

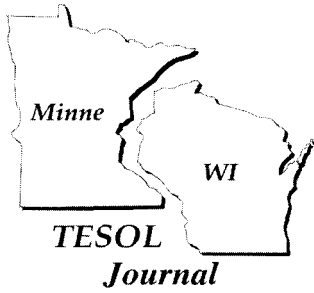
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Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages**



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CALL FOR PAPERS

MinneTESOL/WITESOL Journal, Volume 23

The *MinneTESOL/WITESOL Journal* seeks contributions for Volume 23 to be published summer of 2006. Submissions of the following type will be considered:

- **Articles** (15-20 pages) or **Reports** (7-10 pages) about:
 - Instructional methods, techniques, and materials
 - Work or research in progress with implications for ESL
 - Issues in ESL curriculum and program design
 - Testing, assessment, and evaluation in ESL
 - Professional preparation
 - Sociopolitical issues in ESL
 - Learner perspectives about language learning

- **Reviews** (500-1,500 words) on recently published ESL materials
 - Journal articles; print or online
 - Texts for professional development
 - Instructional materials for learners
 - Educational ESL websites or software

Complete details on submission guidelines and categories can be downloaded from the MinneTESOL website at <http://www.minnetesol.org>. Click on "Journal" and download "Author Guidelines".

Submissions must be emailed to one of the following editors; Kristi Kline Liu or Nima Salehi as a Word or text file. Submissions and questions can be addressed to:

Kristi Kline Liu
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ph: 612.626.9061ph:

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nsalehi@themlc.org
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Deadline for submissions is December 30, 2005

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INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to bring to you the twenty-second volume of the MinneTESOL/ WITESOL Journal, and mark the tenth year of collaboration between Minnesota and Wisconsin TESOL affiliates. The articles and reviews in this volume examine effective teaching strategies in schools and workplaces, language teacher education in the U.S. and abroad, alternative testing instruments in the assessment of English Language Learners (ELLs), and the ongoing need to understand issues faced by members of minority groups as they accommodate to life in a dominant culture.

Our first article, by Molly Rojas Collins, Robin Murie and Dan Detzner, is *Finding a Voice and a Place: Using Life Histories in a Second Language Writing Classroom*. The authors provide a useful background on life history research, and, through the eloquent written testimony of their students' work, present an effective argument for the use of life histories in the academic classroom.

Our second article, by Kimberly A. Johnson and Kelly Marchwick, is *Educational Models and Effective Practices in Occupational English For Immigrant Workers*. This focuses on the promise of Occupational English (OE), the integration of language and job skills training, to meet the challenges facing the future workforce development needs in Minnesota.

In our third article, *Non-Native Teachers in Expanding Circle Countries: Assets and Implications for Teacher Education*, Diana L Dudzik explores the impact of English as an international language upon teacher education. Drawing upon her experiences with teacher training in Vietnam, she suggests assets that non-native English speaking teachers bring to contexts of expanding circle countries and makes suggestions for effective teacher education that both recognizes and develops these assets.

In our fourth article, *ELL Teacher Preparation: A Process for Becoming Strategic Teachers*, Kathryn Henn-Reinke suggests how to prepare teachers to deliver instruction in ways which will meet the needs of ELL populations. She highlights one university's approach to preparing teachers with skills in areas of strategic teaching, learning and assessment.

Our fifth article, by Thomas Lombard, Julie Henderson and Tim Vansickle, is *An Alignment Study of the Test of Emerging Academic English and Minnesota's Standards for Reading in Grades 3, 5, 7 and 10*. The authors discuss the use of Minnesota's Test of Emerging Academic English (TEAE) as an alternate test for reporting yearly progress in reading by ELLs.

Finally, five book reviews complete this volume. The first two focus on language teaching and learning strategies: Larry Davis reviews *Sound Bites: Pronunciation Activities* while Amy Tarrell reviews *Inspired to Write: Readings and Tasks to Develop Writing Skills*. Three reviews focus on immigrant cultures and the lives of young people living between two cultures: Elizabeth Kurtz reviews *Accommodating and Educating Somali Students in Minnesota Schools*. Donald Hones reviews a trilogy of stories from Australia; *My Girrragundji*; *The Binna Binna Man*; *Njunjul the Sun*. Rhonda Munson reviews *Hey, Hmong Girl, Whassup?*

We wish to thank the members of the Editorial Advisory Board in both Minnesota and Wisconsin for all the effort that went into producing this volume.

Don Hones
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Finding a Voice and a Place: Using Life Histories in a Second Language Writing Classroom

**Molly Rojas Collins,
Robin Murie,
and Dan Detzner**

This paper describes the successful use of an extensive life history project in a second language writing classroom at a large urban university. In this paper, the authors describe the course design and application, including a description of assignments and the student writing process. Students were asked to write the life history of an elder from their own communities as they defined it. They were also asked to enhance this 15-20 page paper with library research. The life history project proved to be a useful tool in the research writing classroom.

In addition to describing the course, the authors place using such a project in the context of both multicultural theory and L2 writing practice. The benefits of such a project for college level English language learners were many. This project allows students to gain respect for their families and elders, as they become more proficient writers. Studies have shown that the knowledge of elders can lose its importance as families emigrate. As young immigrants further their education, they may begin to feel separate from their families and the knowledge from the “old country” may become less relevant, causing intergenerational conflict. Using the life histories of elders in the college writing classroom provided a place of importance for the elders and their stories in the college experience.

Introduction

Changes in immigration laws in the 1960's have promoted the current influx of new refugees and immigrants from Asia, Africa and the near East, with dramatic effects on education. Many school districts are overwhelmed by the multiplicity of cultures, languages and challenges that students present. Between 1975 and 1995 "the number of immigrant children ages 5 to 20 living in the United States more than doubled, from 3.5 to 8.6 million" (Ruiz-de Velasco & Fix, 2000). Locally, the Minneapolis Public Schools currently report that 23% of its student body are English Language Learners (2003). As colleges and universities begin to receive more and more of these immigrant students, there are challenges in meeting student needs in terms of language and the immigrant experience.

Immigrant students entering the university are often the first in their families to attend University in the United States. They may be under pressure to succeed in the "new world" while maintaining cultural values from their country of origin. (Weinstein-Shr & Henkins, 1991). As students become more educated, they may find that this puts them in conflict with their families. The knowledge of community and family elders may seem less relevant to them as they become proficient academics (Xiong, Detzner & Rettig, 2001; Xiong, 2000; Liebkind, 1993; Tobin & Friedman, 1984). Ironically, the goals of their immigration, often including education and economic mobility, may create conflict and distance in their families.

Moreover immigrant students in college may feel that they are being asked to acculturate and give up their identities, or that their difference is something they have to "overcome" (Gay, 1993; Lu, 1992). Teachers interested in helping immigrant students navigate their education are met with challenges to create classrooms and meaningful projects that respect students and their families. Educators can play a critical role in creating curriculum where students' families, and the knowledge they have, can be integrated into learning, while at the same time elders can become important sources of knowledge.

Using Life Histories in a Freshman Writing Class

Using a substantial life history project in a writing class for immigrant students proved to be successful in creating a meaningful writing task, producing a high level of writing and fluency in second language writers, and providing a place for students to learn about the elders in their communities. A life histories approach in a research writing course was developed to address the need for developing extensive academic writing skills, linguistic fluency, as well as the important goals of finding place and voice. This course was created in a collaboration between the Commanding English Program, a freshman program for 2nd language college students, and the Department of Family Social Science, and funded by a grant from the University of Minnesota's Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Writing. Using life histories in the college writing classroom can address student language needs, and honor families and cultures, providing immigrant and refugee students with a way to connect the college experience to their family experience. This approach creates a writing context where the students can use their expertise as multilingual and multicultural specialists, and moves away from a deficit view of 2nd language writing. By using a life history assignment the writing classroom can become a place where their identities and cultures are given an important place in the curriculum, instead of a place which potentially alienates the students from their families. The ability of students to speak multiple languages becomes a tool they need to complete the assignment; thus their language abilities are viewed not as an obstacle to overcome as they write, but rather a strength. Students are positioned as bilingual experts, not novice writers prone to making error. In addition, they learn not only about writing for the University, but also about their cultures, their families and themselves.

Generation 1.5 and college writing

Students who belong to “generation 1.5,” or students who immigrated to the U.S. as children, face a number of challenges in the college writing classroom (Harklau, Siegal & Losey, 1999; Roberge, 2002; Zamel 1991). Because of a disrupted education caused by the transition to a new language, their writing may have features of L2 writing, and yet they may resist the stigma of being placed in ESL classes, especially if

they have graduated from U.S. High schools. Second language writers also may encounter a hostile response to their writing in their college classes if their writing has many grammatical errors (Roberge 2002; Zamel, 1991). These students can be at risk of failing as they begin college. The question then becomes, “How do we address language needs in a way that respects the fluency that many of these students have in English?”. The course described here is part of a first year curriculum for just these students. International students are served elsewhere on campus. Unlike most traditional college ESL programs, students in this freshman program are enrolled in credit bearing courses during their freshman year.

When students enter this program, they complete two required semesters of basic writing courses. Their first basic writing class introduces them to source based writing and investigates the topic of education. The second semester course develops more focused research skills and writing. Students are expected to become proficient researchers using both the internet and library. A series of assignments builds to a lengthier research paper incorporating a variety of sources. Students also complete editing drafts guided by their writing instructor, find patterns and become more proficient editors of their own writing.

Spring 2003: The Life History Project

In the spring of 2003, one research writing section was offered to students with a focus on writing the life history of an elder in their community. Students selected this course based on their interest in the topic. Students had choices of two other topics, and a parallel section of the course was offered at the same time to ensure that students selected the course based on a desire to do life histories, rather than a time preference. A total of 17 students registered for and completed the course. Student backgrounds were diverse, from Vietnam, Nigeria, Sri Lanka, Bosnia, India, Eritrea, Somalia and Kenya. The majority of students were Somalian (7 of 17) reflecting current demographics in the program as a whole. Despite their varied backgrounds, students shared some common experiences. Many had spent considerable time in refugee camps and had had their educations disrupted and delayed. Almost all had graduated from high schools in the United States.

The life history project provided the foundation of the course, and required extensive writing and research. Students were asked to select and interview an elder from their community. They were required to interview their subject at least 3 times, with interviews ranging from 1-3 hours each. Other sections of the research writing course required students to write an 8-10 page research paper, however, students completing the life history project were asked to develop a 15-20 page paper. The instructors of the course wrote documents for the University of Minnesota's Human Subjects committee that limited the use of all writing produced by students, and required informed consent from all subjects

Course Design

In addition to the primary research interview, students were required to undertake library research to support the information they were gathering in their life history interviews. There were a number of "prewriting" assignments that helped students divide up the work of the life history project and get writing feedback throughout the semester. These included a paper that defined the meaning of elder based on students' individual and cultural definitions, and a biographical object assignment in which students were asked to identify and bring a biographical object from their lives and write about it, developing both interviewing skills as well as descriptive writing skills. Students shared powerful stories from their own experiences as others asked important questions about the objects they brought from their own lives.

In addition, students were asked to draft 3 lengthy pre-writings, preliminary write-ups of their interviews for the project, broken down by chronological life stages: early life, middle age and later years. Students then used these pre-writings to develop their life history projects. In addition, students were asked to reflect on the life history project as a final paper. Throughout the course, students read about the aging process and about life histories. They met twice a week with Rojas Collins (writing instructor), and once a week with Daniel Detzner (Family Social Science) who shared his expertise in immigrant families, research and life histories. From Detzner, students learned how to successfully interview and situate the life histories in history and place. Both instruc-

tors read and commented on drafts throughout the course.

After completing each interview, students were required to find library research that supported or explained the information gained in their interviews. For example, if the student found out in their interview that the subject had lived a nomadic lifestyle, they might find library research about nomads and incorporate that into their paper. Student research included varied topics like the Somali Civil War, Hindu arranged marriages, and early 20th century Polish immigration to New York City. Students also visited the Immigration History Research Center on campus, where they could see primary sources from earlier and current immigrants, as well as documents and books documenting the immigrant experience. While students were motivated and excited by the collection of documents about immigrants from the past, they were also impressed by the lack of information available about their own communities, which fused new importance into the research they were conducting.

Students also participated in two public readings of their work: one for visiting high school students and one for the dean, associate dean, and director of academic affairs of the General College, and the Center for Interdisciplinary Studies of Writing, among other invited guests. The Dean of General College, a specialist in African American history, praised the student's work and their role as budding historians. This was their final reading and a fitting conclusion to the course.

The Success of the Life History Project

The life history project was a successful one, as evaluated by students and instructors. It worked to meet the goals of the writing course, and to meet curricular goals of inclusion and multicultural education. Students developed a sense of community as the course progressed, supporting each other in their work and forging bonds as a cohesive group. The project itself gave students a real audience and purpose as they wrote, as one requirement of the course included giving the interviewee a copy of their final draft. Students were aware as they wrote, that they were creating a document that captured this person's life for their families, and this gave the project added importance. Because of this real purpose, students became very concerned with making the paper an

accurate and finished product. Students commented on the very real motivation created by the idea that generations to come might read their papers, and made real efforts in their editing and in their writing. As one student said, “It is important because I never gave a gift to my aunt and since I’m writing this paper as a gift it will be my first gift to her” (Somali student). Another student commented, “One thing that makes me proud is that this project will be a gift to Mr. X and also other people who will read one day my work” (Somali student).

Students Develop as Academic Writers Because of Meaningful Work

This being the second course of two writing classes, the instructors had high expectations and expected students to be able to accomplish multiple writing goals. Students were expected to develop as researchers and strong academic writers. This course emphasized integrating a variety of sources and developing academic style in a final research paper. The life history project worked well as a research project and as a tool to teach students academic writing.

Students had to do extensive research, as they do in all the research writing courses. Students were exposed to research in multiple disciplines and seemed motivated by the project to do appropriate research. They developed interviewing skills, and learned to ask more focused and open ended questions as they conducted their interviews with an elder. In their pre-writings, their developing skills as interviewers became apparent. By their third pre-writing, they were getting far more detailed and focused information. By using the life history project as a starting point for research, students were able to evaluate the available research and to have a narrow focus as well as a criteria by which to select the most appropriate sources. These interviews and the information gained by doing them gave them a measure by which they could evaluate the library information they were being asked to include. While beginning freshman writers often find general or unconnected sources to incorporate in their writing, and often do not have the criterion to discard unrelated sources, these students could clearly see which sources did not fit with their interview information. They had a real purpose for sifting through written documents.

Students commented that researching was difficult because they could not use as many broad sources and needed to be focused. Despite the difficulty, they were motivated to find the best sources. One Somali student wrote, “The research was difficult for it was hard to find, and if you found it, it was also hard to connect it with the story. Therefore, one was expected to do as many researches as he can do through the libraries looking for books, articles, journals and websites. The good part of it was that the more research you did, the easier your work became.” Students reported that they were motivated to seek out the right information. One student writer reported that “Sometimes I did not find any information at the library. So I went to different libraries to research.” They also found the lack of information motivated them. As another student said, “When I wrote the history project of Somali elder, I feel I did something that was needed, because there is little written stuff you can find about Somali history”.

In addition to developing research skills, the volume of writing increased their fluency. Students became more proficient writers. The initial anxiety about writing a 15-20 page paper gave way to complaints at the end of the semester that the 20 page limit was too short. The page limit forced writers to focus on telling the story. They had to make writing decisions about what information to include, what information to leave out and how to present that information in a way that made sense. Their final products were successful and impressive in that they sustained 15-20 pages of interesting and relevant content. Students worked with transitions and subheadings to guide the reader through the life history. The very nature of telling one person’s story and the meaningful writing context helped students to organize their paper logically and to connect events and stories. They also had to learn to transition to multiple stories in a way that made sense. Transitioning from the elder’s story to the wider historical material needed to be smooth and students worked hard to make those transitions.

As students completed their life history projects they reported a sense of pride in their work, as well as a general agreement that their abilities to write academically had improved. One student reflected, “One other thing I learned from writing longer papers is that you feel different as your writing comes to an end. You feel proud of yourself; it’s

like an accomplishment.“ Students reported improvement in their writing: “I can proudly say I write a lot better now than I did in the past. Organizing my paper and using the found research is something that I got very good at.” Student ability to sustain writing also improved through the experience of doing longer writing: “I am able to write longer papers and my writing is clearer, organized and makes sense” one student said.

The Life History Project Supports a Multicultural Curriculum

One of the goals of multicultural education is to provide students with opportunities to see themselves in the curriculum (Kutz, Groden and Zamel, 1993). Often students from outside of the dominant culture do not find models of their own experience in the college curriculum, and sometimes can lack relevant experience and schemata to use in their analysis and response to college material and assignments (Collins 2001). This can be especially true for immigrant and refugee students in the U.S. for whom readings based on American culture can often be more difficult to understand than the English itself. A teacher of students from many different backgrounds may struggle to find relevant content for all her students.

The Life History Project then is a culturally relevant college level assignment that requires students to use their own knowledge as a base to approach the assignment. In this case, students were asked to describe their own and community definitions of elder, and then to find an elder of their choice to interview. Definitions for an elder ranged from their age, to having grandchildren, their education or community status. They were able to define community as they wished. Students were not pigeonholed as immigrants, and could interview people from a variety of contexts. Most students chose to interview elders from their country of origin, grandparents, neighbors, relatives and family friends, but 4 students chose to interview elders from cultures other than their own: a teacher, mentor, pastor and family friend.

The life history project was successful in its goals of inclusiveness and respect for students’ families and cultures. Indeed, students reported that their understanding of elders had changed as a result of taking the course. One student discussed this change in her reflection pa-

per: “Before taking this class, I thought that an elder was an old person who just tells stories to their grandchildren for fun. After this project, I learned that an elder is someone who everyone respects because of his or her wisdom and value.” Other students reported that their respect for the person they interviewed grew greatly as a result of having completed the project. “There were many things I could not imagine that my grandmother had to go through in the past” one student reported learning. Another student reflected that “As I took a trip to my grandmother’s past I found out that she overcame many hardships such as being responsible at the age of 12.”

