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From Theory to Practice for Teachers of English Learners

Teaching and learning English in the US are complex processes that are not explained by language theories or methods alone. Concepts such as the relationship between language majority groups and language minority groups, language status, immigration, economics, language planning, and policies add to the complexity of language-learning situations. Effective teachers for the more than 5 million English learners (ELs) in kindergarten through 12th grades require unique knowledge, skills, and dispositions. This article provides a review of the language, learning, and language learning theories and practices for second language teaching, focusing on sociocultural theories and practices.

This article provides an overview of theories, approaches, and practices in teaching children who speak languages other than English in K-12 schools in the US. Building from a synthesis of the literature on teaching English as a second language, I conclude by noting the pedagogical knowledge and skills teachers in K-12 settings must have to appropriately meet the needs of this growing population. An additive and culturally responsive approach is taken in addressing the educational needs of English learners (ELs), namely that using children's languages and cultural backgrounds should be viewed as resources in helping them succeed academically (Kloss, 1998).

The education of the nation's more than 5 million English learners (Goldberg, 2008) depends on the delivery of academically rigorous and linguistically appropriate instruction by their teachers. While the need to provide this type of instruction for all English learners is critical, it is imperative for English learners at the K-12 level. K-12 English learners have the dual urgency to acquire English proficiency while simultaneously mastering the increasingly complex requirements for high school graduation. As such, it limits the review of instructional practices to those that have been most influential in the development of second language teaching as it is practiced today.

The review includes a synthesis of the history of second language teaching with a focus on the relationships between language learning and language teaching. Language teaching methods, along with the learning theories that guide those methods, will help inform the recommendations for effective beginning

English as a Second Language instruction at the K-12 level. Perspectives on the impact of reforms such as the role of standards and technology for English learners will also be included. The requisite teacher expertise for the appropriate instruction of K-12 English learners at the beginning levels of English proficiency across the language skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) is also highlighted.

Second Language Teaching: Perspectives on Learning and Language Theories

The historical antecedents of contemporary language teaching methods are premised upon notions about human learning. Language teaching is influenced by the fields of linguistics and psychology and, by extension, second language teaching methods are closely related to concepts and theories about the ways in which humans learn in general, along with the ways in which linguists define language. The following sections briefly review theories of learning, followed by theories of language, and their relationship to second language teaching.

Learning Theories and Second Language Teaching

Learning theories can best be described as conceptual or philosophical orientations about ways that human beings learn. These include behaviorist, cognitive, and sociocultural perspectives (see Table 1). Behavioral learning theory views learning as a response to stimuli in the environment; the learner is a "creature of habit" who can be *manipulated, observed, and described* (Brown, 1994; Gass & Selinker, 1994; Skinner, 1957). Behaviorist influences in second language teaching can be observed in methods such as the audio-lingual approach and situational language teaching (described later in this article).

Table 1
Overview of Learning Theories and Teaching Implications

Learning theory	*Origination*	*Definitions and instructional implications*
Behaviorist	US c. 1914; influenced by European empiricism	Learning as a response to environmental stimuli and can be *manipulated, observed, and described* (Watson; 1919, Skinner, 1938). Teaching thus is through practice, repetition, and rewards.
Cognitive	1950s to present	Learning can be *explained as* deep, complex psychological phenomena such as motivation, schemas, and processes for learning (Bruner, 1996; Piaget, 1974). Teaching occurs in phases with gradual complexity.
Sociocultural	1970s to present	Learning is influenced by social, cultural, and historical factors. Learning takes place within social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1991). Teaching occurs through meaningful interactions between experts and novices.

Cognitive learning theories attempt to explain deeper, complex psychological phenomena such as motivation, schemas, and other processes for learning. This orientation can be described as comprising two branches, developmental cognitive learning, from the work of Piaget (1974), and socio-constructivist, based on the work of Vygotsky (1978) and Bruner (1996). Developmental approaches propose that learning occurs in stages and follows a sequence, whereas socio-constructivist approaches propose that "development occurs because of learning" and because it is "scaffolded" (Bruner, 1996) or supported through interaction of some kind.

Sociocultural views of learning, which build upon constructivist approaches, are often linked together in the psychological and pedagogic literature, and they include the premise that second language teaching and learning take place within the social interactions of learners and more capable others and seek to understand the cultural and historical influences on learning (Faltis & Hudelson, 1998; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wertsch, 1991). A sociocultural theory of learning "begins with assumption that action is mediated and that it cannot be separated from the social milieu in which it is carried out" (Wertsch, 1991, p. 18). Table 2 summarizes the basic tenets of sociocultural theory.

Table 2
Tenets of Sociocultural Theory

- Learning precedes development.
- Language is the main vehicle (tool) of thought.
- Mediation is a central concept of learning.
- Social interaction is the basis of learning and development. Internalization is a process that transforms learning from the social to the cognitive (individual) plane.
- The Zone of Proximal Development is the primary activity space in which learning takes place.

Second language educators must be knowledgeable about the development of learning theories both in terms of their historical development and in terms of their analogous relationship to language teaching. The next section reviews theories about language that will be briefly defined in order to apply them later in the review of second language teaching methods.

Language Theories and Second Language Learning

Language theories fall into broad categories: those that are structural, cognitive, functional, and interactional (see Table 3 for an overview). Structural language theories are those that view language as composed of interrelated linguistic features of language, such as the phonological, lexical, and syntactical components.[1]

Cognitive approaches to language learning (also called "mentalist" approaches) were reactions to structuralist views that language learning primarily requires knowledge of the surface level of forms.

The biological and generative ability to produce language, as proposed by

Table 3
Overview of Language Theories

Language theory	*Definition*
Structural	Language is equated with its linguistic forms.
Cognitive	Language is a biologically predetermined mental ability.
Functional/ communicative	Language learning is a tool that is used to accomplish things or for certain purposes (i.e., communication).
Interactional	Language is a means through which exchanges, performances, and human relationships are created and maintained.

