

2013
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2014

The Conference Proceedings of MIDTESOL



The third edition of the *Proceedings* is a combined edition from the 2013 and 2014 conferences with the following themes: 2013, Lawrence, KS, “Engaging Learners, Building Community,” and 2014, Warrensburg, MO, “The Wise Learn from Everyone.” The past two years, our organization has seen amazing growth and has expanded its member states to now include Kansas and Nebraska, whom we welcome back into the MIDTESOL fold with exuberance. We continue to work towards fulfilling our mission as stated below:

The mission of Mid-America Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages is to strengthen the effective teaching of English in Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, and Nebraska to people whose native language is a language other than English while respecting their individual language rights. As a regional affiliate of TESOL and a professional organization, MIDTESOL:

- Supports those involved with English language teaching, teacher education, administration and management, curriculum and materials design, and research;
- Provides leadership and direction through the dissemination and exchange of information and resources;
- Encourages access to the standards for English language instruction, professional preparation, and employment.

The Communications Committee and Proceedings team encourages MIDTESOL members to use this valuable resource as they continue to improve their own teaching and as they strive to meet the needs of their diverse learners.

A sincere thank you goes out to all those who had a hand in preparing this edition, including the reviewers and those who spent countless hours preparing the following articles.

Jennifer Morrison, MIDTESOL Communications
Director

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Contents

K-12 Interest Section Article	5-19
DJ Kaiser, S. LeLaurin, & H. Tuckson <i>Cultural Differentiation in Lesson Plan Development</i>	5-19
IEP/EAP Interest Section Articles	20-62
R. Brefeld, A. Meechai, & D. Pascoe-Chavez <i>Dialogic Teaching and Literacy Learning</i>	20-30
A. Ergun <i>Undiagnosed Mental and Behavioral Disorders among ELLs: The Growing Concern in ESL Programs and IEPs</i>	31-38
K. Foster & K. Grothoff <i>The Multicultural Classroom: Activities to Incorporate Student Culture into the Classroom</i>	39-51
H.Y. Chan <i>Grammar Teaching for an Academic Writing Course</i>	51-62
Applied Linguistics or “Other” Topics	63-130
J. Cardwell <i>Benefits of an English Language Fellowship</i>	63-69
DJ Kaiser <i>Practical Approaches and Strategies for Teaching Stress-Timed English Rhythm</i>	70-90
T. Tran <i>Methods for Offering Written Corrective Feedback</i>	91-101
T. Tran <i>Instituting and Maintaining Learner’s Motivation: From Research to Practice</i>	102-116
K. Cunningham <i>Exploring Language through the World’s Museums</i>	117-130

Cultural Differentiation in Lesson Plan Development

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Abstract

The benefit of differentiated instruction in classrooms that include English Language Learners is well documented. This paper focuses on differentiating instruction from a cultural perspective using Geert Hofstede's dimensions of national culture. After an overview of differentiated instruction, Hofstede's cultural dimensions will be presented with an explanation of how these differences may affect ELLs in the classroom. Finally, examples of how lesson plans for a grade-school Math class can be differentiated based on these cultural dimensions will be presented to show how to make instruction more effective and to prepare ELLs and all learners to succeed in diverse learning environments.

This article is dedicated to the memory of Nahed Chapman (1954-2013). Ms. Chapman served as the Executive Director of St. Louis Public School's ESOL Program. She was the driving force behind the grant described in this article and followed it through to the end. She fought tirelessly for the best possible educational support for St. Louis's immigrants and refugees.

The majority of states have adopted the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), and their schools are already implementing this new curriculum into their classrooms. Haycock (2012) notes that the purpose of the CCSS is “engaging all [students]—rather than just a privileged few—deeply and meaningfully in the rich and rigorous content that will prepare them for college and careers” (n.p.). One of the greatest difficulties that content teachers today have been facing is addressing the language and culture needs of their English Language Learners (ELLs). Recent statistics show that the percentage of ELLs in public schools exceeded 10% in 2010-2011, up from 9% in 2002-03 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012, p. 1). Both in-service and pre-service teachers are rushing to find better ways to assist an increasing number of ELLs in their classrooms so these learners do not lag behind their peers.

The Math Success for ELLs Grant

To meet the needs of ELLs today and to help them access their academic content, the St. Louis Public Schools (SLPS) applied for a three-year Title II, Part B Mathematics and Science Partnerships (MSP) grant. The grant initiative was titled “Math Success for ELLs” and focused on cross training K-5 Math content instructors in methods that would benefit the ELLs in their classrooms. District data show that from 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 the percentage of ELLs increased from 6.7% to 9.7% while total district enrollment decreased more than a third (Adams, 2009, pp. 2-3). To help address the needs of this increasing student population, a total of 48 teachers from 6 different SLPS participated in this grant. A total of 41 of these teachers finished the grant (with 7 teachers leaving the grant due to retirement or moving to another school, which made them ineligible for participation). The specific purpose of the grant was to

(1) increase the mathematics content knowledge of K-5 mainstream and ESOL teachers as it relates to the Show Me Standards, grade level expectations (GLEs), the Common Core State Standards for mathematics, and the district's curriculum; (2) improve the pedagogical skills of K-5 mainstream and ESOL teachers to provide sheltered mathematics instruction for ELLs; (3) build and support strong peer coaching and learning communities; (4) improve academic achievement in mathematics for K-5 ELLs; and (5) build a strong partnership to support the ongoing professional development needs of mainstream and ESOL teachers. (St. Louis Public Schools [SLPS], 2011, Abstract 1)

The partnership team was comprised of multiple institutions and organizations both from the St. Louis community and nationally. The St. Louis Public Schools' English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) "program is the largest in Missouri, with a comprehensive program providing English language instruction and content assistance currently implemented in 16 schools and serving more than 1,800 students in grades K-12" (SLPS, 2011, Partnership 1). Webster University was brought in for their "strong mathematics content and pedagogical expertise" from the Mathematics faculty and also the Teaching English as a Second Language Program, which "has worked closely with the district's ESOL program for many years" (SLPS, 2011, Partnership 1). Sessions from the International Institute of St. Louis provided "a deep understanding of the issues faced by refugee and immigrant families as they strive to assimilate into American culture" (SLPS, 2011, Partnership 1). Lastly from St. Louis, the Magic House provided "innovative mathematics learning opportunities and teacher training which provide children with creative and real-world applications of complex mathematical concepts including using technology to solve mathematical problems" (SLPS, 2011, Abstract 1).

From outside of St. Louis, the grant contracted specialists from the Center for Applied Linguistics and Pearson National SIOP to provide extensive sessions in Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol ® (SIOP). The SIOP model was chosen for this grant because it had been identified as “a highly effective, research-based model used successfully in Missouri and elsewhere for adapting instructional strategies to meet the special needs of ELLs” (SLPS, 2011, Narrative 3). In addition to the SIOP training, culture components, and math training, additional math sessions were offered by Greg Tang of Greg Tang Math.

This three-year grant spanned from 2011 through 2013. During each summer, teachers participated in two full weeks of training in SIOP, math, and culture. Twelve Saturday seminars were also scheduled throughout the first two years of the grant. Beyond the Professional Development hours that teachers could accrue, grant participants had the opportunity to combine grant time with additional work to receive graduate credit from Webster University in the School of Education. Teachers could pursue one unit of credit per year in each of the three following areas: Curriculum Design (SIOP), Math Content, and Culturally Responsive Teaching. Only one grant participant followed all three years of the credit for Culturally Responsive Teaching. This article represents this collaboration.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

Each year of the grant focused on a different topic related to culture in today’s K-5 classroom. Year one’s session addressed newcomer culture with a panel discussion on the special cultural needs and differences of refugees and new immigrant families. Year two’s session changed focus to culturally responsive teaching using cultural dimensions based on Geert Hofstede’s research (Hofstede, 1980; Hofstede, 2011; Hofstede, Hofstede, & Minkov, 2010; Hofstede, Pedersen, & Hofstede, 2002). This topic continued into the third year of the grant with

an application of these cultural dimensions to lesson plan design. Each year included a follow-up session and a formal assessment.

The majority of the sessions on culture were developed and led by Suzanne LeLaurin, the Senior Vice President for Programs at the International Institute in St. Louis. DJ Kaiser, Associate Professor and Coordinator of Teaching English as a Second Language at Webster University, provided assistance and worked more on the assessment side. Heather Tuckson, a third-grade teacher with St. Louis Public Schools, followed all three years of the culture component and worked closely with Ms. LeLaurin and Dr. Kaiser. This article will continue with a description of the cultural dimensions presented and explored in the last two years of this grant. Suzanne LeLaurin has adapted Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions to address the cultural aspects that teachers may need to address in their classrooms. This description will be followed by a summary from Heather Tuckson on how she used these cultural dimensions in her lesson plan design. Finally, this article will end with some suggestions for classroom teachers today.

Cultural Dimensions

According to Geert Hofstede (2001), the concept of culture may be operationalized into five dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism versus collectivism, masculinity versus femininity, and long term versus short-term orientation. Each dimension should be viewed as operating on a continuum between two extremes rather than as exclusive binaries. Using his experience as a cultural anthropologist, Hofstede used a variety of research methods to identify work-related values in IBM offices around the world. From his research he identified these five dimensions.

The value of Hofstede's work is not that he has definitively defined each and every national culture through describing a particular national culture based on where they "rank" on the scales for each of the five dimensions. Rather, Hofstede has given us a model to help discern cultural differences between others and ourselves. With this awareness, we can then modify our behaviors and methods of interactions with others to strengthen communication and enhance learning.

Two approaches may be considered. One approach would be to assess the cultural values of particular students, the classroom or school, or an identified cultural value, and then modify teaching practices to better respond to those values. An alternative, and the one we advocate, is to ensure that values at each extreme of the dimensions are reflected in teaching approaches.

Our training in the second year of the grant focused on educating the teachers on the Hofstede theory and helping them begin to consider how the theory may be playing out in the classroom. The training included an overview of what culture is and several experiential exercises from the book of exercises by Hofstede, Pedersen, and Hofstede (2002). The purpose of the exercises was to help the teachers recognize that multiple interpretations of experiences are possible, and those interpretations are rooted at least partly in cultural values.

We then educated the teachers on each of the five dimensions and how they may be recognized at the extremes of the continuum. Many of Hofstede's cultural dimensions were adapted into terms that would be easier for classroom teachers to understand and apply in their classrooms. Table 1 outlines these adapted terms.

Table 1

Adapted Terms for Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions as Presented by Suzanne LeLaurin

Hofstede's Terms	Adapted Terms	Value 1	Value 2
Power distance	Hierarchy	Respect for status	Equality between people
Uncertainty avoidance	Uncertainty	Certainty	Exploration
Individualism versus collectivism	Identity	Individual freedom	Group harmony
Masculinity versus femininity	Purpose	Winning	Caring for others
Long-term versus short-term orientation	Time	Long-term benefits	Immediate benefits

The purpose here was not to label any particular culture according to the dimensions, although we did describe where U.S. culture tends to fall on each dimension. Continuing with material from the exercise book by Hofstede, Pedersen, and Hofstede (2002), we asked the teachers to identify words that might be clues about cultural values along each dimension and shared dialogues that illustrated different extremes within each dimension. Finally, we explored how each dimension might show up in the classroom with teachers giving examples that helped to translate the theory into real-world experiences.

During the second year of the grant, the final step in the training called for teams of three teachers to role-play a conversation between a principal, a teacher, and a student using language that reflected each of the extremes of the assigned dimension. Besides gaining practice in communicating at both ends of the continuum, teachers quickly learned how hard it is to communicate outside their own cultural norms. This helped internalize the emotional component of experiencing cultural mismatch between one's own worldview and that of others.

The third and final training session involved development of lesson plans that incorporated the cultural dimensions. Groups of teachers first decided on content to be taught in the plan. Then they developed two lesson plans, each one addressing one of the extremes of the dimension assigned to the group. In addition to using SIOP techniques, they were expected to consider a variety of factors in the development of the plans: teacher behaviors and words, nonverbals, relationships between teacher and students, relationships among students, and general approaches to activities.

Our goal was to help teachers identify a variety of ways to construct lesson plans, incorporating various elements of cultural dimensions that could build on the values of a diverse classroom. With practice, teachers could begin to step outside their own worldview or cultural norms and adapt their teaching to meet the needs of students who might see the world differently. No single lesson plan will ever capture the values of each student. However, by reflecting a diversity of cultural values as operationalized by Hofstede throughout the school year, teachers should see greater engagement among their students and ultimately deeper learning.

The next section of this article shows how one elementary school teacher, Heather Tuckson, used the materials presented by Suzanne LeLaurin (explained in this section) to reflect more upon her teaching and lesson plan development. This reflective portion—in the form of a first-person narrative—is provided as an example of how K-12 content teachers may develop and differentiate their lessons to meet the needs of culturally diverse learners in their classrooms.

Culture Objectives in the Classroom: One Teacher's Reflection

Teachers have many factors to consider when designing lesson plans for a diverse class of learners. Adding cultural dimensions to lesson planning can be a daunting task. My

experience has taught me it is not so harrowing of a job. We already differentiate lessons to suit our students' interests and learning needs; differentiating by culture is another piece to teaching the whole child. I found while studying Hofstede's cultural dimensions that we all have personal preferences that lean toward one cultural extreme or the other. As a teacher it is important to know your students well enough to identify which cultural dimensions they relate to and prefer. While designing lessons, try to incorporate cultural characteristics. There are different ways to approach this. You can incorporate just one element predominately within one lesson and in subsequent lessons hit the other extreme. Another approach is to blend tasks within a lesson that incorporate opposing cultural characteristics. Finally, you could incorporate multiple dimensions within a unit of study.

When creating the lessons for this collaboration, I chose all three approaches. The first lesson was a project-based lesson where students would use their knowledge of geometric solids to make a statue for their school's Character Committee. I chose to give the students a task-based learning situation engaging them in a real-world problem as a group to make an individualistic lesson more collectivist. In this activity, students were working solely within their "ingroup" throughout the entire project. Even when they were looking at other groups' statues, they were still working within their "ingroup" to give feedback to the other groups. I tried to avoid group members overpowering others by assigning specific roles and giving every member a chance to have each role. Also, in the end the glory of the statues picked by the committee will go to the group as a whole since they worked collectively on the project. Each member had a solid shape they added to the statue. They all had roles and responsibilities within the group to make their group successful. I tried to include some elements of Hierarchy as well. Particularly with the assigned roles, this addressed low power distance, giving group members

equality in their roles. Everyone had a chance to speak, write, and read. I also included this to reach my low-language students to give everyone a chance to practice language skills.

In another lesson, I took the approach of addressing a game practicing fact fluency with two conflicting cultural dimensions. One game scenario is the classic “Around the World” facts practice where students play individually and one winner is declared. In the contrasting fact game scenario, students collaborate to win as a team. I culturally adapted games to address the needs of students from cultures that promote extreme success and extreme compassion. Extreme success focuses on achievement vs. non-achievement. Students get the fact correct and stay in the game to be the ultimate champion; if you are incorrect, you are out. The faster the better, and students are in it to win for themselves. Extreme compassion focuses on caring vs. needing care. If you are weaker at fact fluency, you will have the group to help you through. The focus is on the group winning, not the individual. You are only as strong as your weakest link, so cultures rooted in extreme compassion will work together for the common good, in this case to ensure everyone gives the correct answer through collaboration. The group gets the glory—not the individual—so exceptional achievements of the strong students in fact fluency is downplayed. Speed is not emphasized; rather groups have the luxury of taking their time to come up with their answer.

Finally, a third lesson outside of Math addressed multiple cultural dimensions within a unit on landforms. The final project prompted students to collaborate within a group to create their own island featuring a variety of landforms. I made adaptations based on Hofstede’s cultural dimensions of Identity and Uncertainty. This lesson was culturally adapted to address the needs of students from cultures that promote extreme tolerance and extreme collectivism or individualism. Extreme tolerance focuses on exploration. Innovation is tolerated within this

culture. Students are given the freedom to create their own island; there are no right or wrong answers. I designed the group project in a way that students would have individual input in designing and naming their assigned landforms to contribute to the whole island design. Patience for others' ideas is essential in the success of the project. This also ties in with the cultural aspect of identity. Both individualism and collectivism are tested to make this project work. Students are infusing their individual perspectives to make the collective project work as a whole. I tried to blend these conflicting perspectives to both challenge and comfort students from these cultural backgrounds.

