TNTESOL Journal

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Call for Papers

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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 bhearn@utm.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, 2012.

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Editor's Comments: In This Issue

Dorothy Valcarcel Craig
Editor

I have served as the Editor for TNTESOL Journal for the past two years. As my term draws to a close, I continue to reflect and would like to share just a bit about my first journey as an editor. I hope that as I exit and another steps up, my experience will help to alleviate any fears that come with such a role as we are all volunteers bonded by the common passion we have for the diverse field that represents learning English as a second or foreign language.

From the first meeting in my loft in Nashville—I got to know a group of wonderful people who over the years have assisted me as mentors and coaches. I learned quickly that I could always email Teresa Dalle with questions—some more lengthy than others—and that I would receive prompt feedback, insight, and suggestions. The second lesson that I learned is that Lee Martin is quick and efficient in providing "last minute" answers regarding publishing. Third, Gabriela Kleckova—whom I have never met face-to-face—can do wonders with technology and repeatedly works her magic in helping to professionally format and convert files into a "real" publication. Although pressed for time by professional responsibilities and schedules, the group of reviewers who serve on the Editorial Board are always willing to review and continue to be extremely helpful with feedback to authors. Perhaps most challenging task involves encouraging beginning authors to share their experiences, research and classroom expertise.

With that said, it has been a rewarding experience!

As I reflect on the articles presented in the fourth edition of TNTESOL Journal, I am experiencing a twinge of regret that I will be leaving as editor due to the rich, interesting entries in this year's issue…and also because I finally feel like I somewhat know what I am doing!

The articles are varied and represent a wide range of topics from the technical aspects of language learning to technology-based issues. In addition, the articles reflect teaching in a variety of settings including university, ESL, EFL, and regular education classrooms where second language learners are present.

Although unrelated, the articles present the diverse texture of teaching English as a second language in today's times. Thus, this edition's theme could be nothing less than affirm and celebrate diversity, reflect on the challenges, and look to the future.

Hana Park, Teresa Dalle, and Moongee Jeon present an interesting article that encourages educators to consider corpus-based studies in order to assist students in identifying patterns of actual language use. The article examines the role that phonological and morphological factors play in a language learner and user's choice of words. The authors also examine whether syntactic and semantic factors are likely to create linguistic environments where one form is preferred over the other. Using a corpus-based study, the authors test four hypotheses that focus on the use of comparison forms.

Rebecca Zanolini takes us on a journey of ethnic identity. Her article presents findings from an interesting qualitative set of case studies that explored perceptions of ethnic identity held by university students who were enrolled in a Spanish course and who also represented the Hispanic culture. Rebecca's study encouraged students to engage in a "study of self" where student participants explored factors, experiences, and cultural membership. Findings from the study indicate that a combination of internal and external factors contribute to the formation of ethnic identity as related to each case—which encourages educators to consider the individualistic nature of one's own cultural identity as a means for understanding each student.

Christine Love Thompson and Tiffany Strange invite us into their classroom to explore the Triple Rotation Inclusive (TRI) Reading Model. Developed by the authors, the model is based on the "push in" instructional approach for English as a Second Language. Christine and Tiffany structured their research to focus on Limited English Proficient (LEP) students who took part in a 60-minute reading block. Students received reading instruction from three licensed teachers working collaboratively. The article provides an effective model that is collaborative in nature. The TRI is an excellent example of how professional educators can work together in meeting the needs of second language learners.

We return to the adult learning setting in the article written by Daiva Berzinskas. Daiva's action research study examined the use of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) and the impact on reading comprehension among adult ESL students. The participants in this study were enrolled in an intensive English program within the university setting. Multiple forms of data were collected and analyzed. The findings are presented in the article and indicate that reading comprehension levels increased as students engaged in extra time to focus on the development of

reading skills. Since the study was conducted, Daiva moved from the university setting to the middle school ESL classroom.

This year, we include two articles written by authors who do not reside in Tennessee.

Maria Sanchez is an educator in Texas where the discussion of bilingual education continues. Bilingual education—currently an approved program in Texas— is being evaluated in terms of effectiveness. Although Maria is not a resident of Tennessee, the information presented may be helpful in providing insight for future instructional programs.

A current concern of professional educators is the lack of adequate preparation of preservice teachers who will work with second language learners upon entering the classroom.

Sharon Hixon teaches at Dalton State College. Sharon attends our TNTESOL conferences regularly and is one of our contributing authors this year. Her article appears in the Classroom Practices section and provides a view of the decisions of educators as they implement specific components of the SIOP®. Sharon's collaborative work with preservice teachers encourages teacher educators to further examine the need for preparation in the area of appropriate application of methods for second language learners.

Last, I offer my own Classroom Practices contribution and encourage reflection on the Digital Youth project and the concept of participatory culture. As more and more English language learners continue to participate in U.S. schools, there is a need for the development of multiple literacies. By becoming a member of participatory culture, second language leaners are able to utilize the cultural tools that their English-speaking peers are using. By doing so, they are able to use language in meaningful, relevant ways. Thus, they are prepared for creating content and contributing to the participatory culture as full members in the future.

The contributors in this edition of TNTESOL Journal represent two states, multiple learning environments, and diverse groups of language learners. The collective experiences presented in this issue encourages us to

...*Affirm and Celebrate Diversity, Reflect on Challenges, Look to the Future!*

In parting, I will share the words of the great Yankee pitcher, Orlando Hernandez. Better known as, El Duque, Hernandez defected from Cuba to pitch for the Yankees many years ago. Throughout his experiences and challenges, he always would say—todo está bien—all is well!

Friendlier or More Friendlier? Corpus Analysis Findings on the Use of the Adjective Comparison Forms in English

Hana Park, Teresa Dalle, and Moongee Jeon

Corpus-based studies can help identify the patterns of actual language use of the comparison forms in English, that is, when English speakers use the inflectional suffix, the -er or -est forms, or insert a periphrastic form more or most before the adjective. This paper investigates to what extent phonological and morphological factors play a role in predicting language users' choice and whether syntactic and semantic factors are likely to create linguistic environments where one form is favored over the other. It uses a corpus-based study to test four hypotheses concerning the use of comparison forms. Some implications for ESL/EFL teaching are also discussed.

Corpus linguistics has increasingly strengthened its status in a wide range of linguistic fields; however, its application to language teaching was paid little attention until the early 1990s, and the actual use of computer corpora in language classrooms has been largely absent (Kaltenbock & Mehlmauer-Larcher 2005). Fortunately, researchers like Douglas Biber, Susan Conrad, Sylviane Granger, and Randis Rappen have recently published influential scholarship confirming the pedagogical value of corpus linguistics in teaching language and suggesting some important implications for material designers, language teachers and learners. In addition, noting that ESL/EFL grammar books often fail to reflect native speakers' language use, these recent studies suggest that corpus findings can be helpful in dramatically improving the contents and order of presentation of ESL/EFL teaching materials (Barbieri & Eckhardt, 2007; Biber & Reppen, 2002).

CORPUS FINDINGS ON THE ENGLISH COMPARISON

Susan Conrad (2005) defines a corpus as "a large, principled collection of naturally occurring texts that is stored in electronic form" (p. 394), making it possible to investigate "natural" and "actual" usage of language. Corpus-based

research employs computer programs, known as concordancers, which, among other things, show all the words occurring in the environment of an identified key word. Since corpus linguistics focuses on empirical evidence, including statistical analyses and frequency information, it can help in identifying patterns of language use. A corpus study, therefore, can aid in determining the use and frequency of such grammar structures as the comparative in English, specifically, the inflectional –er or –est and the periphrastic more and most.

Grammar texts will typically specify that one-syllable adjectives require inflectional forms in comparisons (see below for possible exceptions) but that three-or-more-syllable adjectives are almost always compared periphrastically (Kyto & Romaine, 1997). Exceptions, however, can be found in disyllabic adjectives, that is, adjectives consisting of two syllables. Some researchers suggest that the differences lie in the endings of such adjectives. Kyto and Romaine (1997), for example, concluded that disyllabic adjectives ending in –y, -ly, -le, -er, have moved towards inflectional endings whereas the periphrastic comparison has been fully established in –ful and –ous groups. Elzinga's (2006) study found that both prosody information, i.e. number of syllables and stress patterns, and the phonological termination of adjectives are important factors in the choice between inflectional and periphrastic comparative forms.

Leech and Culpeper (1997) tested the traditional assumption that disyllabic adjectives ending in an unstressed vowel, e.g., -y, -ly, -ow, syllabic –l, or /ə/ take inflectional endings. Results show that while the –y group dominantly does take inflectional forms, the -ly group is becoming less inflectional, that is, frequencies of –ly adjectives with inflectional comparison has been decreasing from 84.3% to 62.3%, and the number of periphrastic comparisons in this group has accordingly increased from 15.7% to 37.7% (Leech & Culpeper, 1997). Notably, most of the adjectives showing significant increase in the number of periphrastic forms are derived adjectives, adjectives created from other parts of speech, e.g., *deadly, friendly, likely, lively, manly, seemly, surly* (Leech & Culpeper, 1997). This indicates that for some adjectives, morphological construction also seems to be of importance in predicting the choice.

A preliminary corpus-based study, which examined the frequency scores of comparative forms of selected disyllabic adjectives, observed that *more friendly* was favored by language users (72%) over *friendlier* while *earlier* and *uglier* were predominantly favored (100% and 90% respectively) over *more early* and *more ugly*. This result indicates that although *friendly* and *early* have similar phonological features, i.e., both are disyllabic and have the same phonological termination –ly, the more complex morphological nature of *friendly*, an adjective derived from the noun *friend*, may prefer the use of periphrastic construction.

Some linguists (Leech & Culpeper, 1997; Lindquist, 2000; Mondorf, 2007) have considered syntactic and semantic factors. In order to account for exceptional monosyllabic adjectives and the unpredictable behaviors of some disyllabic adjectives, Leech and Culpeper (1997) identified several syntactic environments where periphrastic comparative forms were favored over inflectional forms, and vice versa. Even though monosyllabic adjectives take inflected comparison forms, they tend to prefer periphrastic forms when 1) the comparative construction is followed by *than*; 2) the comparative construction is used with degree modifiers such as *even, much, still,* and 3) the same type of comparison appears as part of coordinated or parallel structures (Leech & Culpeper, 1997). Consider the following examples borrowed from Leech and Culpeper's (1997) data (p. 357).

1. *I am **more proud** of this card than of this badge.*
2. *Edward's face was still **more pale** and drawn*
3. *Their achievement becomes **more impressive** and their status **more clear** if we realize.*

Leech and Culpeper (1997) also noted that a majority of monosyllabic adjectives attested with periphrastic comparatives is used predicatively, which implies that the syntactic function of adjectives, whether attributive or predicative, may be an important predictor of the choice. They also concluded that in the case of disyllabic adjectives taking either form, periphrastic comparisons tend to be favored when they are modified by degree modifiers (Leech & Culpeper, 1997). When two or more comparison constructions are combined together, they tend to take the same type of construction (Leech & Culpeper, 1997).

Mondorf (2007) examined the role of semantic factors in determining the choice of comparative, hypothesizing that periphrastic comparison is more likely to occur with abstract meanings than with concrete meanings, e.g., *fresher taste*, as opposed to a *more fresh approach*.

These corpus-based studies have provided some new insights into the comparison of English adjectives; however, they have some limitations. The research data were often restricted to British English (Kyto & Romaine, 1997; Leech & Culpeper, 1997; Mondorf, 2007), superlative forms were often neglected, (Elzinga, 2006; Mondorf, 2007), or the number of data samples was too small to be generalized (Mondorf, 2007). In addition, these studies tended to deal with each factor separately, one at a time, and few studies have been conducted to cover all four dimensions. Therefore, in order to get more conclusive results and to obtain

a better idea of how these factors interplay with one another, the current study expands the scope of previous research and investigates possible associations between various factors and the choice of comparison forms by comparing larger numbers of data samples.

METHODOLOGY

Corpus Data and the Sample Data Set

This study investigated mainly disyllabic adjectives, since they are the ones that can be regarded as "unpredictable" and "changeable" in their choices of comparison. Two standard computer corpora are used: the Brown Corpus of Standard American English, which includes about one million words in about 500 documents representing a variety of written genres (Kucera & Francis, 1967), and the TASA (Touchstone Applied Science Associates) corpus, which includes over twelve million words in about 37,000 documents, representing texts available to American school children in third through twelfth grades (Zeno, Ivens, Millard, & Duvvuri, 1995). While perhaps less familiar to linguists, the larger-scale TASA corpus has become an important tool in education and psychology (Landauer, Foltz, & Laham, 1998; Steyver & Malmberg, 2003; Turney & Littman, 2003) and will allow for more detailed analysis. In all, 191 adjectives in either comparative or superlative form were retrieved from the Brown Corpus, among which 40 adjectives occurred in both comparative and superlative forms. The TASA corpus was used to actually investigate distribution of the adjectives generated by the Brown Corpus.

In addition to these two standard computer corpora, the study also used the Newspaper corpus, *the New York Times,* from September 01, 2006 to September 01, 2008, which was obtained from the *Lexis/Nexis* database. In order to increase comparability between comparatives and superlatives and between TASA and the Newspaper corpus, only those adjectives that appear in both comparative and superlative forms in both corpora were used.

This study also identified disyllabic adjectives frequently used in contemporary grammar books[1] and added them to the data set. Note that participial adjectives, such as *fitted* and *fitting,* were excluded from the sample data set, since they are almost always compared periphrastically. As a result, 129 disyllabic adjec-

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1   For this research, 6 grammar books were examined, and they are *English, An Essential Grammar* (Gerald Nelson, 2001); *Modern English Structures: Form, Function, and Position* (Bernard O'Dwyer, 2006); *Basic American Grammar and Usage: An ESL/EFL Handbook* (Marcel Danesi, 2006); *A Semantic Approach to English Grammar* (Robert M. W. Dixon, 2005); *Master the Basics: English* (Jean Yates, 2007); *Understanding English Grammar: A Linguistic Approach* (Ronald Wardhaugh, 2002).

tives were selected as a final data set. In order to examine distributive patterns of comparison, standardized ratios of inflectional/periphrastic comparison were used instead of raw frequency scores, since a comparison of the standardized ratio of each item will give a more accurate assessment of the frequency distribution.

Because some words occur more frequently than others and, therefore, can skew the results, the raw frequencies should be standardized. In this study, standardized ratios were calculated as follows:

1. Standardized ratio of *inflectional comparison* = Frequency of -er form / (frequency of -er form + frequency of more form)
2. Standardized ratio of *periphrastic comparison* = Frequency of more form / (frequency of -er form + frequency of more form)

Experiment 1 – Phonological Factor

> Hypothesis 1: For disyllabic adjectives, the heavier the final syllable, the more likely the periphrastic comparison will be used.

The "phonetically heavy" endings are defined as consonants, consonant groups, and certain vowels. To recognize a hierarchy of heaviness among vowels, Bailey's (1985) definition of "heaviness" and "lightness" is used: long vowels and diphthongs are heavier than short vowels. Therefore, a hierarchy of phonetic heaviness from weak to heavy presents as follows: nondiphthongal vowel, diphthongal vowel, syllabic liquid, and consonant.

Material and procedures. The data set was divided into six groups according to the phonetic heaviness of the final segments of adjectives: 1) an unstressed vowel –*y*; 2) an unstressed vowel –*ly*; 3) a diphthong –*ow*; 4) syllabic */r/*; 5) syllabic */l/*; 6) a consonant and consonant clusters.

After gaining the means of standardized ratios for each of the six groups from the TASA corpus, a mixed ANOVA analysis was performed on ratios of inflectional and periphrastic comparison (dependent variable) with phonetic heaviness as a between-subjects factor (independent variable) and comparison variations as a within-subjects factor (independent variable) in order to see the interaction effect between phonetic heaviness and comparison variation. Adjectives in the sample data set were also searched for in the Newspaper corpus, and the same statistical analysis was performed.

Results. In both TASA and NY Times corpora, the periphrastic is more favored than the inflectional comparison. In the TASA corpus, 67.50 % of disyllabic

adjectives are used with the periphrastic more, and 57.68 % are used with the periphrastic most. In NY Times corpus, 65.76 % of disyllabic adjectives are used with the periphrastic more, and 61.14 % are used with the periphrastic most.

A comparison of standardized ratios of the two variants of each phonological group, shows that Hypothesis 1 is supported: disyllabic adjectives with heavier final syllables tend to prefer the periphrastic form.

In fact, in the TASA corpus, the use of periphrastic comparatives tends to increase with phonetic heaviness: *-y* group, 15.39% (42/1334); *-ly* group, 56.37% (312/807); *-ow* group, 41.75% (7/64); */r/* group, 89.85% (60/66); */l/* group, 76.89% (221/380); *consonant* group, 93.07% (744/804), indicating that the interaction effect between phonetic heaviness and the choice of comparatives was statistically significant, $F(5, 123) = 34.93$, $MSE = .14$, $p < .01$. Also, the periphrastic superlatives also shows a similar pattern: -y group, 3.16% (11/389); *-ly* group, 26.66% (92/494); *-ow* group, 25.0% (2/18); */r/* group, 68.19% (25/50); */l/* group, 66.35% (115/386); *consonant* group, 92.30% (884/920), indicating that the interaction effect between phonetic heaviness and the choice of superlatives is statistically significant, $F(5, 123) = 40.16$, $MSE = .16$, $p < .01$.