In addition, the life history project answered some of the questions that students had about their own lives. For students who grew up in refugee camps or outside of their countries, there often were gaps in their understanding of their own collective histories, gaps that were filled in by completing the interviews and research. In many instances, they learned important information about conflicts in their own countries, their culture, and the reason for their immigration. One Somali student wrote, “Since I lived in Uganda, I only heard a little bit about the civil war and I didn’t know how serious it was. . . . I learned about the civil war.” Another student wrote that by interviewing her mother, she learned, “New things which I never knew about my culture before.”

Importantly, the life history project moves away from a deficit model of second language learners. Instead of looking at immigrant students as both linguistically and culturally deficient and thinking of the writing class as a way to “fix” their linguistic errors, the life history project offers students an important context where they literally are the only people who could successfully accomplish the project because of who they are. Their multilingualism becomes essential as they interview elders in their native language, and then turn around to become the recorders of their experience in English, the language of future generations. They are culturally appropriate specialists since they know how to approach their subjects in ways that an outsider would not. Students recognized their important role in the process of recording these stories. “The Somali Elders are full of great stories and this project gave me confidence that in the future I will go and do my own interviews because if we don’t write their stories they will be lost” reflected a Somali student. Their identities

and differences then become important strengths to draw on, rather than markers of difference to be overcome.

Student Response to the Life History Project

Overwhelmingly the student response to the project was positive in student written evaluations of the course. This in part can be explained by the students themselves- they had chosen the course based on an interest in doing this type of research. But, beyond interest in the topic, in their evaluations, students stated that what they learned about writing would help them in their future courses. In response to the question: What did you learn about writing for college in 1422? Students replied, “It prepared me for other classes”, “Everything, exceptional amount”, “I learned about how to ask good questions for interviews, doing research and how to write long papers”, and “I learned how to edit a twenty page paper”. When asked if they felt that the life history project was a good way to learn about writing for college, students said that they did. One student stated, “It is a good idea because it gives freshman the confidence to write a long paper.”

Finally, the experience of creating a real and meaningful piece of writing gave students confidence in themselves and their abilities to write. Students described their experiences positively. “One thing I learned is that I had always had a gift in writing and describing but it just had to be the right theme to write about and this theme and the whole course have helped me figure that out” (Bosnian student). “This project encouraged me to become a writer” (Somali student). “I felt like a formal public writer when I researched information and added it to the life history paper” (Somali student).

Designing a course around the life histories of elders provides not only a meaningful and real writing context, but also creates a writing course that is inclusive and respectful of student identities and cultures. Students are able to learn real writing tasks that they will need to succeed in their educational goals, while at the same time, affirming the importance of the elders in their communities and of the knowledge they have. The life history assignment brings the students’ communities into the classroom and creates a real and meaningful context for documenting one person’s story for future and current generations to read. In

doing so, student multilingualism and an ability to move between two cultures becomes a necessary tool to complete the assignment. Their status as second language learners is not a deficit in this context, but an asset. They are exposed to a variety of research contexts and materials as they write their life history project, meeting the needs of the writing classroom as they also learn about who they are and why they are in the US.

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Authors

Molly Rojas Collins has been an instructor in the University of Minnesota's Commanding English Program since 1999, where she enjoys teaching writing, college reading and literature. She has a Master's degree in Applied Linguistics.

Robin Murie directs the Commanding English Program at the University of Minnesota General College. She has an MA in ESL from the University of Minnesota, where she has worked with freshman from a variety of language backgrounds for over 25 years. Research interests include second-language writing, high school outreach development, and meeting educational needs of students who graduate from U.S. high schools but whose home language is not English.

Dan Detzner is currently Professor of Family Social Science at the University of Minnesota. His research interests are located at the intersections of ethnicity, family, and gerontology. He is the author of *Elder Voices: Southeast Asian Families in the United States* (Altamira Press).



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Educational Models and Effective Practices in Occupational English for Immigrant Workers

**Kimberly A. Johnson
and Kelly Marchwick**

This paper shares highlights of a report funded by contract from the McKnight Foundation that focuses on the promise of Occupational English, the integration of language and job skills training, to meet the challenges facing the future workforce development needs in Minnesota. We begin with the design of a needs-based framework composed of four educational models – *Pre-Employment ESL*, *Workplace ESL*, *Bridge Vocational ESL*, and *Occupational-Specific Vocational ESL* – created to understand the range of Occupational English training currently available to limited English language speakers; delivery of instruction options are discussed within that framework. Next, we reviewed the literature to identify indicators of success for Occupational English programs and synthesized these into a listing of effective practices in the field. Finally, to bridge theory to practice, we describe these effective practices and include highlights from five Minnesota programs, selected as examples of the diversity of organizations and program types operating in the state, to illustrate both the successes and challenges associated with those practices.

Introduction

Within the next two decades, the U.S. labor force, including Minnesota, will be transformed by the retirement of the baby boomer generation, a decrease in the numbers of native-born workers, and the influx of foreign-born workers needed to fill jobs. Immigrant labor will

account for almost all of the growth in the workforce in the future (Wrigley, Richer, Martinson, Kubo & Shawn, 2003) and significantly more jobs will require post-secondary education. In fact, according to the Governor's Workforce Development Council, skill shortages will be one of the main challenges facing Minnesota in the immediate future (Shelton, 2004).

This growing immigrant workforce is concentrated in low-wage, low-skill jobs (Capps, Fix, Passel, Ost & Perez-Lopez, 2003; Wrigley, et al., 2003), largely due to low levels of English proficiency and/or limited educational attainment (Burt, 2003). Despite this challenge, there is growing evidence that a strong relationship exists between language proficiency and income—i.e. increased English proficiency brings increased earning power (Capps, et al., 2003).

Unfortunately, immigrant workers often have limited access to either the language or career training needed to move out of low-wage jobs and into higher-skilled, higher-paying jobs. There are a variety of factors that contribute to this limited access: 1) a tradition by employers of investing training dollars in middle and upper management rather than in entry-level workers (Capps, et al., 2003); 2) exclusion from government-sponsored job training programs due to language proficiency or educational attainment requirements (Capps, et al., 2003; AFL-CIO, 2004); 3) limited access to post-secondary education due to the escalating costs (Shelton, 2004); and 4) program language proficiency requirements (Gillespie, 1996). The convergence of these trends presents a looming challenge for Minnesota's workforce development system. This report focuses on the promise of Occupational English, the integration of language and job skills training, to meet that challenge.

Recognizing this potential, yet lacking data for informed decision making by policy makers at the state and local level, the McKnight Foundation funded a research project by contract to provide vital information on the state of Occupational English programs in Minnesota. Specifically, the research was designed to:

1. Deliver a framework for understanding the range of Occupational English training available to limited English language speakers in Minnesota;

2. Identify indicators of success for Occupational English programs that were consistent across the literature and synthesize these into a listing of effective practices in the field;
3. Highlight five programs in Minnesota that exemplify the diversity of organizations and program types operating in our state, and share some of the successes and challenges facing those programs;
4. Identify ways for stakeholders to better serve the needs of our growing immigrant workforce.

Although the final report was written primarily for an audience of policy makers, many issues surfaced in the course of our research that we felt would be of interest to educators and providers throughout the region. This paper, then, is designed to share highlights of that completed report, focusing in particular on the program framework developed and the effective practices synthesized from the current literature.² In addition, to bridge theory to practice, we also include highlights from our survey of state providers that illustrate both the successes and challenges associated with those effective practices.

Framework of program types

There are a variety of frameworks available for understanding Occupational English programs (Burt, 1997; Gillespie, 1996). Many tend to be designed with the provider in mind, rather than the client. Additionally, Occupational English programs are often categorized by the type of instruction, focusing on *how* instruction is done rather than *why* it is done that way. We believe that it is important to move beyond instruction type, to put the learners at the center of the discussion, and to choose a suitable instructional method only after determining the needs and goals of those learners. Therefore, we discuss models of instructional delivery, not as a framework, but as a choice to be made by Occupational English providers once the needs and goals of learners, and hence the content, are clearly established.

A needs-based framework for understanding Occupational English programs

Our framework focuses on the learning needs and goals of clients. Specifically, there are three types of low-wage workers that are unlikely to enter, survive, or thrive in the workplace without training and support: (1) those struggling to enter the workforce for the first time, (2) those who cycle in and out of entry-level jobs, and (3) the working poor who are stuck in low-wage jobs (Shelton, 2004). Immigrants and refugees can be found in all of these categories. Because workers in each of these categories are at a different point in their work life, they will need different types of training and support to be successful. Consequently, a variety of programs are needed that address the learning and life needs of immigrants at different stages in their careers.

The needs-based framework is composed of four main program types – *Pre-Employment ESL*, *Workplace ESL*, *Bridge Vocational ESL*, and *Occupational-Specific Vocational ESL*. Following our framework descriptions, this report will briefly describe instructional delivery options.

- 1) *Pre-Employment ESL*, sometimes called Pre-Vocational ESL or Functional Workplace English, is mostly geared towards the needs of immigrants who are preparing for initial entry into the workforce. Course content often focuses on job search and job readiness skills as well as work culture. The Secretary of Labor's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)³ are often integrated into the curriculum. While not common, the introduction of career exploration topics and skills would also be beneficial to clients (Shelton, 2004). Unfortunately, the work-first emphasis for those on public assistance means that many Pre-Employment ESL learners exit early to accept entry-level positions without enough language skills or information to thrive or advance in the workplace (Gillespie, 1996).
- 2) *Workplace ESL* focuses on the language use needs of a specific worksite. It serves incumbent workers, which includes both cyclers and the working poor. Workplace ESL courses usually involve customized curriculum and

materials based on employer needs. Classes are often held at the workplace, and employees usually receive release time or at least partial compensation for attending. If designed correctly, Workplace ESL courses can benefit all types of immigrant employees: Addressing immediate language needs will help workers to survive in the workplace, and including the language skills needed for promotion, or the exploration of options to advance in their current field, will help workers to thrive. However, because of the high cost the employer bears – lost production time, employee salaries, etc. – courses often focus on immediate language use needs and do not include language skills or information that would help employees advance within a company. The short-term nature of the training, generally 20 to 30 hours, only intensifies the focus on survival language needs.

- 3) *Bridge Vocational ESL* is designed to build the prerequisite content knowledge and language skills needed to participate in occupation-specific training programs. For example, workers looking to move into a skilled manufacturing training program may lack content and language to succeed in that training, so a *Bridge Vocational ESL* program might integrate algebra, geometry, and manufacturing language to prepare for the training. Participants in these programs are often low-wage workers looking to move into higher-paying, higher-skill jobs. Participants tend to be workers with good work histories, and success in these programs tends to require a high degree of stability (i.e. reliable transportation, childcare, housing, etc). Bridge programs most often serve as preparation for longer-term training and are frequently located in post-secondary institutions. Course content usually includes a combination of academic and language skills along with content knowledge needed to be successful in the training program.

- 4) *Occupational-Specific Vocational ESL* focuses on training people for specific jobs (such as nursing assistants or bank tellers). These programs tend to serve immigrants who have been here longer and who have higher proficiency levels. Participants may be cyclers or immigrants employed in low-wage jobs with little possibility of advancement. Traditionally, these programs have cooperated with two-year colleges as the training often leads to some kind of credential, though this trend is changing. Adult Basic Education programs, community-based organizations, and employment services agencies are now offering short-term Occupational-Specific Vocational ESL training geared at higher-paying, entry-level positions in the healthcare, manufacturing and hospitality industries. To be successful, these programs require teamwork and cooperation between ESL and the program area faculty. These programs tend to be susceptible to shifts in the labor market, and require a critical mass of students interested in the same field to be viable.

Instructional Delivery Methods

Once the goals and objectives of an Occupational English program are established, course designers must select the most effective mode of delivering the instruction. In making this decision, trainers must consider the number and background of the learners, the nature of the content, the provider's institutional culture, and available resources such as money, hours of instruction, staff expertise, and post training support (Graves, 1996). Instructional delivery options deal primarily with the level of integration between language and career training. Gillespie (1996) outlined the following five delivery options:

- 1) **Sequential** training requires that English Language Learners obtain a certain level of English proficiency before they can begin their career or technical training. There are two major disadvantages, however: 1) many immigrants are excluded from training and 2) to reach the proficiency level required to succeed takes both time and money, hurdles that can lead to low completion rates.

- 2) **Integrated** training combines career and language training in one course. Career training includes soft skills (general life/culture skills transferred to a work environment), content knowledge (foundational knowledge that a person needs for a particular job), and hard skills (specific skill sets for specific types of jobs that can be documented through some type of technical credential). Most programs can successfully integrate soft skills and content knowledge with language. However staff expertise can be the greatest barrier to integrating hard skills successfully.
- 3) **Concurrent training** has two training components—career-training (hard skills) and occupation-specific language teaching (soft skills and content). These run simultaneously so that training in the career is not delayed by the acquisition of language skills. Concurrent delivery of instruction can lead to a quicker entry into the job market, and students can begin their career training right away. However, it requires special training of content-area instructors so that they can work effectively with English language learners.
- 4) **Bilingual training**, broadly speaking, is the use of participants' native language to aid in the acquisition of either career or language skills. However, the ways in which programs actualize this can differ greatly (Gillespie, 1996; Wrigley, et al., 2003). For example, English may be the language of instruction and the participants' first language might be used as supportive tool; career training may be done in participants' first language while an Occupational-Specific Vocational ESL course runs concurrently; or both languages may be integrated equally in the classroom with materials and assessment in both languages.
- 5) **Cluster** instruction is a delivery option that minimizes vulnerability to shifts in the labor market by combining learners from a variety of occupations into one course. Courses are usually divided into two parts: One half to address topical themes important to all learners, and one half to allow for individualized study of one's chosen field.

Effective practices in Occupational English

Despite recent calls for funding and research to identify best practices in Occupational English (AFL-CIO, 2004; Gillespie, 1996; Wrigley, et al., 2003), we found no studies that contained the longitudinal data necessary to determine which practices in Occupational English are indeed best practices. Much of the literature, however, does outline successful or effective practices in some form, and we have synthesized those practices into a succinct and accessible list.

Definition

For this paper, we define *effective practices* in workplace training as “processes and strategies that lead to excellence, as documented in real training situations. Effective practices are not only better by comparison with other ways of operating; they stand on their own as models to be emulated” (Friedenberg, Kennedy, Lomperis, Martin & Westerfield, 2003, p. v). Effective practices in Occupational English should go beyond helping learners to find a job—they also involve assisting clients to both survive and thrive in the workplace (Grognet, 1997). Although policy-makers, labor union organizers, or non-profit training organizations approach the topic of Occupational English practices with differing agendas that inform their recommendations, we sought to maintain a focus on the learner in our identification of seven broad categories of effective practices for Occupational English. We shall look more closely at each following a description of the Minnesota providers highlighted in this report.

Highlighted Minnesota programs

We initially conducted 60-90 minute phone surveys with 13 Minnesota programs referred by the McKnight Foundation or through others in the field. Five of these programs were then chosen for closer non-evaluative review, selected as representative of program types and which demonstrated successes or faced challenges that we felt were worth sharing with a larger audience. Both investigators visited each program and two-hour taped interviews were conducted on site with the program manager and/or administrators and teachers. Supplemen-

tary materials, including texts, course materials, promotional flyers and websites, were also collected and reviewed. Below is a brief description of each highlighted program type.

1. A two-year state college customized training program, which is publicly funded, is an example of a *Workplace ESL* program. This program contracts primarily with manufacturing firms to deliver customized assessment and Workplace ESL courses. Content and language are integrated. They also provide other language-related services to employers such as help improving internal communication, trainings on supervising a diverse workforce, and interpretation and translation services.
2. A non-profit organization that provides employment services and refugee programming by bidding on county contracts. This organization has experimented with a hybrid program that combines a Pre-Employment ESL orientation with either a Workplace ESL tutorial or an *Occupational-Specific Vocational ESL* short course. It employs sequential, integrated and concurrent instructional delivery options. It is designed as an alternative approach to serve immigrants participating in the state welfare program for low-income families with children. Recipients enter with a basic level of English, but may not be able to secure stable employment even after participation in a classroom-based ESL or Pre-Employment ESL program.
3. A community-based mutual assistance organization (run by members of an ethnic group created to serve that ethnic group) is an example of a *Pre-Employment ESL* program. Language and content are integrated. The program is designed to help non-native state welfare recipients increase their language proficiency and obtain full-time employment. The program serves pre-literate clients as well as intermediate-level learners and its open enrollment policy means new learners join class on a daily basis.
4. A medium-sized non-profit organization with a long history of serving immigrants and refugees through resettlement and language education

services. The organization has a program for medical careers with multiple components. The first is an *Occupational-Specific Vocational ESL* program that leads to certification as a nursing assistant. Instruction is concurrent with a part of the day spent on occupation-specific language skills (taught by ESL instructors) and the other on skills needed to become a nursing assistant (taught by nurses).

5. Another component is an advancement program designed to help immigrants currently working in healthcare to advance up the career ladder. This program does not have a language component, rather, it is exclusively a support services program for students entering or enrolled in post-secondary institutions in advanced health career programs.
6. For those who lack the language or academic skills to participate in the advancement program, the organization offers a *Bridge Vocational ESL* program that helps immigrants acquire the needed reading, writing, grammar, listening and computer skills to attend post-secondary institutions.
7. An Adult Basic Education program that offers two types of Occupational English programs. The first is a *Workplace ESL* program that contracts with employers in a variety of fields to provide language training for their employees. The *Workplace ESL* program provides training to supervisors on managing a multilingual workforce.

The other program is an example of an *Occupational-Specific Vocational ESL* program that is designed to prepare students to take their first steps toward becoming certified child development associates. After the successful completion of the pilot program in 2003-2004, four additional Adult Basic Education programs will utilize the curriculum and also run this course in the future. However, it is important to note that this training provides only the first step necessary to become a certified child development associate. Students must go on to complete 480 hours of work with children as well as to take an oral and written exam.

A listing of effective practices

In this section, we provide a definition and description of each effective practice, and then feature examples from our highlighted providers to illustrate successes and challenges with the implementation of those practices. It is important to note that the successes and challenges we identified were seldom a result of the type of program. They were more often related to the provider type and their context, specifically their resources and stakeholders.

