

WAESOL World Quarterly

A quarterly publication of the Washington Association for the Education of Speakers of Other Languages

Welcome!

Sunday, July 1, 2012



Welcome! The WAESOL World Quarterly is an electronic publication of the Washington Association for the Education of Speakers of Other Languages. It provides information about the world of TESOL by sharing new teaching practices, addressing current issues, and collaborating with each other. If you are interested in submitting an article, please visit our website at <http://waesol.org/newsletters/submit/index.html>.

Filed in [Fall 2011](#), [Spring 2011](#), [Spring 2012](#), [Summer 2012](#), [Winter 2011](#), [Winter 2012](#) || [Comments \(0\)](#)

* Letter from WAESOL President Naomi Elliott

Sunday, July 1, 2012



Dear Colleagues

Summer has officially arrived, and I hope you have made plans to rest, reflect and explore new approaches to your practice in the fall. For those of you teaching summer quarter, or K-12 summer schools, thank you for your dedication to continued student progress over the break. It is so important to maintain the gains they have made over the 2011-12 school year.

Unfortunately, due to budget cutbacks, critical summer school programs have been scaled back through the reduction of services, or eliminated. In an effort to preserve the future funding of key adult, and public education, English Language Learner program funding, TESOL affiliate representatives from all over the United States congregated in Washington, DC for TESOL Advocacy Day.

Advocates thanked representatives for supporting leveled federal funding of our current programs, and requested their continued support of the unique funding streams, provided through the ESEA and WIA Acts, which preserve them. This year, the WAESOL board was able to send 3 representatives, and according to John Segota, set an example for other state affiliates. State representatives are more willing to meet face-to-face with groups of their constituents to discuss community concerns regarding the direct impact their work on students and families.

The result of this year's meetings has surpassed previous years for Washington State ELL adult and public education programs. After face-to-face meetings with Congresswoman Cathy McMorris Rodgers, Congressman Jim McDermott's chief education staffer, and Senator Patty Murray, all have agreed to send staffers to visit the Refugee Summer School program on the Gonzaga University Campus, and the Kindergarten Jump Start program in the Auburn School District. Both summer programs include parent education courses. Congresswoman Cathy McMorris plans on personally visiting the Gonzaga Campus. Before our meeting, she was unaware that Spokane is one of the major gateway cities for the flow of refugees into the U.S.

An article detailing the overall activities of TESOL Advocacy Day will be posted to the WAESOL website soon, along with details about how you, as inspired educators, can advocate at the grass roots level in your communities. If you have further questions regarding Advocacy Day or ELL summer school visitations, please email me at naomi@waesol.org

Please read, and enjoy, the wide variety of articles arranged by our wonderful WAESOL Quarterly editor Jodi Ritter, jodi@waesol.org .

Have a restful summer.

Sincerely,

Naomi Elliott

WAESOL President 2012

Filed in [Summer 2012](#) || [Comments \(0\)](#)

*** Letter from WAESOL World Quarterly Editor**

Sunday, July 1, 2012

Happy Summer to all of you!

May the summer bring lots of relaxation, sun, fond memories, new experiences and time with family and friends for all of you.

As I begin my summer, I find myself thinking a lot about what I need to do this summer in order to be fulfilled, refreshed and focused. I always struggle with having a lack of routines or an array of very different, short-term routines, even though I enjoy the free time that comes with it so much. As I read through some of the articles in this edition of the WAESOL World Quarterly that include some really great information on how to help our ELL students be better independent learners and find interests and strategies that work for each individual, it really resonates with me and with the summer ahead. These articles in particular, by [Ciechanowski](#),

[Huang](#), and [Bauer](#), are also a culmination of their work or case studies that demonstrate a final product of individual learners who have found various strategies that work for them in one way or another in order to complete the project. I also find the reflection or story telling articles by [Reeves](#), [Song](#) and [Yearwood](#) to be another tool to consider when trying to find strategies that work for all of us as individual learners. By reflecting and story telling, we can tease out some of the less obvious things in our lives that we value and want to focus on as we move forward in whatever we are doing.

I hope you all enjoy your summer and this edition of the WAESOL World Quarterly.

Our 2012 WAESOL Conference: *Where do we go from here? Pathways in Times of Change* will be held Saturday, Oct 20, at Highline Community College. Please visit our website at www.waesol.org for more information. I hope to see you all there!

Take care,

Jodi Ritter

Editor, WAESOL World Quarterly

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[WAESOL Conference 2012](#)

Sunday, July 1, 2012

WAESOL Conference 2012

Where do we go from here?

Pathways in Times of Change

**Saturday, October 20, 2012
8 a.m. p.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Highline Community College
Des Moines, Washington**

Registration
is now open.

Call to Proposals is still open until August 15.

Conference FAQ page coming soon.

Filed in [Summer 2012](#) | | [Comments \(0\)](#)

*** In the Words of a Teacher: Finding Avenues to Communicate for ELLs**

Sunday, July 1, 2012

By:

Kathryn Ciechanowski

On March 31st, a local newspaper reporter arrived in Ms. May's dual language third grade classroom to celebrate Cesar Chavez's birthday (all names are pseudonyms). Her class hosted a community- and school-wide event where visitors circulated among informational tables staffed by third graders. The event culminated from a year-long study of the Latino activist and social justice themes. One student said it was fun and important because Chavez helped so many, especially Latinos. An instructional assistant applauded student efforts, remembering farm worker movements from her childhood and emphasizing Latino heroes for children today. Ms. May was dedicated to social justice and culturally-relevant role models.

Teaching for social justice requires acting (more than talking) to end oppression in all social domains and working to empower minoritized groups (Sensoy and DiAngelo, 2012). According to Bartolomé (2003), "Teachers play a significant role in creating learning contexts in which students are able to empower themselves" (p. 423). This vignette shows how Ms. May created learning environments to empower students and connect to community. Her class had many Spanish-speaking ELLs, suggesting the need for meaningful and collaborative projects to learn grade-level content and gain English proficiency. This article reports on one illustrative case of a Latino boy named Gabriel who responded well to Ms. May's teaching approach, as described by teachers' own words.

Gathering information from the collaborative team of teachers

During 2008-09, I conducted a study in a K-8 school in the Northwest focusing on the integration of English Language Development (ELD) and content (i.e., social studies and science), particularly in dual language third grade. The study contained two parts that were digitally audio-recorded: (1) after school meetings with teachers (Kim May and Tish Derko), ELL specialist (Helena Beck), and researcher (the author) to discuss learning and plan instruction and assessment of integrated ELD/content, and (2) observations of ELD and content classes to focus on students and teacher interactions. Transcripts of meetings and observations were analyzed using Discourse Analysis (Gee, 2011).