Conclusion

Based on these three years of work on culture and lesson plan development, we offer classroom teachers and curriculum designers today some suggestions. First of all, be mindful of learners. This requires becoming familiar with more than the linguistic differences that ELLs may face in the classroom. Teachers must get to know their learners' home cultures and their individual learning styles, which may be heavily influenced by their home cultures. Teachers should also take into account cultural dimensions when developing their lesson plans. This may require adapting existing lesson plans or consciously working on an additional draft that takes culture into explicit consideration.

When looking at existing lesson plans or reviewing newly developed ones, teachers should check to see if the presentation, materials, and activities give preference to one extreme or the other of these cultural dimensions. For example, if a lesson plan is more focused on *certainty* (where there is one correct answer), work to incorporate tasks that require *exploration*. By coupling tasks on both ends of the spectrum, all learners in a culturally diverse classroom may benefit from the full range of cultural approaches to uncertainty avoidance.

With the implementation of the Common Core State Standards in most districts, teachers find themselves developing new lesson plans to meet the new standards. This provides a perfect opportunity to create lesson plans that address the cultural needs of diverse learners. One way to do this is to create contrasting tasks that hit on both sides of one or more of the cultural dimensions. For example, a task that focuses on *individual freedom* could be contrasted with one that requires *group harmony* to address Hofstede's range of *individualism versus collectivism*. In longer units, different lessons can be created over the course of several days that address different aspects of the cultural dimensions. For example, one lesson that focuses on *equality between people* (where each class member's opinion holds equal weight) could be contrasted with a lesson that focuses on *respect for status* (where the teacher maintains control). These contrasting lessons address both ends of the spectrum for Hofstede's *power distance*, and this approach acknowledges that some learners may feel more comfortable with one cultural style over the other.

One effective way to embed the cultural dimensions into lesson plans is to write *culture objectives* as a part of each lesson. The SIOP model already advocates for adding language objectives to the content objectives that come from the curriculum (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2010, p. xii). Classroom teachers can easily add culture objectives to the beginning of their lesson plans. Teachers should share these explicitly with their learners at the beginning of lessons and review them at the end of the class period, as they would with content and language objectives. These culture objectives will focus learners' attention on the cultural dimensions needed during lesson tasks to be more successful.

Teachers today are constantly faced with the need to differentiate instruction in their classrooms. While adding culture objectives to lesson plans may be more work, we must

recognize that culturally differentiated lessons appeal to diverse groups of learners. More importantly, culturally differentiated lesson plans provide diverse learners essential opportunities to push themselves culturally to interact through and to learn from new cultural perspectives that will be necessary for living in the United States and collaborating in globally diverse settings. Seen from this collaborative perspective, culturally differentiated instruction benefits *all* learners, including American-born, native-speaking English learners because they too must be prepared to live and work in a culturally diverse world.

When teachers have the proper tools to prepare all learners to work, collaborate, and fully participate in their local classrooms and later in global workplaces, our learners win regardless of their linguistic or cultural background. Geert Hofstede's cultural dimensions provide teachers a simple model that can be used to write culture objectives that focus their learners' attention on specific cultural goals embedded into their content instruction. With explicit attention to these cultural dimensions, ELLs will have better access to the core competencies and content they must master in the classroom to help them become "college and career ready" by the end of high school along with their peers (Common Core Standards Initiative, 2010a, p. 3; Common Core Standards Initiative, 2010b, p. 4).

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Dialogic Teaching and Literacy Learning

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Abstract

Teachers described dialogic teaching stances, variations in classrooms, and why it is important for English language learners' literacy learning. A practical example showing how students can be involved in creating norms for one version of dialogic teaching, instructional conversations around difficult texts was explained. Variations of teacher questioning according to content and language objectives was given as a possible template for participants to use in their classes. Narratives of how dialogic teaching worked in ESL programs in higher education was shared with suggestions for applying the concept in other contexts.

There were three main reasons we embarked on studying dialogic teaching. First there was a felt need. All of the authors had experienced difficulty in trying to enact academic discussions with English language learners around difficult texts. We asked, “What can we do to better enact discussions with our English language learners?” Moreover, there have been published reviews of the literature which indicate a need for more emphasis on oral language development. In 2006, the National Literacy Panel (NLP) and the Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) published two separate reviews of the research in an effort to focus on the best approaches to help ELLs succeed in school. The NLP culled over 3,000 reports from 1980-2002 and reviewed 300 articles which were based on empirical research and focused on language minority student populations between the ages of three and 18.

The CREDE report centered on approximately the same time frame with a similar population and a focus on empirical research, but they looked at 200 different reports. While they both examined similar materials, they differed in that CREDE focused exclusively on the study of English in quantitative studies whereas the NLP also analyzed qualitative reports and included studies about first languages as well. The NLP looked at literacy learning and what influenced it, whereas the CREDE report looked at literacy and achievement in the content areas. Both studies distilled the research resulting in various summaries regarding what to focus on and how to implement effective teaching for ELLs (as cited in Goldenberg, 2008). Classroom oral language development for ELLs was found to be wanting. The lack of attention to classroom oral language development and reasons for this are elaborated below.

Oral language.

The NLP reported that high quality reading instruction alone is “insufficient to support equal academic success” and that “simultaneous efforts to increase the scope and the sophistication of these students' oral proficiency is also required” (Lesaux & Geva, 2006, p. 26).

The CREDE reports also called attention to oral language:

This chapter shines a spotlight on an area of the curriculum-oral language that typically remains in the shadows. This has been consistently noted by researchers of L2 development...by researchers of L1 development...and by scholars who document the history of the English Language Arts...The results of our review confirm what seems to be a continuing neglect of oral language research.(Genesee, Lindholm--Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2005, p. 42)

In addition, the academic reality for international ELLs, especially in higher education, is that students are expected to take active roles in discussions about texts, and for the most part, many students do not feel comfortable discussing in classrooms because they are not used to it and it goes against their home culture.

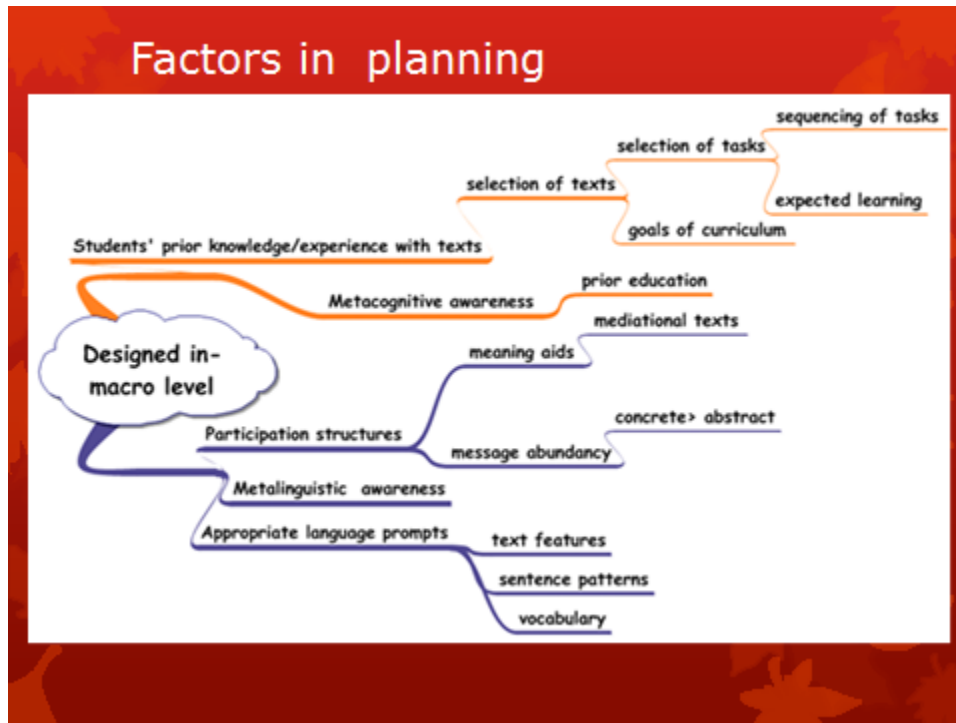
The need for explicit teaching to enable discussions around grade level texts is therefore very real. The task falls on the ELL practitioner to scaffold discussions for their EL learners. In order to do so, several aspects of the contextual requirements for successful discussions were reviewed. First, the background knowledge and vocabulary load of the text must be assessed. What are the challenges that the learner faces in terms of those areas? We recommended that texts be leveled so that the challenges of the text could be found and strategically scaffolded with the learners (see <http://www.azed.gov/leadingchange/files/2013/06/ae-tu-2c.pdf>).

Dialogic teaching

The main vehicle for scaffolding is the use of dialogic teaching. Dialogic teaching (Alexander, 2008; Boyd & Markarian, 2013; Reznitskaya, 2012) focuses on using classroom talk to stimulate and extend students' thinking and advance their learning and understanding. A review of the literature shows that there are multiple studies pertaining to EL teachers, dialogic teaching, and literacy learning in the lower grades (Boyd, 2012; Boyd & Maloof, 2000; Boyd & Markarian, 2001; Boyd & Rubin, 2002, 2006). Discussion based approaches are also advocated for L1 middle school and high school students (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003). There are likewise studies of classroom teachers focusing on scaffolding and instructional conversations (Frey & Fisher, 2010; Wilkenson & Silliman, 2000), how to prepare classroom teachers for instructional conversations, (Roskos, Boehlen, & Walker, 2000), and the merits of dialogic teaching for classroom teachers (Reznitskaya, 2012).

Dialogic teaching is explained using sociocultural theory (Vygotsky, 1978; Bahktin, 1986). Learning is mediated by words and social practices in students' zone of proximal development, so language use is of primary interest. Students internalize words through interaction; if they feel unthreatened, they will use that language. However, dialogic teaching moves beyond the basic step that students must have an opportunity to speak; dialogic teaching means that teachers need to explicitly model and implement scaffolding. It is not just putting students in groups or simply asking questions but rather an organized scheme of gradual release which depends on language proficiency level, context, goals etc. Each one of the factors in Figure 1 is important for consideration in preparing students for discussion.

Figure 1: Factors in Planning for ELL Discussions



The term dialogic teaching is often described as what it is not. It is not monologic teaching where the teacher does all of the talking and the student is limited to simple answers. There are several different theoretical roots; the one most called on for teaching stems from Bakhtin's (1986) and Vološinov's (1973) writing. Bakhtin theorized more about the quality of the interaction and what it meant to understand and think in conversation. For ELL practitioners, the usefulness of classroom talk is determined by the nature of the talk for the learner. As Nystrand, Gamoran, Kacher, and Prendergast (1997) note,

The key features of effective classroom discourse cannot be defined only by identifying particular linguistic forms such as question types, or even the genre of classroom discourse (lecture, discussion, etc.). Ultimately the effectiveness of instructional discourse is a matter of the quality of teacher-student interaction and

the extent to which students are assigned challenging and serious epistemic roles requiring them to think, interpret, and generate new understandings. (p.7)

Dialogic teaching is not a panacea for all that is problematic in ELL literacy learning, but it is a key piece in enabling students to develop a self-extending system of learning so that they may experience success. Other pieces in literacy pedagogy which appear to be helpful include multiple formative ways of assessing student skills in reading and speaking (Rodgers, 2006) and matching texts with readers (Fountas & Pinnell, 2006) so that students' capabilities can be taken into consideration for lesson planning (Halladay, 2012).

A major teacher move to facilitate dialogic teaching includes asking open questions to which more than one response could be correct. After the question is asked, teachers should focus on the third turn, that is to say their response after a student has given a response. A question or response contingent on what a student said positions the answering student as knowledgeable and as having interpretive authority. Use of reasoning words to further probe the answer could also demonstrate the teacher's interest in what the student has to say (Boyd, 2012). For example, a teacher could ask after reading about Martin Luther King,

Teacher: Do you think things have changed for the better for African Americans?

Student A: No

Teacher: Why do you say that?

Student A: Look at what happened to Michael Brown.

Teacher: Who else thinks what happened to Michael Brown shows that things have not changed for the better for African Americans? Student B, tell me more.

Student B: He was unarmed and shot by a policeman.

Teacher: How might what happened in Ferguson tell us something about whether things are better for African Americans or not?

In this example, we see the teacher picking up what the student said and probing the student for more ideas so that a real dialogue is enacted.

Here we see that dialogic talk is collective in the teacher's move to include others in the discussion, yet it is supportive and purposeful. The previous examples were given in the presentation to exemplify these principles of dialogic teaching, which is more like a stance than a hard and fast protocol. Research has shown that students who regularly are involved in dialogic discussions have improved reasoning (Kuhn & Udell, 2003; Mercer, Wegerif & Dawes, 1999), enhanced quality of writing ((Resnitskaya et al., 2001), and increased comprehension of text (Murphy et al., 2009). Therefore, implementing a dialogic technique can move students towards language proficiency as they learn to interact with others.

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Undiagnosed Mental and Behavioral Disorders among ELLs: The Growing Concern in ESL Programs and IEPs

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Abstract

Over the past decade, a growing trend among college and university English language programs has emerged wherein the English language proficiency requirements are either lowered or eliminated as a way to recruit students from a significantly larger base. This is a concern in that, based on traditional admission criteria at American universities and colleges, L2 proficiency among international student applicants has proven to be a valuable assessment tool for admission requirements. To explain, language ability, paired with previous academic performance, illustrates an accurate measurement of students' overall ability to learn, adapt, and problem-solve. When ESL Programs and IEPs lower and possibly eliminate English language proficiency requirements, this also complicates assessment of the students' academic abilities overall. Again, second language proficiency has often been an indication of students' abilities to learn, adapt, and problem-solve, so when second language proficiency is removed, it is more challenging to assess and measure these skills. While this change in admission requirements guarantees a far larger pool of international student applicants for higher education, this mass recruitment and enrollment trend simultaneously allows for students who have potentially limited or underdeveloped language, learning, and problem-solving skills to gain admission to ESL Programs and IEPs..

Over the past decade, a growing trend among college and university English language programs has emerged wherein the English language proficiency requirements are either lowered or eliminated as a way to recruit students from a significantly larger base. This is a concern in that, based on traditional admission criteria at American universities and colleges, L2 proficiency among international student applicants has proven to be a valuable assessment tool for admission requirements. To explain, language ability, paired with previous academic performance, illustrates an accurate measurement of students' overall ability to learn, adapt, and problem-solve. When ESL Programs and IEPs lower and possibly eliminate English language proficiency requirements, this also complicates assessment of the students' academic abilities overall. Again, second language proficiency has often been an indication of students' abilities to learn, adapt, and problem-solve, so when second language proficiency is removed, it is more challenging to assess and measure these skills. While this change in admission requirements guarantees a far larger pool of international student applicants for higher education, this mass recruitment and enrollment trend simultaneously allows for students who have potentially limited or underdeveloped language, learning, and problem-solving skills to gain admission to ESL Programs and IEPs.

Of course, this arrangement does provide an excellent educational opportunity for students who would otherwise not have a chance to pursue L2 acquisition and development. The favorable outcomes of this trend confirm that a large number of students are given an opportunity to enter into language programs, develop L2 proficiency, and then advance into and excel within an academic program of study at an American college or university. In fact, providing this opportunity to students was the general premise that fueled this mass recruitment and enrollment trend. Unfortunately, along with the incoming students with the necessary

strength and self-discipline needed to succeed, a portion of students with undiagnosed mental and behavioral issues have also gained admission to these colleges and universities. Again, while the overall drive behind this recruitment trend is positive and provides an opportunity for many, it also complicates the L2 classroom environment because it opens the door for students who have not been able to overcome academic obstacles in their native countries so as to gain admission to a university in their home environment. This trend itself, as well as its consequences, has been evidenced through “discussion tables” at regional, national, and international conferences for TESOL, ESL, and EFL. Moreover, emails shared through both the TESOL Interest Sections, UCIEP, and AAIEP notifications express concern about related topics, such as “Language Learner or Learner Disability.” Additionally, this topic has made frequent appearances at NAFSA “roundtable discussions” over the past two consecutive years. Nevertheless, this trend allows for mass recruitment and enrollment efforts of a considerably larger group of prospective students who in many cases have limited educational opportunities. While the business concept of this trend is both logical and enticing, there are several pressing concerns that have arisen as a consequence of this trend. As a result of this trend, an underexplored and unfamiliar concern has arisen, calling into question the unique needs of students with undiagnosed mental and behavioral disorders and the responsibility that the respective ESL Programs and IEPs have in dealing with such issues.

