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Call for Papers

TNTESOL Journal
Volume 3, Fall 2010

The Editorial Board of the TNTESOL Journal seeks articles of general interest on any aspect of the teaching of English as a second or foreign language in elementary, middle high school, college/university, or adult/immigrant education. The topics can be varied and wide-ranging.

Articles should be no longer than twelve pages, double-spaced, or no more than 4000 words. A section entitled "Classroom Practices" will allow a maximum of 1500 words. Articles should follow APA style format, use nonsexist language, and have bibliographic references for all citations or works referred to in the body of the article.

Important note: All articles must be submitted electronically.

To submit your article electronically, please do the following:

1. Write and save the article as a Microsoft Word document.
2. Submit your paper as an attachment to an email in which you provide the following in the body of the email: your name, address, home phone number, school affiliation, email address, and title of the paper. Include a statement that your work has not been printed elsewhere and is not currently submitted elsewhere.
3. Email to dvcraig@mtsu.edu and include the words "TNTESOL-J Submission" in the subject heading. You will be notified immediately by return email once the article is received.

Note: We accept articles year-round. Deadline for submission for fall publication: June 1, 2010.

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Editor's Comments: In This Issue

Teresa Dalle
Editor

The articles in this second edition of the TNTESOL Journal fall into three main categories—visioning, reflecting, and going digital. They mirror the concerns of teachers in an era of change and uncertainty. The ideas expressed in this edition suggest that this is a time for those involved in the field of teaching to reflect on where they have been, envision where they want to be, and reconsider some practices from the past to apply them in new ways. Some practices include the newer technologies. Whereas last year's edition was entitled, "Generating Usable Knowledge," this year's is labeled, "Reflecting on What is Usable Knowledge."

Beverly Hearn and Deborah Sam in their article on visioning suggest a means of setting directions for the future, particularly for organizations that represent TESOL. They define what they mean by "visioning" and provide a history of its use in TESOL to bring the organization to where it is now. In the review of the activities that comprise visioning and the results of it, they demonstrate the effectiveness of the activity. Most of all they, encourage ESL teachers to communicate a vision to others. Vision, they state, "will be a crucial element in strategic planning for twenty first century educators."

In their article, Dorothy Craig and Johnna Paraiso suggest that this is a time for reflection about beliefs and teacher roles. ESL teachers realize that understanding students and their culture is as important as being competent in linguistic issues; however. with the current influx of Spanish-speaking immigrants, many must examine their views on immigration and on the issue of working with so many Spanish-speaking students. The authors use action research as a means of examining and documenting beliefs about immigration in pre-service and in-service teachers. They do this by having the participants reflect on issues of importance to immigrants through various activities, including reading literature based on immigrants' stories. Although the authors focus on Spanish speakers, the issues apply to any immigrant or refugee group.

James Kelley's article on the use of social network sites(SNSs) makes a case for using technology in the language curriculum as a means of encouraging students to participate in real or imagined communities. He uses the metaphor of "playing in the park" to explain how the SNSs provide students, especially those in

EFL settings, with a means of participating in intercultural exchanges. His paper is more an overview of the benefits of having students participate in SNSs rather than a how-to, and he makes a strong case. Like a public park, SNSs give all students the opportunity of "sitting in (or playing in) the 21st century public park."

Using Korean students as a sample group, Danny Hinson and Kabyong Park report on a project involving students in a short-term intensive program in the United States. The lack of progress in language acquisition even after several years of study is a concern of some EFL students, particularly those who know that the ability to use English provides professional and economic benefits. Though error correction is typically the means of evaluating the students' language use, the authors provide an overview of the literature on error correction, especially how it is ineffective for many students. The authors' statement that "students consider the rules of grammar as something to memorize rather than something to use," suggests that students should focus more on the functional aspects of language, both in speaking and writing, and work on those specific areas of weakness which need improvement. However, students are not always aware of those areas that need attention. Using student writing in journals, researchers look at each individual student's language, mark areas that deviate from standard English forms, and categorize those. By providing information to students about their findings, the researchers help students become more focused on error awareness.

In her article, Martha Michieka challenges teachers to reconsider the writing conference and its use in ESL. Her research suggests that spending lots of time in conferences does not necessarily result in better student writing, perhaps a reason that some teachers have abandoned the practice. She encourages teachers to reassess their conference style, outlines some characteristics of successful and unsuccessful writing conferences, and provides general tips. Her article suggests that both teachers and students must understand the features of good writing conferences, and both must be prepared for them to make them beneficial.

Self-reflection is the theme of Susan Garnett's article. She suggests that although teachers may have been introduced to the practice of self-reflection in their teacher education classes, because of time constraints and other issues, many do not practice it. Using her own experience, she tells how she rediscovered the role of self-reflection, and she makes a good argument for its practice. Not only was she able to fine tune her own teaching, she was able to learn something about herself and her personal characteristics. She suggests that self-reflection may be a means of keeping morale high, stating that teachers are within themselves "a source of innovation and motivation."

Having students keep reading journals proves to be an effective means of helping students develop a type of reading fluency, according to Timothy Micek in his article. Here again is another look at a practice that is not new but which has strong implications for ESL learners. When ESL students read regularly the kinds of texts that interest them, according to Micek, they are motivated to read and improve vocabulary and comprehension. There are challenges for teachers, though, including how to assess and how much time to spend reading the entries, but both concerns are addressed in the article.

In her article, Barbara Finney outlines her procedure for using Digital Storytelling for ESL students in various grade levels. She found it a useful technique to help her ESL students present their personal stories "digitally" to their school. Besides the obvious benefit of introducing students to the use of technology, the project had the added benefit of fostering a sense of community among the ELLs at her school.

Jenny Alton Price suggests in her article that teachers revisit the use of authentic assessment as a means of encouraging students to take ownership of their own learning. She recognizes that these are "educationally trying times" with the mandates of No Child Left Behind and the AYP (annual yearly progress), but ELL teachers can encourage students to constantly evaluate and track their own progress. She states that doing so helps not only in improving language skills but also in improving motivation.

The contributors to this second edition challenge those in the field of ESL to reflect on their field, consider where they are and where they want to be, and in the process, consider revisiting and revising established techniques, while also weighing the possibilities of technology in language teaching.

Visioning for the 21st Century

Beverly Hearn and Deborah Sams

Leadership scholars ascribe universal acceptance to the practice of organizational visioning. Nanus (1992) defines vision as "a realistic, credible, attractive future for your organization...your articulation of a destination toward which your organization should aim" (p.8). Furthermore, Nanus expands vision to a future that is "better, more successful, or more desirable for your organization than is the present"(p.8). TESOL leadership scholar Neil Anderson deems vision a crucial characteristic of leaders, using the metaphor of a telescope to illustrate how "leaders must keep the big picture in mind" (2008, p.l9). Yet many TESOL leaders are not acquainted with the implementation of specific visioning techniques. This article examines visioning sessions conducted by English language teachers during two state conferences, the processes, results, and ensuing follow up. Not only did the sessions identify projects and goals, but also they etched a framework for the future, ultimately setting directions for a state organization.

Leaders use visioning to promote, advance and guide organizations through exciting, challenging times. Certainly that describes the twenty first century scenario for the field of education in general and in the area of English language teaching in particular. Vision will be a crucial element in strategic planning for twenty first century educators. Specifically, conducting visioning processes, communicating vision, and securing appropriate follow up actions are three key visioning practices which will benefit all those who lead classrooms, groups, and organizations to advance projects and goals successfully.

Organizational leadership scholars recognized the significance of vision as a leadership practice as early as the 1980s. However, clarifying the practice of visioning has been a work in progress. Vision has been variously described as "the framework for leading the journey" (Belasco & Strayer, 1993, p.90), as the "'first basic ingredient' of leadership" (Bennis, 1994, p. 39), and as an essential element of the change process (Kotter, 1999). An educational leadership expert, McAndrew (2005) focuses on vision among literacy leaders who "share a vision of literacy and its teaching and learning" (p. 46). For them, vision is not just one element of leadership but is essential and integral to leadership success, enabling literacy leaders to accomplish the tasks needed to meet the tough challenges faced by twenty first century literacy organizations and their stakeholders.

Universally recognized, yet nebulous, how can we describe vision? Nanus (1992) defines vision as "a realistic, credible, attractive future for your organization...your articulation of a destination toward which your organization should aim (p.8)." Furthermore, Nanus expands vision to a future that is "better, more successful, or more desirable for your organization than is the present" (1992, p.8). In terms of future goals, Maxwell (2007) warns that "if you can't imagine it, you probably will not be able to achieve it" (p.101). Hence, properly communicated, vision opens newer, superior horizons for groups and organizations. Indeed, leadership experiences produce spectacular results for those who are aware of vision and employ it as a leadership practice.

The visioning process is no less important in the field of English language teaching. At least one TESOL leadership scholar, Neil Anderson, formally sets forth vision as a crucial characteristic of leaders. Anderson's metaphor of a telescope reminds TESOL leaders that they "must keep the big picture in mind" (2008, p.19). "Every teacher, administrator, curriculum developer, test developer, or language supervisor is a leader…because we interact with learners and others engaged in language education contexts…We each have opportunities each day to influence someone within our profession" (2005, p.2-3). However, leaders must be able to communicate vision in order to be completely effective.

A visioning leader raises the energy and the confidence of the group to enable stakeholders to see the possibilities on the horizon. The practical application of visioning can be better understood by examining the visioning process and its results as it took place within a state TESOL affiliate. In 1978 Tennessee TESOL was established by Tennessee Intensive English Program educators at the University of Tennessee at Martin in order to promote and advance the profession of TESOL professionals in the state of Tennessee; with 33 members, it became an affiliate of International TESOL that same year. The organization was involved in setting parameters and guidelines for the TESOL profession in the state: in delineating an ESL curriculum, in setting state teacher endorsement requirements, in establishing a textbook review process, by hosting state and southeast regional conferences, and by creating an electronic presence on the World Wide Web . By 2005, the organization had several hundred members, the organization was financially viable, and it was providing needed professional development with its annual conferences. The organization was ready to move beyond the basics.

The first visioning session was held as a part of the TNTESOL conference held in Clarksville, Tennessee, at the 2005 conference, which coincidentally was themed "Inspiring Excellence and Aspiring to Success." The visioning session, "Where Do You Want TNTESOL to Go Today?" was presented Saturday morning, March 19, 2005, and was led by the incoming president. The session began with a look

at the past by considering the question: "Where Have We Been?" The answer was provided in a time-line review of the organization's accomplishments from 1978 to 2005, which had been researched and developed from a review of the archives of the TESOL board minutes. Given the instructions to "Think big—think small; every idea is important," the attendees were asked to divide in small groups and to discuss their dreams for the organization. Participants were encouraged to look ahead as if looking at the horizon: ten, fifteen, even twenty years into the future. "What projects, attributes, and goals will TNTESOL have?" the moderator asked the group. Ideas were posted in categories and attendees were given three votes with which to rank the top three goals and projects of all those presented by the group members. The top ideas generated were listed:

1. Provide regional meetings for training and development were needed to better meet the needs of professionals in all areas of the state.
2. Promote communication between the public schools and Universities.
3. Enhance communication via e-mail.
4. Support ESL from top down with professional development for administration and classroom teachers.
5. Organize mentoring groups for ESL teachers by levels.

These basic ideas from the membership were communicated to the TNTESOL board by the president and several of the suggestions became projects for the following year. Subsequently, the Board voted to support two mini-conferences a year; these came to fruition in 2007, 2008, and 2009. A second goal emerged: to increase the involvement of the university professionals in the organization. The board voted to publish a refereed TNTESOL Journal, which would provide a publication venue for college and university TESOL professionals, their graduate students, and K-12 teachers. A list-serve for Tennessee ESL teachers was established to enhance electronic communication and to provide a forum for questions and concerns to better meet the needs of teachers throughout the state. Some of these projects were accomplished within the year of the president's term; others, such as the publication of the journal, became long-term projects but were eventually accomplished. The visioning session provided a forum for members to verbalize what they wanted their organization to be, do, and accomplish for them. Subsequently, affiliate leaders responded to members' vision for the future, resulting in the accomplishment of important TNTESOL milestones.

Results from the first visioning session increased organizational impact for the TESOL professionals in the state. However, most of the goals set by the membership at that meeting were accomplished by 2008, the 30th year anniversary of TNTESOL. As the organization moved further into the 21st century, it was

important to review and renew its vision. A second visioning session at the 2009 conference held in Franklin, Tennessee, took a fresh look at the horizon and set new goals: this conference session was entitled "Tennessee TESOL in the 21st Century—Visioning for the Future." The process was outlined for attendees using the acronym: RAVE: Remembering the past, Assessing the present, Visioning the future, and Enacting ideas. The visioning session began with review of past accomplishments for those members who had become involved recently. As they assessed the present, attendees discussed what TNTESOL was doing well and identified areas for improvement. Using hindsight and foresight, session attendees again focused on long-range goals for TNTESOL in a participatory activity. Similar to the 2005 session, discussions took place in small groups and followed a similar process. Participants were asked the following questions: Where do you see TNTESOL a few years from now? What needs will the organization need to address? What goals should be implemented? Members were encouraged to look beyond the horizon to see the best that organization that TNTESOL could become. By visioning together, past, present, and future leaders were able to sketch out goals from which would emerge a vision to take TNTESOL further into the 21st century.

