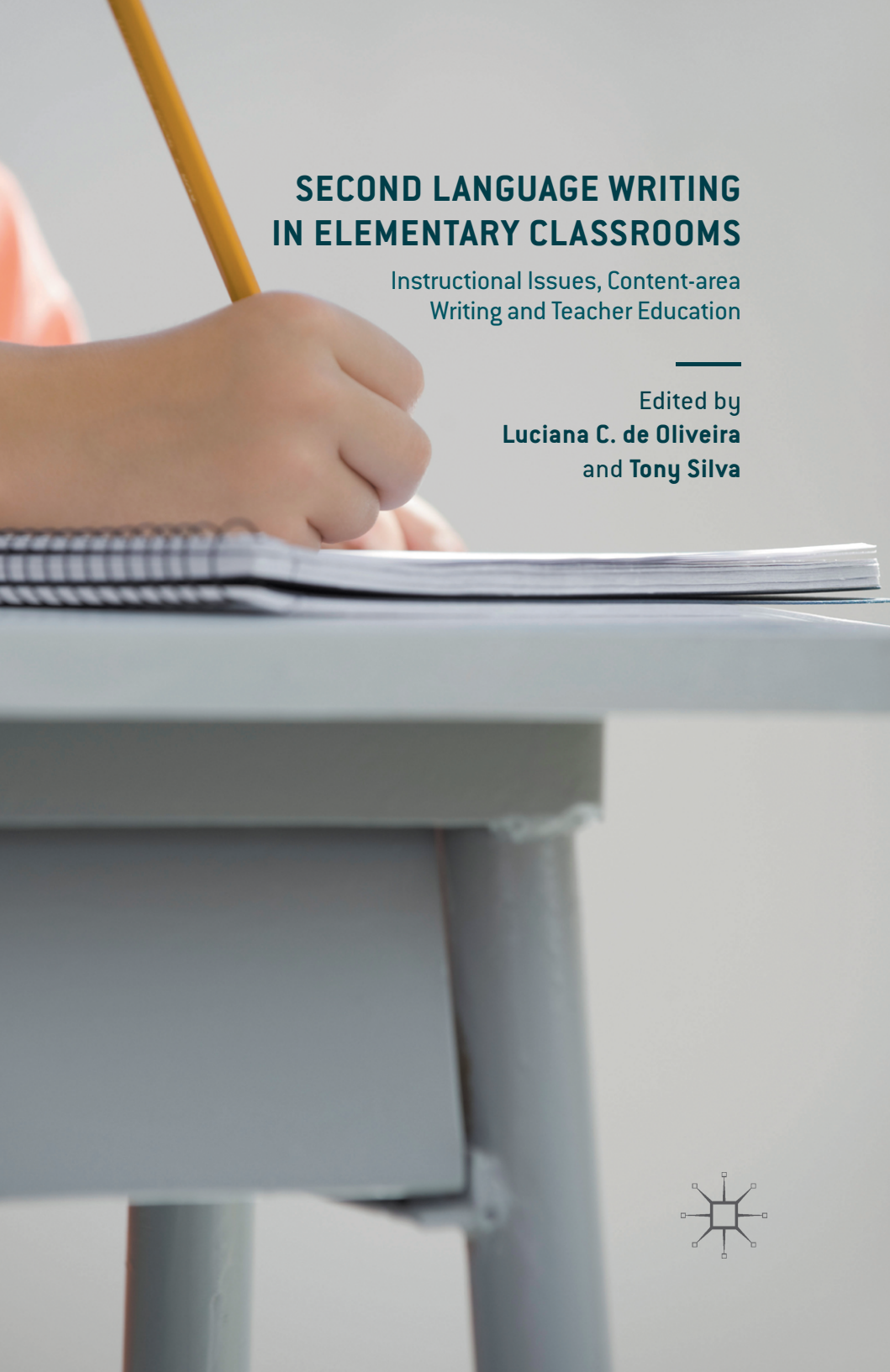

SECOND LANGUAGE WRITING IN ELEMENTARY CLASSROOMS

Instructional Issues, Content-area Writing and Teacher Education

Edited by
Luciana C. de Oliveira
and **Tony Silva**

Second Language Writing in Elementary Classrooms

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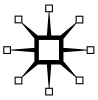

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Sarah Henderson Lee is Assistant Professor of English and Director of ESL at Minnesota State University, Mankato. She teaches in the graduate TESL program and supervises the department's ESL teaching assistants. Her teaching and research interest areas include second language writing, biliteracy, critical pedagogy, language socialization, and TESL teacher education. Most recently she co-edited a special issue of *TESOL Journal* titled *Critical Perspectives on World Englishes* (2014) with Gloria Park.

Tracy Hodgson-Drysdale is a part-time instructor at both the University of Ottawa in Ontario, Canada and Lesley University in Cambridge, MA. She completed her dissertation at Boston College in Curriculum and Instruction in 2013 with a focus on bilingualism and teaching writing in elementary school informed by systemic functional linguistics (SFL). Tracy has taught in various capacities over a 15-year period, including working as an elementary generalist,

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Carrie Neely has taught English as a Second Language, English Literature, and Spanish from Kindergarten through the University level, most recently as an instructor/researcher at the University of Delaware's English Language Institute. In addition to teaching, she has supervised student teachers in the MATESL program at the University of Delaware. She is also certified as a co-teaching trainer and instructor. Her research is focused on English Language Learners and the impact of the Common Core State Standards.

Deborah Nelson is a teacher at the Russell Elementary School, Boston Public Schools. She has taught elementary school for 18 years. She has taught fourth and fifth grades as well as science to the primary grades. She participated in the research project to implement SFL-informed genres of writing for seven years.

Cheryl O'Connor is a teacher at the Russell Elementary School, Boston Public Schools. She has taught elementary school for 27 years. She has taught fourth and fifth grades. She participated in the research project to implement SFL-informed genres of writing for seven years.

Cécily Selden is a PK-8 Literacy Coach for Holyoke Public Schools in Holyoke, Massachusetts and a veteran public school teacher of 13 years. She holds an M.Ed. in Bilingual, ESL and Multicultural Education, and is working toward an advanced certificate and Reading Specialist licensure. Her research interests relate to effective cross-curricular literacy instruction for ELLs and the empowerment of economically, culturally, and linguistically diverse students. Her work has appeared in *Multicultural Perspectives* and been presented at regional conferences such as Massachusetts TESOL.

Dong-shin Shin is an assistant professor in the Literacy and Second Language Studies Program at the University of Cincinnati. She is working with K-12 teachers in graduate courses. Her research interests include digital literacies for L2 academic literacy development, computer-mediated communication, systemic functional linguistics, multimodal writing, and language teacher development. Her work has appeared in *Language Learning & Technology*, *Language and Education*, *Computers and Composition*, the *CALICO Journal*, and *Journal of International and Intercultural Communication*, among others.

Tony Silva is a professor in the Department of English at Purdue University, where he directs the ESL Writing Program and teaches graduate courses for Ph.D., M.A., and Certificate students and writing support courses for graduate and undergraduate international students. With Ilona Leki, he founded and edited the *Journal of Second Language Writing* from 1992 to 2007; he continues to co-assemble the *Journal*'s annotated bibliography. With Paul Kei Matsuda he founded and hosts the (now annual and international) Symposium on Second Language Writing. His articles have appeared in a number of journals, including *College Composition and Communication*, *Composition Studies*, *ELT Journal*, *Foreign Languages and Their Teaching, Journal of Second Language Writing, Modern Language Journal, TESL Canada Journal*, *TESOL Journal*, *TESOL Quarterly*, *Writing Program Administration,* and *Written Communication* and has co-authored and co-edited many other books.

Joanna W. Wong earned her doctorate at UC Davis in Language, Literacy, and Culture with designated emphases in Second Language Acquisition and Writing, Rhetoric, and Composition Studies. Her research interests include second language writing, bilingualism, and teacher education to serve nondominant populations. She draws on over 14 years of experience in urban elementary education for her research, teaching, and professional development. She has published an article on metalinguistic awareness as resource for potential bilingual teachers in *Bilingual Research Journal* and has a book chapter in *Career Trajectories of English Language Teachers* (eds. P. Haworth & C. Craig). She is a fellow with the National Council of Teachers of English Cultivating New Voices of Scholars of Color program.

1

Second Language Writing in Elementary Classrooms: An Overview of Issues

Luciana C. de Oliveira and Tony Silva

Mainstream, general education teachers are now seeing high numbers of English language learners (ELLs) among their students. All teachers, not just specialist English as Second Language (ESL) or bilingual professionals, need to be able to work with ELLs (Lucas & Grinberg, 2008). The need to prepare teachers to work with this population of students is pressing across the U.S.A. These rapid changes put pressure on teacher education programs to prepare teachers to work with ELLs (Athanases & de Oliveira, 2011).

Mainstream and ELL teachers working with ELL populations need to create a supportive and academically challenging environment for ELLs (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005). Teachers need to be able to provide best practices for ELLs such as recognizing different linguistic and academic needs of students in various ELL subpopulations, instructing students in language learning strategies, specifically reading and writing strategies, and a gradual release of responsibility model for organizing instruction for ELLs (Fisher, Rothenberg, & Frey, 2007). Other tools and strategies include materials and instructions in students' native language (Faltis, Arias, & Ramírez-Marín, 2010; Téllez & Waxman, 2006); extralinguistic resources, text and oral language modifications, and explicit instructions (Lucas & Villegas, 2011); differentiation by language proficiency level (Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008); and multimodal strategies (Gibbons, 2009). Collaborative groups can support academic English development (Wong-Fillmore & Snow, 2005) with flexible grouping structures and interactions with fluent English speakers (Faltis et al., 2010; Rumberger & Gándara, 2004). Explicit attention to language

form and function (Schleppegrell, 2004), assessed through multiple means (de Oliveira & Athanases, 2007) is of particular importance for ELLs at all grade levels and should start in kindergarten (de Oliveira, Klassen, & Gilmetidnova, 2014).

Research has shown us many tools and strategies for working with ELLs in mainstream classes. Less is known about second language (L2) writing in the elementary classroom context, which has received little attention compared to other skills such as reading. Few articles and books focus on both L2 writing and K-6. The dearth of research in early second language writing has been recognized by the *Journal of Second Language Writing* (JSLW) (Matsuda & De Pew, 2002), but the need to research the needs of ESL writers in elementary mainstream classrooms remains. For instance, only a few articles in the JSLW, the flagship journal of the field of L2 writing, targeted ESL writers in elementary classrooms in U.S. contexts (e.g., McCarthey, Guo, & Cummins, 2005; Reynolds, 2002, 2005). Of the few studies, Reynolds (2002, 2005) analyzed the written texts produced in English by Grade 5–8 ESL writers and their English-speaking peers, and McCarthey et al. (2005) focused on the written texts produced in both English and their L1 (Mandarin) by Grade 4–5 ESL writers. In addition, Hirvela and Belcher (2007) note that little attention has been given to the kinds of preparation that pre-service and in-service teachers have to address L2 writing and call for more work in this area. To address these needs, this book combines a focus on research in elementary L2 writing and the preparation of K-6 teachers to teach L2 writing.

Overview of issues

While there is a body of scholarship on second language writing in elementary school contexts, it represents a very small fraction of research on second language writing in general. This scholarship, which dates back to the late 1980s, can be seen as falling into two fairly distinct categories: research on students' second language writing development and research on writing instruction.

With regard to studies on the second language writing development of elementary-level students, the 1980s brought research on writing processes (Samway, 1988); on comparisons of Anglo and Hispanic student writing in bilingual, submersion, and mainstream programs (Carlisle, 1989); and the relationship between first and second language writing skills (Lanauze & Snow, 1989).

The 1990s saw studies on the use of email (Trenchs, 1993); invented spelling (Lundblade, 1994); the relationship between reading and writing (Hammond, 1995); writing activities, strategies, and abilities (Al-Omari, 1996); report writing (Ghosn, 1996); organizational structures (Dykstra, 1997); books produced by student writers (Rudden & Nedeff, 1998); and the influence of transfer on writing development (Broussard, 1999).

In the 2000s, there was research on reported speech (Yi & Kellogg, 2006); speaking personalities in writing (Maguire & Graves, 2001); comparisons of the writing of native English speaking and ESL writing with regard to organization, support, and voice (Huie & Yahya, 2003); writing development in first and second languages (McCarthey et al., 2005); attitudes toward L2 writing (McCarthey & García, 2005); letter–sound correspondence (Raynolds, 2007); general literacy development (Sanogo, 2007); and multilingual writing practices (Laman & Van Sluys, 2008).

More recent work addresses the written narratives (Verheyden, Van den Branden, Rijlaarsdam, Van den Bergh, & De Mayer, 2010); control of grammatical person (Brisk, 2012); and student understandings, expectations, and experience around writing (Wong, 2014).

With regard to research on instructors and instruction of elementary second language writers, the late 1980s saw studies on teaching word processing (Andorka, 1986) and information sequencing in scientific writing (Heath, 1986).

The 1990s brought studies of teaching creative writing (Donahue, 1991; Kenyon, 1990); word processing (Van Haalen, 1990); process writing (Hall, 1993); the teaching of writing in language classes (Nuessel & Cigogna, 1993); writing workshops (Portocarrero & Bergin, 1997; Stafford, 1993); structured vs. free writing (Gomez, 1994); and whole language instruction (Serrano, 1995).

Relevant work in the 2000s focused on the teaching of non-fiction writing (Haynes, 2006); referential explicitness and coherence (Enos, 2007); fostering student engagement and motivation (Lo & Hyland, 2007); peer tutoring (Dekhinet, Topping, Duran, & Blanch, 2008; Standley, 2007); teacher analysis of grammar errors (Ho, 2008); balanced and interactive writing instruction (Wolbers, 2008); and instructional strategies (Schulz, 2009).

More recent work addresses the use of blogging (Gebhard, Shin, & Seger, 2011); thinking maps (Sunseri, 2011); readers theater (Tsou, 2011); wikis and collaborative writing (Woo, Chu, Ho, & Li, 2011);

using systemic-functional linguistics to inform teaching (Harris, 2012); collaborative writing instruction (Aminloo, 2013); a genre approach (de Oliveira & Lan, 2014); and support of argumentative writing development (O'Hallaron, 2014).

Specific pedagogical tools to focus on writing for L2 writers, teacher preparation for teaching writing, co-teaching and collaboration, and genre-based pedagogies are topics that this book addresses, to highlight research done in elementary classrooms with L2 writers and their teachers.

Overview of the book

This book features chapters that highlight (1) research in elementary classrooms focused on the writing development of multilingual children, and (2) research in teacher education to prepare elementary teachers to teach L2 writing and address L2 writers' needs.

Part I presents instructional issues for L2 writers at the elementary level. In Chapter 2, "E-Journaling in Response to Digital Texts," Sally Brown discusses the portraits of six third-grade English learners utilizing an e-journal to respond to digital texts. She examines their journal entries and language use, and showcases the complexities of writing in English as a new language as well as the practical considerations needed when teaching L2 writing.

In Chapter 3, "The Benefits of Co-Teaching in the ESL Classroom," Carrie Neely examines the concept of co-teaching by exploring the question of whether co-teaching would provide ESL teachers and students with the greatest success and improvement in their second language writing through interviews with research staff and supervising teachers, observation as qualitative data and related research literature.

Chapter 4, "Leveraging Hidden Resources to Navigate Tensions and Challenges in Writing: A Case Study of a Fourth Grade Emergent Bilingual Student" presents a case study of Lizette, a fourth-grade Spanish/English emergent bilingual. Joanna Wong provides a close examination of how one student, identified by the teacher as a low-skilled writer, engaged in classroom-based writing interactions and how they enabled and/or constrained her writing development. Findings draw attention to the hidden resources Lizette leveraged to engage as a student and writer, the tensions she faced attempting

to meet classroom writing norms and expectations, and the consequences of these unresolved tensions on her writing over the academic year. Implications address the need to provide responsive instruction based on students' assessed needs and authentic opportunities to write.

Part II of the book focuses on content-area writing. All of the authors from this section use systemic-functional linguistics (SFL) as a theory of language to examine the writing of elementary school students or as a pedagogical tool used in elementary classrooms. Chapter 5 by Tracy Hodgson-Drysdale, "Teaching Writing through Genres and Language," compares the experiences of a fourth-grade teacher and a second/third-grade Structured English Immersion (SEI) teacher as they learned to teach writing informed by SFL. Tracy examines the importance of emphasizing the teaching of language and its functions in conjunction with the stages of genres in order for bilingual students to improve their understanding of language and to be able to express their learning in writing. The results show how teachers developed their knowledge of teaching writing informed by SFL over the course of a school year, and how they gradually began teaching the stages of multiple genres as well as some of the language features required of each genre taught.

In Chapter 6, "Bilingual Fourth Graders Develop a Central Character for Their Narratives," Maria Estela Brisk, Deborah Nelson, and Cheryl O'Connor show the impact of concentrated instruction on fourth-grade bilingual students' ability to create the main character in their narratives. The students' writing over a period of eight weeks was analyzed for characters' external attributes and internal qualities, and how these impact the plot. The chapter explains the instructional strategies implemented by two mainstream teachers with extensive preparation on genre pedagogy.

Chapter 7, "Disciplinary Language Development in Writing: Science Reports and Common Core State Standards," by Dong-shin Shin, examines how a first-grade teacher taught science reports to English language learners through an SFL-informed pedagogy, reflecting a need for language-focused instruction to support academic literacy development in the era of Common Core State Standards. The conceptual framework of this study is built upon SFL perspectives of genres and registers of disciplinary language and literacy development. Drawing on a case study approach, it presents a

bilingual student's processes of writing science reports on organisms. The findings suggest that language-focused pedagogy allowed the student to develop the metalanguage of science reports and to write topic-centered reports coherently with an expanded, domain-specific linguistic repertoire.

In Chapter 8, "Supporting L2 Elementary Science Writing with SFL in an Age of School Reform," Kathryn Accurso, Meg Gebhard, and Cecily Selden analyze how an elementary school teacher used SFL and principles of genre-based pedagogy to design curriculum to support fifth-grade English language learners' (ELLs) science literacy development. The implications of this study relate to conceptualizing language learning as the expansion of a meaning-making system in ways that support both content learning goals and the academic literacy development of linguistically diverse students.

Part III, Teacher Education, explores the preparation of pre-service and in-service teachers to work with L2 writers. Sarah Henderson Lee, in Chapter 9, "Bridging the In- and Out-of-School Writing Practices of ELLs Through Postmethod Pedagogy: One Elementary Teacher's Journey," details one in-service teacher's exploration of the in- and out-of-school writing practices of elementary ELLs. The participant's knowledge construction of a postmethod approach to L2 writing was analyzed in three stages: (1) during her participation in a graduate TESOL methods course, (2) through her completion of a 90-hour practicum required for K-12 ESOL certification, and (3) in her intermediate-level elementary classroom. Additionally, the participant's application of such an approach is discussed as a means to bridging the home–school literacy gap and, ultimately, empowering young L2 writers.