L2 students with undiagnosed mental and behavioral disorders face many challenges by entering into ESL Programs and IEPs at American colleges and universities. These students are often isolated in the ESL classroom because of their labored language development. For instance, students who cannot grasp the most foundational concepts of the English language are viewed by their classmates as incapable. Further, due to the behavioral norms that are associated

with certain illnesses, students can recognize a lack of “normalcy” in their peers. While it is standard for colleges and universities to have support systems set in place for students, such as counseling services and study counselors, these students often cannot utilize these services because of two primary reasons: (1) they do not have the English language skills to successfully communicate with counselors or tutors, and (2) they are unaware that they have a problem that requires attention.

The students’ inability to fully utilize these services also puts the ESL teachers in a difficult situation because it complicates their teaching responsibilities. Even though the ESL teacher’s primary role is to educate the students and guide them to an enhanced understanding of the English language and culture, these students’ unique needs require teachers to seek out and provide services for these troubled students, report the students’ behavior, and monitor the students’ overall wellbeing and safety. To illustrate an extreme example of a troubled student is a specific case experienced by the author in which a female Chinese student at a Midwestern university displayed symptoms of schizophrenia. While her typical behavior and personality in China were not known by her ESL teachers or classmates, her behavior and personality in the American classroom environment was found to be odd and concerning. Based on reports, she did not answer questions that were asked in the English language by her teachers, and she did not respond to or acknowledge questions that were asked in Chinese by her peers. At social gatherings for ESL or class events, she often sat alone and mumbled to herself. During lunch and dinner in the school cafeteria, her classmates noted that she prepared several plates of food and readied a table for two or three people; however, she ate alone nearly every day and had conversations with herself. Her Chinese classmates distanced themselves from her, and her Chinese roommate requested a room change so as not to be with her. Upon further investigation

by an ESL Program administrator about this student's status, it was discovered that she was granted admission to the university ESL program, even though she had zero English language skills and did not have college experience. This particular student failed the same level of ESL for three consecutive terms before she was placed on probation. After failing two more consecutive terms, the student was removed from the university. In total, she spent over a year at the university before she was sent home. Again, this is an extreme case, but it illustrates the severity of the situation and calls attention to the concern about students like this with undiagnosed mental and behavioral needs.

Limited research has been conducted that focuses on language (L2) development and its correlation to people with diagnosed mental and behavioral disorders. Even less available is scholarship that discusses the problems with L2 development in combination with the factors of undiagnosed disorders and foreign culture immersion. However, given the professional experience of Jackson (2006) in working with second language learners in an environment pressuring employees to adopt a cultural personality to complete the second language proficiency, he is a leading voice in the field of cultural identity among second language learners. Interestingly, one leading article focusing on these points identifies the growing problem in the L2 classroom setting of a Business Processing Outsourcer (BPO) environment in Asia. The article explains that BPOs expect their call center employees to become "Americanized" by reducing their foreign accent, adopting an English name, and establishing an interest in American hobbies and pastimes (Jackson, 2006, p. 14). As a result of this pressure to become acculturated to the Western way, experts in the BPO industry report growing numbers of call center employees with psychological problems who explain that they feel like they are in a state of limbo. Further, the first stage of L2 acquisition "[...] involves the loss of all perspective,

frame of reference, and inner voice,” meaning that L2 learners go through stages of loss and must create an alter ego (Jackson, 2006, p. 15). This means that these employees—much like L2 learners in America—have one personality that represents their native language, culture, and lifestyle, and a second personality that reflects their L2, L2 culture, and L2 lifestyle. Even though emotionally and mentally balanced people have little difficulty navigating between the two personalities, this is not as easily done by people who have mental or emotional weaknesses. Age also plays a factor in troubled navigation between the “L1-L2 personalities,” as the highest number of reported cases of people with mental and behavioral disorders within the BPO industry are entry-level employees aged 18-27 who are characterized as being young and impressionable like immigrant children. The age demographics of these BPO call center employees directly matches the standard age of students at American colleges and universities. To illustrate the significance of this correlation between the age of employees and the age of students, Dr. Liam Brown, an expert in the field of psychological and personality development, reported concern about the average age of university students, noting that the requirement to adopt and enact a second personality during that formative time frame might actually have long-term psychological influence (Jackson, 2006, pp. 14-15). This is especially true for individuals who have undiagnosed mental or behavioral disorders.

Without a doubt, as ESL Programs and IEPs throughout American colleges and universities continue to attract international students with limited-to-no English language ability, this concern will continue to grow and become more pressing. Clearly, dealing with students who have undiagnosed mental and behavioral disorders has proven to complicate the role of the ESL instructor, and while there is no perfect solution or ideal model to remedy the situation, there is certainly an urgency to addressing and resolving the trend. If American university IEPs

continue to grant admission to all international students without regard to their second language ability, then support services must be made available to these students so that they can be treated in their native language. If such arrangements are deemed too expensive by the host university of the IEP, then screening methods must be implemented so as to identify incoming international students who display symptoms similar to mental or behavioral disorders. In both situations, the approach to remedy the situation is not ideal, but at least it is a step in the right direction to maintain the overall quality of education for second language learners without complicating the role of the instructor in the ESL classroom and putting the other students at risk.

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The Multicultural Classroom: Activities to Incorporate Student Culture into the Classroom

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Abstract

Creating a sense of a shared global community by focusing on the diversity found in an ESL classroom can enhance students' motivation and lead to better language skills through increased interaction. We explore McKay (2003)'s concept of incorporating students' unique experiences and culture in daily lesson plans to cultivate more meaningful interaction among students. This article outlines ways to utilize students' prior knowledge and expertise regarding culture in overall planning and specific activities. These activities include: both short and long-term lesson plans and creative in-class activities which are designed to include student expertise in every facet of the classroom. Furthermore, this article provides examples of how these activities can be modified to fit into any skill level or classroom. Calling on student expertise in cultural knowledge, as these activities do, not only creates a sense of shared knowledge and community but they also enhance student motivation and involve them in our increasingly globalized world.

Intensive English Programs and elementary and secondary schools in the United States have been experiencing a steady increase in the diversity of their student population over the past few decades. For the ESL teacher, this has problematized the notion of what is expected as well as what is possible to teach students about culture. The frequently overlooked value in this situation is that increasing numbers of classrooms can benefit from a population of diverse students who bring new ideas, experiences, and perspectives to the language classroom. This diversity can only enhance students' learning development due to the creative avenue it opens up for teachers and students to explore. Creating a sense of a shared global community by focusing on the diversity found within an ESL classroom can enhance student motivation and lead to better language skills through increased interaction. Directing a class based on its own diversity and multicultural make-up not only creates a sense of a community and enhances motivation, but it also mitigates social anxiety and breaks down uncomfortable barriers which, at times, keep students from fully participating and engaging in the language (Huang & Brown, 2009). McKay's (2003) concept of incorporating students' unique experiences and culture in daily lesson plans to cultivate more meaningful interaction among students is a rising model in both ESL and foreign language instruction. This article outlines theories and concepts of linguists and ESL instructors alike who have promoted the creation of classrooms that are based upon the multiple cultures of each student in the class. This article also presents innovative activities and techniques designed to motivate students to participate in class by sharing knowledge of their own and other cultures. Calling on students' expertise and cultural knowledge can be applied to activities, assignments, and projects to enhance student motivation and involve them in our increasingly globalized world.

Models of Culture

An important first step in implementing lessons and developing a classroom milieu based on the cultures present in the room is to consider what a classroom without such explicit focus on student cultural contributions looks like. An Acculturation Model of classroom culture instruction as described by Kubota (2012) describes exactly this scenario. In this model, students are seen as having a cultural deficit--they lack knowledge of the target culture, and any knowledge and skills from their culture interfere with their ability to learn the new target culture. The teacher is then the source of target culture knowledge and therefore responsible for disseminating all the information about culture to each student; in short, teachers must fill students in on what they do not know because students are perceived as not having the right kind of cultural knowledge. A second model on the opposite end of the spectrum, the Pluralist Model, requires students to respect and give voice to all cultures present in the classroom (Kubota, 2012). This means that even the varied rhetorical structures from each country represented in the classroom must be accepted. This model too fails to adequately address all of the aspects necessary in an ESL classroom as teachers are tasked with preparing students to perform in an environment that is different from their own. Placing the students' culture on a pedestal and never pointing out how the target culture differs from that of the student means students will not understand the expectations placed on them in a mainstream or university classroom. The space in which target culture and student culture interact ideally is glimpsed by McKay (2003) who states that the purpose of English instruction is not a process of helping students understand a language and culture, but one of giving students the ability to express their own ideas through English. Like McKay, Gottlieb, Handelsman, and Knapp (2008) recognized that a balance was needed between the target culture and the culture represented by a particular student(s). With the

adoption of both the Acculturation Model and the Pluralist Model, students will learn to balance the existing notions of traditions and values of their cultures, while also understanding and gaining knowledge of not only the culture they are immersed in, but also the cultures of their classmates (Gottlieb, Handelsman, & Knapp, 2008). McKay, like Gottlieb, Handelsman, and Knapp, points to the necessity of exposing students to a multitude of cultural practices alongside the target culture of the area in which they study when one's aim is improvement of students' abilities in intercultural communication (McKay, 2003). This approach sees students adding new cultural tools to their pre-existing repertoire, not replacing ideas or ways of interaction deemed to be different from the target culture. The approach laid out in the following activities seeks to offer teachers a practical method of valuing each student's culture as part of a larger whole so that all students benefit from the collected wisdom and diversity of the class and understand how the aspects of the target culture they have and will encounter fits into this broader perspective.

Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is derived from an L2 speaker's inherent interest in the class/activity/subject matter in which he or she is involved and from which he or she can feel satisfaction (Noels, 2001). A source of such motivation put forth by Noels is the integration of and focus on the various aspects of the differing cultural lineages and legacies of individual students due to this approach's cultivation of a sense of student ownership of the classroom and in turn one's own interlanguage development. As a teacher, instructing targeted English skills using the content built around the different cultures represented by the students in the classroom can be challenging; however, those students are the experts of their culture, so letting them construct the class not only aids the teacher, but it also adds to the ownership the students have of the class itself. Targeted skills can be taught through content centered on the different cultures

represented in a classroom, but the skills can also be practiced and produced by utilizing activities, discussions, and presentations centered on those different cultures. The following section of this article will introduce and describe some of these discussions, activities, and presentations that can be utilized in a classroom focused on the cultures of the classroom. The authors of this article not only encourage the use of these tasks and techniques, but also welcome the creativeness of their fellow colleagues to experiment and create their own activities based on the ones outlined in this article.

Practical Applications

Integrating culture into the classroom is not only important in intermediate or advanced classes nor is it effective in only listening and speaking class. Rather, culture can be and should be incorporated into every classroom no matter the proficiency level or targeted skill. However, creating innovative, motivate, and engaging activities at every level for every skill can be challenging; thus the next section of the article is devoted to providing practical and functional techniques, tasks, and activities which can be modified to fit any class or any level depending on the classroom and instructor.

Spelling classes are vital to students in any type of English program, but especially in programs whose curriculum is centered on an academic purpose. One simple way to integrate culture into a spelling class is focusing on words that the English language has borrowed from other languages, countries, and cultures. Introducing the history and meaning behind the use and spelling of words provides students with a deeper understanding of the word and can help the students make inferences about words they may not know how to spell. Teaching the origin of a word and its spelling is not only important in order to deduce the spelling of an unknown word, it is also important to the students whose first language may have influenced English. When

students are aware of the affects their first language may have had on English, it motivates them to attend and participate in class. Centering units on borrowed English words can be an effective tool in lowering students' affective filters and stimulating class engagement.

Instructors may find it difficult to incorporate culture into a writing or grammar class due to its focus on targeted skills. However, grammar and writing classes may be the subjects in which integrating culture becomes the teacher's most useful tool. An activity which the authors of this article have entitled "Globe Trotting" can be suited to any proficiency level and targeted grammar skill. The instructor needs a globe or a ball-like globe and participative students. The objective of this game is to cultivate student production through turn-taking. The instructor will throw the globe ball to a student or have the student approach the globe and spin it. The student will then stop the ball or the globe with his or her hand and choose a country which his or her hand is touching. The student will then have to produce the targeted grammar skill by using an aspect of that country's culture. If the student knows nothing about the country, the teacher may assist, or if another student knows something about that country or is from that country, he or she can help the student with the globe. After correct production of the grammar the student will throw the ball to another student or chose the next participate. For example, in the study of adjective clauses, a student may spin the globe landing on France. The student then produces an adjective clause sentence using an aspect of French culture the student is familiar with such as "Paris, which is known as the city of love, is the capital of France." This activity can be modified for any level and for any skill and works well as a review game or basic warm-up at the beginning of class.

Culturally centered writing prompts are another effective and motivating tool that can be used to focus on writing techniques and practice targeted grammar skills. Writing prompts can

direct students to either write about a broad or specific aspect of their own country or another country that may be represented by a classmate, thus compelling students to interact with each other to gain information from each other in order to complete the objective of the writing prompt. For example, a writing prompt may ask students to write about nature and conservation in a country different from theirs, but which is represented by a classmate. Thus, the students must interact, ask questions, and negotiate meaning with fellow students in order to fulfill the directions of the writing prompt. Of course, these prompts can be adjusted according to the targeted skill and class level. For instance, a low intermediate grammar class focusing on the past tense may be prompted to provide a brief description of an important event in a classmate's country's history. The text which the students produce in writing class can then be used across skills. It can serve as the platform for a reading exercise, as a presentation assignment in speaking class, or as the focus of a topic during class discussion and thereby incorporate all levels and types of language skills using a prompt written by the student about something they feel passionate about and have vested interest in.

The next few topics this article focuses on are presentations and in-class discussions. Instructors understand the benefits of in-class presentations. Whether they are individual or group presentations, they offer students experience in public communication, provide organization/preparation practice, and allow students the opportunity for self-correction of language errors through the process of repetition and practice. Discussions are also a useful classroom tool as they aid in decreasing student affective filters, increasing motivation, and enhancing opportunities for students to use their language skills to express themselves and form their own ideas. To further cultivate globalized, motivated, and engaged students, these presentations and discussions can/should be geared towards the diverse cultures represented in

the classroom. Many teachers probably already do this, but an important aspect of these presentations and discussions is assuring the students that they are the experts of their culture and therefore they are the teachers and leaders of their own discussion and presentation. This provides students with a sense of ownership over their own classroom and language development.

Creating presentations which foster the diverse cultures presented in a classroom may include presentations about a country's popular food and drink, famous locations or people, and fashion or history, but these presentations may also include aspects of the culture which are unfamiliar to the rest of the world such as heroes/heroines of the country, informal/formal social customs, a daily routine of a University student in the country, and social/political problems. The list can go on, but the importance of this exercise is to allow the cultural identity and expertise of the students to be illustrated through their discussions, presentations, and ideas. For advanced speaking and listening classes an effective research and collaboration exercise will involve partners from different countries researching their classmates' country/culture and presenting about each other's. This not only allows the students to become experts on their classmates' cultures, but may also aid in developing a class identity which furthers language development. The authors of this article encourage instructors to be creative with discussion questions and presentation prompts and choose questions and prompts which suite the unique dynamic of each particular class they teach.

The Cultural Observation project activity is another effective tool in fostering student interaction. In this activity classmates have the chance to share ideologies and beliefs with each other. These projects can range from simple group discussions to presentations or even semester long projects. The idea behind this particular activity is to allow students to learn about the

underlying aspects of their classmate's culture. Instead of focusing on the food, clothing, or traditional dances, students focus on each other's cultures in terms of the important characteristics valued among family members, friends, or teachers and students, thus experience those cultural aspects often not generalized or well known to those outside of the culture. An example of a classroom discussion focused on these cultural observations may involve asking the students about each other's family or friends and typical customs and characteristics that are valued among family members and friends. For example, students can specifically inquire as to how families treat each other: is the man the head of the household or the women? Is it common for women to work? How many children do families usually have and perhaps why? These questions not only teach the students about their fellow classmates, but also allows the students whose culture is being focused on in the discussions to reflect on aspects of their culture they perhaps have never thought about. Presentations can also be an effective tool to share these cultural aspects not often examined. For example, an instructor may ask the students to give a presentation about their country's symbol and their national animal, having them explain why those symbols represent their country and reflect the values and characteristics that country regards as essential to their culture. These presentations can be modified to integrate student engagement by instructing students to interview each other and conduct research about a student's culture which is different from their own. This allows students to become cultural experts on a culture different from their own. Once again, like many of the activities discussed throughout this article, these activities and tasks can be modified according to age, level, and the cultural representation of the classroom.