Experiment 2 – Morphological Factor

> Hypothesis 2: The periphrastic comparison is more likely to occur with derivational adjectives than with non-derivational adjectives.

Material and procedures. In this experiment, only *–y, -ly,* and */l/* groups were examined. Adjectives belonging to *–y* group were divided into two subgroups: 1-a) non-derivational *–y* and 1-b) derivational *–y*. For instance, *pretty* and *easy* were put into subgroup 1-a) and 1-b) respectively. Likewise, adjectives belonging to *–ly* group and */l/* group were divided into two subgroups.

As a next step, after gaining the means of the standardized ratios of each subgroup of *–y* adjectives from the TASA corpus, a mixed ANOVA analysis was performed on ratios of inflectional and periphrastic comparison (dependent variable) with morphological complexity, i.e., whether or not the final segment is a derivational suffix, as a between-subjects factor (independent variable) and comparison variations as a within-subjects factor (independent variable) in order to see the interaction effect between the morphological nature of adjective endings and comparison variation. The analyses of *–ly* group and */l/* group was performed in the same way. Standardized ratios of each subgroup were also obtained from the Newspaper corpus, and the same procedure of statistical analysis was performed.

Results. The corpus data reveals that disyllabic adjectives ending in a derivational –ly and /l/ take the periphrastic form more often, but that is not the case for adjectives of –y group, which are inflected whether or not they end in a derivational morpheme.

Disyllabic adjectives ending in a derivational *–ly*, such as *costly* and *friendly* show a tendency to take periphrastic *more* much more frequently (75.76%), whereas adjectives ending in a non-derivational *–ly,* such as *silly* and *ugly*, demonstrate a preference for inflectional *-er* (79.38%), showing the interaction effect between morphological endings and the choice of comparatives, $F (1, 12) = 14.62$, MSE = .12, p < .01.

Superlatives of the derivational *-ly* group also show a slightly greater tendency to take the periphrastic method in comparison to non-derivational *-ly*, but the difference does not have statistically important meaning, $F (1, 12) = . 18$, MSE = .28, p = .68. This indicates that other factors may be involved here to make comparatives and superlatives behave differently in choosing the methods of comparison.

The choice of comparison of disyllabic adjectives of */l/* group, which shows much stronger preference for periphrastic comparison in both corpora, also seems to be influenced by a morphological factor. Adjectives of the non-derivational /l/ group, like *gentle* and *simple*, tend toward inflectional comparison. In the TASA corpus, 51.02 % of the non-derivational /l/ group takes inflectional comparatives; 71.94 % takes inflectional superlatives, indicating that the interaction effect between morphological endings and the choice of comparison (i.e., comparatives and superlatives) was statistically significant, $F (1, 23) = 21.75$, MSE = .14, p < .01, $F (1, 23) = 37.61$, MSE = .15, p < .01, respectively.

Experiment 3 – Syntactic Factor

Hypothesis 3-1: periphrastic comparison will be more likely to occur in predicative position rather than in attributive position;

Hypothesis 3-2: periphrastic comparison will be more likely to be favored when the comparison construction is modified by degree adverbs;

Hypothesis 3-3: when two or more comparatives or superlatives are coordinated, the use of the same type of comparison (periphrastic or inflectional) will be preferred.

In this experiment, adjective groups which were examined in Experiment 2 were also selected with the derivational */l/* group excluded from the data set, since its

morphological endings, such as *–ful* and *–al*, almost always take the periphrastic form.

To test hypothesis 3-1, each concordance line of comparison construction was coded as 1 for attributive function and 2 for predicative function. The predicative category includes adjectives occurring in object complement, as in (1); isolated position, as in (2); and postmodifying position, as in (3), as suggested by Leech and Culpeper (1997).

1. Mama looked at her daughter's sad face and wished there was something she could do to make Eugenie **happier**. (TASA)

2. Even **more strange,** the girl swore that Maggie was wearing a pair of black and white socks that belonged to Esther. (TASA)

3. […] our investments must be carefully targeted to those areas **most vital** to national security […] (TASA)

Next, standardized ratios of periphrastic comparatives/superlatives in attributive position versus predicative position were calculated. After gaining the means of standardized ratios for each group of syntactic function, a one-way repeated ANOVA was performed on standardized ratios of attributive comparison and predicative comparison (dependent variables) with syntactic function of adjectives as a within-subjects factor (independent variable).

To test hypothesis 3-2, concordance lines where comparative or superlative forms are premodified by degree adverbs such as *much, far, a lot, still, even*, and *a little* were identified. After obtaining frequencies of each comparison form accompanied by degree modifiers, the percentages of inflectional comparatives that occur with degree modifiers were compared with those of periphrastic comparatives with premodification. A one-way repeated ANOVA was conducted on the percentages of inflectional and periphrastic comparison with premodification (dependent variable) with premodification as a within-subjects factor (independent variable). The same procedure was performed to examine the association between forms of superlatives and premodification.

To explore hypothesis 3-3, observational measures, that is, the percentages of parallel comparison structures and non-parallel comparison structures, were compared.

Results. The result reveals in all three groups under study, periphrastic comparative forms occur more in predicative position than in attributive position (59.62%), which is a marginally significant result, $F (1, 45) = 3.36$, MSE = .26, p = .07. The periphrastic comparatives of –ly group occur much more frequently in predicative position (71.76%) than in attributive position (28.24%), and the difference is highly statistically significant, $F (1, 11) = 7.28$, MSE = .16, p < .05. The differences of the other two groups do not provide statistically significant results. Periphrastic comparatives of –y and /l/ groups both occur more frequently in predicative position than in attributive position. However, Hypothesis 3-1 was not realized in periphrastic superlatives. It turns out that periphrastic superlatives occur much more frequently in attributive position (66.24%) than in predicative position (33.76%), $F (1, 32) = 7.55$, MSE = .23, p < .05.

The third syntactic factor suspected to influence the choice of comparison is co-ordination. It is hypothesized that when two or more comparatives/superlatives are coordinated together, they may have a tendency to imitate the forms of their neighboring comparatives/superlatives, as in (4) and (5).

1. I felt *older, wiser* and ***abler***. (NY Times)
2. There is no one *more qualified, more committed* and ***more able*** than Ms. Nichols. (NY Times)

Looking at the occurrences of comparison constructions coordinated with one or more other compared adjectives, we see that about 10% of comparatives (1527 out of 14859 tokens) and about 6% of superlatives (566 out of 9524 tokens) are coordinated with other comparison constructions in the *NY Times* corpus. Among these cases, 63.70% of comparatives turned out to be coordinated with comparatives of the same type, and 36.30% with a different type, $F (1, 45) = 14.75$, MSE = .12, p < .01. Superlatives are also more likely to be coordinated with the same type of superlatives (54.96%) rather than a different type (45.04%), but this is not statistically significant, $F (1, 47) = 1.27$, MSE = .19, p = .27.

Note that in cases of periphrastic superlatives of *–ly* group, the percentages of superlatives coordinated with different types (53.33%) are slightly greater than those coordinated with the same type (46.67%), which contradicts the prediction. However, these cases of unparalleled coordination are produced by three types of adjectives, *costly* (6), *deadly* (1), and *lovely* (1), and examples are these:

1. Offering *the newest* and ***most costly*** vaccines   (NY Times)
2. acquisition of *the largest* and ***most deadly*** class (NY Times)
3. the nation's *oldest* and ***most lovely*** botanical gardens (NY Times)

Observation of these cases reveals that they are all in attributive position, and periphrastic superlatives always follow inflectional superlatives. In fact, Lindquist's (2000) study investigating coordination of adjective phrases also found out that when a mixture of both comparison construction occurs, "the order is almost always *inflectional + periphrasis*" (p. 130).

In this experiment, we have seen that syntactic factors such as attributive versus predicative function of comparison construction, premodification, and coordination can be important predictors of the choice of comparison.

Experiment 4 – Semantic Factor

> Hypothesis 4: periphrastic comparison will occur more in semantically abstract contexts than in concrete contexts.

To determine the degree of abstractness/concreteness of a noun more accurately, "concreteness ratings" (CR) provided by the *Medical Research Council Psycholinguistic Database*[2] were adopted in this experiment. For instance, in the following sentences, the semantic environment of *narrower* is more concrete than that of *more narrow* in terms of the concreteness ratings of *sheet* (CR=608) versus *senses* (CR=316).

1. In laying *the narrower* sheets, every other one should be turned upside down. (TASA)
2. In a *more narrow* sense, the principal resources are the textbook and materials intended to supplement it. (TASA)

The present experiment examined comparative or superlative forms of disyllabic adjectives occurring in attributive position. As for data samples, only disyllabic adjectives of the –ly group were examined, since they are the ones that are suspected to shift towards periphrastic comparison (Leech & Culpeper, 1997; Lindquist, 2000). To examine semantic environments where each variant of this group occurs, the concordance lines retrieved from the NY Times corpus were examined. Comparative or superlative forms occurring in attributive position were identified, and each comparative/superlative form was given numerical values according to the concreteness ratings of the noun following comparative/ superlative adjectives.

The next step was to calculate mean scores of concreteness ratings of each group. Once again, statistical analyses could not be conducted because the size of

2   The MRC Psycholinguistic Database produces the list of about 3,400 nouns and assigns concreteness ratings from 100 (*highly abstract*) to 700 (*highly concrete*) e.g., *milk* - CR 670 and *unreality* – CR 203.

samples was too small. So, Experiment 4 only reports CR scores of each group. *Results.* In order to get more comparable data, only *-ly* adjectives that occur in both inflectional and periphrastic comparatives/superlatives were examined. The results reveal that Hypothesis 4 is supported: periphrastic comparison is likely to occur more in semantically abstract contexts than in concrete contexts. Specifically, the findings showed that the semantic context of inflectional comparatives tends to be more concrete (CR=445.38) than that of periphrastic comparatives (CR=427.9). In cases of superlatives, the semantic context of inflection consistently tends to be more concrete (CR= 454.09) than that of periphrasis (CR=450.16), although the difference is modest.

CONCLUSION

This study discussed four experiments: the phonological factors, morphological factors, syntactic factors, and semantic factors influencing choices of English comparison. The results of each experiment indicate that the choice between inflectional and periphrastic comparison is likely to be influenced by various linguistic factors. Results also showed that computer corpora can be used effectively to examine the possible association between linguistic factors and the language users' choice.

Such knowledge informs the field of ESL, especially if it appears in corpus-based grammar books, which are useful in that they contain real usages of grammatical structures gained from both native and learner corpora and include practical exercises such as discovery learning and error corrections (Meunier, 2002). However, corpus findings alone cannot be used as an absolute criterion on which the teacher makes a pedagogical decision in his/her class. They can be best used when they are added to other pedagogical considerations such as learnability, learners' level and age, and class objectives (Kaltenbock & Mehlmauer-Larcher, 2005). Meunier (2002) suggests that both native and learner corpora should complement each other in the design of materials and curricula but that learner needs and pedagogical relevance must be taken into account.

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Between Two Worlds: The Formation of Ethnic Identity in Latino University Students

Rebecca H. Zanolini

The United States has long been home to immigrants from all around the globe. Currently, the majority of new immigrants coming to the U.S. are arriving from neighboring Latin America. As a result, Hispanics are the largest minority group present in the United States. Consequently, the current and future generations of Hispanic Americans will have a significant impact on U.S. society in terms of ethnic identity. Ethnic identity is considered to be a basic need for full understanding of the self. Thus, this qualitative case study focused on examining the factors and perceptions of ethnic identity within U.S. Hispanic university students. The study was framed by a set of overarching questions including: 1) What tangible/non-tangible factors contribute to ethnic identity? 2) What is the perception of the sample group's ethnicity as a result of experiences with members of their ethnic community? 3) What is the perception of the sample group's ethnicity as a result of experiences with members of the mainstream culture? Data were collected in the form of discussion questions to measure ethic identity formation. The results are a combination of external and internal factors that contribute to the individual's ethnic identity. The information gleaned from this study provides insight in today's fastest growing minority as a means to improve society and educational practices.

INTRODUCTION

The United States has long been home to immigrants from all around the globe. While many immigrants who arrived prior to the 21st century were mainly of European descent, today the majority of new immigrants are arriving from neighboring Latin America. As a result, Hispanics are the largest minority group in the United States. "One- in-five schoolchildren is Hispanic. One-in-four newborns is Hispanic. Never before in this country's history has a minority ethnic group made

up so large a share of the youngest Americans" (Pew Hispanic Center, 2010, p. 1). Consequently, the current and future generations of Hispanic Americans and new immigrants will have a significant impact on U.S society in the following factors: education, culture, socio-economic class standards, and race. While these factors may be overarching, it is the internalization of the latter coupled with influences of the former factors that contribute to an individual's definition of ethnic identity.

Given that there may be a correlation between positive ethnic identity with academic and social achievement, well-rounded Latino university students arguably have a positive sense of ethnic identity. Likewise, a negative or lack of ethnic identity may place Hispanic youth and young adults at an increased risk for academic failure, pregnancy, gang affiliation and/or prison. Thus, as both a preventative and nutritive measure, it is imperative for Latinos to reconcile their biculturalism and/or bilingualism in an effort to create an ethnic identity.

Defining Ethnic Identity in Hispanic Immigrants

Although children's awareness of ethnic identity and cultural differences may begin by the age of three or four, identity has been found to be one of the pivotal developmental tasks of adolescence. Because identity cannot be separated from the culture(s) which build and structure it, Hispanic adolescents often find themselves caught between two worlds: the dominant White mainstream culture and their Hispanic subculture which has been transformed upon immigration to the United States (Erikson, 1950; Guanipa & Guanipa, 1998, & Rothe, 2004). This paradox causes extra stress, which adds to the already existing conflict of adolescent self-identity. Although self-identity is multifaceted, ethnic self-identity proves to be most challenging for immigrant youth in the United States.

Ethnic identity, defined as, "the sameness of a band or nation of people who share common customs, traditions, historical experiences" (Trimble & Dickson, 2010, p. 1), is considered to be a basic need for full understanding of the self. Furthermore, Guanipa & Guanipa (1998) find:

> Ethnic self-identity is the integration of race into one's self-concept or self-image. It is the full recognition of one's ethnicity (ies), and the subsequent self-identity that follows from the values, ways, and styles of that ethnic background(s), instead of from the self-concept based on the opinion and prejudices of the larger society towards the ethnic group. (p. 3)

As a result, if the individual does not form positive identification markers, he

or she is at risk for developing self hate towards the marginalized ethnic group in which the person identifies (Rothe, 2004). If ethnic identity is not positively reconciled, self-hate coupled with other limiting factors discussed below can attribute to placing the Latino young adults at risk.

The definition of ethnic identity, albeit imperative, provides an ambiguous guideline from which Hispanic young adults can develop an individual definition of such. While it is assumed that most people have reconciled their identity by adulthood, adult Hispanic immigrants are often faced with a reconstruction or duality of such upon arrival to the United States. Amaya (2007, p. 199) attains, "Reconstruction necessitates a reflective rewriting of the self that tries to account for the changed environment, the narratives coming from the new landscape and the actions available to the individual which are constituted materially and symbolically." Moreover, adult Hispanic immigrants have the opportunity to abandon their prior identity and choose one perceived to gain access to certain material benefits, to achieve what they view as higher social recognition or to create an imagined community that will provide them with a sense of understanding and control in their new social reality (Itzigsohn and Dore-Cabral, 2000).

From this standpoint, adult Hispanic immigrants are at an advantage in their new role as they choose whether or not to assimilate and/ or acculturate into the dominant culture. On the contrary, Hispanic adolescent immigrants, many of whom are uprooted at the beginning of their awareness of self and identity, are handicapped when faced with a plethora of choices in which to reconstruct, abandon or expand their yet formed ethnic identity. Roth (2004) offers that children and adolescents rarely participate in any decisions regarding immigration. Rather, they are uprooted from their human environment as well as the nonhuman environment. Parents are typically overwhelmed by the stresses and challenges of migration, thus, they may not be available emotionally to help the children or adolescents negotiate the intrapsychic process.
Parental unawareness coupled with societal ambivalence leaves many Hispanic youth to reconcile their ethnic identity on their own. Thus, the process by which the individual forms identity appears to be unique to the person's experiences, age and socio-economic factors.

Ethnic Identity Process and Limitations

It is suggested that immigrants will assimilate, acculturate or reject the mainstream culture. Smart and Smart (1995) found six ways in which Hispanic immigrants may have a distinct acculturation experience from other immigrant groups. All of the following factors may influence formation of ethnic identity.

