Creativity Based Instruction in the EFL Classroom
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The Urgency for Equivalent Reform to a Rapidly Growing Diverse Population of ELLs in Ohio
Ohio TESOL Board

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Advisory Board - Non-Voting Members

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Committees

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Dear Ohio TESOL Members and Journal Readers,

Greetings! I’d like to introduce myself as the 2017 Ohio TESOL President. It is my pleasure to serve in this capacity, and work with the dedicated executive and advisory board that makes our conference, journal, and support services possible.

I have worked as an ESL educator in both K-12 and higher education for the past seven years. Just this past year, I decided to embark upon a new journey, and entered the world of education publishing as a manager of curriculum development at McGraw-Hill Education. I have the opportunity to work with international clients and a global team, using TESL expertise and ongoing professional development opportunities to enrich my work. I miss the classroom, but enjoy the behind the scenes work as well.

Our 2016 president, Dave Brauer, will now serve as Past President and continue to be involved within the Ohio TESOL organization in an advisory role. The 2017 board also consists of new members for the following positions:
- Erica Dunn of Pickerington Schools will now serve as the First Vice President
- Nathan Reiter of ESC Central Ohio will be joining as Second Vice President
- Emily Williams of Sycamore Community Schools in Cincinnati will serve as one of the K-12 interest section representatives
- Sharon Underwood, an independent contractor providing ESL teacher training will serve as the interest section representative for Teacher Education and Research
- Aaron Schwartz of Ohio University will serve as our new Webmaster

If you’re interested in learning about ways to get involved with Ohio TESOL, please contact us at ohiotesol@gmail.com

2016 Conference Highlights and 2017 Save the Date

Our 2016 conference, themed Success for All Students, provided many learning opportunities to advance your knowledge on emerging trends, and research-based suggestions to enhance the work in the classroom and beyond. You helped us achieve another successful conference, and in return, we are optimistic that your choice to attend was rewarding and inspiring.

Our keynote speaker, Alba Ortiz of the University of Texas at Austin, shared keys to ensuring success of English learners. She presented a framework for addressing the many issues ELs face.

Our featured speaker, Jin Stearns, shared his life’s journey as an orphan from South Korea in his book Lost Seoul, which will be produced as a feature film in the upcoming year. The movie trailer can be viewed on YouTube.

Over 800 teachers and administrators attended, and we hope to attract even more this year with a later date. The 2017 conference will be held Friday and Saturday, October 27-28 at the Greater Columbus Convention Center. Mark your calendars!

Updates
- Shortly after the conference, the Seal of Biliteracy passed. It should be active for the 2017-18 school year.
- Be on the lookout for the 2017 Call for Proposals this spring.
- Keith Folse, a best-selling author and well-known TESOL expert, will give our 2017 Keynote. Learn more about Keith at www.keithfolse.com.
- Follow us on Social Media for up-to-date professional development offerings, important deadlines, and updates from the board.

Sincerely,
Lejla B. Maley
Dear Readers,

This issue reaches you as the weather warms and schools and universities across the state ramp up for state testing and finals. Before you get immersed in the assessment and grading cycle, we hope that you will have a look at this spring’s issue.

As usual we have a variety of articles for you to peruse. In this issue we have three advocacy pieces that we’re very excited about. Dr. Ammar Al-Sharafi’s article calls for the reform of K-12 teachers education in order to prepare all teachers to work with ELLs. Ellen Adornetto discusses how The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) addresses and supports ELLs. Dr. Olga Shonia writes about her experiences working with Community Refugee and Immigration Service (CRIS), a Columbus-based resettlement agency. We also have two book reviews one submitted by Dr. Tim Micek regarding Custodio’s (2017) publication entitled Educating students with interrupted formal education: Bridging where they are and what they need; and the other by Brenna R. Seifried regarding Shapiro, Farrelly & Tomaš’ (2014) book entitled Fostering International Student Success in Higher Education. We also have an interesting reflection presented by Nicole King and Jackie Ridley which discusses their transition from their K-12 classrooms into the world of higher education as doctoral students attending Ohio State University. Under the field of primary research, we have Samara Murtagh and Azzah Alzahrani. Samara Murtagh’s study, situated in a classroom in Thailand, reminds us how important Creativity Based Instruction is on motivating student participation and learning. While Azzah Alzahrani’s article presents her research in an adult ELP classroom and illustrates the importance of pre-during-post reading strategies for the development of successful readers. Finally, we have an excellent lesson plan idea from Fernanda Wilmes, Katherine Gadd and Felichia Lenzy that uses grammar to help ELLs create authentic story lines. I hope you will enjoy reading all of the articles as much as we did!

We would like to remind and encourage readers to submit their own lesson plans, advocacy pieces, book reviews, district highlights and research in any of our interest sections which are: post-secondary/higher education, adult and refugee education, research/teacher education/applied linguistics, and K-12. We will be accepting submission and starting review for our fall issue by the time you receive this journal. Please make submissions to our on-line submission system located on the Ohio TESOL website under the journal’s drop-down box. If you would be interested in acting as a peer reviewer for the Ohio TESOL Journal please contact Dr. Fennema-Bloom at fennema-bloom@findlay.edu for further information.

Sincerely,

Dr. Jennifer Fennema-Bloom
Dr. Ivan Stefano
Creativity Based Instruction in the EFL Classroom

Samara M. Murtaugh

With the rise of English as a global language, many educational institutes are tunneling money into establishment of English programs (Jindathai, 2015, p. 1). This can especially be observed in Southeast Asia and the 2015 establishment of Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) Economic Community within which the ten member countries are working together to better serve their collective economies. The participating countries are now able to travel, invest, trade and work within any of the other ASEAN Economic Community countries which has led to greater job competition, as employers have a broader range in which to seek out potential employees (Wall Street English Thailand, 2014).

As English has been specified as the lingua franca for all AEC meetings (Jindathai, 2015, p. 1), the participating countries have begun to ramp-up their English competency. Unfortunately, when one looks at the money and time spent in English programs in comparison to English communication abilities coming out of said programs, the data is not favorable (Boonkit, 2010, p. 1). Looking specifically at Thailand, The Programme for International Assessment (PISA) ranked Thailand’s English competency skills as 50th out of 64 participating countries (Sedghi, et. al, 2014), and the English First English Proficiency Index (2011) ranked Thailand’s English as 12th out 14 Asian countries (EF EPI, 2011, p. 14).

Considering that English as a foreign language is a compulsory course within Thailand and how easily available English language tutoring is (Boonkit, 2010, p. 1), it’s a wonder that Thai people are not more proficient. Many speculations are given as to why Thai people cannot speak English better. Research suggests that there is a direct link between low English speaking skills in Thailand and the method of English instruction found in their schools’ common practice to utilize rote memorization and grammar drilling (Boonkit, 2010; Pawapatcharadom 2007). It seems that the traditional methods of teaching English in Thailand have resulted in students who may be able to copy grammatically correct sentences from the board, but are unable to produce English in a communicative, effective or meaningful way. Something needs to change.