The last activity this article will discuss does not require a diverse classroom nor does it require students to reflect on their own culture; however, it focuses on global knowledge and an

understanding of cultures in general. To do the next activity the instructor will need a map of the world with clocks representing different time zones in different parts of the world. The instructor can choose to pass out a handout with this map or simply project it towards the front of class. The students will then be separately assigned a different region of the world, which they are not to share with their classmates. The students then give each other vague descriptions of their location by using cultural aspects of that region such as the popular religion, politics, food, or clothing. If the students fail to guess the region from the cultural description, the students can then say the time that is on the clock representing their region, and the students can then deduce where the student is located. This game uses negotiation skills and inference strategies as well as evaluates the students' knowledge of the world. An example of the activity is as follows: a student is assigned Egypt. That student then describes cultural aspects that he or she knows about Egypt such as, "I am going to the Pyramids today, and afterwards I will visit the city of the dead." The other students can then guess what region the student may be from given that short description. This activity works well for intermediate level students and advanced-beginners; however, it can be modified to incorporate more complicated grammar skills and more specific regions. Instructors may even decide to put limitations on what the students can ask or what information they can provide to their partner. For instance, a more advanced class may be required to talk only in the third person and talk in the future and conditional tenses. The instructor may also set limitations on which grammar structures can be used. For example, an instructor may require the students to use adjective clauses to describe their region (i.e. "I am in a place which has the tallest mountain on earth."), thus requiring students to not only call on their schemata of the regions they are given, but also utilize grammar skills that have been targeted previously in the class. These activities can be used in various classes such as speaking, listening,

writing, and even reading. Once again, like most of the activities described throughout this article, this task can be modified and suited according to the particular class, level, and targeted skill.

Although the entirety of this article has discussed techniques and classroom applications which incorporate ESL student culture into the classroom, the authors of this article want to stress that this multicultural focus should not exclude the instructor's culture or the American culture. The importance of incorporating all cultures, the instructor's included, is an important facet when creating a classroom built upon understanding, community, and globalized engagement. Instructors should find the balance between incorporating each student's unique background and culture, as well as their own, in order to create a classroom which fosters global engagement and is built around an all-inclusive community.

Conclusion

Utilizing the students' linguistic and cultural prior knowledge to build the content of a classroom is not only an effective tool for classroom instruction, but it also produces culturally competent students whose second language has been developed through the integration of language skills with critical thinking and methods for fostering understanding among diverse members of a single learning or working community. Finding a balance between representing the cultures of the classroom and focusing on necessary language features adds a particularly challenging element for the teacher, but one which, if achieved, can reap endless benefits for both the teacher and the students. As McKay (2003) suggests, perhaps English as a foreign language should be regarded instead as English as an international language. Therefore, in today's increasingly globalized world the English speaking culture cannot be defined or limited to one culture in particular. Rather the English speaking culture is a mix of cultures, and

consequently the English speaking classroom should be centered around the English speaking culture as we find it today, a wonderfully blended group of cultures who share ideas, customs, and beliefs to connect our world and connect each other through a common language that is English.

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Grammar Teaching for an Academic Writing Course

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Abstract

The increasing number of international students studying in English-speaking countries is not uncommon. Most of them consistently need some kind of language assistance particularly in academic writing which has been a challenge for L2 students. In order to effectively develop L2 students' ability to produce acceptable academic written texts, the teaching of grammar is a requisite. Yet, it has also been a challenge for writing teachers to determine which grammar items to teach since it is impossible to cover all grammar items with little class time. This paper identifies what grammar items are worth the time teaching in class and what items may not be necessarily discussed in class due to the class time constraint. With the understanding of this issue, hopefully writing teachers can effectively prioritize their teaching materials accordingly in order to maximize students' learning in the classroom.

It is a fact that the enrollment of international students is skyrocketing in the United States (Flannery, 2009; Sadowski, 2008). Approximately 886,052 international students attended U.S. colleges and universities during the 2013-2014 academic year, an increase of 8 percent from a year earlier (IIE, 2014). The diversity of these students' backgrounds--linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and socioeconomic--is unprecedented (Schwartz, 2004; Shin & Bruno, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, 2003; Wurr, 2004). The increasing number of English language learners studying in colleges and universities in the United States brings to light serious issues concerning academic writing and what it takes to participate in an academic discourse community in America. The English language proficiency of international students becomes a major concern for many universities in the United States. Most higher education instructors feel that students in general, particularly international college students, have difficulty becoming skillful writers (Adamson, 1993; Hartman & Tarone, 1999). The writing skills of second language students and the conventions of second language (L2) texts have been capturing increased attention in the academy (Hinkel, 2002). Although much time, effort, attention, and resources has been dedicated to teaching L2 academic writing and its conventions (Hinkel, 2002), it is evident that international students' texts are quite different from that of native English speakers (Silva, 1994). The teaching of L2 text features, discourse, and writing has become a vital focus and challenge in many colleges and universities in the U.S. (Hinkel, 2002).

Academic writing is also a challenge for second language students at the linguistic level. Second language students are frequently plagued by problems of grammar in context and semantics. Hinkel (2002) claims that grammatical accuracy has a strong influence on the assessment of second language student writing, and that students often lack the practice and do

not apply the declarative knowledge gained in their grammar classes to their writing. Poor writing skills are often considered as a leading factor in the failure of international students to meet institutional literacy expectations (Zhu, 2004).

It has often been not only a challenge for L2 students in academic writing, but also a challenge for many college-writing teachers to teach L2 writing since academic writing covers so many areas but with limited class time. Therefore, careful planning is critical. Without it, teachers of L2 students may either mainly focus on grammar but neglect literacy instruction (Truscott, 1996) or concentrate too much on global issues at the expense of language issues, hoping that L2 students' accuracy problems will be solved by themselves (Ferris, 1995). The challenge of teaching L2 writing for teachers of L2 students is to strike the balance between language features and content-related features in academic texts (Ferris, 2009; Paltridge et al, 2009). Therefore, teachers may need to raise students' awareness of the importance of both. For the discussion of this paper, the instruction of grammar will be the main focus.

Grammatical features are frequently covered in academic writing such as tenses, clauses, parts of speech, and nominalizations (Paltridge et al, 2009). Teachers can spend a portion of the class on grammatical items by having students look at their own texts for any lexical variety (Ferris, 2009), or teachers can use authentic academic texts for students to examine what grammatical items could be found and evaluate which tenses are more commonly used in academic texts (Paltridge et al, 2009). The goal of teaching grammar constructions is to help L2 students develop fluency in academic writing (Hinkel, 2004). However, a substantial and advanced L2 proficiency in lexical and grammatical items may not be achieved without an explicit, focused, and consistent instruction (Ellis, 2002; Richards, 2002). A number of studies have also pointed out that without the development of grammar

skills required in academic writing, L2 students could not construct an acceptable academic text (Nation, 2001; Paltridge, 2001; Read, 2000). In light of this, explicit and focused instruction of grammar in class is important and necessary because explicit instruction can help students attain greater language gains than an implicit instruction approach (Norris & Ortega, 2000), and constant grammar instruction helps L2 students develop language awareness and improves the quality of L2 students' work (Fotos, 2002; Norris & Ortega, 2001; Muranoi, 2000).

Besides classroom pedagogy, insufficient class time is also a major issue for many teachers. Since limited class time is inevitable, prioritizing grammar structures to teach is important and time-efficient in the design of a writing course. There are too many grammatical items for instructors to cover in class with limited instruction time. Careful planning and deciding what grammar structure could be taught and might not be taught are fundamental in order to maximize L2 students' language learning. According to Hinkel (2013), here are some of the grammar structures that should be taught in a classroom:

Sentence construction

Fragments and run-on sentences are common types of language errors found in L2 students' writing. These errors can easily create unclear and confusing meanings in L2 students' written texts; as a result, the true meaning intended to be conveyed will be lost. Teachers need to find a better way to teach students and help them avoid making these types of errors. This type of sentence construction is of high instructional importance in a classroom. When students can grasp the concept of that, they will be able to identify their own sentence construction errors and feel exceedingly confident in developing more complex sentence structures in their own writing.

Verb tenses

Most grammar textbooks cover all the tenses, yet it may not be practical for teachers to try to teach all the tenses listed in the textbooks, particularly due to class time constraints. Therefore, it might be better for grammar or writing teachers to use discretion as to which tenses should be taught and which should not. Reid (2000) notes that present, present perfect, and past tenses are commonly found in academic writing conventions. Therefore, it is important to discuss these tenses in class. On the contrary, future perfect and future perfect progressive tenses; past perfect and past perfect progressive tenses (e.g. will have finished, will have been finishing; had finished, and had been finishing) might not be the best use of limited class time since they are rarely found in academic writing, and hence they are of low instructional importance (Biber et al, 1999).

Passive voice

Some writing teachers might suggest that it is better to use active voice than passive voice in writing. However, the use of the passive voice is very common in academic writing, and its function allows students to avoid subjectivity and directness required in traditional academic writing conventions, particularly in sciences and engineering discourses (Hinkel, 2013). Nevertheless, the use of the passive voice in some particular tenses and aspects are less frequently used in academic writing conventions such as passive in future perfect (e.g. will have been finished), and passive in future progressive and past perfect progressive (e.g. will be being finished; had been being finished). These passive voices are of low instructional importance.

Reporting verbs and noun clauses

These reporting verbs such as *states*, *indicates*, *suggests*, *notes*, and noun clause

construction are prevalent in academic prose. They are commonly used and helpful in paraphrasing and citing information. For example, *the author states that ...* is the type of structure that is necessary to be taught to students because they are important and commonly used in academic writing regardless of discipline. It is worthwhile teaching L2 writers to be familiar with reporting verbs and noun clauses.

Nominalizations

These constructions are common in academic prose (Swales & Feak, 2012) but so complex that they require academic L2 writers extensive time and practice to feel comfortable with these types of constructions in their academic writing. For example, *when I denied his accusations, I impressed the jury*. This is a common sentence structure found in L2 students' written texts. However, the structure of this sentence could probably be shifted to nominalizations or noun phrases in many academic texts. For example, *my denial of his accusations impressed the jury*. By understanding these types of constructions, L2 writers will not only find it easier to understand the complex constructions of academic written texts as they read, but also be able to apply these common types of constructions in their academic writing as well.

A final note

Hinkel (2011) stated that even highly educated graduated L2 writers studying in English-speaking countries “have a severely limited lexical and syntactic repertoire, compared to their native-speaking peers” (p. 530). She continued to note that without an avenue to more advanced language features, L2 undergraduate students would end up creating simple texts that depend on conversational language features. L2 students should be instructed in all these skills and apply them not only in their language or literacy courses but also in their academic settings.

As teachers of L2 writing, it is impossible to teach all the grammar items listed in a grammar textbook due to insufficient class time. Therefore, being able to identify what types of grammar constructions are common in an academic written text and are necessarily to be taught in a classroom is important. Without the understanding and the awareness of various grammar constructions, teachers may not fully help L2 writers develop the language proficiency and fluency required in the convention of an academic written text.

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Benefits of an English Language Fellowship

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Abstract

As the United States moves towards a more global society, teachers need to have a variety of experiences in their repertoire. There are many different international exchange programs including student teaching, practicum experiences, and fellowships. Participating in an exchange program offers teachers benefits and enhances their careers. Teachers experience a growth in professional development through discovery of different education systems and collaboration with others. Teachers benefit from personal growth in self-efficacy, interpersonal skills, and self-discovery. Finally, teachers experience increased global awareness as they learn more about another culture and perceptions of their own culture.

There are many programs that offer international experience for students and teachers of the English language from various university programs including student teaching, practicum experiences, and fellowships. The State Department offers several exchange programs in conjunction with Georgetown University including an English Language Fellowship (ELF). The ELF program places teachers around the world for ten months to teach classes, coordinate workshops, and work with teachers in prestigious academic institutions (United States Department of State, n.d.). More than 1,000 Fellows have been placed around the world to promote the English language. Although the program is designed for Fellows to be teaching others, there are many more benefits from this cultural experience in the areas of professional growth, personal growth, and global awareness.

Professional Growth

Even though most teachers are required to pursue some sort of professional growth, teaching in another country provides a unique opportunity to see similarities and differences in educational systems through classroom management techniques, teacher characteristics, teaching strategies, and learner-centered versus teacher-centered classrooms (Doppen & An, 2014; Lee, 2011). Teachers in another country may use different classroom management techniques that are best for the cultural norms of the school and society. Teachers may also have different characteristics such as a friendly and helpful persona or a strict and stern one, which work best in their teaching environment. Teachers on both sides (local and American) can learn from each other with teacher strategies. The American teacher may have brought new ideas or lesson plans that the local teacher may be willing to try once trust is established. Finally, teachers benefit from learning about the orientation of the classroom. For example, in Uganda, the lessons are often teacher-centered because the classes are very large. It is difficult to coordinate cooperative

grouping with 70 or 80 students. This gives the American teacher an opportunity to be creative and suggest ways in which the local teacher may try an activity that is learner-centered. This allows teachers to evaluate their own beliefs and ideas about education, especially if the system is different from their own educational system. Teachers also collaborate with and observe local teachers in order to deepen their own understanding of education (Chan & Parr, 2012; Lee, 2011; Olmedo & Harbon, 2010). This benefit is especially important for student teachers who are trying to solidify their own philosophies of education. Another benefit that teachers would utilize during an exchange experience is the skills of decision-making and flexibility, specifically in developing countries (Doppen & An, 2014; Olmedo & Harbon, 2010). The infrastructure in developing countries is a challenge so teachers must have a plan and several backup plans to continue on with the lesson whenever there is no electricity, no technology, an uncomfortable temperature, a lack of supplies, too many students, etc. Teaching overseas, no matter the duration, will also increase marketability and add to a teacher's qualifications. In fact, administrators view teachers with international experience as being more qualified than teachers without international experience (Doppen & An, 2014; Kissock & Richardson, 2010). Because these teachers have an intercultural competence and cross-cultural awareness, they are revered for their experiences and often receive more job offers than before their international experience (Lee, 2011).

Personal Growth

Exchange programs also foster many areas of personal growth. Participants in these programs boast an increase in self-efficacy and self-confidence (Chan & Parr, 2012; Doppen & An, 2014; Kissock & Richardson, 2010; Lee 2011). After experiencing these international programs, teachers often feel more comfortable advocating for themselves in their more familiar,

home context. They also benefit from an appreciation of diverse ideas and collaboration with others in a new context. The success of teaching in a foreign context depends on a person's ability to cultivate relationships with strong, interpersonal skills (Chan & Parr, 2012; Doppen & An, 2014). In the ELF program, most teachers need to be autonomous since the closest support may be many hours or several countries away. They need to be able to communicate effectively despite cultural and language barriers in order to have a successful experience. Teachers also go through a period of self-discovery as they cope with abnormal conditions and lack of infrastructure. Some programs even allow dependents to accompany the participant in the exchange where families can grow and learn together in a new country (Kukk, 2009). Family members often have time to connect with local families and become a part of the community in which the teacher is working.

Global Awareness

Lastly, with an increased expectation of all teachers becoming globally aware, an international exchange program increases global awareness (Doppen & An, 2014; Kissock & Richardson, 2010; Lee, 2011; Olmedo & Harbon, 2010; Walters, Green, Wang, Walters, 2011). Teachers in these situations are able to see the United States from the outside looking in through another perspective. They are also able to benefit from listening to others' opinions about their home country. Teachers in an exchange program are the representative of their home country and are judged as such. They help local people to understand American life and challenge stereotypes of Americans seen from other perspectives. Teachers also learn and appreciate the way their culture is perceived by others. In fact, one of the participants in a student teacher experience in Scotland said,

The easiest way to learn more about your own country is to live in another one. I expected to learn more about Scotland. I did not expect to learn about America. But when you see the way we are presented in international news, hear what kids say about the country, listen to debates among friends about how your country is governed, it is truly eye opening. (Doppen & Ann, 2014, p. 69)

They begin to question their own identity and patriotism because others are asking them about the realities of life in America. Global awareness also increases empathy towards others, open-mindedness, and resistance to stereotyping (Chan & Parr, 2012). As teachers begin to form personal connections and relationship to people in another country (as opposed to watching people from that country in the news), their empathy grows and they are more open to accepting the cultural norms of that society (Doppen, 2010). These teachers also become global citizens through their connections with schools, teachers, and communities. They learn about the culture in which they are teaching and cultural norms that are acceptable.