1. Discrimination on the Basis of Skin Color
2. Unique Hispanic Emphasis on Social and Family Ties
3. Illegal Immigration
4. Geographic Proximity
5. The Legacy of Armed Conflict
6. Hispanic Reliance on Physical Labor

While each of theses components provides valid facets to ethnic identity, perhaps the process can be more simplified. Although not complete, Latino young adults may attain ethnic identity through the following variables: school, family and society. These three factors may function inter or intradependently throughout formation of ethnic and self-identity. For new immigrants, school is undoubtedly the most extreme obstacle in identity formation. Guyll, Madon, Prieto and Scherr (2010, p. 114) find, "Latino/a acculturation and ethnic identity as predictors of academic performance." The previously learned cultural norms are often contradicted without explanation for the immigrant teen. Concurrently, given the resistance to adopt Spanish bilingualism in schools today, language creates a temporary paralysis for the adolescent. Rothe (2004) finds that Hispanic immigrant children and teens often are not able to academically compete effectively with English speaking due to a lack of proficiency in the language.

Thus, the immigrant teen, unable to express him or herself throughout verbal or nonverbal communication, may become frustrated and transfer this negative frustration to a negative view of the dominant culture which may perceive the individual's ethnicity and language as not only inferior, but problematic to the school and society in general. This interaction may in turn create adversity for the teen to assimilate or acculturate to the dominant culture and language. While first generation immigrant children are faced with a cultural divide in schools, Rothe (2004) attains that the second generation becomes distanced from the country of origin and is unable to identify with models of either culture. It is because of this that the researcher found it imperative to explore ethnic identity in Latino university students from a variety of backgrounds and ages. By comparing and contrasting the results from this study with literature previously written on this topic, one can further understand the complexity of ethnic identity in Latino youth into adulthood.

Furthermore, the educational experience can further impact ethnic identity through the development of self-fulfilling prophecies during this crucial time period. Summarized in Guyll et al (2010), the self-fulfilling prophecy occurs when an individual performs at the level of expectancy set forth by an individual perceived as a valid authority figure. In support of this as a possible attribution to ethnic identity, research proves that teachers tend to hold lower expectations

for Latino/a students than for their mainstream counterparts (Guyll et al, 2010). Beyond negative self-fulfilling prophecies, schools may view Hispanic students as having deficits that impede success and assimilation into academics and mainstream culture (Souto-Manning, 2007). Such mentality only reinforces negative ethnic identity and or reject of mainstream culture.

By all accounts, both assimilated and non-assimilated Hispanics recognize family as a primary source for problem solving, evaluation and identity. Though often through implicit measures, the family unit serves as a model for ethnic identification and cultural boundaries. Schwartz, Pantin, Prado, Sullivan, and Szapocznik (2005) hold the quality of positive identity is determined largely by parental support, communication with parents and the quality of parent-adolescent attachments and relationships.

As a result of experiences at school and in the home, society is perhaps the collective sum that aids in either reinforcing or challenging forming ethnic identities in Latino young adults. Given that schools are often a reflection of society, it is arguable that the negative stereotypes many Hispanics suffer in school from teachers and peers are prevalent in society as well. Torres (2004, p. 134) states, "Discrimination against others because of their race-ethnicity and national origins is a contagious illness that pervades social practices and individual institutional levels." While many youth and young adults may show one facet of identity in school and another at home in an attempt to belong to both venues, the complexity of society may cause Hispanics either freedom of adaptation to develop a complete ethnic identity or create more obstacles and confusion from which the individual must reconcile and add to the multifaceted layers of identity already in existence.

Examining Ethnic Identity

This qualitative case study focused on examining the factors and perceptions of ethnic identity within US Latino university students. Specifically, the study examined the following overarching questions:

1. What tangible/non-tangible factors contribute to ethnic identity?
2. What is the perception of the sample group's ethnicity as a result of experiences with members of their ethnic community?
3. What is the perception of the sample group's ethnicity as a result of experiences with members of the mainstream culture?

Data were collected in the form of open-ended interview questions (Figure 1) to measure the content of the overarching questions previously mentioned. The data

were analyzed by dividing each appropriate response with the matching overarching question. Due to the consistencies found within the responses, the researcher divided the participants into Group A and Group B. The results from each group were then independently analyzed and ultimately cross analyzed between the two groups to check for consistencies and differences within the information provided by the participants.

Figure 1. *Open-Ended Interview Protocol*

1. To what extent are you aware of your ethnicity?
2. Do you think it is necessary to have an ethnic identity? Why or why not?
3. In what ways do your parents and family members ethnically identify themselves?

4. What term do you prefer to be called? (Please select all that apply)
   - Latino (a)
   - Hispanic
   - Chicano (a)
   - None of the above
   - All of the above
   - Other: _____
   - Why do you prefer to be called this?

5. How do you feel your ethnicity is represented in popular culture (movies, music, etc.)?
6. To what extent has the way your ethnicity is portrayed in film and television impacted the way you identify
7. yourself?
8. What aspects of your ethnicity or culture make you feel proud?
9. What (if any) aspects of your ethnicity or culture make you feel ashamed?
10. How does your ethnicity impact your relationship with your family/friends?
11. How have you experienced discrimination within your ethnic group?
12. How have you experienced discrimination within the dominant groups in U.S society?
13. How has discrimination impacted your personal view on your own ethnicity?
14. In what ways have you attempted to conform to (or resist) the dominant culture?
15. In what ways have your parents integrated into mainstream society?
16. In what ways have you integrated into mainstream society?
17. In what ways do you identify yourself specifically (ethnicity and/or otherwise)?
18. What does being of Latino heritage mean to you personally?
19. What do you think the biggest challenge people your age and in your ethnic group face?
20. What advice would you other young Latinos who may be struggling with identifying themselves?
21. What advice would you give mainstream society in the United States about your ethic group?

Research Procedures

The participant group for this study was defined as Hispanic students attending a

large university in Tennessee. A homogeneous sampling was conducted in order to ensure proper selection of candidates for the purpose of the study. The participants ranged in age from 18 years old to 49. All were enrolled as university students at the time of the study. Each participant was invited to complete a 20 question open-ended interview. The duration of the study lasted approximately three weeks between the date the subjects were sent the consent forms and the date the instrument (discussion questions) was returned to the researcher. Due to the short timeline and desire to maintain autonomy and limit bias with the participants, the researcher opted to use only one data set for the study. The researcher analyzed the data and results were drawn from the analysis. The researcher only had contact with the participants via e-mail through sending and receiving the consent forms and instrument used for the study.

Data Analysis

For this project the researcher chose a case study research design to investigate the chosen phenomenon. According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2009, p. 426), case study research can be defined as, "A qualitative research approach in which researchers focus on a unit of study known as a bounded system." Five Latino university students represented the bounded system. Likewise, the phenomenon being investigated is the formation of ethnic identity in Latino students attending a state university. Once the researcher collected the completed interviews, she then categorized the information in the responses to the 20 questions in an unordered meta-matrix for each participant (Tables 1-5). Upon organizing the information, the researcher found many responses did not support any of the three overarching questions posed at the beginning of the study and which were the basis for the open-ended interview instrument. Thus, only the responses directly supporting these overarching questions were included within the matrices. Out of 20 total questions and responses, on average, 13 responses were included in each matrix (Tables 1-5).

Furthermore, the researcher divided the subjects into two groups: Group A) Participants born in Latin America and Group B) participants born in the United States. Each set of data were originally analyzed independently and then included in a cross-case analysis within each group and between the two groups to observe consistencies in responses to the discussion questions with an ultimate goal of supporting the overarching questions directing the study.

Table 1. *Group A – Participant 1*

Latin American Born	Participant Characteristics	Tangible/Non-Tangible Influencing Factors	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Ethnic Group	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Mainstream Culture
Participant 1	Born and raised in South America. Parents still live in South America (they have never immigrated). Nationalistic attitude.	Aware of ethnic identity. Society dictates ethnic identity based on physical appearance. Unity of home culture. Poetry from home. Nationality, not ethnicity = pride. Language Identifies self by country of origin.	Culture of origin does not identify people based on ethnic identity. Likes title, "Latino." No in-group discrimination reported.	Portrayal of Latin American men, poorly portrays Latinos = negative identity. Latino men in USA negatively reinforce false stereotypes. Negative comments contribute to ignorance; however this does not impact ethnic identity. Assimilated.

Table 2. *Group A – Participant 2*

Latin American Born	Participant Characteristics	Tangible/Non-Tangible Influencing Factors	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Ethnic Group	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Mainstream Culture
Participant 2	Born and raised in South America. Parents still live in South America (they have never immigrated). No mention of nationalism.	Aware of ethnic identity and considers self to be a "typical Hispanic person." Food Dances Differences = unity. Does not identify with a specific group. Different traditions	Culture of origin does not identify people based on ethnic identity. Likes title, "Latino." Feels the term, "Hispanic" doesn't sound right. Gangs are a negative aspect of identity.	Latinos portrayed on T.V. negatively impact ethnic identity. Has not conformed. Learned English.

Table 3. *Group A – Participant 3*

Latin American Born	Participant Characteristics	Tangible/Non-Tangible Influencing Factors	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Ethnic Group	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Mainstream Culture
Participant 3	Born and raised in Central America. Parents still in Central America (they have never immigrated). No distinction between nationalism and ethnic identity.	Aware of ethnic identity. Language Country Family Culture Friends Music	Culture of origin does not identify people based on ethnic identity. Prefers the term, "Latina." Considers discrimination to be confused as a Mexican. Feels US Latinos are better than others.	Latinos are portrayed as bad = negative stereotype = negative ethnic identity.

Table 4. *Group B – Participant 4*

Latin American Born	Participant Characteristics	Tangible/Non-Tangible Influencing Factors	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Ethnic Group	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Mainstream Culture
Participant 4	Born in the United States. Parents are from Latin America. Parents immigrated to the United States. Quote about ethnic identity: "I never really gave it (ethnic identity) that much thought. I just lived my life."	Speak 2 languages. Food History Somewhat aware of ethnic identity. Identifies self as a parent, student, and employee.	Embarrassed to be 'Latina" growing up. Prefers not to have a title. Discrimination in skin color. Clash growing up between individualistic vs. collectivistic cultures. Does not feel these factors have impacted ethnic identity.	Feels movies represent Hispanic culture in "true form," but not TV shows. Does not allow negative stereotypes from mainstream culture to impact ethnic identity. Feels most comfortable around African Americans.

Table 5. *Group B – Participant 5*

Latin American Born	Participant Characteristics	Tangible/Non-Tangible Influencing Factors	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Ethnic Group	Impact of Ethnic Identity from Mainstream Culture
Participant 5	Born in the United States.	Somewhat aware of ethnic identity.	Prefers the term, Mexican-American because other terms are too broad.	Media misrepresents culture.
	One parent from Latin America.	Food, celebrations.		Negative assumptions by mainstream culture = negative attributes to ethnic identity.
	Second parent is 2nd generation Latin American.	As a teen did not feel like he could fit in because he was judged by his ethnic group and the mainstream culture.	Ashamed about gangs.	
	Both parents live in the United States.		People refer to the participant as, "The whitest Mexican they know."	Most comfortable with Caucasian group.
	Listens to rock music.	Trying to please both cultures and fit in with both.	Called, "White boy" by peers.	
	Has a Caucasian wife.			

DISSCUSSION

Upon analyzing the responses provided by the participants, the researcher found the following consistencies between the three students in Group A:

- All students were born outside of the United States in Latin America and lived in Latin America through late adolescence.
- All have parents who still reside in home country of origin.

Upon cross-analysis of responses of Group A directed by the overarching questions, the researcher found a combination of factors that may impact the Latino student's ethnic identity and perception of such. First, although all three Latin American born and raised participants claim to be aware of their ethnic identity, all agree the process of categorizing people based on ethnic identity is unlikely to happen in their home country. All participants in Group A claim that although diversity exists, little attention is given to differences based on ethnicity. Second, all members considered themselves to be "Latino/a" when asked which label they most preferred. Third, all participants reported limited discrimination or negative experiences with people from their own ethnic group. Fourth, all members agreed that mainstream culture is highly misinformed about their ethnic group. The

culprit for much of this misinformation was agreed upon by the participants to be mass media.

While all members have dealt with negative experiences in reference to their ethnicity with members of the mainstream culture, each participant assured he/she did not let this negatively impact or change their current perceptions of their own ethnic group or identity. Finally, the participants in Group A unanimously decided the tangible factor they associate most with their ethnic identity is food. The non-tangible factors the participants associate most with their ethnic identity is language, cultural traditions (i.e., dances, celebrations, etc) and an overall sense of unity. Thus, it appears all members in Group A arrived to the United States with an already formed ethnic identity. This perhaps may suggest that any ethnic identity formation that occurs will take place before adulthood. Furthermore, the information provided by the participants shows that ethnic identity may not be a plastic process as the subjects reported little change with the perception of their own ethnicity as a result of experiences with the mainstream culture.

Upon analyzing the responses provided by the two participants in Group B, the researcher found the following consistencies:

- Both participants were born in the United States.
- Both have at least one parent born in Latin America.

Upon cross-analysis of the responses provided by the members in Group B, the researcher found the participants identified themselves to be somewhat aware of their ethnic identity. Both members of this group admitted to having a negative perception of ethnographic labels, in general preferring to not identify themselves as such. Furthermore, the members of Group B report many negative experiences with members of their own ethnic group that appear to have negatively impacted their perceptions of ethnic identity.

While both members report clashes between their ethnic group and mainstream culture, one participant reports, "I was embarrassed to be Latina growing up" while the other participant reports being bothered when members of his group growing up called him, "The whitest Mexican they know." Both members of Group B report having limited opportunities of having friends from their own culture. While one participant identified more with African-Americans growing up, the other identified most with Caucasians. Furthermore, while both participants acknowledge that media misrepresents their ethnic group, both deny it has negatively impacted their ethnic identity formation or perceptions of their ethnic group. Finally, the participants in Group B both agreed the tangible factor they associate most with their ethnic identity is food. The non-tangible fac-

tors the participants associate most with their ethnic identity are cultural history and language. Through the responses provided by the participants, it appears the formation of ethnic identity may occur on a subconscious level as both members of Group B admit to trying to please both their ethnic group and the mainstream culture growing up, yet also admit to being only somewhat aware of their overall ethnic identity.

Thus, upon cross-analysis of responses between Group A and Group B, the researcher found the following:

- While Group A claimed to be fully aware of ethnic identity, Group B claims to be only somewhat aware.
- Although Group A reported limited negative impact to their perceptions of their ethnic group based on experiences within their ethnic group, Group B reported more feelings of discrimination that may or may not negatively impact their perceptions of their ethnic group.
- The members of Group A unanimously chose the label "Latino/a" for ethnic identification, while members of Group B were more resistant to claiming any one label to represent their ethnic identity.
- Both Group A and Group B claim the mainstream culture has a limited understanding of their ethnic culture in part due to misrepresentation of Latinos in film and on television. Even so, all participants claim negative experiences with members of the mainstream culture do not impact their perception of their own ethnic identity.
- Last, both groups identified food as the one tangible factor they attribute to their ethnic identity. Non-tangible factors identified by both groups were reported as cultural traditions and language. More over, where Group A included unity as another non-tangible factor, Group B identified history as an important non-tangible factor.

Thus, through the cross-case analysis, the researcher was able to identify many responses that support the overarching questions driving this study.

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- The members of Group A unanimously chose the label "Latino/a" for ethnic identification, while members of Group B were more resistant to claiming any one label to represent their ethnic identity.
- Both Group A and Group B claim the mainstream culture has a limited understanding of their ethnic culture in part due to misrepresentation of Latinos in film and on television. Even so, all participants claim negative experiences with members of the mainstream culture do not impact their perception of their own ethnic identity.
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Thus, through the cross-case analysis, the researcher was able to identify many responses that support the overarching questions driving this study.

1. Question #1: What tangible/non-tangible factors contribute to ethnic identity? The factors identified by all participants in this study to contribute to ethnic identity are food, cultural traditions and language.

2. Question #2: What is the perception of the sample group's ethnicity as a result of experiences with members of their ethnic community? According to the responses received, the researcher found the U.S. born Latino university students experienced more discrimination within their ethnic group than their foreign-born Latino counterparts. However, it is not clear if these negative experiences within the ethnic group negatively impact the sample group's perception of their ethnic community.

3. Question #3: What is the perception of the sample group's ethnicity as a result of experiences with members of the mainstream culture? While both Group A and B reported negative experiences with the mainstream culture, both groups deny a negative impact to their perception of their identity as a result of such experiences.

Recommendations and Conclusions

While the discussion questions used in this study allowed the researcher to adequately explore the overarching questions in this study, the researcher believes the responses may have been more in depth if they had been in Spanish. Although all of the participants spoke English fluently, those from Group A (foreign-born) may have struggled discussing their ethnic identity in English due to the fact that

their identity process was likely formed in their country of origin with their native tongue. The researcher does not believe the discussion questions in English hindered the responses of Group B (U.S. born) participants given that many of their experiences during their identity formation were influenced by the English language and mainstream culture.