The purpose of this case study is to examine the effects of creativity based instruction (CBI) to improve young L2 learners’ English communication abilities, specifically their speaking skills in one Thai classroom. The framework of CBI draws greatly upon Vygotskian theories of scaffolding and the concept that learning is a socialization process (Vygotsky, 1978, pp. 33-36), as well as Vygotsky’s belief that young language learners need a “mediating system” in which to make meaning of language learned before producing it (Vygotsky, 1971, p. 83). The creative arts used in the classroom will work as said mediating system—providing a bridge from language unlearned to language learned (Vygotsky, 1971, p. 83).

Read’s (2015) Seven pillars of creativity in primary ELT are:
1. “Build Self-Esteem”
2. Model Creativity Yourself
3. Offer Choices
4. Use Questions Effectively
5. Make Connections
6. Explore Ideas
7. Encourage Critical Reflection” (p. 30-35)

also play an important role in creativity based instruction. Teachers who embrace a CBI approach to teaching would be sure to:
1) create an environment of building student self-esteem; 2) model creativity; 3) offer students a choice of materials and media; 3) use questions to draw out student thinking; 4) make connections with other subject matter; 5) allow the students to explore their own ideas when working classroom tasks; and 6) reflect on their own completed work. Thus, CBI in this context is defined as EFL instruction that moves away from the traditional classroom model of teacher led, explicit instruction, towards a student focused classroom that incorporates storytelling, the creative arts, authentic materials and dynamic tasks into every class period. It fosters a safe, low-stress learning environment allowing students to make meaning of the language being learned at their own pace, while simultaneously encouraging the flow of creativity.
Methodology

While research has been conducted showing the benefits of using creativity in core curriculum classrooms (Ruppert, 2006; Spina, 2006), very little has been done exploring the effectiveness of creativity within the EFL classroom. Therefore, this case study sets out to investigate and answer the following questions:

RQ 1: To what extent does CBI enhance students’ English speaking for communication skills?
RQ 2: What are the students’ reaction to CBI?
RQ 3: What are the students’ perceptions of their own English communication skills before and after implementation?

Research Site and Participants

The case study took place in a level four English class at an elementary school in Hang Dong, Chiang Mai, Thailand. Seventeen students (ten male and seven female), comprising the level 4 classroom, participated in this study. Due to the ability grouping practiced at this school, the participants ranged from grade 3 (8 years old) to grade 6 (14 years old). The teacher taught specifically designed lessons implementing CBI in the classroom over a seven-week period (56 hours of instruction), with the participants receiving instruction twice a week for four hours/week. The activities included in the curriculum incorporated the ideas of Vygotsky (1962, 1971, 1978) and Read’s (2015) seven pillars of creativity and included the students designing and constructing their own board game. Members of the English speaking community participated in classroom instruction by leading workshops that included knowledge necessary to foster creativity (e.g. how to take a good photograph, storytelling, drawing, etc.).

Data Collecting Tools

Pre/Post Assessments and Rubrics. In order to answer research question 1, the participants speaking skills were assessed at the beginning of CBI unit and again at the end. The participants were assessed by the completion of two speaking tasks. To measure the participants’ ability to direct, narrate and inform, the students were asked to complete a ‘how to’ demonstration for the class and in order to measure the participants’ ability to elicit information, they were required to ask follow-up questions at the end of their peers’ demonstrations.

In order to assess the participants’ English speaking for communication, a rubric was created following Hughes’ (1989) framework. The rubric assessed the participants’ L2 English pronunciation, grammar, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension within the specified functions. For inter-rater reliability, the researcher, along with a trained colleague, scored the students’ demonstrations and follow-up questions, giving the students’ the mean of the two raters scores.

Student Interviews. In order to answer research questions 2 and 3, students were interviewed at the end of the pre/post-assessments, as well as at week 4 and at week 6 of the unit of instruction. The student interviews were facilitated by the researcher, with a Thai colleague present in order to allow the students to answer their L1, Thai. The interviews were recorded, translated and then transcribed.

Field Notes. The researcher began taking field notes (observing the students’ use of L2 in the classroom, behaviors and willingness to participate in activities) seven weeks prior to the treatment period in order to give comparison data. The researcher continued taking field notes during the seven-week treatment period.

Results

The results are presented in the following order: pre/post-assessment results, students’ reactions to CBI and finally, students’ perceptions of their own English speaking abilities.

Outcome 1

Pre/Post-Assessment English Speaking. The participants average English speaking scores increased in a statistically significant way over the course of the unit of instruction from 13.79 to 24.42 (out of 30 possible points) as seen in the table below. These results show that CBI does, in fact, enhance the English speaking for communication abilities among the participating learners.

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Outcome 2

**Students’ Reactions to CBI (field notes).** The field notes show that there was a visible change in the student engagement during the CBI unit of instruction. The research noted that prior to the unit, the students were quiet and docile, often saying they understood what was being explicitly taught, but were unable to produce any language. With the initiation of CBI into the classroom, the researcher noted that the classroom became a much noisier place, as the students became more engaged in the classroom activities and began expressing themselves much more freely.

**Students’ Reactions to CBI (student interviews).** The participants were interviewed four times over the course of the CBI unit, through a process of thematic coding three main themes were found among the students’ answers: “Preference”, “Community” and “Authentic Tasks”.

**Preference.** Unanimously, the participants mentioned that English class became fun. While fun is not always the main point of learning, in this instance we can see that the use of CBI in the classroom did create an atmosphere that was enjoyable for the learners. While the participants were having fun with the community members or creating their board game, they are unaware of the stress associated with L2 learning. Moreover, ten of the 17 participating students brought up appreciating the different input method used by the researcher during the treatment period, as well as the ample amounts of speaking practice allowed in the class. Students reflected that while they didn’t always understand everything that was being read aloud from the novel or being said by the visiting community members, they enjoyed being able to hear English all the time and the exposure to the new words. The students innately understood the value of being able to listen to and practice speaking English regularly in the classroom.

**Community.** More than half of the participants mentioned that they enjoyed working in groups and learning from one another. Students consistently made mention of activities and in-class opportunities to work with and learn from peers.

**Authentic Tasks.** Thirteen of the 17 participants mentioned appreciating the authentic tasks that are at the core of CBI. Students said that they enjoyed the fact that they were using real materials and not just flashcards and worksheets. One student mentioned feeling very valued that the teacher bought all the requested materials for their board game, regardless of how obscure they were. This student said that the teachers interest in fulfilling their desires, showed his that she really cared.

**Summary.** Clearly the participants reacted positively to CBI. Participants became excited, participatory learners. The students spoke favorably about the authentic materials and real world activities used within CBI. Students saw the value in the authentic input they received and the opportunities to practice communicating through English.