There are many benefits of participating in some form of an international exchange program whether it is for a few weeks or several months. Teachers experience professional and personal growth as well as an increase in global awareness during these experiences. I had the opportunity to experience a fellowship at a university in Mukono, Uganda. During my ten-month term, I taught classes in curriculum, writing, and education; conducted workshops around the country for teachers; planned, collaborated, and promoted a large national conference; wrote articles for the university newspaper; revised a university textbook; and conducted numerous training sessions with university staff. In order to become a fellow, teachers must have a Master's degree in TESOL (or related field of English), must be a U.S. citizen, have teaching experience, and some recommended skills. It is paid work with benefits, including insurance.

Personally, I had enough money from my fellowship salary and benefits to travel around Africa and still have money left over for the summer. Some districts have a policy about taking a sabbatical or year of foreign teaching leave. The majority of fellowships are September through June. My school district not only allowed me to take a year off (without pay, of course), but they also allowed me to gain a year of experience on the salary scale and hire my replacement for the year. This allowed for a seamless transition between fellowship and school year. Although it was a long process to participate in the ELF program, the benefits I received during my fellowship have changed my life forever.

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Practical Approaches and Strategies for Teaching Stress-Timed English Rhythm

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Abstract

This article presents four practical approaches and then numerous specific and ordered strategies to strengthen the instruction of stress-timed English rhythm patterns with English Language Learners. Evidence from a textbook survey demonstrates how current pronunciation materials often overgeneralize English rhythm patterns, making sentences sound like iambic pentameter or nursery rhymes. Based in approaches that can inform multiple aspects of oral production, the reader is guided through practical strategies that can be used at any level to teach the stress-timed variety of English

The rhythm of the native languages of many English Language Learners (ELLs) is **syllable-timed**. In a syllable-timed language, each individual syllable (regardless of stress) receives approximately the same amount of time. Most native speakers of English in “inner circle” countries (the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, and Australia; see Kachru (1990) for his model of World Englishes) use a **stress-timed** rhythm. David Crystal (2003) credited Kenneth Pike (1945) with this rhythmic distinction and while acknowledging criticism of this dichotomous description he concluded that “most people would accept Pike’s judgment that English – for at least 500 years – has been essentially stress-based, with just occasional use of syllable-based speech” (pp. 169-170). In a stress-timed language, such as inner-circle varieties of English, the rhythm is determined more by the syllables bearing stress than by the number of syllables in the utterance. Due to this fundamental difference, ELLs often struggle with the stress-timed patterns of English resulting in their speech sounding choppy, too fast, or having a flat intonation. In extended discourse, this can cause serious problems in comprehension because the listener may be uncertain which words and syllables to listen for. For this reason, instructors preparing ELLs to teach in classrooms, interact as business professionals, present at conferences, and work in other fields requiring strong oral communication skills often need to focus on teaching English rhythm as a discrete skill.

While numerous published materials on English pronunciation address the issue of English’s stress-timed rhythm, most of these materials present inaccurate models. Example phrases and sentences often present one repetitive rhythm pattern that sounds “sing-songy.” Many textbooks will go as far as to use nursery rhymes or other poetic examples that force English into a STRONG-weak-STRONG-weak-STRONG pattern. These overgeneralizations do

not prepare ELLs for the realities of English rhythm, which often includes consecutive stresses and patterns that are far from regular alternations between stressed and unstressed syllables.

This article first presents four approaches to describe the stress-timed variety of English in a manner that will benefit learners. This will be followed by the presentation of pedagogical strategies that can be used when teaching these rhythm patterns. I include some references to published materials (mainly pronunciation textbooks) on teaching rhythm to alert the English Language Teaching (ELT) professional to potential problems in existing pedagogical resources. The examples in this article come from materials developed for advanced learners of English, but these approaches are applicable to all levels and the strategies may be adapted for multiple teaching contexts.

Practical Approaches to Teaching English Stress-Timed Rhythm

The specific strategies for teaching English stress-timed rhythm presented later in this article were developed from some more general approaches. These approaches have implications for teaching other elements of English pronunciation beyond phrase rhythm, most notably word stress and noun construction stress. It is important for instructional strategies and materials to fit a more unified set of approaches so that instruction on one aspect of teaching English pronunciation does not contradict other aspects of instruction. This section will present four more general approaches to teaching English rhythm upon which the strategies in the following section are based.

The first approach to teaching stress-timed English rhythm concerns teaching only two levels of stress (strong and weak) at the word level. Most English dictionaries mark three levels of stress: primary stresses, secondary stresses, and unstressed syllables. When longer English words are uttered in isolation, both primary and secondary stresses often alternate with the

unstressed syllables to create a stress-timed rhythm as in “con-**GRA**-tu-**LA**-tions” or “**MO**-nu-MEN-tal.” Once these multisyllabic words are placed into a phrase, though, it is only the primary stresses that will play a role in phrase rhythm: “he **SAID** con-gra-tu-**LA**-tions” or “it was mo-nu-MEN-tal.”

This is where a greater understanding of other elements of English pronunciation is necessary. In addition to word stress and the alternations between stressed and unstressed syllables at the word level, there is an additional level of stress at the phrase level, which may be referred to as the “phrase stress,” the “primary phrase stress,” the “focus,” or the “phrase focus syllable.” Erik Fudge (1984) in his book *English Word-Stress* noted that “the physical properties which signal stress in English do not enable hearers, even trained phoneticians, to distinguish consistently more than three degrees of stress” (p. 135). If the focus syllable at the phrase level is the highest level of stress, then this only leaves two remaining levels of stress to teach for the purposes of word stress and phrase rhythm.

This has strong implications for teaching word stress and the stress on noun constructions, such as compound nouns (see Kaiser (2014) for a more detailed discussion of stress on compound nouns and other noun units). ELLs should be aware that secondary stresses at the word and noun-unit level can affect vowel quality because these syllables will have full vowels as opposed to reduced vowels. For the purposes of phrase rhythm, however, secondary word stress is not audibly distinguishable from unstressed syllables. Therefore, secondary word stress should not be taught explicitly (because in conversational English secondary stresses are not distinguishable from unstressed syllables). Table 1 shows the relationship between traditional approaches to stress and this new approach.

Table 1

Comparison of Traditional Approaches and the New Approach

<u>Traditional Approaches</u>	<u>New Approach</u>
Phrase stress	Focus syllable
Primary (word) stress	Strong syllables
Secondary (word) stress	Weak syllables
Unstressed (or reduced) syllables	

The second approach to teaching stress-timed rhythm specifically addresses cases when there are consecutive stresses in a phrase. This approach advocates for presenting what I call the “lettered” and the “numbered” patterns of rhythm, and then teaching how to mix these patterns. This second approach correlates the **syllable-timed rhythm** of most languages in the world to a **lettered rhythm pattern**, which sounds similar to saying the alphabet quickly: ABCDEFG. By contrast, the **numbered rhythm pattern** correlates to the fixed regular **stress-timed pattern** presented in many English pronunciation texts, which sounds similar to saying 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 with alternating stresses. This approach advocates *explicitly* teaching both rhythm patterns and *also* teaching how to mix these patterns.

Most English pronunciation materials do not explicitly address the distinction between syllable-timed rhythm and stressed-timed rhythm. Beverly Lujan (2008) does contrast syllable-timed patterns from stress-timed patterns in her book *The American Accent Guide* (pp. 4.1-4.3). Linda Grant (2010) also contrasts an “all cars” rhythm pattern with a “cars with motorcycles and busses” pattern (p. 85). Of fifteen texts reviewed for this article (Beisbier, 1994; Beisbier, 1995; Cameron, 2012; Cook, 2000; Dale & Poms, 2005; Gilbert, 2012; Grant, 2010; Hahn & Dickerson, 1999; Hewings & Goldstein, 1998; Lane, 2005; Lujan, 2008; Miller, 2007; Mosjin,

2009; Orion, 2012; Reed & Michaud, 2005), only Grant presents an explicit model to contrast stress-timed rhythm with the three-levels of stress found in English. Because ELLs typically transfer the stress-timed patterns of their native language into their English speech, it is important to present an explicit description of how stress patterns differ between their language and English.

Regardless whether a text presents an explicit comparison of styles, the critical issue is that traditional English pronunciation materials most often force English rhythm into a strict iambic pentameter, paying no attention to where stresses in the phrase fall. In other words, a phrase such as “The tall girl was standing by the short boy” would be forced into the pattern “the TALL [pause] GIRL was STANDIng by the SHORT [pause] BOY.” The English language frequently produces phrases with consecutive stresses, which do not fit a regular iambic pentameter of alternating stresses. For this reason, it is essential to teach *both* syllable-timed and stress-timed patterns *and* how to mix these patterns so that the previous example will sound like “the TALL GIRL was STANDIng by the SHORT BOY” (without intrusive pauses to force the sentence into an unnaturally “regular” rhythm). Later in this article, I will present pedagogical strategies to work on combining both patterns to match the *dynamic* pattern of English rhythm.

The third approach for teaching rhythm styles in English is to use **physicalizations** to help make strong syllables stronger than weak syllables. Many English pronunciation instructors use various techniques or tools in the classroom to help learners visualize or “feel” aspects of the English language. Judy Gilbert (1978) has long been a proponent of “gadgets” such as kazoos and rubber bands as part of English pronunciation work (p. 7). Because ELLs often have trouble producing stronger syllables to contrast with the weaker syllables, physicalizations (such as Gilbert’s rubber bands) can help by matching strong physical actions with stresses to make them

relatively louder, longer, and higher in pitch. Later in this article I will present a series of physicalization strategies that can assist with practicing rhythm patterns in English.

The fourth and final approach in teaching English rhythm patterns is to teach both focused (bottom-up) prediction skills and more global (top-down) skills. Teaching prediction skills to accurately identify strong syllables in content words and strong function words helps analytical students by giving them a logical framework. Teaching more global prediction skills helps promote developing intuition in English and may be a more practical skill for some learners. The combination of both skills will appeal to a wider range of learners' abilities and learning styles. Table 2 contrasts these two skills.

Table 2

Contrasting Focused (Bottom-Up) Prediction Skills with More Global (Top-Down) Skills

<u>Bottom-Up Skills</u>	<u>Top-Down Skills</u>
More focused	More practical
Promote accuracy	Promote fluency
Help with error correction	Help with oral fluency

In summary, the four practical approaches I have presented for teaching English rhythm in the ESL or EFL classroom are as follows: 1) at the word level, only teach two levels of stress (strong and weak); 2) teach both the lettered (ABC) and numbered (1 & 2 & 3) patterns of rhythm, and teach mixing them; 3) use physicalizations to help make strong syllables stronger than weak syllables; and 4) teach rhythm using both focused (bottom-up) prediction skills and more global (top-down) skills. In the next section, I will suggest specific strategies for teaching

English rhythm patterns and skills to ELLs based in these approaches. When appropriate, I will compare and contrast these strategies to those found in published pronunciation materials.

Practical Strategies for Teaching English Stress-Timed Rhythm

In the previous section I discussed four approaches to teaching English rhythm patterns to ELLs. In this section, I present a systematic way to teach these patterns to learners through a series of practical strategies. The strategies are organized into four areas that build upon each other: 1) word-level stress, 2) phrase rhythm patterns, 3) focused and global skills, and 4) body training.

The first area teaches strategies focused on strong and weak syllables at the word level. Before learners can work with phrase-level rhythm, they must first be proficient in the basics of word stress. Word stress placement helps determine where strong syllables occur in a longer phrase. This first step requires explicit instruction in English word stress followed by ample practice.

1.1 Identify the number of syllables per word

Because unstressed syllables are more difficult to hear, ELLs often have trouble counting the number of syllables in a word. Provide learners with a list of words appropriate for their level and discipline and ask them to count the number of syllables.

1.2. Mark strong syllables with an accent mark

Next, focus the learners' attention on marking the strong syllable of each word. The same words used in 1.1 can be used for this. Unfortunately, there is no simple system of rules for word stress in English and many systems overgeneralize or include too many exceptions. (For perhaps the most extensive system see Hahn and Dickerson's (1999) *Speechcraft*.)

1.3. Use physicalizations on the strong syllables

Identifying strong syllables on multi-syllabic words (prediction) is not enough because ELLs often have trouble making the stressed syllable of a word stronger than the other syllables in the word (production). The following three physicalization exercises can help with this: 1) **air pointer** – take a pen or pencil and push it in the air (like you are popping a balloon) when uttering the strong syllable; 2) **hand raising** – with your hand in front of you (palm facing down) raise your hand when uttering the strong syllable; after the strong syllable, lower it for any remaining syllables (this will help with raising the pitch on stresses); and 3) **rubber band** – using a real or imaginary rubber band, stretch a rubber band out when uttering the strong syllable (this will help with lengthening the stressed syllables).

2.1. Demonstrate the difference between syllable-timed and stress-timed rhythm

After teaching the basics of word stress (a foundation for phrase stress), these strong syllables can be put in the patterns of phrases and sentences. Because more ELLs come from first languages with a syllable-timed rhythm, it is important to contrast the syllable-timed rhythms of their languages with the stress-timed rhythm of American English. Figure 1 shows a contrast of these two styles.

Figure 1

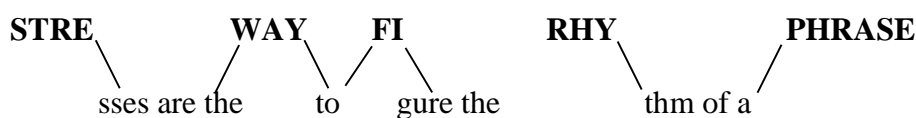
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K
¿Dón	de	es	tá	la	ca	sa	de	tu	ma	dre?
1	&	2	&	3	&	4	&	5		

STREsses are the **WAY** to **FI**gure the **RHY**thm of a **PHRASE**.

2.2. Analyze how the numbered (stress-timed) rhythm style works

Once learners can recognize the difference between these two rhythm patterns, attention should turn to an analysis of the numbered or stress-timed rhythm: 1) strong syllables tend to occur at regular, rhythmic beats; 2) weak syllables are squeezed together on the off beats; and 3) strong syllables should be longer, louder, and on a higher pitch than the weak syllables. Figure 2 visually represents these three features.

Figure 2



2.3. Practice the numbered rhythm style with physicalizations

As done in 1.3, physicalizations can help learners acquire the stress-timed patterns found in the numbered rhythm-style sentences. The following five techniques can all be used to find the model that works best for learners. These physicalizations can be done with the sentence in Figure 3.

1. **Air pointer** – Take a pen or pencil and push it in the air (like you are popping a balloon) every time you make a strong syllable.
2. **Dot drawing** – With a marker, tap it on a blank sheet of paper every time you make a strong syllable; then count the dots to see if you have the correct number of dots.
3. **Hand raising** – With your hand in front of you (palm facing down) raise your hand every time you make a strong syllable (concentration on raising the pitch on stressed syllables).

4. **Rubber band** – using a real or imaginary rubber band, stretch a rubber band out every time you make a strong syllable (concentrating on lengthening stressed syllables).
5. **Wheel spinning** – make a circle with your hand as you do the exercise; your hand should come closer to your chest on each stress and then spin around away from you during weak syllables (concentrating on a regular flow, rather than choppy rhythm).

Figure 3

1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5

STREsses are the **WAY** to **FIG**ure the **RHY**thm of a **PHRASE**.

2.4. Show examples of the lettered rhythm style and combined style in English

While rhythm in English is stressed timed as opposed to syllable timed, most pronunciation textbooks and materials present English rhythm as if all sentences had a rhythmic iambic pentameter or sounded like poetry. This is further perpetuated by the use of jazz chants and nursery rhythms in textbooks. Learners need to be aware of and practice examples where two or more stresses appear together as shown in Figure 4. The air pointer physicalizations described in 2.3 work best with these.

Figure 4

A B C D E F G

MARK BOUGHT THAT BIG OLD BLUE COUCH.

A B C D & 1 & 2 & A B C

PAT'S NOT SURE WHY she has to **GO** to the **STORE** with **THAT DUMB DOG**.