Noam Chomsky (1957), advanced the notion that humans are innately predisposed to create and use language. Chomsky also coined the term "language acquisition device" (LAD)—a concept that Krashen would later apply to second language acquisition theory and practice. According to McNeil (1967), the LAD consists of four internal linguistic properties:

1. The ability to distinguish speech sounds from other sounds in the environment;
2. The ability to organize linguistic events into various categories that can be refined;
3. The ability to recognize that only certain types of linguistic structures are possible and others are not; and
4. The ability to evaluate language production to determine accuracy of production.

These properties come together to form a new theory of language learning that views all languages as having the same underlying principles (called Universal Grammar), but differing from each other in the application of different rules for sentence structure, pronunciation, and word insertion. Chomsky's generative grammar theory posited two levels of grammatical structure: deep structure and surface structure. Although generative grammar did not result in widely used methods, the application and use of *cognitive code,* a language teaching method that involved the application of innate rules of grammar through explicit generation and analysis of new language structures, had an impact on language-teaching methods through the 1960s and '70s. Most notably, the influence of Chomsky in contemporary second language teaching is evident in methods such as the natural approach (Ellis, 1986, as cited in Richard-Amato, 1996, pp. 410-412).

Functional language theories view language as the medium within which to achieve specific purposes or meanings. Communication, and not just the grammar and structure of a language, is the essential characteristic of language. Key theorists who influenced language teaching through this approach were Halliday (1970), Wilkens (1976), and Widdowson (1978). The extent to which communication is considered a function of language is the point of intersection between functional and communicative language theories. Additionally,

both functional and communicative approaches represent a significant historic shift from *prescribing* forms of language (such as in the structural approach) to *describing* the conditions for meaningful uses of language. Consequently, communicative language theories evolved from the functional language theories of the 1970s and have greatly influenced contemporary language teaching methods.

Interactional views of language are those that view language as the means to achieve relationships and performances (internal/innate features) between people (Richards & Rodgers, 1998, p. 17). While not directly linked in the literature, there is at least some correspondence between interactional views of language and sociocultural views of learning. The degree to which there is a requirement for social exchanges and "transactions" between beginning and experts in the language is one such commonality. Another similarity is the way in which language learning is studied (for example, conversational analysis).

Summary of Language Theories

Theories of language focus the understanding of the key constructs that provide the foundation for second language learning theories. Consequently, specific methods proceed from combinations of theories of learning and theories of language. The next section provides a brief chronological review of language teaching methods, which are categorized according to the theories of language (structural, functional, and interactive). Included in the descriptions of second/foreign language teaching methods are: (a) the learning theory (ies), and (b) the key instructional practices for each specific method.

Communicative Language Teaching. Drawing from notional-functional language theorists such as Wilkens (1972), Halliday (1975), and Hymes (1967/1974), communicative language teaching (CLT) focuses on learning language to communicative notions of language (time, sequence, quantity, location, and frequency) for specific functions (requests, denials, offers, complaints). Baco Finocchiaro and Brumfit (1983) point to the complementary nature of the approaches. Thus, communication as the ultimate goal of language learning is achieved through interaction with others. Because of this blend, CLT is classified here as following the interactionist theory of learning and is now considered to be essential for effective second language teaching.

Communicative competence, defined initially by Del Hymes (1967/1974), is a central tenet of CLT. Expanding on Chomsky's notions of language competence to include pragmatic and sociolinguistic aspects of language (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2001), and elaborated upon originally by Canale and Swain (1980), communicative competence underscores the importance of "discourse-connected thoughts"—orally or in writing—in four critical areas:

1. Strategic competence—engages other competencies in order to promote production;
2. Sociolinguistic competence—includes cultural knowledge as it informs ways to use languages appropriately in terms of formality, politeness, turn taking, interrupting, asking questions, and so on;

3. Discourse competence—the selection, sequencing, and arrangement of oral or written words, structures, and utterances or sentences;
4. Linguistic competence—basic elements of language (phonology, lexicon, sentence patterns, and morphological inflections (Celce-Murcia & Olshtain, 2001, p. 16).

An example of the ways in which second language learners engage in acquiring strategic competence in the L2 is revealed in ways they seek to "compensate" through:

- Paraphrasing—elaborate descriptions to fill in missing words;
- Transfer—inverted grammar, or trying to making it "sound right";
- The creation of new words.

Thus, the tasks that language learners engage in CLT emphasize meaningful, learner-centered activities in all four language areas. As the most widely used method for language teaching, CLT focuses on all four skills of language—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—and does not specify a prescribed grammatical or structural sequencing. Most significantly, CLT focuses on meaning through contextualized interaction over form.

Total Physical Response. An outlier sandwiched between the more traditional approaches and those that are more communicative is total physical response (TPR). Developed by James Asher (1977), TPR espoused delayed production through actions as prompted by the imperative (commands). Its use has been limited more to beginning levels of language learning (Brown, 1994, pp. 98-99). From a behaviorist learning approach, TPR follows a gradually more complex sequence of grammatical structures enacted by the teacher's use of verbal commands. The learner's role is to physically respond to the commands, although she or he is not required to speak. Concern about the learner's emotional affective state is a consideration for the teacher. Tracy Terrell and Stephen Krashen (1982) later extended and incorporated the concept of delayed production from TPR to the natural approach.

The Natural Approach. Krashen and Terrell (1983) developed the natural approach following Krashen's observations of Tracy Terrell's teaching practices. Krashen's views of language emphasize second language learning as following a similar developmental sequence as first language development. A focus on communication through meaningful input, as manifested in Krashen's five hypotheses (see Table 4), include some of the initial practices from TPR.