Outcome 3

**Student perceptions of their own English speaking abilities.** At the beginning of the CBI unit the majority of the participants made mention of their poor English speaking skills, saying things like, “my English is bad” or “I can’t speak and I don’t know what to say”. When asked to rate their speaking skills on a scale 1-5 (one being very poor, five being excellent), during the first set of interviews 14/17 participants rated their English speaking at a 3 or lower, making comments like, “I am a three because I am not good at speaking, but I can understand a little bit”.

By the final set of interviews, however, the students made comments about having increased confidence, that their English had improved and that they feel proud of themselves and all that they accomplished. When asked to rate their English speaking abilities during the last interview, only five of the 17 participants scored themselves as a 3 or lower—compared to the 14 at the beginning of the treatment period. This means that 12/17 participants gave themselves a 4 or a 5 on the scale; five of the students believed their English speaking abilities had increased two whole points over the CBI unit of instruction.

Discussion

The results from this case study indicate that CBI enhances young L2 learners’ English communication skills, as well as, increases students’ perceptions of their own English speaking abilities—creating more confident L2 English speakers. Knowing that EFL is a compulsory course in all Thai schools, starting as early as grade one (Boonkit, 2010, p. 1) and that Thai people’s L2 English skills lag far behind that of their ASEAN counterparts (Wall Street English Thailand, 2014), something is wrong. As the poor speaking abilities of Thai people can be linked to the method of L2 English instruction used in the classroom, it’s time for change – this research points to another option. CBI not only enhances the learning experience for the students, but also works in producing confident English speakers.
Taking into account young L2 learners are not exposed to English outside of the classroom, it is the responsibility of the English teacher to create an environment where learning is not only enjoyable, but also stimulating and possible. CBI does just this, while setting the foundation that English is fun and success is accessible.

**Conclusion**

This case study shows that incorporating creativity by means of implementing CBI methodology into the L2 classroom not only increased participants’ motivation to learn, but also enabled them to be more successful English language learners. CBI as a methodology may hold the key to sparking student interest and a desire to learn by unlocking the English potential in classrooms across Thailand.

Samara Murtaugh (sunshinesamara@msn.com) is a Master’s student at Payap University currently teaching at School of Promise and Chiang Mai University in Chiang Mai Thailand.

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**References**


Educating Students with Interrupted Formal Education: Bridging Where They Are and What They Need

Tim Micek


Educating Students With Interrupted Formal Education: Bridging Where They Are and What They Need is a book about the increasing number of students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) in the US. The work is aimed mostly at P-12 teachers who work with SIFE, but others, including teacher educators, would benefit from it. The book’s purpose is to explain who SIFE are and how teachers may help them to succeed in US classrooms.

Educating [SIFE] is divided into five chapters plus an appendix with glossary and bibliography. In Chapter 1, Custodio and O’Loughlin argue that SIFE are increasing in the US and that they pose “a significant challenge” to educators, both in ESL and mainstream classes. The authors also define SIFE, describe how SIFE are classified as such, and document related matters: immigration trends, countries from which SIFE come, and school districts affected by their presence. They also explore how SIFE differ from typical newcomers and make recommendations for working with them. In Chapter 2, Latinos with Interrupted Education, Custodio and O’Loughlin point out that, by far, the largest percentage of SIFE comes from Latin America. They also look at relevant economic and educational conditions in the countries from which SIFE come and address challenges to academic success that these students face. In Chapter 3, Unique Issues of Refugee Children, the authors point out that each year, the US resettles about 70,000 refugees, most of whom have had few opportunities to get an education. They describe both the refugee experience and the resettlement process. They also make suggestions for helping SIFE in terms of “cultural adjustment, literacy development, and socio-psychological support.” In Chapter 4, Providing Social and Emotional Support: Developing Resilient Students, Custodio and O’Loughlin define resilience, discuss the effect of environmental and educational factors on the success of SIFE, and suggest ways to build resilient learners using a research-based set of guidelines. In Chapter 5, Providing Academic Support: Programming and Curriculum for SIFE, the authors focus on “the unique learning challenges” of SIFE. They also (1) discuss programs designed for “basic literacy and content area skill development” and (2) recommend scheduling and curricula that meet the needs of SIFE.

Educating [SIFE] has many strengths. The definitions, descriptions, and explanations provide an excellent introduction to, or review of, SIFE. The chapter on Latinos provides information about the largest linguistic minority in the US, and the chapter on refugee children similar information about that population. The discussion of resilience has resonance throughout TESOL—and education, for that matter. Finally, Chapter 5 has many ideas and resources for supporting SIFE. It is difficult to find a weakness in the work.

Custodio and O’Loughlin provide a thorough yet focused discussion of SIFE and what teachers can do to support them. Their text is recommended for those who work with these students and for those who prepare them to do so.

Tim Micek is Associate Professor, Division of Education, and Director, MATESOL, at Ohio Dominican University in Columbus, Ohio. His research interests include program administration and development, clinical supervision, professional dispositions, and reflective practice.
Ask a room full of conference attendees their opinions of the recently passed federal education law, The Every Student Succeed Acts (ESSA) and they may groan anticipating more federal requirements and mandates. But ask the same room of professionals for a list of wants and needs to support their students’ success and be prepared for the strong voices of passionate educators!

ESSA, ESSA, NCLB
ESSA is the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) passed in 1965 by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The ESEA law, keeping in step with the civil rights era, established federal funding to ensure equitable access for low income students to quality education across the nation. Most educators today recognize this funding stream as ‘entitlements’ or ‘Title I, Title II, Title III’, etc.

Further reauthorizations of ESEA have structured the availability, use and accountability of these federal funds within a variety of approaches, most notably The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2002. ESSA represents a solid shift away from NCLB’s federal requirements and mandates and instead creates the opportunity for states and local communities to make the important decisions regarding the quality of their educational systems.

In 1965, federal funding spoke solely to students of poverty. However subsequent civil rights victories such as Lau and Plyer helped expand federal funding to include the needs of additional students including English Language Learners. ESSA continues this expansion by identifying and including the populations of Homeless Youth and Children of US Active Military.

Since the bipartisan support and passage of ESSA in December of 2015, each state has been developing their plan for submission and approval by the United States Secretary of Education, along with considering existing state policy and anticipating needed procedural shifts. Concurrently, a multitude of groups including TESOL International Association, Ohio TESOL, Lau Center and the Ohio Education Association (OEA) have sought to inform stakeholders (students, parents, educators, communities) of ESSA’s opportunities.

WANTS, NEEDS or BOTH
Again, ask about federal law and responses may be few. Ask trained TESOL professionals which needs and wants are needed to support their students’ success and their expertise flows. Some might consider ‘wants’ as desirable extras and ‘needs’ as must haves. But with the varied support of English Learners across Ohio, it was not surprising wants and needs frequently overlapped.