Furthermore, the researcher suggests further examination into the plasticity of ethnic identity. Based on the responses provided by the participants, it appears that ethnic identity formation has been realized before entering into higher education. Moreover, the experiences with the U.S. mainstream culture appear to have little impact on the participants' current perceptions of their own ethnic identity. Thus, this begs the following questions: 1) Is ethnic identity a plastic process that can be altered after the age of 18? 2) If the answer to number one is affirmative, under what circumstances can this happen? 3) Does such change result in an individual with a hybrid ethnic identity or does one have to give up one for the acceptance of the other? In order to seek answers to these new questions, further investigation with a larger number of participants is required.

In conclusion, while many factors attribute to the formation of ethnic identity in Latino university students, this study has focused on the tangible and non-tangible factors contributing to such, Latino experiences within their ethnic group and Latino experiences with the mainstream culture to better understand the process by which ethnic identity evolves. The information gleaned from this study supports prior research in the following ways: formation of ethnic identity appears to be multi-faceted, food is perhaps the most common tangible factor that may impact ethnic identity, and there appears to be an overall misunderstanding and misrepresentation of the Latino culture in U.S. media that reinforces negative stereotypes which may negatively impact the formation of ethnic identity and thus create ethnic self-hate in Latino individuals if not properly addressed. Given the increase of both foreign and domestic born Latinos in higher education, it is imperative educators and administrators become educated on our nation's fastest growing minority with an ultimate goal of a positive university culture that reflects such an attitude coupled with increased Latino university student retention rates. Although the researcher suggests further investigation on this topic, this study can be used to inform and improve both current and future educational practices at any educational institution.

The Author

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Tripling Reading Instruction by Using the TRI Model: A Pilot Project's Preliminary Results

Christine Love Thompson & Tiffany Strange

Seeing the need for Limited English Proficient (LEP) students to increase their reading skills through differentiated instruction, the researchers of this study developed the Triple Rotation Inclusive (TRI) Reading Model to increase students' participation in reading interventions. Based on the "push-in" instructional method, TRI maximizes the amount of time each LEP student receives targeted instruction from three certified teachers, the classroom teacher, the English Language (EL) teacher, and the reading specialist, during a 60-minute reading block. This article describes the TRI Reading Model and details the preliminary results associated with this reading model.

Limited English Proficient (LEP) student populations are increasing at an astonishing rate in the Southeastern United States. According to the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition (NCELA), the growth of LEP students in comparison to Native English speaking students is more than seven times higher. For example, the number of all preK-12 students has increased by 7.22% between the years 1998-2009; whereas, the number of preK-12 LEP students has increased 51.01% (NCELA, 2011). In the state of Tennessee, the growth of the English Learner (EL) student population has increased more than 200% since 1998 (Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students, 2010). Tennessee is just one of the many states that has witnessed a surge in the LEP population over the past decade. In fact, around twenty percent of United States is seeing LEP population growth rates of more than 200%. In addition to Tennessee, other states, such as Alabama, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Kentucky, Arkansas, Colorado, Virginia, and Indiana are showing dramatic increases (NCELA, 2011). If this trend continues, the Southeast will eventually surpass areas in the West as having the most concentrated populations of LEP families. Based on this information, it is evident that the Southeastern United

States will need to meet the challenges of supporting students who begin school without full proficiency in English Language. Interventions should include the use of traditional and non-traditional methods of reading instruction.

Besides meeting the basic language needs of such diverse students, schools today are faced with the challenge of increasing student proficiency as measured via standardized test scores. The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) legislation dictates that 100% of all students demonstrate proficiency in Reading/Language Arts and Math by 2014, including those who may have only recently immigrated to the United States. Schools have to work even harder to meet these proficiency milestones. As Tennessee schools labor to master the requirements of NCLB, they also have to meet the new standards-based reforms of the "First to the Top" educational legislation. To show improvement from year to year, schools are scrutinized based on their value-added and proficiency performances of all students, including its increasing LEP population.

Although LEP students may enter school with deficiencies in English language, they are still held accountable to the same state testing standards as their native English-speaking peers. To combat this issue, many LEP students receive dual services from a certified English Learner (EL) teacher and a Title I Reading Specialist. Through individualized instructional strategies, it is the schools' hope to decrease learning gaps that generally show up on state testing data.

Data from the 2008 Green Elementary School (pseudonym) report card classified all students as either being advanced, proficient, basic, or below basic in their proficiency levels based on their Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program (TCAP) achievement test scores. For example, in the area of Reading/Language Arts and Writing, 11% of the students scored below proficient. Fifty-three percent of the students were proficient, and 36% advanced, totaling 89% proficient/advanced. When considering the proficient/advanced scores of the school, the school appears to be on the right track to achieving 100% proficiency by 2014. After closer inspection through data disaggregation, it is evident that LEP students are not performing as high as their same age/grade peers; the LEP students' scores were much lower. In the area of Reading/Language Arts, 37% scored below proficient, 49% scored proficient, and only 14% scored advanced for a total of 64% proficient or advanced LEP students. This is 26% less than the entire school average of students who were proficient or higher. Digging a little deeper, the data revealed that there was a decrease in the number of LEP students who scored proficient on the 2008 TCAP results. Data from the 2008 and 2007 report cards for Green Elementary revealed a 5% increase in below proficient LEP students' scores and a 10% decrease in the number of proficient LEP students, totaling a 15% drop in the number of proficient LEP students in 2008.

This decline shows that some LEP students may be falling through the cracks and possibly "left behind."

Table 1: *Reading/Language Arts Proficiency Rates at Green Elementary*

Subgroup		Advanced	Proficient	Below Proficient
2008	Whole School	36%	53%	11%
2008	LEP Students	14%	49%	37%
2007	LEP Students	9%	59%	32%

One possible reason for the decrease in proficient test scores could be related to time management and instructional methods used by the classroom teacher as well as the EL teacher to meet the needs of LEP students. Typical LEP instruction in Tennessee uses a pull-out method in which students are pulled from their regular education classroom for 30 minutes to an hour a day to receive English language instruction. Even though LEP students at this school received services from a certified EL teacher, they may not have been instructed using the academic content necessary to increase student proficiency rates as measured via the TCAP test and English Language Development Assessment (ELDA). Students require adequate instructional time exposed to specialized language instruction that provides more saturation in the language acquisition experience, which includes academic vocabulary. This study used an inclusive model to address this need.

The total number of students in this LEP subgroup for Green Elementary is approaching the minimum requirement of "45," thus creating a situation in which TCAP scores from this subgroup could negatively affect the school's status under NCLB. The LEP students face major learning challenges because of language barriers, which must be overcome to ensure proficiency on the annual TCAP assessment that also includes the writing assessment. The EL program at Green Elementary—though valuable to the acquisition of LEP students' English language skills—needed restructuring to rapidly enhance LEP students' academic language, which is a crucial component to increasing their success on TCAP and other formal assessments such as ELDA. Increased proficiency in Reading/Language Arts could close the educational gaps in all subject areas. This will lead to increases in the proficiency of this particular subgroup of students.

The problem is that students in grades four and five have insufficient time instructed in differentiated reading groups, compromising their growth in reading and language development especially when pulled out of class for English language development. Although schools are working feverishly to make Annual Yearly Progress (AYP) and increase value-added scores, additional interventions and cutting-edge teaching strategies are required to stay on top. Based on prob-

lem identification, this research sought to answer the following questions:

1. Will increased time in differentiated reading groups increase students' reading levels?
2. Will increased time in differentiated reading groups increase students' ability to pass ELDA tests?
3. Will increased time in differentiated reading groups increase the writing proficiency of LEP students?

To find answers to the research questions, the Triple Rotation Inclusive (TRI) Reading Model was designed to increase the amount of time students spend in differentiated reading groups receiving scaffolded instruction daily as a way to increase LEP students' language development in the content area of reading and writing.

BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONNECTION TO THE TRI MODEL

Situated Conception of Motivation

The Situated Conception of Motivation looks at how motivation is effected by the classroom context. It also examines how course design such as teacher and classroom group dynamics can positively or negatively affect student motivation (Vance, 2008). According to this theory, cognition and behavior are preceded by motivation (Cuddy, Fiske, & Glicke, 2007; Dörnyei, 2003). If students have no desire to learn, they will not achieve. Teachers can take steps to increase students' motivation. Positive classroom emotions stimulate positive learning experiences, which increase students' desire to achieve (Masgoret & Gardner, 2003). Some factors that teachers need to take into account when designing a reading program is the level of anxiety students feel toward their ability to read, inhibitions that they have toward reading, whether or not a student has an extroverted or introverted personality, the self-esteem level of the students, learning styles, attitudes, the peer group in which the student is working, and the climate of the school (Vance, 2008, p. 3). Teachers must also consider a learner's emotional state and how this affects their learning and language acquisition (Krashen & Terrell, 1983). Students who have high levels of anxiety will require more teacher modeling and scaffolding than those with lower levels of anxiety.

Affective Filters

The Affective Filter Hypothesis maintains that certain variables affect students' ability to learn. These variables include motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety,

which can influence the process of second language acquisition. This hypothesis "implies that our pedagogical goals should not only include supplying comprehensible input, but also creating a situation that encourages a low filter" (Krashen, 1982, p. 32). If a learner has a high or strong affective filter, the input will not reach the part of the brain responsible for learning. Depending on the individual student, an affective filter can either increase a student's ability to understand and comprehend information or it can hinder the learning process. Using the TRI Reading Model of EL instruction at Green Elementary, the time each student is directly instructed by a certified teacher in the area of reading/language arts in increased, thus decreasing the students' affective filters with the goal of increasing achievement. To meet the needs of the diverse learning styles and levels in both the fourth and fifth grade classes, all three teachers used differentiated instruction primarily focusing on Lev Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (Driscoll, 2005). By working at each student's appropriate level of development, the amount of anxiety each student felt concerning their ability to read and achieve using grade level texts and assessments was decreased. In small groups students used peer collaboration as a way to process new knowledge in a social context. Teachers facilitated student discussions by asking guided questions, initiating possible solutions to topics being discussed, and by providing a role model for group discussion (Driscoll, 2005). During teacher-led collaborative peer discussions, students' language skills were increased. As students' language increased so did their cognitive development.

Inclusive Co-Teaching Model through a Constructivist Lens

At the beginning of the school year, it was noted that the fourth and fifth grade classes in this study had the highest concentration of LEP students while also having some of the lowest reading levels for those grades according to the STAR reading test. Therefore, an inclusive, or push-in, reading model was designed to meet the needs of the LEP students as well as the remaining students of the classes, which were comprised of Title I and special education students as well as some gifted education students. The researchers used a co-teaching model that allowed all students to be served by the reading specialist and the EL teacher.

Using the TRI Reading Model, students rotated between three teachers in 20-minute intervals using Constructivist teaching strategies for reading and literacy development. Students' interactions were the cornerstone of each reading group and proved to be a fundamental component and essential to support student learning (Tompkins and Tway, 2003; Peterson, 2003). Instruction included opportunities for students to share and define knowledge rather than simply exchange facts about the selections that were read. Teachers used cueing and questioning techniques to help students "construct" knowledge while building their vocabu-

lary and background knowledge about subjects being discussed (Labbo, 2004; Routman, 2005). As literature was discussed, students were encouraged to find relevance in the information by making text-to-text, text-to-self, or text-to-world connections. By making learning meaningful, the students were actively engaged in their learning which increased the retention of knowledge and reduced students' affective filters thus increasing student motivation (Krashen, 1982).

TRIPLE ROTATION INCLUSIVE (TRI) READING MODEL

To increase students' time receiving differentiated instruction, the researchers developed a reading model in which every day during a 60-minute reading block all students in the participating fourth and fifth grade classes worked with three certified teachers: the regular education teacher, the EL teacher, and a reading specialist. Throughout the reading block, students were rotated between each teacher in 20-minute intervals. To place students in leveled reading groups, each student took a reading inventory via a computer-based STAR reading program to determine their approximate reading level and range. Using this information, students were placed into homogenous reading groups. Students who demonstrated the lowest levels of reading proficiency were placed in the smallest groups of only three or four students; whereas, students who were more proficient readers, at or above grade level, were placed in larger reading groups of five to six students. The students with the most need rotated four days a week during TRI while those who needed less intensive instruction only rotated twice a week. When students were not actively participating in reading groups, they worked in independent literacy stations which included activities such as Mountain Language; computerized programs such as ORCHARD, Education City, and Study Island; and learning games. Figure 1 provides an example of one classroom's group rotation chart.
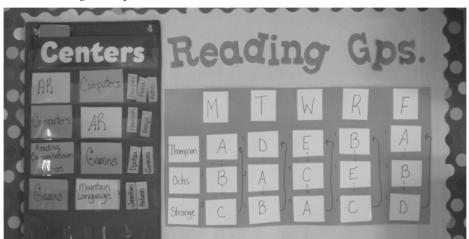
Figure 1: *Reading Group Rotation Chart*

Seventy-five percent of Groups A, B, and C consisted of LEP students. Six out of eight of the students in Group A and B were LEP students. Group A and Group B each rotated with the three certified teachers four days a week guaranteeing them 12 reading group interventions each week. In a typical 60-minute reading block, these students would normally receive one reading intervention a day four or five days a week at 20 minutes a day. Using TRI, students receive differentiated reading instruction with three certified teachers for 60 minutes a day. This triples the amount of time they would normally receive direct instruction in reading/language arts from 80 minutes a week to 240 minutes a week of differentiated instruction in reading, language arts, and vocabulary. Group C, which included three LEP students out of four, received reading interventions three days a week which is an increase of 60 minutes a week to 180 minutes a week.

When reviewing STAR reading data for the research participants, it was noted that this data aligned with the proficiency rates of students on the 2010 TCAP tests demonstrating a need for students to have a comprehensive intervention that not only services their LEP needs but also their content area vocabulary requirements for grade-level mastery of the subject matter.

METHOLOGY

The research design of this study was a mixed method quasi-experimental design—with no random assignments—based on a convenience sample. Students were grouped according to their current classroom placement. There were a total of two groups, which included a fourth grade class and a fifth grade class.

Quantitative data were derived from ELDA Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking scores. Data from the 2009 and 2010 ELDA scores were compared to students' 2011 ELDA results. Other quantitative data were taken from students' beginning of the year STAR reading test results. STAR reader reports students' grade level equivalency at the time of testing. The students' beginning-of-the-year STAR reading levels were compared to the middle and end-of-the-year STAR reading levels to determine if there was a significant change in students' reading levels. Data from the 2011 TCAP writing scores were evaluated to determine students' level of writing proficiency. Because this is a pilot project, success of the TRI Reading Model will also be determined through a comparison of students' 2010 TCAP Reading/Language Arts scores and their 2011 TCAP Reading/Language Arts score. This data will not be available until the 2011-2012 school year. A dependent samples T-Test will be used to determine if there is a .05 level of significance between the two scores. This data will not be reported in this article due to this being a report of preliminary findings thus far.

Participants

In the 2009-2010 school year, there were 314 students in grades 3-5. Data from the TN.gov website indicated that in 2010, 73% of the students were at or below poverty and received free/reduced lunch. Thirty-four percent of the students were minority students which included 7% LEP students. Of the 314 students, 19% qualified for special education. LEP students may have been factored into one or more categories depending on their socio-economic classification and whether or not they had a learning disability. It is possible that an LEP student would count for three sub-groups in regard to status on NCLB data. Students who participated in this research project were from one fourth and one fifth grade classroom. Frequencies and percentages of students reveals that roughly one-third of both the fourth and fifth grade classes include students who are either receiving EL services or who are NELB. Over 50% of the fourth grade class included African American students; whereas, the fifth grade class contained 59% Caucasian. Both classes had student memberships in which at least 75% of the students were at the poverty level and received free/reduced lunch.

Table 2: *Student Demographics*

Grade	Ethnicity	#	%
Fourth			
	Caucasian	2	13
	African American	9	56
	LEP/NELB	5	31
	Total	16	100
Fifth			
	Caucasian	12	52
	African American	2	9
	LEP/NELB*	9	39
	Total	23	100

*NELB = Non-English Language Background

The data in Table 2 reveal that the percentages of LEP students for these two classes were drastically higher than the overall LEP percentage for the entire school. The school had only 7% LEP students tested in grades 3-5; whereas, these two classes each contained more than 30% LEP/NELB students.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Data were gathered to determine if students who participated in the TRI Reading Method improved their English language proficiency as measured by ELDA examinations. For a student to show mastery, he or she must score a four out of

a possible five. If a student demonstrates English language competence, he or she will exit the program. The student will then be reclassified as a Transitioning Year 1 LEP student, thus beginning their first year out of two EL transition. Table 3 data indicate the percentage of students who were proficient or below proficient based on their yearly ELDA examinations. Fourth grade students' data reflects the years 2010 (third grade) and 2011 (fourth grade). Fifth grade data account for students' third (2009), fourth (2010), and fifth (2011) grade years. For ease of interpretation, the data was disaggregated to determine the percentage of students who were proficient or below proficient according to ELDA scores.

No fourth grade students were proficient in Reading, Writing, Listening, and Speaking in 2010. Fifth grade ELDA results in 2009 and 2010 reveal similar results in that no students were proficient in Reading, Writing, and Listening save for one student who tested proficient in listening in 2009 but regressed in 2010. Forty percent of the fifth grade students were proficient in speaking in 2009, and all were proficient in speaking in 2010. Overall, no LEP students in this study were able to move to the Transitioning Year 1 category at the beginning of the 2010-2011 school year.