2.5. Practice different rhythm-style combinations

One of the best ways to practice various styles in sentences is to use build-up exercises where you begin with shorter sentences that become longer and change the rhythm styles used as in Figure 5. Many pronunciation textbooks already use build-up exercises, but they force every sentence into the numbered STRONG-weak-STRONG pattern (see Grant, 2010, pp. 86, 87, & 94; Hahn & Dickerson, 1999, p. 45; Lane, 2005, p. 156; Lujan, 2008, p. 4.2; Miller, 2007, p. 78; Orion, 2012, p. 44). Even Celce-Murcia, Brinton, and Goodwin (2010) advocate teaching this overgeneralized rhythm pattern noting that “the time needed to say each sentence is roughly equivalent” with “Cats chase mice” taking the same time as “The cats have been chasing the mice” (p. 210).

Figure 5

- 1) **A**
FRED **B** LIKES **C** & WALKing.
- 2) **A**
FRED **B** LIKES **C** WALKing & **1** in the PARK.
- 3) **1** & FRED and his **A** DOG **B** LIKE **C** WALKing & **1** in the PARK.
- 4) **1** & FRED and his **A** BIG **B** DOG **C** LIKE **D** WALKing & **1** in the PARK.
- 5) **1** & FRED and his **A** BIG **B** BROWN **C** DOG **D** LIKE **E** WALKing & **1** in the PARK.
- 6) **1** & FRED and his **A** BIG **B** BROWN **C** DOG **D** LIKE **E** WALKing & **1** in the PARK & **2** & in the MORNING

2.6. Teach how to break longer sentences into smaller message units

Because many sentences are longer, it is also important to teach learners how to break these down into shorter message units as shown in Figure 6. This should be followed by practice with longer texts. Marking the message units and rhythm patterns can help learners with this.

Figure 6

- A B & A B & 1 & A B C D & 1
 1. Last night, my big brother and I went to see that new movie with aliens.
- A B || & A B & || 1 & A B C D & 1
 2. Last night, || my big brother and I || went to see that new movie with aliens.
- A B || & A B & 1 & 2 || A B C & 1
 3. Last night, || my big brother and I went to see || that new movie with aliens.

3.1. Identify words that take strong syllables

After learners have had an opportunity to practice these rhythm patterns, they need to learn to predict where the stresses go themselves. Several pronunciation textbooks include explicit instruction on how to predict which words to stress, though their list of word categories may be incomplete (Beisbier, 1994; Cameron, 2012; Cook, 2000; Dale & Poms, 2005; Gilbert, 2012; Hewings & Goldstein, 1998; Mosjin, 2009; Orion, 2012; Reed & Michaud, 2005). What learners need to know is that content words tend to be stressed in sentences along with the strong function words, while all other words tend to be unstressed as shown in Table 3 (see also Dickerson (2004, 2011) for a discussion of the distinction between “loud” and “soft” function words).

Table 3

Content Words <i>Stressed on Strong Syllables</i>	Strong Function Words <i>Stressed on Strong Syllables</i>	Weak Function Words <i>Unstressed (Weak)</i>
Nouns Verbs Adjective Adverbs	Question Words Negatives Demonstratives Reflexive Pronouns Possessive Pronouns	Articles Prepositions (Other) Pronouns Conjunctions Auxiliary Verbs The verb: <i>to be</i>

3.2. Mark strong and weak syllables correctly

Learners should then be given time to work with practice sentences. After predicting which words are strong, they should work on marking where the stress marks go (review 1.2). Marking unstressed syllables can be helpful for some learners as it will help them recognize the numbered and lettered patterns based on the composition of strong and weak syllables. See the example in Figure 7, and note that two-word compound nouns take one stress for rhythm purposes (see Kaiser (2014) for more on the stress of compound nouns and other noun constructions).

Figure 7

A 1 & 2 & 3 &
 Név [cómputĕr mōnītōrs] wĕre órĕĕred fŏr thĕ [óffice stăff.] Correct stress placement

A 1 & 2 & 3 & 4 & 5
 *Név cómpŭtĕr mōnītōrs wĕre órĕĕred fŏr thĕ óffice stăff. Incorrect stress placement

3.3. Teach global (top-down) skills of rhythm prediction: Eye training tactics

In addition to the bottom-up skills covered in 3.1, learners can benefit from global (top-down) skills for predicting the stresses in a phrase. In more advanced texts, word length can be a good indicator of which words are content words and therefore will receive stress. Learners can train their eyes to focus on these longer words and place stresses there while weakening the shorter function words (see the first sentence in Figure 8). As the second sentence in Figure 8 demonstrates, this tactic does not always work, especially with less technical texts. Another tactic is to help the learner recognize and weaken the function words that do not generally carry stress (see Table 4).

Figure 8

These skills are on a grammatical, pragmatic, and functional level.
 ***** .. . ***** .. ***** *****

The man put an ad in the paper to sell his old red car.
 ... *** .. ** .. ***** .. ***** ... *****

Table 4

a	off	Him	when*	do*
an	under	His	who*	does*
the	about	Her	where*	did*
some	I	Our	which*	am
of	you	their	can*	is
to	he	And	will*	are
in	she	But	could	was
on	it	because	would	were
for	we	If	should	been
from	they	So	have*	
with	my	then	has*	
out	your	that*	had*	

* These words could be strong depending on their grammatical function in the sentence.

3.4. Put the eye training tactics into practice

For advanced and adult learners, ask students to find texts from their discipline or texts they use for work. For less advanced learners, the instructor can select appropriate texts. These texts should be read aloud concentrating on using the tactics described above. As a follow up, ask learners to summarize the text in their own words to make the connection between reading aloud and speaking without a script.

4.1. Demonstrate how native speakers use gestures when speaking

Finally, rhythm practice should focus on speaking without the use of a prepared script through **body training** with gestures. To assist learners with this, show video clips of proficient speakers (e.g., TED Talks), or assign students to observe proficient English speakers teaching, presenting, or being interviewed. Then students should observe that gestures often accompany speech in English. Students should also observe that these gestures often mark where the speaker is placing his or her strong syllables.

4.2. Use gestures with rhythm

First review the physicalization techniques in 2.5 and then help learners correlate these movements to making gestures while speaking. Then practice making a number of different gestures as observed in 4.1. You may use practice sentences from early portions of the lesson and have students recite them using gestures in place of the physicalizations.

4.3. Put gestures and rhythm into free speech

To put all of these skills into practice, assign conversation partners with topics or assign oral presentations. Students should strive to use gestures along with their strong syllables (it is okay if they exaggerate these at first). Allow students to watch each other and provide feedback, or you may video record learners so they can watch themselves.

Conclusion

Teaching the patterns of English rhythm can be one of the more difficult tasks when working with ELLs, but it is one feature of pronunciation that can have the strongest impact on intelligibility. If we teach one standard, regular pattern, however, we risk our learners' rhythm sounding overly lyric or poetic. Because most ESL and EFL instructors must rely on published textbooks to help them in teaching pronunciation, instructors need to be aware of the

oversimplification of rhythm patterns in these materials. This article presents some practical approaches and specific strategies that may be used to supplement lessons on rhythm to meet varying learning styles and break away from static stress-timed nursery rhymes in pronunciation lessons.

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Methods for Offering Written Corrective Feedback

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Abstract

Second language writing teachers face numerous challenges when providing feedback on student writing. There may be so many problems in the writing that is almost impossible for them to focus on or they may constantly seek a better method of giving feedback on student written errors. This paper attempts to provide novice second language writing teachers with some key considerations in providing written feedback. To begin with, the author reviews reasons supporting the practice of giving feedback on student written errors. Next, he presents a typology of written errors and discusses different ways of offering corrective feedback. Finally, he summarizes key considerations in giving feedback on student written errors in a table.

Second language writing is a notoriously difficult skill for students to master, and teaching second language writing can be said to be one of the most challenging tasks second language practitioners have to undertake. It is challenging because the amount of time for class preparation and paper grading is overwhelmingly more than classroom instruction time. Further, even more challenging is how to best assist students in their endeavor to learn to write in another language. One question teachers may ask themselves is whether providing corrective feedback helps improve student writing. Some notable authors (Krashen, 1984; Trustcott, 1996) held that providing error correction is not helpful. In a forty-three-page article, Trustcott (op. cit.) argued for the abandonment of grammar correction in writing classes. Ferris (1999, 2011), however, maintained that grammar correction is necessary for second language writing acquisition and instruction. She offered the following grounds for giving students grammatical error correction. First, feedback enables students to improve their text. Second, feedback helps students gain accuracy over time. Third, both teachers and their students see value in giving and receiving error correction feedback. Most importantly, in the real world writing accurately is of great importance. In addition, reviewing research into written corrective feedback, Bitchener (2012) noted that written corrective feedback can help learners have better control over targeted structures.

Trustcott (1996) may be right when noting that too many red marks on students' papers can be quite discouraging for students, but it may also be argued that no error correction feedback at all and a low grade on the paper can be equally discouraging. Most language learners seem to expect some kind of feedback on their writing to at least know what the problems are and preferably how to improve them. Students' expectations alone deserve writing teachers' effort to help them compose accurately and clearly in another language. The next logical

question to ask is what some efficacious approaches to responding to student written errors are. How to best respond to student errors plagues both neophyte language classroom practitioners and seasoned second language writing professionals. The issue of treatment of written errors has been widely discussed (Robb, Ross, & Shortreed, 1986; Truscott, 1996; Lee, 1997; Ferris & Robert, 2001; Chandler, 2003; Ferris, 2006, 2011; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Sheen, 2007; Sachs & Polio, 2007; Guenette, 2007; Ellis, 2009; Evans, Hartshorn, McCollum, & Wolfersberger, 2010). One of the most recent, useful, and comprehensive publications for language teachers on this topic is Ferris (2011) who devoted 219 pages of her book to addressing fundamental issues in the treatment of error in second language student writing. Due to space limit, this paper can only provide the reader with a brief overview of the issue of treating errors in second language student writing, giving teachers some more insights into best practices in doing so.

Types of Errors in Student Writing

Written errors are of many types. In order to easily assist learners in improving their writing, researchers and textbook authors have classified them into the following general categories: global, local, treatable, and untreatable errors.

Global or Local Errors

One dichotomy is global versus local errors (Burt & Kiparsky, 1972; Bates, Lane, & Lange, 1993; Hendrickson, 1978). Whereas global errors refer to those errors that impede comprehensibility of the text, local errors are employed to describe errors that do not impede comprehensibility of the text. The distinction between global and local errors is not fixed and easily described, as one type of error may be a global error in one text but it may also be a local error in another text. The key interpretation depends exclusively on the teacher or reader of the text.

Treatable or Untreatable Errors

Another dichotomy is treatable and untreatable errors (Ferris, 2011). Whereas treatable errors, according to Ferris, are rule-governed structures such as subject and verb agreement, verb tenses, or capitalization, untreatable errors are “idiosyncratic features” such as word choice or unidiomatic sentence structures. To deal with treatable errors, teachers can conduct a mini lesson to address each issue identified. Nonetheless, it is harder to enable students to effectively correct untreatable errors. Encouraging students to be omnivorous readers is one way to improve word choice and use of sentence structures.

Methods of Giving Written Corrective Feedback

In terms of typology of corrective feedback, Ellis (2009) and Ferris (2011) identified two common dichotomies: direct or indirect feedback and focused or unfocused feedback.

Direct or Indirect Feedback

When teachers offer direct written feedback, they provide the corrected version of the erroneous language forms. When teachers give indirect feedback, errors are pointed out, but no corrected versions of the erroneous linguistic forms are offered. Ways of indicating errors vary. As Ferris (2011) noted, some popular methods for pointing out erroneous linguistic forms are highlighting the errors using different coded colors (e.g., one color for each common type of error) or simply underlining them. The degree of directness may differ tremendously. While one teacher may just underline the specific problematic words or phrases, another may indicate the sentences in which errors exist and students have to find the errors and correct them. Also, some teachers may give a brief note on what is wrong and how to correct the errors, but other teachers may require students to work on their own or seek further assistance from writing centers or peers to improve the erroneous language forms. Moreover, some teachers may prefer to use metalanguage (e.g.,

subject, verb, object, article, and preposition) in their feedback. Some others may only use the short forms of such terms such as art (article) and s-v (subject and verb agreement).

Focused or Unfocused Feedback

As second language teachers are well aware that one piece of writing by a language learner may include so many errors that it may not be possible to correct them in one time, it is important that teachers consider whether to focus on some target structures or correct all errors in a particular piece of student writing. If teachers offer focused feedback, they focus on providing feedback on some specific structures their students have just learned. When teachers provide unfocused feedback, they give feedback on any errors they see in student writing.

Key Considerations in Providing Written Corrective Feedback

Stylistic Differences versus Errors

One of the most important considerations for any writing teacher is to determine if a certain paragraph, sentence, phrase, or word needs to be corrected or improved. Ferris (2011) cautioned second language writing teachers against correcting too much, especially when the structures or language being corrected is not erroneous. What teachers need to bear in mind, according to Ferris, is to be cautious of stylistic differences and erroneous linguistic constructions. If student writing is correct but may not be written the way the teacher would write, correction may not be necessary, as there may be differences in composing styles. There may be a fine line between what needs correction and what does not, but it is relatively easy for a teacher to determine if student language is accurate and clear. If the language is correct and the meaning is clear, there is no need for correction. Most advanced learners of a language can easily produce correct language, but the meaning may not be clear to the teacher as a reader. In such a

case, it is necessary for students to improve the structures to communicate their meaning more effectively.

Error Types versus Feedback Types

Although written error correction is one of the most widely studied issues in second language writing, it is one of the least understood (Polio, 2012). Brown (2012) indicated that when classroom teachers turn to research for their many questions, it can provide them with few concrete answers about the effectiveness of written corrective feedback. In addition, there is no recipe for corrective feedback (Ellis, 2009; Guenette, 2007) as what may work for one student in one setting may not for another student in another setting (Hyland & Hyland, 2006). Available research on the effectiveness of error treatment seems to be inconclusive. For example, research on the effectiveness of direct versus indirect error feedback shows conflicting results (Ferris, 2006). Ferris also noted that although the majority of researchers think that focused error feedback is better than unfocused error feedback, unfocused feedback in certain cases may be more effective. Learning to write is a daunting task for native speakers of any particular language as it takes an extensive amount of time and practice to write well. For learners of English as an additional language, learning to write in English is even harder and more time consuming, so it is understandable that it is difficult to determine if one method of providing feedback is more beneficial than another.

Second language researchers once tried to find an effective instructional method, and after much research, no satisfying results have been obtained as each method and instructional approach may be effective in certain contexts with certain teachers and learners. The many different teaching approaches seem to have provided second language educators with multiple choices to enrich their classroom experience and maximize student learning by utilizing a wide

range of activities derived from different teaching methods. In second language writing, each teacher may feel more comfortable with a specific way of giving written feedback due to their beliefs about how languages are learned and taught, and their students, likewise, have their own preferred way of being assisted in learning to write. Teachers need to know how students prefer to be corrected in order to cater to their needs. Also, if teachers are convinced that a particular way of providing error correction is effective for their learners, they may need to tell their students the reasons for such conviction. If teachers try to diversify the way to teach to better serve learners' varied learning styles, they may find it reasonable to try varying the methods of giving written error feedback based on individual students' preferences and language proficiency because some approaches to error treatment may seem more effective than others depending on the level of students' language proficiency. Beginning learners of a second language, for instance, may benefit more from direct correction feedback when teachers provide the correct language forms for them to revise their erroneous language forms because learners' knowledge of the language may be too limited to benefit from any indirect feedback. Bitchener (2012), in fact, postulated that indirect feedback may be enough for more proficient language learners and that direct feedback might be more beneficial for less proficient language learners due to their limited linguistic repertoire. Additionally, it has been suggested that focused feedback may be more effective for learners with a lower level of proficiency because it may be easier for learners to process the feedback provided (Bitchener, 2012).

Depending on teachers' knowledge of their students' preferences, language proficiency, learning goals, and situations, they can employ the approach(es) that may work best for their students in their specific contexts. Classroom teachers have to make multiple decisions while grading student writing. Some questions might be:

- Is this a global error or is it a local error?
- Is this a treatable error or an untreatable error?
- Should I provide direct feedback or indirect feedback?
- Should I focus on just some errors or should I give feedback for any errors I see?
- What kind of feedback does this student prefer to receive?
- Can this student improve his/her writing based on my feedback?