1) Funding

Funding sources are stable, multiple and long-term. Funding decisions are made by considering a variety of factors and are linked to effective practices in Occupational English, rather than made solely on the basis of performance outcomes.

Stable, long-term funding

Programs serving adult immigrants are generally seriously underfunded (Wrigley, et al., 2003). To best meet the needs of these workers, funding sources should be stable and long-term to allow for the development of programs, to purchase equipment and supplies, and to provide staff and support services to students. In addition, stable funding streams can impact teaching, and thus outcomes, by allowing programs to “employ a more consistent and permanent teaching staff, thus gaining an advantage in developing, encouraging and reinforcing good instructional methods” (AFL-CIO, 2004, p. 32).

Multiple finding sources

Many programs face the demise of quality programs when relying on a single funding source. Although multiple funding sources may mean more work in terms of assessments and competing demands, a variety of funding streams offers some security to programs often scrambling for the next dollar (Burt, 1997).

Successes and Challenges

In general, the Adult Basic Education program we reviewed is very adept at finding and managing multiple funding streams, receiving sup-

port from local businesses and utilizing the connections and donation possibilities brought to them by their volunteers (who worked in the office, participated in the literacy program, etc.). Juggling multiple grants and funders means more administrative work, but also provides multiple resources from which to draw for any need.

In contrast, the community-based mutual assistance organization, which performs a vital service in preparing some of the most needy workers for participation in the state economy, expressed concern about funding being cut and services there are already stretched. The outcomes-based evaluation required by the state and county for renewal of its funding puts them at a disadvantage because: (1) they serve immigrants with the most barriers to training and (2) unlike other Occupational English programs, they can not screen participants based on their likelihood to succeed. In addition to this uncertainty about long-term funding, the mutual assistance organization also faces a funding cap on the numbers of students. In spite of a 20-student cap, and in response to the increasing need, they often take as many as 30 students without additional compensation.

2) Program Design

Needs of stakeholders are thoroughly assessed and reconciled to create clear, measurable objectives matched to those needs. The development of relevant and appropriate curricula, and choices made about instructional methods and strategies, emerge from that assessment.

Needs assessment

An effective needs assessment has many components:

- Familiarity with the workplace community in order to understand what stakeholders perceive as needs (Grognet, 1997). Such an assessment often involves interviews or discussion with supervisors, managers, customers, co-workers and potential participants. This assessment provides insight into the language skills deemed necessary for participants. In addition, it provides an opportunity for individuals to feel involved and may strengthen their commit-

ment to the program (Friedenberg, et al. 2003; Grognet, 1997).

- Observations and analysis of workplace language, in order to learn the language and competencies needed for the job or training (Friedenberg, et al., 2003; Johns and Price-Machado, 2001). This may include shadowing participants, reviewing workplace texts or engaging in discussion with participants' colleagues.
- An assessment that includes both the needs of stakeholders as well as the larger regional labor market to determine the opportunities for post-training job placement (AFL-CIO, 2004).
- A thorough assessment of the participants' language proficiencies in order to gauge the mismatch between current language competencies and the competencies needed for the job or training (Friedenberg, et al., 2003; Grognet, 1996). These assessments for both oral fluency and literacy should be appropriate for the context and the learners (Wrigley, et al., 2003). Additionally, learners' needs are best met when programs consider not only issues of English language proficiency and literacy, but also consider the first language literacy and educational background of clients, as well as their work history and occupational skill proficiency (AFL-CIO, 2004).

It is through a thorough needs assessment that programs can establish objectives that are clear, measurable, and realistic – another very important component of any course or program (Burt, 2003; Friedenberg, et al., 2003; Grognet, 1996; Johns & Price-Machado, 2001).

Curriculum development: skills and materials

Curriculum development also entails the creation and use of appropriate materials and technologies. According to Friedenberg and her colleagues (2003), a workplace training program might facilitate learning through the use of authentic customized texts and teacher-generated resources that incorporate materials used in that workplace. Using these

materials also “encourage[s] the transfer of learned skills to real-life workplace settings and situations” (p. 80). A state-funded pre-employment Occupational English program, on the other hand, might be best served by introductory texts that include general workplace skills and the SCANS skills and competencies. Lastly, curriculum developers should consider taking advantage of available and appropriate technologies to support learning and teaching.

Instructional methods and strategies

Determining instructional methods and strategies are a vital component of program design. These strategies maintain a “focus on objectives, [and] keep the class learner-centered” (Grognet, 1996, p. 1). Content-based instruction can be particularly effective in Occupational English programs when occupational content and language objectives are properly integrated into the curriculum (AFL-CIO, 2004). Finally, to facilitate and enhance learning, programs should strive to deliver instruction in a way that creates an environment conducive to learning – one that is comfortable and that keeps learners involved and motivated (Friedenberg, et al., 2003).

Successes and Challenges

With each project, the state college customized training program conducts a lengthy needs analysis that includes a customized assessment tool developed after consultation with potential employer-clients. They are careful in their assessments of the language and skills necessary for success and program objectives are developed only after the needs assessment has been completed. Customized, rather than standardized, tests are used to assess language proficiency, and sometimes these assessments include individual interviews. Their careful analysis of needs prior to contracting for training mean that both provider and employer are clear about the training and set realistic objectives and expectations.

Pre-employment ESL programs like that at the community-based mutual assistance organization face challenges that prevent customization and thorough needs analysis. Given a set of pre-determined objectives prevents them from tailoring objectives to specific client needs, and the required use of standardized tests (such as the Comprehensive Adult

Student Assessment System, or CASAS)4 for formative and summative assessments leaves them little room to customize objectives or assessments to meet learners' needs. In addition, there is a revolving door – they do not ever have a group of students that work together for any length of time. Such a system makes customizing any aspect nearly impossible.

3) **Staffing**

Highly qualified instructors and appropriate support staff are hired and provided job security and opportunities for training and professional development.

Committed, trained professionals

There is general agreement in the literature about the knowledge base and training required for successful teaching in Occupational English. Unless programs provide for collaboration between content teachers and language teachers, Occupational English programs require a range of skills from their instructors, including an understanding of second language acquisition, language teaching pedagogy, and the principles of adult learning, as well as a general familiarity with the occupational language needs of the workplace (Burt, 1997; Johns & Price-Machado, 2001). Providers typically have difficulties finding someone with all of these qualities, especially in an environment of funding uncertainties that leads providers to turn increasingly to part-time and temporary staff (Gillespie, 1996). This trend also becomes problematic because committed, full-time instructors and support staff can provide continuity and stability to programs (AFL-CIO, 2004; Burt, 1997). Coupled with a general lack of professional development opportunities for instructors and staff, this can lead to high turnover rates, burnout for overworked staff, and uncertainty in teaching quality.

Professional development opportunities for teachers and staff

It is important that programs offer professional development and training opportunities to all staff and instructors. This helps staff to keep abreast of new practices and research, (AFL-CIO, 2004; Burt, 1997; Friedenber, et al., 2003) and provides opportunities for part-time or

isolated instructors to connect with professional colleagues (National Center for ESL Literacy Education, 2002). All too often, such training possibilities consist of short in-service workshops or quick trips to conferences (Gillespie, 1996). Such training opportunities may be limited in their usefulness, in that they may not provide for critical reflection nor satisfy the need of effective teacher professional development to be sustained over the long term (Clair & Adger, 1999).

Successes and Challenges

Although most of the teachers at the Adult Basic Education program are part-time, this program tries hard to provide teachers with minimum employment to ensure they receive benefits. They have very low turnover. Of the five sites visited, this program alone created an environment of expectation for professional development: All instructors are required to create a personal professional development plan for each year and identify opportunities for their own development. Attempts are made to provide funding for everyone to take advantage of some training, conference or workshops each year. The working environment is collaborative, with consensus-style decision-making and shared responsibilities. In addition, all instructors meet regularly for support and to discuss practice. A team leader/committee chair position is rotated each year to allow everyone an opportunity to lead.

Strapped by funding, the community-based mutual assistance organization does as much as possible given the circumstances. Staff consists of two full-time teachers and the Program Manager. There is no administrative support. When we visited, one of the teachers had to leave her class momentarily to greet us. This lack of support personnel, the constant entry of new students, and the characteristics of the clientele, which is composed of the most needy in the state welfare system (nearly 50% of whom are not literate in their own language), places a heavy burden on the teachers. In addition, they are paid only for classroom hours, and receive no compensation for hours engaged in preparation or curriculum development. This is a recipe for teacher burnout, and the organization runs as well as it does on the generosity of under-compensated and overworked teachers.

4) Student Support Services

Support services, over and above language and skills training, are offered to support participants and to facilitate learning.

Assistance with needs beyond language and work skills

Learners often face challenges over and above language and work skills. These hurdles range from housing, childcare, and transportation issues, to a need for career counseling or assistance with issues of cultural awareness. For training programs held outside of a particular workplace or outside of the regular workday, these needs often make it difficult or impossible for even the most motivated student to attend and succeed (Shelton, 2004). Recognizing that these students often have special needs, and providing services to meet those needs, can help students to feel part of a larger, supportive environment (AFL-CIO, 2004; Gillespie, 1996). This positive environment helps to create the right conditions to facilitate learning. Generally, programs that strive to provide a range of services to learners do produce the best results (Shelton, 2004; Wrigley, et al., 2003).

Multilingual advising and support

Although not always possible given the varied conditions and learner situations of Occupational English programs, multilingual advising and assistance can be very helpful as a support service to learners. A multilingual staff provides language assistance, and if they are sensitive to cultural issues they may be particularly helpful to learners (Wrigley, et al., 2003).

Success and Challenges

Of the providers we interviewed, the non-profit organization that provides employment services and refugee programming for the county supplied the most support services to its clients. This includes maintaining a multilingual, multicultural staff and managing connections with jobs counselors and other services. While they often find it difficult to communicate with overburdened job counselors, with enough staff, they are sometimes able to drive students lacking transportation to work locations. This organization's staff is also able to draw from emergency funds

kept specifically to aid students with bus tickets or help with car repairs. The fund gives the organization's staff additional resources to help students overcome some of the barriers that might keep them from attending the training. They are the only provider we reviewed that has access to money to assist students in this way.

In contrast, the health-related Occupational English program at the medium-sized non-profit organization has a long history of serving immigrants and refugees, but provides little in the way of supplemental support services to its clients apart from the informal assistance provided by teachers and staff. This non-profit organization has a very successful Occupational English program as measured by the numbers of students who enter the job force or move up within it. They are very good at what they do; however, the focus on outcomes means that in a weak economy, the program tends to only take students who demonstrate the qualities that indicate that they would be successful. This involves screening out students who face multiple barriers to program participation or completion. Learners who have transportation or childcare issues, for example, are likely not admitted to the program.

5) Evaluation & Assessment

Appropriate, customized assessments of learning, instruction, and outcomes are utilized and are matched to program goals and objectives.

Learner assessments

There are a wide variety of activities for formative assessment of learning, including standardized or customized tests, learner self-analysis in the form of journals or checklists, and written or oral reports. It is important that assessments measure proficiency (rather than just basic skills) and provide information on oral fluency and literacy (Wrigley, et al., 2003). Additionally, instructors must take care to identify assessments that are appropriate, valid and reliable (Grognet, 1996; Kenyon & Van Duzer, 2003).

Summative assessments typically involve some type of pre-test and/or placement test at the beginning of a program followed by a post-test and/or closing interview at the end. In some training programs, students

are preparing to pass a state license or entrance exam, and these scores can be used as the summative assessment of learning.

Teacher and teaching evaluations

As with any teaching enterprise, the evaluation of teaching is necessary to determine its appropriateness or effectiveness (Grognet, 1996). Such evaluation might include supervisor or peer observations, conversations with stakeholders, or end-of-course evaluations of teaching by learners. All these are important in order to provide teachers with feedback, recognize training needs for teachers, and allow supervisors or program managers to anticipate potential problems or conflicts in the classroom. Unfortunately, programs that employ temporary, part-time staff often lack the time and opportunity to adequately evaluate teaching performance and have few resources to work with teachers on methods or skills (AFL-CIO, 2004).

Evaluation of programs and outcomes

As important as the evaluation of outcomes might be, it can often be surprisingly difficult to do. The measure of outcomes is dependent on the goals and objectives determined at the start, and this underscores the importance of setting out clear, attainable objectives when designing a program or course (Burt, 1997). Program objectives often include more than language gains, and programs may need a variety of measures for evaluating a variety of outcomes, such as statistics on job placements, percentages of students who continue training, figures on increased participation in the workplace, or some indicator of improvement in specific language areas, such as pronunciation. It is important for any provider to demonstrate results or return on investment to validate an employer's or funder's investment in the training (Burt, 1997; Hayflich, 1996; Johns & Price-Machado, 2001).

Successes and Challenges

The Occupational English providers that serve immigrants and refugees participating in the state welfare program are required to use the CASAS test to measure and report client proficiency gains. Despite this requirement, most providers agreed that the CASAS test does not

necessarily measure gains in occupational literacy. The program manager of the non-profit employment services organization successfully made the argument to the state funding agency that “CASAS doesn’t work for the guy in the garage.” Because of the experimental nature of its program, the organization was granted permission to create an alternative assessment. Using the CASAS’ proficiency levels, they created a holistic scoring rubric that allows for flexibility in assessing clients’ proficiency in any environment. This assessment includes a pre-post observation evaluation by employers that measures an intern’s language proficiency along with their hard and soft job skills proficiency. This kind of adaptation may be necessary when providers are restricted by state mandates to use a test that really cannot measure a learner’s overall skill development.

On the other hand, as a county-funded program, the community-based mutual assistance organization is required to utilize the CASAS for all official assessments. (Teachers were free to develop their own measures for classroom use.) There are many problems with using only the CASAS for both formative and summative assessment. First, the CASAS itself indicates that moving into a higher proficiency level generally requires 100 hours of instruction; students here are tested after 50-60 hours, so lack of movement may be wrongly interpreted as lack of progress. Secondly, many of the students are new to the United States and lack the cultural knowledge necessary to understand items on the CASAS. A low score, therefore, may reflect a lack of cultural knowledge rather than proficiency. The state-mandated use of the CASAS and the lack of staff and paid preparation time are factors preventing this mutual assistance organization’s staff, as well as that of many other organizations, from developing more meaningful assessment tools.

6) Partnerships

Partnerships are cultivated within organizations to garner stakeholder support, and between organizations to pool resources and to provide support services to learners.

Stakeholder partnerships

In a recent AFL-CIO report, the importance of partnerships, par-

ticularly the partnerships of employers and unions, was stressed as necessary for success. These employer-union partnerships, or the involvement of labor in the funding, design and running of an Occupational English program, demonstrated a “variety of promising practices” for the Occupational English field (AFL-CIO, 2004, p. 5). And it is possible, as the report argues, that these types of partnerships benefit the learners by moving the focus of training beyond the specific workplace language skills to include citizenship and employee responsibilities. In addition, it is likely that bringing the varied stakeholders into the program as partners may contribute to their support and acceptance of the training.

Organizational partnerships

Because students are often in need of support services that programs are not in a position to provide, the existence of partnering organizations can help to satisfy those needs and free students to concentrate on learning. Partnering with other organizations can also provide support to instructors and staff and provide for shared development opportunities.

Successes and Challenges

While the community-based mutual assistance organization faces many challenges, it has strong organizational partnerships. It is one of seven Pre-Employment ESL programs funded by the county to supply Occupational English training to students on public assistance. The organizations that receive such funding work together to provide support for the students, as well as to the six partner programs (students can be shifted to a partner program if one lacks space, etc.). The staff at the community-based mutual assistance organization is, thus, able to participate in shared training and workshop opportunities with these partner programs. Moreover, as a member of the state literacy organization, the community-based mutual assistance organization has these resources available to it, including access to volunteers, training and materials.

At the same time, both organizations that serve students on public assistance (the community-based mutual assistance organization and the non-profit employment services provider) work with county job counselors to assist students. They find that counselors are often handling

many cases and cannot always be available to provide more than the minimum of support for these needy students.

7) Stakeholder Support

Stakeholders are involved throughout the program process, and non-participant stakeholders are offered appropriate training opportunities to foster a workplace environment that is supportive of new workers.

Buy-in from stakeholders

Stakeholders must be invested in the program itself; a funder who loses interest in a program or a supervisor who makes it impossible for employees to attend courses can be the death-knell to even the best-planned program. Getting this kind of buy-in from stakeholders can be accomplished by keeping companies involved in the training from beginning to end, through such things as regular meetings, periodic visits, or consultation with advisory boards (Burt, 1997; Friedenberg, et al., 2003; Gillespie, 1996).

Educating stakeholders

Often, potential clients lack understanding about the value of Occupational English training (Friedenberg, et al., 2003). They may also lack a familiarity with second language acquisition and cross-cultural issues that can result in unrealistic expectations for training. Co-workers, supervisors and others who work with limited English proficient workers might benefit from multicultural awareness or intercultural communication training to assist training participants' success.

Successes and Challenges

The two-year state college customized training program has worked hard to win stakeholder support and this buy-in from others in the workplace is a vital part of their success. They have accomplished this by engaging and including all stakeholders at every step, from the initial needs assessment through the final evaluation of outcomes. Frontline supervisors have become part of the training by being consulted and included in homework assignments. Teachers meet weekly with stake-

holders, and people from other departments are invited to visit or participate in the training. This customized training program also provides its expertise beyond the training by offering additional fee-based services to employers that include supervisor training, and the evaluation and rewriting of workplace documents.

For organizations serving Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP) clients (i.e. – the community-based mutual assistance organization and the non-profit employment services organization), there is often a conflict between funder, or the county, and provider objectives. While the goal of the funder is employment, the goal of the provider is instruction, and this can lead to confusion by the students as to what is really important (see Gillespie, 1996, for more discussion).

Conclusion

In the future, Minnesota must identify approaches to training and education that will address the challenges facing our current workforce development system. Occupational English programs offer a promising means to address some of those challenges by working to improve the lives of immigrant and refugee workers in our state and capitalizing on the economic force that they represent for Minnesota.

