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Mark Roberge and Margi Wald

2009 GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH AWARD

Task-Based Writing Instruction 9
Alexandros Bantiss

The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of task-based writing instruction, a communicative language-teaching method, on second language acquisition and differentiation of instruction for English language learners during the independent work time instructional component of the Open Court Reading program. Through student-teacher interaction that incorporated prompts, recasts, and constructivist pedagogy, the students' rough drafts (written interlanguage) were transformed into standard English at the conclusion of 1-to-1 writing conferences. One teacher and 10 3rd-grade students participated in this mixed-methods study. The study took place after school for 1 month (20 sessions of 20-45 minutes each). The data consisted of 35 transcribed writing conferences, writing samples, and interviews. Results indicate that it can be a useful vehicle for differentiated instruction, constructivist pedagogy, and second language acquisition to address the diverse needs of second language learners.

FEATURE ARTICLES

**Examining the Role of the Library
in Promoting the Academic Achievement of English Learners** 29
Marcela de Souza

The purpose of this article is to share findings from a qualitative study showing the positive influences the local public library and the school library had on the personal and academic lives of 18 low-income English language learners of Mexican descent while they were adjusting to the numerous demands of school in the US. For these students, the library represented a resource and a safe haven, a direct link to the academic world they knew little about and a strong connection with librarians who not only supported them with reading materials and guidance for homework assignments, but who also encouraged them to pursue their formal education against all odds. These particular findings are consistent with evidence from related research in the last 3 decades pointing to the vital roles played by well-stocked and properly staffed libraries in the lives of students from disadvantaged backgrounds, especially English learners.

Claiming Their Voice: Sociolinguistic Factors Affecting Immigrant Workers' Ability to Speak Up 45

Kathleen Gardner and Roseanne Liu

Immigrants' multiple identities are sources of contention as they strive in the English-speaking workplace, where they need to meet job demands and demands from employers who expect them to conform to the culture of the management (Harper, Peirce, & Burnaby, 1996; Jacobson, 2003; Katz, 2000). With California having a significant immigrant worker population, this study investigated how many of these workers navigate multiple identity and cultural issues while attempting to use their learned English to claim their voice. In an adult ESL classroom, first qualitative data were collected from students' responses about a workplace scenario. Then, 3 individuals from the class were chosen for in-depth interviews to determine factors that contribute to or hinder their ability to stake their claim in the workplace and speak up for themselves. The study results showed that several sociolinguistic factors influence whether or not workers chose to speak up and that these factors are as pertinent as workers' linguistic proficiency and the types of employers and coworkers they have. The authors discuss pedagogical implications with the goal of empowering immigrants to claim their voice at the workplace.

An L2 Reader's Word-Recognition Strategies: Transferred or Developed 66

Bonnie Alco

Transfer of reading strategies from the first language (L1) to the second language (L2) has long puzzled educators, but what happens if the L1 is an alphabet language and the second is not, or if there is a mismatch in the languages' grapheme-phoneme connection? Although some students readily adjust to reading and writing in their second language, others do not. Research has shown that orthographic depth may play a role in how readily a student can transfer reading strategies from his or her L1 (e.g., Akamatsu, 2003; Muljani, Koda, & Moates, 1998; Seymour, Aro, & Erskine, 2003). If readers typically depend on their language's grapheme-phoneme connection or on visual cues in a nonalphabet language to develop word-recognition strategies, ESL students may become frustrated when the graphics or orthographic depth of the second language does not match that of the first and the process, thereby, crosses the "threshold" of orthographic complexity (Seymour et al., 2003). An unreliable connection challenges the student to adjust strategies appropriately in order to develop an automaticity that furthers reading competence. If the task is too difficult, cognitive load may inhibit the process.

Vocabulary and Content Learning in Grade 9 Earth Science: Effects of Vocabulary Preteaching, Rational Cloze Task, and Reading Comprehension Task	75
<i>Siok H. Lee</i>	

This study examines strategies for supporting vocabulary and content learning in 5 grade 9 Earth Science classes that are part of a SDAIE program (Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English) in an urban California high school. Students received vocabulary and content instruction during a unit on Earthquakes. One group of students performed rational cloze (gap-filling) exercises as a postinstruction activity, while a second group performed reading comprehension exercises. In immediate and delayed posttests, the 2 groups showed no differences in receptive learning of vocabulary and content. However, in delayed posttests, students in the rational cloze group performed better on paragraph summary writing using content-area vocabulary and expressing content knowledge. Their superior performance may be attributable to 2 factors: The rational cloze activity gave them opportunities for text rehearsal (i.e., reading and understanding the passages while filling gaps) and the rational cloze passages gave them discourse-level language models. In a follow-up questionnaire, students in the reading comprehension group characterized their activity as equally useful to other instructional activities. However, students in the rational cloze group characterized their activity as distinctively more useful than all other instructional activities. Thus, rational cloze activities appear to provide learners with useful scaffolding for vocabulary use and summary writing.

Negotiation Strategies in Short-Term Two-Way Conversation Partnerships: Their Use and Usefulness	103
<i>Janine Poreba</i>	

Past studies in language teaching have addressed the issue of whether the benefits of formal instruction outweigh those of naturalistic instruction, or vice versa.¹ This study examined 1 aspect of naturalistic instruction closely: the conversation partnership. There were 3 conversation partnerships (English/Mandarin, English/Arabic, and English/Korean); each partner played the role of native speaker (NS) and nonnative speaker (NNS) of 1 language. An underlying idea of this study is that the repercussions of a relationship in which members are equal partners in language learning may extend beyond the relationship and into the community. These pairs were organized by the ESL Center at the Monterey Institute of International Studies (MIIS). Transcripts of 10-minute English parts of 6 conversations (2 from each partnership) were examined for uses of certain negotiation strategies, and the participants' opinions regarding the usefulness of these strategies in learning English, Mandarin, Arabic or Korean were sought.