The attendees at this session of the 2009 conference set the following goals for the organization:

1. The organization should strengthen training opportunities for school administrators. It was suggested that liaisons with other state level organizations that serve school administrators be created in order to provide training sessions for administrators given by ELL professionals.
2. Similar liaisons should be developed to provide training sessions given by ELL professionals for content area teachers, including a strand for classroom teachers at the TNTESOL conference.
3. Legislative advocacy on ELL issues should be provided by TNTESOL in the form of formal communications with state congressmen. Organized input to local school directors and school boards and other elected officials should be adopted as one of the roles of the organization. This would require an amendment to the present TNTESOL Constitution.
4. More and stronger involvement of higher education in collaborative work with K-12 professionals should be organized. TNTESOL could sponsor grant-writing workshops to formalize more university/public school collaborations to compete for federal and other grant monies available to strengthen ELL instruction in Tennessee.
5. TNTESOL conference strands should be delineated for the various levels and interests such as academic, adult education, elementary, secondary, so that the needs of all interests are more clearly met by the conference sessions.

The final step in the visioning process, "Enacting Ideas," began immediately after the session when the visioning priorities that the members produced during the 2009 conference were communicated to the current TNTESOL president for further action. Just a few weeks after the 2009 visioning session, steps toward state administrator training sessions were taken. An evaluation checklist for administrators focused on English language learners was created by combining ideas from ELL educators across the state. Academic sessions designed to train administrators in the use of the tool have been proposed at TESOL 2010 in Boston and/or at the 2009 Tennessee LEAD conference for Tennessee principals. Further information about this conference can be accessed at http://www.tn.gov/education/lead/

CONCLUSION

The outcomes of the visioning process with the state affiliate described above provide convincing evidence that this practice succeeds in activating ideas for a better future for the organization. Visioning is a powerful way to involve stakeholders and support them in "selecting, synthesizing and articulating an appropriate vision for the future" (Bennis & Nanus, 2003, p. 94) and visioning is vital to the future development and growth of educational organizations. Maxwell (2008) believes that "ideas are what move the world forward " (p.141). Surely the same applies to groups and organizations.

Because vision is ranked so highly by general leadership scholars as a crucial leadership component, more attention to this aspect of leadership will benefit educational leaders who work in classrooms, groups, and organizations to advance projects and goals successfully. By learning the importance of vision and how to communicate a vision to others, English language teachers will be empowered to become more effective leaders in their classrooms, departments, groups, and organizations.

Note: In addition to the references for this article, a checklist of free leadership resources to support readers in their personal leadership development is appended below.

Go to www.tesol.org and search for TESOL Symposium on Leadership where the following papers may be retrieved:

Anderson, N. (2005, January 23). *Leadership is not about position: Leading from behind*. Paper presented at the 2005 TESOL Symposium on Leadership. http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/bin.asp?CID=663&DID=4562&DOC=FILE.PDF

Murray, D. (2005). *The ecology of leadership in TESOL.* Paper presented at the 2005 TESOL Symposium on Leadership. http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/bin.asp?CID=663&DID=4563&DOC=FILE.PDF

To find the Professional Development in Language Education Series, go to http://www.tesol.org/s_tesol/seccss.asp?CID=284&DID=1774

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Antonio's Gun and Delfino's Dream: Views and Perceptions of Immigrant Students and Immigration

Dorothy Valcarcel Craig and Johnna Paraiso

This study adopted a qualitative stance and incorporated elements of the action research process to examine views and perceptions held by graduate students and practicing teachers regarding immigration and immigrant students in classrooms. Using selected literature and the structure of online forums, participants engaged in interactive discussions regarding immigration, economic aspects, stereotyping, and student needs. Findings indicate that views and perceptions changed as the study progressed. A consistent conflict of views regarding economic aspects of immigration as well as political influences emerged. Based on the findings, the researchers compiled suggestions generated by participants in order to assist teachers in meeting the needs of immigrant students.

As of July 1, 2005, Hispanics accounted for almost half (1.3 million or 49 percent) of the national population growth. Of the increase, 500,000 were due to immigration. Approximately one-third of this population is under the age of 18. The influx is expected to continue for the next several decades (U.S. Census Bureau News, 2006). In addition, both growth and immigration patterns indicate that many school-age children and their families are locating and settling across the southern region of the country. These patterns support the projection that students of color will make up approximately 46% of the nation's K-12 student population by 2020. Data provided from the Census 2000—now almost ten years old—indicate that along with population growth, language diversity continued to grow. Census reports show that close to 32 million people speak a language other than English in the home environment and almost one half of these people speak Spanish as their first language (U.S. Census Bureau Report, 2004).

In addition, the bulk of this growth is predicted to occur throughout the south and western regions of the United States. Adding to the already intricate situation, The 2000 Census allowed individuals to check as many "race boxes" as they deemed necessary. As a result, large numbers of Americans—for the first time in U.S. history—were able to provide unique demographic information which may

prove useful to future educators due to the fact that approximately 40% of children under the age of 18 represent a minority or multi-racial group. This growing population is expected to continue to become even more diverse in terms of racial, cultural, religious, language, and ethnic backgrounds (Hodgkinson, 2001; Statewide Master Plan for Tennessee Higher Education, 2000, Therrian & Ramirez, 2001).

In Tennessee, the rate of growth in the LEP population enrolled in public schools rose from 12,000 students in 2000 to almost 20,000 in 2005. These numbers indicate a 369.9% growth rate (U.S. Department of Education's Survey of the States, 2006). The variety of countries and languages represented by these students creates a picture of a rich, colorful, and varied weaving. However, this intricately woven texture that makes up the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds of K-12 students presents an imperative that cannot be ignored.

In a recent article that appeared in The Tennessean, Carey (2009) reports that the region's growing immigrant population continues to place pressure on districts in terms of program expansion to meet the needs of unique populations. In addition, the number of second language learners in schools across the state has increased by 10% in the last year alone. With this growth, school systems must evaluate current programs and seek new and innovative ways to provide enriching learning experiences for English language learners.

Carey (2009) also suggests that—although the state will allow teachers to work on a waiver while they are completing licensure requirements for ESL—there is still a shortage of approximately 200 teachers. This number is projected to reach 400 over the next five years. Therefore, the challenges posed to school systems and districts are also one that is of great importance to universities and teacher education programs. Not since the 1900s have classroom teachers faced the challenges posed by large numbers of immigrant students enrolling at such an increasingly growing number. With new populations of students comes the need to reflect on personal views of immigration and immigrant students.

Causey, Thomas, and Armento (2000) suggest that in the past, teacher preparation programs did not address the background of minority populations nor did they assist future teachers in developing an understanding of various cultures, which left first year teachers at a loss when placed in schools with high minority populations. Given the magnitude of these issues, one of the biggest tasks for teacher education programs is not only to prepare future teachers for diverse student populations, but also to encourage reflective thought, self-evaluation, and consideration of diversity.

In addition, Trumbull and Pacheco (n.d.) suggest that by utilizing a framework based on individualism and collectivism related to diversity, teachers can begin to build a better understanding of some of the very large differences between the immigrant populations now entering public schools and the more dominant Euro-American middle class culture that they are familiar with. Under the new NCATE 2000 Standards, teacher education programs have realigned core educational foundations courses to insure that prospective teachers have ample opportunities to build diversity awareness and to make sense of pedagogy as well as ideologies that will better assist them in implementing a variety of methods and strategies to meet the needs of the diverse learner. If designed well, courses have the potential to enable teachers to do the following:

- Investigate issues of inequality in their own environments.
- Take action regarding certain conditions.
- Conceptualize culture and identity as complex and dynamic.
- Consider all cultures to be an integral part of curriculum.
- Realize that as public school educators they are agents of change in society (Martin & Van Gunten, 2002; Sleeter & Grant, 1994).

Antonio's Gun and Delfino's Dream

In the southern region of the United States, many who represent diverse populations are newly arriving immigrants or relatives of immigrants. For educators preparing pre- and in-service teachers to work with second language learners, the issues surrounding immigration—and in particular economic immigration—are of the utmost concern as the views and perceptions of these issues affect the teaching and learning environment. The critical issues of immigration, illegal immigration, newly arriving immigrant students, and economic immigration became the focus of an action research study that attempted to provide insight and suggestions for practicing teachers who are faced with meeting the needs of immigrant populations. In order to assist in building an awareness of the circumstances surrounding immigration, the researchers previewed several texts that presented information regarding immigration.

The intent was to select a text that provided a rich narrative told from the standpoint of immigrants as well as those considering immigration to improve economic situations and to use the text as the basis for exploring immigration from two sides of the border—the U.S. and Mexico. After careful examination, a text was selected. It was *Antonio's Gun and Delfino's Dream* (Quinones, 2007), a collection of stories about Mexican immigration to the United States. A "chunking" technique was employed to divide the text into sections. Chunking helps to reveal literary essentials, character development, and changes within a narrative

(Craig, 2005; Koch and Zachman, 1995). Open-ended questions were designed and integrated into online discussion forums, which served as an avenue for discourse to explore immigration.

Using the text, *Antonio's Gun and Delfino's Dream* (Quniones, 2007), the researchers integrated the following: a) assigned readings, b) open-ended interviews, c) focused reflective questions, and d) the online discussion forum to explore views and perceptions of English Language Learner Immigrants in public schools. Participants included two groups, graduate students and practicing students. The graduate students were enrolled in an ESL methods course as partial requirement for the add-on endorsement in English as a Second Language. The practicing teachers read the book and engaged in online discussion forums as part of professional development activities.

METHODOLOGY

The researchers took a qualitative stance and incorporated elements of the action research process. The process of action research led the researchers to investigate in a systematic, process-oriented manner. Following guidelines outlined by Craig, (2009), the researchers did the following:

1. Identified and defined the focus of the study,
2. Refined the focus through discourse and dialog,
3. Designed the set of overarching questions,
4. Identified appropriate data sets,
5. Built a data collection plan based on the research questions,
6. Conducted data analysis,
7. Gleaned information regarding findings, and
8. Presented and shared findings as a means of improving practice.

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) suggest that two types of knowledge play an important role in creating meaning and in developing understanding. First, there is tacit knowledge, the unarticulated, unformulated knowledge such as the type of knowledge we have in the act of "doing." The second type of knowledge—explicit knowledge—is that which can be written down. In conducting qualitative studies, the researcher relies on both types of knowledge to derive meaning from a particular situation. Due to the nature of the study, the researchers took a qualitative stance. Bogdan and Biklen (1998) suggest that qualitative researchers study a specific setting or situation because they are concerned with the context of the environment. Taking a qualitative stance, therefore, involves several things: a) descriptive data, b) concern with process, c) inductive inquiry, and d) seeking "meaning" within the situational milieu. According to Patton (1990), the

research design should address specific issues of the inquiry, with considerations made to the purpose, focus, data, and approach taken. In addition, triangulation options were explored in order to address validity and confidence in the findings.

Considering the notion that research is conducted to describe a particular phenomenon, understand what is taking place, and utilize findings to inform practice, a formative research model (Schensul, Schensul, and LeCompte, 1999) was designed. Formative research—within the context of action research and qualitative studies—enables the researcher to study the community within a specific institution or agency in order to improve practice. In the case of this particular study, the community consisted of the participants, the community of graduate learners, within the university online classroom, an extension of the institution. In addition formative research enables the researcher to develop effective strategies for improving practice, which is closely aligned with the process of action research (CDHS, 2009, 1998; Craig, 2009; Gittleshon, Steckler, Johnson, Pratt, Grieser, Pickrel, Stone, Conway, Coombs, Staten, 2006; VERB, n.d.).

A set of overarching questions became the framework for the study:

1. What are the views and perceptions of immigration, newly arriving immigrant students, and economic immigration held by graduate students and practicing teachers and what prompts the differences, if any, among the two groups?
2. How do these views and perceptions influence teaching, classroom environments, and philosophies of teaching?
3. What patterns and/or categories will emerge as participants complete readings and engage in integrated discussion forums and will this information inform practice?
4. What can be gleaned from findings that may be helpful to administrators, teachers, and graduate students who work with second language learners?

Action research that employs a qualitative approach requires the researcher to engage in ongoing data collection and ongoing analysis. This is due in part to emerging patterns and categories that may present throughout any given study. The process of continuous analysis also assists the researcher with "discovery." Discovery involves identifying particular phenomena in data, grouping data, and categorizing data. Categories that emerge as a result of the process are unique to each study and typically are original to the study at hand. The categories have conceptual power because they are original to each study and enable the researchers to integrate the data in order to identify concepts, subcategories, and themes (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

Figure 1 outlines the readings and focused questions which were based on the Quinones (2007) text.

Figure 1. Discussion Focus Questions Based on Antonio's Gun

After reading chapters 1 - 3, post reflections to the following:

- What is your position on the current state of immigration?
- Do you have any suggestions for immigration reform?

After reading chapters 4 and 5, post reflections to the following:

- We have all mocked and laughed at the "velvet Elvis" or "velvet Jesus" hangings that crop up on corners. In fact, at one time velvet paintings were for sale at the intersection of Memorial Blvd. and Broad Street. After reading the chapters, what are your thoughts regarding this art form and how it relates to economic conditions?
- Think of the culture tied to the paintings. How would you respond to an ELL who is ridiculed when he or she shares this family tradition within the school environment?

After reading chapters 6 and 7, post reflections to the following questions:

- The theme running through the chapters is one of betrayal and abandonment. In chapter 6, the high school teacher feels betrayed by his own country because the opera organizers pass him by. The teacher stays in Mexico but feels abandoned.
- In chapter 7, families striving for a better life move to Chicago but return to their home town to build lavish houses with the intent on returning to Mexico permanently. In time, however, they settle in the U.S. returning to Mexico for brief vacations.
- Considering the conditions of immigration, which situation cited above is worse? Explain your position.