This project is a start at providing information on best practices in Occupational English. It is not intended to be an exhaustive study of Minnesota programs or a definitive listing of best practices. Informed by our understanding of teaching and learning as English language teachers ourselves, we found many things that work in Minnesota and were able to identify many ways to improve things for our future workforce. Making the necessary changes will require both the will and interest of all stakeholders, as well as the always-important resources to support those changes.

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(Footnotes)

1 The Wilder Foundation Report (Shelton, 2004) cites U.S. Department of Labor Statistics data that forecasts a 24% increase in jobs that need a post-secondary vocational credential or a two-year, post-secondary degree (AA or AAS) between 2001 and 2009. It also predicts that, by 2020, there will be 15 million new jobs in the United States that will require a bachelor's degree. However, there will be only 3 million new graduates to fill them.

2 The entire report, which also contains a list of recommendations for OE programs, is available at the McKnight Foundation website: <http://www.mcknight.org/cfc/lab.aspx>

3 In addition to foundation skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking and math), SCANS skills include personal attributes, thinking skills,

technology skills and resource management skills. See http://wdr.doleta.gov/opr/FULLTEXT/1999_35.pdf for a complete listing. 4 CASAS contains tools for assessing learner outcomes, instruction, and program evaluation. More information is available at www.casas.org

Authors

Kimberly A. Johnson is an ESL teacher pursuing a PhD in Curriculum & Instruction at the University of Minnesota. Her interests include teacher professional development, classroom discourse, and the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching and teacher education. She is currently designing ESL professional development curricula for post-secondary vocational instructors.

Kelly Marchwick is the program director at Hennepin Technical College of Project ACCESS (Achieving Career and College English Success), a demonstration project funded through the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education (FIPSE). Her areas of professional interest include: English for Specific Purposes (ESP), program design, strategy instruction, and proficiency-based assessment.

Non-Native Teachers in Expanding Circle Countries: Assets and Implications for Teacher Education

Diana L Dudzik

This article examines literature related to the phenomenon of English as an international language and the related fact that most English language teachers worldwide are non-native speakers of English. There are several important questions to consider. How should English language teacher education reflect the reality that most English communication is between non-native speakers? What assets do non-native English-speaking teachers bring to their classrooms? What are the implications for teachers and teacher educators in both international and local contexts? The article describes English as an international language, discusses non-native English-speaking teacher assets, and concludes with implications for teacher education in both local and international contexts.

As a teacher educator in Vietnam, I viewed my native speaker status, my insider knowledge of American culture, and my bias toward communicative pedagogy as essential credentials for my work. However, these assumptions have consequently been challenged and informed by many experiences. First, I have reflected upon my position in teacher development in an international setting (Dudzik, 2005a). Second, I have recently begun research in a second international English teaching context in East Africa (Dudzik, 2005b). Third, I attended a course on English as an international language (EIL), and I have examined literature related to the international status of English (see Crystal, 2003; Graddol, 1997; Higgins, 2003; Jenkins, 1998, 2000; Kachru &

Nelson, 1995; Matsuda, 2003; McKay, 2002; Widdowson, 1998; Yano, 2001).

When English is viewed as an international language, the goals of English teaching and the types of materials and pedagogical approach are influenced by that view. After returning to Minnesota to pursue further studies in language teacher education, I am pondering many questions. How should curriculum, materials, and teacher education reflect the worldwide reality that most English communication is between non-native speakers? What assets uniquely qualify non-native English-speaking teachers to teach English? What are the implications of English as an International language for teacher education both internationally and locally? This article begins with a description of English as an international language. It then discusses non-native English-speaking teacher assets, and concludes with implications for teacher education in both local and international contexts.

The Internationalization of English

English has become an international language, serving as a *lingua franca*, or language of trade, between speakers of different languages since the 1950s. This international role is evidenced by the official status English holds in international organizations such as the United Nations, the World Bank, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the World Health Organization, the North American Treaty Organization, and the European Union. The fact that approximately ninety percent of international bodies hold their proceedings entirely in English further illustrates the role of English as an international language (Crystal, 2003). Furthermore, it is somewhat surprising to learn that the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) uses English as the common language in their meetings (Yano, 2001).

Desires to share in the world economy, access world knowledge, and to participate in international tourism, media and transportation have established English as an unprecedented international language (Crystal, 2003; McKay, 2002; Widdowson, 1998; Yano, 2001). Crystal (2003) states, "There has never been a language so widely spread or spoken by so many people as English" (p. 189). The British Council's English 2000 Project (Graddol, 1997) estimated that the number of English learners

in the world is approaching one billion with a more conservative estimate of intermediate level users at 750 million. A conservative estimate of those who have learned English as a second language is 430 million. In any case, the number of second language speakers of English vastly outnumbers first language speakers of English (Crystal, 2003).

Inner, Outer, and Expanding Circles

Several authors describe English as an international language using the image of three concentric circles (Crystal, 2003; Kachru & Nelson, 1995; McKay, 2002; Yano, 2001). The Inner Circle represents countries such as the United Kingdom, the United States, Australia, and Canada. In these countries English is a first language and a dominant language of education and government. The Outer Circle refers to former British colonies such as India, Nigeria, and Singapore where English plays an official role in government, education and media, but is not necessarily the home language of its citizens. The Expanding Circle represents countries such as Japan, Brazil, Sweden, or China where large numbers of people learn English for instrumental purposes such as international business, cooperation and tourism (Crystal, 2003).

When a language reaches international status, issues of affiliation and inheritance change with the users. The language is no longer exclusively an inheritance of birth; it also becomes a language with which many people choose to affiliate (Rampton, 1990). In the Outer Circle, clearly delineated categories between native speakers and non-native speakers blur as speakers in former colonial regions identify themselves as native speakers (such as in Singapore or India). This self-identification also occurs with some privileged speakers from the Expanding Circle who are products of international English education and economic prosperity (in Brazil or Korea, for example), and who may associate primarily with English (Higgins, 2003).

Native speaker norms for pronunciation, grammar, and sociocultural pragmatics are being challenged when English is viewed as an international language (Kachru & Nelson, 1995; Timmis, 2002). In the Expanding Circle, speakers of English as a foreign language are contributing to new forms of English. These new forms are a “common denominator” (Yano, 2001, p. 129-130) language characterized by sim-

plified spelling, regularized verbs and plurals. In a survey of 600 students and teachers in more than 45 countries (Timmis, 2002), given a choice between native speaker pronunciation and intelligible accented English, the majority of students preferred the native speaker norm; however, students from Outer Circle countries such as South Africa and India preferred accented English, reflecting local ownership of English. In the same study, the attitudes of non-native teachers of English differed from students regarding pronunciation norms. Non-native English-speaking teachers showed no difference among the three choices of native speaker norm, accented intelligible English, and no preference (Timmis, 2002). The study concluded that non-native teachers' attitudes are "moving away from [native speaker] norms" for pronunciation more rapidly than students' attitudes are (Timmis, 2002, p. 248). The study also concluded that a majority of both non-native English-speaking teachers and students valued a native-speaker norm for grammar (Timmis, 2002). Both pronunciation and grammatical accuracy function to provide social access and to signal identity (Widdowson, 1998). Widdowson (1998) projects that global English will "stabilize into standard form to the extent required to meet the needs of the communities [of scientists or businessmen] concerned" (p. 385). Through textbooks, the Internet and media, written English will maintain some global standard (Crystal, 2003). What are the implications of this globalization of English in Expanding Circle countries like Vietnam and Djibouti?

English in the Expanding Circle

The status of English as an international language is undisputed; evidenced by the fact that English is "virtually everywhere" (Crystal, 2003, p. 60) in the Expanding Circle. A survey of seven nations in the Asia-Pacific Region examined how the status of English as an international language affects language policies in these countries (Nunan, 2003). In Vietnam, the poorest of the surveyed countries, compulsory English education begins in junior high school with four 45-minute sessions per week. Compulsory English education in senior high school drops to three sessions per week. The government policy is communicative language teaching. However, similar to other nations in the region, the rhetoric often does not match the reality. The study (Nunan, 2003) cites

four major concerns for English educational policies in the Asia-Pacific Region:

1. Access to English education is unequal.
2. Teacher education is inadequate.
3. Rhetoric of communicative pedagogy does not match the reality of classroom practice.
4. The limited English proficiency of local teachers.

In my work in Vietnam I became concerned with the mismatch between language teaching policy and classroom practice that Nunan (2003) described. I found that while many teachers had been introduced to learner-centered, communicative pedagogy, they often became frustrated when attempting to implement it. As a result, they tended to return to more familiar teacher-centered styles of instruction (Dudzik, 2005a; in press).

In Djibouti (a former French colony in East Africa), English is needed for regional economic development and trade with other African nations despite a complex multilingual context of French, Arabic, Afar and Somali (Dudzik, 2005b). The overwhelming majority of English teachers in contexts like Vietnam and Djibouti are non-native speakers of English. What assets do these teachers bring to their teaching?

Clarifying Terms: Native and Non-native

Terms such as “bilingual user”, “bilingual learner”, and “bilingual teacher of English” (McKay, 2002), “second language user” and “foreign language user” (Yano, 2001), “center speaker of English” and “periphery speaker of English” (Canagarajah, 1999) or “L2 learner” and “L2 user” (Cook, 1999) may be more dignifying than the terms “native speaker” and “non-native speaker”, which hold the native speaker up as an idealized standard (Cook, 1999). Additionally, the terms “native speaker” and “non-native speaker” do not adequately address the linguistic and sociolinguistic identity of, for example, the Indian speaker of English or the immigrant to the United States (Medgyes, 1992). Instead, Rampton (1990) suggests using the concept of expertise because experts don’t have to identify closely with what they know. Expertise is learned rather than a right of birth; it is dynamic and not static. It is never complete and needs to be validated by others. “Expert” may be a more

suitable term than “native speaker” because it is less ambiguous; measuring what the speaker knows rather than who they are (Rampton, 1990). However, for the purpose of this discussion, I use the terms native and non-native speaker because:

1. Writers from the Expanding Circle use these terms.
2. TESOL’s Non-Native Speaker Caucus, the advocacy group for the members of our national professional organization, uses these terms.
3. Issues of nativeness and non-nativeness in Expanding Circle countries are not as sensitive as they are in the Outer Circle where the ownership of English, localized varieties of English, and speakers’ self-identification as native speakers create controversy regarding the term.
4. More benign terms may be ambiguous in a context where English is taught as an international language. For example, in Vietnam, a bilingual teacher of English could refer to either an American teacher of English who speaks Vietnamese or to a Vietnamese teacher of English.

Assets of Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers

Non-native English-speaking teachers can uniquely stand between their home cultures and the target culture materials they are often required to use (Cook, 1999). These teachers understand the local contexts and the purposes for English as an international language in those contexts (McKay, 2002). Additionally, according to Yano (2001) non-native English-speaking teachers can interpret “culture-laden expressions” packed with target culture “values and beliefs” (p. 130) and teach sociopragmatic appropriateness such as culturally appropriate eye contact and silences.

More is being written about appropriate use of first language in the second language classroom for clarifying meaning, communicating during classroom tasks, explaining complex concepts and disciplining students (Turnbull & Arnett, 2002). The first language is there whether it is obvious or not (Cook, 1999). The ability to code-switch between the first language and the second language is a rich resource that is available to non-native English-speaking teachers. The vast majority of native

English-speaking teachers in international settings lack this resource. When code switching occurs in the language classroom, a more realistic linguistic environment is created (Turnbull and Arnett, 2002). The use of the first language in the classroom may help learners to build an image of “multicompetent students, not failed [native speakers]” (Cook, 1999, p. 204). However, there is still substantial support for using the target language as much as possible in international settings (Turnbull and Arnett, 2002).

Surprisingly, native English-speaking teachers are not always the most effective teachers of pronunciation (Jenkins, 1998, 2000). According to Jenkins (1998), both native English-speaking and non-native English-speaking teachers need to be equipped with the essential areas of sounds, nuclear stress, and articulatory setting; however,

[It] is a current irony that although pronunciation teaching tends to be marginalized throughout the [English language teaching] world, it is non-native teachers who are generally the better versed in all these areas, and thus the better prepared to embark on teaching pronunciation for [English as an international language] (p. 125).

The appropriateness of western methodology such as communicative language teaching and learner-centered classrooms in Expanding Circle countries, and the frustration of non-native English-speaking teachers in their attempts to implement such methodologies are prevalent themes in the literature (Bax, 2003; McKay, 2003; Widdowson, 1998). Non-native English-speaking teachers are “uniquely suited to be agents facilitating learning by mediating between the different languages and cultures through appropriate pedagogy” (Seidlhofer, 1999). Additionally, non-native English-speaking teachers are more aware of the language itself (Cook, 1999) and as a result, they have a sense of what kinds of instructional input students need (McKay, 2002).

The most important asset that non-native English-speaking teachers possess is that they are meaningful models of successful language learning that is relevant in the contexts of the language learners (McKay, 2002). Medgyes (1992) states that non-native teachers are exclusively better at modeling second language learning. They can provide contrastive analysis, more understanding of learner needs, and benefit from sharing the learners’ first language. However, native English-speaking teachers who are moving towards fluency in the host language can also serve

their students in all of these ways. Medgyes (1992) balances his position by declaring, "In the final analysis [native and non-native English-speaking teachers'] respective strengths and weaknesses balance each other out" (p. 347). This assessment may be accurate if native English-speaking teachers move towards fluency in the host language, become familiar with host-culture norms and expectations, collaborate with local teachers and administrators, and are willing to leave the comfortable identity of foreign expert, with its unspoken assumptions of innate superiority, on the airplane.

Native Speaker Fallacy Dismantled

There remains a belief among some within the international TESOL community that being a native speaker of English is a prerequisite to being a credible teacher of English. The phenomenon of advertising for native speaking teachers only is quite common in settings where English is taught as a foreign language (Braine, 1999a, 1999b; Thomas, 1999). A preference for native English-speaking teachers is disempowering for non-native English-speaking teachers whose race and accents often disqualify them from jobs for which they are professionally qualified (Amin, 1999). Amin (1999) describes the disempowerment she experienced when students expressed their preference for white, native English speaking teachers. Thomas (1999) describes how disempowered she felt when a final course evaluation commented, "We need native speaker teacher. It will be better." (p. 10) This comment was made even though the student evaluations of her teaching were generally positive. According to Thomas, the comment was debilitating because it was directed at her identity rather than her ability as a teacher. This credibility gap between non-native teachers, students and employers are echoed throughout the TESOL profession (Braine, 1999b).

The fallacy that native speakers make the best language teachers is caused by "narrow definitions of pedagogical expertise [and] a great deal of prestige . . . given to native-like pronunciation and intuition" (McKay, 2002, p. 42). This fallacy is evident in Vietnam in private English centers that will hire only native English speakers, sometimes as the only necessary qualification. However, this phenomenon is far from prevalent, perhaps due to a scarcity of native English-speaking teach-

ers. At the major language teaching university in Vietnam, a forward-thinking administration welcomes Inner Circle native English-speaking teachers when available, but also welcomes and utilizes English teachers from Outer Circle countries such as neighboring Singapore. To its credit, this institution is placing priority upon the development of its own Vietnamese teachers of English than in recruiting native speakers.

In Djibouti, where widespread English language instruction is a more recent phenomenon, there are few native English-speaking teachers. Other African teachers of English from countries such as Senegal, which is also a former French colony, contribute to the development of English. In this country speakers primarily need to interface with African varieties of English such as Kenyan and Nigerian English and with speakers of English in Dubai (Dudzik, 2005b). How should teacher education in international contexts reflect the fact that most communication in English takes place between non-native speakers (Timmis, 2002) and more than 80% of the English language teaching professionals worldwide are non-native speakers (Canagarajah, 1999)? How should local teacher education address the needs of non-native English-speaking students?

Implications for Language Teacher Education

Local and international teacher education programs need to equip teachers to do several things. First, these programs need to help teachers understand the demands of local contexts, including appropriate materials and pedagogy and the possible role of indigenous varieties of English. Next, programs must be prepared to address non-native speaker issues of identity, value, language proficiency, and first language use in the second language classroom. Finally, programs must mentor non-native teachers on ways to enter the professional dialogue through publication.

Integrate Reflections on Contexts of Teaching

Graduate teacher education programs in international settings as well as the United States need to consider the teaching contexts and situations for which they are preparing students. Programs in the United

States may not be able to tailor their instruction to address each context, especially those outside of the country. However, these programs can address a variety of contexts by alerting pre-service teachers and teacher educators to the situated nature of education, and by building ethnographic research and reflection on contexts of learning into teacher education programs. As a result, non-native speaking graduate students who plan to return to their home contexts to teach will be better prepared to more appropriately apply what they have learned. As teacher education programs, both locally and internationally, equip developing teachers to assess student needs, interests, and targeted use of the second language, teachers will be more prepared to plan courses and lessons, adapt materials and focus learning.

Non-native English-speaking teachers in both international and local contexts need to be equipped to think critically about the appropriateness of materials, and to examine the cultural and idiomatic inaccessibility of authentic materials (Widdowson, 1998). Since eighty percent of English communication in the Expanding Circle is between non-native speakers (Timmis, 2002), Inner Circle cultural knowledge and norms are much less important for learners in many international contexts. Often, teachers in the Expanding Circle are not in positions of power to choose materials, but they may be given latitude to adapt and supplement institutionally- or ministry-determined materials. Teacher education in the Expanding Circle should provide practical experience for teachers in adapting materials that are packed with Inner Circle cultural topics, so that they are more appropriate for international speakers. This exercise in evaluating the cultural load of materials also benefits local developing teachers whose goal generally reaches far beyond sociocultural competence to academic competence.

In international contexts, other varieties of English encountered by learners (such as Kenyan, Nigerian varieties in Djibouti or Singaporean English in Vietnam) should be introduced as part of the teacher education curriculum. This introduction could be done by comparing articles on similar topics in English language newspapers from Singapore and India with similar articles from Inner Circle countries. Additionally, hiring Outer Circle teacher educators in international contexts would expose students to indigenous varieties of spoken English. If students and

teachers are aware of issues in international settings, the value of familiarity with Outer Circle varieties of English may increase. This will result in teachers and learners who are equipped to use English in the contexts in which it is required.