Finally, in Chapter 10, "Pre-service Teacher Preparation for L2 Writing: Perspectives of In-Service Elementary ESL Teachers," Ditlev Larsen reports on a study that surveyed practicing elementary ESL teachers about their preparedness for teaching L2 writing after completing their teacher education programs. The teachers reported that their programs offered very little or no specific instruction on L2 writing pedagogy, which is problematic as the teachers also reported that they deal with English language learners' writing every day in their elementary ESL classrooms. The chapter suggests that in order to make sure teachers become adequately prepared for teaching

writing, ESL pedagogy needs to include explicit recognition of L2 writing as a major component of second language acquisition.

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Part I
Instructional Issues

2
E-Journaling in Response to Digital Texts

Sally Brown

Introduction

This chapter provides insight into the L2 writing development of a diverse group of third-grade English learners as they engage in digital writing experiences using the Barnes & Noble e-readers called Nooks. Given the highly visual nature of 21st century texts, all learners need a means for applying divergent ways of thinking about new and unfamiliar texts. Additionally, there should be spaces for creating meaningful messages based within a variety of sociocultural contexts. The acceptance of multiple forms of mainstream or standard Spanish, English, etc., and language variation is essential for equity within this changing social world. This includes social languages, which Gee (2008) defines as "different styles of language used for different purposes and occasions" (p. 3). For example, all languages must be considered as equal where no one cultural dialect maintains superiority, especially in classrooms (Gee, 2008; Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). Communicating via the Vietnamese language should be equivalent in status to using English.

Currently, most school systems focus on foundational literacies, or the skills and strategies associated with decoding, reading comprehension, written composition, and oral communication in Standard English (Skinner & Hagood, 2008). Neglected are new literacies, or "the skills, strategies, and dispositions necessary to successfully use and adapt to the rapidly changing information and communication technologies and contexts that continuously emerge in our world and influence all areas of our personal and professional lives"

(Leu, Kinzer, Coiro, & Cammack, 2004, p. 1572). This is concerning since contemporary literacy practices are distinguished by their multimodal nature and, as composers, students weave together the different symbol systems to communicate meaning (Dyson, 2013a).

Policies and practices need to move toward a more inclusive framework for literacy that views literacy as a socially situated practice involving the manipulation of multiple modes of expression, where students draw from cultural resources and establish their own purposes for literacy (Street, 1984). This requires the combination of foundational and new literacies in discursively constructed contexts. The global nature of communicating in a 21st century world requires flexible abilities for interacting with texts that involve multiple representational modes (Siegel, 2006). Being a full participant within a social group where one is able to draw upon their cultural and linguistic resources as well as those of their peers supports the learning process. In particular, there is little research that examines the relationship among foundational literacy, new literacies, and students learning English within a social practice framework. These topics are addressed in this chapter.

Childhood agency

As children engage in literacy activities, they enact or shape their responses to everyday practices. "Developing child writers are thus not envisioned solely as climbing up the literacy ladders of success, but also as maneuvering on an expanding landscape with more flexibility and more deliberateness in their decision making" (Dyson, 2013b, p. 405). Making decisions about the ways to represent knowledge is active semiotic work that requires engagement on the part of learners (Kenner & Kress, 2003). As children construct digital texts as writers, they are able to position themselves as specific kinds of people. These writing opportunities afford learners the ability to shape or remake themselves through unfolding discursive practices (Merchant, 2005).

Studying children and the rich interplay of interaction between official school worlds and the unofficial spaces operating within classrooms informs our understanding of children and their worlds (Dyson, 2013b). Allowing students to maintain some control over making meaning in their lives is critical for literacy development.

Insisting students utilize individual-based paper and pencil writing regimes in a classroom does nothing to bridge the out-of-school digital practices that children are absorbed in on a daily basis. For example, children coordinate responses to one another through voice-over gaming, texting, virtual worlds, and social network spaces at home. In these instances, writing is collaborative and children act strategically to accomplish their goals (Johnston, 2012). Children are active authors of their own stories, and those who are learning English as a new language need time to develop this sense of agency (Laman, 2013) where they recognize, seek, and use available tools for writing (Fisher, 2010).

This is evident in the research of Kuby & Vaughn (2015), where they studied the multimodal practices of kindergarten and second-grade students in terms of agentive practices. Across cases the findings indicated that multimodal encounters with literacy provided opportunities for student acts of agency. The open-ended spaces teachers created in a multimodal workshop (as opposed to the traditional writer's workshop) fostered agency in terms of actions, talk, and choice of modes, materials, and ideas. Agency was enacted through both productions and processes as students negotiated departures from traditional ways of doing literacy.

Vasudevan, Schultz, & Bateman (2010) assert that engaging in new composing practices can lead to the development of authorial stances in classrooms. This is where students have a stronger sense of agency and are more engaged in classroom literacy practices. In their research this occurred by students initiating narrative authority as they used various modes to produce texts. Offering students a variety of digital tools for academic assignments provided spaces for students to enter official classroom activities, especially recent immigrants whose backgrounds and cultures differed from the majority of the class. Reimagining literate practices in multimodal forms is essential for 21st century composing.

Writing in English as a new language

Writing is a social act that involves complex cognitive functioning during which an individual creates meaning (Samway, 2006). Many elements must be taken into account as learners interact in writing communities at school. One such sphere involves language, cultural knowledge, and interactions with others. Given that writing

is a socially constructed process, it is essential that students develop as writers where their first languages and cultural experiences are valued.

In order to acknowledge the strengths English learners bring with them from their first languages, teachers have to recognize a few key principles. First, language learners can write prior to mastering the new language. For example, a student whose first language is Vietnamese need not know all of the forms of English grammar before crafting meaningful communication. English learners are very effective at making meaning in written forms without extensive oral development of English. Within these varied forms of written communication, it is necessary to recognize that English learners will use less than fluent English or approximations to express their ideas and thoughts. For example, word order or the appropriate verb tense may not be in Standard English, but the meaning of the message is clear and effective. Additionally, English learners can benefit from using invented or multimodal symbols to express complex messages (Samway, 2006). Van Sluys & Rao (2012) examined the literacy lives of elementary students in a dual-language program and reported that even though the monolingual teachers could not interpret all of the multilingual communication written by students, they understood that the students' work was meaningful and used community resources to assist in gaining insight into the writings. The goal of teachers is to develop students' writing through an emphasis on the process and not the product (Mora-Flores, 2009).

In early childhood classrooms, students may demonstrate multilingual writing abilities in a variety of ways. Genishi & Dyson (2009) state, "children take their own paths, marching to the rhythm of their own inner clocks, not abandoning their ways of making sense in a language they don't speak" (p. 40). Allowing students to pair home and school languages assists them in becoming participants in a larger social world. This process of language development (written and oral) occurs within social interactions during dialog. Each child travels a different path on their language journey as they navigate communicative histories that reflect individual choices.

Role of talk

Language is a meaning-making system that "allows the mental resources of individuals to combine in a collective, communicative

intelligence which enables people to make better sense of the world" (Mercer, 2000, p. 6). Therefore, the use of language, as in classroom talk, is particularly key for the development of thought that is based on the cultures of the speaking community. Dialog, the creation of joint knowledge, is one mode young students use to make sense of their experiences. Rogoff (2003) refers to this as an apprenticeship for learning.

One of the essential purposes of literacy is collaboratively constructing meaning in fluid, multilingual, multimodal ways. According to Wells (1999), examining classroom talk is one way teachers can gain insight into the thinking processes of children. As students speak, read, write, and listen to one another's utterances, they reconsider their own ideas and are shaped by the thoughts of others. There is a back-and-forth process of understanding, questioning, and responding where the result is meaning construction for each individual. Experiences as both producers and recipients in a dialog encourage understanding. In some instances, knowledge is transformed as one student learns from the other and develops a mastery of a new process, topic, or problem. It is this collaborative participation in dialog that advances learning.

Pahl (2009) investigated the talk of young children as they created multimodal texts. She found that collaborative talk was actually extended as students engaged in the construction of panoramic boxes based on a particular habitat. The multimodal communicative practices were focused on key talk moments where students were constructing meaning. Her findings offered insight into the production of meaning across talk and the social histories of the students. Student meaning making was influenced by the talk constructed around the multimodal text. Similarly, Fisher's (2010) study of young writers highlighted the central role of language in extending human interactions. In six elementary classrooms based in England, about half of the students reported the instrumental nature of others in learning to write.

Multimodal writing

Multimodal literacies refer to the interconnectedness of written-linguistic modes with other ways of making meaning, such as visual and spatial. These new ways of literacy learning require an expanded sense of communication that values a wide range of texts with

variations in form and function (Kalantzis & Cope, 2012). Meaning makers actively use all available forms of representation to transform or reconfigure modalities. In order for this to occur, students must be agentive in the literacy process.

Multiple semiotic systems function as tools in the dynamic construction of meaning, which highlights the emergence and development of English or hybrid versions of it. Multimodal writing moves away from a linear, individual model of writing towards multidimensional social worlds where young learners are social agents in their text productions (Dyson, 2013b; Laman, 2013).

The field of semiotics allows us to open up the boundaries traditionally associated with written communication. Attention to other modes of representation focuses the composing of children on the ways in which they adapt and use available resources (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Multimodal writing requires many choices, including the selection of words, representations of form such as color, font style, and size, and images that signify the text (Skaar, 2009). In fact, children become text producers and sign makers, stimulating active interaction with digital tools that produce stories rich in multiple modes.

In Bearne's (2009) research with seven-year-old children, she found the modes utilized to create multimodal texts varied according to the needs of individual students and the purposes of their production. Some children focused more on sound narration and detailed images while others drew upon language and movement. In all cases it was the interrelatedness of the modes that assisted in meaning construction. The level of complexity involved in this type of communication is greater than that of foundational literacy skills.

In particular, multimodal literacies offer many benefits for students learning English as a new language. Meaning can be expressed through a larger platform of tools, given the interconnectedness of multiple forms of communication. These alternative ways of creating meaning allow English learners to go beyond the written word when engaged in complex literacy practices. Ajayi's (2009) work with adolescent English learners found multimodal learning opportunities provided unique paths for entering literacy tasks in the classroom. As a result, students transformed the ways they engaged and participated in language and literacy experiences at school.

Digital spaces afford new dimensions where writers can enter texts in interactive ways that reconfigure how literacy is understood and

taught in classrooms. Flat learning and paper-based-only resources limit authenticity and place obstacles for social world communication. Even though English learners bring a wealth of digital skills and particular mindsets with them as they enter the classroom (Lankshear & Knobel, 2011), multimodal approaches are not always embraced by teachers as they work with students learning English as a new language. Some do not understand the applications for newly arrived immigrants or feel that traditional basics in print literacy are a priority (Lotherington & Jenson, 2011).

Methods

Context and participants

This qualitative study was conducted over the course of one academic school year at a Title I, urban elementary school. The public K-5 school had a 70% free and reduced lunch rate among its diverse student population. The participants in this portion of the research were a group of six third-grade English learners (out of a class of 23) who ranged in age from seven to ten years old with varying literacy and English proficiency levels (Table 2.1).

The researcher served as an additional literacy teacher in the students' mainstream third-grade classroom two days per week. During

Table 2.1 Participant information

Student (pseudonym)	**First language**	**ACCESS score* (August)**	**ACCESS score* (May)**	**Instructional reading level** (August)**	**Instructional reading level (May)****
Darly	French Creole	4.5	6.0	L	N
Arturo	Spanish	2.0	3.5	E	K
Luis	Spanish	4.1	5.7	K	M
Andrea	Spanish	4.0	5.5	M	P
David	Spanish	5.0	6.0	M	O
Mai	Vietnamese	1.0	3.9	E	I

*ACCESS – Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State to State for English Language Learners (six-point scale).
**Fountas & Pinnell (1999).

literacy time the classroom teacher provided large group instruction through the use of a state-adopted basal reader and focused on mandated writing modules with prompts. During this time small groups of students (heterogeneously grouped with native and non-native English speakers) rotated to the back of the classroom to read and write with the researcher. This included reading digital children's literature and nonfiction texts and responding via an e-journal app available on the e-reader. Student reading processes were supported through scaffolding techniques provided by the researcher. The journal entries were required to be connected to the text read but allowed student choice in terms of what they wanted to say about the text and how they wanted to construct their responses. Emoticons (Figure 2.1), characters like :),

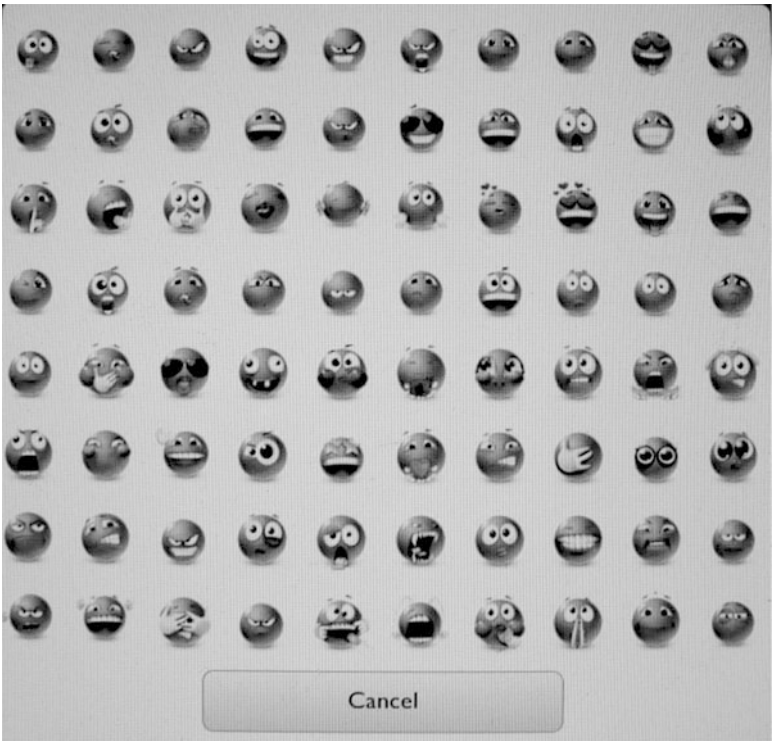

Figure 2.1 Emoticons available to students in the e-journal app

that are used to express emotion, were available to students as part of the journal app. Students were encouraged to talk with one another throughout the learning process while the researcher quietly observed.

These events were videotaped and transcribed for analysis. In addition, digital student e-journal entries were collected for a closer examination of multimodal digital texts. Field notes were also recorded to document the connections between what students were writing in the e-journals and the talk that simultaneously occurred. Screen shots were gathered to document writing in progress and students were interviewed at the end of the study to gain insight into their experiences. The multiple forms of data corroborated the analysis of literacy events through triangulation (Wolcott, 2008).

Analysis

The unit of analysis was the social event (enacted practice) that surrounded and mediated the production of multimodal texts during which who constructed what, when, and for what reason was examined (Dyson, 2013b). Two research questions guided this study: (1) How does engaging with multimedia digital writing tools impact the literacy development of English learners and (2) How do peers use language to interact during literacy events to support writing experiences? There was an attempt to capture the horizontal moves of evolving practices that alternated between text production and communicative moves. This involved closely examining or matching the interplay of student language use and its connection to the multimodal writing activity on the Nook devices. This methodology afforded a multilayered view of the classroom context by examining the official and unofficial communicative and writing practices of the six students who were learning English.

Open coding, developing tentative labels for chunks of data, of transcripts and field notes was used as a process for identifying meaningful interactional data which led to further interpretations through expanding, transforming, and reconceptualizing data (Merriam, 2009). Repeated interactions with particular events, the English learners themselves, language use, and the multimodal texts led to the development of categories which were initially very general and became specific. This data was indexed with screen-shot images in the form of multimodal transcripts to establish a dense set of themes that were compared and contrasted for possible relationships (Bezemer &

Mavers, 2011; Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). This process permitted an interactional sociolinguistic approach to the learners' composing process over time that included an understanding of the semiotic resources available to students during the writing process (Gilje, 2010).

Findings

There were three major thematic findings related to this small group of English learners and their multimodal writing experiences. First, the e-journals served as learning tools that support L2 writing development. Second, students pooled their shared expertise to mediate language use, content, knowledge of the writing process, and technology usage. Finally, the emoticons were additive in the multimodal composing process.

E-journals as learning tools

The e-journals served as learning tools that assisted L2 students in expressing their thoughts and ideas about the digital texts they read. The students engaged with the blank pages in different ways. Some chose to focus more on the product and fulfilling classroom academic expectations. Other students used the e-journal as more of a process tool to facilitate their thinking about the texts.

The more advanced readers (David, Andrea, and Darly) used the journals to record traditional notions of literacy practices sanctioned by formal school expectations and identities. Below, David's entry was written in response to a chapter he read from a graphic novel called *Bad Kitty for President* (Bruel, 2012). Given the nature of school writing instruction and the classroom teacher, David followed official protocols in terms of writing in complete sentences, stating the main idea, correct spelling, and staying on topic (Dyson, 1993):

> The kitty wanted to be a president. He went to houses to get cats to vote. I can't wait to discover something new from the book.

He was the first in his group to say, "I'm finished writing. What next?" He seemed to view writing as a task or product. David's first sentence was very general and stated the overall theme of the book, but did not offer much insight into his understanding of the storyline. Basically, he listed one event, getting the cats to vote, as the focus of his writing. Additionally, David added the last sentence

as a statement that rehearsed classroom reading expectations. The classroom teacher emphasized reading as discovery. There was a missed opportunity on David's part to explain what he was discovering about Bad Kitty. Although this writing illustrated some level of understanding of the book chapter, the e-journal was not utilized to deepen his learning. It served as a very basic learning tool.

In stark contrast, the less advanced readers (Arturo, Luis, and Mai) used the journals in a more authentic way and recorded their thoughts and ideas about texts and used the e-journal as a tool to remember events. These students were writing to think and extend their understanding of texts. A small group of students read *The Monster Who Lost his Mean* (Haber, 2012) and talked about the initial event when Monster lost his "M" and was referred to as Onster:

Mai: What, what this? [Tapped Henry on the shoulder.]
Henry: There's no "O". You know. He called Onster now. [Laughed]. Like you be called Ai or something like that. You got no "M".
Mai: I like Monster, Onster. [Smiled.]
Luis: Now, he's all alone. Lunch alone. Play alone. [Made sad face.]
Henry: Yea, by himself. [Pointed to image.]
Mai: No friend.

As the event opened, Mai sought help from her English dominant peer, Henry, by tapping him on the shoulder. She appeared to view literacy as a collaborative process that involved speaking and listening to her peers as a way to consider her ideas and expand her understanding of the text (Wells, 1999). Henry and Luis's follow-up comments served as a scaffold for Mai's comprehension of how the monster transformed from being mean to a friendly onster.

At the conclusion of the interaction Mai wrote this response related to the text:

> I liked the book because we know we can use a missing name. Thing my name is Mai if I missing M my name is Ai. If monster I is don't was play with every monster I play with people or animal. (If I am a monster, I will not play with other monsters. I would play with people or animals.)

There was a clear connection between Mai's writing and her conversation with her peers during the reading process. Mai began her

e-journal entry with a typical statement about liking the book. Then, she really used it as a thinking tool to absorb how her name would be transformed using the same principles. She used the word "thing" instead of "think," but did not get caught up with converting it to conventional spelling. Instead, she continued to process the way in which her name would change from Mai to Ai.