Table 1: Key considerations in offering written error feedback

	Global errors	Local errors	Treatable errors	Untreatable errors	Student level of language proficiency and preferences
Direct feedback					
Indirect feedback					
Focused feedback					
Unfocused feedback					

Table 1 may be of use to teachers as it shows them some key considerations in providing written feedback. The table summarizes key questions second language writing teachers may need to ask themselves. The table may serve as a guide for writing teachers to effectively provide written feedback. Keeping error types, feedback types, and student language proficiency level as well as their preferred method of receiving corrective written feedback in mind may maximize the effectiveness of written feedback given.

Concluding Remarks

Regardless of how many papers a teacher can read and comment on, students need to write copiously and regularly if they wish to make progress in their writing ability. Just as athletes have to practice thousands of hours intensively to perform well, second language writers

are no exception. The more they write, the better they can write. Written feedback may be a facilitating factor in the success of student writing, but it has never been considered the only factor contributing to learners' success in writing. If teachers cannot help their students to write better in a short period of time, they can at least make them write more so they can improve on their own. As suggested by Sokolik (2003), one of the principles of teaching writing is providing students with many opportunities to write.

For a second language writing class to be successful, both parties, the teacher and learners, need to actively participate in the learning and teaching process by fulfilling their responsibilities. Learners have to produce writing so that the teacher can help. The teacher needs to offer students with optimal learning conditions by scaffolding the writing process with doable steps to enable students to produce plenty of written language. When students have managed to create written language, they then are in need of constructive feedback to write more accurately and clearly. In order for second language writing classroom practitioners to give their students efficacious feedback on their written language, they may find it useful to be cognizant of key considerations in providing written error feedback. Knowing students' types of errors and their level of language proficiency as well as their preferences in receiving feedback can help the teacher to utilize effective methods for offering feedback. There is clearly no best feedback type, but it is beneficial for the teacher to be aware of the range of options from which to choose.

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Instituting and Maintaining Learners' Motivation: From Research to Practice

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Abstract

Whereas teachers' responsibilities with accountability, class sizes, and workload increase, their benefits, income, and job security seem to decrease. Motivating and keeping classroom teachers motivated to successfully and happily perform their instructional duties can be challenging. One feasible approach to motivating teachers is offering them strategies to be big motivators. When students are motivated to learn, teachers can feel the joy of seeing their students succeed, which can be one way to inspire, enthuse, and energize teachers in their careers. The literature on motivation in language learning is extensive. It is, therefore, unrealistic to cover all major aspects of motivation in language learning. This paper focuses on aspects that are of interest to second language educators. Specifically, I review the concept of motivation and discuss some strategies for instituting and nurturing second language students' motivation in light of the scholarly literature.

Motivation has traditionally been divided into integrative and instrumental or intrinsic and extrinsic. The relationship between these two dichotomies, as Bailey (1986, cited in Brown, 2007, p. 175) provided, can be found in Table 1.

Table 1: Types of motivation (Bailey, 1986, cited in Brown, 2007, p. 175)

	Intrinsic	Extrinsic
Integrative	L2 learner wishes to integrate with the L2 culture (e.g., for immigration or marriage)	Someone else wishes the L2 learner to know the L2 for integrative reasons (e.g., Japanese parents send kids to Japanese language school)
Instrumental	L2 learner wishes to achieve goals utilizing L2 (e.g., for a career)	External power wants L2 learner to learn L2 (e.g., corporation sends Japanese businessman to U.S. for language training)

How to motivate students to learn and maintain their motivation during their studies and how to best inspire and enthuse students with learning may be questions which classroom teachers constantly ask themselves before, during, and after classes. Dörnyei (2007) stated that the motivating factors of learning contexts can be bolstered by the language teacher. Additionally, Lamb (2007) suggested that teachers should motivate learners to survive the rocky passage of school.

Motivation in second language acquisition has been rigorously discussed by a plethora of authors such as Gardner and Lambert (1972), Williams and Burden (1997), Dörnyei (1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2001a, 2005), Dörnyei and Otto (1998), Dörnyei and Skehan (2003), Dörnyei and Schmidt (2001), Spolsky (2000), and Ushioda and Dörnyei (2012), to name but a few. Although motivation has been considered an elusive concept that evades “any simple explanation or

prescription” (Wlodkowski, 2011, p. 14), attempts have been made to define it. Covington (1998, p. 1) stated that “motivation, like the concept of gravity, is easier to describe (in terms of its outward, observable effects) than it is to define. Of course, this has not stopped people from trying it.” Dörnyei (2001, p. 1), in fact, started his book by claiming that “there is no such thing as ‘motivation’.” As the author further explained, what he actually meant is that motivation is a vague, abstract term that is commonly used to refer to a wide variety of meanings. According to Dörnyei, motivation involves both direction (the choice to do something) and intensity (the amount of effort and persistence with it). Therefore, as this scholar added, motivation can provide the reasons people elect to do something, how hard they will pursue it, and how long they will sustain such an activity. Motivation is also defined as “a desire to learn plus a willingness to expend effort in doing so” (McGroarty, 1996, p. 30). In terms of the motivation to learn a language, Cooper and Seckbach (1977) argued that when knowing a language is associated with material benefits, and when people have the opportunity to study it, they are likely to do so. Intuitively, if being able to use a language is an advantage for a person socially, professionally, or economically, he or she will be motivated to learn the language.

Motivation is seen from different perspectives. From a behaviorist perspective, motivation is viewed as the product of external forces through reinforcement. A cognitive perspective sees motivation as a choice human beings make within their control. In a constructivist perspective, motivation is based upon the premise that each person is motivated in a different way (Williams & Burden, 1997).

Motivation, therefore, can be both internal drive and external forces which could be influenced from a variety of sources. Due to its complicated, abstract, and multifaceted nature, a definition of motivation is elusive and strategies for enhancing motivation are notoriously

difficult to document as they vary depending on individuals and contexts. Dörnyei (2001b) postulated that from a classroom teacher's point of view the most pressing question about motivation is not what motivation is but how motivation can be increased.

Strategies for Instituting and Nurturing Sustained Motivation

As learners are of various types and learning contexts are indefinite, no set of strategies may work for all learners and teaching contexts. Just as there are many viable ways to effectively teach students, there are also as many methods to bolster students' motivation. The strategies that follow may be selectively utilized with many different student populations.

Setting Clear and Attainable Objectives

Tarone and Swierzbins (2009, p. 3) noted that "language learning motivation is the intensity and persistence of a learner's desire to succeed." It is, however, hard to determine when a learner has achieved success in learning a language. Therefore, it is quite difficult for learners to know if they do well enough in learning a language to maintain and foster their motivation. Learners may keep wondering where they are in their endeavor to learn English and their uncertainty can be a hindrance or a source of amotivation. In order to encourage learners to constantly maintain a high level of motivation in learning a new language, teachers need to develop clear and achievable objectives for each class meeting, lesson, and semester. If students feel that they have made measurable progress in learning, they may be motivated enough to continue to work hard to reach a higher level of accomplishment as set out by a language program or teachers. Setting specific and achievable goals is one doable step to sustaining as well as fostering language learners' motivation. As found by Svinicki (1999), one of the motivational strategies is setting "challenging but achievable goals." In addition, clear course objectives have been found to have a strong influence on students' motivation to study out of

class (Fukuda & Yoshida, 2013). It is often difficult to know what to focus on when students learn on their own outside of class, so clear course objectives can serve a guide to help them achieve the goals of the course.

Practicing Clear Speaking and Supportive Conversation

Another approach to motivating language learners is by speaking and explaining language points clearly to ensure that learners can understand what has been communicated to them. The more learners can understand what is taught in the classroom the better they feel about their learning progress. This is especially true for adult learners learning a language in a context in which the target language is not spoken. Due to a lack of listening input, their listening skills are often weak. Not being able to understand much of what is said by the teacher is another possible cause of amotivation. When learners have to complete a task that they are interested in and understand clearly how to complete, they are likely to perform it well. As a result, their overall motivation may be enhanced. A single activity or a series of well-designed activities that can bolster learners' desire to learn and sustain that desire can have an enduring effect on their motivation to master the language in the long run. Additionally, having supportive conversations with learners, talking to them at the rate and level that they can understand, is also a way to motivate them as they feel that their ability to communicate in the target language is effective enough to convey a certain amount of information. In a diary study describing her own informal self-study of Japanese while teaching in Japan, Casanave (2012) noted that she was so discouraged when she failed to understand conversations in Japanese with her tutor that she quit lessons with the tutor. However, she regained her pleasure and motivation to learn the language when she talked about the topics she was interested in and familiar with to two Japanese students who spoke at the level she could easily understand.

Providing Detailed and Constructive Feedback

The crucial role of feedback has been reiterated in suggestions provided by Williams and Burden (1997), Svinicki (1999), and Dörnyei (2001). Moreover, feedback given to learners can also be one method of helping students to maintain or even increase their motivation. If feedback is clear and constructive enough, learners may feel that they are able to meet their teachers' expectations. On the other hand, when feedback is not specific enough or is destructive, learners' motivation may decrease drastically. The following example can better illustrate the importance of feedback. There was a doctoral student who was highly motivated to learn and conduct research in her area of studies. In one of her doctoral courses, she had to carry out an empirical study to investigate one topic of her choice in second language acquisition. She presented her professor with a research proposal and received the professor's feedback that suggested she do more than her initial intention for the proposed study. She was nervous as she did not possess the skills needed to investigate the suggested section added by the professor. Nonetheless, because the professor's feedback was accompanied with detailed and structured instructions on how to go about investigating her suggestions, the student was confident enough to do as was suggested, and she finally completed the research with success beyond her imagination feeling much more motivated to continue her arduous process of completing her doctorate. The same highly motivated student took another course with a professor who required her to complete a synthesis of research in one specific area of using technology in language teaching. She submitted her work to the professor and received feedback that was so destructive that she considered dropping out of her doctoral program. She had been in the doctoral program for more than one year, had completed all her courses with the highest caliber, and had been regarded as one of the brightest students in the program. However, one professor's feedback was so powerful that she was in

great stress and reconsidered pursuing her goal of obtaining a doctoral degree. Feedback, therefore, can be a motivating factor that encourages lifelong learning or love for learning a certain subject, but it can also be a reason that essentially influences one's decision whether to follow a certain career path or to drastically change it. In fact, Dörnyei (2009) suggested that three main sources of motivation in language learning are as follows: (a) the learner seeing him or herself as an effective language learner, (b) the pressure emanating from the learner's environment, and (c) positive learning experiences. The last of the three is certainly within the ability of considerate, conscientious, and dedicated classroom educators.

Making Good First Impressions

Furthermore, in daily life, first impressions are often a key factor that influences the way people think of others. In educational contexts, it was also found that college students who had a positive experience during their first day of class performed better during the semester and reported to be more motivated during the class than the students who had experienced a negative first day of class (Wilson & Wilson, 2007). The implications for language teachers may be that if language teachers can provide a motivating and positive learning experience on the first day of class, chances are their students may have more motivation to be fully engaged and active in attaining the learning goals of the course throughout the semester. Additionally, it was also found that in college courses in which college instructors began their course with a reciprocal interview activity aimed at establishing expectations and a supportive environment, the students reported "greater clarity regarding their course responsibilities, more support from their instructor, and greater course satisfaction on both official evaluations and experimenter-administered measures" (Hermann, Foster, & Hardin, 2010, p. 79). Apparently, if students know what is expected of them, they feel assured that they will be able to satisfactorily fulfill their responsibilities. Thus,

the task for the teacher is to ensure that their students know exactly what they need to do as unambiguously as possible.

Having High Expectations of Students

Teachers' expectations can also be one factor that makes students achieve more than they typically can. Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968) have found that those students who are thought of as smart by their teachers perform significantly better than they usually do. If language students are seen as able individuals with varying needs and learning approaches and if they are given the support they need, they will be successful language learners. The key is the suitable scaffolding support that teachers provide students during their course of studies. Each student requires a different type of instruction that works best for them, but the teacher is unable to teach students individually in the class. The fine line for classroom teachers is to provide instruction at a level that is challenging enough for weak students to understand but at the same time not too easy so as to keep abler students interested in the lesson. As students in the same class level may have uneven language proficiency, which is common in most language classrooms, teachers' expectations for each student have to be different to be realistic. The main point is each student is expected and assisted to perform beyond their current level of language proficiency. To that end, classroom teachers need to be cognizant of principles and strategies for teaching students with varying proficiency levels in the same class.

Incorporating Technology in Language Learning Activities

In a recent study, Freiermuth and Huang (2012) ascertained that online chatting is a motivating factor for students to communicate in the target language. Indeed, technology can be an extremely important factor to motivate students to learn the target language if used effectively and appropriately. For example, if students are shown how to use Photo Story to create a short

story about themselves, their families, or someone they like, they can be empowered by the ability to communicate a short message by simply reading the scripts to accompany a short video clip or a series of photos with the teacher's assistance and guidance. In this case, students will be motivated to learn the target language for both communication and technology use. They can then feel that the use of what they are learning is practical and tangible, which may give them more instrumental motivation to learn the language.

Making Students Feel Comfortable

Krashen (1987) put forward a set of five hypotheses about second language acquisition, one of which is the Affective Filter hypothesis, which “implies that our pedagogical goals should not only include supplying comprehensible input, but also creating a situation that encourages a low filter” (p. 32). He stated that:

Those whose attitudes are not optimal for second language acquisition will not only tend to seek less input, but they will also have a high or strong Affective Filter - even if they understand the message, the input will not reach that part of the brain responsible for language acquisition, or the language acquisition device. Those with attitudes more conducive to second language acquisition will not only seek and obtain more input, they will also have a lower or weaker filter. They will be more open to the input, and it will strike “deeper” (Stevick, 1976). (p. 31)

Moreover, Krashen (op. cit.) added that effective language teachers are those “who can provide input and make it comprehensible in a low anxiety situation” (32). It may be understood that comfort plays an important role in language learning especially in instructed contexts. Comfort is considered a key factor in second language learning because when learners are worried, nervous, or feel insecure, they may not learn much. However, when they are

comfortable, they may learn much more. Instead of forcing learners to work in pairs or groups, teachers may need to consider allowing students to work in whatever ways they are comfortable as long as the learning objectives are achieved. For instance, if the goal is to ask learners to identify the supporting details of a main idea of a reading passage, students should be given a choice whether to discuss with their friends or to work on their own. Nonetheless, when the goal is to have students engage in a conversation with other students to improve their speaking or discussion skills, students should certainly not be allowed to work alone, but they should be given a choice to work with the students they like or feel comfortable with. Fukuda and Yoshida (2013) ascertained that one of the factors motivating students to learn out of class time is creating non-threatening classroom environments. Thus, classroom teachers may need to make students feel secure, confident, and comfortable in the classroom to ensure that optimal learning takes place.

Creating Positive Student-Teacher Rapport

Finally, good student-teacher rapport has also been reported as reason for students to attend class, show greater attentiveness in class, study, contact their teacher and engage in academic behaviors (Buskist & Saville, 2004; Benson, Cohen, & Buskist, 2005). Dörnyei (2001), in effect, pointed out that teachers should develop a personal relationship with their students. In order to create favorable learning conditions, good rapport seems to be an essential component in the search for ways to motivate students. Although rapport must be built by both teachers and students, teachers are likely to be in a position to set the tone and atmosphere of the class. If they can manage to create good rapport with their students, the teaching and learning endeavor may be more favorably perceived by both parties. Teachers interested in measuring teacher-student rapport may find the scale developed by Wilson, Ryan, and Pugh (2010) a useful

measure. Moreover, Fukuda and Yoshida (2013) found that strong student-teacher relationship was one of the factors that make students study out of class. The participants in their study reported that “the teacher remembering every student’s face and name helped them foster a strong student-teacher relationship, which in turn, enhanced their attitude towards out of class study time” (p. 38).

Armed with knowledge of empirical research findings, their implications, and strategies for motivating language learners, classroom teachers can decide for themselves what strategies to use with their students for successful ultimate learning outcomes.

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Exploring Language through the Worlds' Museums

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Abstract

The Google Art Project can be used to unlock student interest and motivate them to use language creatively as they explore the world's museums. It offers an international platform that connects users with art and objects around the world and throughout time, allowing visitors to explore and connect with culture and language in new and intriguing ways.