Kim's class (the primary focus of this study) had 42% Spanish-speaking ELLs (14 of 33 students), representing various English proficiency levels. Tish's regular education third grade class (n=13) had 3 ELLs from countries like Malaysia, Marshall Islands, and Mexico. Helena had been using primarily a pull-out approach; she had robust training in ELP standards and ELD and a Master degree in Applied Linguistics. Kim was a recent graduate of the university's Immersion MAT program, where the author was a faculty member, that focused on cultural and linguistic immersion and social justice.

An illustrative case: Gabriel's avenue to communicate

In the following case, the teachers and ELL specialist discussed a particular ELL, Gabriel, that scored at an early intermediate level but who had barely spoken or done work in class. During our meeting, they described how a Cesar Chavez project intrigued and engaged him in schoolwork. Knowledge from extensive study of Chavez provided him the expertise so he felt he had a contribution. Confidence from being an expert on a topic allowed him to take risks, letting him forget the ELL label and perceived deficits. As depicted below, Kim, Helena, and Tish explained how the study of Chavez was meaningful in several regards.

Kim: He loves all things Cesar Chavez. All the stories he's been writing lately, you know, are all about Chavez and so any time we do an activity related to that, he's there.

Helena: They did a unit on it so it gave him a whole lot of background and now he takes it and applies it to everything.

Tish: It made him really engaged and he was a lot more confident. He was more willing to take risks.

Kim: Yeah.... It's almost like he gets distracted a little bit by the Cesar Chavez. ... Then he ends up using the language because he wants to talk about Cesar Chavez. And he doesn't realize that, "Oh, I don't know the English very well, and I'm not very good at it," but he kind of doesn't even notice he is using it. Hah.

Tish: Because at the beginning of the year, he wouldn't be able to communicate so well because he'd be so afraid, anxious and worried about what he would say.... That's kind of been an avenue to communicate.

Helena: He “killed” me today, like I don’t know, he just took nine and a half months but he had a great day today; he was like “Teacher, I’m learning English!” I said, “You are, I know, I noticed that, too.”

Gabriel’s solution to fear and anxiety was extensive study on Cesar Chavez. By year’s end, all teachers noticed improvement in Gabriel’s engagement and language proficiency, relating how his emotions, expertise, and self-esteem played a role.

Discussion of teacher talk in the transcript

The teachers articulated various ways that the year-long study of Chavez was powerful and effective for Gabriel’s learning. First, the teacher positioned students as experts, allowing them extensive time to learn content and responsibility and ownership of the project. Helena explained, “it gave him a whole lot of background and now he takes it and applies it to everything.” The depth of study proved effective for Gabriel—more than short glimpses of content—so that he could achieve a sense of mastery. Feeling like a knowledgeable expert increased his confidence and application of knowledge across contexts. Tish suggested he was “a lot more confident” and “more willing to take risks.” He developed a sense of security in his own ability.

Second, the teacher promoted extended discourse on a topic so students could tap into their full linguistic repertoires and tie language structures together in meaningful coherent units. This communicative approach (Larsen-Freeman, 2001) wove together attention to form, meaning, and use through students’ need to make sense of content in order to complete a broad-based task. Cooperative work to organize Cesar Chavez’s event and targeted practice of social and academic language provided the impetus to attend to language. This large project required language practice at discourse levels (not single word or sentence level) both orally and written.

Third, Gabriel’s developing confidence allowed his affective filter (Krashen, 1982) to lower so he was not held back by fear and anxiety. Krashen proposes that affective states can impact second language learning. For example, high motivation and self-confidence but low anxiety is conducive for English learners. Gabriel’s increased confidence allowed him to take more risks and try out language. His motivation (i.e., “he loves all things Cesar Chavez” and “he wants to talk about Cesar Chavez”) helped him forget about his insecurities and communicate because he was excited and interested. Tish mentioned different behavior early in the year, “he wouldn’t be able to communicate so well because he’d be so afraid, anxious and worried about what he would say,” which gradually changed as he reacted positively to the Chavez unit.

Fourth, Gabriel seemed hindered by his status and label English learner. His perceived weakness in English led to hesitancy to talk in class. Once the labels and deficit positioning were removed (temporarily because he was distracted), he felt at ease and more readily able to discuss topics in class. Kim remarked, “It’s almost like he gets distracted a little bit by the Cesar Chavez. ...And he doesn’t realize, ‘Oh, I don’t know the English very well, and I’m not very good at it,’ but he kind of doesn’t even notice he is using it.” It is powerful to remove negative perceptions or labels and focus on meaning and communication.

Finally, the topic connected Gabriel to his community and ethnic identity. As a Latino, Chavez shared some similar characteristics with him and perhaps Gabriel could see himself in the images of Chavez. And, at the March 31st event, the instructional assistant described the link between the study of Chavez and their community, demonstrating the importance of Latino heroes for youth. For various reasons, the study of Cesar Chavez resonated with Gabriel, enhancing his English proficiency and sense of confidence, and linking to a wider community.

Providing avenues to communicate: Where do we go from here?

The exemplary case shows effective teaching that positively affected an English learner Gabriel. The teachers described him as a reluctant learner early in the year disadvantaged by negative self-perceptions and lack of confidence. Kim's teaching approach—involving in-depth projects, social justice, and community events—connected with Gabriel as relevant and accessible to him. The students had a culminating experience covered by a reporter from the local newspaper. Students like Gabriel need opportunities to become experts and to showcase their knowledge to overcome the deleterious effects of deficit-based labels that remind students of what they do not know. Teachers need to highlight ELLs' strengths and capabilities with an eye towards building self-confidence and lowering affective blocks. Furthermore, educators should attend to the ethnic identity, community affiliations, and cultural contexts that are highly relevant to ELL learning so students like Gabriel can buy-in to school and celebrate learning.

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*** Key Concepts and Theories in TEAL**

Sunday, July 1, 2012

By: Li-Shih Huang

Featured Contributor from BC TEAL

Language Transfer



A recent report in *University Affairs* (August 2011) pointed out that an increasing number of academic institutions are devoting efforts and resources to encourage and attract top-quality international students. Another recent major announcement by the BC government in fall 2011 released its plan to increase the number of international students studying in BC by 50 percent over the next four years. As demographic trends change, fewer Canadian-born students and a growing number of international English-as-an-additional-language (EAL) students will be attending post-secondary institutions in English-speaking countries. *Of note*, BC has become one of the world's most popular destinations for international students. As a result of the increase in both the number of international students and the variety of places from where they originate, now, more than ever, a "one-size-fits-all" language-teaching approach that does not take learners' previous language-learning experiences into consideration will not suffice. Instead, we need to consider taking an approach that starts from what learners already know and acknowledges their linguistic choices.

