subject such as English, history, science, and mathematics. One interesting example of the use of graphic novels involves having students develop illustrated graphic story panels to highlight important scenes from history using modern day language and slang along with models, figures, props, and costumes from DAZ 3D. Students then create their own graphic novels to present historical scenes. Graphic novels are illustrated, have scripts, and are formatted much like comic books, and students do not even need to have drawing ability to produce them. Brozo et al. point out that graphic novels are the fastest growing type of young adult literature and that using these novels can increase interest and enthusiasm for learning. It is clear that graphic novels present an opportunity to enrich a teacher’s arsenal of classroom resources in order to promote language development for ELL students as well as the learning of basic subject matter.

**The Structured English Immersion Model.** Arizona has taken a very direct approach to serving ELL students in its use of the Structured English Immersion Model (Aguilar, & Gonzalez Canche, 2012). Aguilar and Gonzalez Canche studied 65 randomly selected school districts in Arizona and found 29 that were willing to participate in the language immersion model. A four hour English Immersion Model was implemented to accelerate the learning of the language for ELL students. Of 880 teachers who were asked about their perceptions of what was working, it was found that the teachers supported exploring a variety of programs for ELL students and assessing their progress using multiple indicators. They seemed in agreement that one instructional approach was not going to be effective in helping prepare ELL students to fully meet academic challenges for successful high school and higher education opportunities.

**The Co-Teaching Model.** In another effort to find a model that will work for ELL students, the Superintendent of the Saint Paul Public Schools in Minnesota has recommended using a co-teaching model to increase learning for English language learners (Silva, 2011). Silva found that switching from a model in which ELLs were taught English to learn academic content to placing them in general education classrooms worked best. Silva believes that she has identified the factors that are critical to success as learning English through content is helping to raise learner proficiency in St. Paul.
In one classroom, you find a general education teacher who works with higher-performing ELL students while an ELL teacher works with lower-performing ELL students with the help of a bilingual aide who helps explain the lesson. Co-teaching is a strategy that is working according to the Superintendent of Schools in St. Paul as this model is believed to help prepare ELL students to become the workers of the 21st century (Silva, 2011).

**Translanguaging.** Freeman, Freeman, and Ebe (2014) advocate the use of translanguaging when working with ELL students to increase their ability to operate between languages and to enable them to share knowledge, skills, and experiences fully. Freeman et al. believe teachers should provide learning activities in which students can use their home language as well as English as they construct meaning. Translanguaging allows students to comprehend and analyze what they read, and Google Translate can be used to assist in this endeavor. Freeman et al. assert that English language learners are not bilinguals but are, in fact, emergent bilinguals as they are struggling to master English. These educators offer a host of translanguaging strategies that can be used in the classroom. They suggest using books, magazines, and other resources in the students’ home language, using videos in other languages, pairing students who speak the same home language, and using a bilingual aide to provide clarification after a teacher has explained a lesson in English. English language learners face special challenges, yet Freeman et al. believe that the key to their success in the classroom lies in using translanguaging to bridge the gap of understanding in these emergent bilinguals.

**Teacher Preparation: New Assessment Tools**

Teachers must pursue training in the use of new assessment tools. Educators know that mandatory exams are not fully measuring the abilities of ELL students as well as students with disabilities and other problems (Texas Education Agency, 2014). Although it is difficult to develop more sensitive assessment measures, it is important that advancements be made in this area. Two new assessment tools that teachers should explore include the use of multilectical methods and the culture-language interpretive matrice.