Next, she revisited the storyline and pondered a question about why the other monsters would not play with Onster. The statement, "If monster," represented her inquiry even though she did not finish the thought. There was a lengthy pause after she wrote this, as if she was processing a way to articulate her question. She did not finish the thought, but moved on to consider who she would play with if no monsters played with her. Her response ended with a solution to the problem – playing with people or animals.

In this instance, Mai used the e-journal along with peer talk to construct her understanding of the text. Exercising agency over the meaning-making process informed her personal knowledge of the text. In her writing, Mai seemed to position herself as a capable writer who used the composing process to think through novel ideas (Merchant, 2005). Mai was not inhibited by the official school curriculum that focused more on writing conventions and regurgitating facts from stories (Dyson, 1993). Noticeably, there was more emphasis placed on writing as a process as opposed to a product using the e-journals.

Shared expertise

During the small group literacy events, the role of "expert" was mediated by language use, content of the text, knowledge of writing, and use of technology. These roles evolved as different students shared their expertise at various times depending on the context of the situation.

In the following transcript Arturo and Shaquela (an English-speaking peer) offered their expertise to Mai as she wrote a response to a nonfiction text called *Animals at Home* (Lock, 2007). This text presented readers with facts about animals and their habitats, and Mai focused her writing on birds. The literacy event was initiated when Mai sought assistance with content. She wanted to know the name of the bird's habitat:

Mai: [Started e-journaling and typed words] *Bird make*. Who know how to call bird live?
Arturo: Bird house? Is that what you saying?
Mai: Uh, no house. [Moved hands.] Other thing. How I go to book?
Shaquela: You're in the journal. You wanta go back to the book?
Mai: [Shook head yes.]
Shaquela: Push this one. [Pointed.] Then put in Animals at Home again. See right there. Click it.
Mai: [Clicked to open the book.]
Shaquela: Yep. That's the one.
Mai: [Opened e-book to page with the birds. Appeared to be re-reading text silently. Smiled and started writing. Started typing.] *nest*. [Then, copied the following sentence.] *Some use mud, twigs, and grass*.
Arturo: What did you write about birds?
Mai: [Read her writing.] *Birds make nests*. *Some use mud, twigs, and grass*. [Misread twigs as teegs.]
Arturo: What? Mud and teegs? You mean twigs. Little sticks like you play with outside. Birds get those for their nestes. Real little ones. They still have to fly, you know and I know cuz I have birds nestes in my yard at home.

Arturo clarified Mai's question initially and later (toward the end of the transcript) provided expertise about bird nests. His talk was targeted at helping Mai understand what a twig was since she copied this sentence directly from the text into her e-journal. Not only did Arturo provide a model for pronouncing the word twig (language use), but he also explained how birds use twigs and why.

In the middle of the transcript, Shaquela responded to a request for support in relocating the text in the e-reader. Mai wanted to refer to the text as she composed. Shaquela explained the multi-step process of exiting the journal app and re-entering the book title in the library section of the e-reader. The event continued as Shaquela provided technology support at a level Mai understood and followed. Ultimately, this collective interaction enhanced the learning of the group.

Mai demonstrated persistence and ownership in this learning opportunity. She was empowered to seek help from her peers and

use the available digital tools to fulfill the purpose of constructing an e-journal response. Mai actively engaged in this activity in a way that made sense to her and met the goal of writing a response (Genishi & Dyson, 2009). Arturo and Shaquela served as a social network of peers and illustrated the ways student learning was shaped through social processes (Dyson, 1993). Enabling Mai to learn in this way allowed her to share the cognitive burden of thinking, and as a result Mai came away from the interaction with a deeper understanding of birds and their habitats (Pahl, 2009).

Emoticons: additive to the multimodal the writing process

There was a wide array of emoticons available on the journal app (see Figure 2.1) and students were very interested in adding them to their writing both in the middle of the process and upon completion. The learners used emoticons as part of their writing on numerous occasions. These multimodal images appeared to add to the depth of the response by providing an emotional outlet for feelings about a particular text.

In the transcript below, Andrea and David discussed the use of emoticons (with their English dominant peers Sam and Heather) after reading the book *The Paper Bag Princess* (Munsch, 1992) while crafting a digital response:

Andrea: Hey, I think I will use those smiley things on this one.
David: What?
Heather: You know the faces you texts on iPhones.
Andrea: Yea. I liked this book and, and so funny and look there are lots funny faces. I like the one and this one, this one. [Pointed.]
Sam: Me too. I'm going to use some of the smileys in mine. I like scary ones.
David: Oh. Well, I, (inaudible).
Andrea: [Started typing.] *That princes wares a paper bag and chases that dragon*.
[Added emoticon (character is laughing eyes and mouth open)] [Flipped out of edit view to see the image. Showed journal to Heather.]
Heather: [Smiled.] That's cool. I like that one.
Andrea: [Continued writing.] *That princes she saves that princ and have bad hair day*.

[Laughed.] This one here (referring to emoticon) is perfect! [Added emoticon (character had big white eyes with teeth and mouth wide open.)]

David: Why are you do that?

Andrea: It shows how funny the story. [Laughed.] You know, you read it too.

The event began with Andrea initiating the use of emoticons in her response to *The Paper Bag Princess*. David questioned Andrea's actions and Heather clarified the meaning of "smiley things" by connecting them to the out-of-school literacy of texting on iPhones. Then, Andrea explained her purpose for including the emoticons with this funny text. She continued typing her response about the prince chasing the dragon and paused to add a laughing emoticon. This action was her emotional reaction to that part of the story and added meaning to her response.

Andrea continued writing, "*That princes she saves that princ and have bad hair day*," and added a laughing emoticon with its mouth wide open. In this case the emoticon also supported the written words, but added another layer of meaning or an alternative way of communicating the humor of the story. She tried to help David understand her choices, but he was unsure about how the emoticons supported the writing.

Furthermore, the written response constructed by Andrea did not use Standard English conventions. Instead, she approximated spellings to express her ideas and concentrated on the message (Samway, 2006). Her intent was to showcase the humor of the story and she succeeded in this endeavor.

Student interview responses provided further evidence about the additive nature of emoticons as a multimodal feature of their e-journaling experiences. Five of the six English learners reported multiple ways that the images added to the meaning of their e-journal entries. For example, Arturo said, "I makes one face man [emoticon] at [the end of] my writing. I make it to show you how I like book we read." He utilized this semiotic tool as a reflection for how he felt about a particular text. Luis spoke about his use of emoticons with the book *Frederick* (Lioni, 1973). "I did those [emoticons] on *Frederick* a sad one, cuz he did not help the other mouses. You know, he was being lazy. That why I pick a sad one that day." In Luis's case the emoticons

afforded him the opportunity to convey the emotions of the book characters. Finally, Mai, who spoke the least amount of English in the class, said, "I use them faces [emoticons]. I cannot know English by [but I] know Vietnam[ese] and it tell people I am happy." She indicated the emoticons assisted her personal expressions because she did not have the English words to communicate her feelings. Although there were numerous reasons the learners used emoticons, in the vast majority of cases they added depth to written words.

Discussion

Plainly, there is a significant role for social interaction to play in a digital approach to writing that involves multimodal elements (Edwards-Groves, 2011). In many cases L2 students' success hinged on social interactions among students with varying levels of abilities and different native languages. In-school and out-of-school practices interplayed in ways that allowed students to be agentive in their intellectual lives while recontextualizing available resources. This social engagement afforded students the chance to modify their actions and understandings of the world (Dyson, 2013b).

Mercer (2000) reminds us that classroom talk is a powerful tool for the development of thought and that this joint meaning construction is how learners make sense of their world. According to Rogoff (2003), interactions such as those described above provide apprenticeships for learning where the students gained experiences as producers and consumers of language in both written and oral forms. The value of dialog cannot be understated when it comes to student learning (Wells, 1999).

Both visual and linguistic modes were used as design elements to convey meaning about students' understanding of both fiction and nonfiction texts (Kress & van Leeuwen, 2006). Students were social agents engaged in nonlinear text production (Dyson, 2013b). In other words, the use of emoticons added an additional layer of design choice in the composing process and showcased the social nature of multidimensional writing, which is particularly important for English learners (Lotherington & Jenson, 2011). Emoticons were used to signify multiple meanings, thus expanding the notion of foundational literacy skills (Bearne, 2009; Skaar, 2009).

The sharing of expertise among students was agentive as communally they knew more than each did as an individual. There were

very few instances of the learners seeking help from the researcher. Instead, the writers relied on one another and positioned themselves as experts (Merchant, 2005). As a result the literacy engagement of students seemed to increase. The transcripts showed a deep level of investment in understanding the digital texts and constructing digital responses for L2 students (Ntelioglou, Fannin, Montanera, & Cummins, 2014).

Implications

The findings suggest the need for a contemporary writing pedagogy that reconsiders the former notions of the writing process and moves away from a limited linear, linguistic composing (Dyson, 2013a; Walsh, 2010). This new method would integrate print, visual, and digital modes through imagination and creativity (Edwards-Groves, 2011). In this type of instruction, educators will simultaneously and synchronously combine technology and literacy skills, or *techno*literacies, into one lesson where students have opportunities to move across multiple modes of textual design and production (Cope & Kalantzis, 2013). Within this new approach value and status should be given to children's multimodal productions (Bearne, 2009).

As evidenced with the focal students of this chapter, technology necessitates the increased need for collaboration among students through spontaneous dialog and informal sharing of digital navigational strategies (Edwards-Groves, 2011). Providing dynamic spaces and time for these types of discussions to occur is essential, along with offering guidance for accepting language diversity, cultural differences, and multiple ways of learning that are represented in the classroom (Genishi & Dyson, 2009). Future writing instruction must be flexible to accommodate for the varied needs of students and be situated in authentic learning contexts in order for interaction to play a role in literacy learning (Pahl, 2009).

Laman (2013) states that "independence, resilience, risk-taking, perseverance, and stamina" (p. 132) are desirable attributes for multilingual writers. Offering students opportunities to develop these traits may support young writers' sense of agency in the composing process. According to Fisher (2010) many students report the role of others and the role of choice as crucial in mediating the writing process at school. Because agency is negotiated in face-to-face interactions,

new levels of sophistication have the potential to emerge when there is an open, malleable curriculum (Kuby & Vaughn, 2015).

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3
The Benefits of Co-teaching in the ESL Classroom

Carrie Neely

I recently read a passage which described children as artists with the human capacity to be makers and doers. The author goes on to compare children and their diversity of work(s) to that of Picasso, who is not Cezanne, and Whitman, who is not Dickinson (Carini, 2001). You get the idea. Although individuals, these artists also build upon one another's vision, and an image assumes new dimensions and possibilities, whether it is intended or not. And we, as the viewers, draw our own parallels. And so, this combination offers diversification and complication and wonder (Carini, 2001). The same can be said of our young writers.

It is this sense of diversification, this wonderful uniqueness, that makes up each child in the classrooms that I see every day, that has led me to want to discover a way in which they can all learn together, write together, without sacrificing those elemental constructs that define them at their core. Ironically, it is in seeing my students this year as a collective group, a community of writers throughout my process of co-teaching in an urban elementary school, that I have truly been able to reflect upon how valuable co-teaching is in demystifying the needs of the English Language Learner (ELL) and allowing the best teaching practices to unfold for *all* of the children.

My students as artists, as creators of their own uniqueness, began this year to draw upon one another for inspiration, an organic emergence that both surprised and delighted me and their classroom teacher; the process that unfolded in our classroom as a result was beyond our expectations. It has indeed been my experience that there is a place for co-teaching in the writing classroom, where

parallels can form out of complications and children will rise to challenges you never thought possible when afforded a little creativity and inspiration.

Benefits of the integrated writing classroom for English language learners

Segregating students according to level, ability, or cultural or linguistic background is often no longer feasible due to the increase in classroom diversity (Hourcade & Bauwens, 2001). If we are honest with ourselves, we might see that exclusive pull-out, as opposed to a push-in approach that allows for more integration into the mainstream classroom, is not promoting equity; it is, in fact, pulling students out of their community of learners—a community that they are already having difficulty associating themselves with on so many personal and academic levels; thus, the question should not be do our ELLs belong in the general education classroom? Rather, we need to rewrite the question: How can we, as educators, create and implement more effective instruction for *all* students?

One way to do this is to collaborate, of course, but this is tricky. Collaboration, although highly valued by teachers, is not often promoted, despite evidence linking it to student achievement (Lee & Picanco, 2013; Walsh, 2012; Wang, 2013). Mainstream teachers today, as research suggests (Dekutoski, 2011; Pawan & Craig, 2011; Pettit, 2011; Polat, 2010; Webster & Valeo, 2011), are ill-prepared to teach ELLs in their classrooms and perhaps hold erroneous pedagogical beliefs related to the overall practice and process of educating ELLs in the content areas. Ultimately, there is a sense that integration is a mistake, especially when faced with the rigor of the Common Core State Standards and the pressures of teacher accountability. Is it unreasonable then to ask teachers to welcome another person into their classroom, even though they may see it as yet another mandate of the system? Not necessarily.

Rigor need not be sacrificed for our ELLs, despite a common assumption that, since time is limited, ELLs can and should be given less work and, therefore, be held to lower academic expectations (Polat, 2013). What is the solution to the demands of time placed upon teachers in today's academic climate then? One solution is teacher collaboration in the form of co-teaching. And the writing

classroom presents the ideal platform from which to take the giant leap. Often times, teachers have difficulty grasping the process of second language acquisition in its entirety and have a particularly arduous time with writing instruction when faced with ELLs in their mainstream classrooms. It is therefore not always reasonable to expect a mainstream teacher to create a task that is carefully designed to meet the needs of the ELL without consultation or collaboration (Schulz, 2009).

Co-teaching is, in fact, cooperative teaching. Traditionally defined, it involves two educators, a generational education teacher and a special education teacher, who work together to teach heterogeneous groups in the general education classroom. The definition has evolved, however, and can now include a number of teachers, even the English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher (Hourcade & Bauwens, 2001). Whether we call it team teaching, cooperative teaching, or collaborative teaching, the nomenclature is unimportant; the aim is that teachers plan and collaborate, put their collective brains together, and tap their magical, creative wands to deliver some engaging, impactful lessons that reach all learners. This is key: All learners benefit from co-teaching.

Co-teaching in a typical writing classroom follows one of the various strategies or models that have evolved over time, or switches between several strategies during the same lesson. In whatever form it takes, it is two teachers working together to provide the same lesson (Piechura-Couture et al., 2006). As there are various definitions to be found across plenteous sources, they all describe the same thing in the end. I've chosen to describe a few of them in simple terms and thus avoid further confusion (Figure 3.1).

What makes co-teaching in the writing classroom so effective for us is our compatibility, our philosophy of teaching, our management styles, and our ability to compromise and communicate. There really is not a magic formula to begin the process. Though there is training to facilitate the process of matching personalities and easing two teachers over the initial bumps, my advice is to jump right in. I came up with a graphic of the way I picture our own process in my mind (Figure 3.2).

Sometimes students need an escape from what they perceive to be a routine in their academic day. Writing, particularly with the creative perspective and vision that two teachers bring through

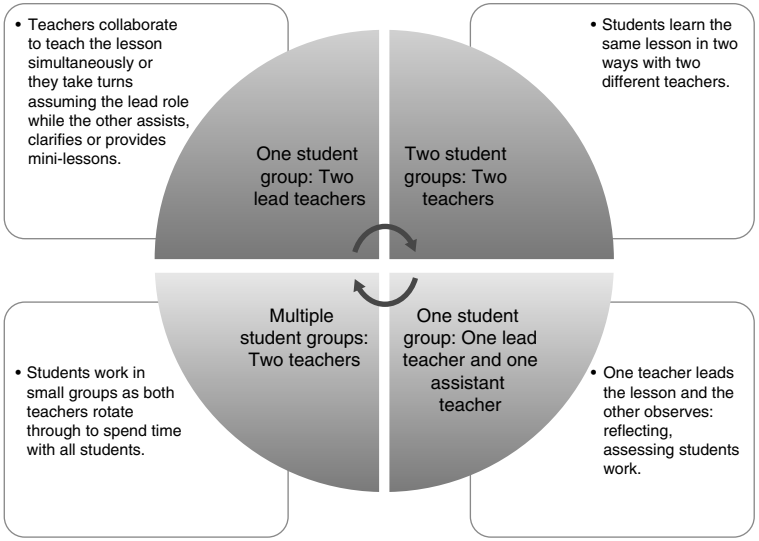

Figure 3.1 Co-teaching
Note: This figure is used to provide a visual of the co-teaching process (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). The circle demonstrates that the elements can either work together simultaneously, or in segments according to teacher and student needs.

co-teaching, allows for this to take place. They need writing during their day, and they need a sense of community. And they need it now. In an environment of chaos, whether it be an urban classroom filled with children who exhibit behaviors stemming from instability, insecurity, and inconsistency in their lives, or simply the chaotic environment of a child's mind when feelings of rushed confusion and inadequacy creep in as others around them race ahead, there must be an outlet. Without an outlet, frustration builds. Teachers acting alone in a class would have to place a magician's hat upon their heads in order to quiet the minds of all of their students while continuing to meet their own goals at week's end. Collaboration and the writing classroom constitute an open door to some relief for all involved. One simply needs to walk through it.

Perhaps one of the greatest sources of release for our students is the ability to express themselves in writing. Self-expression is therapeutic, no matter whom it serves, and to document it with the written

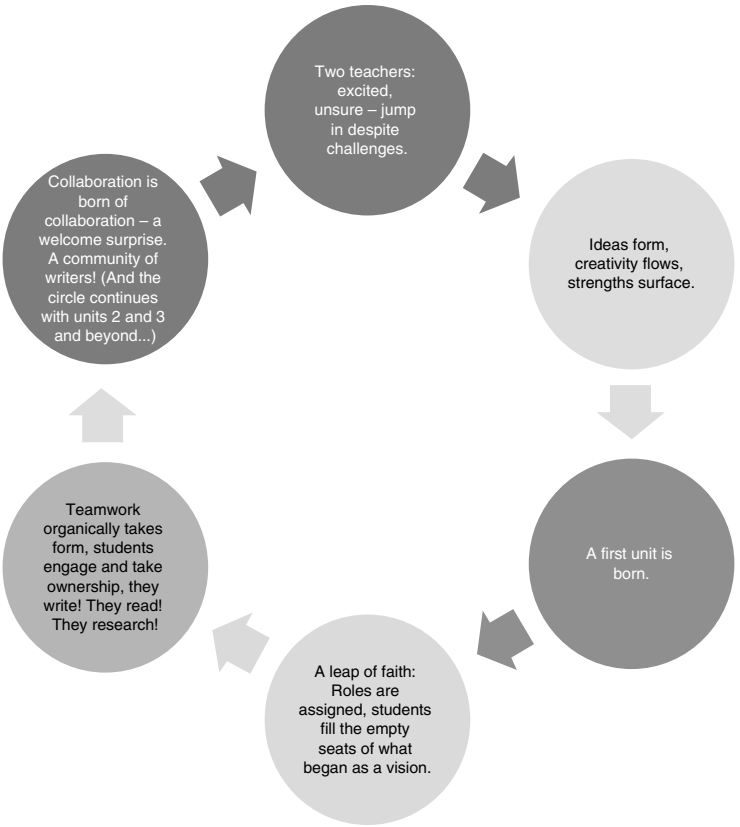

Figure 3.2 Co-teaching realized
Note: This figure introduces the thought process of an actual writing unit as the vision is shaped via the planning process, with ultimate implementation between two teachers realized in an organic, recursive pattern.

word provides proof that we indeed have a voice—academic or otherwise (Campbell, 1998). For second language learners, and all learners, because our class is truly a class of students who all benefit from this learning environment we have created, a sense of peace takes over when the pen meets the paper.