Time Spent on Testing: Educators stated they wanted less testing and needed more time with their students. Not only was less testing mentioned, but also the issue of determining when these tests would ‘count.’ TESOL teachers want their students to have “daily support” and need “time to meet with them daily.” Their ability to meet with students daily was also connected to a need for increased staffing levels.

ESSA provides multiple opportunities to reduce time spent testing students. States are able to use federal funds to conduct testing audits to identify overlap and reduce the number of required grade/topic level assessments. Additionally, states can consider replacing multiple end of course exams with a nationally recognized assessment. Less testing means more time with students.
Quality Training to Meet EL Student Needs – TESOL educators want their regular classroom colleagues to have professional development opportunities which share EL techniques and strategies. Comments included “Districts should support PD training for ELs” and “TESOLs need training too!” In the new law, federal legislators strengthened the definition of quality professional development and the importance of its availability to all educators. Based upon Ohio’s Professional Learning Standards, TESOL and classroom educators should be receiving professional learning opportunities which are pertinent to each teacher’s needs. Educators can use Ohio’s standards to gauge the quality of trainings they receive. Lastly, ESSA requires evidence based interventions be selected and used.

Technology – While technology is usually not covered by federal funding, it is worth mentioning teacher responses on this topic. Did educators ask for 1 to 1 devices, commercial language programs in every language and state of the art computers? No. While some did want Kindles for students, others made the disparity of EL programming in Ohio apparent by needing “enough pencils, paper and EL materials for the students” in addition to “a classroom to work in.”

A Community of Collaboration – TESOL professionals overwhelming commented on the want and need for collaboration across the educational community. They need the support of their administrators, teacher colleagues and central staff “for a better understanding of the needs of ESL.” Collaboration needs to help “parents to be empowered and equipped to be part of their child’s education.” The opportunity to collaborate is embedded in ESSA. The law requires the engagement of community stakeholders in both the development of the state plan and any intervention which is required at the district or building level. No longer are plans to be implemented, but instead created by the members of the local educational community (students, parents, educators).

Since the inception in 1965 of federal funding, education and our communities have undergone noticeable changes. Testifying to these changes, a teacher shared the heartfelt comment, “I need educators to be culturally open-minded and responsive.”

The desire of TESOL professionals to see their students succeed and enjoy a well-rounded education, another provision of ESSA, is strong. One teacher envisioned ‘I want my students to have chances to participate in extra-curricular and/or sports.” While another stated “I want my students to feel successful and not discouraged by the tests results.”

Ms. Adornetto is an Education Policy and Practice Consultant as part of the Ohio Education Association. Her current work areas encompass The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the Ohio Teacher Evaluation System (OTES) including performance measures based upon the Ohio Educator Standards and the various student growth measures including Value Added and Student Learning Objectives (SLOs). From 1991 through 2012, Ms. Adornetto was a classroom teacher for the West Muskingum Local Schools in Southeast Ohio. There, she was both a classroom and Interventionist teacher, Teacher Mentor, Adult Volunteer Trainer and she chaired the Local Professional Development Committee. Ms. Adornetto obtained Master Teacher status in 2012. She is a trained Reading Recovery teacher, holds a k-12 Reading Endorsement, received her M.A. in Reading from the Ohio State University and her B.S. in Education from Ohio University. She is currently working towards completion of her TESOL endorsement as she is passionate surrounding the needs of English Learners in Ohio.

References


Shapiro, Farrelly, and Tomaš’ recent book, *Fostering International Student Success in Higher Education* (2014) provides a clear, easily-accessible introduction to strategies for supporting international students for content area faculty. It also explores “ways to empower international students to contribute fully to our communities” (p.8). Through suggested instructional practices rooted in their experience and in research, the authors “build on what teachers already know and do” (p. 6).

*Fostering International Student Success in Higher Education* is divided into five chapters: The Role of Culture, Applying the Principles of Second Language Acquisition, Assignments and Assessment, and Empowerment of International Students. The book additionally contains an extensive list of resources as an appendix that may be developed and adapted by faculty members for use in their classrooms, including ideas for assessment, assignments, and classroom practice.

The book’s main strength lies in its concise nature. It may be easily read in a few uninterrupted hours, or implemented in a series of faculty development workshops. The authors’ emphasis on inclusivity and supporting the needs of all students, regardless of national origin, is a laudable one. The appendices give an accessible starting point for those seeking easily integrated activities which would be attractive to content-area faculty members with little time to do exhaustive research in this area.

All in all, Shapiro, et al.’s book on strategies for student success achieves the goal of introducing academic faculty members to pedagogical “tweaks” that can inform their practice and lead to more successful outcomes for the international students in their courses.

Brenna R. Seifried is the Program Coordinator for the University of Dayton English Language Institute (UDEL). She enjoys linguistic hijinks, urban gardening, and travel.

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### 2017 Ohio TESOL Awards

**Ohio TESOL Excellence in Teaching Award:** This award honors an Ohio TESOL member who is considered by colleagues to be an excellent teacher.

**George Hertrich Service Award:** This award acknowledges outstanding service to Ohio TESOL, contributions to the professionalism of our membership, and dedication to furthering the ideals of TESOL.

**Ohio TESOL Lifetime Achievement Award:** This award honors an Ohio TESOL member who has made a significant contribution to the field of TESOL through research, publication, leadership, public service, or by assuming an active role in educational advocacy.

The deadline for all nominations is September 15, 2017.

### 2017 Ohio TESOL Grants

**Travel Grants**

**Ohio TESOL Travel Grant:**
Deadline: September 1, 2017

**International TESOL Travel Grant:**
Deadline: December 31, 2017

**Marcie Williams International Travel Grant:**
Deadline is 45 days before the conference activity

**Professional Development Grants**

**PD Adult and Higher Ed Grant:**
Deadline is 45 days before the PD activity

**PD Pre K-12 Grant:**
Deadline is 45 days before the PD activity

More details on each award and grant along with the online forms can be found on the Ohio TESOL website under Awards, Grants, and Professional Development or by contacting the Awards and Grants Committee Chairs: Emily Williams eawohio@gmail.com or Brooke Leach Grable brookleachgrable@gmail.com.
Reading Strategies that Second Language Students Use to be Successful Readers

Azzah Alzahrani

Academic researchers have found that there is a strong correlation between reading and academic success. In other words, students who read are more likely to succeed in school than those who do not read. Indeed, Kim and Goetz (1995) described reading as a complex cognitive process in which readers construct meaning through interactions with the text. Because reading is a complex process, many students find it difficult to read for specific purposes or find reading to be a time-consuming task.

As I noticed through many informal course observations in an Intensive English Program (IEP) at a comprehensive university in northwest Ohio, many students lack good reading skills. They might start reading immediately, depend heavily on the dictionaries to figure out the meaning of the new words, read the whole text and thus take a longer time, etc. All these observations demonstrate that students do not exploit the use of reading strategies. Nevertheless, most of the English language institutes and schools teach various reading strategies to the language learners.