Data in 2011 paint a different picture. It can be noted that there was an increase in the number of students in fourth (N=1, 50%) and fifth (N=4, 80%) grades scoring proficient on the Reading subtest. There were no significant changes in fourth grade Writing proficiency; whereas, there were two students in fifth grade (40%) who were proficient in Writing. Eighty percent of students in fifth grade scored at least a 4 (proficient) on the Listening subtest. Half of the students in fourth grade were also proficient on the Listening subtest. All students in fourth and fifth grade were proficient in regard to the Speaking subtest. Overall composite scores did not show any changes in fourth grade students' English proficiency; therefore, they will not begin the process of exiting the program. These students will participate in a modified version of TRI using a standard push-in model in fifth grade. Two out of five students in fifth grade had composite scores high enough to begin transitioning out of the EL program (see Table 3).

Prior to the 2010-2011 school year, students had not participated in push-in, or inclusive, services for English language. This data were used to determine if the push-in model for EL instruction in conjunction with inclusion reading increased LEP students' growth on ELDA. After reviewing data for individual students for the school years 2009 through 2011, significant improvement in students' language proficiency is clear. For example, six out of seven (86 %) students in this study showed gains from their 2010 Reading scores to their 2011 Reading scores. In fact, most of the students demonstrated at least a two-point gain from the previous year. Historically, the 2008-2010 growth data showed that no students

made any growth in their Reading scores. Considering that almost all students showed substantial growth the following year, the TRI Reading Model can be said to have a positive effect on students' Reading proficiency. Conversely, fewer students progressed in Writing with only three students making growth. Over half of the participants showed growth in Listening with 71% showing scores in the proficiency range of 4 or higher. Every participant demonstrated proficiency in Speaking (see Table 4).

Table 3. *ELDA Proficiency Scores*

Year	% Below Proficient	% Proficient
4th Reading		
2010	100%	0%
2011	50%	50%
5th Reading		
2009	100%	0%
2010	100%	0%
2011	20%	80%
4th Writing		
2010	100%	0%
2011	100%	0%
5th Writing		
2009	100%	0%
2010	100%	0%
2011	60%	40%
4th Listening		
2010	100%	0%
2011	50%	50%
5th Listening		
2009	80%	20%
2010	100%	0%
2011	20%	80%
4th Speaking		
2010	100%	0%
2011	0%	100%
5th Speaking		
2009	60%	40%
2010	0%	100%
2011	0%	100%
Overall 4th		
2010	100%	0%
2011	100%	0%
Overall 5th		
2009	100%	0%
2010	100%	0%
2011	60%	40%

Table 4. *Student ELDA Scores 2009 – 2011*

Grade	Subject	Student	2009	2010	2011
Fourth					
	Reading				
		Student 1	n/a	1	3
		Student 2	n/a	2	4
	Writing				
		Student 1	n/a	3	3
		Student 2	n/a	3	3
	Listening				
		Student 1	n/a	3	5
		Student 2	n/a	3	3
	Speaking				
		Student 1	n/a	5	5
		Student 2	n/a	4	4
Fifth					
	Reading				
		Student 3	2	2	4
		Student 4	n/a	2	4
		Student 5	4	2	4
		Student 6	2	2	2
		Student 7	1	1	5
	Writing				
		Student 3	2	2	3
		Student 4	n/a	2	4
		Student 5	3	3	4
		Student 6	2	3	3
		Student 7	1	2	2
	Listening				
		Student 3	3	3	4
		Student 4	n/a	2	4
		Student 5	3	4	5
		Student 6	1	3	3
		Student 7	3	5	5
	Speaking				
		Student 3	4	4	5
		Student 4	n/a	4	5
		Student 5	5	5	5
		Student 6	4	4	5
		Student 7	3	4	4

Data in Table 5 display students' reading levels as determined via the STAR reading test. To evaluate students' vocabulary and comprehension, the STAR assessment uses a 25-question fill-in-the-blank format that progressively becomes harder as students continue to correctly identify the answers. Based on

the results of this test, students are given a grade-level equivalency in reading proficiency along with a targeted reading range. Students at Green Elementary School took the STAR reading assessment in August, December, and May. This information is used by the teacher to guide students' self-selection of literature as well as group students accordingly in homogenous reading groups as a way to differentiate instruction based on student need. This information shows that both the 4th and 5th grade LEP students averaged around a 0.7 month gain, which is close to the 0.8 gain expected at this level.

Table 5. *STAR Reading Levels*

Grade	Student	August	December	May	Yearlong Gain
Grade 4					
Student 1	2.5	2.5	3.2	+0.7	
Student 2	2.8	3.5	3.5	+0.7	
Mean		2.65	3.0	3.35	+0.7
Grade 5					
Student 3	2.5	3.6	3.2	+0.5	
Student 4	2.6	2.8	2.6	+0.0	
Student 5	3.9	5.1	6.0	+2.1	
Student 6	1.9	2.4	2.4	+0.5	
Student 7	2.2	2.4	2.9	+0.5	
Mean		2.62	3.26	3.42	+0.72

Students in fifth grade participate in the yearly TCAP Writing Assessment each February. The writing assessment requires students to construct a narrative essay using a predetermined writing prompt within a 35-minute time limit. Proficiency requirements judge students' ability to write a comprehensive rough draft that attends to detail while having few grammatical and structural errors. The writing is scored on a scale of 0 to 6 with a score of 4 being grade-level proficient. Scores below a 4 indicate below proficient levels; whereas, scores above 4 are above average or outstanding. Four out of five LEP students in fifth grade scored a 4 indicating that they were proficient in their ability to write in comparison to their same-age, same-grade peers who are not LEP students. One student scored a three, which is slightly below average. Final data collected showed that that 80% of the LEP students who participated in TRI with instruction from an EL teacher, a reading specialist, and the classroom teacher were proficient on their TCAP writing assessment.

When data from the ELDA Writing Assessment is compared to the students' TCAP Writing Assessment, a noticeable gap exists in the number of proficient students. For example, only 40% of the students scored a 4 or higher on the ELDA examinations compared to the 80% of students who were proficient on the TCAP Writing Assessment. Table 6 displays this data.

Table 6. *Comparison of 5th Grade ELDA and TCAP Writing Scores*

Student	ELDA Score	TCAP Score
Student 3	3	4
Student 4	4	4
Student 5	4	4
Student 6	3	3
Student 7	2	4

For the school year 2010-2011, students in one fourth grade class and one fifth grade class participated in a pilot research project using a Triple Rotation Inclusive (TRI) Reading Model, which aimed to increase students' time on task in differentiated reading groups based on students' needs and reading levels. With increased time on task, students demonstrated growth in their average reading levels as indicated via STAR reading assessments. Forty percent of the LEP fifth grade students who participated in this program achieved ELDA test scores high enough to classify them as a Transitioning Year 1 LEP student, which is the first phase in exiting the EL program. Although, not all students showed gains high enough to exit the program, all students increased in their levels of English language proficiency in Reading. In addition to these positive effects of the TRI Reading Method, almost every LEP student scored proficient on the 5th Grade TCAP Writing Assessment.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data from this pilot project, it can be concluded that students who participate in leveled reading groups more frequently show substantial gains in their reading levels based on STAR reading and ELDA scores. It can also be inferred that LEP students who participate in leveled reading groups are more likely to increase their English language proficiency as measured by the ELDA examination. In addition, LEP students who participate in leveled reading groups using the TRI Reading Method were more likely to be proficient on the 5th Grade TCAP Writing Assessment.

Based on the preliminary data from this pilot research, we would like to make three recommendations for classroom teachers of LEP students as well as for EL teachers. First, use inclusion teachers or push-in EL teachers to maximize differentiated reading group instruction using strategies targeted to increase students' academic vocabulary. Also, focus on explicit reading comprehension instruction to increase LEP students' reading levels. Last, limit the number of interruptions that occur during TRI to maximize reading/language arts growth of LEP students. Based on available faculty, most schools may not be able to fully implement the TRI reading model; therefore, we recommend using a traditional push-in method

in which the EL teacher works collaboratively with the classroom teacher, utilizing content-related materials.

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Sustained Silent Reading and Its Impact on Reading Comprehension and Motivation

Daiva Berzinskas

This action research study examined the use of Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) and the impact on reading comprehension among adult ESL students enrolled in an intensive English program at a state university. A qualitative approach to action research was adopted. Multiple forms of data were collected throughout one semester. Data sets included student surveys, reflection logs, writing samples, grade book entries, and field notes. Data analysis revealed specific codes, which provided insight regarding motivation and comprehension. Findings indicate that that by providing a non-accountable designated period of SSR, reading comprehension levels increased by providing students extra time to focus on their own skills without coursework distraction.

A primary area of difficulty in second language acquisition (SLA) for English as a second language learners' (ELL) is the development of reading comprehension skills in the second language (L2). Reading comprehension is defined as the ability to understand meaning from text and is a primary component in the successful development of second language acquisition (Alyuosef, 2006). For many second language learners, the "reading problem" cannot be explained by student abilities or inabilities to learn grapheme-to-phoneme rules form text to speech, but as the difficulties language learners have in understanding the spoken as well as written meanings in the second language (Burt, Peyton, & Van Duzer, 2005).

Reading instruction in the ESL classroom is an important interactive process between the reader and the text because when successfully comprehended by the language learner, leads to reading fluency. Researchers have attempted to explain the fluent reading process by grouping its mastery into six general component skill areas:

1. Automatic recognition skills,
2. Vocabulary and structural knowledge,
3. Formal discourse structure knowledge,
4. Content/world background knowledge,
5. Synthesis and evaluation skills/strategies, and
6. Metacognitive knowledge and skills monitoring (Grabe, 1991).

Programs of reading comprehension in ESL instruction primarily focus to master these higher-level processing skills by grouping them into these six general component skill areas and by utilizing the following explicit methods of ESL instruction for skills enhancement when implementing reading comprehension programs and strategies in the ESL classroom:

1. *Monitoring comprehension*. Method focuses on awareness, identification, and strategies to resolve misunderstood information.
2. *Metacognition*. Method of previewing and foreshadowing text and monitoring through reading.
3. *Graphic and semantic organizers*. Reading concepts organize and illustrate concepts in text or with diagrams.
4. *Answering questions*. Identification of explicit and implicit information in text.
5. *Generating questions*. Inferences from main ideas are explored from text to draw conclusions.
6. *Recognizing story structure*. Exploration of characters, setting, and plot.
7. *Summarizing*. Utilization of own words to summarize text (Adler, 2005).

These methods of reading instruction are often a laborious process for second language learners due to the likelihood that they have not yet fully acquired lower-level processing skills, such as word processing. Thus, language learners often have difficulties comprehending and analyzing texts, even when studying at intermediate and advanced levels of English. As a result, lack of interest in reading creates a setting of unmotivated readers with low levels of reading achievement in the L2 language (Taguchi, 2006).

The following study utilizes an action research approach to study the reading comprehension skills of ESL students in an intensive program of language instruction by incorporating a Sustained Silent Reading (SSR) Program in effort to achieve higher levels of L2 reading fluency by promoting student motivation and interest through a designated period of silent reading in a relaxing classroom environment of non-accountability and student chosen texts. The implementation and focus of the research study stemmed from the exploration of three overarching questions in regards to the relationship of SSR in accordance to the following

themes: the goal of SSR, course design, and student motivation. Consideration of the three themes uncovered the following overarching questions and the ultimate focus of the study:

1. What is the effect of SSR on the reading achievement of ESL students?
2. What is the effect of SSR on reading motivation in a second language?
3. What is the effect of the implementation of non-accountability during the SSR period to the implementation of accountability during the SSR period in regards to achievement?

BRIEF REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Sustained silent reading (SSR) is defined as a designated period of uninterrupted silent reading in the classroom used in schools to promote literacy and improve student reading skills (Pilgreen, 2000). The aim of SSR is to help students build vocabulary, make connections, develop an understanding of what makes a great reader, and provide students with the ability to connect with reading in an unstructured situation (Miller, 2006). When implemented in the English as Second Language (ESL) classroom, SSR has shown positive improvements in the development of second language (L2) reading skills, vocabulary acquisition, and the development of positive attitudes towards reading. In addition to the changes in attitude, SSR has helped ESL students widen their scope of background information in content area subjects, by providing a more accessible knowledge base in relation to their subject area textbooks and class lectures (Taguchi, 2006).

Dr. Janice Pilgreen, Director of Reading at the University of La Verne in California in the SSR Handbook (2001) has assessed through first-hand research and twenty years of classroom instruction, that successful SSR programs typically have the following 8 features in common in order to ensure a "stacked to success program:"

1. *Access:* Students should have accessibility to a wide range of reading materials.
2. *Appeal*: Students should choose their own reading materials tapping in to their own interests.
3. *Environment:* A comfortable reading environment should be provided for the students during the designated reading period.
4. *Encouragement:* Various classroom strategies should be used to support the development of student reading habits.
5. *Non-accountability*: Assignments for the SSR reading materials should not be assigned during the designated time period.

6. *Distributed time to read*: SSR should take place in the classroom on a regular basis.
7. *Follow-up activities:* Students should be provided with opportunities to share what they have read.
8. *Staff training:* Instructors must learn how to effectively implement SSR in the classroom, as well as receive support for the institution of it from the administration.

Essentially, SSR is a teacher-controlled activity in the classroom where all students have the opportunity to participate. Students are able to manage their own reading and are not required to respond to texts during the designated reading period. Because SSR is informal and not graded, the period provides students with a recreational perspective on reading (Trelease, 2006). Research has shown that sustained silent reading when implemented successfully is a proven way to help students build literacy skills at all reading levels. Sustained silent reading has shown to help improve vocabulary development, literacy skills, and background knowledge. Linguist and educational researcher at the University of Southern California, Dr. Stephen Krashen (2006), has concluded that the effects of silent reading have successfully demonstrated that students in silent sustained reading programs make strong gains in reading comprehension over time. Krashen's cumulative studies have shown that students who have participated in silent reading programs equaled or outperformed traditionally taught students. Krashen's studies (1993) have also revealed that sustained silent reading helps language learners gain skills no matter the L2 language. Those students who can read in their first or second language also write and spell better in that language.

In 2000, a study conducted by The National Reading Panel (NRP) listed reading comprehension, phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension as the five main components of literacy (NICHD, 2000). This study, which did not include independent, silent reading, has caused much controversy in regards to the effect of independent reading in the classroom. On the contrary, The Reading Recovery Council of North America has added that in addition to the five components listed by the NRP, writing, motivation, and independence also play a dynamic role in helping students achieve literacy (Components of Reading Instruction, 2010). Sustained Silent Reading provides ESL students the opportunity to be actively engaged in their reading and also provides an avenue for thoughtful demonstration and reflection of the components of literacy as addressed by the NRP.

AN EXAMINATION OF PRACTICE

The study took place at an intensive English language center which utilizes a di-

rect method of English language instruction to teach cognitive academic English language proficiency (CALP) skills to university bound international students who intend to complete their undergraduate or graduate course-work at English speaking universities. The SSR program was implemented in an afternoon skills enhancement course taught by the teacher-researcher. Participants included 14 English language learners operating from intermediate to advanced levels of English proficiency. The students represented a diverse group of L2 language learners representing the following countries: a) Saudi Arabia, b) China, c) Korea, d) Japan, e) Taiwan, f) Gabon, and g) Venezuela. The majority of the students spoke Arabic—however, Japanese, Korean, Spanish, and French language speakers were also included. Six of the students were female, and the other seven were male (Table 1).

Table 1. *Participants*

Participant	Gender	Native Country	L1/First Language
S1	Female	Saudi Arabia	Arabic
R2	Female	Saudi Arabia	Arabic
W3	Female	Saudi Arabia	Arabic
M4	Female	Japan	Japanese
J5	Female	Korea	Korean
A6	Female	Venezuela	Spanish
M7	Male	Saudi Arabia	Arabic
M8	Male	Saudi Arabia	Arabic
Y9	Male	Saudi Arabia	Arabic
Q10	Male	China	Chinese
YC11	Male	Taiwan	Chinese
D12	Male	Gabon	French

METHODOLOGY

The process of action research was utilized to address the problem of poor student motivation and low level reading comprehension skills in ESL students by implementing a program of SSR instruction in effort to improve practice in reading instruction. Action research is a proven methodology in classroom settings because researchers/practitioners are able to engage first-hand in the field intensive process by collecting and analyzing primary sources of data in order to draw conclusions by means of collaborative reflection in order to present findings in an effort to improve practice. This action research study utilized a qualitative approach by examining a variety of data in effort to address overarching questions in a cyclical method to uncover emerging patterns focusing to improve practice. The following guidelines were used to implement the action research process (Craig, 2009):

1. A problem of focus was identified.
2. Theories, problems, and situations relevant to the focus were examined.
3. Themes and subthemes were identified.
4. Overarching questions were established.
5. Subjects and participants were identified.
6. Method behind inquiry established.
7. Collection and analysis of relevant data was conducted.
8. Plan of action was designed.
9. Reporting of findings was conducted to improve practice.