"Sharing the pen" with ELLs can be particularly powerful because it instills confidence and a sense of belonging. Writing can help to build a community in the classroom. Being seen by their peers as

contributing members of their classroom community is both valuable to their sense of self and serves as a powerful motivator (Weiner & Murawski, 2005). Confidence is everything. Confidence opens doors.

Below is an excerpt from Carrie's Teacher Journal that was kept during her year of co-teaching with Laurel Rockwood at Stubbs Elementary in Wilmington, Delaware.

> 12/18 (reference "Snow Journal Project")
>
> Looking around at the children, I see each as an island unto himself: cutting, pasting, adding an "s" or dotting an "i". They are spread across the room on carpets, at desks, on the floor, at tables, in the reading area … final projects have come together. I didn't think it would happen, but it did. I watched them and I thought, wow … they are actually doing this. They can do this. And then I had to stop again because something shifted in the dynamics. The isolation of their island existence changed and they began to merge, to share, to listen. They began to get feedback. They did all of this of their own accord, organically, this merging of island nations … we never asked them to. We've created a community of learners. Who knew?

Benefits of co-teaching

Perhaps the greatest benefit the ESL teacher can bring to the mainstream classroom is the fostering of culturally responsive pedagogy. Nieto (2013) describes this as affirming students' identities while at the same time expanding their world. It means that students' cultural practices and values can and should be infused into the curriculum—the ESL teacher as co-teacher can help to facilitate this process. And what better way to speak to a student's individual identity than in writing? When a student is allowed the time and the process to develop his or her thoughts, and talk about them, the voice emerges; the rushed panic that often leads to silence has no place in this classroom. There is time. If there is not time, the lesson will shift and continue into the following day, or the teachers will split the groups or the class to make sure each child is heard.

In addition, co-teaching allows for collaboration on a variety of projects and prompts for the units, as two teachers with very different ideas will inevitably bring them to the discussion; furthermore,

each teacher has a unique perspective as to student interests and needs, depending on the amount of time each has spent with the particular students in a variety of contexts. For example, in our classroom, as we are both continuing our studies, we might bring something like gender to the planning table. To further illustrate this, girls and boys may prefer different subjects to write about, but many writing prompts tend to focus on interests more geared toward girls (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2009). Therefore, in avoiding writing that clearly favors girls' learning where boys tend to suffer the consequences of disengagement with the subject matter, we can collaborate on ideas to ensure all students will find at least one topic with which they can identify. Thus, the superhero mini-lesson was born. As was the "how-to" unit on lizards (see lesson plan). This is a learning process, and through our students learning we realize that we must continue to learn as well.

Below is an excerpt from Carrie's Teacher Journal during her year of co-teaching with Laurel Rockwood at Stubbs Elementary, expressing the common frustration teachers must go through, and subsequently overcome, as part of the process of learning to teach together as they become true role models for their students.

> 2/5 (reference "Lizard Project")
>
> Is this too hard? Laurel and I looked up from our respective groups at the exact same moment with the exact same look on our faces and we knew what the other was asking: Did we make this too challenging for them? Did we consider ENOUGH differentiation? Can they rise to it? We went back to doing what we were doing and worked with our groups, rotated through the room from group-to-group and then it happened … the rhythm. The collective sigh of relief. You have to ride it out. The kids began to not only produce their sentences, but asked if they could write more. To think, in our initial panic, we could have called it off due to initial fear, discomfort or uncertainty. Couldn't our kids have chosen to do the same? They chose to rise to it, and so did we … together. Laurel and I are just amazed with their work and dedication.

Despite the obstacles of proper implementation, co-teaching helps meet the curriculum demands and takes the pressure off of the

classroom teachers, while helping them to respond to new accountability mandates (Little & Dieker, 2009).

My first-grade teacher and I meet on Fridays during her lunch period and my planning period. We also talk before or after school and rely on email when I am in other schools. We make it work. When I am pulled for testing or have to be at another school, she fills in the gaps. I will then make up the time and effort by perhaps bringing the next unit design to her via a presentation—and then do the copying for the unit.

Co-teaching creates a greater opportunity to capitalize on the unique, diverse and specialized knowledge of each instructor, and we have used this to our advantage when planning our units (Thousand, Villa, & Nevin, 2006). Where I am more of a "big picture" planner and have a vision for what I want to see happen, she is able to immediately get the resources we need and form the groups and pairs we need to make it work. She also has the full-time advantage of being in the classroom to connect with the kids on a daily basis. Magic.

When it comes to the subject of co-teaching, the challenges of implementation are often highlighted as factors for not initiating it sooner in classrooms. By simply working with the model on a small scale and using it in the writing classroom, however, challenges need not become obstacles. For example, as only a portion of the day or week is spent teaching with one another, it is not necessary for two teachers to co-exist in a classroom all day, which eliminates most of the personality/style/management/philosophical conflicts at the onset. Two people can find a compromise that works for a short period of time.

As far as evaluation of student progress monitoring and parent communication is concerned, it is business as usual. There is no need to make a major change in the system. The teachers are already or should already be doing these things—the addition of the ESL teacher to the writing classroom is merely an added bonus. Planning is always an issue and will not go away without proper administrative backing; however, given the need to plan for only one subject, we have found that meeting once each week and communicating via email is sufficient. We have also found that support comes from results. Once the administration sees the wonderful things going on in the classroom, the support often follows.

In addition to the lack of challenges, there are additional benefits for both the teachers and the students. There is flexibility in

scheduling and grouping, especially our grouping. We are able to lower the student-to-teacher ratio and reach more of our students, thus differentiating more effectively. For example, as one student known to be a "fast finisher" finishes quickly, one of us is able to anticipate this and be ready with a challenge to extend the lesson for him, while another does not have to leave the group who might be struggling with a sentence on the more basic level.

In essence, co-teaching enhances instruction for all students and reduces role differentiation on the part of teachers (Dove & Honigsfeld, 2010). It opens doors to shared problem solving and allows teachers to practice and share new skills and ideas while relying upon one another's strengths and improving upon weaknesses that surface. It sometimes takes another set of eyes to identify a weakness that we are unable to see in ourselves. The same can be said of our strengths.

Divergent ELLs, especially those with limited or interrupted education, are no longer isolated when co-teaching comes into play. Cultural and emotional needs can be tended to and modeled while instruction takes place in an authentic setting as social skills form naturally. Co-teaching gets them and gets us, the ESL teachers, back in the classroom without the social disconnect which has so often resulted in constant pull-out.

"A teacher cannot build a community of learners unless the lives of the students are an integral part of the curriculum" (Peterson, 1994, p. 30). Bringing in students' stories, connecting to their lives through dialog results in richer content, critical thinking, and social justice in the classroom. It happens organically—because of the students—and it starts with the teachers who have to set it up, set *them* up to share their stories, by sharing their *own* stories. It's an equation that works. Teacher transparency and modeled collaboration plus an open environment for children to share equals a community of open voices where learning takes place.

According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, we are ultimately motivated to obtain self-actualization once the basic physical, safety, and community needs are met (Farmer, 1984). In other words, no matter what extrinsic, or outside, rewards are present or absent, we will strive for self-esteem and fulfillment. But what if rote memorization or scripted assignments are squelching that sense of creativity and fulfillment? Education is for people, right? And so we need to educate

the whole person, starting with what motivates them from the inside out. When two teachers come together, one whose strength lies in dreaming up captivating, inspired lessons, and the other with the organization and management to bring them to fruition in an efficient manner, and both relate to the children, magic can truly take place in a classroom for these children, and for the teachers.

What does our co-taught writing class look like?

The easiest and most visual answer is that it looks like collaboration. Collaboration in writing is modeled when we as teachers solicit assistance from one another and from our students.

It goes back to shared writing, the idea of going beyond the pen-to-paper routine (Riot & McKenzie, 1985). However, we take it far beyond those initial steps until we have reached a fully integrated, interactive, communicative writing class. In the beginning, we are working on interactive writing (McCarrier, Pinnell, & Fountas, 2000) where the children compose with us, the teachers. Participation is a key factor, taking us well beyond the shared writing experience. Ultimately, though, the goal is the same: The children are brought into the craft of writing every single day. And so there is this fluid movement, this shift from our meeting on the carpet where the lesson is introduced and the goal of the day is explained to them; the discussion then begins to take shape as we ask probing questions to elicit feedback. From their whisper-in-the-ear sharing to their collaborating on our shared example on the board, they are moving toward independent writing—which always takes place next, with the two teachers acting as facilitators and guides.

Typically we begin class by gathering at the carpet where there is access to technology, the whiteboard, etc. We might ask a probing question or provide students with a scenario that requires them to solve a problem by thinking of solutions. Often times, however, the meeting in front of the room will begin with a story.

The discussion of stories supports oral language development (Snow, Tabors, Nicholson, & Kurland, 1995), especially when there are dialogic interactions. It provides the proper scaffolding, embedded vocabulary, and shared background knowledge to our interactive writing lessons. As so much of our writing and the goals set forth in the writing curriculum have become research-based, we are doing

extensive modeling of pulling information from a text in the form of details as well. Many purposes are served during this reading warm-up time.

Reading and writing are always intertwined in our classroom. How can they not be? Readings also serve as springboards for discussion where students can draw their own personal connections to the themes and apply them to the writing task. Readings should represent a variety of written genres in order to maintain the interest of the students and also challenge those who are moving along further than the others. Even within these more difficult texts, differentiated assignments can still occur, and they do.

In a classroom with more than one teacher, a child has significantly more opportunities to share his or her writing in front of an audience or during a teacher conference. More sharing leads to greater understanding, more editing and revision; it familiarizes them with English syntax, phrases and vocabulary, and allows for more automatic word recognition (Williams & Pilonieta, 2012). We often require students to gather written feedback from peers and from both teachers on their work. In order to do this, they must constantly revisit their own writing and therefore they are editing without realizing they are editing.

Why does this work for us? Well, many teachers have limited experience teaching writing to ELLs and may not grasp the process of learning a second language in its entirety (Schulz, 2009). Without this knowledge, it is difficult to know when to stop and ask the necessary questions like the ones the ESL teacher will insert during discussions to make the personal connections to the content that ELLs need. It is done seamlessly, without certain students being singled out. These questions and clarifications, these different perspectives and varying techniques, are beneficial to other students in the classroom who do not qualify as ELLs as well. Everyone wins, everyone feels the same: equal.

Below is an excerpt from Carrie's Teacher Journal during her year of co-teaching at Stubbs Elementary, which demonstrates that equality can begin to surface visually, through the students' final products.

> 2/15
>
> Laurel pointed out to me today something that I nearly missed: the covers of the kids Lizard Journals. They work in tables when

> they "go back to journal" after our meeting at the carpet, and today something very cool and unexpected happened. As they designed their journal/book covers, each table developed its own theme somehow: The kids at the blue table had journals that all featured people on them; the yellow table all had lizards with water, and the purple table's journals all incorporated hearts. They didn't talk about this at all, it just happened as they worked. Community.

Co-teaching fosters lifelong learning

In retrospect, I can now acknowledge that it has been through my experience working with my first-grade co-teacher that one of the most valuable forms of professional development arose in a rather organic fashion this year. It was in observing her during her lead-time in the lessons—as she instructed the approaches to writing or modeled our lessons—that my own personal pedagogy improved. It was through her seamless management style that my own management style began to surface again, after a period of forced dormancy during my years teaching in higher education—a world apart from an urban elementary school.

Ultimately, however, it was in the small comments made to one another as we watched our students engaging in the writing tasks set before them that allowed for a form of post-observation feedback at the end of the class, where we marveled at what went so wonderfully right and allowed ourselves a laugh at what did not.

Co-teaching may still be thought of in today's classrooms as a construct of special education rather than a component of ESL methodology, but it is available to all of us—if we choose to take advantage of it and push for an opportunity to experience it. We advocate for our students every day: seeking out better teaching opportunities is merely an extension of that advocacy. Imagine a world where all students' needs became every teacher's responsibility. Imagine the possibilities. Imagine the communities we could create.

Below is the final excerpt from Carrie's Teacher Journal during her year of co-teaching at Stubbs Elementary, illustrating the importance of continued learning and opening our minds to the possibility of new ideas for our classrooms.

T2/12 (reference "Lizard Project")

What I see are small groups engaged in the whole process. They are engaged in their research: watching a short video and taking a note on what NOT to do. A second group simultaneously challenges themselves by finding more difficult information from an article we gave them (printed from the computer). A third group is in a circle on the floor, their heads literally together with their legs displayed like the petals of a daisy. They are searching their books for answers to add to their journals. They're like little adults—co-existing, but engaged. I feel so honored to be working with them and with this teacher.

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4

Leveraging Hidden Resources to Navigate Tensions and Challenges in Writing: A Case Study of a Fourth-grade Emergent Bilingual Student

Joanna W. Wong

> I like [writing] better at home because they don't have to like, check it. You relax. Nobody's talking.
>
> (Lizette, Spring Interview)

During this May interview, Lizette shared her preference for writing at home rather than at school and noted some issues she has with writing in class. The first was Lizette's wariness of having writing constantly checked for form errors. This "checking" of writing was indicative of a *culture of correctness* (Wong, 2014) that permeated classroom discourse around writing and emphasized mechanical correctness as an essential criterion for good writing. In contrast, during writing experiences at home, Lizette was able to align writing efforts with her own goals for learning, thinking, and expressing ideas, goals that remained invisible and untapped in her classroom writing experiences. Additionally, for Lizette, student talk in the classroom made writing experiences at school less desirable.

This chapter examines the writing experiences and understandings of Lizette, an emergent Spanish/English bilingual fourth-grade student, who was identified by her teacher at the beginning of the year as a low-skilled writer in English. This case study poses the following questions: What are the writing experiences and expectations of an emergent bilingual student identified as a struggling writer? When does the student have difficulties writing and when does she

engage as a writer? The goals of this study are to examine phenomena related to writing instruction that enable and/or constrain L2 writing development.

Background

Although research on elementary school writing instruction for emergent bilingual students, often identified as English Language Learners (ELLs), is a nascent field, the existing body of literature draws attention to issues of inadequate and infrequent writing opportunities for this student population. One problem is that when and if non-English-dominant students receive writing instruction at all, instruction is often skills-based and geared towards high-stakes standardized assessments (Menken, 2006; Pacheco, 2010; Wright & Choi, 2006). Such instruction fails to view and engage young learners as writers and to promote writing to learn and to communicate in authentic, meaningful, and critical ways. Consequently, writing achievement data in the US continues to highlight issues with students' writing development, particularly of Latino students (NCES, 2012), who represent the largest emergent bilingual group in the US and are projected to be the dominant ethnic group in California, the site of this study.

In this vein, researchers of emergent bilingual writers have documented how instruction and the context of schooling have constrained students' writing development (Brisk, 2012; Crosson, Matsumura, Correnti, & Arlotta-Guerrero, 2012; McCarthey & García, 2005; McCarthey, López-Velásquez, García, Lin, & Guo, 2004; Reyes, 1991, 1992). In a study investigating the relationship between the quality of writing tasks and native elementary Spanish speakers' use of academic register in their L1, Crosson et al. (2012) found that fourth- and fifth-grade students (N = 224) had minimal opportunities to engage in challenging L1 writing tasks despite being enrolled in a bilingual instructional program. The researchers propose that a lack of opportunity to engage in challenging L1 writing tasks limits to emergent bilingual children's written language development, particularly for academic contexts. Crosson et al.'s study draws attention to the marginalization of bilingual students' L1 even within bilingual educational programs.

In a study of five Spanish-English speaking and six Mandarin-English speaking fourth and fifth graders enrolled in an elementary

English as a Second Language (ESL) program, McCarthey et al. (2004) found that the opportunities to write depended on the pedagogical orientation of the teacher, the teacher's own culturally influenced language ideologies concerning attributes of good writing, and curricular mandates from the district and state. The cultural incongruence of teachers' responses and students' expectations and understandings as evidenced in their responses in students' dialogue journals was one example of how student writing was impeded by teachers' assumptions about students' genre knowledge. In such cases, students were unable to make sense of the teacher's feedback. For example, Luis—a student from Mexico—did not understand why his teacher responded to his journal entries with questions, and so he did not answer her questions. Another student, Hui Tzu—from China—wrote in Chinese in her journal and was puzzled by her teacher's questions that were unrelated to the content of her entries. Instead of the teacher making accommodations to understand student writing, Hui Tzu began illustrating her entries to support her teacher's comprehension. Moreover, while students understood teachers' expectations for most writing assignments, they did not understand their purpose beyond task completion. Overall, students reported that they did not enjoy writing. However, similar to Reyes' finding (1991), McCarthey et al. concluded that students wrote more and demonstrated more engagement when they generated their own topics for writing. These findings align with theories that children's writing development is driven by their articulation of voice (Calkins, 1994; Graves, 1983). When children's voices are constrained or silenced and their ideas remain untapped, they are denied opportunities to develop as writers.

The demands of the Common Core State Standards emphasize evidence-based writing as a necessary competency of a literate individual. This has shifted attention from an over-emphasis on reading instruction to develop academic literacy to an understanding that writing in academic contexts must be developed alongside reading. However, educational policies alone will not transform the quality of opportunities bilingual children have to develop as writers in school. Examination of how instructional pedagogy, language ideology, school structure, and educational policies inform the teaching and learning of writing in schools is needed to develop an understanding of how emergent bilingual students are supported and/or

constrained in schools. Such research will contribute needed insights into designing spaces and enacting pedagogy that leverages the languages, literacies, and cultural knowledge of students learning to write in English as an additional language.

Theoretical framework

To fully realize and uncover the literacy practices of emergent bilingual students, this study draws on theories that shift understanding of language and literacy away from an understanding of language as a system and structure and towards conceptualizing language and literacy as local social practices that are imbued with the sociocultural historical histories of literacy practices from other times and spaces (Canagarajah, 2013; Pennycook, 2010; Valdés, Capitelli, & Alvarez, 2010). At the core of the framework that undergirds this analysis is the understanding that emergent bilingual children do "self-regulate when and how to language, depending on the context in which they're being asked to perform" (García & Wei, 2014, p. 80). These theories account for the intentionality of children's language negotiation in writing, reading, and speaking.

Sociocultural theories propose that all children learn to use language and literacy through conversational interactions with peers and adults and become language and literacy users within social groups (Rogoff, 2003; Vygotsky, 1978). Emergent bilingual children negotiate meaning making with local language practices and social groups who may use languages and literacies for myriad ways and purposes. In this manner, emergent bilingual students agentively draw on and integrate multiple linguistic practices to engage in language and literacy usage (Canagarajah, 2013; García & Wei, 2014; Valdés et al., 2010). Such understanding of the flexible and layered ways that bilingual children engage as language and literacy users is hidden and misunderstood, however, within classrooms where mainstream language and literacy norms and standardization of practice and product are the goals and expectations of a factory model of education.