As an example to introduce this edition's concept, a second-language (L2) learner who speaks Chinese as her first language (L1) wrote the following message when she was a fifth-year Ph.D. student.

Thank you very much for helping me improve my thesis writings. After revising my paper based on your suggestions and feedbacks, it looks much more professional.

Here is the 2nd part of my thesis chapter. Because the section finishes at the 20th page, I include five more pages. Sorry for exceed the page limit.

When I'm writing, sometimes I'm not sure whether I should use "the" or not. Sometimes I'm confused about the structure of the sentence. Should it be 'The question is what should we do' or

‘The question is what we should do’? What’s the right position of “should”? Could you please recommend a good and easy-to-read grammar book to me?

Those who are teaching speaking or writing to English-language learners whose L1 is Chinese probably have encountered some, if not all, of the commonly seen linguistic deviations in this student’s message. One may ask: What might be the sources of those deviations?

In this edition, I’d like to touch on one of the major issues in the field of second-language (L2) acquisition – the role that a language learner’s first language (L1) plays in the acquisition of a second/target language (L2/TL), or what is commonly known as “language transfer.” What does “language transfer” encompass? What can insights from empirical research teach us about the importance of language transfer? What are the implications of these insights for English language teaching and learning?

What does it mean?

As with all key concepts in this field, researchers often use different terms and phrases interchangeably to refer to phenomena related to language transfer: *language mixing*, *linguistic transfer*, *cross-linguistic influence*, *cross-linguistic transfer*, *cross-linguistic interaction*, and so on (e.g., Gass & Selinker, 1992; Lado, 1957; Odlin, 1989; Torrijus, 2009). In general, transfer describes “the carryover of previous performance or knowledge to subsequent learning” (Brown, 2007, p. 102). According to Odlin (1989), language transfer is the influence resulting from similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired” (p. 27). *Cross-linguistic transfer* refers to the use of linguistic structures from another language without an active switch to that language (Marian & Kaushanskaya, 2007). It is considered a covert behaviour in which the speaker uses the TL in a way that is semantically or syntactically appropriate for the other language (but not for the TL), which the speaker does without an overt switch of languages (Odlin, 1989).

The varied effects of cross-linguistic similarities and differences have led to a distinction between positive and negative transfer, which, in turn, may contribute to an acceleration or a delay in the rates of acquisition, as well as to the varied routes of acquisition. As the term suggests, *positive transfer* occurs when the influences of the L1 can promote or facilitate TL acquisition (e.g., similarities in vocabulary, writing systems, syntactic structures). In other words, positive transfer can lead to an acceleration in the rate of acquisition. *Negative transfer*, in contrast, tends to be linked to interference that may be bidirectional (L1 à L2 or L2 à L1) (Pavlenko & Jarvis, 2002) or to overgeneralization (L1 à L1 or L2 à L2; i.e., overgeneralizing a particular rule in the L1 or TL). Errors arising from negative transfer may include the following (Odlin, 1989):

- *Underproduction*: the infrequent use or avoidance of a certain TL structure, such as relative clauses in Chinese or Japanese learners’ production;
- *Overproduction*: the overuse of certain TL structures, which may be proficiency-related (e.g., the use of too many simple sentences) or culture-related (e.g., the overuse of apologies);

- *Production errors*: substitutions (using L1 forms in the TL), calques (word-order errors), or hypercorrection;
- *Misinterpretation*: L1 influences on the interpretation of TL that arise from, for example, misperceptions of the TL sounds or from differences in word-order patterns or cultural assumptions; the listener/speaker may then make incorrect inferences.

It is important to note that transfer can occur consciously, as a communication strategy that compensates for a gap in the learner's knowledge, or unconsciously, because the use of the correct form has not yet acquired or reached automaticity.

What does the research say?

Since the 1940s, much research has been devoted to investigating how language learners' L2 acquisition or production is affected by their first L1. Language transfer has been a vibrant area of research and has evolved through several phases of development over the past few decades. In the following sections, I will first provide a brief historical overview of language transfer, before moving on to discuss research on language transfer and its teaching implications.

Over the past few decades, the importance of language transfer in language learning and teaching has been re-evaluated. First, there was the structural-behaviourist view of contrastive analysis. During this period, the L1 effect was called "interference" or "negative transfer," and researchers believed that the effect could be predicted by contrasting learners' L1 and L2. This was reflected in pedagogy that focused mainly on identifying similarities and differences between learners' L1 and L2.

Then came the creative construction phase. This notion of creative construction operated under the key assumption that L2 and L1 acquisition proceeded similarly as a result of the innate mental mechanisms learners universally employed. During this period, the role of L1 was minimized, and pedagogy included an overemphasis on grammar (i.e., focus on forms) without considering the relationship between linguistic competence and communicative competence (i.e., function). In addition to the overemphasis on forms, external factors (i.e., learners' internal mechanisms and the external input of their linguistic environment) were ignored, and the focus was mainly on observable errors.

During the phase of the pragmatic-cognitivist view of contrastive analysis, the emphasis was expanded from a linguistic focus to the level of discourse and pragmatics. Researchers also recognized that L1 could facilitate L2 learning/use. This development, which was followed by contrastive rhetoric, led to a focus on textual analyses in paragraph organization. This involved examining how writing conventions in one language might influence how a writer organizes written discourse in another. In 1966, Kaplan proposed that culture shapes rhetoric, in the sense of how ideas are arranged in writing, and that each culture has some preferred rhetorical patterns (see Kaplan, 2005). Pedagogically, this approach emphasized the explicit teaching of rhetorical structure, styles, and strategies.

At the discourse level, over the past four decades, numerous studies undertaken within the area of contrastive rhetoric have served to both support and refute the idea that there are culturally

specific, preferred organization patterns within texts (see Ramsay 2000). Recent research findings have also suggested that language interaction is bidirectional; i.e., the L2 can also influence the L1 (e.g., Marian & Kaushanskaya, 2007; Pavlenko & Jarvis, 2002).