Methodology

This study explored the most effective reading strategies used by students to help them be successful readers. It also sheds light on the strategies that are taught in an IEP at a comprehensive university in northwest Ohio. 30 ELLs participated in this study. They responded to a questionnaire that investigated the types of reading strategies they employ. In addition, two ESL reading instructors were interviewed. They reflected on the reading strategies they teach, their views of what constitutes successful readers, and how they prepare their students to read new materials. The results of the study will help both teachers and students become aware of the importance of using appropriate reading strategies that best assist ELLs in reading comprehension.

Results

Using the reading process:

The survey results showed that students who rated themselves high use reading strategies more than students who rated themselves as low readers. The highest mean recorded in eight out of ten questions regarding reading strategies was for students who highly rated themselves. Also, students use during reading strategies more than the pre and post-reading strategies. Of the 30 students who completed the survey, an average of 7 students reported that they always use pre-reading strategies. The average number of students who reported that they always use the during-reading strategies is 7.5. An average of only 4.33 students reported they always use post-reading strategies. However, based on the teacher interviews, teachers teach students strategies according to the three stages of the reading process. Instructor B stated that s/he asks students to read through the title, the subtitles, the abstract, the conclusion, and know any key words. S/he also asks them to write down their predictions about what they are going to read, what they know about the topic, and what they want to get from the reading. During reading, s/he teaches them annotating, skimming, scanning, asking questions, making predictions, and highlighting any unknown vocabulary words to figure out these words based on context clues. Instructor B believed that her/his students use the strategies on their own. When they read articles, some of them claim that they highlight vocabulary, scan, skim, ask questions, etc. Based on these findings, there is a disconnect between the strategies instructors teach their students and the ones students actually employ.

Recommendations for teachers

Some researchers believe that the lack of using appropriate reading strategies may lead to the lack of comprehending a text. This may explain why students think that they are low readers or struggling readers. Because they do not employ reading strategies or they only use them during-reading, they may not fully comprehend the text. The survey showed that some students use post-reading strategies less than during-reading strategies. An average of 4.33 of students reported that they always use post-reading strategies, while an average of 7.5 reported that they always use the during-reading strategies. These students do not allow time to think beyond the lines. The reading process does not end only by reaching the end of the text. Rather, Paris,
Wasik and Turner (1996) found that good readers continue checking their understanding of a text by reviewing pre-reading expectations, reviewing notes and information, reflecting on text understanding, etc. (as cited in Lijuan & Kaur, 2014). Indeed, students need to employ at least one strategy in each stage of the reading process (Lijuan & Kaur, 2014). Hence, they are able to discard strategies that do not help them to understand text and substitute them with different ones (Mokhtari & Sheorey, 2002). Therefore, ESL teachers should encourage students to employ these strategies in every reading class. Teachers can keep a list of reading strategies (image #1) to help them through the reading lesson. Teacher can choose some strategies to employ and model with every reading text. For example, in one reading text, instructors may assess prior knowledge, check comprehension through reading activities, and/or discuss pre-reading expectations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pre-reading strategies</th>
<th>While-reading strategies</th>
<th>Post-reading strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Establishing a good physical environment.</td>
<td>Checking comprehension throughout the reading activity.</td>
<td>Appreciation of text and writer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Setting reading purpose</td>
<td>Identifying the main idea.</td>
<td>Revisit pre-reading expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Previewing the text: examining headings, pictures, title, etc.</td>
<td>Predicting the main idea of each paragraph.</td>
<td>Elaborate and evaluate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Identifying text structure and genre.</td>
<td>Comparing what is read with what is known.</td>
<td>Apply new information to the task at hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Determining what is known about the topic.</td>
<td>Evaluating value of what is being learned.</td>
<td>Relate the text to own experience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Predicting what might be read.</td>
<td>Rereading text or skipping a head.</td>
<td>Critique the text.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


In addition, teachers can provide students with “The reading strategy I use chart” (image #2) to encourage students to use one strategy from the three stages of reading process and write it down in the chart. Gradually, students will figure out what reading strategies work best for them and help them comprehend the text. These strategies will eventually become reading skills.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The strategy I use:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Text title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Image #2: “The reading strategy I use chart” for students.

Moreover, teachers may create focused mini lessons where they briefly teach students reading strategies. Later, students will be able to relate these smaller lessons to the larger texts they read independently. For instance, teachers may use the following passage and lesson plan at the beginning of a class to teach summarizing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson topic:</th>
<th>Summarizing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Connection:</td>
<td>Last time we the story of the turtle and the rabbit and we learned how to find meaning using context clues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching point:</td>
<td>Today, I will teach you how to summarize the story using a number of key words from what you read. Remind students that “Summary is a brief statement of the main idea and the supporting details.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstration:</td>
<td>Find the most important 20 key word from the story that help to write a good summary. (owl, wise, turtle, rabbit, challenge, bragging, race, run, fast, speed, route, rest, lie down, hill, nap, slow, cheer, reach, goal, win). To summarize a story, consider the use of the connectors of sequence such as first, second, then, next, after that, and finally. Write few sentences on the board.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active engagement:</td>
<td>Have students complete the summary and write three sentences using the last four key words (cheer, reach, goal, win).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Link:</td>
<td>Encourage students to read short stories and try to write short sentences summarizing the story.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Image #3: Mini lesson plan for teaching summarizing strategy.

### The Turtle and the Rabbit

I’m a very wise bird, an owl, but even I did not think my friend the turtle could win a race. Here is the story.

One day, the rabbit was boasting of his speed. “I have never yet been beaten,” said he, “when I put forth my full speed. I challenge any one here to race with me. I am the best.” He was hopping up and down.

The turtle said quietly, “I accept your challenge. I am tired of your bragging. I am confident that I can beat you.” The turtle looked around with her sleepy eyes and saw that the other animals were smiling.

“That is a good joke,” said the rabbit. “I could dance around you all the way. You will never speed past me!”

“Keep your boasting till you’ve beaten me,” answered the turtle. “Shall we race? I know that I can defeat you.”

So they set a route for the race. It went through hills and rocky paths. It had rained, so the rocks were slippery.

They were off! The rabbit darted speedily almost out of sight at once, but soon stopped to rest. He believed that the turtle could never catch him. “I’m going to lie down by some bushes at the top of this hill to have a nap,” he said to himself. The turtle kept racing, slowly but surely on his way to the goal.

Then a noise woke the rabbit from his nap. The snail and frog and other animals were all cheering loudly. He saw the turtle was near the finish line. The rabbit ran as fast as he could, but it was too late. He saw the turtle had reached the goal. He was very surprised. He had never lost a race.

“Ha, ha,” I said. “I knew that my friend would win. The turtle is strong and steady. You are fast, but you didn’t think about how hard the turtle would try. I knew he would try harder than you. I know a lot. That’s why people say owls are wise birds.” The other animals smiled.