Additionally, this study draws on language and literacy socialization theories that emphasize how children are socialized to use language and literacy in particular ways (Heath, 1983; Schieffelin & Ochs, 1986). Individuals negotiate and appropriate social group

norms and ideologies most often when they align with their own. However, school-based practices and norms for language and literacy often reflect mainstream ideologies and practices that subordinate students' home cultures and languages and position students as non-language users and low-achievers until/unless they become competent using English for academic purposes (Talmy, 2008). Ultimately, such positioning creates additional problems and barriers for student learning and academic achievement.

Methods

Case study affords examination of phenomena within a particular context and is appropriate to research how a student engaged as a learner and writer over an academic year (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Yin, 2014). Because case study is intended for close study of individual or small group experiences, findings are not meant to be generalizable; their purpose is to provide insights into ways of examining and theorizing about similar instructional contexts and students.

Context of the study

Tesoro Elementary was a public dual-language immersion school located in a low-income, urban community in Northern California that serves a predominately Latino/a population. The school attempted to employ a 90-10 language instruction model with 90% of instruction in Spanish in kindergarten and a gradual increase of English by 10% per grade level as students advance through the grades. However, due to a variety of issues including accountability measures based on high-stakes assessments, students in fourth grade (the grade level of this study) received little Spanish-based instruction during the observation year. In fact, all Spanish-based instruction ceased after winter break.

Focal participant

Lizette, the daughter of two Mexican immigrants, was born in the USA. Spanish is the primary language used among her family. At home, Lizette often assumed the role of English teacher to her mother and five-year-old brother. Lizette taught her mother work-related English vocabulary that was essential for her work in a fast

food restaurant. After school, Lizette taught her younger brother English words and expressions as he was too young to enroll in kindergarten and whom, according to Lizette, they could not afford to send to preschool.

Lizette acted as a resource as well as drew on multiple resources outside of school to support her English literacy development, a competency that she thought was valuable. Although Lizette had attended Tesoro Elementary since kindergarten, she explained that her parents intended to send her younger brother to an English-only school instead of Tesoro Elementary. "So he, when he's bigger so he could speak it right." This indicated a particular language ideology and recognition that speaking English according to mainstream norms of correctness was a goal. Lizette explained that she often used a computer software program to bolster her English speaking and writing. Additionally, Lizette's older brother reluctantly provided her with feedback and support for academic work done at home.

Data collection and analysis

Data for this study are drawn from a larger data set collected as part of a year-long examination of elementary bilingual writers' development. The primary sources of data for this study are field notes and transcriptions of audio recordings from classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with six focal students (three male and three female) who represented a range of writing ability. Data collection also included samples of student work and instructional artifacts.

I conducted classroom observations from September through June. During observations, I assumed the researcher role of *observer participant* (Merriam, 2009). In this role, I engaged with students during literacy events to inquire about their processes, practices, and thinking but did not become involved with instruction unless students asked for assistance. Though I became integrated into the classroom environment, I was not a full participant in the classroom community. In total, I observed 30 days of literacy instruction for a total of 47 hours of English language arts instruction. The original intent of this study was to also observe Spanish writing practices; however, Spanish instruction was infrequent and ceased after the winter break. Because it was inconsistent and often omitted from the daily schedule during

the fall and early winter, Spanish instruction was only observed twice for a total of 105 minutes.

I conducted two semi-structured interviews with focal students in late fall/early winter and spring. The purpose of these interviews was to elicit students' knowledge about writing, attitudes about writing in their L1 and in their L2 (English), their ideas about being bilingual, information about their experiences with writing at home and at school, their expectations for learning to write in school, use of writing outside of school, and their writing process. The average time of both sets of interviews was about 45 minutes. Additionally, I engaged students in dialogue during and after classroom writing events to gather students' reflections on their writing processes and thoughts about their written products.

At the end of the academic year, I also engaged focal students in three additional semi-structured interviews to elicit reflections on researcher-selected writings to learn more about their writing process and have them self-assess their work. The three writing assignments chosen for student reflection were a fictional narrative in the manner of Cinderella (this writing assignment culminated a unit on Cinderella stories from different cultures and was identified by four of the focal students as being their favorite piece of writing); the spring district mandated performance writing assessment to assess students' ability to write an opinion essay related to taught science content; and a free write completed in June. Students wrote a free write in English at the start of every month and could choose the genre and topic.

For data analysis, I applied the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss, 1987) to examine field notes and transcriptions of classroom observations and student interviews. The process involved multiple iterations of coding and grouping of codes to identify themes that echoed across classroom observation data and interview responses.

Findings

Drawing upon analysis of field notes, classroom discourse, and interviews, this section reports on three themes salient to Lizette's understandings and experiences as an emergent bilingual developing writer.

Expectations and desires for writing

The first theme, *expectations and desires for writing*, highlights Lizette's evolving understandings and goals as a writer. During interviews and observations, Lizette expressed a desire to use writing as a way to deepen her knowledge about topics salient to her life. In her fall interview, Lizette identified ducks as something she wanted to learn about through writing. "Because they sound interesting and my dad always wants us to go to the park on Saturdays cuz he wants to go to the park but we don't and he tells us to go." Lizette expressed personal reasons for wanting to learn about ducks through writing and situated her interest in this topic as something that would enrich her life and family excursions to the park, and potentially make going to the park more interesting for her as well. Lizette understood writing to be a vehicle for learning about something new.

In the spring, when asked to share more about what writing she did at home, Lizette explained that she had recently written a paragraph on bullying on the Notes application on her iPod. Bullying had emerged as a class topic following an incident at recess midway through the academic year. Students engaged in class discussions and read an article about bullying in Scholastic News. When pressed for why she decided to write about this topic, Lizette shared, "Cuz, so, I could know, so people could know, it's actually only for *me*. Like how, you don't have to bully, just so they could give you something. You could just ask them." Clearly, this topic resonated with Lizette, and writing provided a means of processing ideas for herself as indicated by her emphasis on "me." Here, Lizette extended examination of an issue that surfaced at school to writing practices at home, a space for extended literacy usage and learning that was not obvious within classroom walls.

In this vein, Lizette also described a research project she planned to do in the summer. For Lizette, this project would serve two goals: to explore personal interests and to educate others about her chosen topic:

> I don't want to do like a story but you know how we did our science project? I want to do a project about dogs. And sharks. Because people might think they're harmful and dogs cuz they

> might think the same thing that they bite. And dogs can bite like pit bulls, but they could be nice. I chose them and I'm gonna get the materials to make a little project.

Lizette explicated her desire to inform others about dogs and sharks and to dispel conceptions of them as being dangerous through her writing. She intended to do this project outside of school and was confident in her skills to do so, drawing a connection between her experiences crafting a science project (an ecosystem research project to be described in the following section) and this proposed work.

Despite Lizette's ambitions as a writer and interests in using writing to learn, Lizette remained insecure about her writing skills throughout the academic year and shared that she thought she was "sort of" a good writer at the beginning and end of year. At the end of the year, Lizette reported that she felt she really understood math while with writing "I sort of do and I sort of don't." For Lizette, being able to "make it all up" made writing easy. However, the time it took to write and her self-reported limited English vocabulary made writing challenging: "You might not know words and it might be difficult." Lizette's understandings about good writing and good writers' practices indicated a belief that good writers were active, agentive, and resourceful. "They always pay attention. They write a lot. If they have an important question, they raise their hand and ask for it. If they don't know a word." Lizette identified graphic organizers and templates taught by her teacher, such as the *Bing Bang Bongo*, as tools that supported writing (albeit formulaic) across numerous genres of writing. Additionally, Lizette shared that good writers "read a lot" … "to get ideas."

On the one hand, Lizette held a holistic conception of writing, yet was insecure about her own writing ability because she struggled with spelling and vocabulary. She wanted writing to be "fun" for herself and others, and found it to be so at times, mostly at home when she had opportunity to choose her own topics and genres for writing. At school, the teacher identified most writing topics and provided a formulaic organizational structure while emphasizing correct mechanics for writing. Consequently, the teacher-controlled writing events in the classroom and mandated writing processes created tensions and challenges for Lizette that are explored in the next section.

Navigating tensions and challenges with classroom-based writing expectations

The second theme illustrates the tensions and challenges Lizette faced aligning her own expectations and desires for writing with those of the teacher. Instructional interactions and expectations reinforced lock-step processes of writing and engaged students in formulaic writing practices premised on a monologic pedagogical orientation where students had few opportunities to make their own decisions about how and what to write.

One challenge in the formulaic instructional approach to writing for Lizette was that although Lizette could apply the formula, she did not develop a clear understanding of the functions each component served. In her December interview, Lizette described a recent opinion writing assignment that she liked and felt she had done a good job with: "When we were doing the Bing Bang Bongo." Here Lizette, like other focal students, equated the formulaic template with a type of writing and echoed how writing activity was named during instructional interactions.

To teach this writing assignment, the teacher provided students with a step-by-step model of writing an opinion essay focused on the question of whether cheerleading should be considered a sport. The original intention was for students to all write on this same topic, but after realizing students' lack of interest in the topic, the teacher allowed students to select from a handful of pre-selected topics. Lizette described how the teacher asked students to close their eyes to vote for their topic of interest. Following voting, the expectation was that students would work in writing groups to read informational texts and co-construct ideas for writing. The teacher had expressed an expectation for students to write similar pieces based on agreed-upon ideas. Lizette described the first phases of this writing project in this interview excerpt:

> I voted for dog. And I did this [showed work]. And it's just like a paper that she did but now we have to write what, um, we were in our groups. Our first reason. Our person was. This is what I did. Have you ever seen a dog? No wait. Yeah. And I said, I have.

Lizette assessed that her writing was "just like a paper she did," and referred to the teacher's model. Lizette proceeded to explain that her

topic sentence was "Have you ever seen a dog?" When I asked her to tell me more about what the topic sentence should tell the reader, Lizette responded, "Like a question. Like have you seen a dog? Like a dog. Would you like a dog as a pet?" I followed with a question to elicit her understanding about the function of the topic sentence:

J: So does your question tell your reader what the rest of the paper is going to be about?
L: EE, no.

Lizette hesitated and appeared unsure about how to answer this question, and responded that she did not think that the topic sentence should establish the focus for her paper. She understood the teacher's recommendation to begin this writing piece with a topic sentence in the form of a question, but could not explain the purpose it served.

During the subsequent phases of this writing project, Lizette encountered additional challenges and tensions, particularly around the teacher's expectation that students co-construct ideas for writing to produce similar essays. This created a tension for students who wanted to follow the teacher's instructions and gain approval for their writing, but doing so required students to set aside their own ideas or personal opinions to craft an "opinion" essay:

L: Cuz we did like with Valeria and some people chose dogs and different kind of things and our group chose dogs and we, we agreed about things they could only see black and white.
J: So did working in a group make it easier to write it or more difficult?
L: Sort of cuz sometimes we didn't agree with each other. And sometimes we did.
J: So if you didn't agree, did you have to write the same thing or could you write your own idea?
L: If we didn't agreed, we'll just try to agree with each other cuz we have to get one thing only, not all of them. Or we could use them in each paragraph.
J: So did you have to write the same thing as a group or you could write your own idea?
L: Same things but different words.

Working in the group provided Lizette with the opportunity to discuss her ideas with classmates and ask for support from another student, Valeria. However, the teacher's expectation that students within the group have shared opinions made the work challenging and contrived. As Lizette shared, students held different opinions and wanted to highlight particular ideas they thought were important, yet had to arrive at consensus to meet the teacher's expectations for this assignment.

This conformity to the teacher's expectations would continue to create tensions for Lizette and challenges to her developing deeper understandings about the purposes of writing, writer's craft moves, and organizational structures. At the end of the year, students had their only assignment to craft a fictional narrative. Following a fairy tale across cultures unit that focused on analysis of cultural elements across Cinderella tales, the teacher assigned students the task of writing their own modern American Cinderella fairy tale. Lizette struggled with this writing assignment for a number of reasons: she did not understand how to reconcile this fairy tale narrative set in a particular time and place with her contemporary world and her lack of identification with the Cinderella character. For example, Lizette set her narrative "A long time ago in England …" When asked why she chose this setting, Lizette explained that most "palace things are in England." Although students worked on this narrative for several weeks, Lizette did not receive the feedback and support to develop an understanding of how to write a localized version of the traditional narrative. Her challenge remained undetected as feedback focused on writing mechanics and teacher examples emphasized descriptions of modern-day technology such as cell phones and hybrid cars to establish a contemporary setting.

Lizette's description of her process of crafting this piece reflected a resistance to developing a traditional "Cinderella" character. For her central character, Lizette crafted a female soccer player who excelled at playing soccer (naming the character after herself). Instead of encountering a prince, she met two famous soccer players. The story concludes after Lizette (the character) marries one of the soccer players and lives happily ever after. In contrast to the traditional fairy tale, Lizette positioned the main character as a strong individual who was not dependent on a prince for salvation. In her assessment of the story, Lizette suggested it might be improved if she had included

a prince in her story, and noted this departure from the traditional story as a potential problem. In describing her writing process, Lizette shared how she struggled through multiple drafts of writing that resulted in many handwritten pages (her third draft was seven pages). For Lizette, the process was a combination of "boring" and "fun" as she tried to come up with ideas to write another version of this fairy tale. By her second draft, Lizette began incorporating elements that were "fun" for her such as dogs and soccer, and this made the writing process more enjoyable.

Ultimately, Lizette's published piece was a hybrid of the traditional Cinderella tale and her own fantasy story, and represented a simplified version of her thinking throughout the process. Whereas her published Cinderella story was brief with little elaboration of events, her earlier handwritten drafts included richer story development, particularly around character interactions. All students typed their final drafts on computers during the last days of school, and limited practice typing combined with time constraints may have also contributed to Lizette's abridgment of her final draft.

With a focus on whole-class direct instruction, the challenges Lizette faced remained unaddressed by the teacher. Although the teacher provided students with rubrics at the start of most assignments, they were not employed to provide students with strategic feedback. When I asked Lizette what she did with finished writing in class, she explained, "Keep it in a folder. Or sometimes I take it home, and add more things and then I bring it back." I followed up by asking if the teacher graded it or told her how she did. "No. She'll just look at it and tell us what's wrong and we'll write about it." Ultimately, Lizette received little feedback on her writing beyond "what's wrong with it" and understood that part of the writing process was then to "write about it" and correct what was wrong.

Leveraging hidden resources

Although Lizette shared how her teacher supported her to generate ideas for writing and identify mistakes, Lizette's writing strengths and needs were not addressed in other ways. Instead, she sought assistance from family members and peers who could provide her with the support needed to accomplish writing tasks. In this manner, Lizette leveraged hidden resources to understand and complete assigned writing tasks and/or to achieve her own goals as a writer.

This theme extends the previous two and explicates how Lizette negotiated tensions and addressed challenges through her own agency as a learner.

During late winter/early spring, students engaged in a science unit on ecosystems. The culminating project consisted of two components: an informational report and a diorama. Lizette identified this as one of the harder writing assignments because she had no first-hand knowledge about the desert. However, her father and brother assisted her in understanding the conditions and the types of plant and animal life found there. Additionally, her father took her to the library so that she could engage in research on the Internet and helped her create models for her diorama. Lizette worked on her desert report and diorama at home and felt pleased and excited about her writing process and final products. She was eager to show these to her parents and cousin.

Lizette's writing process culminated in the production of two papers. One was a five-paragraph essay in which she had synthesized her ideas into the learned requisite introduction, three body paragraphs, and a conclusion; in Lizette's words, "I got used to it," referring here to the Bing, Bang, Bongo essay template. This was the first time she had written an essay independently outside of school. However, Lizette learned that she was mandated to use the four-paragraph, fill-in-the-blank paragraphing frame provided by the teacher. To complete this second piece of writing, Lizette consulted with her older brother for assistance, "Cuz I kind of didn't understand this." To illustrate what she did not understand, Lizette pointed to the labeled blanks on the assignment sheet; each blank was underscored with a label to indicate the type of word needed to complete the frame (in the manner of Mad Libs). "There was too many blanks." Additionally, Lizette explained that she did not understand much of the academic vocabulary in the frame and that this made filling out the template difficult. When Lizette read this paper aloud to me, she stumbled on words that were not her own, a further indication of how this essay frame was more of a barrier than a scaffold. Lizette also noted how her peers struggled applying this frame to their work as well. Ultimately, Lizette wrote two essays, one where she filled in the blank and her "unofficial" essay developed through an independent application of what she had learned about writing. The "unofficial" essay was crafted at home where she engaged more

fully as a writer and problem solved by leveraging myriad resources. Lizette reasoned that her teacher assigned the fill-in-the-blank frame so "it's not like us doing a lot of writing." However, Lizette chose to do her own writing, was excited to do so, and could read and comprehend her original essay.

During our spring interview, Lizette identified how she drew on her neighbor, Rosa, for support. I had also observed this activity during classroom observations throughout the year. A number of students, including Lizette, identified Rosa to be a strong writer. Lizette explained that Rosa was often able to communicate ideas and directions more clearly than her teacher and she often clarified unknown vocabulary:

L: Cuz sometimes I really don't understand Ms. Andrews, what she says. Uh, cuz, Rosa, she explains it much better. And … she tells me how.
J: Do you have an example that you remember? That you had to ask Rosa to help you understand?
L: Like when we used to write the commas and those things. Like when the teacher used to say things and I couldn't understand it, I tell her, 'can you tell me it?' But like, not hard words. Some words that I do know.

According to Lizette, Rosa could explain things more clearly because she used familiar language and words. Observations of interactions revealed instances of translanguaging (García & Wei, 2014) where both students drew on Spanish and English for meaning-making, and during which Rosa provided feedback and/or scaffolding to support Lizette's learning and problem solving in writing activities.

The following is an example of how Lizette drew on Rosa for support and integrated Rosa's ideas to support her own writing during a writing event in March. During this observation, students had engaged in a shared reading of a chapter from *Island of the Blue Dolphins*. Following the reading, the teacher assigned students the task of writing a paragraph that compared Karana's (the novel's main character) two houses. The teacher emphasized the need to write a particular type of topic sentence, and provided several model sentences orally. Students began working independently, and I noticed Lizette peering over at Rosa's paper so I asked her about this activity:

L: I was trying her to read her, hers and I'll make another one.
J: Okay. So you were asking her to help you with ideas?
L: Yeah.
J: Good. So what, Rosa, what did you write?
R: Karana's two houses had some differences and some similarities.
J: Okay. [to Lizette] What are you going to write?
L: I'm going to write, Karana's house. I mean, Karana's two house. [*Erase*.] One. I'm gonna put. [*Erase*.] Karana. Karana's house [*talking aloud while writing*] is near the … the water.
R: Spring. Spring.
L: Spring. And the other one ain't next to it, like she has to go somewhere else. To go get the spring.

In this interaction, Lizette peered over at Rosa's paper to see what she had written to get ideas. After listening to Rosa's topic sentence, Lizette began drafting her own paragraph. Rosa interjected as Lizette composed aloud and offered her the more precise word of *spring* for water, which she integrated into her writing. Although it was unclear from Lizette's use of the word *spring* if she understood the full meaning of the word. Consequently, with Rosa's assistance, Lizette was able to develop ideas for writing and begin the writing task.