Schachter (1988) stated that there is so much evidence that anyone who looks at the empirical findings cannot be skeptical about the significance of transfer. Decades later, her statement still holds true. A look at the literature on language transfer in the field of L2 acquisition shows that transfer has been found to occur on the phonological, lexical, morphological, syntactic, discourse, and pragmatic levels (Montrul, 2010; Pika, Nicoladis, & Marentette, 2006; Odlin, 2005). To provide a few examples, English prepositions present one of the most challenging aspects of grammar for learners whose L1 expresses similar concepts in different ways conceptually, temporally, or spatially (e.g., Chinese, German, and Arabic). L1 speakers of Chinese, Japanese, and Korean, for example, have particular difficulty with English articles, as reference is realized differently. Lexical errors, such as false cognates, may occur when similar sounding words convey different meanings in a learner's L1 and the TL. Chinese is characterized by non-inflection. The gender-neutralness and the lack of third-person singular and equivalence to the counterpart English syntax in indicating tenses presents challenges even for highly advanced learners. Finally, when a native Chinese or Japanese speaker makes a request, the indirectness (e.g., the use of "because-initial" information sequencing by delaying the request/main statement until after the provision of reasons or background information) may result in the speaker taking too long to get to a point or cause a communication breakdown (Huang, 2010).

A large number of studies that compare, for example, the phonology, morphology, grammar, and discourse of learners within different languages indicate that some acquisition differences are attributable to cross-linguistic influence (Torrijos, 2009). In terms of levels of proficiency, transfer might be more easily observable in the early stages of learning, but transfers are not always tied to proficiency (Marian & Kaushanskaya, 2007). Advanced learners' language production also can manifest the effects of transfer (Navarro & Nicoladis, 2004).

In recent years, researchers have broadened their investigation to look into how transfer interacts with linguistic, cultural, social, and individual variables in language learning and language use (e.g., Murphy, 2003; Wei, 2003). The dimensions of investigation have also expanded to consider bidirectional transfer and transfer in trilingual and multilingual situations (refer to Odlin, 2005). Studies of transfer in how individuals use gestures that go beyond speech have also entered the field (e.g., Pika, Nicoladis, & Marentette, 2006; Sherman & Nicoladis, 2004). Finally, recent studies using neuroimaging have supported that the cross-linguistic differences between the L1 and the L2 are important in explaining the patterns of brain activation during L2 processing (e.g., Jeong, Sugiura, & Sassa, 2007). These findings have revealed that (a) the L1 and the L2 are likely processed in the same brain network, but the level of activity may be higher during the L2 processing than during the L1 processing; (b) semantic processing of L1 and L2 show similar brain-activation patterns, but the syntactic process of L1 and L2 may activate the various neural networks to different degrees. Researchers utilizing neuroimaging technology (e.g., fMRI) (e.g., Jeong et al., 2007) and measuring event-related potential (ERP) (e.g., Sabourin, 2003) have postulated that the acquisition and processing of an L2 may be related to the linguistic similarities and differences between the L1 and the L2.

What can we do?

Whether researchers are for or against the notion that there are culturally specific ways of communicating, few would deny that an informed L2 instructor can benefit from understanding the variations that exist within discourse types across culturo-linguistic groups. Research evidence over the past decades has provided ample insights about the similarities and differences across languages that may potentially facilitate or present challenges in the learning process. Swan and Smith's (2001) *Learner Language: A Teacher's Guide to Interference and Other Problems*, for example, provides an excellent starting point and may serve as a reference that helps instructors understand the problems that learners of various L2s face. As Steven Covey (1989) once said: "Seek first to understand, then to be understood" (p. 11). One other recent *ELT Journal* article on the potential influence of the L1 (Chinese) on the L2 (English) also offers specific examples at the lexical, phrase, and discourse levels, as well as practical teaching points that address the deviations that appear in the message presented at the beginning of this article (Huang, 2010). The examples and points are likely to help any EAL instructors who are facing an increasing number of Chinese-speaking learners in their classrooms.

In addition to taking advantage of the similarities between learners' L1 and the TL in our teaching, we need to raise our own and our students' awareness of differences between learners' L1 and English. Both instructors and learners need to engage in research-like activities by recognizing that learners' previous language-learning experiences can affect their TL acquisition. The process of eliciting learners' awareness of differences between the L1 and the TL may also enable them to understand and anticipate some of the linguistic variations that may arise in communicating, even for very advanced learners. As Swan (n.d.) once pointed out, the more aware language learners are of the similarities and differences between their L1 and the TL, the easier they will find it to develop effective strategies for language learning and language use. Thus instructors' awareness of the similarities and differences between students' L1 and the TL can better equip instructors to help students formulate hypotheses about cross-linguistic correspondences and to become more attentive to important features in the TL that have no L1 equivalents and vice versa. Understanding factors associated with language transfer or cross-linguistic influence may help instructors connect with their students. Such an understanding may also facilitate learners' acquisition and development of effective learning and communication strategies that can be used to deal with potential negative transfers during L2 communication.

Finally, it is important to keep in mind that not all difficulties in language learning are the result of differences between the TL and the learner's L1. Nor can differences always be unequivocally identified as interferences from the learner's L1, and thus their effects cannot always be predicted. In the process of teaching a second language, we must acknowledge the interplay of individual, instructor-related, and contextual variables that may have roles in learners' production of the target language.

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Dr. Li-Shih Huang is Associate Professor of Applied Linguistics and the Learning and Teaching Centre Scholar-in-Residence at the University of Victoria, Canada. Since her first teaching job in 1992, Li-Shih has garnered extensive experiences in English-language instruction and curriculum design in Canada and overseas. She was also the recipient of TESOL's Award for Excellence in the Development of Pedagogical Materials. This article, "Key Concepts and Theories in TEAL — "Language Transfer,"" was first published in *BC TEAL News*, Winter 2012. Li-Shih can be contacted at lshuang@uvic.ca. You can also follow her on Twitter at @AppLingProf or visit www.li-shihhuang.ca.

Filed in [Summer 2012](#) || [Comments \(0\)](#)

*** Relieving Library Anxiety in the ESL Classroom**

Sunday, July 1, 2012

By:

Jill Bauer, ESL Instructor

With Elinor Appel, Reference and Instruction Librarian

North Seattle Community College

Because reading is a foundational language skill, I want my ESL students to read extensively by maintaining a reading log and selecting their own books. In the past, I would simply suggest they go to the library to check out books. What I did not know was that going to the library and checking out a book is not so simple for my students. Many ESL students face myriad anxieties, issues, and confusions when accomplishing this seemingly simple task. Fortunately, I had the opportunity to participate in a grant-funded quarter-long collaboration with our community college librarian.