Action research utilizes a methodology of continuous inquiry, reflection, and improvement, to implement practical improvements in classroom settings and other practitioner-based environments. Research procedures for this study began with practitioner-based reflection and observation field-notes focusing on the identification of a specific problem in the classroom setting. Researcher reflective field notes identified the need to improve reading comprehension skills in classroom practice. Overarching questions established that data sets would be collected in a cyclical method in order to study the emerging patterns in student motivation, overall achievement, and student non-accountability in regards to reading achievement by participating in a practitioner led SSR program in the ESL classroom.

DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS

Data sets included: a) student surveys, b) reflection logs, c) writing samples, d) grade books, and e) field notes. Once collected, data was organized and coded in relationship to the overarching questions in effort to identify patterns by establishing categories and attributes in order to share findings and improve practice. Codes used to transcribe data included: context, event, process, method, situation, strategy, and overall relationship codes described by the following categories (Craig, 2009):

1. *Setting/Context code:* setting, location, environment
2. *Event code:* student interview response and unsolicited information
3. *Process code:* words, phrases, and terms sequencing activities or changes
4. *Method code:* researcher/participant reflective field notes
5. *Situation code:* participant interaction in specific situations
6. *Strategy code:* specific classroom strategies or techniques
7. *Overall relationship code:* relationships between participants, activities, and data sets

These codes helped determine attributes of the collected data and assisted in making connections through evaluation of categories. Categories and attributes were labeled to establish emerging patterns. Attributes were analyzed to define the group and creatively coded to illustrate the attribute (Figure 1).

Figure 1. *Categories, Attributes, Codes Table*

Code	Category	Attribute
Context code: Initial opinion of student insights on reading in English	*Give me any book, just NOT that English book, please!*	• Students enjoy reading for pleasure, but do not have time. • Students primarily associate reading with academic texts. • Students are frustrated when reading in English.
Event code: Student opinion on personal achieve-ment	*Reading set-backs: Back to square one*	• At the onset of this program, students responded with a feeling of initial "defeat" in reading in English. • In regards to reading in English, students have a poor self-efficacy. • Students find level of academic texts too difficult.
Process code: Transition of in-sights on reading in English	*Hey, I've become a page-turner!*	• A positive change in student demeanor has been noted. • Students have noted that they have been reading SSR books independently. • Students feel they are reading at personal reading level in SSR. • Students would like to see SSR implemented in regular instruc-tion. • Students have responded with appreciation for designated reading time.
Method code: Implementation and demonstration of student improve-ment	*Watch them read; and watch them grow*	• Initial observations reflect lack of excitement for this project from students. • As weeks go by, noticeable patterns of independent student ex-citement in SSR are emerging. • Students are excited to share and discuss. • Discussions are reflective and personal.
Strategy code: Student opinion of self-improvement	*I can be my mirror, and I like what I see*	• Students have expressed opinions of individual improvement in weekly reflection logs. • Students have noted they are interested in their chosen books. • Choosing books from personal interest helps involve reader. • Students enjoying reading in English.
Situation code: Student participa-tion in SSR	*They're laughing, and they're "lik-ing" it!*	• Students have noted lack of interest in assigned content. Reflec-tion logs have helped students identify interests and choose materials accordingly. • Students are becoming "page turners."
Overall relation-ship code: Pattern of student reading improvement	*I don't need a babysitter*	• Students are becoming accountable for their own work. • Students have demonstrated eagerness to begin SSR period on own volition rather than instruction.
Strategy code: Demonstration of reading comprehen-sion skills through student writing	*I can figure this out by myself, thanks*	• Student weekly writing samples demonstrate overall improve-ment of reading comprehension skills and reflect intimate connec-tions to characters and themes. • Writing sample are demonstrate that students utilize SSR time wisely by providing thought provoking summaries and reflec-tions.
Event code: Marked improve-ment	*Star kids*	• Assessment tools and rubrics are showing emerging pattern of an improvement in reading comprehension skills.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Sustained silent reading is an effective form of reading instruction in the ESL classroom furthering the development of reading comprehension and fluency skills in second language instruction. SSR as a method of instruction ultimately helped boost reading comprehension skills and self-confidence in second language reading skills for all 14 subjects who participated in this study. Data sets revealed that in response to the initial Reading Pre-Survey, 11 out of the 14 surveyed participants enjoyed reading for pleasure in their native language, but only 3 of the 11 surveyed enjoyed reading for pleasure in the English language. Interviews revealed that participants found academic English texts too difficult to comprehend and that they experienced low levels of confidence in regards to personal reading skill because sentence structures were too complex and vocabulary too difficult in course textbooks. Reading aloud in class was ineffective. During the individual student interviews, students were asked to individually categorize their favorite reading genres categorically by interest:

1. Fiction
2. Horror
3. Science Fiction
4. Biography
5. Mystery
6. Romance
7. Adventure
8. Non-Fiction

The following class period, students were taken to the library where—under the guidelines of the five-finger test—established individual reading levels by eliminating texts that contained vocabulary, which was either too easy or too difficult for individual student comprehension levels. This testing procedure calls for each participant to randomly choose one page from any given source. For each unknown word, the participant will held up one finger. If the participant held up five fingers, the text is too difficult. If no fingers go up, the text is too easy. If two or three go up, the text is just right to challenge the student's reading level (Pilgreen, 2000). In consideration of the five-finger test, participants chose three books from which they would read during the designated SSR periods that would took place for the next six consecutive weeks for 10 minutes at the beginning of each class period. ESL student reading achievement in response to choosing individual reading materials according to individual reading levels, along with SSR designated reading time were examined for emerging patterns in the data sets.

At the end of the study, participants completed an post-study opinion survey. All 14 participants responded that reading materials that they had chosen in consideration of personal interest in culmination with a designated period of silent reading during class helped them to better comprehend English texts and improved their reading fluency overall. Five of the 14 participants noted that they had been reading their SSR books independently out of class. All 14 participants concluded that they would like to see SSR continued in routine instruction.

Researcher field notes, participant weekly reflection samples, and weekly instructor feedback reports revealed an overall pattern of improvement in ESL student reading motivation in direct response to SSR. Initial researcher observations at the onset of the SSR program reflected an overall lack of excitement in participants when reading in the second language. As the study continued, noticeable patterns of increased motivation emerged evident in participant weekly reflection samples, class discussion, and researcher observation. For example, one participant wrote, "It was hard to read at first, but one page after it and after it, and it drew my attention. From now on, I think I could read more at the same time" (Post-Study Opinion Survey).

Participants were eager to discuss developing storylines emerging in their SSR books with fellow classmates. Participants were observed chuckling in response to the reading materials during the SSR period expressing a direct connection with the text. Overall motivation to read in the English language had noticeably improved and enjoyment in individual reading texts was evident. Data also showed that participants were increasingly becoming accountable for their own work. Writing samples reflected thought provoking summaries and reflections evident in effective student utilization of reading time. Examples of work in weekly writing samples and weekly reflection logs revealed that participants were independently taking accountability for individual personal achievement in ESL reading comprehension and effectively utilizing learning strategies.

Last, data sets reveled that by providing a non-accountable designated period of SSR, reading comprehension levels increased by providing students extra time to focus on their own skills without coursework distraction. Grade books also revealed a high level of success. Overall, reading comprehension in ESL participants increased as more and more opportunities were provided for students to choose reading materials and reflect on individual reading skills.

In conclusion, SSR is an effective tool in the classroom setting as a method of instruction to improve reading comprehension skills for ESL students. In order to effectively implement the program it is suggested that classroom instructors and students work collaboratively to assess individual reading preferences in order to better motivate student acquisition in reading fluency through interest and personal reflection.

The Author

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Views of Bilingual Educators: Lessons for Future Practice

Maria Sanchez

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to investigate educators' views and perceptions of the effectiveness of bilingual education. The study focused on whether or not bilingual education effectively promotes reading and other content areas such as science, social studies, and math as it prepares English language learners (ELLs) to enter into the schools' mainstream. Sixteen educators from an urban school district in Texas currently working with ELLs were asked to participate in the study. Data collected included taped interviews and participant responses, classroom observations, and artifacts. The artifacts included classroom and curriculum materials, student work, student projects and technology. The study examined the experiences, knowledge, and perception of the participating educators involved in bilingual programs in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses. The study aimed to provide useful information that can assist policy makers, school districts, parents, and teachers across the country in making clearer, sounder decisions for English language learners in states that are considering adopting bilingual programs.

Over the past decade, the number of English language learners (ELLs) enrolled in the United States public schools has nearly doubled to about 5 million. "According to U.S. government figures, English is the second language for approximately 5.5 million students in the United States, nearly one-tenth of the total U.S. student body" (Sanchez, 2007, para. 1)). It has also been predicted that by 2015, English language learners in U.S. schools will reach ten million and by 2025 nearly one out of every four public school students will be an English language learner (Sanchez, 2007; Roekel, 2008).

Recognizing that culturally diverse children enrolled in USA public schools were not receiving an education equal to their limited English proficient peers, Congress passed Title VII and initiated programs associated with bilingual educa-

tion (Pompa & Pham, 2002). Bilingual education design is intended to meet the needs of the English language learners (ELL), and offer the opportunity for linguistically diverse children to achieve comparable academic standards required in all public schools.

Since its establishment by Congress, bilingual education has met with massive criticism. Those who argue against bilingual education say that the program interferes with the "proper teaching of English" (Duignan, 2007, The Case for and against Bilingual Education, para.17). According to Duignan (2007), these critics consider bilingual education an "ineffective teaching tool" (The Case for and against Bilingual Education, para.18). As a result of the heated arguments and the attack against bilingual education three states have successfully removed bilingual programs from their public schools; California with Proposition 227, Arizona with Proposition 203, and Massachusetts with Question 2. These state-wide initiatives have become effective political tools for challenging bilingual education programs and changing the language policies governing the education of ELLs (Galindo & Vigil, 2004).

The increased attention and successful removal of bilingual education from these three states have prompted a need for further study of bilingual education. This study investigated how bilingual education is perceived by the educators who are involved with the program in a rural district in the state of Texas. Chapter 1 presents an introduction. The general problem is whether bilingual education programs are effective for improving English reading skills and other general content knowledge of ELLs. In order to develop a clearer understanding of the problem, the background of the issue is presented along with the problem and purpose for the study. A discussion of the significance of the study for educational leadership is also provided. Chapter 1 will also provide a brief summary of the study's method and design as well as the theoretical foundation that supports the relevance of the study.

In today's schools many ELLs are immersed in English-only classes. Students immerse in English-only classes learn English as a byproduct of using the language when studying other content areas. Once sufficient language has been acquired, the students begin to study language itself and to refine their usage and style. According to Katz and Stevens (1997) Ells who attend English only classes "are not expected to perfect their grammar skills until early or mid-adolescence" (para. 4). Supporters of bilingual education argue that immersion in English only classes can be detrimental to ELLs. They contend that ELLs who receive English-only instruction "take 7 -10 years to catch up to their English-speaking peers in all subjects" (Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, n. d., What Does the Research say about Bilingual education, para. 3). Alexander & Winne

(2006) maintain that the difficult side to learning a new language by immersion is that the formal context of a school "demands significant academic language-specialized vocabulary, literacy skills in the new language, and oral presentations" (p.574). As a result the language learner is likely to encounter difficulties with school because he/she not only has to learn the language, but also must do so in a context where it is equally important to keep up with the subject content of instruction (Alexander & Winne (2006). They also argue that ELLs "taught in their native language, with some instruction in English, reach and surpass their peers in all subjects after 4-7 years in a quality bilingual program" (Westchester Institute for Human Services Research, What Does Research Say About Bilingual Education, para.3).

Debates over the best way to educate English language learners are ongoing and unresolved. Critics who argue against bilingual education say the program is expensive and does not expose ELLs to enough English to become proficient quickly. They believe teaching these students in their native language works against the students since it interferes with or delays the learning of English (William, 2010). Supporters of bilingual education argue that students learn best in their native language. They believe students will be more academically proficient if allowed to learn critical content in the native language while learning a second language. As a result of the heated arguments three states have dismantled bilingual education from their districts and require that ELLs be taught through a transitional program known as sheltered (or structured) English immersion (SEI). Students in SEI receive all instructions in English for one year then according to the law must transfer into mainstream English classrooms by the end of the year (Mora, 2009). Many students are affected by these mandates since these three states together enroll almost half (43 %) of the ELL student population in the United States (Krashen, 2004).

This qualitative study sought to define the effectiveness of bilingual education by examining the experiences, knowledge, and perception of educators who are involved in their bilingual program in order to identify its strengths and weaknesses. The study aimed to provide useful information that can assist policy makers, school districts, parents, and teachers make clearer, sounder decisions. Although the study took place in Texas, the findings are offered to all states in order to provide insight regarding bilingual education—in particular to those states who do not yet have an established bilingual program. The study was framed by the following overarching research questions:

1. Research Question 1. How do educators perceive the effectiveness of bilingual education for improving English reading skills and other general content knowledge of English language learners (ELL) in an urban

school district in Texas?

2. Research Question 2. What, if any, are the possible benefits of bilingual education according to the educators involved in the study?
3. Research Question 3. How can the findings of these questions inform policy and assist administrators in meeting the needs of ELLs?

RESEARCH METHOD AND DESIGN

The study was conducted using a qualitative phenomenological research. Phenomenology is a qualitative research that examines the lived experiences of human beings (Byrne, 2001). The purpose of phenomenology studies was to illuminate the specific and identify phenomena viewed by those who are involved with the issue or situation (Groenewald, 2004; Lester, 1999). Phenomenological research allows for the gathering of deep-rooted information of the phenomenon or phenomena that can be perceived through inductive, qualitative methods such as interviews, discussions and participant observation, and representing it from the perspective of the research participants. Researchers are concerned with clarifying the specifics and recognizing the phenomena through the eyes of the participants (Lunenburg & Irby, 2007). Fieldwork produces meaning, enhances understanding, and develops a clearer picture of the phenomena and its effect on the individuals. It allows an in-depth view of the phenomena as experiences are being described by the participants who have first hand experiences with the phenomena. The study design incorporated semi-structured taped interviews, direct observation and archived document analysis. The primary objective of the interviews was to understand the meaning of what the participant said, thus the search for meaning, knowledge and understanding became the main focus (Lunenbur & Ivy, 2007). Most of these questions are open-ended questions which facilitated the obtaining of rich vital information pertaining to the study.

The site selected for the study was located in central Texas. The district covers two small towns and a military installation. Approximately 31,000 students are enrolled in this district which houses 27 elementary school, eight middle school, four high schools and five special campuses. About 2 percent of the student population from grades pre kindergarten through high-school receives bilingual/ESL services. Participants represented campuses where dual bilingual education was being implemented (Table 1). The researcher conducted the study using recorded interviews and participant observations. The interviews were semi-structured and informal. They were conducted face to face and were recorded using audio recording equipment to validate the study and diminish wrong interpretation of the data. Participant observations were also conducted and field notes were taken during the observations. Field notes and interview recordings were kept in a locked post office box.

Table 1. *Information Pertaining to Participants*

	Gender Age	Race/Eth-nicity	Grade Level	Years Teaching Experience	Years Teaching Bilingual Ed	Years Current Grade	Other Teaching Experiences
#1	Female 45-55	Hispanic	3rd	15 yrs	9 yrs	6 yrs	3 years H.S. Special Ed
#2	Female 45-55	Hispanic	ESL	3 yrs	3 yrs	3 yrs	Instructional bilingual aide for 10 years
#3	Female 45-55	Hispanic	5th	9 yrs	7 yrs	7 yrs	2 years ESL in PR
#4	Female 30-40	Hispanic	Kdg	1 year	1 year	1 year	none
#5	Female 25-35	Hispanic	4th	3 yrs	3 yrs	1 year	2 years at another district
#6	Female 25-35	Hispanic	Kdg	6 yrs	6 yrs	6 yrs	none
#7	Female 25-35	Hispanic	2nd	10 1/2 yrs	7 1/2 yrs	7 1/2 yrs	3 years instructional aide/1year substitute
#8	Female 25-35	Hispanic	1st	4 yrs	4 yrs	1 year	Pre-k 3 years
#9	Female 25-35	Hispanic	1st	4 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	Instructional aide for 1 year
#10	Male	Hispanic	2nd	16 yrs	16 yrs	8 yrs	4th grade 5 years, 4/5th 3years
#11	Female	Hispanic	2nd	7 yrs	5 yrs	5 yrs	2 years in daycare
#12	Female	Hispanic	4th	4 yrs	4 yrs	4 yrs	none
#13	Female	Hispanic	1st	7 yrs	6 yrs	6 yrs	1 year as teacher as-sistant
#14	Female	Hispanic	3rd	7 yrs	5 yrs	5 yrs	2 years regular educa-tion
#15	Male 45-55	Hispanic	PreK	4 yrs	4 yrs	2 yrs	2nd grade 2 yearS
#16	Female	Hispanic	5th	3 yrs	2 yrs		1 years as an aide

DATA SETS AND INSTRUMENTS

Data collected for the study included 20-30 minutes semi-structured taped in-terviews and direct classroom observations. Interviews were conducted during the initial meeting after participant teachers accepted and signed the consent form. Interviews with teacher participants continued for four consecutive weeks. Recorded interviews were conducted for the purpose of understanding and cap-turing the essence and totality of each response and to avoid misunderstanding.