Teaching English as a Second Language: Sociocultural Issues

Teaching and learning English in the US are complex processes that are not explained by language theories or methods alone. Concepts such as the relationship between language majority groups and language minority groups, language status, immigration, economics, and language planning and policies add to the complexity of the language learning situation (Cummins, 1991; Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000). Accordingly, scholars have identified key sociocul-

Table 4
Krashen's Five Hypotheses

1. Learning versus acquisition	Humans are genetically programmed (LAD) to acquire languages; explicit instruction may impede natural language learning
2. The language monitor	Overemphasizes rules and consciousness over production
3. Comprehensible input + 1	Messages must be delivered in ways that are understood by the learner and that are slightly above his or her current proficiency level
4. The affective filter	The learner must feel comfortable enough to take risks in the language learning situation
5. The natural order hypothesis	Language acquisition follows a natural sequence, from simple to more comples language

tural notions of additive and subtractive bilingualism as approaches to learning English that either seek to eliminate (subtractive approaches) the first language of students versus those that seek to augment the home languages of students (additive approaches). Cummins's theories of language threshold and minority status, influenced by Skutnabb-Kangas, have provided educators with a framework for understanding the complex relationship between the development of the primary language and the second language from the standpoint of language status. The five principles, outlined in Table 5, offer one explanation for the complex dynamics involved in learning English as a second language in the US.

Table 5
Cummins's Contextual Interaction Theory

Cummins's five principles for the education of language minority students

Principle 1: For bilingual students the degree to which proficiencies in both the L1 and L2 are developed is positively associated with academic achievement.

Principle 2: Language proficiency is the ability to use language for both academic purposes and basic communicative tasks.

Principle 3: For language minority students the development of the primary language skills necessary to complete academic tasks forms the basis of similar proficiency in English.

Principle 4: Acquisition of basic communicative competency in a second language is a function of comprehensible second language input and a supportive affective environment.

Principle 5: The perceived status of students affects the interactions between teachers and students and among the students themselves. In turn, student outcomes are affected.

Cummins' fifth principle refers to issues of status, not only of the language of immigrant students, but status as embedded in the daily interactions between teachers and students, and between students and students. Thus, effective language learning for English learners is not only a matter of quality instruction, teacher expertise, and appropriate instructional programs; it also must address the microlevel contacts that English learners have with others in schools every day. These interactions are laden with subtle and often not so subtle messages about the learner and the learner's first language and culture.

Institutional factors, such as the types of instructional programs available to English learners, access or barriers to a rigorous curriculum, and other institutional mechanisms that signal the types of opportunities for equitable learning for these students, all are considered important in understanding academic success for this population (see Walqui, 2000a).

More recently, Tsuda (as cited in Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000, pp. 656-657) posited "language ecology" as a useful paradigm for examining the balance or inbalance of monolingualism versus bi-or multilingualism at the more global levels. The language ecology model can be extended to the examination of schooling structures and classroom practices that promote or hinder monolingual or multilingual outcomes. History, however, points to the language ecological balance's being tipped much more toward the diffusion of English at the expense of the languages of immigrants as a result of schooling (Fishman, 1983/1991; Romaine, 1999; Veltman 1983). The next section identifies the types of instructional programs available for K-12 English learners in the US, along with a brief review of legal precedents for instruction of English learners.

Effective Instructional Programs and Practices for K-12 English Learners

The types of instructional programs available to English learners in the US must be addressed before discussing effective classroom practices in those programs. Valdés (2001) summarized the types of programmatic options available to most K-12 English learners as a precursor to her ethnography of the schooling experiences of middle-school Latino immigrant students in Northern California. Table 6 adapts Valdés's typology to include those programs that include primary language literacy or content-area instruction, whether in newcomer programs, Spanish for native speakers (SNS) classes (Constantino & Lavadenz, 1994; Walqui, 2000b), or dual language programs. Although these programs are rare, they do constitute additive versus subtractive forms of language education.

Similarly, Baker's typology (2001) defined strong versus weak programs for English learners at all grade levels, the former being categorized as those programs that explicitly have outcome goals of biliteracy and biculturalism and the latter as those that have explicit outcome goals of English monolingualism and monoculturalism. A number of studies support the development of literacy in the primary language as a foundation for literacy development in the second language (Cummins, 1991; Thomas & Collier, 1997/1998).

Table 6
English Language and Academic Instruction Program Options in K-12 Schools

Program type	*Grade levels*	*Descriptions*	*Classroom population*	*Comments*
Dual language programs	Pre-K-12	Regular subject matter instruction in the target (non-English) language. By mid-elementary, students have approximately 50% of their content-area instruction in English and 50% in the target language	Typically, classrooms are composed of 50% English learners (who speak the target language) and English-only students	This program focuses on biliteracy as an outcome for both language majority and language minority students. Variations in percentage of instruction and of content in target language
Early exit	K-2nd or 3rd	Early primary students are taught most subjects in the primary language along with English as a second language. By third or fourth grade, most students placed in sheltered or mainstream English classes	Language minority students/ELs	This was the mode of the majority of bilingual programs since the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. The goal is English
Late exit	K-6	Variations of these programs include primary language instruction in literacy and some subject matters, along with English as a second language instruction	Language minority students/ELs	These have been less commonly taught programs. May also be called heritage language or maintenance programs