After reading chapter 8 and the Epilogue, post your reflections to the following:
Chapter 8 illustrates a "dual existence" between immigrant students and U.S. born students. For this forum:

- Share one instance that you have observed of the "dual existence."
- If you do not work currently work with ELLs, share an instance that you have observed the "dual existence" between Caucasian students and any other minority (Ex: African American students, gender minority, special needs, etc.)
- How can teachers help to dissolve the "dual existence?"

Note: All participants read the text on a voluntary basis and engaged in forums for four weeks.

DATA ANALYSIS

In order to address triangulation, participants were asked to keep personal reflective journals. In addition, researchers administered open-ended questionnaires and kept field notes based on: email inquiries, general postings gleaned from the "Open Forum," and final project evaluation surveys. All data was collected, analyzed, coded, and re-analyzed. Emerging categories were determined and at-

tributes defined. These categories were identified as a result of data analysis and are original to this particular study, as most categories are within action research that employs a qualitative approach (Craig, 2009).

Once all data were collected in a particular data set, the researchers transcribed information as needed and made copies of all data in order to prepare for analysis. Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest that there are differing levels of data analysis when working within the qualitative framework. The levels of analysis also involve interpretation. The levels of analysis and interpretation range from low-level, narrative and reporting to a level called, recognizable reality, to the highest level, which involves the constant comparative method of analysis. Due to the time constraints and the nature of the inquiry, the researchers determined that: a) narrative reporting analysis and b) recognizable reality analysis best suited the inquiry. The researchers attacked the task of data analysis using the suggested procedures outlined by Maykut and Morehouse (1994). The procedures included these:

1. Organizing the data by creating a system that both researchers would be able to utilize. This included organizing by folder and making duplicates so that the data could be analyzed by two individual researchers at different times. This process assisted with triangulation and comparison.
2. Initial coding of each unit of data. An initial code was assigned data as they were collected. The codes reflected the type of data, date, subject (if appropriate), and the overarching question aligned with the data.
3. Unitizing the data. This involved making duplicate copies and re-organizing as needed.
4. Discovery, which required the researchers to examine each unit of data in order to identify any emerging patterns, themes, or categories.
5. Defining each category discovered. Defining or "writing the rules" of each category involved assigning a set of attributes to each category and then conducting a re-check of data in order to confirm the category.
6. Exploring patterns and relationships among data, which required the researchers to complete a re-examination of all data in order to determine, identify, or confirm relationships.

Researchers conducted the analysis individually—apart from each other. The individual analysis was then compared and confirmed. The researchers collaboratively examined the triangulation matrix in order to ensure triangulation and confirm the collaborative findings.

RESULTS

As part of the qualitative stance taken for this action research project, the researchers defined emerging categories and identified attributes associated with each category. The process involved in reflective, interactive discussion yielded in-depth information. As the study progressed and the discussions deepened, it was evident that the graduate students—some who were not yet practicing teaching—began to alter their views. The flexibility shown by the practicing teachers seemed to influence the more rigid views of the non-practicing graduate students. General findings include the following:

1. Religious convictions, beliefs, and views at first indicated a strong dislike for illegal immigrants and all that this Spanish speaking population represents including: a) music, b) work ethic, c) Catholicism, and d) foods.
2. Examination of the forum posts also showed a consistent conflict of views regarding the economy and how immigration affects both U.S. and Mexican economies.
3. An emerging pattern also showed perceptions regarding the fear of: a) neighborhood integration, b) "dumbed down" schooling, and c) relationships at the high school level.
4. Last, a strong voice regarding political influences and beliefs that the U.S. must stop "looking the other way" regarding illegal immigration consistently appeared throughout data.

Figures 2, 3, and 4 illustrate emerging categories as well as descriptors and attributes. The categories were determined following the process of data analysis and coding outlined by Maykut and Morehouse (1994). Categories and attributes were identified by the researchers and are unique to this particular study.

Figure 2. Emerging Categories and Attributes: Immigrant Nation

Nation of Immigrants Attributes	*Don't Take Our Jobs Attributes*	*Melting Pot 2008 Attributes*
• U.S. began as a nation of immigrants • Mexicans are perceived differently than the first and second waves • Okay then, but not now! • Mexicans = All Latin American countries • Parallels to history, but too many Mexicans	• Conflict – Taking jobs vs. apparent work ethics • Hard working men • Immigrants take jobs no one else wants • Will work for any amount of money, therefore they take all the jobs	• Must learn English / English Only! • Problems due to "culture retention" • "Americanize" all • Become "Christian" and convert if needed • Religious duty to help Americanize and assimilate • Conflict – Must learn English, but no services provided; Must learn English vs. fear of government
References to: • Legal and illegal immigration • Immigration in U.S. history • U.S. as immigrant nation (…even Native Americans are immigrants!) • Too many immigrants from one place is not good	References to: • Creating U.S. unemployment (taking jobs that others would want) • Taking jobs from U.S. citizens	References to: • Discrimination • Hatred • Fear • Racism • Duality of living in two cultures

Figure 3. Emerging Categories and Attributes: Economic and Societal Concerns

Eternal Paternalism Attributes	*Border Patrol: La Migra! Attributes*	*Blame it on the Salsa! Attributes*	*The Sorting Hat Attributes*
• Canadians are U.S. "equals" • Mexicans are U.S. stepchildren • Burden on U.S. economy to care for Mexico and illegal immigrants • Problem with businesses hiring illegal immigrants • Illegal immigration encouraged by the Mexican government	• Establishment of border patrol with strict "shoot as needed" rules • Beef up patrols • Enforce car checks • Militia • Construct a wall to keep "them" out	• Mexican government is irresponsible • Too many economic problems encourage illegal immigration • If illegals work, the money should not be sent "home" • Advocates of "transfer to friends" • Ban books on "the journey" and "How to get across" • Burden on U.S. taxpayers and Mexico likes that • Mexican "ghost towns" are okay, just don't come here	• Immigrants in history were sorted out at Ellis Island • Establish a screening system to keep out certain people • Keep out criminals, sick, poor, infected, indigent, dirty
References to: • U.S. bound to Mexico due to history • U.S. "taking care of" Mexico and Mexicans	References to: • Reform on part of U.S. as well as Mexico • Mexico slack, therefore, duty of U.S. to step up border patrol and control	References to: • Inadequate government • Corrupt government • "Free for all" lifestyles in Mexico	References to: • Somalis can enter • Africans can enter • Canadians… come on down!

Figure 4. Categories and Attributes: Educating the Children

Ven Comigo! Attributes	*Social Epidemic or Plain Ignorance Attributes*	*Enlighten Me Attributes*	*Dual Existance and New Diaspora Attributes*
• Advocates for education • Help the children • Children viewed as "innocents" • Forget the taxpayers – take care of the kids • Families should not be torn apart • Children seen as victims	• Attack on the economy vs. U.S. tourism • Cultural values mismatch (… beauty is in the eye of the beholder…) • Lack of knowledge regarding dislocation and diaspora • Resourcefulness of Mexican v. Americans of privilege	• Lack of cultural knowledge • Tipping Point – devalue of culture and failure to see things from another's point of view • Exploitation in U.S. and Mexico • It is cultural pride or pure arrogance?	• Acknowledgement of forces driving illegal immigration • Conflict between leaving home (guilt) and staying in MX (despair) • Assimilation brings guilt • New culture brings bitterness • New diaspora based on illegal status • Choices followed • Acknowledgement of dangers when crossing • Celebrating some immigrants
References to: • Teachers as child advocates • Look the other way for the child's sake • Religious duty to care for children	References to: • Cautious emphathy matched with uneasiness of the "brown man"	References to: • Common stereotypes • Media references and portrayals	References to: • Middle Easterners – it's okay for them to come to the U.S. • "Boat People" – no other choice • Empathy and sympathy for Asian immigrants

DISCUSSION

As professional educators, it is our responsibility to provide the best possible education for all children. In some cases, this implies that we must suspend our beliefs and perceptions for the good of a student. This study encouraged self-examination and reflection. The more we learn about culture, language, and

diversity—the better equipped we become in facing the challenges posed by variety within the classroom setting. There are many problems and issues that are beyond the control of the classroom teacher. However, there are other problems and issues that are within the realm of the professional educator to generate solutions and put a plan of action in place in order to improve educational experiences.

The participants who took part in this study generated several suggestions to assist teachers who are faced with meeting the needs of immigrant students in the classroom environment. These include the following:

1. Seeking out additional information regarding the student's home country, origins of the displacement and relocation, and related cultural information,
2. Engaging in ongoing discussions at the school and system levels to prepare teachers, offer guidance, and design available resources for those working with immigrant ELLs,
3. Organizing parent/guardian meetings or "get togethers" at locations other than schools—such as local community centers or churches, which is less threatening—in order to encourage parents to take an active role in their child's education.
4. Securing the assistance of bilingual volunteers to help with translation, communications, and homework, and
5. Remembering that the child has no control over the relocation and most times is going through a very traumatic period of readjustment.

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Playing in the Park 2.0: A Case for Social Network Sites in the TESOL classroom

James A. Kelley

Little work has yet to explore the potential for the use of social network sites (SNSs) in the English as a Second Language/English as a Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) classroom, but recent trends in teaching English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) research suggest that SNSs may be a powerful context for language learning: offering students access to online communities of practice and/or imagined communities (as interpreted by Norton et al.); increased control of co-constructed/negotiated identities; and opportunities for empowering positions in authentic intercultural exchanges. This paper gives an introductory theoretical justification for the integration of SNS in the ESL/EFL classroom in an effort to stimulate more practical teaching and research projects and plans.

Throughout my years living abroad, mostly in mainland China, whenever I felt my language learning routine growing stale or found myself drawing away from the target culture what I needed to do was go outside. Usually I "retreated" to a public park or a street side food stall. Mostly I would just sit. Sit and watch. Sometimes someone might engage me in conversation or I might be unable to contain my curiosity and begin asking silly, "foreigner" questions (Why is that man barking at that tree?). But more often than not, this experience of being out and about, being among if not with people of my target culture, helped me feel better. I do not know that it increased my linguistic competence or directly fostered social connections that would lead to greater cultural understanding, but I usually felt better and had found something to spark renewed interest in my target culture and language learning: old couples waltzing; young kids trying to get a flimsy kite to fly; teenage couples trying not to be seen; an old man and his bucket of water, painting Chinese characters on the concrete with a giant brush. Sometimes for this introvert in a foreign country, there was no substitute for such unmediated public spaces.

Networked Publics

In a recent introduction to a special issue on social network sites (SNSs) in the Journal of Computer-Mediated Communication, boyd and Ellison (2008) describe Myspace and Facebook as " 'networked publics' that support sociability, just as unmediated public spaces do" (p. 221). Much like my own experience in such public places in foreign countries, these networked publics have different groups engaged at different levels (boyd & Ellison, p. 220-221) and doing different things. And like those public spaces these networked publics can serve a vital purpose in cultural and linguistic learning. These 21st century gathering places are a largely untapped arena for language practice and development, one whose benefits may be of particular use to ESL/EFL students.

Imagined Communities

In his fascinating study on the birth of nationalism, Imagined Communities, Benedict Anderson (1991) points out the importance, among other factors, that the emergence of print capitalism played in the creation of national consciousnesses and eventually nations (in his formulation, imagined communities). Anderson's study shows how a new form of imagining "fraternity" was born out of a complex mix of cultural, technological, and economic changes in a way that seems to prefigure many of the changes we are witnessing today. Globalism and international market forces have changed the cultural and economic playing field in profound ways and the internet, particularly Web 2.0 services (e.g. blogs, wikis, and SNSs), has created a modality for a new international consciousness in much the same way that Anderson posits national consciousness, connected to vernaculars, traveled on newspapers of the past.

Anderson's work, especially his conception of imagined communities, has lately been adopted in the field of TESOL as a framework to shed light on issues of language, identity, and education. In the words of Kanno and Norton (2003), [its purpose is] to "examine how learners' affiliation with imagined communities might affect their learning trajectories" (p. 242). Most the work in TESOL conceives of these imagined communities, following Anderson, as "groups, intangible or not readily accessible, to which an individual desires to belong" (Carroll, Motha, & Price, 2008, p. 167) and sees language learning as aiding in attaining an identity associated with such communities (Carroll, Motha, & Price, 2008; Norton, 2001).

When we turn to considering the use of SNS, it is possible to see them (and specific groups within them) as virtual communities that students can aspire to join (imagined communities), but also ones that they can participate in at different

levels based on their individual needs, desires, and competencies. In other words, SNS can be conceived of as both imagined communities and online versions of communities of practice. What follows are some thoughts on what SNS as imagined communities and/or communities of practice might bring to the TESOL table.

A Case for SNS in TESOL

Learner Access

The multimodal nature of self-presentation on SNSs may offer new opportunities for self-expression for different levels of English competence. While classroom-based and traditional models of language learning, can cordon off beginning learners from full interaction with native speakers in some situations, SNSs allow students to form a profile that represents them through the use of uploaded pictures, music, video and links. These things can speak for the learner and perhaps open streams of connection and goodwill between participants that may be impossible to access via the traditional skills of speaking and writing. A new mother, by posting pictures of her newborn child, receives a number of comments telling her how "cute" her baby is. This learner now has a conversational topic and can receive authentic input and feedback on her chosen (and crafted) topic. She has initiated a genuine conversation in a way that her limited proficiency and/or access may not have allowed.

