Realizing Opportunities for English Learners in the Common Core English Language Arts and Disciplinary Literacy Standards

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Think About

Twenty years ago

• How is your life different today than what it was at the time?

• How similar or different is instruction in schools today than it was in 1992?
Times have changed dramatically

…but education has remained almost unchanged at its core. We need to do things dramatically different:

• Contemporary life requires citizens with multiple literacies, readers and producers of multimodal texts, autonomous learners, responsible decision makers with a firm sense of ethics and community responsibility.

• This means the learning opportunities we need to offer our students have to model and apprentice them into future successful participation in valued life practices.
A Cautionary Tale: Chattanooga VW Plant

The New Standards Reflect These Required Changes

- Common Core Standards in ELA and Math
- Next Generation Science Standards
- Revised and New English Language Proficiency Development Standards
I Will Explore Some Ideas that are Consistent with QTEL Work and the New Standards

The Questions:

- What important understandings in the education of ELLs do they validate? What are the implications for practice?
- What tensions related to the education of ELLs have emerged in discussions of implementation of the new standards?

Validated Understanding: 1

Curricular goals are fewer, potent, and spiral over time. Content should be introduced, expanded, and connected to multiple other ideas and applications across the academic life of a student.

For English Language Learners it is best to focus on fewer key ideas, and develop them in depth (in their interconnections) than to work superficially on many. The first time a concept is introduced, it is impossible to expect mastery. If the concept is important, it should be reintroduced and expanded through the school years. (Walqui, 2000; Walqui & van Lier, 2010; van Lier & Walqui, 2012; Walqui & Heritage, 2012)
**Implications for Practice**

- Avoid focusing on isolated concepts or skills
- Do not focus on bits and pieces of language
- Make sure to reintroduce key ideas deliberately and to create links between and across ideas continuously
- Do not expect students to “get ideas” or ways of expressing them completely after one teaching sequence
- Accept “flawed” English, focus on what students are doing through the medium of their new language (CCSSO, forthcoming)

**Elaborating: Limitations with Formal Progressions of Language Development**

(CCSSO Framework for ELPD Standards, Forthcoming)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Simple</th>
<th>Present Progressive</th>
<th>Simple Past</th>
<th>Simple Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Emphasis is placed on:

- syntactic forms, words, sentences
- “mastery” (students to do not move into more advanced courses until they demonstrate “accuracy”)
- linguistic competence, but not subject-specific communication abilities
Or Focusing on Limited Understandings of Functional Theories of Language

Propose pedagogical work at the level of “functions” and “notions” but not necessarily in interwoven discourse.

Run into problematic progressions:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Level 1</th>
<th>Level 2</th>
<th>Level 3</th>
<th>Level 4</th>
<th>Level 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Identify responses to community</td>
<td>Provide examples of responses to</td>
<td>Pose questions about responses</td>
<td>Explain and elaborate on</td>
<td>Defend responses to community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>challenges using visuals and</td>
<td>community challenges using</td>
<td>to community challenges using</td>
<td>responses to community</td>
<td>challenges in small</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>word banks in small</td>
<td>sentence frames in small groups</td>
<td>sentence frames in small groups</td>
<td>challenges in small groups</td>
<td>groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>groups (e.g., point out example</td>
<td>(e.g., “A leader could</td>
<td>(e.g., “A leader could</td>
<td>(e.g., “A leader could</td>
<td>(e.g., “A leader could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s of evidence of leadership in</td>
<td>to solve the problem.”)</td>
<td>to solve the problem.”)</td>
<td>to solve the problem.”)</td>
<td>to solve the problem.”)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pictures of community scenes)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Devastating Consequences:
Percentage of ELs who progress, stay at, or regress one or more CELDT levels (in grades 6-8, 2007/08 to 2008/09)

Linquanti, Crane, and Huang, WestEd, 2010
Validated Understanding: 2

All Teachers are literacy and language teachers in the areas they teach.

Because teachers apprentice their students into the ways of being (thinking, behaving, speaking, writing, reading) in the content area, they should not teach these components in isolation from each other.

For English Language Learners, content and language are intimately related. While an initial period of developing basic “language across the curriculum” is justified, after that, deep knowledge of the discipline is required to teach it (Walqui and Heritage, 2012)

Implications for Practice

All teachers need to:

• Gain an awareness of how practices in their disciplines involve language to explicitly discuss how language works and the characteristics of texts and disciplinary discourse

• Integrate all language modes (oral, written, visual, and graphic) in teaching

• Scaffold instruction to develop student autonomy and assist their progression from “more spoken” to “more written”-like uses of language
Validated Understanding: 3

It is important to assist students so that they can engage with complex text, initially with scaffolding, eventually developing increased autonomy to work with them productively on their own.