Then the rabbit said, “I have learned a lesson today.”


This mini lesson allows the instructor to teach students how to summarize a passage in a simple way. It helps students understand and apply this strategy in a short period of time. With more mini lessons, such as this, students will have the opportunity to learn more strategies that they can employ when they read.
Another valuable resource is using KWL chart “Know, Want to know, Learned.” This technique is especially helpful for beginning learners as it encourages them to use prior knowledge and personal curiosity while reading a text (image #5). It also encourages them to use pre and post-reading strategies in an interesting and innovative way.

Image #5 (Lory, 2012): KWL chart

Using this chart, students can write down the topic of the reading text. Before reading, they will write what they already know about the topic and what they want to know. After reading, they will write what they learned from the text. This technique encourages students to use pre and post-reading strategies. It activates their prior knowledge and can be a great assessment of what they have learned.

**Conclusion**

This study investigated the reading strategies students use to be successful readers. The results showed that: 1) highly self-rated students use reading strategies and read for pleasure more than students who self-rate themselves as low readers, 2) students use during-reading strategies more than the other two strategies, and 3) some students have bad reading habits which may impact their reading comprehension. Based on the results, the researcher provided some recommendations for ESL teachers to increase success in reading.

Azzah Hassan Alzahrani is a December 2016 graduate of the University of Findlay MA TESOL program. She earned her BA in English Language and Literature through the University of Dammam. She has experience in teaching English (EFL) to K-12 and worked as a teacher assistant in the University of Findlay Intensive English Program. She looks forward to work in one of the top ranked universities in Saudi Arabia.

**References**


OHIO TESOL JOURNAL -- Volume 9, Number 1
Integration of refugees is complex. It is broadly defined as a “multidirectional process in which newcomers and the receiving communities intentionally work together, based on a shared commitment to tolerance and justice, to create a secure, welcoming, vibrant, and cohesive society” (Brown, Gilbert, & Losby, 2007).

Therefore, integration is a multi-dimensional process often measured through an array of tangible benchmarks on the one hand, like securing a job, earning an income, homeownership, acquiring citizenship, and, on the other, by more psychological, emotional benchmarks, like sense of belonging to a community or ability to retain cultural, religious, or linguistic ties with their countries of origin while living in the United States. It is also a multi-generational and multi-player process, involving refugee family members, children, as well as community members and institutions joining their efforts in assuring success of integration efforts (Newland, Tanaka, & Barker, 2007). Welcome teams can play an important, albeit often unseen, role in this process.

Refugees should not be alone in their efforts to integrate into American society, and at the community level there are increasing opportunities to join this important cause. By sharing the experience of working as a part of a welcome team for a family of refugees in the Columbus area, I hope to increase awareness of these meaningful opportunities to volunteer one’s time and resources while assuring effective transition for the newly arrived families. Additionally, a significant outcome of this volunteer experience and community connection has been a University-Agency partnership for service learning opportunities that we are looking to develop for our students and faculty.

The family with whom we worked, arrived through a Columbus-based resettlement agency CRIS: Community Refugee and Immigration Services. A representative from CRIS had met with the members of our welcome team to describe the process, policies and expectations of this commitment prior to our assignment to a family. At that initial meeting we were also provided with a list of items from the Welcome Kit packet that we started to collect before our assigned family’s arrival.

CRIS’ vision of a Welcome Team describes it as a group of 6-12 people who “partner with CRIS to assist newly arrived refugees to become self-sufficient as soon as possible and integrate into their new communities” (CRIS, 2016). Welcome Teams are encouraged to make a 90 day commitment to the family with whom they are paired. CRIS professionals assist the members of a welcome team by providing instruction, information, and advice on an ongoing basis. Requirements for the team members include: a 90-day commitment, FBI background checks, clean driving record and a completed Community Group Commitment Form found on their website: http://www.crisohio.org/welcome-teams (CRIS, 2016).

As you may consider becoming a member of a welcome team, here are some of the specific activities in which one can expect to be involved. Examples include: setting up the apartment for your assigned family before they arrive in the country, picking them up from the airport, preparing or ordering their first meal on the day they arrive, collecting welcome kit items, assisting your family with transportation, getting around the city for important appointments (e.g., government agencies, such as getting their Social Security card, medical and school related appointments, etc.) CRIS case workers will take care of many logistics, such as finding the apartment, getting in contact with furniture banks as well as setting up appointments to apply for government issued IDs, enroll in schools, thus you, too, as a volunteer, feel supported in this process.
Due to time constraints, my personal level of involvement was not as comprehensive as some of my other team members’, especially that of our two team leaders’. Time is definitely of a consideration moving forward, something to be aware of as you are putting together a welcome team. We were extremely lucky to have a strong, committed leadership in ours, who made it anything but formal (e.g., taking the family on trips to the Zoo, trick-or-treating, celebrating birthdays, visiting them after the birth of their child). It is because of their commitment, the relationship the team developed with the family had become deeply personal, extending beyond the 90 days of the expected initial commitment.

When we ‘help’, it is truly a question: who is it we really end up helping? I know for sure, the learning with which I am walking away from this experience has been deeply transformative. It was inspirational to see the drive, dedication and hard work of the refugee family I was privileged to meet, as well as learn from the devoted group of CRIS colleagues and my team members along the way. As a result, I have a better understanding and further appreciation for the work of non-profit organizations and resettlement agencies, such as CRIS. This experience has fostered my knowledge of what resettlement and transition process may look like from within for the families involved, and how community members can play a role in its facilitation. Such situational learning and informed perspective is instrumental in my praxis as an educator. As a result of this experience and sharing the story, multiple ways have been identified for broader community and college students to get involved with assisting refugee families in their transition period - e.g., becoming conversation partners, “sponsoring a family” by helping them transition to life in Ohio, serving as a “welcome team”, organizing coat/book drives, etc. Pick yours.

If you or your institution is interested in getting involved, more information can be found at: http://www.crisohio.org/get-involved-2/. CRIS’ office is located at 1925 E Dublin-Granville Rd. Suite 102, Columbus, OH 43229; their phone number is 614-235-5747.

Olga N. Shonia is an Associate Professor and TESOL Endorsement Program Coordinator at Capital University in Columbus.

References
A Tale of Two Teachers: Learning from Both Sides of the Classroom

Nicole King and Jackie Ridley

The following is a reflection composed by two first-year doctoral students at The Ohio State University on their experience at this year’s Ohio TESOL conference. These responses are indicative of the tensions both writers experienced as they transitioned from their former roles as classroom teachers to their current positions as graduate students and emerging scholars. As evident in their reflections, even as their roles have changed over time, their interest and passion in ESL students and classrooms has only intensified.