Program type	*Grade levels*	*Descriptions*	*Classroom population*	*Comments*
Sheltered subject matter instruction; Structured English immersion for EL students	K-12	Specially designed instruction in English in regular subjects: math, social studies, science, etc. Intended for EL students at the intermediate level and uses simplified/ planned language	EL students at all levels	Students spend several periods a day in ESL instruction and are also enrolled in special subject matter classes designed for ELs. There is limited coverage of the regular curriculum
ESL Instruction	K-12	Instruction in English as a second language, either communicative or grammar and lexis	EL students	Students spend several periods a day in ESL instruction, including some pullout classes
Newcomer programs—Type II	6-12	Self-contained primary language literacy and/ or content-area instruction and ESL	EL students who are recently arrived	Students focus on improving primary language literacy and academic content knowledge while simultaneously learning English for a specific period of time (usually not more than 1 year)
Newcomer programs—Type I	6-12	Self-contained ESL	EL students who are recently arrived	Students focus exclusively on English for a specific period of time
English-only—mainstream	K-12	Regular classes	Anglophone and EL students	Students attend mainstream classes with undifferentiated instruction and curriculum

Adapted from Valdés (2001)

While it can be surmised that theoretically those programs that offer additive forms of English language instruction (that still support literacy in the primary languages of students) are ideal, the vast majority of ELs are in English language instructional settings that do not provide primary language support instruction (Government Accounting Office, 2001). Indeed, for K-12 ELs, federal and legal mandates require:

1. Educational agencies must take "appropriate action to overcome language barriers that impede equal participation by its students in instructional programs" (EEOA/The Equal Educational Opportunities Act, 1974).
2. Failure to provide English-language instruction to nonimmigrant students is a violation of the EEOA (Lau v. Nichols, 414 US. 563, 1974).
3. The three-pronged test for evaluating whether programs offer equitable learning opportunities for English learners. The three dimensions for instructional programs include: (a) that the program is based on sound educational theory; (b) that the program effectively implements the principles; and, (c) that the program has succeeded in overcoming language barriers (Castaneda v. Pickard, 648 F. 2d 989, 1007, 5th Cir. Court, 1981.

While the responsibility for establishing, staffing, maintaining, and evaluating instructional programs for English learners at the K-12 level remains with district and school administrators, the most immediate and direct contact these students have is with their teachers. The next section returns to effective instruction for immigrant K-12 English learners, followed by the requisite teacher expertise.

A Sociocultural/Constructivist Approach to Teaching English as a Second Language

Differential achievement of English learners is a serious concern for educators. Various factors affect school achievement, including social, cultural, political, and school-related (institutional) influences. Sociocultural (Del Rio & Alvarez, 1995; Tharp & Gallimore, 1988; Vygotsky, 1978) and constructivist (Poplin, 1988; Vygotsky 1978) theoretical perspectives concerning teaching and learning examine these factors and help to inform practices that contextualize the lived experiences many K-12 English learners face as they encounter schools, classrooms, teachers, and their peers. Sociocultural approaches give priority to knowing who the students are, including the use of language in the home. The Home Language Survey (HLS) asks the following:

1. Which language did your son/daughter learn when he/she first began to speak?
2. What language does your son/daughter most frequently use at home?
3. What language do you use most frequently to speak to your son/daughter?
4. Name the languages in the order they are most spoken by the adults at home.

There is strong conceptual affinity in the literature between sociocultural and constructivist theories. Combined, these two concepts provide a powerful construct that helps inform instructional practices for English learners. The sociocultural/constructivist problem-solving approach holds that knowledge is socially constructed in the interrelationship between the learner, the more competent other (educator, parent, peer, etc.), and the task at hand. This teaching and learning theory states:

- Thinking and learning are social processes, not merely individual processes.
- Teaching and learning occur best in activity settings where more competent others provide facilitation and guidance to learners in productive and authentic activities.
- Learning requires active participation, not only passive processing.
- Meaningful learning is situated in the context of everyday teaching and learning settings and in everyday problem-solving activities—these vary by cultural context, socioeconomic status, and other sociocultural and sociopolitical factors.
- School failure is a product of the interaction of several factors—including the environment, the relationship between the student and the teacher, the teacher's cultural and pedagogic competency and schooling—not just the student (Martin, 1996).

Sociocultural/constructivist theory implies that teachers seek to understand the perspectives and experiences of students, engage them in actively cocreating knowledge, and make learning relevant and applicable to real-world situations. A further implication is that evaluation and assessment must be authentic and linked to instructional processes.

Teaching English as a second language may include sociocultural strategies such as: (a) schematic building (Halliday & Hasan, 1989; Kaplan, 1966); (b) scaffolding (Bruner, 1996; van Lier, 1996); (c) cooperative learning (Kagan, 1995); (d) instructional conversations (IC) (Echevarria, 1996); (e) identifying learners' zones of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978); (f) using students' funds of knowledge (Moll, 1992); (g) multicultural education (Nieto, 1996); and (h) authentic assessment (Lavadenz, 1996; O'Malley & O'Malley, 1996).

The concept of students' funds of knowledge includes the cultural, linguistic, and historic resources that students bring with them to the school setting. Historically, English language instruction has ignored these linguistic and cultural "funds of knowledge" (Cummins 1996; Moll, 1992; Nieto, 1996; Valenzuela, 2000). The next section explores ways in which English literacy can develop more effectively as a result of additive approaches (those that build on as opposed to eliminate/ignore students' backgrounds).

English for Specific Purposes/English for Academic Purposes

Focused on the worldwide spread of English, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) developed as a response to the disciplinary or occupationally designated uses of English (English for engineers, English for business). Methods for each discipline/occupation are developed according to the specific occupation (business, science, or math) on an international level. Designed primarily for adult learners (Auerbach, 2002), ESP instruction assumes some basic knowledge of the second language. The curriculum is based on the materials and texts of the discipline.

Academic Language Teaching

Larsen-Freeman (2000) expanded the idea of discipline-specific language teaching to content-based second language instruction. Academic language development for second language learners entails the integration of language learning with content learning. This instruction can be delivered by the language teacher, a specially trained subject matter teacher, or through a "partnership" between a language teacher and a content-area teacher (Crandall, 1994).