Conclusions

Analysis of Lizette's expectations and desire for writing along with her experiences with classroom-based writing practices illustrate the challenges and tensions faced by a student who desired to meet the teacher's expectations, yet also wanted to communicate personally meaningful ideas and experiences in her writing. A lack of alignment between classroom expectations for writing and her own presented challenges throughout the academic year, and contributed to confusion for a student who leveraged myriad resources to understand and accomplish assigned writing.

Lizette's desire to use writing to learn about concepts relevant to her life, and to use writing to explore her own ideas in her own words and structure, remained largely invisible in the classroom curriculum. Lizette understood good ideas for writing to be integral to quality writing, yet was constrained in her own writing development with inconsistent feedback that emphasized mechanical correctness

and followed a prescribed approach to produce writing. Although students produced a number of pieces of writing over the academic year, analysis of Lizette's reflection on her writing experiences and expectations revealed undeveloped understandings that repeated exposure to formula alone did not ameliorate.

Lizette was identified at the beginning of the year as a low-skilled writer and although she learned the Bing Bang Bongo structure and was inspired by the writing she had done to continue writing independently over the summer, she remained an insecure writer. This was evident in her self-assessment at both the beginning and end of the year, and also in her discussion about her writing processes; she was often unable to articulate a clear rationale for the decisions she made. Lizette had learned to follow the rules of doing school and doing writing, but will need much more to advance her writing skills.

Lizette was a resourceful learner who actively negotiated tensions and addressed challenges. Cognizant of her learning needs, she employed understandings of self-regulation to draw on others for assistance in varying contexts (García & Wei, 2014). At home, Lizette was more fully engaged in the holistic process of writing. She identified her own topics and genres for writing and drew on the support of her father and older brother to understand and accomplish writing projects. Although writing at home was still difficult, Lizette described these experiences and pieces as purposeful and meaningful. In school, Lizette had more difficulties with writing because instruction focused on following procedures to organize ideas and the mechanics of writing. Moreover, Lizette often needed clarification of instruction, not understanding at times the expectations and/or the language of instruction (McCarthey et al., 2004). In response, Lizette enlisted the aid of those students she identified as being more capable and was fortunate to have a neighbor (Rosa) who was especially attentive to her needs.

Learning to write and writing to learn were social practices for Lizette as she initiated interactions with others to develop understandings and accomplish writing goals, agentively tapping into contextual affordances (Canagarajah, 2013). She desired to write to learn more about topics salient to her and to organize these ideas independently; however, classroom norms provided few official opportunities for her to do so and, hence, to build on her strengths

and personal goals for writing. In this manner, Lizette continually balanced contextual affordances and constraints.

In conclusion, students developing academic language and literacy in an emergent second language require responsive assessment, instruction, and strategic scaffolding to help them achieve at high levels. This chapter illustrates how Lizette engaged with three instructional practices: the Bing Bang Bongo five-paragraph essay template, the opinion essay writing group (dogs), and the fill-in-the-blank essay template (ecosystem). Such practices might qualify as types of instructional scaffolding if used in responsive ways, and if aligned with students' needs, and if responsibility for problem solving is gradually released and subsequently transferred to the student (van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen, 2010). However, used with all students as a way to do writing, these lock-step processes acted as "routine supports" (Athanases & de Oliveira, 2014) and not as the instructional scaffolding they may have originally been designed to provide. Ultimately, analysis revealed that instructional expectations resulted in minimal shift of responsibility and instead socialized students into standardized writing practices, uniformity, and low-level expectations.

Teachers of emergent bilingual students must especially be reflective and cognizant of instructional practices and consider how they are providing both "high challenge and high support" to increase academic rigor while providing the necessary instructional scaffolding to advance each student's learning (Athanases, 2012; Hammond, 2006). Without a deeper understanding of emergent bilingual students' expectations and desires for developing English language and literacy practices, their needs will remain unmet and their voices silenced. For students to achieve academically, educators must listen and respond to their students' voices.

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Part II
Content-area Writing

5
Teaching Writing through Genres and Language

Tracy Hodgson-Drysdale

The teaching of writing is a complex skill that teachers must master in order to be effective educators. However, research shows that not all teachers feel prepared to teach writing (Gilbert & Graham, 2010), that writing is taught in many different ways by individual teachers (Cutler & Graham, 2008), and that there is a need to improve the teaching of writing (Cutler & Graham, 2008; Gilbert & Graham, 2010; National Commission on Writing, 2003, 2005, 2006). It is important to note that not all teacher education programs include courses that prepare teachers to teach writing (Gilbert & Graham, 2010). This is especially true with respect to teaching English language learners (ELLs) (Gebhard, 2010; Hyland, 2007; Larsen, 2013; Schleppegrell, 2004).

Over the last three decades, many teachers in North America and Australia have used process writing to teach writing, by teaching students to brainstorm ideas, write a draft, revise their writing, and publish it to share with an audience (Graves, 1994). Although these are important, the teaching of writing requires more than a simple linear process for teachers and students to follow. Writing is an iterative process of using language to construct meaning in specific sociocultural contexts and teaching must be explicit enough for students to understand how language is used within a culture to create meaning in writing (Rose & Martin, 2012). Process writing focuses on engaging children in writing personal recounts, sharing what they have experienced, and while this is important for young children and students learning a new language, it is ultimately limiting. To help students become successful writers who are prepared to write in

the various genres required of them in school, teachers must provide instruction on writing for new and varied purposes, exploring new topics, and using new language (Christie & Derewianka, 2008; de Oliveira & Iddings, 2014; Rose & Martin, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004).

Part of the problem is that "[m]any teachers are unprepared to make the linguistic expectations of schooling explicit to students" (Schleppegrell, 2004, p. 3). In order to teach writing, teachers need to understand how language works in the culture and context in which they work, the different purposes for writing, and how language choices realize meaning in texts (Hyland, 2003; Rose & Martin, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004). Teachers must also be cognizant that not all students are aware of the language and social practices surrounding writing in English (Hyland, 2003; Kress, 1994; Schleppegrell, 2004). Classrooms today include students from diverse cultural and language backgrounds and, since valued linguistic practices vary from culture to culture, teachers must understand students' existing linguistic resources if they are to help students build on that knowledge to communicate effectively (Hyland, 2007).

In order to create a text, a writer must make linguistic choices. The more knowledge the writer has about language and how it can be used to make meaning, the more they are empowered to make their own language choices to create meaningful texts (Hyland, 2003). With this knowledge, teachers can provide students "with a knowledge of appropriate language forms shifting instruction from the implicit and exploratory [as with process writing] to a conscious manipulation of language and choice" (Hyland, 2007, p. 151). This is essential if ELLs are to understand how language works and to use language for increasingly complex academic purposes, especially in writing (Gebhard, Chen, Graham, & Gunawan, 2013). Teachers can achieve this by learning to teach writing as part of a framework that is based in a theory of language, such as Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL) (2007), that teaches them how language is used to create meaning while also providing them with the language to engage in conversations about language with colleagues and with students (Achugar, Schleppegrell, & Oteiza, 2007; Brisk & Zisselsberger, 2011; de Oliveira & Iddings, 2014; Gebhard et al., 2013; Hyland, 2007).

The teaching of writing is more than a series of independent activities and is best understood as part of a broader framework where

language is an essential element of meaningful communication situated in the context of a culture and the context of a particular situation. Teaching writing informed by SFL can provide such a framework for teaching writing but teachers still need ongoing instruction and support (Aguirre-Muñoz, Park, Amabisca, & Boscardin, 2008; Brisk, 2015; Brisk & Zisselsberger, 2011; Daniello, Turgut, & Brisk, 2014; Gebhard, Willett, Caicedo, & Piedra, 2011). This chapter addresses this issue by analyzing the experiences of two elementary teachers as they learned to teach writing informed by SFL to understand their experiences, and how this knowledge can assist teacher education programs and professional development to better support teachers in learning to teach writing.

Questions:

1. What was the impact, if any, of introducing two experienced teachers to SFL informed writing instruction and supporting their ongoing learning and development throughout a school year?
2. What were the similarities and differences in the uptake of SFL informed writing pedagogy by the two teachers?

Literature review

Genres and language

The view that language is a resource for making meaning is the foundation for SFL, Halliday's theory of language (Halliday, 1993, 2007). "When children learn language, they are not simply engaging in one kind of knowledge among many; rather they are learning the foundation of learning itself … language is the essential condition of knowing, the process by which experience **becomes** knowledge" (Halliday, 1993, pp. 93–94, emphasis in original). Halliday defined three metafunctions of language: the interpersonal, the ideational and the textual, which are realized through language and "occur simultaneously in every sentence, providing different layers of meaning" (Derewianka & Jones, 2010, p. 9). Language thus enables us to relate to an audience (tenor), to express ideas on a specific topic (field), to communicate either orally or in writing (mode) (Halliday, 2007). Teaching language from an SFL perspective goes beyond traditional grammar to view "language as a resource, a meaning-making

system through which we interactively shape and interpret our world and ourselves" (Derewianka & Jones, 2010, p. 9). Teachers familiar with traditional grammar can use that knowledge to learn about SFL and how language functions; the theory clarifies how people use language in functional ways and empowers people to make language choices to realize specific meanings.

Genres have been defined as "staged goal-oriented social process[es]" (Martin, 2009, p. 13) and many have been identified as important for elementary school such as recounts (personal, procedural and historical), procedures, and reports (Brisk, 2015; Christie & Derewianka, 2008; Rose & Martin, 2012). Within each genre, language is used to construe meaning for a different purpose through a different set of stages. In some schools, writing calendars are created to ensure that students learn a progression of genres throughout the grade levels and that they learn to write for a variety of purposes across content areas (Brisk, 2015). Teachers can then scaffold the teaching of writing for students by introducing a genre with simple stages before one that is more complex, such as procedures before reports. Procedures are generally easier to write because telling how to do something requires brevity, whereas reports classify content and include descriptions of several subtopics. Teaching procedures first is also beneficial because the writing progresses from telling how to do something based on personal experience to the more abstract task of researching a topic and writing a report based on notes.

Knowing the stages and language features of each genre is essential to teaching it effectively (Brisk, 2015). *Recounts* generally consist of a title, an orientation, a sequence of events, and a conclusion. Personal and procedural recounts are serial in that they recount all of the events in a short period of time such as a vacation or a science experiment. Historical recounts, such as autobiographies, are episodic because they recount the major events in someone's life. The language of recounts includes descriptions of participants using adjectivals, tracking of participants using appropriate pronouns, past tense, action verbs, and adverbials to show time, place, and manner. Personal recounts are written in the first person whereas factual recounts are written in the third person. *Procedures* require a title, a goal (which is sometimes stated in the title), materials and steps, and the language includes precise action verbs in the imperative, and specific language through noun groups and adverbials. *Reports* require a

title, an opening general statement and subtopics, and the language includes the timeless present, specific or generalized participants depending on the topic, adjectivals to describe participants, and both adjectivals and clause complexes to pack information more densely.

The teaching and learning cycle (TLC)

For teachers new to teaching writing informed by SFL it is often easier to teach the stages of the genre first and then to teach the stages and language together as they gain experience (Brisk, 2015). However, it is essential for teachers to eventually teach both so that students have a greater understanding of how the language is actually realizing the meaning in the genre (Rose & Martin, 2012). To accomplish this, teaching should follow the teaching and learning cycle (TLC) (Martin, 2009; Rothery, 1996), a model which "represents a 'visible pedagogy' in which what is to be learned and assessed is made clear to students" (Hyland, 2003, p. 26). Using the TLC, teachers apprentice students to conduct research and learn the content of a topic, they deconstruct texts with students to help them understand how real authors use language, they co-construct texts with students teaching them to make language choices, and they support students as they write independent texts, revisiting the cycle at any point as needed (Brisk, 2015; Daniello et al., 2014; Rothery, 1996). This model is essential for teaching ELLs the expectations for writing in the new language and culture.

While some have contended that SFL is too hard for teachers to learn, that has been refuted by current research on SFL in education. "From an SFL perspective, the job of the teacher is to broaden students' ability to use language more expertly across a variety of social and academic contexts to accomplish specific kinds of work" (Gebhard et al., 2011, p. 93). Studies of teachers who are supported in learning SFL-informed pedagogy show that "participants developed a deeper understanding of disciplinary knowledge and associated language practices, both of which are essential components of teachers' knowledge base" and that by using SFL-informed practices in professional development "teachers developed greater confidence in teaching a variety of genres and ability to plan, enact, and revise writing lessons with specific text organization and language features in mind" (Gebhard, 2010, p. 800; see also Brisk & Zisselsberger, 2011; Daniello et al., 2014; de Oliveira & Lan, 2014).

Teacher change

When teachers seek change themselves there is a greater chance of actual changes to pedagogy and practices because enduring change depends on the investment of the people involved (Fullan, 2007). Each person experiences an innovation in unique ways, depending on whether the innovation matches their goals, how it relates to their teaching experience, and even to their personal lives (Sikes, 1992). However, those involved also need to realize that change initiatives involve a process that takes time and commitment; "change is a process, not an event" (Fullan, 1991, p. 130). Teachers need time to internalize an innovation, and in order for long-term change to occur, they need long-term support (Achugar et al., 2007; Aguirre-Muñoz et al., 2008; Brisk & Zisselsberger, 2011; Daniello et al., 2014; Gebhard et al., 2011, 2013). Principals must actively support teachers and the process of instituting change by attending training sessions to understand the innovation and what teachers will need to implement it (Fullan, 2007). When teachers go beyond changing teaching materials to changing their beliefs they are creating real change "which can come about *only* through a process of personal development in a social context" (Fullan, 2007, p. 139, emphasis in original).

Method

Context

The study examines the experiences of two teachers learning about teaching writing informed by SFL at two different schools in the same major urban center. The first teacher, Eva (all names are pseudonyms), worked at a public school that was in the first year of a school–university partnership in 2008 (for a complete description of the partnership, see Daniello, 2012; see also Brisk, 2015). The partnership is ongoing. Thirteen teachers in grades three through five and the school principal met with the lead investigator of the project for a two-day summer institute and then monthly for professional development (PD) on teaching writing informed by SFL. The content of the summer institute was an overview of SFL and an introduction to genres and language, the introduction of a Teachers' Manual (created by the lead investigator), the creation of a writing calendar

where each grade level selected genres to teach, and planning writing units in grade-level teams.

The student population of the school consisted of 326 students from a variety of linguistic backgrounds and over 60 per cent of students were bilingual. Half of the population spoke Spanish as a first language. Eva taught in a Sheltered English Immersion (SEI) classroom where the teacher supports newcomers in learning English while learning content. Her students' language proficiency in English ranged from beginners entering their first American classroom to students who were quite fluent across the four language domains. All of Eva's students spoke Spanish as their first language.

The second teacher, Myrna, worked at an urban private school that was also in the first year of a school–university partnership in 2011 (for more information, see Hodgson-Drysdale, 2013; Pavlak, 2013). Five teachers in grades four through eight and the principal participated in a one-day summer institute with similar content to the institute previously described and then met monthly for PD in grade-level teams across content areas. They also met weekly with research assistants to plan and review lessons. The student population of the school consisted of approximately 250 students, 76.6 per cent of whom were bilingual. Half of the student population spoke Spanish as their first language, and one-fifth spoke Vietnamese. In Myrna's class of 21 students, eight spoke Spanish at home, six spoke Vietnamese, two spoke Haitian Creole, one spoke Amharic, and four spoke English.

Each teacher had been teaching for over 20 years and both taught language from a traditional view of grammar. It was clear in both classrooms that the teachers valued literacy. In Eva's classroom a schedule was posted at the front of the room listing Writer's Workshop every day from 1:30 to 2:30. By the windows, there was an extensive classroom library stacked in milk crates five columns wide and three rows high. Each crate held a basket filled with books and there were additional rows of baskets on top of the crates, along with a bookshelf for big books next to it. There were word walls for each content area. Book jackets had been copied, laminated and placed at the front of the room, and each included a short word list relating to the book. Eva was excited about writing and so were her students. She helped them find stories in their lives, in the little things they did and experienced each day. They read many fictional

trade books for entertainment and they returned to them often to see how authors told their stories.

Myrna's classroom was also a literacy-rich environment. Student work was always prominently displayed on a bulletin board at the entrance to the classroom. There were bookshelves to the right and left of the door and a table with books as well. At front of the room was a new SMART board, and there were posters up for teaching writing on either side. Myrna also kept samples of student work from previous years to use as mentor texts to help students with projects, such as large trifold poster boards used for science fair projects.

Data collection and analysis

This qualitative study was conducted using a modified form of action research (Herr & Anderson, 2005). Although the teachers had not initiated the study, they shared in the decision-making process and the responsibilities of creating units and lessons informed by SFL and the TLC. The goal of the research was to engage them in the process of learning about teaching writing informed by SFL so that they could eventually work with colleagues in their grade-level teams to create their own writing units in relation to state and district curriculum guidelines.

Observations and data for Eva were collected over the course of seven months during one school year and for Myrna over ten months of one school year. As one of the researchers, I made weekly visits to the schools to observe the teachers as they taught lessons informed by the PD and to meet with them to answer questions. I also planned lessons with Myrna each week. Observations of writing lessons for both teachers were recorded as typed field notes during at least one lesson a week. The lessons generally lasted 45 minutes to an hour. Notes included what the teacher said (as close to verbatim as possible, but no sessions were recorded as stipulated by both teachers), what students said during group lessons, some of what they said during group or individual writing, any relevant information posted in the classroom, and handouts for students. The researcher also kept track of trade books used as mentor texts in the lessons observed. Notes were reread by the researcher after each observation and information was clarified when necessary. The researcher also collected writing samples from students who had consented and received parental permission to participate in the study.

Results: teachers implementing writing informed by SFL

Analyses of the data collected indicated that both teachers did change their teaching practices throughout the school year and that there were more similarities than differences in the way the teachers engaged with SFL-informed pedagogy. Both Eva and Myrna were experienced teachers who loved teaching writing and yet both were looking for new and interesting ways to teach when the project began at each school. Eva had used process writing and conducted writing workshops in previous years. A typical writing period included a mini-lesson, modeling for students with an example Eva had written, student writing time, and sharing writing at the end of the workshop. Myrna was also knowledgeable of process writing and she liked to engage students in writing activities that used strategies such as a RAFT activity, where students consider the **R**ole of the writer, **A**udience they will write to, the **F**ormat of the text (letter, newspaper article, etc.), and the **T**opic of their text. She was also interested in trying activities she learned at writing workshops she attended.

Teaching language

Both teachers had previously taught language through traditional grammar. They learned about integrating an SFL-informed view of language into their teaching in the PD, but said they were still unsure of how to teach language from the perspective of SFL. Both teachers used the language of traditional grammar throughout most of the school year, even once they began teaching language functions and even though the metalanguage of SFL had been introduced during the PD and reinforced during classroom visits.