Cultivate Non-Native Assets and Dispel Fallacy

Non-native students in graduate programs in the United States need to be valued for the unique assets they possess and as resources who can broaden and further inform perspectives on education, culture and global understanding (Braine, 1999b; Thomas, 1999). One non-native teacher describes this unique perspective well, writing “Hovering between two worlds is not all bad; it is a unique position, which endows me with a rare double vision, seeing the duality of reality, the truth and untruth in each other’s claim to universal standards” (Li, 1999).

Additionally, multilingual speakers of English in TESOL training programs need to be valued for the additional resources with which they are equipped; resources such as an extensive awareness of second language acquisition that may better qualify them as teachers of English. The first languages of non-native speakers should also be viewed as resources, and non-native immigrants’ understandings of the needs and challenges to literacy, for example, in the communities they represent (Canagarajah, 1999).

Teacher education programs need to address the fallacy that a native-speaking teacher is always the best teacher. This fallacy needs to be exposed, challenged, and dismantled both in international and local contexts. Non-native English-speaking teachers need to become aware of the expertise they bring to their students in terms of the model of language learning in their context, as well as their knowledge of appropriate curriculum development and pedagogical approaches. In Expanding Circle contexts like Vietnam and Djibouti, non-native English-speaking teachers do not generally compete with native English-speaking teachers in public institutions. However, an unstated assumption remains that a native speaker is somehow superior to the non-native English-speaking teacher. By incorporating literature related to English as an international language and non-native English-speaking teacher issues into teacher education, this fallacy can begin to be dismantled. In-

ner Circle graduate TESOL programs, in particular, need to equip non-native graduate students to deal with the harsh realities of the native speaker-non-native speaker dichotomy and the general hiring bias toward non-native speakers. TESOL training programs in Inner Circle contexts often prepare non-native teachers for a job in which they may be disadvantaged because of their non-native speaker status (Canagarajah, 1999).

Many non-native students come from cultures where the educational tradition is primarily teacher-centered, but pedagogically, programs in the United States foster learner-centered approaches. This contrast needs to be made explicit for non-native participants in local as well as international settings and new classroom roles need to be learned (Dudzik, 2005a). For example, non-native speakers may be reticent to participate orally in classroom interactions due to cultural beliefs about the roles of teachers and learners and also because of doubts about their language proficiency. Thomas (1999) reflects that, "Although there was a cultural explanation for my silence, I now realize that there was a psychological one too. I did not feel that I was as capable as my U.S. counterparts" (p.10).

In both international and local contexts, teacher education programs preparing non-native English teachers should include a language proficiency component. Teacher education should make teachers aware of the fact that they are not required to meet some unattainable native speaker standard for pronunciation, but rather to model intelligibility (Jenkins, 1998). Academic writing is another area where non-native speakers may struggle. "This lack of confidence, this uncertainty about one's abilities, is damaging because it sometimes stands in the way of [non-native speakers] being all that they possibly can be and of realizing their full potential" (Thomas, 1999, p.10). Collaboration and coauthoring papers is one strategy for assisting non-native students in writing. Connor (1999) describes this type of collaboration with coauthors who focused on her strengths, not her language deficiencies, treated her as an equal partner in their collaborations, helped in the editing process, and did not call attention to her status as a non-native speaker.

A study of seventeen non-native English-speaking TESOL graduate students in programs within the United States (Samimy & Brutt-

Griffler, 1999) asked two questions. How do non-native TESOL graduate students perceive themselves as English language teaching professionals? Do they feel handicapped? A Russian participant stated that he was “highly regarded as a professional in [Russia]. There were not many native speakers around to feel competitive toward them” (p. 138). However, other participants were deferential toward native “owners” (p. 139) of the language who they interfaced with professionally. One stated, “Back home I was somebody [a professor]. Here I am nobody” (p. 139). Samimy and Brutt-Griffler (1999) found that the self-identity and confidence of non-native speakers are challenged in native English-speaking contexts. These challenges to non-native speakers’ identities and credibility often result in debilitating nervousness and apologetic attitudes, and a try-harder mentality in relation to native speakers (Thomas, 1999).

Teacher education in both international and local contexts should highlight the first language resource available to non-native teachers by exploring first language use in the second language classroom. Developing teachers should be encouraged to reflect on the advantages of using the native language in their teaching by exploring the literature related to native language use in the second language classroom. Furthermore, they can also observe when other bilingual teachers use the native language and with whom. In addition to using existing research, teacher education should encourage first-hand research on issues such as the appropriate use of the native language.

Encourage the Voice of Non-native Teachers in Professional Dialogues

Within the TESOL profession, non-native speakers often feel ignored or invisible professionally, whether this is intentional or unintentional. Their voices are underrepresented while the voices of native speakers dominate the publications and professional conferences (Lee, 2000; Park, 2004; Thomas, 1999). Teacher education should equip non-native teachers in both international and local contexts to enter the professional dialogue related to issues that influence language teaching. Encouraging and facilitating teacher research and publications (Braine, 1999b; Dudzik, in press) in regional and international forums will con-

tinue to inform language teaching contexts and also develop a new generation of curriculum developers and policy makers.

Non-native speakers in both international and local teacher education programs need to be mentored in the challenges of professional publishing in order to empower their voices (Braine, 1999b; Samimy & Brutt-Griffler, 1999). Li's (1999) mentor-professor illustrates this point beautifully. While Li expected her professor to return her paper with a lot of corrections that erased her foreign accent, her professor felt strongly that he should not correct her writing because her unique voice was what made her writing of particular value. The professor encouraged Li to submit her writing for publication. When her article was published, her mentor wrote, "Now that you have published in English, you can do whatever you want, articles, short stories, poems, non-fiction book, novels, plays. I can hardly wait to see what comes next" (p. 50).

Publishing has inherent difficulties in both Outer Circle and Expanding Circle contexts. Institutions in Hong Kong and Singapore expect returning scholars to publish in prestigious western journals, but scholars from outside the west have great difficulty doing so. Resources are often difficult to secure, and papers from developing world scholars are often so outdated as to exclude them from the possibility of publication. Editors often comment that the topics of these writings are not of interest to their western readers (Braine 1999b). This was my experience when, as a teacher educator in Vietnam, I submitted research papers from some of my students to MinneTESOL (Dudzik, in press).

Conclusion

When English is viewed as an international language, the goals of English teaching and the types of materials and pedagogical approach are influenced by that view. Teacher education in Outer Circle and Expanding Circle contexts should reflect the international status of English in curriculum and materials and in an examination of appropriate pedagogy. The fact that most English communication occurs among non-native speakers of English worldwide should be reflected in the purposes, tasks and activities of English language education in international contexts. English language teacher education should equip developing teachers to study their contexts ethnographically, and to assess the needs,

determine goals, and design and select appropriate materials and instructional approaches. In Inner Circle as well as Outer and Expanding Circle contexts, non-native English-speaking teachers' assets should be highlighted and English language proficiency should be addressed.

As teacher education addresses issues related to English as an international language, as resources are distributed more in the direction of non-native English-speaking teacher development than to secure native speaking teachers (Nunan, 2003), and as Inner Circle teacher education programs address non-native speaker issues there will be profound changes in English language teaching in the Outer and Expanding Circles. Varieties of English encountered within regional contexts will be valued and included in the curriculum and represented by speakers of those varieties in the classrooms. Additionally, the native speaker fallacy will be further dismantled, and non-native English-speaking teachers will be empowered to inform their contexts and the larger profession around the world. Additionally, non-native teachers in Inner Circle teacher education programs will be better prepared for their unique contributions and English language teaching will become more relevant to the contexts in which it is taught through the appropriate adaptation of cultural content and pedagogy. Finally, native English-speaking teachers and teacher educators in the Outer and Expanding Circles will be viewed in more appropriate and balanced respect and, hopefully, will value and collaborate more extensively with their non-native English-speaking colleagues.

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Author

Diana Dudzik worked in Vietnam for four years teaching English and facilitating teacher development. Diana has taught ESL at the k-12, university and adult levels in Minnesota and is currently pursuing a PhD at the University of Minnesota in Second Languages and Cultures Education. Her research interests focus on context-sensitive language teaching pedagogy and EFL teacher education. Diana holds a master's degree in Education with an ESL emphasis from Hamline.

ELL Teacher Preparation: A Process for Becoming Strategic Teachers

Kathryn Henn-Reinke

The goal of all instruction with English language learners (ELLs) is to provide students with the cognitive, linguistic and affective tools to be successful in life. Regardless of the political, economic and educational realities of the districts, university-level licensure programs in ESL/Bilingual Education must prepare teachers who are competent educators. As educators, they are charged with equipping students with the tools for academic success and enhanced self-esteem. The challenge, as always, in the field of education is that teachers tend to teach as they were taught, which may not necessarily be the type of instruction needed by ELL populations. This article deals with one university's approach to preparing teachers who can effectively meet the needs of area ELL populations through strategic teaching, learning and assessment. The curricula of today's schools are far too vast and far too demanding for students to handle without specific learning tools. This is especially true for ELLs. Assisting students in the development of a set of learning strategies that can be used to support their own cognitive development has a great deal of merit.

University licensure programs in ESL/Bilingual Education must prepare teachers who are competent educators and advocates for English language learners (ELLs) in their schools. As advocates, teachers are charged with taking leadership roles that promote best practices for ELLs and their families. As educators, they are responsible for equipping students with the tools for academic success and enhanced self-esteem. The latter, is the topic of this article. The curricula of today's schools are far too vast and far too demanding for students to handle

without specific learning tools. This is especially true for ELLs. They need a program that is rigorous but supportive (Walqui, 2000): a program that bolsters their education in content areas while they are learning English (Echevarria, Vogt & Short, D., 2004; Chamot & O'Malley 1994; Ovando, Collier & Combs, 2003).

Assisting students in the development of a set of learning strategies that may be used to support their own cognitive development has a great deal of merit (Fillmore and Snow, 2000; Valdez-Pierce, 2003; Gibbons, 2002). Universities must develop programs that provide in-depth training for ESL/Bilingual teachers in this area. The challenge, as always, in the field of education is that teachers tend to teach as they were taught (Noe 1994, Zeichner & Tabachnick 1981), which may not necessarily match the needs of ELL populations.

The work of Zeichner and Liston (1996) implies that it takes a specific and intense focus for inservice teachers to develop teaching practices that reflect a change in philosophy from the way they were taught themselves. The pedagogical shift in this instance involved moving from exclusive emphasis on content mastery, to using content as the vehicle to develop learning strategies to facilitate learning. The shift was subtle and many teachers needed most of the semester to fully grasp its significance.

At the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, one of the goals of the ESL/Bilingual program is to provide inservice and preservice teachers with an in-depth understanding of how to make strategy development a focal point of the instructional process. University students explore this process in field-based settings where preservice and inservice teachers come to an understanding of the communities they will serve and are provided with opportunities to apply new instructional techniques in a supportive and collaborative environment. Inservice teachers work with students from their own classrooms to meet the requirements of the university courses.

Teaching Learning Strategies

The context of graduate level courses was used to explore the nature of learning strategies, and CALLA (Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach) strategies (Chamot and O'Malley, 1994) in par-

ticular, with ELLs. The courses enabled teachers to experiment with the teaching, learning and assessment process involved in implementing a strategy-based classroom. Some examples of actual teacher experimentation with specific strategy development are included to highlight the developmental process the teachers went through in adapting to new pedagogy. All of the teachers in the course that will be highlighted, implemented the use of the learning strategies in their own classrooms and kept a field log describing how they introduced, practiced and evaluated the strategies with their students. The underlying purpose of this work was to have teachers actually implement use of learning strategies in their own classrooms. If they found that use of these strategies supported learning for their English language learners, the hope was that they would continue to expand use of a strategic approach with students after the course was completed. This was indeed what has happened with many of the teachers.

The outcomes of the course were to bring teachers to a clearer ability to:

- *introduce, practice and evaluate use of learning strategies*
- *develop higher level thinking skills for English language learners*
- *develop academic language skills with English language learners*
- *implement scaffolding strategies to support learning with ELLs*

In an effort to assist teachers in bridging the gap between the way they were taught and new pedagogy, the university classroom became an experimental laboratory of sorts. In-service teachers participated in actual learning experience simulations that could be adapted for use with their own English language learners. After exploring these activities in relation to development of learning strategies, the teachers stepped back to consider the particulars surrounding implementation of the strategies in actual classroom practice. They also examined their work in relation to how well they were promoting the development of higher level thinking skills (Echevarria, Vogt & Short 2004; Crawford 1997). Teachers

in the course taught early childhood through secondary grade levels, and beginning to advanced levels of English language acquisition. This meant that many small group discussions needed to take place to examine how strategies could be adapted for use at particular grade and language levels. It became apparent from these discussions that nearly every strategy could be adapted to meet the language or developmental level of students.

The following section of this article chronicles the journey of teachers preparing to fully implement use of learning strategies in the classroom. The in-service teachers in this course experimented with a variety of learning strategies and later developed and implemented a series of strategy lessons in PK-12 classrooms. Finally, they reflected on what they had learned about this approach and whether it had a significant impact on student understanding and on their view of the teaching, learning and assessment process with ELLs.

The first task the teachers undertook was to create a booklet that expanded their understanding of learning strategies. Pairs of students selected one or more strategies and explored elements of the strategy, as well as effective teaching and assessment techniques that might be used to develop the strategy. The work was compiled and every teacher received a copy of the completed booklet to use as a guide in designing strategy lessons. This activity was very helpful in familiarizing the teachers with the strategies and in giving them a clearer sense of how to implement them.

Developing A Strategic Mindset

Two aspects are critical in establishing a strategic classroom. The first is to get a sense of how students currently use and understand strategies. The second is for students to begin developing a formal understanding of what strategies are and how they can support learning. To explore these notions for ourselves in the course, the teachers formed small groups and selected one of several games that required explicit use of strategic thinking. They were instructed to play the game and then analyze the strategies they had used in playing. A discussion following the game playing focused on what teachers felt this type of activity would reveal. The teachers determined that observing students play

the games would give them valuable background information about how well students use strategies and how clearly they could verbalize that understanding. They expected to find that some students in their classrooms would already be using a wide array of strategies and others would rely solely on trial and error as their only strategy.

The second part of the discussion focused on specifically naming the strategy that was used. In the game-playing simulation teachers spent time describing their actions initially. When pushed to name the strategies, they came up with strategies such as, “think ahead several steps”, “anticipate choices the opponents have”, “get initial positions established”, “determine the sequence of play”. Activities of this nature would provide teachers with tools to determine the level of sophistication students have in terms of metacognitive development of strategies. Using games as a starting point for strategy development makes a great deal of sense. Games are less threatening and most students have prior knowledge about many types of games.

These types of activities gave teachers a solid starting point for developing the use of strategies. Students could gain a quick understanding of what strategies were and realize they already use strategies. This provides them with a measure of success from the outset. Transferring this understanding to academic areas would then be more meaningful. Some students may be very accomplished at playing video games, for example, but not realize that some of these same thinking skills could be applied to their work in the classroom. If students learn to attach labels to the kinds of strategies they are already using outside of the classroom and then link them to the kinds of strategies needed for academic success, it could become a first step in developing the metacognitive awareness that is so essential to strategy development.

Self-assessment is a very integral component of all aspects of learning in the classroom, but is most essential in the development of strategic thinkers. Students need to look at how well they learned something and how much progress they made, but they also need opportunities to examine which strategies they used and how effectively they used them. A first step in this process, as indicated above, is to make an inventory of the types of strategies already being used and how effectively they are used in accomplishing particular tasks. As new strategies are taught, students need time to reflect on how the strategy assisted learning and

what they might do in subsequent learning experiences to use the strategy more fully. A variety of individual, small group and whole class reflection opportunities enable students to examine their own work and the work of classmates. This often leads them to recognize that classmates have approached the same tasks using a variety of different strategies and to consider using additional strategies themselves.

The most difficult aspect of the assessment phase for the in-service teachers was to have students self-assess how they used the strategy and how it impacted learning. The first instinct was to assess content but not strategy use. Analyzing the strategy itself ensures that students are internalizing how the strategy facilitates learning. The more fully students understand the strategy, the more likely they will be to manipulate its use in other learning situations and the more likely they will be to make connections to other types of learning.

Selecting Strategies

Teachers are encouraged to select a single strategy to initiate the process of teaching CALLA. The teachers in our class considered the district standards they were responsible for developing; the linguistic, social and academic needs of their students; and their own comfort level in teaching strategies and selected a strategy that would best match these circumstances. Kandi, for example, had students who were very eager to participate in a variety of learning activities in her middle school, ESL classroom. She also noted that many of them did not comprehend what they read. Given her flamboyant teaching style and the nature of her students, she decided to begin with “Imagery” as her first strategy.

Another teacher selected “Elaboration of Prior Knowledge” as the first strategy to use with his students. Jim had the advantage of working with both pull-out and integrated groups of ELLs. In this way he and the grade level teachers could monitor how each group was proceeding relative to the other. “Elaboration of Prior Knowledge” had routinely been used by all of the teachers as a way of introducing new stories in reading. Therefore, he was very surprised when he asked his students to discuss why it was important to think about what they already knew about a topic prior to reading about it and the students were only able to respond in a very superficial manner. This example highlighted the situ-

ation in which teachers often used the strategy in teaching and assumed the students understood and could name the strategy, even though it had never been taught directly.

Teaching Elaboration of Prior Knowledge has had a positive effect on these students and Jim expanded use of learning strategies to other subject areas. He taught the strategy by modeling how thinking about what one knows of a topic can influence understanding of a story. Students then had the opportunity to practice the strategy with new stories. Part of what made Jim's teaching effective was what he did following the reading of a story. Students returned to their original elaboration of prior knowledge statements and determined how this influenced their comprehension of the story. With practice the students became quite sophisticated in identifying and discussing critical links.

He soon found that students began making additional connections to other areas of study. Because he had taught the strategy fully and given students ample time to practice and assess their use of the strategy, they had internalized elaboration of prior knowledge as a helpful learning tool (Henn-Reinke and Lehto, 2003).

One of our most effective class sessions was entirely devoted to exploring the development of "Organizational Planning" as a strategy. Teachers did some preliminary brainstorming regarding what they thought might be involved in using "Organizational Planning". The elements were recorded on a chart. Teachers then participated in an activity to dissect these elements further.