With roots in the "language across the curriculum" movement of the 1970s in England, content-based instruction emerged in K-12 settings in the US as "sheltered subject matter teaching" in the 1980s (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Krashen, 1982). It entailed the adaptation of curricular materials and target language instruction based on principles of "comprehensible input." While these approaches move beyond the previously mentioned language learning methods that isolate language learning from the rest of the curriculum, there is a current and compelling need to better understand the language demands of content classes at the K-12 level and to simultaneously address the ways in which teachers can accelerate both language and content learning for K-12 students.

General language skills, content-specific language skills, and content learning are critical issues for all English learners; adolescent ELs are faced with these issues in even more acute ways (August & Hakuta, 1998; Gibbons & Cummins, 2002; Short, 1994). One conceptualization of academic language development is that by Solomon and Rhodes (1995). They define academic language development as extending beyond a discrete set of linguistic features that can be taught (functions and structures) and that includes academic discourse and register, a term adapted from Halliday (1978). According to this conceptualization, academic language is a register of English that can be documented empirically through analyzing the ways in which teachers and students co-construct conversations, instruction, and learning. Schleppegrell (2002) characterizes this as the discourse used in academic, professional, and technical contexts, characterized by its high-level discipline-specific vocabulary and rhetorical styles.

The complexities of second language learning extend beyond the techniques, methods, and practices. The development of theoretical models for second language teaching that consider broader dimensions of language is addressed in the next section.

Table 7
Models of Second Language Acquisition

	The acculturation model (Schumann, 1986)	***The input hypothesis model (Krashen, 1982)***	***Automaticity model (Bailystok, 1978/1982)***	***Conditions-outcomes model (Van Lier, 1996)***	***Language ecology model (Skutnabb-Kangas, 2000)***
Key concepts	Describes language learning as affected by the social and psychological "distance" between the first and second language and cultures of the learner systems and the way in which the learner views and is viewed by the new target language group	Based on the five hypotheses (defined earlier), this model contends that the L2 is acquired (not learned) in a similar fashion as the L1 through comprehensible input.	Distinguishes between explicit and implicit knowledge of language and the degree to which the individual analyzes, monitors, and uses two languages with ease (to use language with automaticity or control)	Takes into account both input and output factors in SLA. Identifies the critical condition required for language acquisition. These conditions include receptivity, focused attention, practiced intake, and language retention, which can be accessed in authentic uses for creative use—leading to proficiency	Examines language contact and learning according to the nature of the environment/context in which such languages can coexist, survive, or are lost. This perspective includes an emphasis on language as a human right.
Classroom application	More useful in teacher preparation as a model that examines the impact of external factors on L2 learning	Has been used extensively in K-12 classrooms through the natural approach	More limited application to instruction; however, this model provides a framework for cognitive learning in the L2	Considers that optimal learner output/production is a key feature in proficiency in L2 learning through authentic and meaningful interaction	Is a useful construct in promoting additive forms of second (English) language learning and toward establishment of equitable educational language policies

Models of Second Language Acquisition

The knowledge base for professionals in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) can be traced to the development of theories and

methods of language and language learning. Additionally, teachers of English learners must be knowledgeable about the *contexts* within which second languages are learned, that is, circumstances, settings, and conditions (social, historical, psychological, and political). Ellis (1986) describes this as "theory-then-research and research-then-theory" (p. 250). Ellis points out that this is by no means a clear-cut approach to explain the phenomenon of learning a second language. As presented in Table 7, these models provide a schema for understanding the complex interplay between language learning and the specific circumstances in which language learning takes place.

Chronologically, the models for second language acquisition highlighted above reflect a trend toward considering more than the linguistic, psychological, or instructional dimensions of learning a second language that the previous discussion has included. Particularly in regard to Schumann's acculturation model and Skutnabb-Kangas's language ecology model, the complex nature of second language learning in relation to the social, historical, and contextual factors that affect language learning point our attention to the challenges of teaching English as a second language. The next section expands on contextual issues that influence the learning of English for immigrant students and their descendents in the US.

Additive Approaches to Second Language Acquisition: Using Students' Resources to Develop Oracy and Literacy in English

Research has maintained that for immigrant and bilingual students, literacy in the first language is a good predictor of literacy in the second language (August, 2006; August & Hakuta, 1997; Cummins, 1991; National Reading Panel, 1999; Thomas & Collier, 1997/1998). For K-12 immigrant students who arrive with little or no English, instruction must provide them with appropriate English language development and, in order for them to keep up with their native English-speaking counterparts, content-area instruction. While the focus of this section of the review is on the development of oral language development and writing for English learners, the concept of primary language support is essential to providing an additive versus subtractive approach to acquiring a second language. Table 8 illustrates at least seven mechanisms to support students' "funds of knowledge" in an English instructional setting.

Table 8
Primary Language Support for ELs

Seven ways to support the primary languages of English learners

1. Resource materials in primary languages
2. Peer interaction (allowing students to use their first language and/or translate for each other)
3. A bilingual paraprofessional
4. Parent volunteers
5. Cross-age tutors
6. Team teaching with a bilingual teacher
7. Community volunteers (retired people, business leaders, and so on)

Even within the apparent constraints of California's Proposition 227, use of the first language, although not typical during target language instruction in English, is appropriate to clarify terms for the most beginning levels of English proficiency, particularly since educators strive to communicate effectively with their students.[2]

Additionally, it is helpful for teachers to be aware of the following about the first languages of their students as it relates to learning English:

- That similarities and differences between the sound, lexical, grammatical, and writing systems between the first language and English can either interfere or assist in the learning of English;
- The length of time and type of schooling experiences that students have had in the country of origin; and
- The level of literacy and content-area knowledge the student has attained.

This information is critical in determining the potential for these factors to assist with or hinder the learning of English and other academic subject matter.