Nicole’s A Visit to Ohio TESOL 2016: From Practice to Research

On October 7, 2016, I entered the familiar world of education conventions from a different perspective. After twelve years as a public educator, having attended multiple conventions and countless professional development workshops, both as a presenter and as an attendee, I returned to this teaching and learning setting as a first-year PhD student from OSU. The feelings which swirled were like a microcosm of the past three months and of the adjustment of transitioning from a teacher to a student. However, the difference in the experience was not solely limited to the emotions of a fragmented and reforming educator identity, but it was also reflective in the selection of the sessions I now knew I should attend.

The journey from the bus to the Greater Columbus Convention Center began before 7 A.M. on that brisk October morning. More than a year previously, I had begun to truly question the educational experiences of some of my elementary students. As a teacher certified in both special education and in teaching English to speakers of other languages, I provided both language and special education services to language learners who had been identified as having a special need, most frequently a specific learning disability or other health impairment. I frequently listened to general education teachers lament that they did not know how to teach or understand some of our students. As I watched my caseload grow, I realized that while I might be helping the students and teachers with whom I have direct contact, I was not impacting the experiences of so many other language learners who were being disproportionately referred and placed into special education. I could no longer be merely a sieve in this systemic problem. I realized it was time for me to venture backwards from practice to research to impact teacher education and policy decisions.

It is with this new, more global awareness of students, teachers, education, and policy that I entered the Ohio TESOL Conference. My journey back to research was cemented with the keynote speech of Alba Ortiz, whose life long support of bilingual students identified with special needs permeates research. Her efforts to develop and disseminate longitudinal assessments across contexts, to triangulate support of academic need, is essential to the future of all students. Drawing from her inspiration, I ventured to sessions on TESOL programming and teacher education, systemic functional linguistics, publishing, networking, and PhD candidate research. These selections went directly against the elementary classroom teacher in me, who wanted to attend sessions on content teacher collaboration, technology in the classroom, language and literacy development, and vocabulary development through songs.

However, the time for selection of sessions which enrich and enhance the four walls of a classroom, or even a school, to their greatest potential, have passed. The journey to influence teacher education and policy require knowledge, awareness, and curiosity of what lies beyond the doors of a school. This is my path now.

From Teacher to Researcher, From Practitioner to Emerging Scholar: Jackie’s Story

Leading up to this past fall, I’ve attend the Ohio TESOL conference in varying roles and capacities. I first attended as freshly minted ESL teacher, eager to gather practical strategies and instructional techniques I could readily apply to my classroom. Several years later, I returned as a presenter, poised and confident as I presented on the experience and insight I gained during my time in Thai-Burmese refugee camps. Finally, and most recently, this past October I attended Ohio TESOL 2016 in yet a new role still, that of an emerging scholar as I began my doctoral studies at The Ohio State University.

The change in my roles and purpose in my attendance at Ohio TESOL is emblematic of my personal and professional transition from teacher to researcher. Far from any attempt to “move on” or “move out” of teaching, my decision to leave the field...
for academy was grounded in my desire to inform the field and to go deeper into classroom best practices. During my time as an ESL teacher, my school experienced a huge increase in enrollment for refugee language learners. As classrooms became increasingly linguistically and culturally diverse, I watched as teachers grew increasingly anxious. Teachers who deeply desired to see their refugee students succeed repeatedly expressed feeling overwhelmed and ill-equipped in the face of the seemingly insurmountable needs these students bring to the classroom. This past fall, I began my doctoral studies eager to research the educational needs of refugee language learners, a pursuit that I hope will ultimately impact refugees and teachers in classrooms much like the one I left.

I attended the 2016 Ohio TESOL conference with the same interest and a new purpose. As a teacher, I had hoped to learn classroom activities and techniques. As an emerging scholar, I had to adjust my goals for attending, and attempted to focus on new developments in research and scholarship with regards to refugee ELLs. While I have embraced my position as a student and my new role in academia, I found I was still intrigued by the same topics and presentations I was as a classroom teacher. I constantly felt the tension of my dueling identities, that of teacher and researcher, practitioner and scholar.

The tension I experienced at Ohio TESOL is emblematic of the larger tension I've experienced in my transition from a teacher back to a student pursuing an advanced degree. As I've begun my studies, one of my constant struggles has been moving away from the immediately practical and into the abstract, the theoretical. At first, this felt counterproductive – the teacher in me questioned the value of pursuing anything that wasn’t inherently practical. How is anything that isn’t practical even worth pursuing? However, over time, I’ve learned the relationship between the practical and the theoretical, between the tangible and the abstract, is much more nuanced than I originally thought. I’ve learned that just as theory informs practice, practice has the potential to inform theory. Both are relevant and necessary as we explore the research (void) surrounding refugee ELLs.

A Time for Reflexivity

Questions of belonging, purpose, and learning continue to swirl in our minds as we think about our experience at the 2016 Ohio TESOL conference. The teachers we learned from and alongside over the course of those two days were encouraging examples of the type of educators we all hope our EL students will have - teachers who strive to learn every new and innovative approach they can to help their students learn just a little bit more. Listening to these teachers provides great guidance for what educational research could be and should be. Teachers are well acquainted with the multiple and competing factors impacting student progress, from assessments to changing standards, to diverse student needs and beyond. Inside every teacher is a pathway for a student to achieve success. The desire to broaden the pathway to a larger population of students may be a whisper in some of these teachers’ ears. If you feel the tug to learn across educational contexts, our experience is that the Ohio TESOL Conference provides a space for like-minded professionals who wish to learn from others in order to broaden the effectiveness and scope of their impact. May we all continue to work together - teachers and researchers, practitioners and scholars - to create the best experiences for our students.

Nicole King is a first year PhD student, studying Foreign, Second, and Multilingual Education, at The Ohio State University in the Department of Teaching in Learning. She is a former classroom teacher certified in special education, TESOL, and early childhood special education.

Jackie Ridley is a first-year doctoral student in the Foreign, Second, and Multilingual Education program at The Ohio State University. Jackie’s current research focuses on the English language development and literacy practices of young refugees, an area of interest born from her experience as an ESL teacher in Northeast Ohio and overseas in Thai-Burmese refugee camps. Jackie welcomes correspondence on issues related to refugee languages learners and can be reached via e-mail at ridley.33@osu.edu.

The call for proposals for the 2017 Conference is now open. Submit your proposal electronically at http://tinyurl.com/otesolg2017
Speakers of all languages are capable of creating and understanding an infinite set of sentences. Linguistically speaking, the purpose of this lesson activity is to teach high school aged students and adults how to recognize and use language utilizing five types of basic sentence structures. This can be taught to small group settings or to an entire class. Once these patterns are understood by the students they enable the students to identify the grammar in a written context and/or enabling the students to construct their own simple storylines.