**Using Multilectical Methods.** Fellner (2014) advocates using multilectical methods to better serve ethnically and culturally diverse students. This educator argues that the picture is very bleak for Latino students in inner-city schools and that standardized tests fail to reveal a true measure of their learning. Test scores are used as a primary tool of assessment and often reveal scores that are below proficiency. These scores are especially important as they will determine further academic trajectories in high school. Fellner suggests that currently teachers only teach to the test and so exclude material that will not be covered by standardized tests. Test data reveal only a very limited range of knowledge and abilities, so Fellner recommends a new multilevel manner of assessing academic ability. This new assessment tool has been called “multilectics” (p. 169) and involves close observation to see how students interact in the classroom. Both verbal and non-verbal modes of communication are captured using video recordings termed “multimodal” (p. 170). Focus is also placed on “multiparty” communicators which include all speakers and listeners in the classroom (p. 170). An argument is made that there are “unmeasurable qualities upon which learning rides” (p. 170) as this idea decries the dysfunction of schools in serving minority populations. One big issue is that our public education system requires familiarity with the dominant culture, and thus, ELL students struggle in the classroom due to their divergent cultures.
Fellner contends that Latinos are excluded from academic achievement due to the narrowness of the standardized tests used to evaluate them. Yet, hope is offered as Fellner maintains that the best teachers will find ways to adapt the curriculum and materials in the classroom to meet their student needs and abilities. Multilectics centers on gaining insights into how students experience the world and manifest knowledge. Video-recording allows a teacher to capture the dialogic interactions of students and encourages curiosity and thoughtfulness, as well as a passion for knowledge. Fellner advises that video-recording can result in reaching collective agreements and shared goals. Video-recording also encourages high-level enthusiastic engagement in the classroom. Teachers can later analyze and reflect on the videos and the performance of each student. The multilectic method can be used to enrich pedagogy and is well within the reach of all teachers (Fellner, 2014).

Using the Culture-Language Interpretive Matrice. Developing new assessment tools can help educators more fully measure the abilities of special student populations. Kranzler, Flores, & Coady (2010). urge the development of new assessment tools as they recognize that language and cultural background do have an effect on cognitive ability on tests. These educators maintain that ESL students need better cognitive assessment tools to measure their intelligence and abilities. The Culture-Language Interpretive Matrice (C-LIMs) is offered by Kranzler et al. as an example of just such an innovative test, but they admit that more empirical research is needed to determine the validity of the C-LIMs results prior to using it on a widespread basis. New assessment tools take time to develop, but they offer the possibility of creating more sensitive testing instruments for not just ELL students but all those whose learning and abilities are difficult to measure on current standardized tests.

The Continued Search for Better Testing Instruments. An astounding report about the research of scientists at Granada University that came out in May of 2014 suggests that IQ tests and other tests aimed at measuring intelligence, abilities, and learning are influenced by culture. This research study suggests that a universal test of intelligence is not possible as cultural differences strongly impact IQ test performance. This group of scientists examined Spanish and Moroccan individuals who were similar in terms of educational level and socioeconomic status and found that, surprisingly, the same IQ test measured different cognitive functions in persons from different countries. The Spanish study group achieved a higher score on the non-verbal intelligence part of the test than their Moroccan counterparts. The results of the University of Granada study tend to show that IQ tests are impacted by cultural differences. This recent research finding highlights the difficulty of measuring the abilities of ethnically and culturally diverse students as culture affects how they process information and how they perform on achievement tests. Thus, the search for more accurate testing instruments must continue and is a challenge that educators must take on if they are to fully measure the abilities of ELL students.

Conclusion

There is clear evidence from the Texas Academic Education Indicator System (2014) that some student populations are not learning at the pace required for continued academic success. Some students are failing to master basic subject matter, so we educators must be open to introducing innovative resources, strategies, and assessment tools into our classrooms if we are to meet the needs of all of our students. Ethnically and culturally diverse students are being left behind, negatively affecting their
probability of success in gaining higher education, finding good paying jobs, and being productive and contributing members of society. We cannot allow the public educational system to fail large numbers of our students. It is clear that change in our educational system is needed, and one starting point is educating our teachers to better serve ELLs. There are many innovative ideas that have been proposed that can be used for this purpose.

