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Margi Wald and Mark Roberge

2015 GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH CONTEST

**“Two Heads Are Better Than One”:
A Curricular Innovation Through Peer Feedback
in a Low-Proficiency ESL Writing Class**..... 1
Lindsey Sivaslian

Peer feedback benefits in composition have been researched in various EFL and ESL contexts. Typically carried out in intermediate to advanced proficiency-level contexts, little has been done with low-level students, potentially because of greater perceived challenges with syntactic, grammatical, and linguistic knowledge. This curriculum-inquiry project investigates the effects of using a collaborative approach rather than an evaluative approach for peer feedback in low-proficiency-level writing tasks. Working alongside an existing reading and writing curriculum, the peer feedback innovation seeks to support the overall course goals while providing explicit, scaffolded support to navigate the necessary pragmalinguistic knowledge, collaborative attitudes, and peer feedback tasks. In addition to the student-reported benefits of feedback and linguistic evidence of their ability/inability to incorporate collaborative attitudes, the inquiry ends with practical suggestions for writing instructors of low-proficiency students.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Does the Flipped Classroom Lead to Increased Gains on Learning Outcomes in ESL/EFL Contexts?..... 39

Marie Webb and Evelyn Doman

This research investigates whether the flipped classroom can lead students to increased gains on learning outcomes in 2 ESL/EFL contexts in Macau, China, and the US. A pretest posttest quasi-experimental mixed-methods design ($N = 64$) was used to determine any differences in student achievement that might be associated with the flipped approach (FA). The effectiveness of the FA on students' achievement with grammar-student learning outcomes was evaluated with a pretest and posttest grammar test, along with students' perceptions of their increased comfort and confidence using English grammar through a grammar survey. These data were triangulated with student focus groups and means of completed grammar assignments. The findings suggest that although both the control and experimental groups showed increased comfort in the self-report data, gains on actual achievement were significant only for the experimental groups. The researchers of this study make recommendations for a flipped curriculum and materials design for ESL/EFL teachers in any context globally.

CATESOL EXCHANGE

Processing Academic Language Through Four Corners Vocabulary Chart Applications..... 69

Sarah Smith, Claudia Sanchez, Sharon Betty, and Shiloh Davis

4 Corners Vocabulary Charts (FCVCs) are explored as a multi-purpose vehicle for processing academic language in a 5th-grade classroom. FCVCs typically display a vocabulary word, an illustration of the word, synonyms associated with the word, a sentence using a given vocabulary word, and a definition of the term in students' words. The use of personal dictionary entries in the form of FCVCs created on 3-by-5-inch index cards allowed for the implementation of 4 key classroom activities—namely, a “fill in the square” review activity and 3 games: Heads Up, a modified version of Connect 4, and Bingo. FCVCs are identified as optimal tools for the instruction of English learners because of the high level of vocabulary processing required for their creation and their functionality as key elements of engaging vocabulary games.

**THEME SECTION:
DOING THE IDENTITY WORK IN ESL LEARNING
AND TEACHING**

Maliheh Mansuripur Vafai, Editor

Introduction to the Theme Section.....81

Maliheh Mansuripur Vafai

Contextualized Workforce Skills and ESL Learner Identity..... 85

Maliheh Mansuripur Vafai

This article reports on an empirical case study centering on adult ESL learners' motivational patterns for learning English and its relevance to their career goals. It looks at past patterns of immigrant insertion within the socioeconomic context of the US and explores current trends in adult ESL curriculum development focused on the task of "career readiness." Drawing on Norton-Peirce's (1995, 1997) concept of "investment" in second language learning, research for this study poses the question of curriculum relevance to student aspirations, implicating aspects of learner identity and various modes of belonging. The study contributes to the understanding of ESL learners' positioning vis-à-vis curriculum change while reflecting on the extent of learner autonomy in the face of structural limitations.

**Constructing Identity Through Negotiation for Cambodian
Adult English Language Learners in East Oakland..... 119**

Brad D. Washington

This study engages with a participatory oral history project that explores 3 themes. First, Cambodian participants included in the study will narrate from their perspectives how the evolution of social engagement and identity among African American and Cambodian refugee communities residing in historically Black neighborhoods of Oakland, California, informed their English language development. Second, it is the author's intent through data collected for the study to explore participants' acquisition of English language as a mode of resistance and empowerment for Cambodian refugees in the US. Finally, in detailing the power of oral history to bridge generational, linguistic, and global divides, the participants in this study express the importance of learning *English as an additional language* for the promotion and preservation of Cambodian history and tradition. The themes of this study will be framed by the theories of microaggression and critical race theory in relation to English language construction.

What About Sam—The Kid in the Corner Whose Voice Doesn't Come Out?—Tensions Between Open Discussions and Inclusive Educational Opportunities for English Learners..... 139
Karen Miller Gourd

This article identifies a tension between a teacher's intention and an English learner's interpretation of his experiences in a US high school English class for native users of English and English learners. The tension highlights two issues. First, democratic classroom practices, frequently advocated by second language acquisition theorists, may be misunderstood or misused in general education classrooms. For example, respecting students by giving them the choice to speak or be silent can negatively affect English learners' opportunities to acquire language, subject-area content knowledge, and social status as knowers. Second, many general education teachers believe they are unprepared to help English learners develop English or subject-area content skills and knowledge. Their lack of preparation can present obstacles for English learners. The author contends that structured, inclusive discussion can benefit English learners' cognitive, academic, linguistic, and social development, while unstructured, open discussion compromises learning opportunities for all students.

Identify the Cracks; That's Where the Light Slips In: The Narratives of Latina/o Bilingual Middle-Class Youth..... 161
Yvette V. Lapayese

In this qualitative study, I examine the intersections of learner identity, power, and language through the experiences and insights of Latina/o 2nd-generation middle-class children who occupy a unique positionality between the discourses surrounding bilingual education. Through narrative inquiry, emerging bilingual middle-class students actualize nonbinary thinking, able to depict identity as an inherently multifaceted process of construction. Their *ways of knowing* and experiences as language learners ultimately shape an *outsider-within* space, rupturing traditional binaries within bilingual education, namely EO/EL (English only versus English learner) and class binaries. They also proffer queer and cyber identities as additional salient variables that plow into language identity. In the end, these learners frame the contradiction and nuance of language learner identity, not as one of struggle, but as one of differential agency, the ability to move in and out of contradictory identities as both strong and advantageous tactics.

**Transformative Professional Development and the Promotion
of Literacy Through Culturally Responsive Pedagogy..... 175**
Sara S. Garcia and Christina Favela Garcia

This article recounts a narrative of professional transformation inspired by the works of Paulo Freire and Gloria Ladson-Billings and advanced by a participatory action research (PAR) project. The PAR team for this case study, consisting of the university teacher educator as a “coach” and a high school classroom teacher along with her students, examines the use of community-based knowledge in a form of *corrido* (ballads) studies. In this process, the ballads become the basis for learners’ engagement with literacy activities in the context of what is known as a *heritage language* Spanish class. The analysis focuses on the process of designing a culturally relevant pedagogy and ensuring its effectiveness through the examination of pre- and postwriting samples and students’ fluid identification with various ethnic labels.

REVIEWS

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