CATESOL EXCHANGES

**Their Words and Worlds: English as a Second Language Students
in Adult Basic Education Literacy Programs 125**

Tünde Csepelyi

The focus of this article is on adult literacy in adult basic education (ABE) programs with special emphasis on English as a Second Language (ESL) students. The article intends to highlight several relevant points in ABE ESL literacy instruction. It focuses on (a) the nature of adult learning, (b) the structure of ABE programs, (c) who the students, in particular ESL students, are in ABE programs, and (d) ESL students' instructional needs. It also refers to the Generation 1.5 phenomenon and describes studies comparing native and nonnative English-speaking students' literacy development. Finally, it proposes some recommendations for future research projects and underlines the necessity of developing literacy programs with a focus on adult ESL learners.

**Achieving Student-Centered Success on the High School Exit Exam:
Five Components of an Effective Remediation Program 148**

Scott N. Forrest

High schools spend incredible amounts of time and resources toward preparing students for high school exit exams. A predicament arises when some students continue failing the exam and are in danger of not receiving a high school diploma. This article describes 5 components of an exit exam remediation program through which to equip and empower students who have failed the exit exam at least once to pass the English Language Arts section of an exit exam. An effective remediation program must not only prepare the students for the exam but also ensure the students master the standards of learning expected of high school graduates. Also, the components must be viewed in light of the unique educational and life needs of students who have failed an exit exam at least once. Therefore, the components are standards aligned with student-centered approaches to learning and assessment.

Teaching Research for Academic Purposes 162

Billy Pashaie

Teaching the ability to find, analyze, evaluate, and synthesize information is an important part of creating an environment in which ESL students feel empowered in the information age. However, a preliminary search of professional literature shows that there is a lack of research in information-literacy programs for ESL learners in higher education. This article seeks to create a framework for developing the information-literacy skills of college-level ESL students while at the same time teaching them the academic discourse and linguistic requirements they need to become lifelong learners, succeeding as college students and beyond. The author will propose a unit plan that can be used in its entirety in a content-based instruction (CBI) setting or that can be used in a modular manner within any given course. After the general unit plan is introduced, a more detailed lesson plan for 1 of the modules within the unit will follow.

Glue: A Technique for Eliminating Fragments and Run-Ons 175

Helaine W. Marshall and Andrea DeCapua

Many students who are nonnative speakers of English, yet highly proficient, are placed into basic writing or English as a Second Language courses when they enter college. While these students may have advanced oral English proficiency, their writing frequently suffers from a lack of training in academic writing and commonly contains fragments and run-ons, a frustrating sentence-level problem for these students. A review of current writing texts uncovered a general failure to treat these problems as a sentence-boundary issue. The approach taken here is that such students will be able to monitor their writing for incorrectly formed sentences if given a system designed to help them understand English sentence structure. The key concept is Glue, a term used for all clause markers. Working through exercises, in which they label the Glue and systematically identify fragments, run-ons, and complete sentences, students see a system emerging, which brings them to an understanding of English written conventions. Using Glue, the students gain control of their writing and are able to avoid fragments and run-ons.

Word of the Day 185

Shahid Abrar-ul-Hassan

Independent lexical development initiatives empower and equip language learners with skills to boost their lexical repertoires. Language instructors can train learners to be autonomous word learners. A sample activity, namely word of the day, is presented in this article. The activity is an independent lexical learning task, which aims to develop the lexical range of language learners through self-regulated endeavors. This activity builds on the lexical approach, which lays emphasis on expanding learners' lexical base in the belief that grammar is embedded in lexis. Thus, the role of "word grammar" overshadows the sentence grammar instruction. The word-of-the-day task acquaints learners with unpacking the lexical information in a word or phrase and sharing their lexical discoveries with the class. The activity could be systematically integrated into the course syllabus. Learners will value lexis as a rich resource of syntactical knowledge and will realize that lexical development is directly proportional to linguistic fluency.

State of the Profession: Intensive English Programs 194

Patricia Szasz

This article focuses on the current state of the ESL profession for teachers in Intensive English Programs (IEPs). Because the IEP context may be unfamiliar to some readers, the author first gives an overview of the characteristics and goals of these types of programs. Second, an examination of how administrators and programs are striving to ensure the integrity of language instruction in this setting is presented. Finally, the results of an online survey of more than 100 ESL professionals are shared. While many respondents expressed frustration with their current situation, one institution's efforts to promote equity for IEP teachers offers a model to other programs.

Professionalism Prevails in Adult Education ESL Classrooms.	202
<i>Megan C. Brown and Kathleen Bywater</i>	

The purpose of this report is to explore the issue of professionalism of adult education ESL educators and uncover any inequities. The arc of this exploration describes the history of adult education, the current state of adult education ESL professionals, and the direction in which ESL adult educators appear to be heading. The results illustrate a positive trajectory of continued growth in training. Additionally, this article identifies challenges, such as part-time teacher status, and successes, such as a highly educated workforce, throughout the field.

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