The grant was awarded by the local administrator of the Library Services and Technical Act (LSTA). The goal of the grant was to integrate Information Literacy into the curriculum of pre-college and underserved community-college populations. Information Literacy is loosely defined as the ability to access, evaluate, and use information effectively for any purpose. These critical-thinking skills are often confused by instructors as the ability to do “research,” and because of this confusion (and lack of time in a content-driven curriculum), these skills are rarely taught with intent at the pre-college level.

Our project’s goals were multi-layered: to help mid-level students acquire the library skills needed to complete class assignments; to raise awareness of libraries as resources for life skills and lifelong learning; and to alleviate the library anxiety that was preventing many students from acquiring these first goals. This project allowed us to introduce the material in stages so students could build on the skills they learned and extend their learning beyond the classroom environment.

Library anxiety as a theory first appeared in information science literature in 1986 in a seminal study by Constance Mellon. However, this phenomenon has been an observable barrier to library use for much longer (Cooke 2010; Harnett 2004). Mellon’s theory was based on her work with native-speaking college freshman, but her work has since been developed by many others investigating all kinds of libraries (public, community college, and university) and patron populations, including distance-learning students, pre-college students, international students, and immigrants. Library anxiety as defined by Mellon consisted of four general areas: library size, lack of knowledge of where things were located, how to start or what to do. Librarians working with pre-college adult learners have further identified other attitudinal issues such as mistrust of authority and overly complex instructions (Roselle 2008). Librarians working specifically with non-native speakers have identified additional contributing factors including lack of confidence and culturally insensitive staff (Burke 2008; Macdonald 2008). Many librarians serving non-native student populations know intuitively that the typical library “one-shot” session is not a sufficient amount of time to give the students the confidence and skills they need to succeed in that environment (Macdonald 2008). In response to these issues, our librarian outlined a plan that moved past the library tour into a series of assignments and activities to integrate information literacy into ESL coursework.

The students in my intermediate integrated skills ESL class were adult immigrants and refugees from a variety of linguistic backgrounds and areas including East Africa, Asia, Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe and Latin America. Together, the librarian and I identified the following barriers among these students: communication, vocabulary, technology, and prior knowledge or experience of libraries. We designed the project to address these barriers while also meeting ESL objectives, especially increased mastery in reading and writing. The summative project was book reports featured in a library display and then kept in a book of “recommended reads” for future ESL students to refer to. Our goal was to make library skills relevant to the students both within the context of the classroom and beyond.

First, students were asked to read for 30 minutes each day and record their reading habits in a log. We placed few limitations on the type of reading material. However, students could not choose grammar books, manuals (e.g., driving), or test preparation materials (e.g., citizenship). The ongoing assignment created a genuine need for access to books.

To explicitly address this need, the librarian visited my classroom. Meeting the librarian face-to-face in the classroom reduced students’ library anxiety. To prepare for her visit, students worked in small groups to generate questions about the library. The librarian then visited the ESL classroom, answered questions, and used visuals to demonstrate important library procedures, rules, and vocabulary (checkout, return, etc.).

The librarian’s visit was followed by a trip to the library. There the librarian taught students how to locate, renew, and check out books, and how to distinguish between fiction and non-fiction books via a hands-on sorting exercise. Soon after, students were given a library quest worksheet [\[LK3\]](#) to reinforce the library introduction and on-site orientation. The quest also directed them to search for information in the library catalog, find books by topic on the shelves, and check out a book in pairs.

I asked students to keep their reading log for three weeks and to check out additional books if necessary to continue their reading. After three weeks, students were instructed to pick one book to review. Students were told that their book reviews would be displayed in the library for others to read, which created an authentic purpose and audience for their writing. I also conducted a series of lessons on summarizing books and how to write and type book reviews.

Near the end of the quarter, students were given a bonus assignment asking them to apply their new library knowledge in a public library setting. This bonus worksheet invited students to visit a public library, describe it, and ask a librarian a question on a topic of interest. Students were also asked to bring back a tangible item from their visit, such as a brochure, a book or a library card.

We collected student responses at three points during the project. After the librarian visit, vocabulary work, and library quest, students wrote about their experiences on a class blog. In addition, the blog posts exhibited the students’ ability to use the appropriate vocabulary. For example, one student wrote, “I browsed to find this book. I didn’t read the book review, because I was in hurry. I learned how to find a book, and I learned how to use a library website to renew a book.”

Nineteen of the twenty-three students participated in the optional public library quest. Eleven of the nineteen students returned with a new library card. Others brought back specific information about library programs relevant to their lives, such as children's story times or computer classes. The questions the students asked the public librarians showed their primary interest was how to get a library card and check out materials. Secondary interests included how to reserve or use the computers and where to locate specific content (e.g., citizenship materials, a book by its title). The library work greatly increased students' exposure to libraries' services and systems. For example, students learned that they could use library websites to find and renew books.

Finally, we compared a pre- and post- writing reflection on library use and knowledge. Most students were familiar with the library beforehand; however, their post-reflection writing showed that students' understanding of library services had increased. Their pre- and post-assessments also showed a marked change in attitude from anxiety to confidence. One student wrote at the outset, "I don't use the library in the United States. I know this is important for my English but I don't have time. . . For now, library can wait me." We interpreted this comment as pure indifference. Later we realized this was a face-saving response. The student was simply not comfortable in a library. At the end of the project he wrote, "Library assignments changed a little bit my life. Right now, I am not scary from library. When I have free time in future I can spend time in a library. It is not dangerous. I believe in library."

This project expanded my view of information literacy and its importance in the ESL curriculum. Prior to completing this project, I had not considered that information literacy started with the ability to access materials. I did not realize the demand I was placing on students by asking them to find their own reading material. I did not know that I needed to intentionally teach how to use the library so that students could complete assignments successfully.

Working with our librarian gave me confidence to integrate information literacy into my classroom by teaching library skills. I continue to use what I learned from this project with my intermediate classes. With the increased understanding of library anxiety, I have reframed my approach and added lessons on how to ask librarians questions and use listening strategies to check comprehension. The library creates a real context for students to use these listening and speaking skills. By meeting the LSTA grant's larger goal of integrating information literacy into the pre-college and underserved community college populations, we expanded my understanding of information literacy and the role it needs to play in the ESL curriculum.