The Role of Assessment

Formal and comprehensive assessment of English learners upon entrance to U.S. schools does not typically occur automatically. English proficiency assessments, even when conducted, are often inaccurate or have not considered other educational/schooling factors. Additionally, instruction for K-12 English learners at the beginning levels of proficiency can take place in any given number of instructional program types (see Table 6). Appropriate assessment and, often, reassessment is necessary to ensure that English learners receive instruction at the appropriate level (Lavadenz, 1996).

Oral Language Development

Given the popularity of those communicative approaches that emphasized the sequence of second language development parallel to the sequence of first language development (as in Krashen's natural order hypothesis), much of contemporary second language teaching has overextended the duration of the oral language-development period to the potential detriment of the K-12 English learner. From the overextension of the oral language-development period came a deferral of the introduction of reading and writing for these students. Communicative language teaching, which emphasized language learning through authentic tasks, such as role playing, jigsaw projects, and problem-solving activities (Larsen-Freeman, 2000), focuses less on the order of the language learning process than on the meaningful uses of language to foster communication. Additionally, the importance of the teacher's knowledge of the students' educational and literacy backgrounds remains a critical factor in the selection of instructional activities that are communicative in nature. This knowledge becomes even more critical for K-12 students in fostering the development of all four language skills in context (Oxford, 2001). Nevertheless,

several questions remain about the development of specific features of language for English learners that will be addressed. These include the explicit teaching of pronunciation, phonics, vocabulary, and grammar.

Teaching of Pronunciation for K-12 English Learners

Pronunciation can be defined as "the production and perception of the significant sounds of a particular language in order to achieve meaning in contexts of language use" (Seidlhofer, 2001, p. 56). While correct pronunciation can be a factor in communication, overemphasis of correct pronunciation through exercises and drills has given way to more meaning-based approaches. Communicative approaches, for instance, count on pronunciation errors as a vehicle to improve communication and move away from "accent-reduction" techniques, which tend to promote intolerance of accents. (It should be noted that language status has a great deal to do with the (in)tolerance of accents—see Pennycook, 1998).

Teaching of Vocabulary for K-12 English Learners

> *"We have not been taught the majority of words which we know…"*
> (Carter & Nunan, 2001, p. 46).

Although written from a first language perspective, this statement underscores the importance of context in learning vocabulary in the second language. Particularly important in the development of academic language, vocabulary development for English learners emphasizes the concept of a "controlled vocabulary"—the selection and delimitation of parameters of vocabulary to facilitate learning (Coady, 1995). Interestingly, vocabulary development and research in second language learning draws heavily from vocabulary development and research in the first language, and most particularly from reading research on what good readers do. Schema theory, techniques such as strategy instruction, chunking, and semantic mapping (Stoller & Grabe, 1993), and cognate analysis (Holmes & Moulton, 1995) are documented as central to vocabulary acquisition in second language learners. In the case of cognate analysis, comparing vocabulary that has similar roots constitutes an additive approach to second language learning. Nonetheless, there is no research that proves that direct instruction of vocabulary in isolation improves L2 learning on a sustained basis (Coady, 1995).

Grammar Instruction for K-12 English Learners

Durgunoglu (1998) identified that the underlying structures and orthographies (or writing systems) of the first language influences the ways in which text is read by second learners. The antiquated grammar-translation methods of the past have been replaced with modern methods that incorporate grammar instruction *within the context of meaningful and authentic texts,* as seen in methods such as communicative language teaching (Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 35). Thus, the focus on form has been extended with a focus on meaning (i.e., appropriate uses of grammatical forms within the contexts of authentic texts).

Phonics Instruction for K-12 English Learners

Phonics instruction can be defined as instruction that helps students learn to relate sounds and letters for reading and spelling. Research suggests that systematic phonics instruction is most successful for early elementary students (K and grade 1), especially among those with reading problems (Ramirez, 2000). However, there has been no documented empirical research supporting the use of direct phonics instruction for adolescent non-English-speaking students, despite the recent claims that ensue from curricular reform movements. The National Reading Panel's 1999 report targeting initial reading instruction for monolingual English speakers at the early elementary grades focuses on phonics instruction as one component of initial literacy development; caution should be applied when extending such conclusions to English learners at any grade level.

Writing Instruction for K-12 English Learners at Beginning Stages of English Proficiency

As previously mentioned, the deferral of literacy instruction for English learners has potentially caused subsequent delays in academic achievement. As a central component to the development of academic language, writing instruction for beginning English learners can be supported through an additive approach. This can occur by employing writing instructional strategies that bridge the first and second language and that use students' background knowledge and experiences (Peyton, 2000; Richard-Amato, 1996; Samway, 1999). Dialogue journals are one example of an initial interactive writing strategy in which the student and teacher exchanges are intended to communicate information on a more informal level. Since the focus is to encourage student writing, direct instruction on grammatical features does not take place with this writing strategy.

The language experience approach (LEA), originally developed for initial literacy instruction with native speakers by Van Allen (1967), has been adapted for use with second language learners. The principal practice is dictation by students to the teacher to produce written text. Its limitations include the extent to which the student and the teacher engage in academic discourse. Richard-Amato (1996) identified two additional concerns: (a) the potential for overgeneralization on the part of students that written language is simply spoken language, and (b) that "purists" practice the form of LEA that includes verbatim dictation (mistakes and all) and that may rectify student errors by noting them in student oral language production. LEA most likely should not be used in isolation as a writing strategy for second language learners; rather, K-12 students require a more rigorous exposure to written English. It does, however, support the connection between oracy and print for beginning English learners. For the very reasons that LEA should not be used in isolation, Leki (1992) identifies critical areas for guidance and instruction in academic writing for English learners. Although she writes for a college-level audience of ESL professionals, these points are important to consider for K-12 ELs. Leki identified "writing behaviors" for students that are supported by the following:

1. Sophistication—Because ELs have a variety of background experiences, including social class differences, the level of sophistication varies tremendously. Indeed, because of exposure to travel, political conditions, and turmoil in their countries of origin, along with a "duality of experiences" that comes with living in two cultures, many older ELs may have greater knowledge of global/international issues than their native English-speaking peers.
2. Use of bilingual dictionaries—While dictionaries can serve as valuable resources, overuse can produce unusual language usage in English.
3. Influence of cultural discourse/rhetoric—ELs' writing may be influenced by the first language and culture's patterns of thinking, speaking, and writing. Teachers' understanding of some of those patterns might help teachers to understand (without the tendency to stereotype) the nature of a student's writing and to respond with appropriate instruction.
4. Benefits from thinking in L1—Zamel (1992) points to the interrelationship between thinking, reading, and writing across two languages. While much more research needs to be conducted in L2 writing, Cummins (1996), Samway (1999), and others point to the advantages of students' using first literacy and language as a springboard for writing in English. Metalinguistic ability in bilingual learners has pointed to the fact that proficient bilingual learners use a "multistrategic approach" (Jimenez, 1997; Kahmi-Stein, 1998); that is, they use metacognitive strategies that include translating, transferring information across languages, and reflecting upon the text in both languages (L1 and L2).

Process approaches to writing (Massi, 2001; Richard-Amato, 1996; Smoke, 1996) appear to also benefit English learners. Process writing, while not originally developed for second language learners, has been used to "scaffold" writing instruction for ELs. Process writing includes strategies such as writing workshops, in which various drafts of the essays are elaborated upon through writing conferences between teachers and students or students and peers. An important consideration for using process writing with English learners is teachers' awareness of the influence of first language on second language writing (in order to understand that these are normal conditions of language development as compared to simple errors). Scarcella, Ehrle, and Geen (2003) provided a poignant case study of students who arrive at the university without having had the benefit of such instruction.

The Role of Standards

The standards reform movement of the 1990s led to the identification of academic content-area performance and subject-matter knowledge for K-12 students in the US (Short, 2000). While there was an attempt to integrate what every student should know and be able to demonstrate across the content areas, the needs of English learners were subsumed (thus basically ignored) within

this broad sweep. In 1997, the professional organization Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) sought to identify age-level appropriate social and academic English skills that should be incorporated into cross-curricular planning, assessment, and professional development. Clearly, social and academic uses of English are the basis for the functional orientation of the standards for K-12. The K-12 TESOL ESL Standard goals are:

Goal 1: Presentation of a Clear Proficiency Standards Framework
The standards publication presents five language proficiency standards. They include both social and academic uses of the language students must acquire for success in and beyond the classroom.

Goal 2: Identification of Specific Grade-Level Clusters
The grade-level clusters for the English-language proficiency standards reflect current educational configurations in the US.

Goal 3: Usage of Four Language Domains
Each of the five language proficiency standards is divided into the language domains of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. While interaction naturally occurs between and among language domains, they are maintained as separate constructs as one way of thinking about curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Goal 4: Inclusion of Five Levels of Language Proficiency
The use of five levels reflects the complexity of language development and allows the tracking of student progress across grade levels within the same scale. Language proficiency levels are intended to highlight and provide a model of the process of language acquisition that can be adapted by individual districts and states.

Goal 5: Proficiency Standards Background
Using students' first language and cultures as the foundation for developing academic language proficiency, the standards expand the scope and breadth of the ESL content standards by bridging them to specific core curriculum content areas, namely English language arts, mathematics, science, and social studies (TESOL, 2006).

Technological Literacy and English Language Learners

The growing use of technology in U.S. schools has created an additional learning and access gap. Not withstanding the tremendous lack of software in the primary languages of students that would allow substantive access to content-area information, the computer and/or the hardwiring that would allow for access to the Internet are glaringly absent from the classrooms where English learners are found. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), for example, published the *National Educational Technology Standards for Students: Connecting Curriculum and Technology* in 2000. While

the volume does contain the most current developments regarding national educational technology standards for pre-K through 12th-grade students (see ISTE, 2007), sample instructional units and lessons, a glossary, student performance indicators, and a resource guide for print, software publishers, and websites, it completely lacks focus on diverse populations nor does the organization provide any recommendations for accommodations for English learners. The combination of lack of technological tools along with the lack of attention to the type of technological knowledge that English learners need exacerbates the digital divide for this population.

Computer-assisted language learning emerged in the 1980s as a potential tool for teaching English as a second/foreign language as well as for other languages (Hanson-Smith, 1997). The last two decades have seen substantive advances in software that enable learners to address all of the domains of language learning through increasingly sophisticated technologies. While most of these are originally focused on discrete skills and drills, the most sophisticated of these incorporate virtual realities (known as MOOs) that are targeted at the post-K-12 levels. Distance learning and the World Wide Web are additional examples of advances in technology that are gradually being incorporated into K-12 instructional settings.

Additionally, the fervor to use technology has not adequately addressed the types of professional development for teachers that would allow them to learn how to use technology *for learning* with their students. One exception is the examples provided by Cummins and Sayer (1995), who presented a variety of scenarios that promote "Global Learning Networks," in which students and teachers engage in international and cross-national classroom inquiry through languages using electronic mail and the Internet. These exchanges led not only to increased crosscultural communication and understanding, but also to a deeper understanding of the content and concepts about which the students were learning.

The Development of Teacher Expertise for Teaching K-12 English as a Second Language

The research in second language acquisition clearly demonstrates that methods that are communicative, relatively stress free, and meaning centered predict better second language learning. The overapplication of communicative approaches overshadowed the parallel and simultaneous need to develop the literacy skills of English learners. Since the passage of Proposition 227 in 1998, the majority of ELs have not received literacy instruction in their primary languages and have been placed in mostly English classrooms. While the National Research Council (1998) acknowledges the importance of primary language literacy for the acquisition of second language literacy, there is a lack of research to inform practice as to how best to develop sound reading and writing abilities for K-12 ELs. The result is that most school districts and teacher-preparation programs have left this up to the discretion of classroom teachers, who may attend a variety of "stopgap" workshops, seminars, and professional-development sessions to fill in those gaps.