Interview questions were open ended and more specific to obtain rich and vital information pertaining to the study. The timely way in which the questions were posed, facilitated full disclosures of the co-researchers' experiences (Moustakas, 2007). A list of the questions addressed during the interview is listed in Figure 1. Timely classroom observations followed the scheduled recorded interviews. The classroom observations were scheduled and conducted during the last two weeks of the 8-week study and after all interviews were completed. Visits to each campus lasted one full day and all teacher participants in the campus were visited on the same day. Each observation lasted approximately 30 minutes. An observation protocol was used to facilitate documentation during each observation. Data collected during the classroom observations correlated with data collected during the interviews. Figure 2 below presents a list of questions for focus during the observation. Teachers who were available for a second meeting at the end of the classroom observation were given an opportunity to explain the lesson and answer any questions or concerns that arrived during the observation.

Figure 3.1. *Interview Protocol. Protocol illustrates each question addressed during interviews.*

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Interview Protocol for Bilingual/ESL Teachers

1. How many years has participant taught in the school or school district?
2. How many years has participant taught in the bilingual/ESL program?
3. Why did you choose to teach in a bilingual education program?
4. On an average, how long do students remain in the bilingual program?
5. On a scale of 1 to 5, one being the lowest and 5 being the highest, how would you rate the effectiveness of the bilingual education program in providing the necessary academic skills for students to be successful in the English dominant program? Explain your response.
6. What type of support –if any—do you get from the district?
7. What type of support –if any—do you get from the parents?
8. What type of support if any do you get from regular classroom teachers and administrators?
9. How often do you attend workshops dealing with bilingual education?
10. What are some of the benefits for students who participate in a bilingual program?
11. How can this program be improved?
12. What would you do to improve it?

</div>

Artifacts such as classroom materials, worksheets, workbooks, and other materials such as computer programs that were used in the classroom for instruction and to enhance learning were reviewed for the purpose of gaining more understanding of the program curriculum. Teachers explained and shared information concerning these materials. Pictures and field notes were taking during this time. Data collected provided vital information that was used for cross-checking, to corroborate or illuminate themes or theory and confirm inferences. All data collected was placed in a sealed envelop and stored in a locked box at the post

office. Data collected was used in triangulation. This study combined the method of gathering data through triangulation to include taped interviews and responses, observations, and artifacts.

Figure 3.2. *Observation Protocol illustrating focus of each observation. The researcher utilized the protocol for all onsite observations.*

<u>Observation Protocol</u>

Participant / Code: _____   Bilingual:_____   ESL:_____
Site:_____
Date_____ Time _____
Length / Duration of Observation:_____
Number of students present _____
Subject/s being taught_____
- Description of the classroom:
- Materials used
- Format of the lesson (ie) lecture/discussion, group work, hands on, active/passive

<u>Teacher Focus</u>
- What types of questions is the teacher asking the students?
- What strategies is the teacher using to solicit answers from students?
- How did the teacher respond to students asking questions or asking for help?
- How often did the teacher simply give answers to questions/problem or showed students a process to solve it?
- How many probing questions did the teacher ask of students as they worked on problems?
- What was the overall attitude of the class? Of the teacher?

<u>Student Response</u>
- How are students responding to the lesson?
- How often did the students provide the correct answer to teacher's questions?
- What problem-solving techniques were being used during the lesson or independent work?
- How many times did the students ask for help?
- What was the overall attitude of the class? Of the teacher?

DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis and interpretation were conducted using Moustakas (1994) Phenomenological Reduction. The steps of Phenomenological Reduction include:

1. Bracketing - The focus of the research is placed in brackets and everything else is set aside so that the entire research process is rooted solely on the topic and question.
2. Horizonalizing - Treating every statement as having equal value. Later, statements irrelevant to the topic and questions as well as those that are repetitive or overlapping are deleted, leaving only the Horizons, "the tex-

tural meanings and invariant constituents of the phenomenon" (Mousta-kas, 1994, p.97).

3. Theming- Involves clustering the horizons into themes and organizing the horizons and themes into a coherent textural description of the phenomenon.

NVivo 9 software was used to assist in the qualitative data analysis. This software was produced by Tom Richards in 1999 to assist in the analysis of rich information where in-depth analysis on both small and large volume of data is required. With this software research data such as interviews, observations, and field notes can be imported, sorted and analyzed easier and most convenient. The software organizes these raw data and links them with memos and "databites" where researchers can make data codes and analytical notes, and then edit and rework ideas as the project progresses (QSR International Pty Ltd, 2007).

FINDINGS

The following findings are presented in chronological order based on data collected. The questions sought to capture the participants lived experiences and perception of bilingual education in order to investigate its effectiveness. Classroom observations and review of artifacts served to correlate the data collected during the interviews. Nine theme categories and two subtheme categories emanated from the 12 interview questions.

Thematic category 1 - *Number of years of teacher experience in bilingual education*

Knowing how long teachers have experienced bilingual education established credibility and an understanding of the teacher participants lived experiences and perception of bilingual education. Teachers' number of years of experiences ranged from one to nine years experience.

Thematic category 2 - *Knowledge and understanding of bilingual education*

Teachers expressed knowledge of bilingual education as they responded to the question "On an average, how long do students remain in the bilingual program?" Answers to this question were indistinguishable. Teachers from the four different campuses all responded and provided the same or closely similar responses to this question regardless of the grade they were teaching. Most teachers agreed that the number of years it takes a student to exit the bilingual program is five years, and that they had to pass the state test in English before they could exit the program. Some teachers were also aware that students who enter school with lit-

tle or no academic experiences and whose first language was not fully developed had the most difficult time exiting the program. These students, they agree, take longer than five years to succeed. However, some teachers focused on the success of students and elaborated their answers with stories of students who reached the goal of mainstreaming and are being successful in the regular classes.

Thematic Category 3 - *Teachers' reasons for choosing bilingual education*

The teachers' responses were grouped according to their uniformity. Six teachers felt they could make a difference to the students because they share the same language and similar culture. Two teachers wanted to encourage students to do better in school by providing the support and understanding they need to succeed. Three teachers based their decision by what they had experienced as students without bilingual education. They wanted to help students avoid the feelings of frustration and sense of helplessness that came from being immersed in English only classes while not being able to speak or comprehend the language. Five teachers had several reasons for entering the bilingual program that were not as deep seated as the previous ones. For these teachers the opportunity to work in the bilingual program simply presented itself and they took it. These teachers however, enjoy working in the program and feel that they make a difference to the students.

Thematic Category 4 - *Teacher's perceived value of bilingual education*

Teachers rating of the effectiveness of the bilingual program at this district felt mostly at the upper end of the numerical scale. Nine of the sixteen teachers rated the program's effectiveness at a 5 and four rated the program's effectiveness at a 4. The teachers provided several reasons for why they felt the program was successful.

- Students are learning the English language effectively.
- Students are becoming bilingual, speaking, reading, and writing both languages, Spanish and English
- Students who exit the program and mainstream into regular English classes are doing well in those classes.
- Students are passing the state required test, some with honorable rating.

The two teachers who rated the program at the lower end of the scale gave it a 2 and a 3. These teachers felt that the program was not effectively preparing all students for transitioning into the mainstream of the schools. Some students, they noted, enter the third grade not even having mastered their first language (L1). They lack vocabulary knowledge and are reading two or three grades below their

grade level in L1. However, these students are expected to take and pass the state required test either in English or Spanish. When students are not ready to succeed in either language by third grade, the teachers who must decide on what language of instruction to focus on are more likely to choose English.

Thematic Category 5 - *Benefits of bilingual education*

Responses were unified and fell under two subtheme categories, comfort and support, and dual language proficiency. In the first subtheme category teachers felt that students in the bilingual education program received the support of learning the necessary skills and concepts through instructions in their native language. Thus, when students don't understand the English word being introduced, teachers provide examples or just give the translation of the word in Spanish so that students can understand the new word.

Teachers also felt that students feel comfortable enough to make the transition into the second language without feeling ridiculed or laughed at for mispronouncing words in the second language. Developing this confidence allows students to practice the language without fear of making mistakes and being ridicule.

Dual language proficiency was the second most prominent response teachers gave to IQ10 when asked about the benefit of bilingual education. According to these teachers students in bilingual education have an opportunity to become proficient in two languages.

Thematic Category 6 - *Stories of students' success*

Teachers elaborated with student success stories. Teachers shared how students who had exited the program were successfully passing the state required test, some with honorable mentions. Teachers also reported that these students were also receiving good grades in all subjects and making the honor roll.

Thematic Category 7 - *Bilingual education workshops, attendance and availability*

Most teachers did not attend any workshops dealing with bilingual education except for NABE (National Association for Bilingual Education) and TABE (Texas Association for Bilingual Education) which some teachers have attended one or both of these at least once. Teachers noted that workshops dealing with bilingual education were rare except for the two just mentioned. Teachers however, did attend workshops offered by the district.

Thematic category 8 – *Teachers suggestions for improving the bilingual education program*

Participant responses were not immediate. The participating teachers appeared to appraise the questions before providing a response. Their behaviors lead to the conclusion that they felt complacent with the current outlook of the bilingual program and that nothing needed to be changed. However, after a brief time period all but one participant teacher, who thought the program did not need to be improved, provided numerous suggestions for improvement. These were:

- Cut back on the amount of testing
- Decrease class size at the lower grades
- Expose students to more English as soon as possible
- Extend the program to the middle and high-school
- Identify and provide instruction in Spanish to those students who really need it. Place students who are ready for English in English only classes.
- Make guidelines more clearer
- Provide workshops geared toward bilingual education and make regular teachers attend as well
- Provide brochures and orientate parents concerning bilingual education

The following are teachers' suggestions for how they would improve the program:

- Include more English instruction
- Change the percentages of instructional times in English and Spanish back to the way they use to be to more Spanish instruction than what it is presently required
- Add more computers and software
- Require that PreK and K introduce frequent sight words in English
- Take students to field trips to expose them to things they have not yet experienced
- Allow more teaching time during the summer months
- Take away the pressure of having to teach English prematurely so more focus can be placed on Spanish
- Add more computers and computer programs to the classroom
- Include more English phonemic awareness in first grade
- Bring more cultural based curriculum
- Provide more computer programs in Spanish
- Have teacher in services that deal with how to work with ELLS
- Reach out and help parents so they can help their students

Thematic Category 9 - *Support for teacher and program*

As a whole, teachers felt that they received tremendous support from the district. Teacher responses all agreed that the district supplied them with all the curriculum materials and resource materials they needed.   Teachers also feel that they get huge amounts of supports from teachers and administrators at their schools. The support participant teachers get from other staff members include; planning together for common assessment and making sure all students are learning the same skill; interchanging of students for special activities and during preparation of state required test skills. Sharing materials, ideas, and support for teach other.

In the area of parental support, teacher participants were not in agreement as to the amount of support they were receiving from parents. Some felt they were receiving adequate support, others felt they were not receiving any support at all. Some teacher participants felt they were receiving supports from some parents but not from all. Teachers agreed however, that in the area of academics many of the parents could not provide support because of their own lack of language and illiteracy. Many parents cannot speak the English language and have low levels of academic language in Spanish. Teacher participants however, felt that parents provided support in the area of discipline and in making sure students completed their homework. These parents however, cannot assist their child with their homework nor check the homework to make sure it was done correctly.

CONCLUSION

Bilingual education has a history of controversial issues. While some believe bilingual education has the potential to advance students' knowledge of the English language so that students can enter the school's mainstream and perform well in regular classrooms others believe in the contrary. Those who are against the program say it is not effective. They believe it inhibits student's social mobility and argue that students in the bilingual program come out of schools with poor reading skills in both English and their native language (Duignan, 2007; Slavin, 2003, Medina, 2003). The results of these heated arguments have been detrimental to the program. Three states abolished the program from their districts resulting in students being placed in sheltered English immersion. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences and perceptions of bilingual educators in an urban school district in Texas to determine its effectiveness for promoting reading instruction and other content areas such as science, social studies, and math as it prepares students to enter the school's mainstream. The phenomenological design provided opportunities for teacher participants to share their perceptions, opinions, feelings and understanding of bilingual education. Although limited to Texas, the findings may better assist school systems

across the United States as they continue to explore programs, strategies, and techniques appropriate in meeting the needs of second language learners.

The Author

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Book Boxes, Inner and Outer Circles, and Graphic Organizers: Pre-Service Teachers Build Background, Develop Purposeful Interactions, and Teach Learning Strategies to Meet with Success While using SIOP®

Sharon Hixon

The need to prepare pre-service teachers to work with English language learners is a current topic across the country. Exploring effective models of instruction as applied to ELLs in the classroom assist teacher educators in integrating pedagogy and methodology specifically for second language learners into methods courses. As a result, pre-service teachers are better prepared in meeting the needs of linguistically diverse students. This practitioner-based article shares the journey of three educators as they implement the SIOP®.

There is little research available that directly addresses the manner in which teacher candidates need to be trained to work with English Language Learners. Yet, there is a need to train these pre-service teachers to work with all learners. Recently, we (a college professor and three pre-service teachers) set out to conduct research that would offer insight into the delivery of several of the English as a Second Language courses offered at Dalton State College for pre-service teachers. For this project, all three candidates used elements of SIOP®, developed by Echevarria, J., Vogt, M., & Short, D.J (2008), in their observed lessons. While we expected to use knowledge gained from the qualitative analysis of our focus group interviews to improve the delivery of the ESOL methodology courses and have done so, a more salient theme emerged from the analysis of the interviews—teacher candidates made deliberate decisions to focus on specific element(s) of SIOP®, and these deliberate decisions led to success for both the teacher candidates and the students in the elementary classrooms. Following is the journey of Ashley, Rica, and Shelley and the decisions they made regarding their own practice.

Ashley's Decision: Building Background

I feel that building background is a crucial aspect that is emphasized by the SIOP® teaching model. The building background aspect ensures that students are given the tools they needed to be successful during the lesson and in a sense enable all students to be at the same starting point.

Of course, one can use literature to build background for a lesson or unit, but using book boxes as a part of storytelling has been a highly successful way I have found to build background in both a fifth and first grade classroom. The book box is a story telling technique in which students are given the opportunity to be a part of the story. Through this building background tool, students are also able to see the concrete objects that they may or may not be familiar with. In the first grade classroom, I told the story Sweet Potato Pie. During the retelling, I pulled objects from my box that related to the story. For example, I pulled out a real sweet potato, a foreclosure notice for the family farm, and some flour that was used for baking and for splashing on the children's faces. Through this book box, students were able to gather background information they would use in several future lessons including a lesson on following a recipe in which students were able to make their own sweet potato pie.

I also used the book box as a building background tool when I began to teach a civil rights unit in a fifth grade classroom. In order for the students to understand the need for the civil rights movement, I told the story Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry through the use of a book box. Students were able to see real life examples along with concrete objects that communicated the conditions previous to the civil rights movement.

I feel that is the obligation of the teacher to place the tools that will be needed for the success of the lesson; we cannot expect our students to reach the top of the staircase without first giving them the information they need in order to walk up the first step.

Rica's Decision: Developing Interaction

Of the many features of SIOP, interaction is the one on which I tended to place a large amount of my focus. I focused on this feature because I believe in the importance of talk. It frustrates me that teachers spend a majority of the day silencing students and then become upset that they cannot produce more than a paragraph of decent writing. I believe talk is essential to aid in the development of both ideas and language.

To ensure that my students were afforded multiple opportunities to engage in pur-poseful talk, I knew that I would have to plan such opportunities as I planned the lessons in which they would occur. Because I am a talker myself, I knew that my natural tendency would be to dominate a lesson with teacher talk. After examin-ing state standards for the content of the lessons and observing common language errors made by my students, I was able to plan engaging lessons that facilitated talk about what was relevant in order to minimize talk about that which was not.

One of my favorite ways to facilitate interactions is with inner/outer circles. In this activity, students are divided among two groups. They each receive a card with a question on it. The questions given to the student are drawn from the content objective and require practice of a language objective (ex: describing the appearance of a mineral while using adjectives appropriately). The students form a circle with one group on the inside facing outward and the other on the outside facing inward. Students on the outside read their questions and wait for respons-es from the students on the inside, and then the roles reverse. Once all pairs of students have asked their questions, the students on the outside of the circle rotate to the next person on the right. This process continues until all pairs have met or until the teacher ends the activity.

I choose to use this activity for many reasons. First, this activity ensures that all students are using various mediums of language. Second, this allows students an opportunity to practice both knowledge and language skills while receiving feedback from peers. I can monitor this activity and determine a level of mastery for the class as well as for individuals. Finally, this activity allows poor readers to participate at the same level as the rest of the class.