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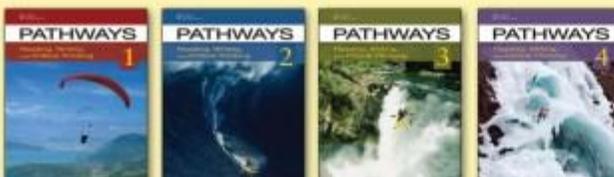
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*** Deracination, Language Learning, and Auto-Ethnography**

Sunday, July 1, 2012

By:

LaVona Reeves

EWU MATESL Program Director

At TESOL in New Orleans in 2011, Jessica Dinneen, an alumna, and I went to Sandra Silberstein's session about teachers' narratives, and we talked about the value of telling our stories to one another and to our students. My mentor at Columbia, Maxine Greene, emphasized teachers' duty to create spaces in classrooms for language learners to tell their stories as well. Like Dayton-Wood, I believe that "the meaning and use of experience are tied to the acquisition of language" (2012, p. 221).

Whether my students are freshmen or graduate thesis writers, I ask them to write auto-ethnography, which is "autobiographical in its approach to research and writing. It evidences multiple voices; multiple positions; multiple layers of complexity....it embraces the subjectivity of the researcher, narrator, and author as central to the research and to the story" (Trahar, 2009, p. 7). Whether teachers' linguistic roots lie in Seoul, in rural Nebraska, on the Crow Reservation of Montana, in the Japanese American internment camp at Topaz, in the hollows of Appalachia, in Saigon, in Paris, or in the *barrios* of New York City, our identities are inextricably tied to our roots. Deracination is the feeling of being uprooted when torn from our communities where we are safe and enter those where we feel unsafe, confused, and devalued. As language learners, we often have these feelings, and it helps to share our stories with one another and with our students—both our victories and our defeats.

As I look around my classroom, I see a woman in full *hijab* who teaches English in Saudi Arabia, a Korean man who will return to teach in Seoul, a Japanese woman who will teach in Kobe, an American who taught in Spain, and others who leave soon for jobs overseas. And I ask them to write about moments they remember in their language learning—snippets of conversations, sounds of words, lines of poetry, moments of deep understanding, snatches of dreams, faces of those who helped them learn important lessons, memories of rooms they studied in, melodies of tunes that calmed them, sketches of dreams that scared them. I share with my students a scene from my classroom at Harvard—a journal I had written in class with my students when I was teaching ESL composition there, and visiting scholars were reciting poems they were going to be writing about in an expository essay. I overlay childhood memories with scenes from Harvard and lines of Adrienne Rich's poem intertwined—hence the multi-vocality

that TESOL asks of us in its guidelines for qualitative research, the weaving of voice upon voice. This story is what weavers call *bayeta*: “cloth which was commonly raveled and reused as weft in nineteenth century Navajo textiles” as defined by the University of Colorado archivists who preserve textiles. Like the Navajo, I have raveled and reused layer after layer of my experiences, memories, and stories to make a new blanket—I have taken the old to make the new.

The Windmill Just Stands There

A Korean man from the Kennedy School rises and begins to recite a poem by Adrienne Rich (1991). I hear just a few words: “*farms of rust and stripping paint . . . a place of sheer unpretentious hardship*” “*dark pines stretching away toward Canada...*” “*a one-room schoolhouse by a brook...*” “*...Cowturd, moss, wild mint...*” (p. 8). I am his composition teacher. I should be paying attention. I should be taking notes, but I cannot. I keep wondering how I got from there to here, from the gray stucco farmhouse to Sever Hall. I want to go back, but I cannot. Again, I hear Mr. Park’s words/Adrienne’s words.

How did I get from barnyard to Harvard Yard, from a one-room schoolhouse to Cambridge? I have a recurring dream where I go to visit the Rockenbachs—our neighbors from childhood. And I want to help Mrs. Rockenbach gather eggs as in the past, and I knock on her door, and she answers, but she doesn’t recognize me. She seems surprised to see me, a perfect stranger, asking to help gather eggs. When I begin to explain who I am, she seems not to comprehend my words. Perhaps I am speaking French or Japanese, the languages I learned at the university, but I think I am speaking English, country English, not city English. I apologize. She closes the door. . . “*wild mushrooms under the pines . . .*” (Rich, 1991, p. 8). I begin to walk down the dirt road toward my old house, but it isn’t there any more. Only the windmill stands there—it just stands still, the way it did on washdays when we had to pump the water, when there wasn’t a bit of wind. I feel lost and confused. And then I always wake up.

Mr. Park, silent now, is still standing at the podium. I don’t know how long he has been standing there. The class is silent. I thank him and call on Dr. Ishikawa to recite her poem next. She has chosen Kotaro Takamura’s “innocent tale”:

“Chieko claims there is no sky over Tokyo and says she longs to see a real sky. . . in surprise I look up. What I see between the cherry leaves is that clear sky of never, never separable old acquaintance....gazing far away Chieko says the blue sky that appears each day over the crest of Mt. Atatara is Chieko’s real sky” (Takamura, 1978, p. 27).

My mind reels back. A student at Columbia years earlier, I also long to see a real sky in New York City. I am like Chieko: for me, there is no sky over Tokyo. It is the memory of Nebraska sky—windmill, horizon, farmhouse, spelling bees, teachers like Miss Winnifred Howell, community—which is the most real to me, even today. It is the way Miss Howell still felt personally responsible for her students—the way she confided to me how she wished she could have done something to keep Charles Starkweather (mass murderer) on the straight and narrow. Miss Howell could recall where he sat in her classroom and where my mother sat and

where I sat years later. What is real to me is the way my people talk after supper, the way Grandpa sighs in silence, the way Grandma sings, the way Mama hums when she cans peaches.

I was fortunate because I never felt that I had to cut myself off from my community of origin, and I never felt alienation from them, but I did feel a kind of devaluing of what I valued when I entered the university. The elders in my family and community were my teachers. They had been my parents' teachers, and they helped to anchor me, perhaps unknowingly, as I entered the University of Nebraska, moved on to Columbia, and eventually completed the doctoral degree while teaching full time.

Stories of Heritage Language Loss

But for some, the family and linguistic ties have been broken, and we see that expressed by fellow teachers like Thomas Nakayama: "While the Japanese language of the Meiji Era slowly died in my family, it was finally silenced in the internment camp experience," (1997, p. 236). Most of us dare not write about the losses expressed by Nakayama when his family "made the switch from being primarily Japanese-speaking" to English-speaking (p. 236). Nakayama says, "I feel as if a part of my tongue has been stolen from me, silenced. I am torn apart, and I feel the loss of the unified subject" (p. 236). More wistfully, Rinco, in *A Jar of Dreams*, discovers a letter from Japan: "I looked at the Japanese writing in the letter, squiggling up and down the soft rice paper like a lot of skinny black spiders, and wished I could read it" (McDiffett, 2001, p. 60). These are losses that scar our spirits, though we cannot speak of them. We fear we dare not name them if we want to be seen as "real Americans." As teachers, we know that insidious chipping away of the dialect or language of the group of origin takes us even farther from our people than resident mission schools, English-only policies, forced busing, and college entry.