For English Language Learners the QTEL Initiative has always proposed that we need to “amplify, not simplify.”

Because ELLs are invited to participate in activities that are beyond their autonomy level (self-regulation) and supported to do so legitimately, they develop the skills needed to use them on their own in the future.

A Pedagogy of Promise: Work in the Construction Zone

Leo van Lier, 1991
Based on L.S. Vygotsky
In this Sense, Scaffolding Is:

- Temporary support
- Support that matures potential and is generative, as such, its goal is autonomy
- A dynamic process that amplifies student accessibility and student agency
- The “just right” kind of support students need
- Contingent

Walqui & van Lier, 2010

Theoretical and Pedagogical Shifts in the Design and Enactment of Learning: UL Initiative

FROM A CONCEPTUALIZATION OF TO UNDERSTANDING
Language acquisition as an individual process    language acquisition as apprenticeship in social contexts
Language as structures or functions    Language as action, subsuming structure and function (Ellis & Larsen Freeman, 2010; van Lier & Walqui, 2012)
L2 acquisition as a linear and progressive process aimed at accuracy, fluency, and complexity    non linear and complex developmental process aimed at comprehension and communication
Individual ideas or texts as the center of instruction    attention to ideas and texts in their interconnectedness
Understanding Language Shifts (cont.)

- Use of simplified texts → use of complex texts
- Use of activities that pre-teach the content or simply “help students get through texts” → activities that scaffold students’ development and autonomy
- Identifying discrete structural features of language → exploration of how language is purposeful and patterned to do its particular rhetorical work
- Traditional grammar as a starting point → multimodal grammar
- Objectives stated as dichotomies → Practice of communicating, doing, being in the language

UNIT Persuasion Across Time and Space: Analyzing and Producing Persuasive Texts

LESSON 1 Advertising in the Contemporary World: An Introduction to Persuasive Texts
Analyzing message, tone, mood, and modality in multimodal texts

LESSON 2 Persuasion in Historical Context: The Gettysburg Address
Building background knowledge for reading; Analyzing the development of central ideas at the macro and micro levels

LESSON 3 Ethos, Logos, & Pathos in Civil Rights Movement Speeches
Critical analysis of the use of Aristotle’s appeals in persuasive speeches

LESSON 4 Persuasion as Text: Organizational, Grammatical, and Lexical Moves in Barbara Jordan’s All Together Now
Comparing and contrasting macro and micro-level textual choices in speeches

LESSON 5 Putting it Together: Analyzing and Producing Persuasive Text
Independent analysis of a speech and writing of a persuasive essay
Lesson 2: Persuasion in Historical Context: The Gettysburg Address

Demonstrates the tripartite nature of lessons: Preparing Learners, Interacting with Texts, Extending Understanding.

Build schema about the time, place, and the political context of Lincoln’s famous speech through the reading of informational text.

Discover how cohesive and coherence ties work together to create meaning.

Example: In Our Own Words the Gettysburg Address is recreated by individual, groups, and the whole class to make a cohesive and coherent contemporary text.
Handout #5: Background Reading Focus Chart

1. Abraham Lincoln Biography
   - Read the biography on President Lincoln. jot down a few notes on:
     - His Family Life
     - His Education
     - His contributions to America

2. The Civil War
   - What central issues caused the Civil War?
   - What was the outcome of the war?
   - Any other interesting facts

3. The Battle of Gettysburg
   - What is significant about the Battle of Gettysburg?
   - Two or three interesting facts about the Battle of Gettysburg

Handout #4a: Clarifying Bookmark!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What you can do</th>
<th>What you can say</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am going to think about what the selected text may mean.</td>
<td>I am not sure what this is about, but I think it may mean...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This part is tricky, but I think it means...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>After rereading this part, I think it may mean...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am going to summarize my understanding so far.</td>
<td>What I understand about the reading so far is...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I can summarize this part by saying...</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The main points of this section are...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Lesson 2 [11]
Handout #10: The Gettysburg Address in Four Voices

Directions: Each student chooses one of four fonts (regular font, bold font, underlined font, or italics); when it is your turn to read aloud, you will read your font only.

Four score and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent, a new nation, conceived in Liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field, as a final resting place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate—we cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note, nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us—that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion—that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain—that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom—and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.
A Website to Visit

Ell.stanford.edu

Understanding Language Initiative

References


Linquanti, R., Crane, E.W., and Huang, M. 2010. Examining Growth in English Language Proficiency of California’s English Learners. San Francisco, CA: Regional Educational Laboratory WestEd.