In many places, English study is an educational requirement but affords little opportunity for real communicative contexts. McCarty (2009) even describes a context in Japan in which serious English study could lead to exclusion from harmonious L1 relationships. This is not always the case though; often students lament and dread English because they have no real application for its use (one need only visit an "English corner" in a mainland Chinese city to see the fervent desire of many English students in China to "use their English"). Most SNS can be accessed internationally and present the possibility to interact with a global community of English speakers and learners in a diversity of contexts doing a number of different things (discussing, sharing, playing). There are countless experts and beginners waiting to be accessed via SNSs, blogs, chatrooms. These contexts can offer real interaction by joining any number of open groups. Interacting with an international community or simply watching the discussion of a community could be a form of what Wenger (1998) calls "legitimate peripheral participation." Students may have access to communities of practice previously unavailable. Even if students choose simply to browse open profiles rather than more active forms of participation, they may be able to imagine possibilities for themselves that others have indexed: "nonparticipation" could help to shape the

hopes of students as they see and imagine their desired place in such conversations.

Learner Control

The asynchronous (and often physically masked) nature of SNS profile creation and online interaction creates a situation in which learner language can be reviewed, researched, and chosen in the relative safety of the learner's time and space rather than formed on-the-fly through face-to-face interaction. This feature makes SNS work resemble written English (when compared to spoken), but it has the added feature of being a lower register that often invites direct response itself. Danet and Herring (2007) have pointed out this hybridity (like writing but also like speaking) in online communication (p. 3) and much of the writing that is done on SNSs reflect this hybridity. SNS work allows the time to prepare and compose writing plus the heightened possibility of getting quick feedback that is often a feature of interactional talk.

This interactive yet constructed nature of SNS posts and responses is one of its most fascinating characteristics in that it seems to approximate the co-constructed nature of identity as described by much post-structural criticism in which identity is conceived of as "dynamic, contradictory, and constantly changing across time and place" (p. 503). (Norton, 2006 gives a succinct introduction applied to field of TESOL). A profile author presents a position (e.g. new mother via written text or photo with baby) and profile-viewers respond to the authored position through comment functions. This feedback allows for the negotiation of a profile author's position through response to (or, even, deletion of) profile viewers' comments. It is an image of the co-constructed nature and negotiation of identity (Kelley, 2009).

And while the process of cross-cultural identity negotiation has the prospect of being quite traumatic (Norton, 1995 and Lam, 2000), sometimes leading to student non-participation (Norton, 2001), the controlled environment of SNSs allows for this to be done in a "safer" environment. Some research has suggested that it is a safe, face-saving environment (Pearson, 2009) and while this is true to some extent this seems to suggest that the online environment is in some way "less real." Regardless, there are certainly built in features that allow the identity to be more tightly controlled. Profile authors (in Facebook) have the ability to hide comments and feedback that they do not want public. This can amount to a sort of secret life or underground narrative about themselves, but still it is one that they are able to control (in theory) its dissemination. With the sometimes serious risk involved in L2 self-presentation, it helps to have a place to play with identity formation, to try on guises with, perhaps, less severe consequences.

Online SNSs seem like the perfect mode for this due to their co-constructed, yet author-controlled nature.

Learner Empowerment

One final but crucial consideration for the use of online SNSs in an EFL context is the notion of learner empowerment. While the internet has not turned out to be the level playing field that many hoped it would become—research suggests that gender even when not disclosed is still ascribed (Herring, 1996, p. 4)—it is still a place that can background (even hide) many of the physical "gating features" (Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008) used to ascribe identities. In addition it is a space that exists outside of and above nationalities and countries in a way that can create true intercultural interaction that empowers language learners, making them experts of their chosen field of expression. Park (2007) describes how a NS/NNS asymmetry was undone in interaction by a NNS's talk about their home country, and McCarthy (2009) describes Japanese EFL students' excitement in sharing about their country via videos on the internet. In discussing the power of Web 2.0 applications in computer-assisted language learning, Antonie Alm (2006) points out that one comment from "a real-life audience [apart from the teacher] is likely to have a stronger motivational impact on the learner" (p. 33).

A great number of students are already engaged and invested in online identities through their participation in communities of practice via SNSs (in L1 or L2). Because many students are already invested in SNS identity and its implications in their lives, to integrate an emphasis on language development into a format both motivating and already seen as worthy of investment may be helpful in leading toward learner autonomy (an important feature of learner empowerment). Halvorsen's work (2009) with SNSs in Japan showed that almost all students were excited about the prospect of doing work on SNSs in an EFL class. SNS can create a platform for such motivational, truly intercultural, learner-empowering exchanges.

CONCLUSION

Very little work is yet to explore the possibilities that exist for the use of SNS in the ESL/EFL classroom (Halvorsen, 2009 and McCarthy, 2009 are notable exceptions), but it is my hope that considering them in the light of imagined communities, communities of practice, and recent research in TESOL focused on learners and their identities in language learning contexts will stimulate investigation, exploration and experimentation leading to exciting new projects in teaching, learning and research.

Regardless of what we might call student participation in these new contexts (online communities of practice in which students participate in dialogue with others or imagined communities in which students project where they would like their language learning to take them), it seems a worthwhile activity, a sitting in (or playing in) the 21st century public park. It is a context in which there are so many varied activities and different ways to participate that it may be possible to simply sit and observe and somehow come away feeling better, to come away a better learner, to come away with a new identity. To be changed like my time on those park benches changed me.

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Syntactic Error Analysis in a Short-term Intensive English Program

Danny Hinson and Kabyong Park

This study focuses on a short-term English immersion program held in the United States and designed for Korean college students. The authors attempt to describe and analyze the syntactic errors found in EFL learners' journals to explore the issue of what needs to be done to improve their English proficiency. The findings of their systematic syntactic errors are expected to be beneficial to both ESL/EFL teachers and students in their attempt to improve their command of the English language.

Because English has long become the global language in many fields, many EFL learners try to learn English for international communication in both spoken and written modes. Though Korean students spend an enormous amount of time and energy to improve their English--more accurately, their English scores--they find the results have been unsatisfactory in terms of their command of English. Unfortunately, English has been simply an academic subject in Korea for a long time. Since the need for English proficiency is rapidly expanding, many Korean students go abroad for both long-term and short-term training to narrow the gap between their expectations and reality. However, not all the language programs abroad have proven to be successful and not all the students have succeeded in improving their English proficiency.

The central purpose of this paper is to report on an assessment of a part of the curriculum of a short-term English/Culture program held in the United States. More specifically it focuses on Korean students' writing samples to find their repeated common errors. At the heart of this analysis is the hope that an understanding of the gap between the students' mother language and the target language will greatly help reduce the chance of their failing to meet their expectations, specifically, to improve their English proficiency through a short-term language program. A part of their effort to improve the command of a foreign language should be to narrow the gap, that is, to decrease the number and range of systematic errors.

At its basic level, a language is a system of rules. Whereas it is true that there is some common core that all human languages share, each language has a unique set of rules that dictates the way communication ought to be carried out in speaking and writing. The learners of a second language are expected to make mistakes and errors in the target language they are learning. In fact, a great portion of the learning process involves making mistakes and errors. In other words, nobody can learn or acquire a language, whether it is a native, a foreign, or a second language without experiencing failures. One way to recognize errors is to study writings of the learners, since the sentences are readily accessible. That is why this study has chosen the learners' writings for the present analysis with the aim to investigate and analyze the patterns in the syntactic errors that students make in their daily journals.

The findings of the generalized and repeated errors of the EFL learners are beneficial to both students and teachers of English to Korean students. First, it is extremely helpful for the students since the errors are indicative of what their weak areas are. By understanding and looking at the errors that they make, the students can enhance the understanding of the system of English sentences. Often, students consider the rules of grammar as something to memorize rather than something to use. It is helpful for the teachers of English as well to recognize the syntactic errors of EFL students since they might be able to understand the gap that the EFL learners have to overcome. Moreover, the native teachers can become aware of the syntactic rules that they are sometimes not aware of. Hopefully, error analysis lets EFL teachers explain why their students commit a particular type of error.

Review of the Literature

During the past decade, error/grammar correction in second language writing classes has been the subject of much controversy. A number of research articles have been published supporting both sides of the discussion. Truscott's (1996) strong position on grammar correction in L2 writing suggests that error correction is harmful and should be abolished. Truscott claimed that error correction research in L2 writing was conclusive in demonstrating that grammar correction was ineffective in bringing about improvement in student writing. Polio et al. (1998) supports Truscott's thesis by reporting no advantage for error correction. According to Fregeau (1999) and Cohen, & Cavalcanti (1990), the outright correction of surface errors has been found to be inconsistent and unclear and overemphasizes the negative. Fregeau also suggests that the method of teachers indicating the presence or types of errors without correction is also ineffective.

A number of other researchers disagree with Truscott's thesis. Ferris (2004)

completed a comprehensive study that examined the issue of error correction in improving writing skills. She reported that several studies and findings--Chandler (2003), Ferris and Holt (2000), and Frantzen (1995)--indicated that students who received error correction over time improved their accuracy. Fatham and Walley (1990) discovered that when students received grammar feedback that indicated the place but not the type of errors, the students significantly improved their grammar scores on subsequent rewrites of the papers. Frodesen (2001) concurred with this idea by noting that indirect feedback is more useful than direct correction.

Although a number of researchers point to the futility of surface-level error correction, very few studies have examined second language students and second language instructors' preferences for feedback on writing assignments. Students often want and expect feedback from their teachers on surface-level errors. Radecki and Swales (1988) found in their survey of 59 ESL students' attitudes toward feedback on their written work that ESL teachers might lose credibility with their students if they do not correct all surface errors. In a similar study, Leki (1991) found that students equate good writing with error-free writing and that they expect and want all errors in their papers to be corrected.

Evidence from the various findings from research on error correction suggests that more research is needed to explore more adequately the necessity for or against the correction of errors in EFL students' writing. Ferris (2004) concluded from her study of published research, the field is still at Square One. The existing research base is incomplete and inconsistent, and it would be premature to formulate any conclusions about this topic. Future research is needed before formulating any concrete theses.

METHODOLOGY

A short-term intensive language program (STILP) is usually defined as a program approximately one month or less in duration that takes place in the target language culture and includes a minimum of three hours of daily classroom instruction in the target language. The Winter English/Culture Program, annually organized and run by the English Language Institute of a small liberal arts college located in Eastern Tennessee for a period of four consecutive weeks, is a clear example of a STILP. This paper is of a case study of the program held from January 11 until February 10, 2007. The participants were all young Korean college students (ages 19 to 24 years, the average age being 22.3), mostly sophomores and juniors. Eight students, who attended a Korean university, a sister institution of the liberal arts college, participated in this camp. They were housed with native English speakers in one of the dormitories on the campus.

The curriculum of the STILP consists of a combination of language classes and a set of cultural activities. Each day, students take two hours of listening and speaking classes and another two hours of reading and writing classes. One hour is reserved twice a week for grammar to reinforce their knowledge of the system of English sentences. Thus, a total of eighty-eight hours of language classes are given to the students during the month-long program. In addition to those language classes, the camp organizes daily activities to encourage the students to experience American culture. Students participate in various types of activities each day such as concerts, sporting events, conversation clubs, seminars and home stays. It is not easy to calculate the amount of time for those cultural activities, since some of the activities are not required for every student. However, generally the students spent more time in cultural activities than class hours.

The classes were taught by two experienced ESL teachers with Master degrees in TESL and significant overseas teaching experience. The writing instructor had significant English teaching experience at a Korean university. One instructor was responsible for the spoken language class in the morning and the other for the written English class. Each class used a textbook and some supplementary materials. Homework and projects were given every day to enhance interaction with American collegians. The project came about as a result of discussions among the ESL teachers that showed their keen interest in what the students' problem areas were and what should be done to help them overcome their difficulties.

The project was carried out as a part of the overall design of the program. For the writing class, all the program participants were required to write eight short essay papers throughout the STILP, on average two essays per week. Then, the instructor of the writing class assigned each student's journals to two native speakers of English with Masters' degrees in TESL and let them make corrections whenever necessary. The two judges were asked to locate clear syntactic errors and note these errors using a standard set of symbols indicating the place and type of error. Thus, many of the students' awkward expressions that sounded odd but were somewhat acceptable were not included in the current analysis.

The topics of the essays are given below:

My First Impression of the U. S. A.
Culture Shock
My Best Friend
My Life Dream
The Eternity Flower

My Experience at the Dixie Stampede
My Homestay Story
My Experience at C-N

Specific instructions were given to the students. They were given twenty-four hours per topic and were allowed to consult dictionaries. There was no minimum requirement in terms of the length of the papers. At the same time, however, the students were told that each paper was expected to be about ten to fifteen lines. The collected papers showed that the length ranged from eight to thirty five lines.

The researchers collected those corrected papers at the end of the camp and investigated their errors with the hope of finding some generalizations in those errors and mistakes. Then, they attempted to categorize those repeated errors. Errors can be informative of the gap between a person's native language L1 and the target language L2 since students are supposed to make 'systematic' errors. The consistency of making the same errors would indicate that those errors also constitute a system that needs to be corrected.

RESULTS

The ill-formed sentences written by the EFL learners can be subcategorized into mistakes and errors. Mistakes are occasional lapses that people make in speech or writing. Thus, even native speakers could make mistakes even though they are aware of all the rules of the language. The mistakes might refer to those deviations that the students are unable to correct by themselves. In that sense, some of the deviant utterances under analysis might be simple mistakes, but, for the sake of convenience, the researchers took all the collected ill-formed utterances into consideration.