In conjunction with writing their history of learning English, I ask students to read parts of Nakayama, McDiffett, Okawa (2012), Shimabukuro (2011), and others who experienced confusion and loss of language and culture of origin. We discuss their own losses as well. A Hmong American student told his peers that the Hmongs did not really have their own country—his grandfather said they were just mountain people without a country. He then did some research on his heritage language and culture, weaving it into his auto-ethnography and sharing the final paper with the class. To give them some idea of memories of language learning, I shared with them my experience of learning French from my Russian godmother, and this story helped them to retrace memories of specific people—other than teachers—who helped them learn English.

"Eat caviar. Drink *Kirschwasser*. Study ballet."

In closing, I will tell you my story of learning French.

A small lady with white hair and a foreign accent answered the door to a house that looked from the outside like a gardener lived there—a white picket fence, many kinds of beautiful flowers, rose bushes blooming gloriously, shrubs pruned and lining the sidewalks! My mother and I were in the Russian neighborhood doing a survey for the government agency trying to identify persons

who were deaf or going deaf. I had volunteered in my elementary school to do this, so my mother came with me since I was just 12 years old at the time. This lady, Olga, had a husband who was going deaf, and we were interested in helping them get a hearing aid for Peter, so she filled out paper work. But before we left, she asked me if I was interested in learning French from her and Peter, and I said I really was! From that day on, I would go to their house for weekends and holidays, and we always spoke French—we started with *Cendrion—Cinderella!* And we read many, many children's books in French, and I learned from the pictures and from Olga, who taught me how to pronounce the words correctly and how to say many things in the language—"I am American. I love to read! I am going to live in France some day! I have three sisters and one brother. I love cognac!" All were fun expressions to say, so I loved spending time there, but they did have a French-only rule from the moment I walked in until the moment I left. All of a sudden, I was in France, learning French from Russian immigrants who had lived in Paris during WWII and were in the process of becoming American citizens. She loved French but hated what the Communists had done to the Russian language and said I should not waste my time learning Russian! Since we had no French classes in elementary school or middle school, Olga was my only teacher until I entered high school and started taking French in the 10th grade.

At the University of Nebraska, I continued to study advanced French literature and language. The faculty were nearly all French or Canadian, but my favorite professor was Lenore Buford, an African American woman from Cleveland, Ohio, who loved poetry and read Hugo and Rimbaud with great passion. And I grew to love French poetry as well—Baudelaire, Hugo, and Rabelais. There were many, many papers I had to write in French, but I also took history courses about France, and I wrote one major paper in English with many French quotes on Stendhal's *The Red and the Black*, which my history professor loved! And I got an A in the class. The hardest part of being a French major was learning the verb conjugations—for 500 French verbs! I had to take that examination twice since I did not pass it the first time. All through college, I went to see Peter and Olga, and on the nights before major exams in French, I slept in their little attic room, studying all night or sitting at the kitchen table while Olga read each poem or story and explained it to me—always in French, however, never in English! No, that was not allowed. English was the forbidden language in the house, though I shed many tears and begged her just to explain everything to me in English—which never happened. On May 1—Olga's birthday and Labor Day in Russia, Olga bought caviar and Kirschwasser—a kind of cherry liqueur, and we had a big celebration when she set out all of her handmade dolls from Russia and those she had made herself since arriving in the United States. And Olga kept telling me that I would live in France one day and study there, so I had to get ready and work a little on my French—a little every day. She also insisted that I start studying ballet—to learn to walk beautifully and to learn the French terms in ballet—which she had studied at the Kirov Ballet Company in Russia as a child! Living in France and studying ballet would make me a lady. Olga promised me that, and I tried my best to fulfill her dreams for me.

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*** "Short, But Sweet" Becomes "Lost In Transition"**

Sunday, July 1, 2012

By:

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It is often said that those who visit China for a week write a book about it. Those who stay a month write an article and those who live here a year or more – write nothing.

If you consciously look at the verbs that are used in that quotation, we notice that ‘*visiting*’ would write a book, ‘*staying*’ would write an article, and ‘*living*’ would write nothing. These verbs imply different types of literacy, which is the context on staying in foreign countries. As far as the verb “visit”, I would translate it into “experience”, meaning everything is new enough to make a book. Everything that happens around the writer or *visitor* would give him or her shocking or surprising insights and impressions about the events from every single moment. This is why being ‘*short, but sweet and intense*’ can be extended by many assumptions, appreciations, judgments, and superficial pictures taken for a short time. Meanwhile, *living* somewhere is unconscious like people breathing everyday. It is natural and hardly noticeable. Moreover, ‘getting *accustomed to*’ could translate into ‘staying abroad’, so people in that situation or “staying abroad” can only write an article, ‘being used to’ would definitely translate into ‘living abroad’, which means, *experiencing* something new is impossible when you are already accustomed to it. This is where the sweet mixes with the “*getting accustomed to*” and turns into “*lost in transition*” after all. The length of time lets us fully experience the culture and we become a part of it. This is why the writer or the *resident* cannot write something specific because he or she is “*lost in transition*”

There is a quotation from Mark Twain(1835-1910): “*I didn’t have time to write a short letter, so I wrote a long one instead.*” He was a hugely well-known American humorist, writer and lecturer who wrote many famous works such as <*The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, 1876>, <*Life on the Mississippi*, 1883>, <*The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, 1884>, etc. As we can tell from these titles, we can assume, at least, that he enjoyed being adventurous and traveling. Actually, he used to be a journalist who wrote a popular collection of travel letters by traveling to many places while working for a local newspaper. Knowing this background about him, traveling can be translated to ‘visiting’, so he couldn’t help but write a book because the view, while he was traveling, is conscious. By the end, it tends to catch dynamic things and his ability to take in the new input is very fast and the amount of new experiences is enough to fill up the book.