We educators must not be afraid of change. We know that change is needed in our entire educational system, which should be open for restructuring so we can create a new educational paradigm. Highlighted in this paper are areas in which we can improve teacher preparation. Teachers should receive training on how to use research findings in the classroom, which can, in turn, serve to increase research and publications by higher education faculty. In this way, the cycle of producing research and implementing findings can continue. Small learning communities should be formed in the public schools, so teachers, administrators, and staff can talk about their work with ELL students and thus arrive at new solutions and strategies to reach this population. Instructional leadership should focus on helping all educators heighten their awareness of the struggles of ELL students so they can find more effective ways to teach them. Certainly, it is critical for educators to receive preparation in multicultural education to develop a better understanding of and respect for other cultures and to assist in fully supporting ELL students. All teachers should have education in teaching methodologies so that their arsenal of skills includes research-proven strategies, student-centered teaching strategies, and student literacy strategies.

Teachers should have knowledge of new models, such as the structured English immersion model and the co-teaching model, as tools to improve achievement levels. Preparation in the latest pedagogical tools, such as the use of the flipped model, scriptwriting, graphic novels, and translanguaging offer the possibility of creating more enthusiasm in the classroom. Lastly, teachers should have exposure and education in the use of new assessment tools, such as multilectical methods and the Culture-Language Interpretive Matrice, which might prove more effective in measuring the abilities of ELL students. Teacher education involves preparing student teachers in the university classroom and providing continuing education as they pursue their careers when new resources, new teaching strategies, and new assessment tools are developed. To increase the achievement of ELL students, we must undertake more thorough, effective, and on-going teacher preparation.
References


Citation

Authors’ Biographies

Ruben E. Gonzalez holds a Ph.D. in Spanish literature with a Minor in Education from Florida State University, and he has a Master of Arts in the Teaching of Foreign Languages from the University of Florida. He is an Associate Professor of Spanish at Alabama State University. He recently obtained another Master’s degree, this one in Educational Leadership from Texas A&M University-Commerce. Dr. Gonzalez worked as a Spanish teacher for many years while he pursued graduate studies and taught both middle-school and high school students. His research interests are varied, and he is presently working on a bilingual instructional textbook, entitled Fun Conversational Spanish Exercises for Students. Recently, Dr. Gonzalez published an article about the physicist and anti-poet, Nicanor Parra, who created the Anti-poetry movement. Second language acquisition is also an area of great interest to Dr. Gonzalez, and he has written several articles on this topic. Writing is a large part of his life as Dr. Gonzalez believes that writing is the ultimate expression of creativity.

Delilah Dotremon is an Associate Professor of Sociology and Criminal Justice at Alabama State University. One of her areas of specialty is the Sociology of Education. As an educator for 20 years, Dr. Dotremon has a keen interest in the struggles of English language learners, who deserve greater support in our public schools, so they can become productive citizens. Dr. Dotremon teaches Introduction to Sociology, Social Problems, and Social Science Research as well as the full gamut of Criminal Justice courses. At ASU, Dr. Dotremon is chiefly in charge of teaching law courses and has even taught American Public School Law.

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Citation

Summer Reading, 2014

by
Rita Deyoe-Chiullan, Ph.D., TexELT Editor
Adjunct Professor, Texas Woman’s University
Adjunct Professor, American College of Education

Soon I might be invited to create an online graduate level applied linguistics course for teachers preparing to become better qualified to meet the needs of English language learners. In addition, I am preparing to teach language acquisition in the spring of 2015 after not having taught that particular course since 2009. As an academic, even though I only teach as an adjunct and have no desire to seek a tenure-track university position ever again, I still recognize that I ought to be writing something that contributes to the field. Since I teach several different courses on an “as needed” basis, I read widely to remain current in a variety of areas related to language, learning, language learning, and education. All of the books in this bibliography were, are, or soon will be available from the online seller who tells me what I should be reading, based on my past purchases.

Key Words: Second language acquisition, vocabulary development, alternative literacy genres.

Of general interest and relevance for all educated individuals, whether or not they are currently employed as educators.