The average number of lines per composition was a little more than fourteen, which is approximately what the teachers expected. As the program continued, the length of the papers tended to increase. Thus, most of the long papers were written during the second half of the program. Each separate paper included sentences ranging from three words to a maximum of twenty-eight words.

The total number of errors collected from the writings of eight students was 1,370. On average, a student was found to have made 172 errors: twenty-two per paper. The two judges reported that they were more or less surprised to find that the students were able to express their ideas quite clearly, after a short period of instruction, though they repeated some common errors.

Determiners

It is not surprising that the most prevalent errors come from the syntactic category of determiners. In fact, these errors account for 37 percent of the total number of errors.

First, the omission of the definite article is the most frequent problem. Some examples of these errors follow, and blanks indicate where the definite article is needed.

- __ symbol of __ Korean national flower
- I put __ bag beside __ big bed in my room.
- my first impression of __ U. S. A. is fine.
- After __ performance, we went to upstairs.
- The performances were terrific because __ music was exciting.

Note that the students do not always fail to use the definite article, as shown in sentence e above. These errors are expected since the Korean language does not have the rule that a singular common noun cannot be used alone; it must be preceded by one of the determiners in English. This is one of the most restrictive rules of the language without any exception. Even though Korean possesses a word corresponding to the definite article, the use of the word ku 'the' is not required in front of a noun if there is mutual understanding between the speaker and the hearer about what they are talking about. For example, the student omitted the definite article in sentence b with the assumption that the hearer already knew which bag and which bed the speaker was referring to.

The students also made frequent errors in the use of the indefinite article.

- They say hello to me with __ smile
- I met him when I was __ freshman.
- Anna has __ red face.

The Korean sentence corresponding to the English one I am a student would be I student am. The absence of the indefinite article is noted in the sample sentences. Thus, again, the difference between the two languages in the required use of a determiner is responsible for these errors. Or, as an alternative, it could be that the omission of the indefinite article is a different story. Strictly speaking, the information on the number of nouns is redundant, since in sentence g, for example, the first person singular subject 'I' is a singular pronoun. Thus, the complement noun phrase 'freshman' does not logically have to be preceded by the indefinite article. In that sense, these errors might be understandable if one considers that in contrast to English where agreement plays a significant role in syntax, Korean

does not exhibit rich agreement. Consider the following example: We saw movie.

The same line of analysis could hold for the ill-formed sentence of this example. If both parties of communication assume that, as a default case, they saw one movie, not two, the indefinite article carries redundant information to the Korean learner.

Though not as omission, overuses of indefinite articles are also found.

- I think she is sharp and has a charisma.
- I brought the my book to America.

These errors clearly indicate that these Korean students do not have a complete knowledge of the class and subclasses of nouns and, more importantly, the use of determiners. While it is clear that these students were taught about determiners in the English language, they must still be thinking what they desire to communicate in Korean and then, using English words, transcribing those ideas into the target language, English. This category of errors is a huge portion of the deviant expressions. If the students are carefully trained in the use of determiners alone, it would not be difficult to decrease the number of errors they make.

Verb Forms

The second most common error in the students' writings is incorrect verb forms. They include the incorrect use of verb tense, the lack of tense agreement, and incorrect use of verb forms. Approximately one quarter of their errors rest within the syntactic category of verbs. The underlined words indicate the misuse of verb forms.

Simple careless errors are found below, where no tensed verb is given but is required for the predicate of a sentence.

- When someone say hello to me, ...
- She speak Korean well.
- He thinks it __ strange.

English treats the third person singular noun differently from other nouns in terms of number agreement between the subject and the following verb, and is therefore "marked." Thus, it might be natural that all the ESL learners, not just Koreans, would fail to inflect the verb with the affix -s in the present tense.

Another error, tense agreement, is one of the most common mistakes that most ESL learners make. This group of students is no exception. Some examples are found below.

- Before I arrive here, I didn't have experience of going U. S. A. so I thought that America is a powerful country.
- I wish that there are shows like this in Korea.
- When I went to the building, there are a lot of tables and chairs.
- I change my mind and I want to inform....

The class of auxiliaries also poses a problem to some students. It is interesting to note that there was no misuse of auxiliary verbs in the other students' papers, though it is not certain whether they are completely knowledgeable of the system of auxiliaries.

- I studied English for a long time.
- When I will go back to Korea, I will mail them often.

The category of past participles and infinitives might not be easy to learn.

- Everything is fine but something is not good comparing with Korea.
- I wanted stay more.
- I also gave Korean drum shape key ring.
- I have study English for ten years.

One thing that needs to be mentioned is that the students do not show many instances of misplacement of verbs. Considering the crucial difference between the two languages in the direction of headedness, it is a very surprising result. Korean is a typical head-final language, while English is a head-initial one. Thus, one might expect that the EFL learners whose native languages are head-final would have difficulty in placing a verb right next to the subject of a sentence. However, the writing samples show that they can place verbs in the correct places with much consistency.

Prepositions

In turn, it is somewhat surprising that these Korean students show many instances of the misuse or non-use of prepositions in various parts of their writings. Korean also has a class of particles that might correspond to English prepositions, though they follow nominals. Remember that Korean is a head-final language. These errors account for eleven percent of their total errors. The omission of prepositions can be exemplified by the following.

- Mr. Hatkins drove us __ Cherokee Dam.
- His hobby is listening __ music.
- It has existed since long time ago __ all parts of Korea.
- Mr. Yanell travelled __ Malaysia to preach people.

Some instances of the overuse of prepositions is also found.

- Since in 2002, I have took an active part.
- After that performance I went to upstairs.
- We explained about the plan.

The lexical difference between an English word and its Korean counterpart, especially the class of verbs, seems to be responsible for most of the omission and overuse of prepositions. For example, the Korean verb tut 'listen, hear' can be used as a transitive verb taking a noun phrase as a complement. Thus, this Korean verb is not followed by a postposition. Then, the ungrammaticality of f, for example, can be viewed as an example of lexical transfer.

- We studied bible in the ground floor.
- Holly is an announcer in Carson Newman campus.

The misuse of prepositions illustrated above might result because the same postposition '-ese' that has a much wider range of uses to refer basically to any location in Korean. Thus, it can be used with a variety of nominals such as a country, a room, a floor or a desk to make up locative phrases. Again, there exists another example of interference of the mother language.

Other types of errors

Other less prevalent errors include those deviances in number agreement, omission and misuse of conjunctions, and incorrect use of vocabulary. Consider, for example, the following data.

- I learned many things through class.
- These were interesting class to me.
- Last weekends, we went to Mr. and Mrs. Yarnell's house.

Number agreement clearly presents another example of transfer of L1 into the target language, since the Korean language is not really sensitive to the number of noun phrases. Thus the agreement in number between the elements of a sentence is often optional in Korean. One might predict that the same student who makes the errors above would not violate the rule of number agreement in other

occasions and produce perfect sentences like ‘These were interesting classes to me.’ Both examples below are acceptable in the Korean language.

- three student
- three students

Some students have a hard time in using conjunctions. Though these are minor local errors, if a student repeats the same kind of errors, they should be pointed out and corrected.

- Jefferson City is very quiet and buildings are low, ___ beautiful.
- There were many kinds of animals like horses, doves, ___ roosters.

One of the things that one can safely generalize with respect to any L2 learners would be that they make semantic errors. In other words, they often show incorrect and/or awkward use of vocabulary in both written and spoken language. Consider the following examples.

- When I make mistakes, they lead me very kindly.
- In Korea, doors are separated from floor and protect people’s personality.
- He likes music so he always keeps MP3 player.
- He was finding someone who stood in front of green screen.

Though these examples might be considered syntactically acceptable, they contain semantic mistakes or errors. The underlined content words should be replaced by other appropriate words: correct, privacy, carries and looking for, respectively in sentences h through k above. Again, one might conclude that the students think in Korean and try to match each Korean word needed to convey the ideas with an English word that he or she is familiar with. For example, the Korean verb caj can mean both ‘to find’ and ‘to look for.’ Thus the role of transfer lets the student use the simpler verb find in his attempt to write in English in k.

The findings from the study indicate that many of the grammatical errors result from L1 interference. Often the students attempted to directly translate from their first language into English, a common practice of many second language learners. However, it is surprising to note that the students do not show many instances of the misplacement of verbs. Considering the crucial difference between the two languages in the direction of headedness, it is a very surprising result. Korean is a typical head-final language, while English is a head-initial one. Thus, one might expect that the EFL learners whose native languages are head-final would have difficulty in placing a verb right next to the subject of a sentence. But, the writing samples show that they can place verbs in the correct places with much

consistency. It is also somewhat surprising that these Korean students show many instances of the misuse or non-use of prepositions in various parts of their writings. The Korean language has a class of particles that might correspond to English prepositions, though they follow nominals. These errors account for eleven percent of their total errors.

DISCUSSION

Error analysis is an essential tool for diagnosis and evaluation of the learners' problems, which, in turn, help EFL teachers better understand their job of teaching English. While it is true that the analysis of the sixty-four essays written by a small group of eight college students during the period of four weeks would not suffice to come to any conclusion on the issue under discussion, the researchers still believe that they have found some general patterns from the students' repeated errors.

First, the current analysis shows that the interference of their mother language plays a significant role in the process of learning their target language. Brown (2001) states that the role of interference is the greatest obstacle to overcome. A great portion of their syntactic errors result from the "unconscious" transfer of their mother language structures to those of the target language. It might be safe to say that Korean students, for example, use English in writing in Korean. Thus, most of their errors result from the gap between the two languages in terms of syntactic rules. The researchers also find that most of the deviant utterances writings are local errors, not global ones that violate the overall structure of a sentence. Thus, a majority of the errors have to do with the use of such features as tense and agreement. As far as the parts of speech of words are concerned, the students continue to commit some serious syntactic errors with structure words such as determiners, auxiliary verbs, conjunctions and prepositions.

It is clearly evident that many EFL learners spend a great deal of time learning about the rules of the English language, but they are not trained to "use" those rules. The best way to improve the command of a foreign language, whether written or spoken, is undoubtedly to keep practicing in order to "use" the rules of the target language. In writing assignments teachers should provide consistent feedback using a standard set of symbols or markings to indicate the place and type of error. Students need to be trained to the kinds of corrections to make based on each symbol and given the opportunity to self-correct. Indirect feedback along with teacher-student conferencing has also found to be an effective tool for improving grammar errors in writing (Fregeau,1999).

Krashen (1983) proposes that extensive reading improves learners' grammar skills. Requiring extensive reading allows the students to become more familiar with the grammatical structure of English. In addition to reading, students can read their own writings and make corrections by themselves, since much of any learning process involves a certain aspect of self-learning. With the current emphasis on process-writing, students can share first drafts with other second language learners for feedback noting grammatical errors using the standard set of symbols being used in the class.

A future study worth exploring would be a diachronic analysis of the program participants. The students consistently repeat some particular syntactic errors, while their later samples show a marked improvement in other categories as well as their confidence in the use of English vocabulary.

CONCLUSION

A four-week STILP is not a long time to expect a rapid growth of students' English skills. But, considering the intensity of the program and the amount of work on the part of students, one month could amount to perhaps a whole year in terms of the amount of work and energy that the students invest in learning English in Korea. Four weeks could be long enough to expect students to show improvement on some aspect of grammar, particularly, in a certain area such as omission of determiners, making questions and so on.

Teacher provided error feedback is expected from Korean students attending the intensive English program. Providing error feedback in such a way as to encourage rather than discourage the students involves careful decision making by the instructor. A variety of options for error feedback--from direct correction to fairly indirect and less informative approaches--are available to the instructor. In choosing an approach the needs of the students as well as the purpose of the course need to be taken into account.

If teachers better understand the syntactic errors of the Korean EFL learners, they should be in a better position to offer better training and specific curricula to address the common errors of the students. It is hoped that the findings of this research can provide a possible answer to the question of how to design a short-term intensive English program to make it as beneficial as possible to the ESL learners.

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Teacher-Student Conferences in ESL Writing

Martha Michieka

Writing conferences can be of great advantage both to the ESL writing instructor and the student; but just like any other skill, good conferences require time and effort. This paper revisits the argument for the popularity of conferences in ESL writing classes, and then presents some characteristics of successful and unsuccessful writing conferences. While there are no standard guidelines that will work for all writing conferences, there are some general tips. The paper concludes by giving tips and suggestions from available literature on how to get the best out of writing conferences.

College composition instructors spend much time responding to students' writing. The responses may be hand written on the margins of a student's paper or, with the current online composition classes, the comments may be typed and communicated to the student through some online media. Regardless of the mode of communication, the process of responding to students' writing can cause anxiety and frustration to the teacher and the student. For instructors, the frustration results from their never being sure of how their students will respond to feedback on their papers and whether the comments will result in improved drafts (Ferris, 2007). Students, on the other hand, may be frustrated because they do not understand the comments on their papers, or, even when they understand the comments, they do not always know how to apply these comments in their revision to improve their writing. The anxiety is even more intensified in ESL writing due to the cultural differences involved. If, for instance, an instructor makes an indirect suggestion, a practice that is common and acceptable in the US classroom, a student from a culture where teachers always give direct commands might ignore the comments thinking, " I thought that was just a suggestion."