**Five Sentence Structures:**
Subject = S; Verb = V; Complement = C; Object = O, Indirect Object = IO; Direct Object = DO

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type I</td>
<td>S + V</td>
<td>A girl laughed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type II</td>
<td>S + V + C</td>
<td>The boy is very active.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type III</td>
<td>S + V + O</td>
<td>The boy likes apples.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type IV</td>
<td>S + V + IO + DO</td>
<td>The girl bought me a ball.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type V</td>
<td>S + V + O + C</td>
<td>The girl makes me happy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Lesson Plan Procedures:**

Step 1: Depending on the level of the learners, teacher should explicitly teach the sentence structure(s) he or she wishes to use, providing rich examples of each of the chosen type(s). Teachers should explain: 1) that intransitive verbs use Type I and that transitive verbs use Type III; and 2) that complements used in sentence Type II (subject complements) behave differently from those in Type V (object complements).

Step 2: Teachers should provide a textual sample (sentence storyline) for the student (working independently or in small groups) to identify each sentence structure type. Topics we suggest are: grocery shopping, shopping for clothes at a mall, a day at the zoo or amusement park, the first day of class, and traveling to the United States. A storyline example of the five sentence structure types is given below.

Step 3: Teachers can choose a topic associate with a given unit within an EFL/ESL textbook or allow the students to choose a topic to construct their own stories using one or all of these Sentence Structure Types. They may do so individually or collaboratively in small groups.

**A Simple Sentence Story Example :**

**Sentence Structure Type I (S + V)**
Fernanda calls. Katherine smiles. Felichia laughs. We agree. We drive. We talk. We park. We walk. We see. We shop.

**Sentence Structure Type II (S+V+C)**
We are hungry. The vegetables look fresh. The broccoli is bright green. The carrots are crisp. Katherine is lost in the market. We search frantically. We are relieved to be reunited. A new plan was made. We feel better. We are ready to shop. We think fast. We need good potatoes.

**Sentence Structure Type III (S + V + O)**
Potatoes go with meat. Fernanda likes fish. She chooses salmon. Katherine prefers steak. She selects a filet. Felichia wants chicken. She picks the best piece. We will grill the meat. We look for charcoal. We find matches. We ask for lighter fluid. We look for the dairy section.

**Sentence Structure Type IV (S + V + IO + DO)**
The attendant shows us the dairy section. Fernanda finds us a cart. She makes us a list. Felichia gives her a coupon. Katherine hands her the eggs. Katherine brings her the blue cheese. Felichia passes her the butter. Katherine grabs Fernanda the parmesan cheese. Felichia gives her the milk. A cashier shows us the checkout lanes.
Sentence Structure Type V (S + V + O + C)

Conclusion:
Overall, teachers can provide guidelines, and examples that engage all students in diverse academic classrooms, community centers, or any English learning setting. We encourage you and your students to utilize the provided storyline example and lesson activity procedures, or even to create your own storylines and activities based on the five sentence structures provided. Please be advised that chosen storylines should be inclusive, engaging and fun for all ELLs while they learn and improve their English language skills.

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The Urgency for Equivalent Reform to a Rapidly Growing Diverse Population of ELLs in Ohio
Ammar Al-Sharafi

The increase in populations of English Language Learners (ELLs) has become a known issue all over the country. Unfortunately, reforming the educational policies to keep up with the demographic change in the students’ population is not as noticeable. Hence, ELLs continue to face tremendous challenges that hinder their academic achievement. Language barriers prevent ELLs from getting equal educational opportunities, making the learning process unpleasant, and negatively affecting their learning outcomes. These challenges increase when ELLs sit with their native English-speaking classmates in mainstream classrooms.

Many mainstream teachers are not trained to teach ELLs who are having communication difficulties and challenges adjusting to the new environment. The responsibilities mainstream teachers face go beyond merely teaching content-area curriculum, they also need to provide adequate support to help ELLs improve their English language skills and help them adjust to a new environment (Shore, 2013). As a result, mainstream teachers may find it difficult to help this category of students achieve academically on the same level as native English-speaking students. Echevarria, Vogt, and Short (2010) explained that ELLs face the double
task of having to learn content at the same time as they are learning English. In many cases, ELLs do not have the luxury of waiting for content instruction until they are fluent in the second language, which makes the achievement gap between ELLs and their English-speaking peers grow wider, as the latter would make progress while the former would remain isolated from content while learning the language (Anderson, 2009).

The State of Ohio, similarly to many other states, does not require training in ESL education for mainstream teachers who teach ELLs. However, many schools in Ohio with a sizeable population of ELLs promote collaboration between ESL teachers and mainstream teachers and provide ESL training opportunities for mainstream teachers. The State of Ohio, as well as Arkansas, Montana, New Mexico, North Carolina, Oregon, West Virginia, and Wyoming, have vague requirements for mainstream teachers who have ELLs in their classrooms. These requirements include adopting effective teaching strategies and appreciation of diversity, but such requirements also apply to all teachers whether they serve ELLs or not. The requirements make no explicit reference to ELLs or ELL pedagogy (State Board of Education & Ohio Department of Education, 2009 National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition, 2008b). In addition, even though the number of ELLs sitting in K-12 mainstream classrooms is growing rapidly, most of the available research focuses on ESL teachers or ESL learning theories.

Arkoudis (2006) argued that a need exists for more training that involve mainstream teachers and the collaboration between them and the ESL teachers. Arkoudis (2006) also indicated that such training might help improve the views of mainstream teachers as well as the ESL teachers about the challenges that ELLs face in mainstream classes. These challenges require an effective collaboration between mainstream teachers and ESL teachers in order to develop an understanding of how to meet the language and learning needs of ELLs in mainstream classes.

**Is it time to change the status quo? / The Need for Urgency**

Misconceptions exist that teaching ELLs is merely a matter of simple tweaking of mainstream classroom teaching strategies. There is some truth to this assumption but applying good teaching practices without a proper understanding of the real challenges that hinder ELLs learning progress and widen the performance gap between them and their native non-ELL peers, has proven to be ineffective. This achievement gap continues every year not because teachers are not employing good teaching practices but because of a lack of awareness of the basics characteristics of second language acquisition by mainstream teachers. In 2011, the reading achievement gap between non-ELL and ELL students was 36 points at the 4th-grade level and 44 points at the 8th-grade level. At grade 4, this achievement gap was not measurably different from that in any assessment year since 2002. At grade 8, the achievement gap between non-ELL and ELL students in reading scores was 3 points smaller in 2011 than in 2009 (47 points), but not measurably different from the achievement gap in 2002.

Closing these achievement gaps means, in part, closing similar gaps in ESL education within teacher preparation programs and ongoing professional development agendas. Today ELLs spend more time in regular classrooms with mainstream teachers who know that they are not fully equipped to teach ELLs (Calderson et al., 2011).

Schools need to improve subject-area instruction for ELLs by first training content area teachers in effective methods of teaching ELLs; and secondly, implementing research-based effective methods and curriculum for this population.

All pre-service teachers and in-service teachers should understand how to address the learning needs of ELL student populations, how to identify at-risk students, how to address linguistic and cultural learning obstacles, and how to implement research-based and proven solutions that help direct ELLs toward academic success. 🌟

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