Language acquisition as seen through expert eyes that often focus on differing issues.


_Vocabulary development, enrichment, and everything else related to words._


_Applying linguistics and language knowledge in many ways and multiple genres._


**Citation**

Dr. Rita Deyoe-Chiullán has taught bilingual students of all ages in the U.S. and Colombia over the past forty-five years. Currently she teaches undergraduate courses at Texas Woman’s University and graduate online courses for the American College of Education. Her scholarly efforts focus on preparing qualified bilingual and ESL teachers. Her most recent publication is entitled “What is language fossilization and why does it matter?” in *English Language Learners in 21st Century Classrooms: Challenges and Expectations* (Eds. M. Cowart & G. Anderson, 2012). Rita’s most exciting recent project has been developing and editing this peer-reviewed online journal, *Texas English Language Teaching* (TexELT) under the sponsorship of the TexTESOL V Board where she serves as Publications Coordinator.

Dr. Jey Venkatesan has taught English as a Second language and college composition in the U.S. and India for several years. She has taught in many local colleges such as Texas Wesleyan, Texas Christian University, Tarrant County College, and Northlake College. Currently, she is a Professor of ESL at Collin College. She is also an IELTS (International English Language Testing System) examiner. She continues to faithfully contribute her excellent copy editing skills as the TexTESOL V Board’s Publications Copy Coordinator. Fortunately, she also agreed to serve as a reviewer for TexELT in addition to providing her copy editing skills at various levels of the publication process.
More recently she has taught ESOL credit courses in all skills areas to adults at two local community colleges, with a focus on the skills of writing/grammar. Currently in semi-retirement, she works part-time as a Writing Tutor at the Richland College Writing Center. Again this year, Margaret has dedicated many hours reading manuscripts, suggesting revisions to make the messages clearer and patiently re-reading after revisions were made to be sure the next draft was more effective.

Margaret Redus has been a member of TexTESOL V for many years. Within TexTESOL V, she served as Treasurer and later Membership Officer. She holds a B.A in elementary education with a minor in English and an M.L.A with a specialization in bilingual education. She began her career in education with 6 ½ years teaching primary grades in Dallas ISD.

More recently she has taught ESOL credit courses in all skills areas to adults at two local community colleges, with a focus on the skills of writing/grammar. Currently in semi-retirement, she works part-time as a Writing Tutor at the Richland College Writing Center. Again this year, Margaret has dedicated many hours reading manuscripts, suggesting revisions to make the messages clearer and patiently re-reading after revisions were made to be sure the next draft was more effective.
Technology Coordinator’s Biography

Rod Segovia is currently the Title I District Translator for Grand Prairie ISD. Recently, he has had the opportunity to take part in delivering Dual Language staff development to the Lower Kuskokwim School District in Bethel, Alaska, and each time walked away with a deeper awareness and appreciation of the importance of heritage language maintenance. Prior to being a translator, he worked for Grand Prairie ISD as a Dual Language Strategist and Instructional Technology Facilitator. Before that, he taught for 9 years in Plano ISD in Bilingual 3rd and 4th grades and was a Bilingual Literacy Specialist for K-5. He has a total of 17 years of experience in education. Rod holds a B.A. in Spanish with a minor in Music from the University of Texas at Arlington and is currently working on a Master’s in Educational Administration.

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Leslie A. Brinkerhoff, Jr. oversees the Continuing Education Program of ESL for Mountain View College in Dallas, Texas. He teaches credit classes for upper level writing courses for the ESOL program there as well. Prior to working at Mountain View College, he worked in several countries of Africa, particularly francophone, as a literacy consultant assisting local communities in the development of literacy programs fitted to local cultures, languages in use, and other environmental factors. He graduated with a Master's degree in Linguistics from the University of Texas in Arlington and a Bachelor's in French from Houghton College in New York State. He is fluent in French and has an intermediate ability to communicate in Spanish.
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