Despite the amount of time spent in giving feedback, research does not unanimously agree that such responses help improve students' drafts (Brannon & Knoblauch, 1982; Ferris, 1995; Ferris, 1997; Hyland, 2000; Sommers, 1982; Sperling & Freedman, 1987; Truscott, 1996; Zamel, 1985). Brannon & Knoblauch (1982), for example, in their review of studies of teacher responses to L1 writing reported that students, in most cases, did not understand teachers' written

comments, and even when the students understood the comments, they did not always know how to apply the comments in revision to improve their writings. Sommers (1982) made a similar observation arguing that written comments are "disembodied remarks--one absent writer responding to another absent writer" (p.155). It is within this backdrop that writing conferences have come to be considered a significant part of the writing instruction. As Brinko (1993) argues, for feedback to be valuable it should be conveyed in various forms. Oral feedback, in particular, especially when combined with written responses, seems to facilitate improvement (Bitchener, et al., 2005). A writing conference, which is a one-on-one meeting of a student and instructor, provides an opportunity for both the writing instructor and the student to clarify any misunderstanding.

Writing conferences operate on several assumptions and theories about writing, including the notion that writing is a social activity, it is collaborative, it is done within context, and it has intended readers. Conferencing is also based on the social constructionist theory, which views language and writing as "social activities" (McAndrew & Reigstad, 2001, p.1). This theory views language as a construct of human beings that allows individuals to connect with others, and this interaction makes language learning possible. A writer is considered an individual trying to connect with other individuals through writing. Applied to the writing class then, the theory postulates that a composition student needs to interact with others in order to learn a language. The writing instructor is considered "a more experienced writer and language user who asks questions and supports the students to help them progress" (McAndrew & Reigstad, 2001, p.3). The writing conferences, unlike written feedback, provide an appropriate context for the instructor to offer this kind of support to the students.

In collaborative learning, a student writer is not seen as a lonely struggler but as a member of society working with other members to construct knowledge. The teacher is an older member and facilitator of this collaboration discussing issues with students to help them construct their own ideas (Bruffee, 1973; Reither & Vipond, 1989). In ESL classrooms, these new roles can be problematic if not played well, and the success or failure of a conference may hinge on how the participants perform their roles.

Some Arguments for the Popularity of Writing Conferences in ESL

Many college writing instructors hold one-on-one conferences with their students to give feedback on student writing. Conferences provide a forum for students to seek clarification of teachers' comments and allow for negotiation of ideas between the instructor and the student (Carnicelli, 1980; Fassler, 1978; Freedman, 1987;Freedman & Sperling, 1985; Harris, 1986; Zamel, 1985). Since students

meet one on one with the teacher, they can ask questions that they might have been afraid to ask in the classroom. Those who are uncomfortable about their verbal ability may get more time to use other forms of communication, such as gestures, to get their message across. The teacher also has an opportunity to ask questions and to ensure that feedback has been understood before the student leaves the conference. Some studies have even envisioned conferences as warm, supportive and orderly learning environments making it possible for even introverted students to express themselves (Peyton et al., 1994).

Despite the popularity of conferences, their success is not obvious. If a conference is defined as a conversation between an instructor and a student, then the factors that make everyday conversations successful or unsuccessful might apply for conferences as well. Although the students might be different, the ultimate goal of a writer's conference is to improve a student's writing ability, and thus a successful conference is one that leads to fruitful revision and improvement of a student's writing. Some conferences succeed while others fail, and as literature shows, not all conferences result in effective revisions (Ferris, 2007; Goldstein & Conrad, 1990). Certain characteristics have been noted to be common among failing conferences. Reviewing these characteristics will help instructors avoid making the same mistakes.

Common Characteristics of Unsuccessful Conferences

The following is a list of what experts consider features of unsuccessful conferences:

1. In most conferences rated as less successful, the teacher dominates both the time and agenda, refusing to allow for any negotiation. The teacher also becomes the expert refusing to acknowledge that the work being discussed is the student's (Carnicelli, 1980; Newkirk, 1989). While it is true that ESL students know that they need their teacher's feedback and may be disappointed if the teacher withholds it (Ferris, 2007), they will be equally disappointed if they are not allowed to clarify their points.

2. The teacher identifies a problem "that does not exist" and "suggests remedies before the student is even convinced that a problem exists" (Newkirk, 1989, p.323). Since the student is not convinced that there is a problem, she/he leaves the conference frustrated and resistant to any suggested revisions.

3. The teacher dictates what the student should write. Walker and Elias (1987) observed that the conferences that were rated low had a certain characteristic: "…the tutors often [took] over the task and [told] their students what to write

and how" (p. 279). Walker and Elias (1987) give an example of one conference scenario where a student was having difficulties composing because she was not sure of the subject matter; during the conference, the teacher explained to the student everything that she needed to write. Although the student left with ideas for that particular paper, she did not gain transferable skills that she could apply in future writing assignments. In this case, the purposes and goals of a conference, which include helping writers become independent, motivating them, and attending to their needs were not met, and thus the conference was not successful (Harris, 1986; Harris & Silva, 1993).

4. The conference focuses on lower order concerns before handling the higher concerns. Sometimes students want teachers to help correct their grammar even before the ideas have been fully developed, especially if their earlier writing experiences focused mainly on grammar. However, both the teacher and student will be disappointed and frustrated if they concentrate on sentence level concerns before handling content and organization issues since the student will have to do further editing after adding more content and reorganizing the draft.

5. The student is unprepared and unwilling to negotiate meaning. A one-on-one conference, just like a regular class meeting, requires preparation. If the student has not done his/her homework before coming to the conference, it is most likely that the conference will fail. For instance if the conference was scheduled to discuss a first draft, but the student fails to turn in that draft, the goals of that conference will not be met.

Although this long list of characteristics of failed conferences might cause teachers to fear that most writing conferences are likely to fail, there are still a number of conferences that turn out successful, and these, too, have particular characteristics.

Common Characteristics of Successful Conferences

Regardless of how success is defined, negotiation of meaning seems to be the key determinant of success. Successful conferences share some characteristics as discussed below:
1. The teacher creates a deliberate critical conversation patiently tolerating hesitant, repetitious and awkward dialogue (Harris 1986; Newkirk, 1989; Walker & Elias 1987). While tension can arise in any situation, hesitancy in ESL conferences is heightened by the students' limited language ability. Newkirk (1989) acknowledges that even those conferences rated as successful have their weak points; there are times when the parties involved almost reach a dead end in their conversation, but with patience they still find their way out. The goal of the

conference is achieved: the student finds some sense of direction for his/her next draft. The writing instructor resists the temptation to jump in during the dialogue and offer a quick solution to a student's problem but instead encourages self-evaluation. The teacher then builds on the student's self-evaluation. If given time, students can come up with self-evaluation, and this helps them build transferable skills that they can use independently to evaluate their work.
Ultimately, students want to produce their own papers and build their own ideas; they want to learn skills they can use later, and they benefit from conferences that show them how to do things for themselves.

2. The successful conference attends to one problem at a time and the most important one first. While a conference can address diverse issues such as ideas, content, point of view, organization, sentence structure and diction, teachers should consider prioritizing problems that will hinder the reader's understanding (Harris & Silva, 1993). If for instance the student needs to work on development of ideas, then the focus should be on probing the student to generate more ideas instead of addressing sentence level concerns at this point. The student should be reminded that all writing concerns cannot be addressed in one sitting.

3. The teacher shifts the roles and process to meet the students' cultural expectations (Bowen, 1993; Pattney-Chavez & Ferris, 1997). ESL students bring diverse backgrounds to the conferences and teachers must admit that they cannot give uniform treatment to all their students during the conferences. Some students might need more nurturing than others before they can assume the roles they are expected to take during conferences. For instance students who come from cultures where the teacher is an unquestionable authority will be very uncomfortable asking questions or commenting during the conference. They may also expect the teacher to play the role of one who imparts knowledge and themselves as recipients of this knowledge.

McAndrew and Reigstad (2001) have discussed three kinds of conferences that can be adopted depending on the context and the culture the student brings to the conference: student centered, collaborative, and teacher centered conferences. In a student-centered conference, the student does most of the talking. In a collaborative centered conference, the instructor and the student share equally in the conversation, although the instructor initiates the move most of the time. In a teacher-centered conference, the instructor takes up the role of a traditional teacher becoming an authority and giving directions. Gradually the teacher and the student will adopt a style that works best for them. Depending on the length of the conference, a teacher can initiate all the three types of conferences. For instance, if a student is unwilling to collaborate, the teacher might start by giving direction, and as the student warms up to the conversation, the teacher can then

gradually let the student take the lead.

4. The teacher finds a right balance between encouragement and positive criticism. ESL students like any other learners appreciate encouragement, and as Harris & Silva (1993) suggest, these students need to be reminded that "errors are a natural part of language learning" (p.526). At the beginning of the conference the instructor can begin by asking the students what they like about their work. The teacher spends a few minutes pointing out and commending on what the student has done well. We all thrive on encouragement, and most students will appreciate this encouragement and may be motivated to discuss areas of difficulty. The teacher, however, should not just stop at the encouragement level. Literature shows that while ESL students want to be encouraged to learn and accomplish projects on their own, they also acknowledge that they need expert correction and feedback, and they will be disappointed if the teacher fails to offer that feedback (Ferris, 2007).

5. The student takes an active role in his/her learning by preparing for the conference and actively negotiating meaning during the conference. Despite possible language and cultural barriers such as the expected physical distance to be maintained between the learner and the instructor to the rules of turn taking during conversation, in the successful conference the student focuses on thinking through ideas. The instructor encourages active participation by assigning the students some work to do in preparation for the conference. This could be completing a draft, an outline or a list of questions to be discussed during the conference. While the conference is going on, the student should be encouraged to take notes that might assist with revision.

CONCLUSION

While there are no standard guidelines that will work for all conferences, there are some general tips. The instructor should strive to create an environment that will allow students to negotiate meaning. Such an environment can be created by requiring students to complete specific tasks in preparation for the conference. Students should be encouraged to talk and lead the discussion. Such encouragement will not only lead to good responses from the students, but it can help the instructor to understand the students' concerns about their papers.

Negotiation of meaning is learned, and both the teacher and student will improve as they practice. Many ESL students will find the conferencing process to be a new experience, and they might need help to adjust to the new roles they are required to take. It is important to recognize the uniqueness of each student; what works for one might not work for another.

Instructors need to set clear, manageable goals for each conference and acknowledge that it is not possible to solve all writing problems during one conference. As long as both parties remember that the goal of each conference is improvement and not perfection, then they will be encouraged by every little improvement that comes with each meeting. Well-organized conferences can be of great benefit both to the teacher and the student; but just like any other skill, good conferences require time and effort.

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Professional and Personal Development through Self-Reflection

Susan Garnett

As an Oral Skills teacher, I am constantly touting the importance of "self-monitoring" to my students. The key to improving pronunciation, intonation, and even presentation skills, I tell them, is to develop the skill of "noticing" when you've done it wrong. Then you will be able to better focus on that aspect of your speech, and do it better the next time around. Several studies have indicated the connection between noticing and learning (Adams, 2003; Mackey, 2006; Schmidt&Froda, 1986; Izumi&Bigelow, 2000), suggesting that the absence of reflection could hinder a student's learning progress. For second language learners, that information is quite motivating, but what about second language teachers? What prevents us from "fossilizing" in our practice as ESL instructors? Self-reflection is one of the few professional development tools that can be practiced individually and on a daily basis. It provides teachers with the opportunity to create and analyze a dialogue about their own experiences and is a key tool for professional and personal growth. "Unless teachers engage in critical reflection and ongoing discovery they stay trapped in unexamined judgments, interpretations, assumptions, and expectations" (Larrivee, 2000, p. 294).

Despite the fact that self-reflection has been an established means of professional development for quite some time, it is still generally overlooked in a teacher's overall practice. There seems to be some good reasons why teachers do not keep up the self-reflection habit. Things like lack of time or lack of support from surrounding colleagues or school administration contribute to a teacher's sense of priorities. It is difficult to find a quiet moment to ponder the effectiveness of your teaching when there are meetings to attend, lessons to plan, and papers to grade.

I am an example of one who neglected self-reflection. After graduate school, I dropped the practice. Adjusting to a new career was enough for me to handle at the moment. Sometimes, though, after teaching a class, I would think "Maybe, if I would've adjusted the groups and made their tasks more specific or rotated the members, that lesson would have gone smoother," or "That transition was a little awkward; maybe a warm-up would help." Since I didn't record these thoughts into any sort of journal, or in any way at all, I typically did not remember my musings and any helpful hints were turned into merely fleeting thoughts. I was short-circuiting my professional development without even realizing it. After a

few instances of not being able to remember what I had thought about, I decided to pull out and dust off the self-reflection tool that I had been taught to use to see if it could help me in focusing and refining my classes. I recorded my thoughts daily for each class that I taught for the first two weeks of the term. This consisted of eight class periods each for two high-advanced oral skills classes and four class periods for a low-advanced listening class.