During the fall, Eva taught students to write personal narratives and many lessons focused on language, some of which reflected the topics discussed in the ongoing PD (Table 5.1). For example, she deconstructed mentor texts for mini-lessons on adjectives, saying verbs and using past tense, and then had students revise their writing. In many lessons, students learned new language related to the topic as they read a book or completed an activity and Eva wrote it on chart paper. Students were then able to use the language related to the topic in their writing. Some of the lessons, such as those on adjectives, focused on a traditional view of grammar while others,

Table 5.1 Genres and language taught by Eva

Genres	Language
Recount: Personal **Stages**: title, orientation, sequence of events (serial), conclusion **Stages taught**: none	**Field**: adjectives (3+ lessons), saying verbs, past tense **Tenor**: audience, question marks and dialog, writing for kindergarten students, for parents **Mode**: not taught
Recount: Autobiography **Stages**: title, orientation, sequence of events (episodic), conclusion **Stages taught**: sequence of events	**Field**: vocabulary and suffixes **Tenor**: writing for classmates **Mode**: timeline with photos and text
Procedure **Stages**: title (goal), materials, steps **Stages taught**: all	**Field**: content language, emphasize specificity (quantity of materials, adverbs for how to do steps) **Tenor**: sentence types related to genre, giving commands (imperative) **Mode**: not using text connectives (not needed in procedure), drawings and related text in steps
Report **Stages**: title, opening statement, subtopics **Stages taught**: all	**Field**: content language, factual language, strong examples **Tenor**: audience, interesting facts **Mode**: drawings and related text in paragraphs

such as the lesson on saying verbs, helped students to understand the importance of language in written texts and how improving the quality of the language would increase the effect of the text on the audience.

To introduce the lesson on saying verbs, Eva told students that she sometimes used "said" too much in her writing and she asked if students ever noticed that in their writing. Then she engaged students in deconstructing a favorite mentor text to find a variety of saying verbs and to create a list of alternatives for "said." After

creating the list, she instructed students to return to a text they had written and revise the dialog to include words other than "said." The lesson was informed by SFL in that students and the teacher collected language samples from real texts that represented how language is used in the culture and then students made language choices when revising their writing to make their texts more interesting for readers.

During the procedure unit, Eva and her students made paper snowflakes and play-dough, and they learned language through their experiences. They discussed sentence types and why procedures required commands but she did not teach imperatives more explicitly, explaining how to begin with the name of a verb (unconjugated form) to give a command. In several lessons, she reminded students to use specific language so that people could follow their instructions to make something. She also taught them not to use connectives such as "and then" explaining that they should just say what they needed to directly, such as "Cut the paper …."

During the fall, Myrna taught many language lessons as well. In some lessons, she taught traditional grammar using a textbook. In others she drew students' attention to language in trade books and textbooks, focusing on the parts of speech and sentence types (Table 5.2). Some of the lessons reflected her traditional view of grammar. For example, during several lessons involving deconstruction of text she asked students to identify nouns, verbs, and adjectives without reference to how the language was used or why. In another lesson, while deconstructing a text with students, she asked them what type of sentences were used and they said declarative. At this point, she was focused on identifying the type of sentence and not on the impact of that choice on the audience. Later in the fall, she began linking the sentence types to their function, reflecting what she had learned during the PD. For example, when she was deconstructing a procedure with students in October, she pointed out that the text used imperatives to give commands to the reader. In another lesson she told students that declarative statements would be found in reports because they state facts, showing the author's role as expert. An important turning point for Myrna occurred when she realized that, although she initially believed her students could only learn about adverbs from the textbook, they had learned to use them in the context of the writing units.

Table 5.2 Genres and language taught by Myrna

Genres	Language
Report **Stages**: title, opening statement, subtopics **Stages taught**: all	**Field**: Content language (nouns), parts of speech, present tense **Tenor**: declarative statements to state facts, drawings to interest audience, author information on back of pamphlets **Mode**: tri-fold pamphlets
Procedure **Stages**: title (goal), materials, steps **Stages taught**: all	**Field**: content language (verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs), being specific, parts of speech, sentence types, language choices related to content **Tenor**: general audience, tone in procedure **Mode**: science fair projects
Procedural Recount **Stages**: title, orientation, sequence of events, conclusion **Stages taught**: sequence of events	**Field**: content language (verbs, nouns, adjectives, adverbs), parts of speech, past tense, irregular past tense **Tenor**: general audience, sentence types **Mode**: science fair projects
Report **Stages**: title, opening statement, subtopic **Stages taught**: all	**Field**: content language (verbs, nouns, adjectives) **Tenor**: if writing for principal "good words, good grammar, good punctuation," audience first-grade buddies **Mode**: mini-books for first-grade buddies

During several of the writing lessons both teachers told students they would be writing for a specific audiences, such as kindergarten students, the principal, and students' parents. They discussed how writing for younger audiences would require simpler language and writing for teachers or the principal would involve more complex language. However, neither teacher showed students examples of simpler or more complex language, or how the language changed due to choices made by the author.

Genres and stages

The concept of teaching the purpose of a text in relation to the genre, and then teaching the stages of the genre, was new for both teachers. However, they both began to teach them in the third month of the intervention.

Eva sometimes made reference to the purpose of the text during the fall, but she did not connect it to the genre of a text or the stages until December, when she taught a unit on autobiographies. During that unit, she explained the episodic nature of the stages in contrast to the serial personal recounts that students were familiar with (Table 5.1). Students gathered information about their own lives by interviewing their parents, filled out a graphic organizer (GO) with what they learned, and brought photos of themselves to remind them of certain events. Eva told students to write a list of important events in chronological order which would be the basis of their paragraphs. These texts were vastly different from texts in the fall that lacked clear stages and sometimes included several purposes. For example, in response to the prompt, "How are you going to tell a kindergarten kid about fall?" one student text began with a partial poem about leaves falling, briefly described children going outside to see the leaves changing color, and then switched to persuading students to go outside to see for themselves. While a hybrid use of genres can be practical and engaging in the hands of a more experienced writer, in this student's writing it illustrated what can happen when writing is assigned without a specific purpose and without connecting it to a genre.

During the unit on procedures, Eva introduced the purpose of procedures and the stages of the genre (Table 5.1). After doing activities as a class, they wrote the procedures for each activity using a GO. For example, after making snowflakes, Eva engaged students in co-constructing the title and materials, asking for their input. As a class they discussed how many steps they would need and then students wrote the steps independently using the GO. Eva introduced a report unit next that was similar in several ways. The major difference was that students learned to do research on a topic and to use that information to fill in the GO instead of using personal knowledge, as they had done during the procedure unit.

Myrna began teaching the purpose and stages of genres when she taught a unit on reports in November (Table 5.2). During the report

unit she taught each stage through deconstruction of mentor texts, and students created independent ecosystem reports. In January and February she taught procedures, including the purpose of telling how to do something, the stages, and the importance of doing the steps of a procedure in order. As a class, they read many procedures and deconstructed them for the stages and the language. Myrna also explained the importance of a procedure being complete and she gave many real-life examples, such as the necessity of having a complete recipe. She continued explicitly teaching the purpose and stages with subsequent genres throughout the year.

The teaching and learning cycle

Both teachers liked deconstructing text from the beginning; it seemed familiar to them and they took up the TLC from there. Eva's previous writing program had emphasized using mentor texts to learn about narrative writing. Myrna was familiar with deconstructing text to help students understand content. Both initially deconstructed texts for language using traditional grammar as a framework, for example identifying adjectives or nouns in the writing.

Joint construction was more difficult for both teachers. Eva began doing joint construction with her students in the fall through revising her own writing. During the procedure unit, she used joint construction for some stages. She continued co-constructing portions of texts during the report and biography units. Myrna co-constructed a text with students in September and engaged students in some joint construction through revising. It wasn't until the procedure unit in January that she began co-constructing texts with her students more frequently and she continued using the strategy for procedural recounts and the final report unit. The change was partly due to Myrna's realization that including the joint construction of a Deserts report, as we had initially planned, would have scaffolded the writing of a report for students. Completing one report as a group, where students had input and could ask questions, would have prepared them to convert their research notes into drafts more quickly and it would have lessened the amount of individual conferencing Myrna did to support them.

Both teachers were eager for their students to complete independent writing projects. Eva assigned personal recounts to students throughout the fall and then had students revise their writing after

mini-lessons on language. Myrna assigned students writing on various topics across content areas from writing riddles to writing about experiments they tried for the school science fair. Once they began teaching the stages of the genres, however, both teachers spent more time preparing students using the TLC before having them write independent texts. They also held writing conferences with students on either their notes or their rough drafts to ensure that students understood the purpose of the genre, the stages, and the language of the topic before they wrote their full texts.

At the end of the year, Myrna taught a second report unit, which included even more SFL-informed instruction than the previous units. Over the course of several lessons, Myrna taught students to do research by deconstructing a text as a class for content and language and taking notes by subtopics in a GO. She then used joint construction to teach them to use the information in the GO to create detailed notes. Once they had completed the class notes then students did independent research and note-taking on individual topics. Once each student had completed their notes, Myrna used co-construction again to teach them how to use the class notes to write sentences and paragraphs. Students then completed their own independent writing on their individual topics using their notes to write drafts of their reports.

Analyses of the data indicated that both teachers engaged in teaching using SFL-informed pedagogy at various points throughout the school year and that instruction became more infused with the pedagogy as the year progressed. Both teachers stated in individual interviews that their views and methods for teaching writing had changed and they had learned a lot from participating in the study.

Discussion

Change is possible but it takes time; both Eva and Myrna needed to try new ways of teaching informed by SFL and assess how it worked for them as teachers. When PD and classroom support were provided they tried new ways of teaching writing that initially relied more on genre purposes and stages, but sometimes included teaching language from a functional perspective. This was dependent on the school–university partnership and support they received from the researchers, their principals, and their colleagues. Myrna had

the advantage of weekly discussions and planning session with a researcher, which may have resulted in her engaging more fully with teaching the stages of the genres and teaching through the joint construction of text. It is also possible that any additional engagement on Myrna's part was due to the refining of the PD and support over the first three years of the project.

Both Eva and Myrna showed changes in their teaching that included teaching the purpose and stages of genres, and they were developing their understanding of teaching language from a functional perspective. The greatest change may have been that they began teaching writing units informed by SFL instead of isolated writing lessons. While both teachers taught writing prior to the study, neither used a cohesive framework for teaching writing nor did they make connections between specific purposes for writing and language choices. When presented with SFL as a theory of language and a framework for teaching writing, both teachers taught the stages of genres and modified their teaching of language in a variety of ways to address how language realizes meaning. Teaching language without attention to genre and purpose led to student texts that were unintentionally mixed genres without a clear purpose. Teaching the purpose, the stages, and the language improved the quality of student texts.

Teachers using SFL-informed pedagogy to teach writing can engage elementary-age students learning English in successfully writing in several genres throughout the school year with instruction and scaffolding. Both teachers successfully engaged students in writing activities in multiple genres by teaching using the TLC. Students grasped the structure of the genres but sometimes struggled to convey their ideas through language. When the teachers implemented the TLC and placed emphasis on joint construction of texts they provided support for students as they learned how language is used. More consistent use of joint construction and teaching more language features for each genre could have further enhanced students' ability to use language to construe meaning.

More research is needed on how to help teachers learn about teaching writing informed by SFL and how to integrate it more effectively into their teaching practices so that they are prepared to make the teaching of writing more explicit for students learning English. Providing pre-service and in-service teachers with instruction on

teaching writing through a methods course dedicated to the teaching of writing is essential, as is ongoing support for teachers through PD and school–university partnerships. Research in schools provides support for teachers in the form of opportunities for discussions about innovations and for assisting them with implementing changes. When provided with instruction and ongoing support, teachers can learn to teach writing informed by SFL which will bolster their confidence as teachers of writing, make the teaching of writing more consistent in schools, and make the expectations for teaching writing in English explicit for ELLs.

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6

Bilingual Fourth Graders Develop a Central Character for Their Narratives

Maria Estela Brisk, Deborah Nelson, and Cheryl O'Connor

A narrative is a special kind of story that is highly valued in English-speaking cultures. Narratives tell an imaginative story, although sometimes they are based on facts. There are many types of narratives, such as legends, myths, and historical fiction. Narratives are structured to be entertaining and to teach cultural values. In narratives, normal events are disrupted and language is used to build up suspense until the plot reaches a crisis point. The basic stages of narratives are orientation, complication, evaluation, and resolution (Labov & Waletsky, 1967; Martin & Rose, 2008). A narrative may end with a writer's evaluative comment (Butt, Fahey, Feez, Spinks, & Yallop, 2000; Education Department of Western Australia, 1994; Schleppegrell, 2004). Across different cultures, narratives share a similar organization, but what makes for a complicating event and resolution may differ (Martin & Rose, 2008).

Children come to school familiar with this genre from home experiences of telling and/or reading stories. These experiences are reinforced in schools when children read or are read more narratives than other genres. Furthermore, a high percentage of the texts in basal readers are narratives (Kamberelis, 1999).

Instruction of narratives tends to focus mostly on features of text structure such as setting, recounting events that lead to a crisis, a resolution, and a conclusion (Wright, 1997). In the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) (2010) the writing standards for Pre-K through second grade focus on events. Beginning in the third grade the notion of describing characters and some of their internal features is introduced. Teachers consider a good narrative one that includes all

elements of the text structure (Martin & Rothery, 1986). However, the main characters in a narrative drive the plot and hold the readers' interest (Roser, Martinez, Fuhrken, & McDonnold, 2007). These characters need to be well developed to justify their goals, problems, and challenges, and how they end up resolving their problems. Because "stories are not driven by the plot; the plot is driven by characters" (Rog & Kropp, 2004, p. 70), it is important to start writing fictional narratives by creating and describing the main characters. Readers' understanding of characters helps them to understand the story plot (Roser et al., 2007). The way in which the characters confront and resolve the crisis teaches the audience about the ways of behaving valued in a culture (Martin & Rose, 2008; Rothery & Stenglin, 1997). Children have difficulty developing character. Usually by late elementary or middle school the characters in children's stories begin to reflect internal qualities essential in driving the plot (McKeough, 2013).

The purpose of this project is to study bilingual fourth graders' attempts at character development resulting from targeted instruction. This instruction used character development rather than plot as the point of departure in narrative writing instruction. Thus this research addresses the following questions:

- Can fourth graders develop a major character for their fictional narrative as a result of targeted instruction on external attributes and internal qualities?
- Do the features of characters impact the plot?

Character development

Most stories have one principal character, although there is often at least a second important character that needs to be developed as well. There can be any number of minor characters that do not need much development (Rog & Kropp, 2004). Characters exhibit external attributes such as age, gender, ethnicity, and physical appearance; and internal qualities such as traits, interests, abilities, values, feelings, relationships, goals or motives, and changes over the course of the story. The external attributes give some insight into the character but the internal qualities provide even more because the characters'

actions are motivated by their internal qualities (Brunner, 1991; Roser et al., 2007). Characters are revealed through a number of indirect devices such as the author's description of the characters; what they say; what other characters say about them; and what characters do (Roser et al., 2007, p. 549).

In children's books, images and language resources are used to describe characters and to show what they do. Language resources such as verbs, adjectives, adverbials, similes, and metaphors help shape the characters. Dialog showing interaction between characters is used to further reveal the character. Children's authors tend to use descriptions and illustrations to depict the character's external attributes while the internal qualities are usually expressed indirectly through a variety of language resources.

When reading, children's ability to understand characters develops "from the 'outside to the inside'" (Roser et al., 2007, p. 550). In kindergarten and first grade children's written stories are personal recounts based on their own experiences. Any fictional story is copied from books or TV shows and the focus is on the events in the story. By second grade they begin producing fictional narratives with a major character (Kroll, 1990). Once they start writing narratives they begin to attribute qualities to their characters. Through the elementary grades students learn how to develop the external attributes and internal qualities of characters, and how characters with different features create tensions that move the plot forward (McKeough, 2013).

In the early grades, students may reveal just one feature of their characters. In most cases these features reflect feelings of the characters and increase in numbers with the grades. By the upper elementary grades characters are more complex. The relation between their features and impact on the plot are clearer. The characters behave consistently unless they change as a consequence of the plot. These characters can still be stereotypical. When students reach middle school there is a significant change in their ability to develop complex characters. This ability continues to expand through high school (McKeough, 2013).

Method

The study was conducted in an urban elementary school with a 70% multilingual population. The largest groups are of Spanish and

Vietnamese background. The two teachers (co-authors) have a job share and they teach fourth grade. They had both taught a fictional narrative unit, but this was the first time they focused on character development before they had students work on the plot. The work of four bilingual students was chosen for analysis. Ismael was born in the United States of a Portuguese father and a Cape Verdean mother. In the house both Cape Verdean and English are used. Juan was also born in the U.S.A. His parents are from Guatemala and Spanish is the language of the home. Walter comes from Indonesia. His mother speaks only Indonesian and his father speaks English. Kelly's parents come from Vietnam. They use both Vietnamese and English at home (all the students' names have been changed).

The teachers spent about eight weeks carrying out the fictional narrative unit. They kept notes on the process and collected all student products including graphic organizers with the research on the animal that would become the main character of the narrative, drawings of the character with initial features, a graphic organizer with further developed character features, a graphic organizer with the plan of the plot, drafts of the narratives, and final product.

Each of the final products was analyzed with respect to the illustrations and the text using the form to analyze characters in a fictional narrative (Brisk, 2015). Each external attribute and internal quality was named, a quote from the text illustrating the feature was listed (or referenced to an image), and connections to the plot were noted. Tables 6.2 and 6.3 show the results of these analyses. The planning images and graphic organizers were checked against the features evident in the writing.

Intervention

To scaffold learning to write fictional narratives, teachers used the Teaching and Learning Cycle (TLC). The TLC is an approach to writing instruction that apprentices student writing through four stages: negotiation of field or developing content knowledge, deconstruction of text, joint construction of text, and independent construction of text (Rothery, 1996). Students develop the content knowledge of the topic of their writing before and during the whole cycle. Teachers guide students through deconstruction or close analysis of mentor texts to learn about the stages and the language features of the

particular genre. Then they collaborate with students in their class to jointly construct texts. With all of the knowledge and experience acquired through deconstruction and joint construction of a text, students can then create their own independent writing.

The teachers prepared their students by first having them research an animal that would become the central character in their narratives. Teaching character development started in earnest with deconstruction of mentor texts. Together with the teachers the students identified features of the characters in these texts and they discussed how the authors show these features in the text. For example, after reading the book *Berlioz the Bear* Cheryl wrote on chart paper "Berlioz," the name of the central character. As they brainstormed features of the character she wrote around the name: *punctual, musician, worrier, grateful, desperate*. At the bottom she also wrote the names of the minor characters. The following day she told the students that she had thought about a character for her story and drew it on chart paper writing internal qualities and external attributes on both sides of the drawing. She discussed her choices with the students. Students were then instructed to go to their seats and close their eyes and visualize their character. Soft music in the background accompanied this activity. Following this activity, students drew their character on a white sheet and wrote features of the character around it (see Figure 6.1).

Cheryl and Deb conferenced with the students about the features of their characters as they looked at their drawings. Then they had the students transfer these features to a graphic organizer and added anything else that resulted from the conference. Before students started writing their narrative, the teachers reread the mentor text and discussed with the students how the author showed features of the character without actually telling specifically what the features were. For example, in the mentor text *Berlioz the Bear* (Brett, 1991), the main character shows that he is a worrier when he asks himself, "What if his bass buzzed during the ball? What if the dancers stopped dancing and laughed at him?" As students wrote Deb and Cheryl conferenced with them, encouraging them to use language resources to show the features of the characters as they had seen in the examples from the mentor text. The teachers focused on having the students "show, not tell" the character traits they had in mind for their characters. Instead of writing "Luis was a slob," they told

Figure 6.1 Kelly's drawing with character's features

the students to write "Luis' room was covered in dirty clothes and old food." They wanted the students to use language to describe their characters to the audience. The mentor text was used once again to find evidence of how good authors use this strategy. After the students worked on their drafts, they created a book with a title page, several pages of texts with illustrations, and a final note "about the author."