In my early lesson plans, I made a deliberate effort to plan interaction opportuni-ties, but it has now become second nature. As I plan lessons as well as when I am in the middle of lessons, I constantly think of different ways to bring more interaction into the lesson.

Shelly's Decision: Teaching and Utilizing Learning Strategies

I believe that the use of learning strategies, techniques and methods for learning and retaining new information, can truly facilitate the learning process for all students. There are a wide variety of learning strategies that can be employed by students and the effectiveness of a particular learning strategy can depend upon the content being learned, as well as students' background and learning styles. Because my last two semesters of practicum teaching experience took place in a 5th grade classroom consisting of a large percentage of English language learn-

ers learning advanced academic content and vocabulary, I felt that focusing on learning strategies would greatly enhance comprehension and retention of newly learned information and vocabulary.

One of the first lessons I was to teach using the elements of SIOP was a science lesson on chemical changes. To introduce and explicitly teach the learning strategy of using graphic organizers, I created an enlarged data-recording chart on the board. I modeled recording data of the students' first experiment while demonstrating how to use short phrases to record notes and explaining the purpose of using graphic organizers. I repeated this procedure with the second experiment, having the students fill in their own data recording sheets following my modeling. For the remaining three experiments, I circulated and guided student partners to ensure comprehension of this learning strategy.

After this lesson, I continued to incorporate various types of graphic organizers in subsequent lessons to allow the students to practice this type of learning strategy. I used similar data recording charts in several science lessons; then I introduced a different type of graphic organizer for students to model and explain decimal multiplication in a math lesson. In addition, I used the familiar cause and effect graphic organizer for a reading lesson.

Although I had received positive results from students' responses during the closing of previous lessons, as well as on their post-tests, the realization that teaching the use of graphic organizers as a learning strategy had been instilled in these students occurred during a language arts lesson on alliteration. After explicitly teaching and modeling how to write an alliterative poem on chart paper, the students modeled the chart I had recorded to create their own alliterative poem during guided practice. In essence, continuously using graphic organizers in a variety of lessons had provided the children with the ability to use them without being told to do so.

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Encouraging Participatory Culture and Language Learning: Assisting ELLs in Becoming Part of the Digital Youth

Dorothy Valcarcel Craig

As English-speaking adolescents rapidly become part of the Digital Youth in using new media tools and operating within a media-driven environment, English language learners are placed at a disadvantage due to a variety of reasons including lack of resources, access, and language. The same new media tools used by English-speaking adolescents may be integrated into ESL instruction and have the potential to encourage language learning, use, and interaction. By integrating components of new media with language and content-based instruction, English language learners are able to develop multiple literacies while becoming aware of the "life tools" needed to fully participate in an English-speaking environment.

With the widely spread use of cell phones, computers, and other current technologies, young people across the country are growing up and operating in what is being called, "a media ecology" where digital and networked media play a critical role in learning, development, socialization, and literacy. Media ecology includes forms of traditional media such as books, television, and radio—however, these are intersecting with digital media—specifically media that is highly interactive such as social networks and online networks. What comes naturally to English speaking students in terms of acquiring technological literacy skills—presents yet another challenge to English language learners in terms of catching up with their peers, decreasing the digital divide, and closing the achievement gap when technological tools are required.

For example, Ohler (2011) suggests that a new acronym is rapidly becoming part of our culture and is present in discussions, dialogs, and narratives regarding technology and technology use. The acronym, BYOD—Bring Your Own Device—implies that a learner is arriving at school, equipped with the tools needed to complete a variety of tasks that take place within the classroom as well as

within the media ecology of today's times. BYOD also encourages educators to think about key questions regarding teaching and learning including:

1. How should learning communities address the issue of students who actually BYOD and how does this impact the "haves" and "have nots"—the latter which usually includes English language learners?
2. What new challenges would a pro-BYOD or an anti-BYOD policy present to classroom teachers and the overall learning community in terms of preparing all students for the world beyond school?
3. How do educators manage the information overload that comes with BYOD, media-centered world and how do these issue English language learners?

Defining the Digital Youth

The Digital Youth Project report (2009) summarizes and presents findings from a three-year ethnographic study, which examined young people's participation in the new media ecology. The focus specifically examined adolescents who were English speakers. One of the main goals of the study was to examine the relationship between new media, teaching, and learning. What emerged was a pattern of a networked public culture that shapes socialization and social interaction. In addition, the researchers found that peer-based learning was commonly practiced among today's young learners (Ito, Horst, Bittani, boyd,* Herr-Stephensen, Lange, Pascoe, & Robinson, 2009).

This particular study attempted to find out how widely adopted were new media and how this adoption impacts learning agendas. An emerging theme with regard to new media ecology and today's middle and high school students involves the processes of youth-adult negotiations over literacy and technology use. Consider literacy in its traditional format—reading, writing, speaking, and listening. Now, consider how these processes would look if technology were used as a vehicle for productive language, receptive language, learning, and managing information. A mental image of very stark differences begins to emerge. Much of the development of the negotiation processes as well as views of technology and literacy takes place within informal settings such as: a) home, b) with friends outside of school, and c) privately.

However, these negotiations carry over to the classroom where formal learning takes place. Think for a moment of any given group of middle or high school students. Most are carrying—somewhere with their personal belongings—several forms of technology including: a) cell phones, b) iPods, and c) tablets or iPads. These are the cultural tools of the current school-age generation—many of whom

would not leave home without them! Watkins (2010) suggests that new media are also influencing the concept of authoritative knowledge. Consider web resources such as Wikipedia. Who is the authority adding and contributing content to this particular site? It could be an eleven year old or it could be a 50 year old. More than likely, the authors of Wikipedia content fall largely between the two.

Enter the English Language Learner

In a study conducted by Lenhardt and Madden (2005), an argument based on three main concerns emerged and continues today. The concerns involve: a) the participation gap, b) the transparency problem, and c) the ethics challenge. The concerns voiced in the study encourage policy change and pedagogical strategies to ensure that all students have opportunities to build the multiple literacies required in the new media ecology. Considering the English language learner, the concerns have the potential to greatly impact the success of any student who enters a U.S. school and is confronted with the intricacies of second language acquisition as well as multiple literacy acquisition.

For example, the participation gap—which refers to unequal access to opportunities, prior experiences, skills, and knowledge to fully embrace the technology tools that English speaking peers are using—increases dramatically for many English language learners due to a number of variables that are not under their control. Variables such as sporadic schooling, immigration, diaspora, socioeconomic status, and lack of resources in the home must all be considered as part of the participation gap.

The transparency problem—which reflects the challenges most English speaking students face in developing the background knowledge needed to see the different ways in which new media tools are shaping their future—is something that most English language learners cannot begin to imagine. Many ELLs have an uncertain future in the U.S. In addition, the culture and language shock that they may be experiencing overtake the affective filter. Thus, their main focus is on immediate language learning and survival—not future plans.

Last, the ethics challenge—the breakdown of traditional forms of education, training, and socialization—has the potential to assist in preparing English speaking students for careers and roles as media creators, designers, consumers, and full participants in a participatory culture driven by technology. However, for the English language learner, many are just beginning to experiment with English. The role of "creator" may develop, however, it may take many more years before an ELL feels comfortable with manipulating new media in creating, developing, and designing information reflected by tools such as blogs, wikis, and social net-

works. In addition, a consumer of information must be able to locate, evaluate, and select information for specific purposes. It is difficult to perform the tasks of a consumer when just beginning to acquire the language.

Practices that Define Today's English Speaking Students and Impact ELLs

Components, concepts, and practices that define many English-speaking students' engagements with new media include:

- **Networked Publics** – The participation in a public culture that is supported by the Internet and mobile networks. The term also refers to active participation in a distributed social network in the production and circulation of knowledge. A study published in 2010 cited that 8-18 year olds spend an average of almost eight hours using entertainment media each day (Kaiser Family Foundation, 2010). Studies conducted and posted on Facebook dispute that number and suggest that the number of hours spent online may be closer to eleven. The time online using social networking sites, blogging, emailing, etc., is rapidly increasing. Of course, the studies imply that most of the time spent online take place outside the formal school day.

  Now, consider the English language learner who may not have access to the types of digital media that the English-speaking counterpart has in the home. This in itself places the ELL at a disadvantage for acquiring language as well as in opportunities for experimenting with the cultural tools of our society.

- **Peer-Based Learning** – Learning outside of school—primarily in settings where peer-based interaction takes place. In many cases, peer-based learning provides "space" and opportunity for learning. The peer-based learning might include Facebook, MySpace, Twitter, instant messaging, texting, or communicating in a variety of group-related, online environments.

  Although these tools and peer-based learning communities are available for anyone, the English language learner may or may not be equipped to fully engage in such a community due to the challenges posed by learning the new language. In addition, considering the nature of peer-based learning and the pedagogy involved in teaching specific skills to capitalized on this interactive type of learning—the implications for using such communities within the structure of the ESL classroom offer great opportunities to practice and use language authentically. Thus, the need

is established before access is ensured.

- New Media Literacy – Definitions of literacies and social competencies that are developing as a result of media production and online communications. These include genres of participation such as:

  - Friendship-Driven Genres of Participation – based on building friendships and networks or groups of selected friends
  - Interest-Driven Genres of Participation – based on a common interest, set of tasks, or projects

  Of the three types of engagement, new media literacy is perhaps the most critical to all learners. For English speakers, media production and creating information is extremely valuable if integrated into explicit instruction. For the ELL, the language processes and skills involved in media production, creating information, and using technology tools as a vehicle for sharing provides multiple opportunities to build both basic interpersonal communication skills as well as cognitive academic language proficiency skills.

  Consider the types of projects appropriate for language learning, using academic language, and interacting in meaningful ways. Now, match those with technology tools and the combination is one that all ELL students would benefit from.

Learning the Lessons of Life

In addition to the distinctions between friendship-driven and interest-driven participation, differing levels of commitment and intensity have been identified (Ito, et al., 2009). For example, Hanging Out, implies a friendship driven genre of participation where young people spend casual social time with one another through new media tools such as MySpace, Facebook, IM, and Twitter. Messing Around represents the beginning of a more intense media-centric form of engagement. Messing Around begins to develop when a young learner takes an interest in and focuses on the workings and content of technology and media itself. For example, authoring a Wiki page, sponsoring a Facebook group, etc. Last, Geeking Out, involves the more expertise-centered forms of interest-driven participation surrounding new media.

Through these practices, adolescents learn "lessons" about social life and the failures and successes that develop. These lessons are grounded in life as they know it. For example, the always-on communication may involve building friendships

and romantic relationships via online spaces such as Facebook. The constant, any time, anywhere communication via Twitter and Facebook allows adolescents to be always connected and always on.

In the ESL classroom, the same practices may be used to encourage language use, language learning, and interaction. The English language learner benefits from friendship participation and interest-driven groups because both involve language use. Friendship-driven participation encourages language use in an informal manner, however, if given opportunities to engage in friendship-driven socialization during the school day, ELLs are able to use language while learning about the typical things that are commonplace to their English speaking peers. However, the socialization becomes much more valuable if connected to guided discussions and interactions focusing on current events, popular culture, and music.

Therefore, interest-driven participation becomes critical. Interest-driven partici-pation may be used to promote language use and language learning in a class-room setting. Group projects where students develop wikis, blogs, and interest-based social networks encourage students to share their ideas. This leads to the creation of authentic content that reflects vocabulary use and overall language use. In addition, the interest-driven participation may be centered on a favorite author, book, content topic, or issue in popular culture.   Thus, the learning is extended beyond the classroom as students "create" projects and share via online media.

Networked Publics, Participatory Culture, and Classroom Implications

Participation in networked publics requires a social, cultural, and technical ecol-ogy grounded in social, interactional, and recreational practices. The networked publics that English-speaking adolescents are participating in provide an arena for them to develop social norms in the context of public participation. In addi-tion, adolescents are developing new forms of media literacy that are keyed to youth-centered, social, and cultural worlds. One must consider that peer-based learning has unique properties that drive engagement in ways that differ funda-mentally from formal instruction.   However, peer-based learning does have its place in the formal education setting as ELLs learn from each other as well as from their English-speaking friends.

This in itself is something to take notice of considering the challenges of today's classrooms as the phenomena that emerges is one of a participatory culture where membership is required. However, membership in a classroom is much different in that it is "traditional" and not typically connected or networked in the same

manner as the networked publics. Participatory Culture is one in which:

1. There are relatively low barriers to artistic expression and civic engagement.
2. There is strong support for creating and sharing creations with others.
3. There is some type of informal mentorship present where the information that is known and acquired by the majority of members is readily passed along to the "apprentices."
4. Members believe that their contributions matter greatly.
5. Members feel some degree of social connection with one another.

In terms of formal education settings, Participatory Culture has the ability to shift the focus of literacy from individual expression to community involvement. In addition, rather than dealing with technology in isolation, pedagogy takes an "ecological approach" in reflecting interrelationships, communication strategies, interaction, and cultural communities.

The English language learner faces many barriers upon entering a U.S. classroom. Language, culture, lack of common knowledge, and even clothing might prevent an ELL from becoming part of a face-to-face group due to the barriers that are associated with linguistic diversity. However, participation in a networked culture—based on technological skills, knowledge, and access—becomes possible when the ELL has opportunities to experiment in a structured classroom setting. Membership in a networked public under the guidance of a professional educator might help to elevate the status of an ELL and also encourage artistic expression, support for language learning, and "belonging and worth."

Considering the specific forms of participatory culture outlined by Jenkins, et al. (2009) each has the potential to influence teaching and learning in the ESL classroom.

- **Affiliations** – Memberships—formal and informal—in online communities centered around various forms of media such as Friendster, Facebook, MySpace, message boards, metagaming, or game clans. These memberships usually do not carry over to the classroom unless some elements are integrated into instruction. With that said, there is great potential to create ESL Facebook pages, using message boards for vocabulary use and word study, and engaging in structured discussions.

- **Expressions** – Producing creative forms of expressions such as digital sampling, fan videos, fan fiction, zines, or mash-ups. The potential here is that—when creating a student-centered learning environment that reflects the

constructivist framework, it seems only natural to encourage expressions via new media. However, in today's world of accountability, expressions may be placed on the back burner. This leaves many educators questioning the appropriateness of encouraging expressions via new media at the expense of preparing for achievement tests. For ESL students, however, expressions become vital to language learning success and overall language use.

- **Collaborative Problem-Solving** – Working together in teams, formal and informal—to complete tasks and develop new knowledge such as designing Wikis, alternative reality gaming, or spoiling. Again, one would think that collaborative problem solving is critical for preparing adolescents for the university classroom and the world beyond and that new media tools could viably be used as a vehicle for generating solutions, solving problems, and selecting the most appropriate solution. There is much to be said of integrating collaborative problem solving in the ESL classroom due to the benefits involved that promote critical thinking and language use. Collaboration among ESL students and English speakers create an environment that fosters and encourages the development of a true learning community.

The identification of new media components and forms of use by adolescents that are rapidly having an impact on classroom learning and which may be considered when designing ESL, language, and content-based lessons that incorporate: a) standards, b) content, and c) media, include:

1. Play: The capacity to experiment with surroundings as a form of problem solving.
2. Simulation: The ability to interpret and construct dynamic models of real-world processes.
3. Performance: The ability to adopt alternative identities for the purpose of improvisation and discovery.
4. Appropriation: The ability to meaningful sample and remix content.
5. Multitasking: The ability to scan the environment and shift focus onto salient details.
6. Distributed Cognition: The ability to interact meaningfully with tools that expand mental capabilities.
7. Collective Intelligence: The ability to pool knowledge and compare notes with others toward a common goal.
8. Judgment: The ability to evaluate the reliability and credibility of different information sources.
9. Transmedia Navigation: The ability to search for, synthesize, and disseminate information.
10. Negotiation: The ability to travel across diverse communities, discerning

and respecting multiple perspectives, and grasping and following alternative norms (Ito, et al., 2009).

Reflecting on the ten components, all have the potential to propel language learning by using technology as a tool for formal instruction, interaction, and collaborative group work. In addition—if appropriately used when targeting cognitive, metacognitive, and affective language learning strategies—English language learners are afforded the same opportunities as their English-speaking peers. Therefore, they are almost put at an advantage because they may begin to develop an awareness of how the new media components may be used as "life tools" for learning.

In terms of instruction, some believe that a new level should be added to Bloom's Taxonomy—one that includes "create" as the most complex of all tasks. Anderson and Krathwohl (2001) first suggested the addition to the taxonomy over ten years ago. Today's adolescents—operating in a fully charge new media world—encourage educators to seriously consider the updated version of Bloom's work as it seems to mirror the skills that students are acquiring on their own. Thus, as a result—ESL educators might focus on:

- Encouraging social skills, interaction, and communication as a part of instruction that also integrates collaboration and networking tools.
- Providing opportunities to develop language-based research skills that result in the creation of information through media and technology.
- Encouraging critical analysis skills integrated into standards-based content instruction that uses academic vocabulary.
- Exploring new media tools as a means for promoting ELL literacy, preparing for college and life beyond the classroom.

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