After completing this "trial period" of self-reflection, I was better able to focus on my teaching practice and learned a few things about my teaching. First of all, I found that, for me, self-reflection is a critical tool in the process of fine-tuning activities, lessons, or teaching styles. This is particularly helpful to me since I teach more than one class each day, and each class has different dynamics and needs to be approached in different ways to be successful. A prime example of this was the two high-advanced Oral Skills classes I taught. Excerpts from my teaching journal show the differences between the classes, even though the material was the same:

Class 1- I think I always need good warm-ups for this class! I just started with the "any weekend plans?" line…this class is so quiet! Nothing. Only a few comments about homework (the other class was extremely interactive and talkative. We had jokes about hair cutting, and I was able to give examples of some cultural items like wedding showers, gift registries, and gift receipts). I had some trouble with students paying attention. This may be due to sitting next to their friends.
Class 2- I felt pleased when this class was over! It's amazing how the same lecture feels so different the second time around, with a different group of people. This class is much more responsive and attentive, and not at all chatty (unlike the other group). The class paid attention to, followed, and responded to the lecture, my questions, jokes in class, etc. Also, probably because it was my second time, I was able to more clearly explain the material.

Because of what I recorded in my teaching journal, I was better able to follow-up with an idea from start to finish. For example, again I noticed that a warm-up would be helpful before students began their presentations. The next week, when student were giving their speeches, I commented in my journal, "personal experience speeches, so I started with a warm-up this time and it really helped transition into the speeches." The act of writing an idea down provided a source of motivation for me to actually turn the idea into reality.

Because of this process of self-reflecting, I was not only able to see my teaching and classes more clearly, but I could also view myself with more clarity as well. I noticed two main things about my personality while reviewing my teaching journal. I tend to be forgetful, and I tend to be negative. There were a few times

specifically that I noted in my journal that I had almost forgotten or did forget something I needed to bring to class because I hadn't written it down. Another time I wrote, "I forgot to write down my reflection here after class was finished. I knew there was something that I wanted to think about how to improve, but because I didn't write it down, I forgot it!" Now, I keep something to jot notes on close at hand. I also noticed in my journal that only once did I comment that I felt really positive about the way the class had gone. My other entries are filled with thoughts and observations about how something "could have been better." This in itself is not bad, but it helped me realize that there is a difference between developing yourself as a teacher and being hypercritical. This revelation itself is enough to prove to me that self-reflection is worthwhile. As a result, I have resolved to also look for things in my classrooms that are going well and to develop them further. This more positive outlook will surely have an effect on my teaching practice and, in turn, my classes and students as well.

Larrivee (2000) wrote, "Teachers who engage in critical reflection infuse their practice with a sense of vision and purpose as they continually forge new ground. While they learn from the past, they thrive in the present" (p.297). Through my experiment with self-reflection, I have found this statement to be true. Despite the time and energy it takes to keep a teaching journal, the end benefits outweigh this cost. If we neglect this step in our daily teaching practice, we dry up our source of innovation and motivation—ourselves. It is time to revive this ghost of teacher training and begin to exploit the possibilities that self-reflection opens to our teaching and personal development.

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Reading Journals for Advanced ESL Students

Timothy A. Micek

Teachers of ESL reading, especially at the advanced level, routinely grapple with the question of motivation in their classes. They know that students are more likely to read material that interests them than material that does not, but they may not know how to assign such work. After all, texts that interest one person may not interest another. One answer to this question is to assign reading journals, logs in which students record, and respond to, what they read.

Reading journals, or logs, have been written about extensively. There are different types of reading journals and they serve different audiences and purposes (Beaty, 2009; Buehl, 2001; Carlisle, 2000; Cohen, 2008; Dougherty, 2009; Freedman, 1999; Hurst, Fisk, & Wilson, 2006; Jonson, 2006; Mangelsdorf, 1998; Phipps, 2006). Mangelsdorf (1998) and Carlisle (2000) are particularly relevant to TESOL.

Mangelsdorf (1998) distinguishes between reading journals and logs. In an "unstructured reading journal," students respond to text without specific prompts. Students may be encouraged to discuss what they liked or disliked about the material, to connect the reading with their own lives, or to explore a central idea or character. A learning log is "a more structured type of journal in which students use specified prompts or response techniques." Teachers may direct students, for example, "to write about a certain passage in the text or to compare and contrast certain characters" (pp. 119-120).

Carlisle (2000) applied reader-response theory to EFL literature teaching. Junior college students in Taiwan made notes in a reading log as they read novels, expressing their thoughts and feelings. This practice encouraged them "to interact with the text, and to tap into their individual responses to the literature." Students said that their reading and writing skills improved and that keeping a log helped them to pass formal exams (18). Reading logs are especially appropriate for second language instruction, in Carlisle's view, as they encourage learners to go beyond understanding to appreciation of text.

Before assigning my students reading journals, I survey them about the reading they do for interest and/or pleasure in English: how many days and hours per week they read, the types of texts they read, the challenges they experience

as well as the rewards, and anything else they want to share with me about their reading. Then I tell them that, to help them to read better in English, I want them to spend at least one hour per day, five days per week, reading in English and writing about what they read. They can read anything they want: newspaper or magazine articles, stories, etc. I collect their reports on Monday. I ask them to report the following: (1) date and time of reading, (2) title, author/source, and type of text, (3) why they read the text (one sentence or so), (4) a summary of the text (one paragraph—three to five sentences), and (5) their reaction to the text (one paragraph—three to five sentences). I give them a sample report.

The day I assign the journal, I also give students (1) a short library tour in which they are shown where they might find different types of reading materials and (2) approximately one hour to do their first journal entry, during which time I am available for assistance. At the end of the term, I again survey my students about their reading. I have found great differences in the way they read as a result of keeping their journals.

First, students read for interest and/or pleasure more days and hours per week after the assignment than beforehand. In addition, they read a greater variety of text types. Both the challenges and the rewards they experience also change. While most students cite vocabulary as their main challenge before assignment, many report a number of other challenges, such as comprehension afterwards. Interestingly, the number of rewards they cite often declines. Finally, when asked how keeping the journal affects their reading in English, almost every student responds positively. While some of these results are relatively easy to explain, others are not.

The fact that students read for interest and/or pleasure more days per week after the assignment than beforehand is not surprising: that is what they are supposed to do. If the assignment were distasteful or onerous, however, fewer students would complete it. The fact that students read more hours per week after the assignment is also predictable, but the amount they read is not. More than half the class reads more than the required one hour per day. Perhaps the rewards they experience—increasing their vocabulary and reading skills, among others—motivate students to read more than they have to.

Another positive result is the increase in text types. Although it is difficult to explain this change, it seems safe to say that the assignment encourages students to explore the range of options available to them as readers; they can read anything they want to. The texts chosen by two students support this explanation. A native Somali, Joseph (like all names, a pseudonym) looked for articles on his homeland in the local newspaper. A Japanese student interested in cars, sports, and the like,

Suke checked out an auto repair manual (a first in ESL reading?), an article about Lance Armstrong on the web, and an AP article about Japanese politics.

Another remarkable result is the increased number of challenges reported by students. Perhaps this result is not too surprising either, given that students are reading more than usual. Although some students report the same challenges before and after the assignment, others report different ones. Before the assignment, for example, Joseph reported difficulty with vocabulary; afterwards, he wrote, "Apart from the vocabulary difficulty, I sometimes have difficulties in understanding the true picture of some stories, because of cultural differences."

Interestingly, the number of rewards that students report tends to decrease with the assignment. It is a troubling result—the assignment is supposed to help students to enjoy reading—and one that is difficult to explain. Perhaps the assignment is burdensome to some students. Young's answer to the question about how the assignment affected her reading supports this explanation: "Very much, but 5 [days]/week is too many—how about 3 [days]/week?"

In post-assignment surveys, students indicate that the assignment has positive effects on their reading in English, from improving to expanding it. Despite the decreased number of rewards they cite, then, students clearly value the assignment. In fact, every student has recommended the assignment for future students.

Reading journals may be particularly effective for students who seem disengaged or unmotivated. Chiko had been a student in two of my courses, including advanced reading, and had failed both. She usually came to class and did her assignments, but not always. She spent her time outside class in the company of other Japanese and once classes were over, she disappeared from campus. In the pre-reading survey, Chiko indicated that she was reading for interest and/or pleasure only one day per week, one hour total. After three weeks, she was reading five days per week, two hours per day. Her post-reading journal survey comments were telling. Asked how the assignment affected her reading in English, she reported, "I changed my thought about reading which I feel better when I read some English. Because, [before] when I read some English readings, I was very nervous."

Suke expressed similar thoughts. Asked how the assignment affected his reading, he reported, "I think it was nice opportunity to make a time to read English article. Before I tried to do this but it was [easy] to abandon. But this time I could [continue to] do it." Requiring, and giving students credit for, interest/pleasure reading may give them the motivation they need to read extensively.

Reading journals pose challenges for instructors, as well. The major ones have to do with the character of the entries, grading standards, and workload. In my experience, journal entries differ greatly in quantity and quality. Kim's summary, for example, is 88 words long and seems a thorough, accurate summary of the article she read. Although the language, however, seems unoriginal, her response reflects some insight into the problem:

Summary
U.S. Army officials told NBC News on Thursday that the Army's fleet of 743 Apache helicopters would not be allowed to fly until they had undergone a safety inspection, because an Israeli Apache helicopters tail rotor assembly separated during flight. The helicopters will be allowed to fly after an inspection but must be reinspected after every 125 hours of flight.
Response
Apache helicopter is the best helicopter in the world. Its ability has already been proved in the Gulf war. I thought that simple defect caused that accident.

Chiko's entry, on the other hand, is short (27 words) but clearly authentic. It gives the gist of the story and an honest reaction:

Summary
A boy, he couldn't score a goal. He try to score a goal so he practiced by himself. Finally, he made a goal.
Response
This story was cute.

Students make very different entries depending upon their background (ELP, reading, etc.) and the texts they read.

These entries raise the issue of evaluation: How should reading journals be graded? Options abound, from grades on an A-F scale to the check plus/check/check minus system often used to grade writing journals to credit for any type of response. As my purpose in assigning this journal is to get students to enjoy reading in English, I give them full credit for making complete entries.

A related issue is workload. Depending on how they are graded, journals may take a lot of time to read. Carlisle (2000) reports that marking reading logs took up to eight hours for a class of 50 students (p. 15); my experience has been comparable. Requiring students to submit their journal in a notebook or on computer paper (typed and stapled) makes them easier to read.

ESL teachers want their students to read texts that are interesting and appropriate. It is difficult to meet this objective with a "one text fits all" approach. One alternative is to have students keep journals in which they summarize and respond to texts of their own choosing. In my experience, this pedagogy can result

in students reading more days per week, hours per day, and text types than they normally do. It results in more challenges, but it also produces more rewards. Although instructors must decide how to evaluate them, these journals show great promise for increasing students' motivation to read in English.

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Tell It Digitally!

Barbara Finney

When my principal suggested that the ELLs in our school prepare a program to present to the student body, I began to think about the logistics of such a program. I was an itinerant ESL teacher, saw each of my groups of ELLs in Kindergarten through fifth grade about three hours a week, and worked with students of various levels of proficiency, most of whom were still beginners. Added to this, the other teachers in my school and I were searching for creative ways our students might participate in our upcoming annual International Studies Festival. I knew that although my students had stories to tell, they were very reluctant to speak in front of a large group. My solution was digital storytelling.

I had heard of digital storytelling at conferences and decided that a digital storytelling project was the perfect way to fulfill my principal's request, develop a presentation for the International Studies Festival, and allow my students to "speak" in front of a large group. Digital storytelling incorporates technology in some very creative ways, enabling the students to each have an active role in preparing a PowerPoint or digital version of a story they would like to tell. Although I had originally planned to prepare a PowerPoint slide show, the idea soon expanded into the making of a DVD.

I had two main reasons for creating a DVD. First, most, if not all, of my students had a DVD player in their home, and I could provide the students and their families with copies of the DVD they could view at home. Second, a copy of the DVD would be provided to each grade level in the school so that teachers could play it for their students in celebration of our International Festival. The DVD would definitely be the most compatible format for the wide variety of computer configurations in our school.

For this project, I met the students for four weeks, three times a week. I worked with 20 students and tried to keep the overall length to 20 minutes or so. Therefore, I had each student plan a one-minute presentation. In the process of working through the project, I designed a ten-step procedure for creating a project that helped students tell their stories digitally. Along the way, I learned effective ways to make such a project work with ELLs, and in the end the students received excellent reviews for their work. This project is worth sharing with teachers who face the same dilemma as I did.

The following is the procedure for this digital storytelling project and some tips I learned:

First, I notified the parents of the digital storytelling project that I would be recording the students' voices and wanted to use their child's or family's photograph(s).
It is essential to get parents to support a project like this and very important to obtain permission to show pictures of the students publicly within an educational setting. Then, if I had planned to use the PowerPoint, DVD or other form of digital media outside of an educational setting, I would have needed additional permission for use of personal photographs. This permission is in addition to any media release authorization signed by the parents at registration.

Second, I prepared guidelines, a project description and a grading rubric detailing the requirements and expectations for the students' participation.
Assigning grades for the various components ensures that students, especially older ones, take the project seriously. Even if students are enthusiastic, the grades can help their regular classroom teachers by giving the teachers sources for grades in the content areas they teach. In projects such as this, ELLs often produce higher quality compositions and oral presentations with their ESL teacher than they do in the regular classroom setting. Therefore, I hoped the information about the progress and ability of the ELLs would prove very valuable to the content teachers for assessment purposes.

Third, I had students select and bring in pictures of themselves and their families.
I sent home a medium-sized envelope that could be sealed so the photographs would not get lost easily and encouraged students to keep the envelope in their backpacks. I also made sure that I returned the photographs quickly.

Fourth, I had students scan the photographs and save the images.
Scanners today offer so many easy-to-use features. By means of the preview feature on my scanner, I did some initial cropping of pictures. It is a good idea to preview and compare the original with the images you wish to save before sending the photographs back home.