Recalling a time, two years ago, when I had a speaking test to get a level assignment, there was a question in the test about the first impression that I had of the United States. At that time, it had been just three days since I came to the States and I still felt like everything was new and very unfamiliar. I remember saying to the teachers that it was unbelievable to see people out the window jogging with their big dogs, which seemed to me like a scene straight out of a Hollywood movie. Moreover, I felt totally foreign while looking at the signs of places written in English, and looking around at the people on the bus, which gave me a feeling of isolation because of appearance, so I was a little scared of being alone on the bus. Because I had only been here for three days, I was able to look at things about America or, at least, Spokane with my Korean eyes and the impression that I got was based on the comparison with what things went on in Korea. However, since I have been living in Spokane for a year now, it still surprises me sometimes that I have become so settled down with life in this city that used to be so foreign to me. I feel at home here with a sense of ownership: for example, if it was back then during the time of my speaking test, I would have described people in this city as ‘American people’ or ‘People in Spokane’; but, now I use the pronoun ‘we’ by seeing myself as part of a group of people in Spokane. I think this sense of being engaged (inclusion) can be due to my successfully adjusting to living abroad here with good people from diverse cultures and the length of time I lived in Spokane. In adjusting to this life, furthermore, I have been successful, thanks in part to

my enthusiasm for studying. In other words, how I look at things and new phenomena became very different compared to the way I might have viewed things when I first came here. So, even though I have been here for a long time and I am able to write a “book”, the content is not about the differences. It is about my daily life, which might not satisfy readers’ “appetite”.

When I visited Korea last August for vacation, an interesting experience happened to me. This visit was the first in a year since I left for the U.S to study abroad. This was also the longest period that I had stayed in a foreign country in my life. I was surprised that my impression of Korea was very different from what I previously had while living in Korea, and also from the perspective of a citizen of that country. I didn’t expect that I ever would start to judge Koreans without putting myself in the circle of “Koreans” of which I am a part. I felt that I was not in the same inner circle as them when I looked at Korea. I considered myself to be an observer and excluded myself as being “Korean”. Instead of using ‘*WE* Korean people’, I behaved like I was a guest in my own family and naturally I was treated as a visitor for one month even though everything in my home country was definitely familiar to me. For instance, I knew where the black pepper was in the kitchen and I knew how to pick up the mail. But, when I tried to speak English while talking about the vacation, I automatically chose the phrase ‘*visited* Korea’ instead of ‘*went* home’. These are some changes that happened to me and I thought, even though I am a Korean, I would probably write a book about Korea based on the feelings and discoveries that I had gotten during the first week. I felt like I was finally getting into the same inner circle when I had to leave Korea again after one month. That is, I was in the position where I would only write an article instead of a book regarding Korean culture.

Finally, I have been lucky to have had the experience of the one week, one month and one year picture – one *week* and one *year* – as relates to living in other countries. Through my experiences, I realized something fresh and new: staying for a short time allows individuals to write a book meanwhile staying longer can create a normal daily life experience. When applying my experiences to literacy, I would like to say: “Be awake, be creative, be sensitive and be diligent. Definitely be prepared to get influential insights from the texts or the situations.” The knowledge that you will get from the diverse contexts will make your brain spin and work on the schema; in other words your background knowledge will be a base and strongly affect how you see the world or how you view literacy later on. Being exposed to various ideas about literacy and frequent “tasting” of them, little by little, will refresh our background knowledge (schema), and effectively transfer our thinking. Finally, we can have multi-genre and various points of view toward the world and literacy in context.

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*** Whaddam I Gonna Do, They Don't Speak English?**

Sunday, July 1, 2012

By:

Janice Yearwood, M.A. in TESOL

More and more often regular classroom teachers are facing this situation: new students come who have very limited English-speaking ability. This happened to me a number of years ago when the principal, a mom and a little boy appeared at my classroom door during instruction time. The principal said, "Here is your new student. He's from Korea, and he doesn't speak English." The two adults left as I stood there in shock and fear. I had no idea how to proceed.

Thinking I was being helpful, I seated him on the front row in the center where I could watch over him as I taught. Unfortunately, this was the worst place I could have put him. He really couldn't see other students' responses to my instruction, so he had no visual clues as to what I wanted him to do. Also that put him where everyone was watching him; very embarrassing! Good intentions are not enough in these situations.

Frequently our first thoughts as teachers are about our workload. When we hardly have enough time to get done all we need to do currently, how are we going to have time to teach English and make modifications to accommodate this child? Sometimes anger, as well as frustration, creeps in.

However, we really need to develop empathy for these students. Often we underestimate the many aspects of learning a new language. It is so much more than just learning new vocabulary and sentence structures. Although that would be hard enough in itself because some languages put the verb first, then the subject. (If you think this is easy just try thinking or speaking for 10 minutes reversing subject and verb). Some languages include the subject in the verb; others don't change the verb to express tense. Sometimes the word you use depends on your relation to the person you are speaking to. Articles are not used in many languages. Some English sounds are not used in other languages, especially the 'th' sound. In some cases a new alphabet has to be learned as well.

And that is just the beginning of language learning. Reading, writing, speaking and listening require different skills. English has about 41 sounds spelled over a hundred different ways. Many times when speaking we reduce and change sounds, as in the first three words of this title. Then we have formality issues (we wouldn't use "you guys" in a formal situation). Additionally, we speak in idioms frequently, and the connotation of words can't be looked up in a dictionary. We are told that learning academic English requires between 5-7 years. These students have a formidable task ahead of them. We need to provide continuous encouragement to help them keep trying.

So far we have just addressed their academic problems. Their backgrounds are varied. Some are here as refugees. Their families have come because of persecution, and the children may have seen atrocities. Others come from places where they may not have even been in schools before. Others have strong academic backgrounds. Some may live in a neighborhood where they are the only speaker of their language; others are in a community of their nationality, and no English is heard outside of school. In all probability the children were not given any choice about moving, and they may be resentful at being put in this situation against their wishes. Regardless of these factors, all have left family, friends, familiar surroundings, and their ability to communicate and knowing how to respond to situations. Everything in their environment (buildings, shopping, food, clothing, customs, etc.) may be new to them.

They all will experience what is called 'culture shock.' When arriving in a new country, there is a honeymoon period: everything is new and exciting. This is followed by frustration: "That's not the way we do it where I'm from." Then there comes an accommodation & blending of the old and new. Finally there is an acceptance of the new people they have become. Many fear losing their old selves, and they are not sure what their new selves will be like. Your students may be in any of these stages when they come to you. Please be sympathetic of the roller coaster ride of emotions that they are on.

As we recognize the situations they are coming from, it should make us more willing to put forth the extra time needed to facilitate their learning and to go the extra mile in appreciating and encouraging them. An added bonus is that all the things we do to help the non-native-English-speaker will also help our lower-performing students as well.

Learning more about these students' cultures and how to help them will be well worth the effort. These students will provide our American students with an opportunity to develop cultural awareness, compassion and helpfulness.

This is the kind of information we ESL professionals need to supply our regular classroom teachers with. If we can get them 'on-board' with us, it will be a big help for our students.