After brainstorming the elements, the teachers participated in an integrated language activity that scaffolded learning "from speaking to writing" (Gibbons, 2002) with a focus on "Organizational Planning". Exploration of the structure of folk literature was used as the content through which the language and strategy outcomes were explored. This was a first introduction to the notion of teaching a strategy as the primary focus and development of content as secondary (until the strategy can be used independently). This assumes that time must be devoted to teaching and practicing a strategy before students can use it independently to support learning. As will be seen, this notion was a dramatic shift that took some teachers much of the semester to master.

Teachers divided into small groups and selected a number of folk-

literature picture books to share. The participants were to explore the nature of folk tales by answering the following questions:

- *Who are the characters?*
- *Where is the setting?*
- *What is the structure of the plot?*
- *Does the tale teach a lesson? If so, what is the lesson?*

The language portion of this activity was devoted to helping teachers explore ways to scaffold learning experiences that support ELLs as they move from “spoken language” to “written language” while exploring a particular topic (Gibbons, 2002). ELLs often need opportunities to explore and rehearse language and understanding of concepts before they are expected to report their understanding in oral and written form. In our simulation experience teachers were given opportunities to develop language by answering the questions above orally in small groups. Each group shared their findings and the results were recorded on the board. The next step was to synthesize the information and to begin developing a profile of folk tales that students could apply and refine as they completed subsequent readings of folk literature. We developed a preliminary profile as a whole class, oral activity, and then completed written profiles in small groups. The teachers were very anxious to try this method of scaffolding language in their own classrooms and reported that it indeed helped students develop better oral and written responses.

After the class completed the profile activity, it was time to examine how they had informally used “Organizational Planning” as a strategy in supporting their work. The groups shared what they did to organize themselves to complete this learning experience. As a whole class the suggestions were compiled, revised and resulted in the following plan.

- *Determine the task/question to be developed*
- *Determine the roles group members are to assume*
- *Organize the workspace and materials*
- *Continually review and revise work*

In a second group activity, still focusing on folk literature and language development, teachers broke into two groups. One group prepared a Readers’ Theatre presentation with a folk story. The second

group used the same tale but prepared a series of “Freeze Frames” or tableaux (Gibbons, 2002) depicting critical scenes from the story. Upon completion of the activity, the teachers returned to the Organizational Plan they had developed following the previous learning experience. They found it surprising that most of the components held constant in this activity also. They refined some of the language and conditions of the Plan but concluded that this could become a model for use in subsequent learning experiences.

The final exploration of “Organizational Planning” involved an activity involving the use of an individually completed task. This would enable us to explore differences between collaborative and individual “Organizational Planning”. Teachers were given a Math word problem to solve. After solving the problem, they shared not only the solution they had arrived at, but also the strategies they had used to approach and solve the problem. They put visuals on the board to further illustrate and explain their problem solving process. Teachers discussed how this type of activity would expose students to a wide variety of problem solving approaches, which might serve to broaden the range of strategies students could use in subsequent contexts. Again, the final step was to return to the Organizational Plan and review differences in planning for an individual or group task. Surprisingly, with the exception of selecting roles, all of the other components again remained constant. Teachers felt that leading students through the process of documenting the components of an organizational plan would be very helpful in subsequent learning experiences.

The use of simulated experiences was used to guide teachers in exploring the nature of the strategy, as well as ways to develop and assess its use in the classroom. The expectation was that if teachers actively explored use of a strategy, they would come away with a better understanding of the process and would be better equipped to effectively implement use of strategies in their own classrooms.

Discussion

The ultimate goal for all work with English language learners is to equip them with the skills, strategies and confidence to ensure academic excellence and well being. Many English language learners have

not had rich educational experiences, or even if they have, their work in learning English and adjusting to new educational expectations is formidable. ELLs very often must make more than one year of academic progress per year in order to catch up to their peers. Therefore, they need top-level learning tools that will serve them well in all academic areas. Learning strategies have the capability of doing this.

However, it is critical to examine how one actually teaches the strategies to the students. This phase of the process is very often the most difficult for teachers. Teachers are often accustomed to *using* the strategies as teaching tools in presenting new concepts and they confuse this with *teaching* the strategy. Very often the lament, “But I used the strategies!” is heard from teachers who need to revise their work to reflect actual teaching of strategies. There is a major emphasis on metacognitive development in CALLA. In order to achieve this, students must be able to name the strategy, indicate how it enhanced their learning and continually refine use of the strategy to make it even more personally effective. The intent of this course has been to provide teachers with a venue for sorting this out in their teaching.

There is an initial commitment of time that is required in teaching, practicing and evaluating the development of the learning strategies that teachers need to be willing to make in order for the strategies to be effectively developed and internalized. Once students acquire the general sense of what strategies are and how to use them, they quickly expand them to other areas of study and to their personal lives. In areas where students do not make the transfer of skills, the teacher is available to continually guide them in this direction. Indeed, the final phase of the continuum for teaching the CALLA strategies suggested by Chamot and O’Malley (1994, p.66-72) is titled “Expansion” and focuses directly on taking the strategy to higher and broader levels of application. All of the CALLA strategies have the potential to help students develop higher level thinking skills. They provide an excellent framework for students to use in approaching new (and often difficult) learning tasks.

Lorene developed teaching, learning and assessment plans that very clearly highlighted a concise process for teaching students about “Questioning for Clarification”. She led students to examine why we ask ques-

tions and to consider whether there are different kinds of questions. Using a novel the entire class had already read, students explored formulation of different types of questions, which they labeled as “In the Book” or “Read and Think on Your Own”. To practice this strategy, students were assigned to small cooperative groups and asked to develop both types of questions for a particular chapter in the novel. Using the “experts and home” grouping framework (Gibbons, 2002) members of the groups were reassigned to new groups, so that one person from each chapter was in the new group. Each new member posed their questions to the rest of the group and listened to their responses. In a self-assessment of this strategy, students went back to the “home” groups to analyze the effectiveness of their questions using a checklist or a rating scale. In Lorene’s reflections on development of the strategy of “Questioning for clarification” she noted,

“I was amazed by their self-assessments. They had such positive attitudes about their reading and how well they mastered the strategies. . . . I believe that these self-assessment pieces really tell the students that this is what you should be able to do by the end of the year. I can see how they cause the students to focus on the strategy and emphasize their independent use of it. I feel good that the students can name the strategies, explain how to use them, and are able to use them upon demand. However, I realize that we have not accomplished the ultimate goal which is independent and automatic use of the strategies” (Gutzmann, 2003, p. 4).

The next stage of development for this strategy focused on having students ask these types of questions of themselves as they were reading. They also developed both types of questions to ask each other during or after reading narrative and expository text. Lorene had taken her time to guide students in understanding, practicing and evaluating use of the strategy.

“I believe that I am beginning to effectively use the CALLA format. I have been sharing the information with my principal as well as our reading curriculum committee. As I talk about it, the format, goals and theory behind it become clearer. I also

feel more enthused about implementing it. At first it seemed like such a huge task, but as I developed the lesson plans, I realized that I was already doing the learning strategies. To teach reading, I don't really focus on the content of the book as much as I focus on the strategies needed to be able to read well. So the strategy part was second nature to me, although this exercise did reinforce it. . . I am beginning to see the value in having the students' voices heard much more often than mine. ELL or not, if students can explain and use the vocabulary, they have learned it" (Gutzmann, 2003, p. 5).

The CALLA strategies are also structured in such a way that they are compatible with scaffolding techniques. When the instructional emphasis is placed on ensuring ELLs are engaged in rigorous learning (Cary 2000; Echevarria, et al 2004), as they ought to be, taking time to teach the learning strategies is key. In essence the content does become secondary, as Lorene suggested, and serves as the vehicle for teaching the strategy.

Kim highlighted this point by using political cartoons to teach her students to make inferences. She linked this work to one state standard focused on identifying and analyzing instances when national and global issues appear to be opposed and another that asked students to analyze a source to understand an issue of public concern (Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2001).

Kim taught the students to analyze political cartoons and identify clues they had used in this process. She also explained that the meanings and messages of the cartoons were not stated directly, and therefore, the clues and hints given by the artist were needed to infer meaning. Kim guided the class in developing a series of steps (organizational planning) that the students could use to infer the meaning. The steps are listed below:

Steps to Infer Meaning from Political Cartoons:

1. Look at the title and available text to help identify people and places.
2. Look for symbols and stereotypes.

3. Look at the expressions on the faces of the people. Are they exaggerated? Do they look silly, angry, etc.?
4. Ask how all of these things are related.
5. Ask: What is the artist's point of view? What side is he/she on?
6. What is the artist's message?

Students used the steps above and filled out a guide sheet to help them find the clues in the cartoon and infer the message. They commented on the artist's opinion and gave their own opinions about the issue. As a self-assessment of their progress in using inferencing they explained to a partner how they inferred the message of the cartoon and wrote about how they made the inference. Kim also had the students create their own political cartoons related to a school, community or national issue, bring in political cartoons they had found and present them to the class to further extend development of the strategy. In the latter activity they had the choice of either explaining how they had inferred meaning or inviting their classmates to infer the meaning.

“We started to practice on more difficult political cartoons as a class. We discussed how the list of questions helped us figure out different clues that helped us arrive at the meaning of the cartoons. I put the old, famous Benjamin Franklin cartoon “Join or Die” with the chopped up pieces of a snake representing the different colonies up on the screen. I asked them to try to figure it out without my help. I didn't tell the students anything; I just let them take notes on everything they felt gave them clues to the meaning. I was amazed at how many figured it out!! We had studied the colonies, the American Revolution and Benjamin Franklin at the beginning of the school year, so I knew they had the background knowledge needed to figure it out. But even so, I felt it was quite difficult because they had to realize who the author was and what country he was probably talking about, they had to recognize the initials and tie them in with the colonies and then they had to read the text and look at the picture to figure out what this message was supposed to mean to the colonies. Overall, I thought it was really taxing

them on many levels; granted some did not understand the cartoon until the full group discussed it, but still a lot of students figured it out! I could have cried out of joy right on the spot. What really helped my students was always working backward with these cartoons. I always gave them the chance to first try to infer the meaning themselves. Again, not every student figured out every cartoon, so we always went back and asked the questions we generated in the beginning of the first lesson for every cartoon. I think this drilled the questions into their memory because now we rarely refer to the questions written in their notes. The students know automatically they need to read all text, study the picture for symbols, real people, facial expressions, stereotypes, clues to setting and location. . . . It was the most successful of the CALLA lessons that I taught and we still continue to do them every week” (Roberg, 2003, p. 1).

This example clearly reflects the use of scaffolded instruction and comprehensible input in the development of higher level thinking skills for English language learners.

Stakes for learning in most schools are very high and students need more than extensive exposure to a wide body of information. They need a repertoire of strategies that they can: 1) draw upon to make links to what they already know in English, as well as in their first language(s), 2) use to organize and direct new learning, and 3) use to activate social/affective factors that further support learning. Strategic learning provides a well constructed framework for doing this. The experiences of the teachers discussed in this article reflect the process of implementing learning strategies and provide some insights into its effectiveness in supporting the learning of students for whom English is a new language.

Conclusion

In conclusion, development of learning strategies requires carefully guided instruction to help students understand what the strategies consist of and how they can support learning. Teachers may initially

struggle with differentiating between using strategies to support learning and teaching strategies directly. They may also struggle with the notion that there is a definite and substantial time commitment required in initially teaching, practicing and evaluating the use of strategies within a content area context. However, the teachers involved in this program have come to the conclusion that making learning strategies available to students has resulted in expanding their understanding not only of the concepts under study but in metacognitive awareness of their learning and what they can do to support their own progress. Having these skills and strategies available and developing a process to continually expand and refine them will support student learning well beyond the initial learning experiences. The time spent in getting this process underway promises to pay big dividends in future learning and life opportunities.

Strategic teaching, learning and assessment reflect a pedagogical shift in thinking for many ELL teachers. Providing them with opportunities to dissect what strategies are and how they can best be developed in the classroom is essential. When given the time and the space to experiment with implementation of strategy development, teachers are able to effectively make shifts in the way they teach. A critical component of this involves opportunities to reflect on the process and to continually refine their practice in this area. Discussions with teachers highlighted in this article several semesters after they completed the program, revealed that they not only continue to use strategic teaching, learning and assessment but have used this process as a springboard to continually refine and expand their teaching.

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(Footnotes)

1 CALLA is a framework for organizing learning that was developed by Chamot and O'Malley . It consists of three categories of learning strategies that help students link prior knowledge to new knowledge (metacognitive strategies), effectively use thinking and organizing tools (cognitive strategies) and develop affective skills that support learning (social/affective strategies) (p62-63).

Author

Kathryn Henn-Reinke, Ph.D. is an associate professor of ESL/Bilingual education and co-director of the Title III ADELANTE Grant at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh. She specializes in curriculum and assessment design related to English language learners.

WITESOL 2005 Preliminary Information

“A New Day in Assessment and Best Practices for ESL and Bilingual Education”

This is a joint conference involving Wisconsin TESOL, Illinois TESOL, Minnesota TESOL and Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction and WIDA. The mission of this collaborative conference is to address practical issues of assessment and best practices in ESL and Bilingual Education at all instructional and institutional levels. All classroom educators, administrators, coordinators, and specialists are most welcome!

Featured Speakers will include:

WIDA Project Staff speaking about the new ACCESS Test, and well known national figures in TESOL.

The conference aims to bring together K-adult educators to discuss and share ideas, strategies, and best practices in instruction and assessment, and to initiate and sustain meaningful professional dialogue across programs, levels, and settings. The conference planning committee hopes that presentation submissions will address some or all of the following broad themes:

- theory to practice, action research,
- four skills/integrated language instruction, content-based instruction training/strategies,
- literacy across the curriculum,
- practical teaching and/or assessment strategies,
- ESL/ Bilingual Educators/Content teachers collaborative activities & strategies,
- curriculum development, assessment tools, testing and alternative assessment practices, resources, rubrics,
- special education/ELL program coordination practices,
- differentiated instruction & assessment for early childhood, mainstream classroom, ELLs, and community college, and refugee populations,
- advocacy, cultural awareness and multicultural education best practices,
- and other related topics.

Further details will be coming soon at www.witesol.org.

An Alignment Study of the Test of Emerging Academic English and Minnesota’s Standards for Reading in Grades 3, 5, 7 and 10.

**Thomas Lombard,
Julie Henderson
and Tim Vansickle**

Large scale testing mandates under the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) could result in costly duplicative testing of English language learners (ELLs). Concerns over the potential dampening effects of overtesting led the Minnesota Department of Education to seek permission from the U. S. Department of Education to use the Test of Emerging Academic English (TEAE) as an alternate test for reporting yearly progress in reading by ELLs. The TEAE was designed to be more assessment friendly by scaffolding test items, gradually increasing item difficulty, avoiding long reading passages, and establishing thematic relevance. Using alignment procedures developed by Norman Webb, the TEAE appears to adequately match the state’s reading standards, clearing a major hurdle in selecting an alternate assessment for ELLs. This study also addresses implications for alignment methodology by introducing a Depth-of-Alignment scale and discusses the need to “unpack” academic standards written in complex formats.

In the past decade, Congress enacted a series of laws that greatly increased the amount of standardized testing of students in America’s schools. With its highly public revelations of student performance in reading and mathematics, this increased testing has sparked concerns from teacher

educators and K-12 teachers about the impact on English language learners (ELLs) (Abedi, 2004). Chief among these concerns are fairness issues from using “one-size-fits-all” state tests designed for English-speaking students (Abedi, 2004), overtesting leading to student anxieties (Clark, Shore, Rhoades, Abrams, Miao, & Li, 2003), and instructional confusion prior to testing (Garcia, 2003; Le, 2002). Translated tests are unlikely remedies for these concerns because of technical issues and cost ramifications, but it is possible for states to use an “alternate assessment” that is more assessment friendly for ELLs, provided the alternate test is adequately aligned with state academic standards. The study reported here examines whether one such test is adequately aligned with Minnesota’s reading standards for possible use as an alternate assessment for reporting yearly performance of ELLs in reading.

Federal law requires state education agencies to ensure their assessment systems are aligned with the major components of the public education system: instructional methods, curriculum, achievement test scores, professional development for teachers, and, most prominently, the state’s “challenging academic content and student academic achievement standards” (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 2001; No Child Left Behind Act of 2001). These federal mandates are challenging in themselves because alignment methodologies in this emerging field are limited (LaMarca, Redfield, Winter, Bailey, and Despriet, 2000). This study derives from the federal mandates cited above, but focuses on statewide testing options affecting ELLs that are open to any state. The Minnesota Department of Education conducted this alignment in June 2003 to meet federal requirements under NCLB, and introduces adaptations of alignment methodologies pioneered by Norman Webb (Webb & O’Neal, 2001). Specifically, Minnesota is seeking permission from the U. S. Department of Education to substitute the Test of Emerging Academic English (TEAE) as an alternate assessment for ELLs to determine the extent to which this group is making yearly progress in reading.

Objective

Minnesota has been administering the TEAE since 2001 (prior to NCLB), but this study was needed to determine the degree to

which the TEAE is aligned with newly adopted grade level expectations in reading for grades 3, 5, 7 and 10. Minnesota has administered the TEAE to ELLs identified as Limited English Proficient in grades 3-12 to assess their progress and proficiency in reading and writing. Minnesota began piloting the TEAE in 1998 because conventional state assessments at that time were deemed inadequate for students developing English skills in the context of ELL programs, especially those just beginning English language instruction. During this same time period, the population of ELLs increased so that most of the state's approximately 400 school districts and charter schools have to face the complex assessment issues related to language differences among students. For the 2004-05 school year, Minnesota's enrollment data show that one in ten students has a primary home language other than English (encompassing at least 75 different languages). A subset is determined to need additional instructional support based on district level criteria. In Minnesota, this amounted to approximately 39,000 ELLs who were tested for reading proficiency with the TEAE and a potentially duplicative statewide test, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessment (MCA). This duplication raises concerns about over testing in Minnesota and possibly other states that use multiple tests to comply with various federal mandates.