Fifth, I had the students view their pictures and write the script for their part of the presentation.
The students can take turns reviewing the photos or clip art they have selected and think about what they would like to say about them. In this project, the objectives were to introduce members of their families and talk about whether they liked living in Memphis, Tennessee. They could mention whether they would

like to return to their country, what they like best about living in the U.S., and what they missed about their homeland. The goal of the DVD was to showcase the international students in our school and help the student body get to know them better by addressing some of the questions they might have about the ELLs.

Sixth, I recorded student narration.
There are different options for recording the students' narration or other speaking or singing parts. I chose a digital voice recorder as an efficient, portable device for recording their voices once the students composed and wrote what they were going to say. Fortunately, the costs of a good digital recorder are reasonable, the sound quality is excellent, and it is easy to convert the .VOC files to .WAV files once they are downloaded by using the USB connectivity to the PC. Organizing the recordings is efficient, also, because of a feature that allowed me to store recordings in several places. I planned time for the students to record their speaking parts, listen and revise, and then finalize the one they wish to save for the digital storytelling.

Seventh, I created the PowerPoint.
In the PowerPoint phase, I worked with the students as we inserted all images (pictures, clip art, and text), cropped pictures, made adjustments, such as brightness, and selected picture styles, adding borders or frames. I knew that it was best not to use the custom animation feature to embed any special effects, make slide transitions, or insert sound files while in the PowerPoint stage of the project. I did, however, guide students in selection of backgrounds and help them decide on how they would layout pictures, clip art, and text for each slide of your PowerPoint. The students enjoyed giving input and placing photos on the slides. When they were satisfied with the product, we saved the PowerPoint as a .jpeg file. We planned to add slide transitions and other special effects in the next phase, the Movie Maker phase, where we also planned to insert the sound clips.

Eighth, I converted the PowerPoint presentation to a DVD format.
I used Windows Movie Maker for the PC to convert the PowerPoint to a DVD format, but those who are more familiar with a MAC could use the iMovie feature. Both programs allow both video and audio files. At this point, I simply referred to the directions for downloading digital files.

Ninth, I imported the sound clips.
I edited the sound clips (the narration, songs, and sound effects) while working in Movie Maker, so I did not spend a lot of time trying to perfect them before importing them into DVD format. I learned that I could also fade sounds in and out while in Movie Maker as well as create rolling credits at the end and more. The same procedure would work for iMovie.

Tenth, I published the movie (or burned my DVD)
I clicked on File – Save Project and then selected File – Publish Movie. This began the DVD burning process. I had several blank DVD-R and DVD-RW disks on hand.

Of course, I could have chosen a variety of other ways to accomplish a project like this. I could have taken short video clips using a digital camera or camcorder and edited the clips to suit my individual needs and desired results. In my first venture with digital storytelling and due to time constraints and working with ELLs in Kindergarten through fifth grade, I decided to have the students bring in pictures and record only their voices. I also wanted the students to focus on their writing and speaking as opposed to how they looked or acted in a video format. A project like this is guided by one's experience with or availability of technology and by the students' creativity. Students enjoy helping select songs that can be played as background or transition music or exploring the Internet for pictures to accompany a favorite hobby or interest they would like to share.

Digital storytelling is a versatile and creative format for just about any project. It can be used for telling original personal stories, such as in this project, student or small group-authored stories, or for story retelling activities, an excellent strategy for measuring and improving reading comprehension for ELLs. Of course, this type of activity often takes weeks of practice and a variety of activities to help ELLs learn the new vocabulary, the sequence of the events in the story, and the details. With digital storytelling, students can record and illustrate the final version of a story they retell and keep a copy for their portfolio assessment.

Digital storytelling also has innumerable benefits that surpass those of integrating technology into the ESL classroom. This particular project fostered a sense of community among the ELLs at my school. It also provided them with an outlet for expressing how they felt about having to leave their countries at a young age or what they have experienced as they adjusted to their new lives and homes in the United States. Truly, the possibilities with digital storytelling are endless. I hope to continue exploring its many uses and benefits in my ESL classroom.

Note. Information on Digital Storytelling can be located on various internet sites. Three that are particularly helpful are http://www.storytelling.org, http://digital-storytelling.coe.uh.edu, and http://scholastic.com/dreamincolor/digitalstorytelling/index.htm.

The Author

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Appendix

Digital Storytelling Project Description and Rubric

Class: English as a Second Language (ESL), Peabody Elementary School, Memphis City Schools

Teacher: Mrs. Barbara Finney **Grades:** K-5

Grades given: 1) composition; 2) oral presentation (A third grade could be given for oral presentation based on the memorization of the poem, "Sí, se puede" ("Yes, I Can!")).

Presentation for International Studies Day on May 8, 2008, Peabody Elementary School, Memphis, Tennessee

The ESL students will bring in 4-6 pictures of themselves and their families. They will write a story about themselves and introduce their family members. This will count as a composition grade. Then, they will read their stories aloud to accompany the pictures of their choice that have been inserted in a PowerPoint presentation. This oral presentation along with their recital of the poem "Sí, Se Puede" in Spanish and/or "Yes, I Can!" in English will count as an oral presentation grade. Each student must recite the poem(s) to Ms. Finney individually and participate in the group choral recitation.

4 – Student brings in pictures from home; writes 5-10 sentences (grades 3-5) and 3-5 (grades K-2) about themselves and their family members; uses correct grammar, punctuation and spelling in English; speaks clearly and to the best of their ability on the oral presentation. Also, student memorizes "Sí, Se Puede" for reciting in final slide of the PowerPoint.

3 – Student brings in some pictures; writes 3-4 sentences(grades 3-5) and 2-3 (grades K-2) about themselves and their family members; has a few errors in grammar, punctuation and/or spelling in English; speaks clearly but not to the best of their ability. Student memorizes almost all of "Sí, Se Puede" for reciting

in final slide of the PowerPoint.

2 – Student brings in some photos; writes 2-3 sentences (grades 3-5) and 1-2 (KK-2) about themselves and their family members; several errors in grammar, punctuation and/or spelling in English; needs to speak more clearly and loudly in oral presentation. Student worked hard to memorize portions of "Sí, Se Puede" for reciting in final slide of the PowerPoint.

1 – Student doesn't bring in photos from home but works to generate 1-2 sentences about him/herself and family members. There are numerous errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling in English even with teacher support and when using classroom resources (dictionaries, word walls, etc.)

0 – Student does not attempt to do any part of the project even with teacher support and prompting.

This was a general, overall rubric. A more detailed and specific rubric can be created for the composition portion and one for the speaking portion(s).

Hope with Authentic Assessment in Educationally Trying Times

Jenny Alton Price

José Miguel came to the United States when he was 17. He is 21 now and worried about not being able to graduate high school because he has not passed the state English exam despite haven taken it five times. In the same ESL class I also have Atinder, who is 18, successful in all of his state examinations and a strong English speaker. These two students are in the same class, yet are on opposite ends of the spectrum, with the other students in the class falling somewhere in between. What is a teacher to do with such a variety of proficiencies in one classroom where the expectations of No Child Left Behind continue to apply and the effect of the AYP (annual yearly progress) threatens schools and teachers? Each of my ESL students needs and deserves all of my attention, but I am only one person with only fifty minutes a day to work with them. The task is daunting, but I have found a chance at success with authentic assessment.

As an ESL teacher, I have discovered authentic assessment as a key to success in educationally trying times. Authentic assessment is not new, but it is something that teachers may have neglected or ignored, feeling that it is too time consuming and does not prepare students for the "standardized" tests. Actually, authentic assessment consists of multiple forms of assessment that reflect a student's learning, achievement, motivation, and attitude on instructional strategies in class and their own language development (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996). Authentic assessments, which include performance assessments, portfolios, and student self assessments, are perfect for assessing students' developing listening, speaking, reading, or writing skills independently while taking into consideration each student's level of proficiency. By using authentic assessment, teachers have a chance to assess a student's individual improvement while also giving the student some ownership over his/her own assessment. It is also an excellent means of creating some motivation for those who lack it.

At first glance, authentic assessment can seem incredibly complicated and time consuming; however, I have discovered that authentic assessment to be deceptively easy and highly effective. If a few hours are devoted at the beginning to the planning and organizing of the unit, authentic assessment can make the day-to-day classroom practices flow easier and give teachers more time to devote to each student's unique needs. Once the planning is done, the rest seems to fall into place.

I recently put authentic assessment into practice in my own ESL classroom. My class is largely made up of intermediate level high school students from all backgrounds. They have made slow progress over the past few years and have become jaded by the failure they encounter in their content-area classes. They also face what they see as the overwhelming task of passing the state English exam. I answered this weariness with a curriculum for a writing portfolio that not only presented opportunities for them to learn to write in the structured ways that are expected by their content-area teachers but also gave them the chance to write in a non-threatening environment. Because writing was the main problem most of my students were facing in their mainstream classes, I decided that for the first semester of school I would focus solely on composition/writing and the use of standard English grammar. With that in mind, I picked out the forms of assessment I wanted to include in a writing portfolio and decided how those assessments would be carried out in the classroom. The forms of assessment I decided to include were those often cited as beneficial in writing: dialogue journals, formal writing formats, and learning logs (O'Malley & Pierce, 1996).

I found the dialogue journals to be one of the most successful assessment tools. Dialogue journals are much like an ongoing written conversation between the teacher and the student. The journals were kept on a weekly basis; the student would write one entry and I would respond to them. There were absolutely no guidelines for the dialogue journal topics; the students were free to write to me about any topic they wished. At first, the students were reluctant to share anything in their journals, but once trust was established, the students really opened up on a range of topics, from problems with friends to individual successes. It not only provided them an opportunity to write freely about topics they were familiar with, but it also provided me an opportunity to assess their 'true' writing abilities as well as get to know them personally. I was also able to learn valuable lessons about their cultures, and, based on that, I was also better able to teach them. Knowing about a student's culture is essential to know because it has such a tremendous effect on the way students learn (Baruth & Manning, 2004). The best result, however, was that students who had trouble writing even one sentence in a formal writing assignment ended up writing several pages in their dialogue journals.

While dialogue journals are extremely beneficial in getting students comfortable with their own writing abilities, it is extremely important that formal writing structures be taught if ESL students are to be successful in their mainstream classes. There are at least three purposes for writing that must be taught to ESL students: informative/expository writing, expressive/narrative writing, and persuasive writing (Baruth & Manning, 2004). For each specific purpose, I spent

time talking with the students about the different writing styles that should be used with each type of purpose. I then provided students with their own copies of examples of each purpose to keep in their portfolio. As a class, we read the examples and pointed out the style that was being used to achieve the purpose of the writing. After looking at examples and talking extensively about the particular writing format, students were given a topic on which to practice the purpose of the assignment. For each, I had students complete the same formatted tasks:

1. Students first produced a rough draft, which was checked by a peer. The peer was directed to check for grammatical errors while also offering stylistic suggestions and encouragement.
2. Once the peer had finished checking the paper, the student then produced a second draft, which was given to me upon completion.
3. I would then sit down with the student individually and review errors and corrections with him or her. This allowed me time to address the student's individual strengths and weaknesses.
4. The student would then produce a final draft, which would be placed into his or her portfolio along with the first and second drafts. The students were then able to see their own progress and were often very proud of their final product (and were sometimes permitted by their mainstream English teachers to use these final copies as their writing assessments in their regular English classes).
5. Finally, the students were given an opportunity to assess their own progression with a self-assessment rubric and writing checklist.

Lastly, as part of the writing portfolio, the students kept learning logs. Learning logs are simply the students' daily reflections on what they are learning (Baruth & Manning, 2004). In my classroom, they proved to be a good tool to have students take a moment to reflect on the day's objectives. I found that it is almost as important to have students reflect on their own learning as it is to actually teach them the objectives. According to the West Virginia Department of Education, writing about learning helps students to become deeper thinkers and better writers ("Learning Logs," n.d.). They need a chance to digest what they have learned and reflect on how that learning is going to be used in the future. Besides being beneficial for the students, the learning logs provide the teacher a means to determine what and how the students are learning daily. Each day during the last five to seven minutes of class, I had students answer these four questions: 1) What did I learn today? 2) What strategies did I use to learn? 3) What was difficult to understand? and 4) What am I going to do to understand it better? I made sure to post the day's objectives on the board as a reference guide for students. Doing so helped students to focus on their problem areas and develop their own solutions to strengthen those problem areas. Of course, learning logs can be done

in a variety of ways, but I found that the more directive the questions, the more reflective the students.

Teachers who decide to use authentic assessment have to keep a positive attitude. They may find, as I did, that students are reluctant to try something new and unfamiliar. I responded by being persistent and modeling the organization repeatedly for the students. After a few weeks of my being patient and helping them adapt, I saw the students become excited about their learning and begin taking ownership over their entries as well as over their individual language development. During the course of the semester, the weekly routine of the class became increasingly smooth and expected, which allowed for a comfortable classroom environment and in turn allowed me to work at ease with students individually on their specific needs. Eventually, as a result of my using authentic assessment, the students' writing and grammar improved greatly.

José Miguel is feeling more confident about taking his state test and has begun working with a tutor to receive some reinforcement while Atinder has also had a chance to feel challenged and enriched and become better at his own English development. I have also seen the other students' grades improve tremendously in their other content areas, and as a result, I have also seen a rise in the intrinsic motivation of each of the students. I, along with their content-area teachers, am breathing a major sigh of relief thanks to authentic assessment.

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