The Google Art Project can be used to unlock student interest and motivate them to use language creatively as they explore the world's museums. It offers an international platform that connects users with art and objects around the world and throughout time, allowing visitors to explore and connect with culture and language in new and intriguing ways.

Art and Language

The deep interconnectedness of art and language makes it unsurprising that art can be a bridge to language learning. Art and writing have been called “complementary processes” (Friedman & Simone, 2000, p. 36) and visual associations have been said to help in the retention of new language material (Martone, 1992). Art and language are tied even at a neurological level with studies of the brain showing “that graphic representation of images is a complex activity which involves a number of areas of the brain—Some of which are intimately connected to language” (Kaplan, 2000, p. 62). More recently, neuroscience has revealed the heightened emotional states of aesthetic experience and the way that connecting with art heightens emotional response in the brain (Vessel, Starr, & Rubin, 2013). If we consider that heightened emotional states can solidify memory and potentially learning, then experiences with art in a course on language learning may help retention of the language and the associated experience.

Using the visual arts in ESL classes has been said to build learners' self confidence and improve classroom dynamics as well (Moore, Koller, & Avago, 1994). In doing so, art in the classroom may help lower what Krashen (1982, 1989) calls the *affective filter*, a potential hindrance to the language learning process. Some of the activities described in this paper allow students to go beyond their comfort zone, take on personas beyond their own, and involve themselves with a culture or express their own while keeping their own self image intact, allowing for the language ego to remain undisturbed.

Art is also a highly effective tool for connecting language and culture in the classroom. Art is a universal and highly valued field in all cultures (Coelho, 2004). With the Google Art Project, learners can share their own cultural backgrounds with one another or explore elements of the many cultures involved

with the target language. In this way, art becomes a tool that can help learners take on a perspective other than their own (Moore et al., 1994). As students become more comfortable taking on new perspectives, they may also gain confidence in facing the challenges of the target language and culture and see the similarities and differences between their own culture and the one they may be immersed in better preparing them for their new environment.

Art can also allow for an incorporation of a variety of learning styles. The Google Art Project interface allows for some level of kinesthetic participation as viewers interact with the museums in 3-dimensional walk-throughs, visual participation as viewers inspect close-up views of artwork with textual descriptions, and auditory participation through informational audio files and explanatory videos. Allowing for a variety of learning styles can make the classroom a more welcoming place to a wider range of students and help them to better connect with material. In addition to the textual and linguistic input offered through a variety of viewing notes and materials, the visual input of the art and artifacts can stimulate language development and ideas that help foster language production and understanding as well.

Features

The Google Art Project, part of the Google Cultural Institute, is an online interactive portal to museums around the world. Employing a similar first person interface to Google Maps' street view feature, the museum view aspect of the platform allows viewers to walk around the interior of museums as visitors. In navigating the museum, visitors may walk room to room, look around with 360-degree views and also utilize floor plans to navigate different rooms and floors more directly.

What sets this interactive museum walk-through apart further is the ability to interact with the museum objects. To do so, users can click on plus signs near artwork or objects throughout the museum to access a detailed view of the specific artifact. This "artwork view" brings the user to an interactive high-resolution view of the artifact where the user can access additional information such as viewing notes, audio or video clips, and maps related to the art or artist. These added features give the art context

and are accessed by clicking a “details” link. Within this artwork view, users can also search the database of other art and artifacts from across the Google Art Project’s range of museums.

This database includes not only artwork but also artifacts across multiple eras, furniture, fashion, design, and even a woolly mammoth. It is searchable by date, collection, artist, medium, and location enabling the viewer to view artwork across multiple museums on a given set of search parameters with certain works also viewable in extreme intricate detail through gigapixel images. Beyond simply viewing works, visitors are able to compare two pieces side-by-side using the compare button, save pieces to personal shareable galleries with custom created viewing notes and views, and view shared user-created galleries.

These final features are of particular interest for educators as this allows instructors to create specific focused collections for class reference and activities fully within the graphic interface that is easy to use and an efficient way to share class resources. This can simplify the creation of sets of images for classroom use and provides a stable reusable resource for future classes as well, cutting down on prep time. Unlike sets of links to random internet pictures, these collections remain saved to a user account and the image-based interface allows for more customization and better presentation than a list of links, not to mention more consistent quality.

Activities

There are many types of activities that draw on the features of the Google Art Project. Three main types of activities will be shared here. Beginning with the most concrete and working towards the most creative these are location-based, art-based, and content-inspired activities. A link to sample materials for these activities is included at the end of the article.

Location-Based Activities

Location-based activities draw on the aspects of the Google Art Project that situate the viewer in a museum. For these activities, students primarily draw on the floor plans and museum view. These activities are particularly good practice for lower-level courses and can be fun expansions for basic

survival courses. In any case, the objectives often include being able to give and follow directions and instructions. An excellent and practical follow-up activity is to hold a field trip to a local museum and provide students with similar place-based activities on the field trip. This can bring the skills developed through Google Art Project activities to the real world and begin the process of skill transfer.

The art scavenger hunt is a simple example of a location-based activity in the Google Art Project. For this type of activity, students will give and follow directions to find pieces of art in a given museum and save these pieces to a personal gallery as proof of their success. While this activity sounds simple enough, it does require the instructions be made ahead of time. To make this activity more fruitful for the class and to cut down on instructor prep time, it can be helpful to pass this task on to students. Prior to conducting the scavenger hunt, give pairs of students one or two highlighted (available in artwork view) pieces from a museum to write directions to. In order to do this, students will need to already be familiar with basic indoor direction-based language such as *turn left*, *turn right*, *go downstairs*, or *continue straight ahead*. They will need to know the necessary conventions of writing directions including the need to include key landmarks, a starting point, and some clear indication of the end point. Have students choose a starting place or for simplicity sake, assign one to them with each artwork. Then have the students write the directions to each piece of art and identify it without giving the name of the art to prevent those following the directions from simply searching for the art. Collect these directions digitally, add an additional set or two of your own, and you have plenty of sets of directions for students to follow for the scavenger hunt without having to create them all yourself. This also gives a natural task progression and continuity in class.

Art-Based Activities

The Google Art Project naturally lends itself to many activities based in the art itself. These activities develop higher-order thinking skills and give students the opportunity to use language without focusing on language so they may develop automaticity and fluency as they focus on ideas. Some of these activities are appropriate for all levels, while others are more approachable for only high-intermediate or

advanced students. What I have found with these activities is that they get students writing, thinking, and speaking more than they might in an average class. The students who become engaged and speak up may surprise you.

A useful first activity in using the Google Art Project in a class is the introductory activity. It is vital in implementing any new technology that students first be given a low-stakes activity that allows them to practice with and explore the tool and allows the instructor to check that everyone can successfully use the tool. With the Google Art Project, this becomes even more important as it is very easy to get lost in the tool or overwhelmed by it. Thus, I recommend beginning with the intro activity.

For the introductory activity, students are to explore the museums with the goal of selecting one interesting piece and collecting information on it to share. This activity can be an in-class activity so that the instructor is present to assist with technology and language needs as they come up. After an initial introduction to the basic functions of the tool, students are given a set time period, usually 10 minutes, to explore the Google Art Project however they wish. Students have tended to love the Google Art Project, and they find it enveloping. This is part of the reason for inclusion of this activity and this step—to give them the opportunity to do what they would have been doing anyway. However, this activity includes a set a time limit on the exploration and a clear goal: to find one interesting piece of art. Some students simply choose the piece they find at the ten-minute mark while others choose the first piece they find. This part of the task ensures that students can find a single piece from the site. Next, they must find predetermined information on the piece. I recommend using a handout like the one on my website that includes the title, medium, artist, size, where the artist is from, a description of the art, and what the student found interesting about it. This part of the task verifies that students can use the basic information features of the site to gather background information. Beyond this, vocabulary needs can continue to be assessed as students try to read about and describe the art. At this point, students will have practiced with the tool, found visual input, textual input, and potentially auditory or video input and are now translating it to written output. The final aspect on what the student found interesting brings this written output to a

higher level than simply copying information or creating concrete descriptions as it allows them to create with language and connect their own ideas and reactions.

The next stage of this activity involves spoken output and interaction. Up until this point, the primary interaction was between student and computer and additionally intra-action within the student's mind as he or she processed the information. Now the student, using the notes as a guide and the visual from the Google Art Project, shows the piece to a partner and talks about it. I typically have students begin by presenting some of the information they wrote down but focusing on what they found interesting before moving to more of a dialogue with their partner about the piece. This stage is not fully scripted and allows students to interact with one another in a natural way. One student is able to act as the expert about the basic aspects of the piece, but both students can talk about their own reactions to the piece. After this, students, potentially only a selection if the class is large and time is short, present their pieces to the class. A follow-up written activity could include having students share a short paragraph on what they found interesting about the piece and the link with the instructor, who could create a gallery of class favorites with the paragraphs in the viewing notes, providing a tangible end product. These could be shared with or without student names so that students might know or may get to guess which student chose which piece of art.

A more advanced art-based activity would include a progression of art discussion and writing on a particular piece or set of pieces. I usually begin by showing the class a single piece and allowing students to make notes and perhaps do a quick think, pair, share on initial thoughts and reactions identifying the characters and subject matter without viewing notes. Then I share the link and allow students to read the viewing notes and access extended media on the piece before we discuss it further. After this, we talk about the themes in the art and connect it to the larger context of that time and contrast it with the present day. We might explore the question of how the piece might look differently today through small group or large group discussion, writing, or creative production. Finally, with a clear

understanding of the piece, if it has characters, students will be assigned to write a short piece from the character's point of view.

Some of the most successful pieces I have used for these types of activities include “the Golden Age” and “Take Your Son Sir”. I have had particular success discussing and also comparing and contrasting these two as they both portray a mother and child as the primary physical subject but in very different circumstances. With the mixed student population of community college intensive English program students, these two pieces have led to excellent class discussions and writings including student ideas of what the *golden age* might be and why. This type of more involved art-based activity requires further prereading and research on the part of the instructor and knowledge of one's own students. A knowledgeable instructor may be able to choose pieces that are approachable and engaging for his or her students and get them talking, thinking, and writing. It is important to remember that some subject matter may not be appropriate for all audiences and that since art, and the themes portrayed in it, can bring out emotional responses, we need to monitor student reactions less we hit a trigger point for some students. For the most part, students have found the use of art in my ESL classes engaging and inspiring.

Content-Inspired Activities

Building on this idea of inspiration, the next and final type of activity discussed in this paper is that of content-inspired activities. Whereas art-based activities work with the art as art, content-inspired activities ask students to begin with the art and allow it to creatively, rather than analytical or responsively, inspire their language production. These fun and often simple activities can include most picture-based language tasks, but they bring in an added element of intrigue and an ease of curating that usual picture files and Google image search seem to lack.

One simple speaking task inspired by art is that of dialogues. In the dialogue activity, students choose a single piece with two or more characters represented. They develop character personas for those in the piece and describe the setting and situation, usually with a guide of some sort, which helps students create a basic back-story for each character and their reason for interacting. Students then write, practice,

perform, and possibly record their dialogue sharing it with the class. This level of removal between the characters and the performer and the audience focus on the characters seems to lower the affective filter and allows students to be more creative and fluent in their creations.

This concept of character development in art can be taken in many directions. For instance, students could choose a portrait and then “introduce” that person to the class as a family member or friend by making up interesting and creative details. This activity has lead to some amusing anecdotes for those who have implemented it. Additionally, students can create a persona for the character and then be interviewed as the character practicing open-ended questions and creative responses as they predetermine why the person is being interviewed and his or her accomplishments or expertise.

When it comes to writing, students can use their character to inspire simple practice paragraphs. For instance, verb tense paragraphs on what someone did yesterday or does every day or someone’s goals for the future can be written about the made-up character and inspired by the artwork to allow for greater creativity. Further, students could demonstrate their understanding of particular newspaper pieces such as roommate ads by writing them for and responding to them as the character.

Content-inspired activities can be extended further to higher-level reading and writing courses as well. In reading, the contents of the Google Art Project can be used to activate schema in prereading activities by having students interact with art and museum objects from the time period portrayed in a story, from the same time a piece was written, or on similar subject matter that students will be reading about. As a post reading activity, students could curate custom galleries to represent particular settings, characters, or concepts in a reading.

Art pieces can also be used to inspire creative writing pieces that push students to use the language creatively or for certain purposes or with particular forms. For brainstorming practice, students can write descriptively using the five senses with initial inspiration coming from an art piece. This type of writing activity couples well with lessons on stative verbs and progressive and simple tenses.

Brainstorming based off of the WH questions has also been successful when inspired by art as the

jumping off point. These need not be merely descriptive but can push students to craft stories that go well beyond the art they draw inspiration from. Further, the unique nature of art may allow students to draw their inspiration from nonrepresentational pieces, which works particularly well for mood or tone. Combining some of these aspects can lead to particularly interesting stories.

In using any of the content inspired activities, it is important to emphasize the inspired aspect. Students may get stuck on the idea of correctness. The use of art can hinder creativity for some students, but with a combination of activities and approaches scaffolded and modeled in class, it seems most students can work up to creativity both in thought and language use.

Adaptations

Activities using the Google Art Project can be adapted as any other activity might be. For lower levels, simpler instructions and careful scaffolding will be needed. Literal assignments using a single input source and whole class assignments may be the most approachable for lower proficiency students in order to reduce the cognitive load. Higher-level students, on the other hand, can thrive with tasks that draw on higher order ideas such as themes in art, multiple input sources, and open-ended activities with more technical vocabulary. They may benefit from pairing Google Art Project based activities with readings or movies and more complex writing and discussion as well. Adult education programs may find activities that draw on real world language and situations related to student lives as more motivating. Academic programs can draw on the Google Art Project for essay topics, critiques, thematic discussions, and literature and historical connections.

Considerations

There are a few critical aspects to remember when implementing any of the activities discussed above. First, always set time limits on the choice of pieces. This can be one of the most time consuming parts of using the Google Art Project as it has an ever-widening enveloping array of choices that can easily become overwhelming. It is for this reason that the second point is to use small focused galleries for each task. These small focused galleries should consist of 2-5 pieces that the instructor has specifically

vetted and set aside for a particular activity. This can help make the Google Art Project less overwhelming for students and help them to focus on the language-learning task. While this takes some prep time initially, the galleries can be used again and again and shared amongst colleagues. Third, try a class activity prior to small group or individual activities. This follows from general classroom practice, but it is particularly helpful for students to participate as a whole with extra guidance when using a new technology tool for a new purpose. Fourth, be mindful of and openly discuss the conflicting ideas students may have about being correct and creative. As with any other activity, it can be helpful to explain the language learning potential and purpose of using a particular task. Especially when discussing art or engaging in content inspired activities, students may be apprehensive as they try to determine what the ‘correct’ answer might be. Being explicit about how these tasks and ideas differ and that there is no correct answer can help ease the burden of correctness and help guide students towards meaningful production. And finally, be mindful of the content. With ESL classes, instructors work with a range of individuals that vary in age, language, and cultural and personal backgrounds. While we may not be able to anticipate every need and perspective, we can try to be mindful in choosing the pieces we include in our task based galleries to include a range of work that might appeal to a range of students and to not include pieces that we feel may offend or trigger students in our class.

From a technical standpoint all of the usual considerations for using technology in the classroom continue to apply to the Google Art Project. The website and the equipment you hope to access it on need to be tested ahead of time. For those with lower internet speeds, it may take a long time to load some aspects. In particular, museum view and the highest-resolution images may be difficult to use. There may be plugins necessary to access the site so it is imperative to test the site in the context where you hope to use it prior to implementation. Another aspect to be mindful of is that not all content will be in English. Since the Google Cultural Institute and the Art Project are international efforts, while the majority of what I have found has been in English, there exists an array of museum resources, which may be in any number of languages, warranting prereading and listening of material by the instructor. A final consideration is

the speed with which Google is updating the Google Art Project. Features may change, be added or removed or be renamed, so instructor generated directions, activities, and plans may need to be updated accordingly. The good news is that these updates often add opportunities for expanded use, include expanded collections that cover more cultures, and reach further around the world to show us and our students things we may not have encountered otherwise.

Note:

Sample activities, assignment sheets, and collections can be found at

<https://sites.google.com/site/eslartproject/home/activities-by-content>

The original presentation this article is based on can be found at

<https://sites.google.com/site/itbecunningham/home/exploring-language-through-the-world-s-museums-w-the-google-art-project>

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