The results reported here demonstrate the degree of alignment between the TEAE and the state's grade level expectations in reading and discuss the implications for alternative statewide testing of ELLs for annual reporting of reading performance. This is one of a series of related studies by the Minnesota Department of Education involving state assessment options, ELLs, and NCLB requirements. Since the TEAE was introduced three years prior to the adoption of Minnesota's grade level expectations, this study does not investigate the original purpose for which the TEAE was developed. Rather, this study uses a panel of experts to judge the degree to which test content matches the recently legislated grade level expectations for all learners in reading. Should the degree of alignment indicate a need to enhance this correspondence, these alignment analyses could be useful in guiding test revisions. Since ELLs also take the statewide MCA for reading, Minnesota Department of Education officials were concerned about the dampening effect of duplicative testing on student motivation for test-taking. If it is feasible

that either test could serve NCLB purposes for reporting reading performance of ELLs, then the testing burden could potentially be reduced. The findings here will be subsequently compared with an alignment of the MCA with the state's recently adopted reading expectations, and a quantitative equating study of 1,300 general education students on both the TEAE and MCA. If these studies show that both the TEAE and MCA are sufficiently aligned with the state's grade level expectations for reading, it supports Minnesota's case for an alternate assessment better suited for ELLs.

Method

The methodology for studying these alignments is adapted from the model developed by Norman Webb (1997). Independent experts used Lykert-type rating scales to match test items with grade level expectations to examine three types of alignment. Some adaptations in scaling were necessary because of Minnesota's unique format for its statewide academic standards.

Categorical Concurrence reflects the consistency in content between the assessment system and the state's expectations for student learning. This alignment criterion shows whether the same content areas are covered by both the test and academic standards. Categorical Concurrence is met in Webb's model when a designated proportion of test items (e.g., 15%) address a content area in state standards. Categorical Concurrence is a simplistic criterion for matching tests and academic content that does not account for cognitive depth, curricular range, or balance (Webb, 1999).

Depth-of-Knowledge is the level of cognitive demand placed on students, and can be similarly applied to test items or elements in state academic standards. When these levels between tests and standards are consistent, it indicates that student performance on the assessment is as demanding cognitively as the state's expectations of what students should have learned. This scale has four levels, ranging from simple recitation of facts (Level I) to higher order thinking (Level IV).

Depth-of-Alignment is a scale modification developed by the Minnesota Department of Education to get additional perspective on the complementary match between test items and grade level expectations. Once a rater determines that a test item matches a grade level expectation, the rater then judges whether the alignment between the test item and the state's expectation is high, moderate, low or not apparent. State standards are sometimes so broadly phrased or highly inclusive that they easily have many relevant test items (high Categorical Concurrence), but the correspondence may be limited to one aspect or a minor component of the state standard (i. e., low *depth* to the alignment). *Depth-of-Alignment* adds a qualitative perspective to a match between test item and a broad learner expectation because alignment at the benchmark level may be direct, partial or not evident at all.

Participants

A panel of eight persons served as raters over a two-day session. Candidates for the panel were recommended by state curriculum specialists, with selections based on expertise and experience in teaching reading, familiarity with state assessments, and instructional experience with English language learners. Raters were screened and selected by state staff coordinating the study. All raters had current positions as teachers in general education, in school programs serving ELLs, or in an ELL-related university training program. Each rater had extensive experience serving ELL populations. As outside persons not employed by the Department of Education, raters were entitled to a small honorarium and travel reimbursement for their participation.

Instruments

TEAE. The *TEAE* has separate components for reading and writing that are designed for students whose home language is not English, and are identified as ELL by district-determined criteria. Assessment friendly features in the *TEAE*'s design include (1) "scaffolding" test items, which means they start out easy and get progressively more challenging; (2) allowing testing to conclude at a ceiling level instead of requiring beginning ELLs to struggle with the entire test; (3) avoiding the use of long reading passages; and (4) "thematic" relevance based on field re-

view by “bilingual/ESL educators” which indicate that the themes depicted in the test’s pictures and passages were relevant and accessible to ELLs (Metritech, 1999; Minnesota Department of Education, 2004a). The domains represented in the reading component of the TEAE are picture vocabulary, short and long narrative, and expository text. There are separate versions of the TEAE for each of three grade clusters (3-4, 5-6 and 7-12) and four forms of each version. According to the technical manual, test forms are vertically scaled (scores from different grades are placed on a common scale), but there is no explanation of the methodology for accomplishing it. Information was not available on the equivalence of test forms. Each form of the TEAE reading test has 25 items for a total of 100 items per grade cluster; each item has five questions with YES/NO choices. The TEAE is composed of four sections; items in the first section are based on a picture, while the following three sections are based on text that gradually increases in length and difficulty. Forms are kept secure with public access to practice tests; forms are not released annually.

Reading standards for grades 3, 5, 7 and 10 were matched with the set of four test forms from the corresponding TEAE, for a total of 16 ratings between tests and reading standards. Raters were assigned two forms of the test from a grade cluster that matched their experience.

GRADE 3

Reading

Expectation	Word Recognition, Analysis and Fluency The student will apply word recognition strategies to decode unfamiliar multi-syllabic words and will read grade-appropriate text with accuracy and fluency.
Benchmarks	The student will demonstrate the ability to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read unfamiliar complex and multi-syllabic words using advanced phonetic and structural analysis. 2. Read aloud narrative and expository text with fluency, accuracy, and appropriate pacing, intonation and expression.

Grade level expectations. Minnesota’s grade level expectations in reading constitute the alignment target for TEAE test items. These reading standards have the format displayed below, where “Word Recognition, Analysis and Fluency” is one of the state’s three broad expectations for reading, the other two being Vocabulary Expansion and Com-

prehension. (The term “Expectation” was later changed to “Sub-strand.”) Minnesota’s format is unique compared with other states by employing a single broad expectation statement that is often duplicated for multiple grade levels. Underlying each broad expectation is an array of benchmarks that range in number from 2-13. In several instances benchmarks are also duplicated or worded similarly among grade levels.

Rater’s protocols. Two standardized protocols were developed for the panel members to independently apply the alignment criteria. Protocol #1 applied Webb’s Depth-of-Knowledge scale representing four knowledge levels to each benchmark, with the ratings summed up by group discussion and consensus. Webb’s scale is briefly described below, with raters receiving a more extensive version with examples:

- Level I requires students to receive or recite facts or to use simple skills or abilities, such as oral reading.
- Level II calls for some mental processing beyond recalling or reproducing a response; shows comprehension and processing of text.
- Level III represents deep knowledge beyond text, which may include explaining, generalizing or connecting ideas.
- Level IV shows higher order thinking plus deep knowledge, typically requiring extended time to assess.

Protocol #2 used a scale developed by the Department of Education for determining depth where alignment was found between test items and Minnesota’s content areas for reading. This four-point scale codes the extent of alignment between test items and grade expectations for reading:

- The test item has a HIGH level of alignment with the grade expectation because it directly matches one or more of the benchmarks.
- The test item has a MODERATE level of alignment because it partially matches two or more of the benchmarks.
- The test item has a LOW level of alignment because it partially matches one benchmark.
- The test item matches the broad expectation but has NO alignment at the benchmark level.

The reader may ask how a test item coded as “hitting” a learner expectation could have “no alignment.” The coding of “no alignment” occurs where a test item matches a broad grade level expectation without even a partial match with a subordinate benchmark. This is possible because (1) test items may readily match expectation statements that are broadly phrased, and (2) benchmarks are not an exhaustive set of skills underlying the expectation. A broad expectation statement may be repeated for multiple grades but in some cases have only one or two benchmarks. For example, a test item may “hit” the broad expectation that a student “will use a variety of strategies to expand. . . vocabularies,” but not match a short list of benchmark skills that demonstrate such learning.

Thus, Webb’s methodology (1999) was appealing because it offered both a flexible and comprehensive model that goes beyond simplistic content matching. The Depth-of-Alignment scale, introduced here, fits with Webb’s methodology and was needed because of the idiosyncratic format of Minnesota’s reading standards—formatting differences among states is a “thorny” problem for alignment (LaMarca et al, 2000). This new scale offers an additional criterion to improve the comprehensiveness of alignment methods used by state education agencies.

Design and Procedure

The rating panel met for a two-day session, starting with an orientation covering definitions, an overview of the alignment process, and the objective of the study. Raters were given the rating scales and protocols to review several days prior to the rating session, and their first task was to reach consensus on the Depth-of-Knowledge level for each of the benchmarks for reading expectations at grades 3, 5, 7 and 10.

For its second task, the panel used the same Depth-of-Knowledge scale to independently code test items.

The third task required the raters to match test items with the state’s grade level expectations, using the protocol to tally “hits.” Raters were allowed to code one primary hit and up to two secondary hits, which means a test item could correspond to more than one learning expectation. Where hits were recorded, the raters also used the Depth-of-Alignment scale to judge the depth of alignment between the test item and its corresponding state expectation(s).

Findings

Tables 1-3 display the findings for three alignment criteria: Categorical Concurrence, Depth-of-Knowledge, and Depth-of-Alignment, respectively.

Categorical Concurrence

Categorical Concurrence indicates the extent to which the TEAE and the state's grade expectations match in content. Hits were tallied between test items and the state's three broad areas of reading: Word Recognition, Analysis and Fluency; Vocabulary Expansion; and Comprehension. Categorical Concurrence is achieved when coded hits meet or exceed 15% of the item pool. For example, a reading test with 40 items has sufficient Categorical Concurrence with the vocabulary component of Minnesota's third grade reading standards if six or more test items "hit" this state expectation: *The student will use a variety of strategies to expand reading, listening and speaking vocabularies* (Minnesota Department of Education, 2003a).

Webb's methodology allows raters to code one primary and up to two secondary hits for each benchmark, which means the total number of coded hits is a duplicated count. It is also possible for raters to indicate no hit, if a test item does not concur with any of the three broad content areas of reading. For example, a test item on spelling would not hit any of the three reading expectations studied here. Similar patterns for Categorical Concurrence across the four grade levels can be seen in Table 1. The hit totals in Table 1 include both primary and secondary matches between test items and benchmarks. These are the results of the Categorical Concurrence measures:

- With only two test item hits among the four grade levels, there is virtually no Categorical Concurrence between the TEAE and the benchmarks for Word Recognition, Analysis and Fluency. This is not surprising—nor does it rule out the use of the TEAE as an alternate reading assessment for ELLs—because these particular benchmarks largely pertain to oral reading, which is typically not covered by large-scale state assessments used by states to comply with NCLB.

- There is extremely high concurrence for Comprehension due to 96, 92, 95 and 98 hits at the four grade levels, respectively. All but 14 of the total 371 test item hits were rated as primary hits, which means the raters saw 357 test items as corresponding primarily with Comprehension benchmarks and not overlapping into the other two expectation areas.
- Vocabulary Expansion was modestly represented on the TEAE at each grade level, meeting Webb’s 15% criterion for Categorical Concurrence in each case. Interestingly, most of the vocabulary hits were judged as secondary to the Comprehension relevance of the test items: Out of 101 total hits for Vocabulary Expansion, 27 were primary hits and 74 were secondary.

The high overlap of the TEAE with the Comprehension area of reading is at least partially attributable to the way some benchmarks are worded. Raters consistently reported that many test items were superficially netted by the broad phrasing of a benchmark, plus it was noted that some complex benchmarks had component parts that might earn different ratings for alignment purposes.

Depth-of-Knowledge

The Depth-of-Knowledge scale represents four knowledge levels applied to both benchmarks and test items. Depth-of-Knowledge consistency is achieved when “at least 50% of the items corresponding to an objective [are] at or above the level of knowledge of the objective” (Webb, 1999, p. 8). Depth-of-Knowledge consistency is reported in Table 2. For brevity, these findings are based solely on primary hits between test items and reading benchmarks. For a lengthier presentation of these alignment data, see Minnesota Department of Education (2003b).

- Depth-of-Knowledge consistency was very high for Comprehension, meeting the “yes” criterion at all grade levels.
- Depth-of-Knowledge consistency was similarly high for Vocabulary Expansion, occurring at Grades 5, 7 and 10 but not Grade 3.
- As expected, Depth-of-Knowledge consistency was not

found for Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency because the test does not sample oral reading skills.

Webb's scale also provides insight into the alignment of tests with academic standards on cognitive demand by the distribution of levels I, II, III and IV. Most forms of the TEAE routinely covered three cognitive levels (I, II and III), while corresponding benchmarks usually ranged across two levels (either I-II or II-III). Level IV ratings ("higher order thinking and deep knowledge") were rarely given to test items or benchmarks, which is not surprising as extended time is required for a student to demonstrate Level IV cognitive skills. Level IV cognitive depth seems to be geared more to performance evaluation than typical pencil-and-paper tests.

Depth-of-Alignment

Depth-of-Alignment is an adaptation of Webb's model that accommodates the format Minnesota uses for its academic standards: a single, broad grade level expectation (often repeated at grade levels) with a subordinate array of 2 to 13 benchmarks. Because this alignment criterion and its scale were newly developed for this study, there is no prevailing standard for acceptable levels of alignment between test items and the subordinate benchmarks for grade expectations. Therefore, Webb's standard for Depth-of-Knowledge was applied: Alignment depth is deemed acceptable when 50% of the ratings are high or moderate.

Table 3 shows the Depth-of-Alignment status for all three reading expectations by grade level. Percentages in these tables indicate the extent the alignment between test items and learner expectation was judged as high, moderate, low or not evident at the benchmark level. Alignment acceptability was similar for Comprehension and Vocabulary Expansion, in that the "yes" criterion was met in all cases. However, Comprehension hits were more often rated as High in alignment depth, and this probably occurs for two reasons: (1) Comprehension expectations typically have a longer list of subordinate benchmarks, and (2) almost all the comprehension hits were primary matches for the corresponding test items. Consistent with other findings, ratings for Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency were not aligned because the TEAE does not sufficiently sample that content area.

Implications

This study attempted to show the alignment, or depth of correspondence, between the TEAE and Minnesota's grade level expectations in reading. The policy question of substituting the TEAE for the MCA to reduce duplicative testing is partially answered by this study: the TEAE is sufficiently aligned with Minnesota's reading expectations in Comprehension and Vocabulary Expansion such that duplicate testing by the MCA seems unnecessary to sample reading performance of ELLs in those two areas. However, the TEAE is not aligned to Minnesota's expectations in reading for Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency (or Literature). Since alignment for oral reading (or literature) is not essential for a statewide pencil-and-paper test under NCLB, the TEAE appears to be an acceptable alternate test for ELLs because it is adequately aligned to Minnesota's relevant reading standards, designed to be more assessment friendly to ELLs, and is beneficial to students and schools because it reduces duplicative testing. Further evidence pertinent to this policy decision is forthcoming from additional studies by the Minnesota Department of Education comparing student performance on the TEAE and MCA reading tests.

Given the judgment of a panel of qualified raters, the TEAE appears highly aligned in terms of Categorical Concurrence for Comprehension, modestly aligned for Vocabulary Expansion, and not at all aligned for Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency. A lack of alignment with Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency was predictable because this expectation falls to classroom-level assessment, not statewide pencil-and-paper tests. With respect to Minnesota's framework for reading standards, the TEAE appears to be primarily a measure of comprehension skills. It is unknown whether the test would align more broadly for other states with a different framework for their standards.

High ratings for Categorical Concurrence, like those obtained for the TEAE, can be misleading with regard to depth, range and balance issues in aligning statewide tests with state standards because high content alignment is easily accomplished with a few broadly phrased or complex standards. Therefore, additional aspects of alignment were examined. In terms of Depth-of-Knowledge consistency, TEAE test items

favorably matched state benchmarks (except for Vocabulary Expansion with third graders). This means that cognitive demands for answering TEAE items correctly is comparable to achieving the state's learning targets for Vocabulary Expansion and Comprehension. TEAE test items showed more breadth by typically ranging across three cognitive levels (I, II and III), which is consistent with the TEAE's design for scaffolded item difficulty which theoretically encourages some test success while limiting test failure for students with limited English proficiency. Matching cognitive demand for higher order thinking and deep knowledge was not problematic because relatively few benchmarks or test items were assigned a Level IV rating. If the state benchmarks were revised, or re-rated, with increased expectations for higher order thinking and deep knowledge, then the TEAE would require revision with the addition of more similarly challenging items.

Raw counts which match test items with broadly phrased academic standards can easily show high "alignment," yet the match could have limited depth when examined at the benchmark level. The Depth-of-Alignment scale adds comprehensiveness to the alignment study by taking into account the direct or partial matching of test items to benchmarks. Here, the TEAE fared well by meeting the depth criterion for benchmark matching at all grade levels for Comprehension and Vocabulary Expansion.

An additional implication for alignment methodology was raised by this study, due to some state standards that were so broadly inclusive and comprehensive that alignment ratings could be misleading. States should consider *unpacking* complex academic standards when doing alignments under NCLB. Unpacking is a procedure that retains original phrasing but reformats complex or broadly inclusive standards into elemental components for more precise alignment rating. Broad or comprehensive phrasing in state academic standards may lead to spurious alignment ratings through simplistic alignment procedures that merely match content. We think this is an important consideration for the rapidly changing field of test alignment because states may find it tempting to validate their tests by overly relying on simplistic indications of Categorical Concurrence. Two of Minnesota's benchmarks illustrate how such phrasing causes rating problems for alignment purposes:

1. Generate and answer literal, inferential, interpretative and evaluative questions to demonstrate understanding about what is read.” [Example has four distinct components that arguably vary in cognitive demand]
2. Scan a passage to determine relevant information and skim the text to locate specific information.” [Example has two components that are not clear in distinction]

Benchmarks like these examples may be “unpacked,” i.e., broken down into more elemental components. Alignment criteria like Categorical Concurrence and depth-of-knowledge could be more fairly rated by reformatting benchmarks like these, as follows:

To demonstrate understanding about what is read, generate and answer:

- a) Literal questions,
- b) Inferential questions,
- c) Interpretative questions, and
- d) Evaluative questions.

Care is needed to preserve the original phrasing and intent without unintended contamination from adding or dropping words. This procedure for unpacking grade level expectations is illustrated further in a more recent Minnesota alignment study of reading benchmarks (Minnesota Department of Education, 2004b).

