

Annotated Bibliography on Teaching English Language Learners

BY NORMA MOTA-ALTMAN

Norma Mota-Altman, Director of the National Writing Project's English Language Learners Network, has developed a close to comprehensive, annotated bibliography of the most important works available on the subject of teaching English Language Learners. Here we present a small piece of this extensive and impressive work. The complete bibliography may be viewed on the NWP website at nwp.berkeley.edu.

Anderson, Valerie and Marsha Roit. "Linking Reading Comprehension Instruction to Language Development for Language-Minority Students." *The Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 96, No. 3, 1996. The authors report on work they have done over 7 years with language minority students in grades 1-6 in the U.S., and grades 6-8 in Canada. They identified six instructional issues related to reading comprehension and to language development, i.e., English language flexibility, use of abstract and less imageable vocabulary, consideration of larger contexts, determination of important and unimportant text segments, elaboration of responses, and engagement in natural conversations. The authors argue that these issues are teachable abilities that increase both text understanding and oral language proficiency when taught to students. Ten instructional suggestions for implementing these abilities, by grade level, are discussed. Practical instructional suggestions for the classroom.

Boyle, Owen F. and Suzanne F. Peregoy. "Literacy scaffolds: Strategies for first- and second-language readers and writers." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 44, No. 3, Nov 1990. Provides examples of scaffolding activities that facilitate successful encounters with print and show children early on that they can learn to read and write. Discusses how literacy scaffolds enhance reading and writing for first- and second-language learners alike.

Celce-Murcia, Marianne. "Grammar Pedagogy in Second and Foreign Language Teaching." *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Autumn 1991. The article looks at trends of the past 25 years regarding the role of grammar in language teaching. The author proposes a decision-making strategy for resolving the issue of when and to what extent, one should teach grammar to language learners. The author further argues that grammar instruction is part of language teaching because it interacts with meaning, social function, and discourse- or a combination of these- rather than standing alone to be learned for its own sake. "The article concludes with a survey of options for integrating grammar instruction into a communicative curriculum and with a reformulation of the role of grammar in language teaching."

Elley, Warwick B. "Acquiring Literacy in a Second Language: The Effect of Book-Based Programs." *Language Learning*, Vol. 41, No. 3, Sept. 1991. "In contrast to students learning by means of structured, audiolingual programs, those children who are exposed to an extensive range of high-interest illustrated story books, and encouraged to read and share them, are

consistently found to learn the target language more quickly. When immersed in meaningful text, without tight controls over syntax and vocabulary, children appear to learn the language incidentally, and to develop positive attitudes toward books. In some cases, the benefits are found to spread to other subjects and languages."

Ervin-Tripp, Susan M. "Is Second Language Learning Like the First?" *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 8, No. 2, June 1974. This article is still as relevant today as it was in 1974. The author questions whether the process of second language acquisition looks like the first. The study looked at English speakers learning French in a natural setting in which communication rather than form was the learner's focus of attention. "The study showed that in many respects the development of comprehension of syntax and of morphological features follows the order in mother tongue studies."

Genishi, Celia. "Observing the Second Language Learner: An Example of Teachers' Learning." *Language Arts*, Vol. 66, No. 5, Sept. 1989. A monolingual kindergarten teacher records her observations of four L2 learners in her classroom. Several critical points about the process of language learning and effective teaching in general are made. One, each child follows his/her own unique timetable and an unpredictable path toward L2 learning. Second, classrooms with a variety of activities and potential situations for talk, have the best chance of supporting the L2 learner. Third, in the classroom, the teacher is at the heart of the L2 learner's support system.

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Henze, Rosemary C. and Tamara Lucas. "Shaping Instruction to Promote the Success of Language Minority Students: An Analysis of Four High School Classes." *Peabody Journal of Education*, Vol. 69, 1993. The authors seek to define what is actually known to "work" in teaching language minority students at the secondary level. They identify three crucial areas: good teaching practices for all students that rely on intuitive teaching talent; the realities of support and/or constraints in the secondary school context; and good research based teaching practices for language minority students. The authors looked at four distinct classrooms and identified what a good class and a good teacher do and how they do it. The class descriptions and commentaries are helpful in defining effective practices for teaching language minority students.

Jackson, Francesina R. "Seven Strategies to Support a Culturally Responsive Pedagogy." *Journal of Reading*, 37, Dec. 1993/Jan. 1994. While school populations are becoming more ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse, the teaching force in the United States is becoming more homogeneous. There are specific strategies that most American teachers already employ but may not recognize as ones they can use to enhance multicultural learning. The article describes seven strategies that are integral components of a culturally responsive pedagogy.

Lim, Hwa-Ja Lee and Dorothy J. Watson. "Whole language content classes for second-language learners." *The Reading Teacher*, Vol. 46, No. 5, Feb. 1993. ESL teachers can help students reach their

potential English proficiency by shifting the focus of instruction from direct teaching of language to using classroom strategies in which language is naturally and functionally learned. Talk that emerges from whole language content experiences has the characteristics of talk as a means of learning rather than talk as a target of learning. Thus, second language learners can learn intellectually interesting content while increasing their language proficiency.

Lucas, Tamara, Rosemary Henze, and Ruben Donato. "Promoting the Success of Latino Language-Minority Students: An Exploratory Study of Six High Schools." *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 60, No. 3, August 1990. The authors state that "schools are responsible for the quality of education students receive, and that given a good education, all students can achieve." They then asked, what makes some schools more successful than others in promoting success for ELL students? The authors studied six secondary schools that have been recognized for their success in providing quality education for ELL students. The study focused on the whole school rather than on classroom practices, and identified eight features that promote the achievement of ELL students.

McKeon, Denise. "When Meeting 'Common Standards is Uncommonly Difficult.'" *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 42, No. 8, May 1994. "Because limited-English proficient learners bear an exceptionally heavy cognitive and linguistic load, they need stepped-up assistance to help them meet new content standards." The author goes on to list a set of opportunity-to-learn standards for LEP students as well

as three problems that impede LEP student achievement. The article ends by suggesting five simple steps that educators can take to ensure that LEP students will meet content standards.

Peyton, Joy Kreeft and Chuck Jones, Andrea Vincent, and Les Greenblatt. "Implementing Writing Workshop With ESOL Students: Visions and Realities." *TESOL Quarterly*, Vol. 28, No. 3, Autumn 1994. The authors looked at the data from 16 ESOL teachers over the course of a school year in describing the challenges of implementing Writer's Workshop with ELL students. How do teachers successfully use Writing Workshop to teach the writing process and to build language and literacy levels? The authors found teachers needed to adapt the following areas to meet the needs of their L2 learners: getting students started writing, conferencing and sharing, and revising. Good description of ways that writing workshop for ELL learners differs from writing workshop portrayed in the literature. Stresses the need for teachers to have time, support, and resources in order to "own in practice what they have learned in the abstract."

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