A key component for effective English language development is the concept of *context.* Context can be defined as the social and cultural knowledge base that the learner uses for both interpersonal and academic purposes (Peregoy & Boyle, 2001). Knowledge of context is the key through which teachers can assist students in making connections between the printed word and how to make meaning. That is, teachers can assist English learners in using their social, cultural, historic, and schooling experiences as lenses through which to make sense of academic instruction in their second language. This, according to Larsen-Freeman (2000), is the difference between a teacher's selecting language-teaching methods as a "bag of tricks" versus teacher inquiry in order to "articulate, and perhaps transform their understanding of the teaching/learning process. Methods can serve as models of the integration of theory and practice" (p. xi). Teacher expertise in constructing effective second language learning practices that are based on the needs of the learner include:

- A vast repertoire of literacy instructional strategies that range from initial oral language development and literacy instruction to academic language development in the content areas;
- Knowledge of metacognitive and metalinguistic skills through which ELs are taught strategies to identify potential transference and interference between the first language and English and to systematically develop resources in the teaching of writing; and
- Knowledge of the culture(s), history, and experiences that students bring with them to the learning situation.

To further exemplify the concept of teacher expertise for English learners, two models, Walqui (2001) and Wong Fillmore and Snow (2000), are reviewed below.

Models of Teacher Expertise for English Learners

The adaptation of Shulman's "Model for Teacher Understanding" by Walqui (2001) provides a heuristic for defining critical areas of teacher expertise (see Figure 1). Walqui expanded Shulman's concepts for teacher knowledge to include both subject matter and pedagogic knowledge regarding English language development. Walqui's model promotes a representation of accomplished teachers whose pedagogic practices are informed by deep reflection about themselves, their students, and the communities in which they live. These reflections further affect the curriculum and their practice.

Wong Fillmore and Snow (2000) constructed five domains of teacher knowledge that inform second language teaching practices. Table 9 is an adaptation of their work, which defines each role/function in light of teaching practices.

According to Wong Fillmore and Snow (2000), teachers should be skilled in five functions of language teaching: communication, education, evaluation, as a human being who is educated and constantly seeks knowledge, and as an agent of socialization. These domains are elaborated by the authors through a

Figure 1
Model for Teacher Understanding

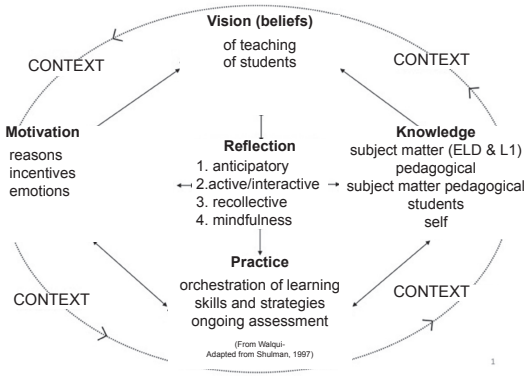

Table 9
Domains of Teacher Knowledge for Second Language Teaching

Role/functions	*Definition*	*Application in second language classrooms*
Teacher as communicator	Strives for understanding of students' cultural ways of talking and of their own language output	Understands cultural discourse patterns that are different from the teacher's to avoid misunderstanding and instructional disruption
Teacher as educator	Plans instruction based on knowledge of the target language and of the content, as informed by students' backgrounds and needs	Assesses, designs curriculum, and instructs students in linguistically and academically appropriate ways
Teacher as evaluator	Determines students' levels of language and academic proficiency to guide planning	Designs for flexible groupings that consider specific student performance abilities as well as objective learning criteria that consider diverse family socialization and linguistic patterns
Teacher as an educated human being	Is knowledgeable of basic English linguistics and of sociopolitical factors that influence academic achievement for diverse learners	Skillfully incorporates knowledge of the structure of English while considering regional, dialectical, and attitudinal differences between themselves and their students
Teacher as agent of socialization	Is aware of the cultural and linguistic "funds of knowledge" that students bring with them to school and uses this knowledge to build understanding of the culture, language, and traditions in the US.	Facilitates transition from home to school without decreasing expectations for student learning. Incorporates an additive approach to L2 learning.

proactive positioning of the teacher as a knowledgeable professional who is accomplished in curriculum, linguistics, crosscultural understanding, and as an assessor and student advocate.

The two models for teacher expertise are complementary in the degree to which their developers highlight the importance of knowledge of language (linguistic) pedagogy embedded within a proactive stance toward diverse learners. Both are important in our understanding of the types of teacher preparation and professional development required to ensure the academic success of English learners at the K-12 level.

Conclusion

The preceding discussion on the research on teacher expertise, the history and types of language-teaching methods, and the sociopolitical considerations for the instruction of K-12 English learners points to a critical juncture in our understanding of the best practices for K-12 ELs. The review suggests that sociocultural and constructivist theories and approaches capture the complexities of the experiences of immigrant students who are in the process of acquiring the type of academic English required to be successful in U.S. schools. These approaches also signal practices that foreshadow the possibility of a more additive model of English language acquisition for K-12 English learners as they are prepared to enter a global, multilingual, and technologically diverse society.

Author

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Notes

[1]Phonology refers to the study of the sound system of a language, lexicon refers to vocabulary and their meanings, and syntax refers to grammar and structure.
[2]Proposition 227, passed by California's voters in 1998, seeks to teach "English for Immigrant Children" primarily through English. There is no provision within the proposition that bans the use of the students' primary languages (California Education Code, Sections 300-349).

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