In conclusion, Minnesota’s alignment study helps reinforce the feasibility of an alternate assessment for ELLs to provide proficiency ratings for NCLB’s yearly progress reporting. Test scores have far-reaching impact when used for high stakes decisions such as graduation or identifying schools in need of improvement, so test scores must reflect actual skills as closely as possible. Testing options are needed for ELLs to ensure that scores are not spuriously lowered by unfair language or cultural misconceptions. A test like the TEAE, or possibly other “off-the-shelf” tests with assessment-friendly features for ELLs, could generate the required scores using testing formats that are more assessment friendly than a one-size-fits-all state test. For example, it is predictable that students just learning the English language will struggle with reading tests that have long passages and require responses to all test items, but

this might be alleviated by tests that use pictures and scaffold test item difficulty accordingly. For states like Minnesota that administer multiple tests to comply with various federal mandates, there are potential cost savings in reducing duplicative testing. Further, a reduction in testing also benefits classroom instruction because it would free up class time used to prepare students, both psychologically and content-wise, for state-wide testing.

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Table 1
Categorical Concurrence Between Minnesota's State Standards in Reading and the Test of Emerging Academic English

Grade	Total Test Item Hits			Is Categorical Concurrence Acceptable? ^a		
	Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency ^b	Vocabulary Expansion	Comprehension	Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency ^b	Vocabulary Expansion	Comprehension
3	0	32	96	NO	YES	YES
5	2	18	92	NO	YES	YES
7	0	19	95	NO	YES	YES
10	—	32	98	—	YES	YES

^a At least 15% of the item pool must have item hits for acceptable Categorical Concurrence.

^b Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency benchmarks are assessed at the classroom level, not large-scale pencil and paper tests.

Table 2

Depth-of-Knowledge Consistency for the Alignment of TEAE test items and Reading Benchmarks

Grade	Is Depth-of-Knowledge Consistency Acceptable? ^a		
	Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency ^b	Vocabulary Expansion	Comprehension
3	—	NO	YES
5	—	YES	YES
7	—	YES	YES
10	—	YES	YES

^aDepth-of-Knowledge consistency is achieved when at least 50% of the test items that correspond to a learner expectation are rated at or above the cognitive level assigned to the expectation.

^bRatings for Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency are considered moot because large-scale pencil and paper testing is not suited to this expectation.

Table 3

Depth-of-Alignment Ratings for Primary Hits Between Test Items and Reading Benchmarks

Grade	Is Depth-of-Alignment Acceptable? ^a		
	Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency ^b	Vocabulary Expansion	Comprehension
3	—	YES	YES
5	—	YES	YES
7	—	YES	YES
10	—	YES	YES

Note. The number of primary hits for the four grade levels was 99, 100, 96 and 100, respectively.

^aAt least 50% of the test item/benchmark matches are rated as high or moderate.

^bSince Word Recognition, Analysis & Fluency benchmarks are assessed at the classroom level, the number of potential test item/benchmark matches is insufficient to rate for Depth-of-Alignment.

Authors

Thomas Lombard, Ph.D., coordinates alignment projects for state-wide assessment with the Minnesota Department of Education. His professional experience in Minnesota's public education system covers more than 30 years in various capacities, much of it dealing with individual and group assessment. He has earned degrees from Inter American University of Puerto Rico, Harvard University, and the University of Minnesota.

Julie M. Henderson, MA Ed., is a supervisor for the Minnesota Department of Education in Assessment and Testing. She has over ten years of experience as an ESL and bilingual education teacher in both Minneapolis and St. Paul Public schools and is currently pursuing her doctorate at Hamline University in St. Paul, MN.

Timothy R. Vansickle, Ph.D., is the Director of Assessment for the Minnesota Department of Education, overseeing all aspects of the state's large-scale assessment systems. He earned a doctorate in psychometrics from Texas A & M University and previously held executive positions with major test publishers including Riverside and ACT, as well as leadership positions in the American Educational Research Association, National Council on Measurement in Education, and American Counseling Association.

Reviews

Kozyrev, J.R. (2005). *Sound Bites: Pronunciation Activities*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

If pronunciation is the “face” of spoken English as Kozyrev contends, then *Sound Bites* is a valuable tool for those hoping to improve their appearance. The aim of the book is to improve fluency and comprehension of low-intermediate students, and it meets this goal through the use of imaginative activities covering a wide variety of pronunciation topics. *Sound Bites* begins with a section on stress and rhythm, followed by units on intonation, vowels, and consonants. The book concludes with a section entitled “Putting Sounds Together” which addresses a number of common pronunciation-related problems such as linking, consonant clusters, r-coloring and adjustments in fast speech. Each topic is presented as a stand-alone unit so the instructor may freely select and sequence items to best fit the needs of a particular teaching situation.

In keeping with the “Sound Bites” title the book is divided into short chapters, each covering a specific pronunciation point. Lessons begin with a brief presentation of the feature of interest followed by a recorded listening exercise, usually consisting of either sound discrimination or gap-filling of a short text. Students are then asked to repeat after the tape as a controlled speaking practice. Guided speaking practice is typically provided through pair work where one student reads a collection of sentences while the other attempts to select the sentence that was spoken or otherwise correctly interpret the first student’s utterance, which provides instant feedback for both speaker and listener. Additionally, dramatic dialogs and poetry are used to practice certain suprasegmental features.

Each chapter concludes with a focused (or free) speaking exercise, and this is where *Sound Bites* truly shines. The book contains a wealth of different speaking exercises that show an impressive degree of creativity. Students use pronunciation features to make dialogs, plan a dinner party, make a radio commercial, and share a recipe, to name a few activities. Any teacher who has attempted the task of designing

communicative pronunciation exercises will surely appreciate the effort Kozyrev has put into this aspect of the book.

Sound Bites also features a simple and easy-to-read layout; each activity is placed on a separate page, and a banner in an upper corner of each page makes it easy to find specific types of exercises (listening, guided practice, etc.). Accompanying the text are student and instructor websites containing additional materials and links to pronunciation-related websites, as well as an online diagnostic test that directs students to specific book chapters for practice. Cassette tapes and an audio CD are also available for purchase.

Sound Bites is well-organized, covers a wide range of pronunciation topics, and best of all, contains an abundance of creative speaking activities. The book's only weaknesses might be the absence of color in the text and the fact that the chapters are short; for difficult pronunciation features, teachers will likely need to provide their students with additional practice. Overall, I believe teachers will appreciate the comprehensive and logical presentation of the material, and students will enjoy the many interesting speaking exercises.

Reviewer

Larry Davis is an M.A. student in the Program in English as a Second Language at the University of Minnesota and taught EFL in China for several years.

Withrow, J., Brookes, G., & Cummings, M.C. (2004). *Inspired to Write: Readings and tasks to develop writing skills*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

I*nspired to Write* is a Post-Intermediate ESL textbook that aims to provide high school and adult students with thought-provoking and culturally diverse texts that will motivate them to become more accomplished writers. The charming and somewhat whimsical image on the cover, a writer in front of a computer beneath a star-lit sky, effectively captures the objectives of the text. It is intended for a multicultural audience and achieves its claim of providing authentic texts from diverse genres, such as newspaper articles, expository essays, poetry, fiction, and academic discourse.

Inspired to Write includes forty-five readings that reflect on how individuals confront changes in their personal lives and the world around them. The authors of each article come from diverse cultural backgrounds and assume an acquaintance with American culture. While exploring mostly immigrant and bicultural perspectives in the United States, the students go on a whirlwind tour, visiting places like San Francisco's Chinatown and South Dakota's Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Along their journey, students discuss ideas such as interracial dating and the concept of the "Fast Food Nation." Given its cultural content, this text is most appropriate for ESL classes in the United States, instead of EFL environments.

The main goal of the text is to guide students through the writing process. The lessons are organized into five sections, which encourage students to examine, pinpoint, and reproduce the "successful" writing styles that appear in each article. The text finds a balance between allowing students liberty in the writing they produce and having them adhere to prescribed rhetorical formulas. Revision and peer feedback are important, and page 217 offers a sample Peer Feedback Form to facilitate the revision process.

Another notable feature is the *Writer's Toolbox*, which appears throughout the text and explains techniques such as brainstorming, free-writing, skimming, and clustering. An outline of these strategies is featured in the index (along with a list of articles by title and author). The

Writer's Toolbox describes writing hints, making it a valuable resource for any ESL (or native English speaking) writing student.

Inspired to Write takes a Communicative Approach and emphasizes student collaboration and small group work. The instructor is a facilitator, and students using this text participate in activities such as journaling, small group discussions, analyzing rhetorical devices, peer editing, and writing more formal essays.

Overall, *Inspired to Write* is an attractive, organized textbook that offers much potential for the ESL classroom. Article content is its greatest strength. The articles reflect the authors' claims of cultural and genre diversity, and because they touch on core aspects such as self-identity and social awareness, they can appeal to many types of students. I recommend reading *Inspired to Write* cover to cover, not as an ESL textbook, but simply as a collection of delightful, nostalgic, and honest narratives. The challenge for teachers using this book is to create an environment where students are comfortable talking about these fundamental elements of human existence, a situation that may be difficult considering the multicultural audience for which it is intended.

Despite this limitation, *Inspired to Write* can be a valuable tool for ESL teachers. The texts are authentic and thoughtful and they provoke students to think honestly and critically about the world around them. By engaging in these stories, poems, and essays, students can reflect about themselves, and through this reflection, they may just be inspired to write.

Reviewer

Amy Tarrell is a first year student in the M.A. in ESL program at the University of Minnesota in Minneapolis. She has taught conversational English in Argentina and currently teaches Spanish at the University of Minnesota.

Farid, M. & McMahan, D. (2004). *Accommodating and Educating Somali Students in Minnesota Schools*. Saint Paul: Hamline University Press.

In their book *Accommodating and Educating Somali Students in Minnesota Schools: A Handbook for Teachers and Administrators*, authors Mohamed Farid and Don McMahan offer valid and relevant insight as to how Minnesotan K-12 educators and administrators can best learn who their Somali students are as well as how to accommodate the unique issues which they bring to the public school context in light of cultural, historical, socioeconomic, educational, and familial factors. This compact handbook serves as a practical guide for those who work with the growing influx of Somali students in Minnesota and includes foundational essentials of Somali culture and history as well as specific academic and social matters facing these students and their educators. Both authors write with authority on the topic, Farid drawing from his personal experience of the transition from Somalia to Minnesota and ensuing career in education, while McMahan has had significant experience as an educator of Somali students.

The handbook begins by discussing the inherent correlation between Somali culture and Islamic traditions and continues with a brief history of Somalia, making special note that it is communist and colonial impact, not Islamic influence, that has caused the recent anarchy. The authors also offer a rationalization as to why Somali families choose to come to Minnesota, shedding extraordinary light on the Somali community and its values.

The next chapter reviews specific problems that Minnesotan Somali families face as well as how these problems affect Somali students. In chapter four, seventeen real-life vignettes regarding problematic situations and ensuing solutions in the classroom are recorded to discuss specific ways by which educators can accommodate Somali students. Continuing with this format, the authors offer explanation regarding and suggestions for resolving behavioral issues. This chapter is particularly significant in its discussion of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, depression, the “refugee culture,” and a denial of traditional Islamic values as causes of misbehavior in Somali students.

The final chapter examines pedagogical considerations for both theory and practice in its discussion of a stable, supportive classroom environment, collaborative grouping, as well as affective and academic needs in regards to Somali students. The handbook concludes with a review section, which educators can use to plan accommodation for future Somali students.

This handbook definitely meets the authors' goals of establishing a foundation from which Minnesotan teachers and administrators can "become engaged in the process of discovering who their Somali students are" (p. 69). Indeed, because the book covers such a wide gamut of both general and specific issues, both those new to and those experienced with Somali culture will benefit. The handbook is marked by an enjoyable readability and an easy-to-reference structure, which includes specific vignettes, bulleted lists, and user-friendly subheadings.

The overriding benefit of this book is in its objective presentation of relevant information as the Minnesotan Somali population is soaring and expanding to school districts which may have had little previous experience with the Somali community as a whole. Farid and McMahan have indeed created a wonderful resource that will be successfully utilized and implemented for years to come.

Reviewer

Elizabeth Kurtz is a senior education student at Northwestern College in St. Paul, Minnesota. Currently, she is involved in practicum teaching in the St. Paul public school system at both the secondary and elementary levels and will graduate with a B.A. in ESL Education.

Growing Up in Two Worlds: A Murri Trilogy from Australia

McDonald, M. & Pryor, B.M. *My Girragundji* (1998); *The Binna Binna Man* (1999); *Njunjul the Sun* (2003). St. Leonards, NSW, Australia: Allen & Unwin.

"I know those old people sent her to protect my spirit. They do that sort of thing. She came to me just when I needed her. She stays with me all through the dark nights. I don't have to worry about squishing her in the bed cause she knows which way I'm gonna roll even before I do." (p. 11)

At the opening of *My Girragundji* (1998), a frog comes to the aid of a young Murri, an Aboriginal child living in the north of Queensland, Australia. With his girragundj's quiet words of support, he finds the strength to face school bullies and the bad spirit, or hairyman, who lives in his house. Through this and two succeeding books, *The Binna Binna Man* (1999) and *Njunjul the Sun* (2003), Meme McDonald and Boori Pryor follow the adventures of the same boy as he comes of age, caught between the worlds of his Murri family, traditions, and the threat and allure of the dominant Australian culture.

These three books by McDonald and Pryor would form a powerful sequence for young readers. Each provides a warm, personal narration from the boy's perspective. Frequent black and white photographs depicting the boy, his family, and friends punctuate the tale, making readers feel as if they were not only reading a book, but literally watching each scene unfold. As the boy grows older, the literacy level of the reading grows more complex, also. The authors also present the stories in the Murri dialect of English, which adds realism and poignancy to the narration. Witness the following scene, at the funeral for a teenage cousin, in *The Binna Binna Man*:

"My Auntie Lill's charged up already, with that drink. She's always charged up, but they reckon she knows all the songs and stories of this place, our place, but she seen too much pain to want to tell anyone." (p. 53)

McDonald and Pryor do not shy away from the brutal reality faced by the Murri people in the story, including alcoholism, racist police, discrimination, the scarcity of jobs and housing, and other threats to family and culture. However, in spite of the obstacles faced in each story, the spirit of the ancestors, and tradition, comes through as a strength that can help one cope with, and thrive, in modern Australia. In *Njunjul the Sun*, the boy we have come to know is now 16 and, fleeing the memory of being beaten senseless by the police up north, he heads down to the Big Smoke, Sydney. There, with the help of his Uncle Garth, Aunty Em, and others, he begins to appreciate his Murri identity again as he performs traditional stories and dances for school children.

Teachers and educators in the United States will find that these books will connect to students from any cultural background. However, for Hmong, Latino, Somalian and other young people who have had to deal with bullying, discrimination and the daily struggle for identity within a dominant American culture, these stories about a Murri boy in Australia will ring especially true. Perhaps immigrants, refugees and others can draw from their cultures' traditional strengths to help them thrive as they walk between two worlds.

Reviewer

Don Hones is an associate professor at the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, where he co-directs Project ADELANTE, a program for preparing ESL and bilingual teachers. He visited Australia on sabbatical in 2004.

Rempel, L. (2004). *Hey, Hmong Girl, Whassup? The Journal of Choua Vang*. Saint Paul: Hamline University Press.

In *Hey, Hmong Girl, Whassup?* Leah Rempel provides a fictional journal account of the life of a Hmong teenage girl. Due to the high influx of Hmong in Minnesota and Wisconsin, this book is relevant and beneficial in creating an awareness of the situations many Hmong youth face. The insights gained through reading *Hey, Hmong Girl, Whassup?* will help educators generate ideas about how to advocate for and be adequately available to their Hmong students.

While the book is written by a white ESL teacher as part of her master's thesis at Hamline University Graduate School of Education, the subject matter was researched and constructed with the collaboration and input of the Hmong community and a group of junior and senior high school students from the Twin Cities. By being written in journal form the book has greater impact, expressing deep emotion and portraying the tumultuous thoughts and feelings of a Hmong adolescent.

The issues Rempel covers range from growing up to dealing with gangs and violence. One of the major themes throughout the book is the struggle Hmong youth face regarding the reconciliation between maintaining the traditional values and cultural aspects of their heritage and fitting into their surroundings—modern American culture. Rempel expertly depicts this struggle between two worlds and two cultures for a generation already struggling through the challenges of adolescence and racial tension. Amidst all their fear, sorrow, and worry, they find no time to dream about and plan for the future, as many American teens do.

The book opens with an introduction to fifteen-year-old Choua Vang. Initially the reader finds Choua to be compliant to the traditional values of her parents, but as time goes by her views change as she finds herself stuck between two cultures. The prospect of her teenaged sister's arranged marriage, the reality of her siblings' involvement in gangs and gang violence, and the fear of violence within her own home at the hand of her father become strong forces in her life. This is an eye-opening account regarding the polar forces at work between those from the older generation who cling to the traditional Hmong ways and those from the younger generation who seek to assimilate as Asian Americans.

Although Rempel focuses on the adolescent years, the book is valuable not only for secondary teachers but also elementary teachers. It informs educators about many of the issues Hmong children and adolescents are facing so that they can advocate for their students and become aware of available community resources and programs that help Hmong students and families. Many of these principles can also be transferred to situations with other minority, underprivileged students.

The value of *Hey, Hmong Girl, Whassup?* extends beyond a mere informative tool for teachers to being a prime tool for use with Hmong and other minority students. Reading it in the classroom creates the opportunity for a forum on current issues students face along with the relevant reading practice of making text-to-self connections and problem solving. Teachers would have the opportunity to help students learn how to make wise choices and to inform them of available resources by integrating experience into instruction and creating real-life relevance within classroom instruction and learning. Students need to see a purpose to their learning and this book can be an excellent tool for dialoguing about numerous issues. Because of its relevance to current situations among Hmong youth and engaging writing style, this book is an exceptional resource and instructional tool for teachers.

Reviewer

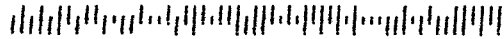
Rhonda Munson has a B.S. in History from Crown College in St. Bonifacius, Minnesota and is currently completing her degree in ESL Education from Northwestern College in St. Paul, Minnesota.

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