Results

The four students' narratives had similarities in some of the features they developed but also had differences in length, level of success in developing features, and quality of the plot.

Walter wrote the longest piece with 389 words. The animal he had chosen to study was the garfish. This fish has an elongated jaw that became central to the theme of the narrative. Walter used dialog, actions, and descriptions to express his main character's external attributes and internal qualities (see complete piece analyzed in Table 6.1).

Kelly wrote a 250-word fictional narrative where not only her main character Blossom the rabbit was developed, but also the squirrel that takes advantage of her is somewhat developed. Kelly is a skillful artist who can show her characters' features not only through words but through their facial expressions in her drawings. The rabbit is a sweet and helpful character that helps the squirrel with her work until Blossom realizes the squirrel is lounging while she is doing all the work. *Rabbit stomped herself into her burrow* to plan how she was going to teach the squirrel the lesson it deserved. In the end the squirrel learns to do her own work. Kelly used action and saying verbs, evaluative vocabulary, similes, dialog, and characters thinking aloud to express internal qualities. The external attributes were mostly reflected in her drawings.

As with the other male students' characters, Juan's platypus was initially rejected by his friends in his 290-word narrative. However, Juan has more difficulty developing the character and the plot. The text and the illustration do not always match. Some of the features he describes do not have an impact on the plot. Early in the story he mentions the platypus's ability to do tricks, but does not explain what kind of tricks. These tricks became important in the end but

Table 6.1 Analysis of Walter's main character's features

Text (Each row represents a page of the picture book)	**External attributes** (underlined)	**Internal qualities** (italics)
There was a fish named Kd who lived in the murkey waters of the river. Then Kd heard someone scream "you're ugly!" So Kd Yelled to the fish "who are you saying ugly too?" "To you Kd." *Kd felt bad* and *he went home.*	Name: Kd Age: school age but vague Gender: male "he." Physical appearance: "ugly."	Feeling: Sad "Kd felt bad" Trait: Non-combative "he went home."
Later he had to buy food. He went to Fish Stop and Shop and when he got there the fishes insulted him by saying "ugly! Ugly! Ugly! What are you doing here." Kd replied "I am grocery shopping." After that the fishes shouted it again. *Kd's face was red* and *he ran out* of the supermarket.	Physical appearance: "ugly! Ugly! Ugly!"	Feelings: Embarrassed, mortified, upset "Kd's face was red" Trait: Non-combative "he ran out of the supermarket."
Like a flash of a light Kd had a idea. Kd said to himself he will go to the fish-o-ball game today. When he got there the announcers said, "Kd, go on the court." So Kd did and the announcers did something bad. The announcers said in a medium tone voice that fishes throw food at Kd and call ugly. SPLAT! One of the fishes threw a pie at Kd in the face and called. The fans could hear the announcers laughing their heads off and saying omg. *Kd started stomping the floor so hard the stadium started shaking. Kd ran out of the stadium.*	Physical appearance: " call ugly"	Goal: To be accepted by others by entering contests. Feeling: Extremely angry "Kd started stomping the floor so hard …" Trait: Non-combative "… ran out of the stadium."

(*continued*)

Table 6.1 (Continued)

The next day Kd thought of going to a three point basketball contest at a school. At first when he got there the fans were cheering. Next the announcers said "Kd go first." That made Kd *bite his nails*, stare a the fans and *chatter his teeth* because he *was nervous*. Kd hoped he would make it in. Noone [None] has ever made a three pointer before! Then he picked up a ball and shot it. Right at that moment the fans heard "swish." The fans were screaming and their mouths were open and *Kd shoot it again and "swish." Kd was a three point legend. It was franchise history*. The first person to make a three pointer. After he shoot hands up, started screaming, and he smiled. Kd was on tv and he was famous. *Never again did a fish call Kd ugly. They called him the Basketball Master!*	Feeling: Nervous "Kd bite his nails, … and chatter his teeth because he was nervous." Goal: To be accepted by others by entering contests. Feeling: Happy "he smiled." Ability: Good at basketball "Kd shoot it again and 'swish.' Kd was a three point legend. It was franchise history." Change over time: Became accepted and admired by his friends "Never again did a fish call Kd ugly. They called him the Basketball Master!"

Table 6.2 External attributes and internal qualities of the students' characters

Potential external attributes	**Ismael**	**Juan**	**Walter**	**Kelly**
Name	√	√	√	√
Age	Vague, a kid	School age	Vague, school age	—
Gender	√	√	√	√
Physical appearance	√ drawings	√ drawings	√ drawings and language	√ drawings
Potential internal qualities				
Traits	3	2	1	3
Feelings	3	2	5	3
Abilities	1	1	1	1
Values				
Interests				
Goals or motives		√	√	
Changes over time	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

they are not addressed in the intermediate scenes. The change from sad to happy came too quickly without a clear crisis and resolution. It is not clear how the character came to realize that doing tricks would be the solution to his loneliness. Juan often names the features directly. Only on a couple of occasions does he express a feature through dialog.

At 163 words Ismael's narrative was the shortest, yet his character has a number of feelings, traits, and abilities. He uses actions, descriptions from other characters, and drawings to tell the story of a smart penguin that because of his bragging was rejected by his friends. The rejection was subtler than in the other stories and leads to the crisis and a quick resolution.

Most students had one central character, which will be the focus of this analysis. The secondary character(s) are rarely described and are mostly needed to bring the crisis about. The characters exhibited a number of the external and internal features (see Table 6.2).

External attributes

All of the students gave names to their characters. In three of the narratives the names were not chosen to reveal something about their character. Kelly's main character was named Blossom, which

suggests a wonderful person with a sunny disposition. Secondary characters were mostly named just by the category of animal, such as *squirrel*, *fishes*, and *kangaroo*. Ismael was the only one that gave children's names to the secondary characters. Age was never specifically mentioned but sometimes it was hinted at by the context, i.e. children going to school. The physical appearance of the characters was clearly reflected in the drawings. The drawings of the three boys showed the animal dressed in sports clothes matching their story in which the characters act as boys who go to school, play with skateboards, quarrel, and get television interviews as sports heroes. Kelly's rabbit is not dressed as a human and the story's context is the outdoors and farming. Walter is the only one who uses language (an adjective – underlined) to express physical appearance, "*Someone scream you're ugly.*"

Internal qualities

The most prevalent internal quality was feelings. These changed over time in direct relation to the plot. For example, Walter's character went from being upset, sad, and embarrassed at being rejected by his friends to angry because the announcer at a game embarrassed him, to nervous about a contest, to finally happy because his friends accepted him. Juan and Ismael also showed feelings through their drawings. Juan drew his character with a mouth arching down at the beginning of the story and arching up at the end to show the change from sad to happy. These children's characters also showed a number of traits, such as hard working, helpful, non-confrontational, generous, and ostentatious. For example, Ismael's penguin was generous, polite, and ostentatious. Only the last trait was directly related to the problem. The other two traits added color to his story and the actions.

Most central characters had a special ability that was either at the center of creating the problem or resolving the crisis. Kelly's rabbit's ability as a gardener gave the squirrel the idea to get help from the rabbit and eventually take advantage of her, bringing about the crisis, while Juan's platypus went from being rejected to being admired by friends for his ability with the skateboard.

Both Walter's and Juan's characters had goals of making friends and being accepted by others, while Kelly's character wanted to teach

a lesson. All the characters changed over time. The boys' characters changed from negative to positive with the sudden change being connected to the resolution. Walter's garfish changes from sad to happy, Ismael's penguin from a bragger to apologetic, and Juan's platypus from lonely to happy. Kelly's rabbit's changes are more complex. She goes from being happy and generous to being angry and finally to being satisfied with herself for having taught a lesson to the squirrel.

Role of images and language in developing character

Students' finished books had images that for the most part reinforced the internal qualities of the characters, especially in the case of Kelly, a gifted illustrator. She used the images to illustrate the mood, feelings, and traits of the main and secondary characters. Ismael's images did not always match the story. For example, he included a character that was not mentioned in the story itself. In addition, it was never quite clear which one was the main character because of the constant changes in clothing. All the students used bubbles with language in their images, reinforcing what the characters were saying (see Figure 6.2).

Dialog, descriptions, and use of verbs were language resources used to develop characters. All the stories included dialog suggesting characters' features. For example, Ismael writes, *Later Max started saying math facts out load "9x9=81, 5x5=25 …,"* to show he was a bragger. The dialog also reveals other characters' perceptions of the main character. Juan writes in a dialog between the platypus and the koala, *Again politly asked Deris, "Can I be your friend" Sorry I don't trust posanus [poisonous] animals* [responded the koala]. The saying verbs connected with the dialog revealed additional features of the character. For example, Walter writes, *So Kd yelled to the fish, …* showing the character's anger. Kelly writes, *" … I think I may have time" Blossom grinned*, showing that the rabbit was happy to help. Action verbs revealed characters' feelings and abilities. Kelly shows her rabbit's anger when she writes, *Rabbit stomped herself into her burrow*. Juan wrote, *Deris was doing tricks*, to show his ability with the skateboard. Some students also named the feature after. For example, Ismael writes, *Max pulled out his math award and started bragging*, showing that he was a bragger by the action but also by naming the trait.

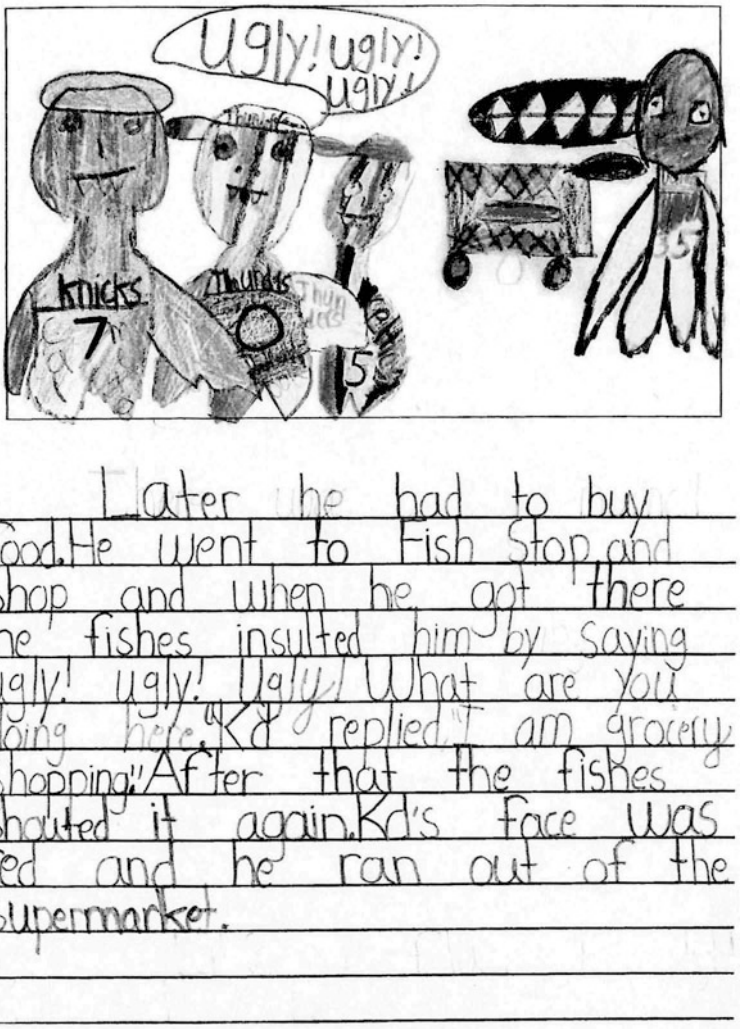

Figure 6.2 Sample page from Walter's narrative

Walter showed that his character was nervous by writing, *that made Kd bite his nails, stare at the fans, and chatter his teeth because he was so nervous*. Juan mostly used descriptions, *Deris was lonely. He felt sorrow evry day because of his lonliness*.

Connections between character and plot

Most of the writers connected the features of their characters to the plot (see Table 6.3). There were some differences among the students.

Table 6.3 Connection between character features and plot

Character (student)	External attributes	Internal qualities	Impact on plot
Max the penguin (Ismael)	School-age boy		Brags about his knowledge of math
			Have a sleepover
		Generous, polite,	—
		Smart, ostentatious	Brags, the source of the problem
Deris the platypus (Juan)	School-age boy		Uses a skateboard
	Lives in Australia		The other animals are koalas and kangaroos
	Venomous		At the source of the problem
		Polite	—
		Lonely, rejected	Continuous search for friends
		Good at skateboarding	Impacts the resolution
Kd the garfish (Walter)	School-age boy		Wears sport team shirts; plays basketball
	Has a big nose		Source of ridicule; related to problem
		Upset, sad, angry, nervous	Each feeling related to an event in the plot
		Very good at shooting basketball	Impacts resolution
Blossom the rabbit (Kelly)	Female, pretty		—
		Hard working, helpful, gullible	Essential to the plot and what leads to the crisis
		Good gardener	Central to the whole theme of the plot
		Surprised, angry	Related to crisis
		Satisfied with her actions	Related to resolution

The three boys made their characters school-age children. This was reflected in the plots by the kinds of actions that were typical of boys such as playing sports and having sleepovers. Juan included the most features related to the animal research, a point the teachers had made. He placed his story in Australia with animals typically found there. The fact that platypuses are venomous brought about the problem. Walter's big nose based on the shape of a garfish jaw also had an impact on the plot. In the case of Kelly, the external attributes had no impact on the plot.

Except on a couple of occasions, the internal qualities had direct connections to different phases of the plot. Feelings usually emerged from events in the plot that impacted the character. For example, the platypus felt lonely and rejected because nobody wanted to be his friend. Traits were at the source of the problem for both the penguin and the rabbit. Abilities helped with the resolution in the case of the platypus and the garfish, for whom the problem was caused by an external feature. Because Walter's character was non-confrontational, there were never fights between the characters. When things reached a very bad point in the scene, his character would leave. Ismael and Juan gave their animals traits such as being polite that had no bearing on the plot. Several of the students had features in their planning graphic organizer that never made it to the story itself.

Discussion and conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate whether instruction on character development would help fourth-grade bilingual students develop the characters in their fictional narratives. Research on children's narratives has shown that, without targeted instruction, the characters tend to be flat (Vardell & Burris, 1986). It is not until middle and high school that they start showing complex features (McKeough, 2013). However, following instruction, even at a young age children were able to develop at least one feature in the character that influenced the plot (McKeough, 2013). In addition, the study explored if the attributes and qualities of the characters had any bearing on the plot because, as Atwell (2002) reports, children may develop characters' features under guidance, but they are not always connected to the plot.

The fourth-grade bilingual students in this study showed that they are capable of developing characters whose features are connected

to the plot. The teachers helped their students achieve this goal by exploring character in mentor texts, demonstrating how to develop a character, and guiding their students to develop their own through multiple planning activities as well as conferencing throughout the whole process. They taught students how to use images and language resources to enhance their narratives and reveal features of the characters.

There was variation on what these children were capable of doing but collectively they showed a number of features expected in fictional narratives. The characters had external attributes and internal qualities that moved the plot, although some just served to enrich the story or never went beyond the planning materials. The number of features was limited. The external features, as in many of the picture books they read, are mostly reflected in their drawings. Interestingly the gender of the characters matched the gender of the authors. Most of the internal features were traits and feelings. The three boys wrote rather simple stories where the main character was rejected by the secondary characters until something happened to change and right the situation. An external attribute brought about the rejection while their abilities made the acceptance possible. Kelly's story is more complex and the resolution includes teaching a lesson. She develops both the main and secondary characters. Their internal qualities interact to drive the plot while the many external attributes of her main character made her a likeable character, in contrast with the mischievous squirrel. Ismael and Juan planned and incorporated internal qualities in their characters that also did not have bearing on the plot. To insure that the features of the characters are related to the plot, Atwell (2002) suggests that the kernel of the problem or the "what if" should be established in anticipation to developing the characters.

The students used language resources to create the image of the characters, especially dialog, descriptions, and different verb types. In some cases they indirectly showed the character features. Finally, Juan created a setting true to the research he had done on his animal. The use of language and facts from the research had been modeled and encouraged by the teachers.

Although students' writing development takes time and milestones happen over time (Kress, 1994; McKeough, 2013), explicit instruction helped students with their writing. Being apprenticed to

develop character by teachers facilitates the process and enhances the potential of what children can do in their second language and in a difficult genre.

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7

Disciplinary Language Development in Writing: Science Reports and Common Core State Standards

Dong-shin Shin

Introduction

T: Tell me about your writing.
St: Butterflies are beautiful.
T: I like your topic. What details are you going to be adding?
St: None, I don't know.
T: Hum. Why do you think Butterflies are beautiful?
(Pause, student does not respond)
T: Can you tell me about a time you saw one?
St: I don't know.

The dialog excerpt above is what first-grade teacher Laura Hall shared with me, her graduate advisor, as a typical interaction that she had in teacher–student conferences with English language learners (ELLs) about their writing. Ms. Hall stated that it was necessary for her to provide scaffolding for the students to transfer the background knowledge that they had built for writing during class activities into their own written texts. As a mainstream classroom teacher who does not have professional expertise in English as a second language (ESL) and bilingual education, she was not confident in supporting ELLs' literacy development in academic writing. In our meetings, she sought out pedagogical methods and strategies for addressing difficulties that ELLs had with academic language in contexts of schooling, and for unpacking domain-specific language for their content knowledge development. Like Ms. Hall, many mainstream

and content-area teachers face the same pedagogical challenges in teaching reading and writing grade-level texts to growing numbers of ELLs.

To support ELLs' academic success, L2 scholars have advocated providing explicit instruction on domain-specific language in content areas toward metalanguage development (de Oliveira & Schleppegrell, 2015; de Oliveira & Dodds, 2010; Gebhard & Harman, 2011; Schleppegrell, 2004). Recently, U.S. K-12 general teacher education programs that have adopted Education Teacher Performance Assessment (edTPA) also mandate that pre-service teachers possess the ability to design and implement content instruction with an analysis of domain-specific texts at the vocabulary, structure, and discourse levels (Pearson Education, 2015). This kind of pedagogy for illuminating disciplinary language is much needed in the current U.S. standards-driven educational reform era based on the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), which requires students to develop the ability to read and write complex informational texts at their grade levels from an early age. To young ELLs who are developing social language proficiencies, however, reading and writing grade-level complex texts in content areas is more challenging. Their academic language development necessitates sufficient scaffolding involving various types of supports from linguistic, sensory to social interactional supports, along with opportunities to "learn about language in the context of using language" (Gibbons, 2009, p. 64). Hence, providing the instruction that ELLs need for academic success and literacy development involves teacher's systematic efforts to transform their instruction through expanded views of language, literacy, and learning.

This chapter examines how a first-grade teacher, Ms. Hall, designed a writing curriculum drawing on systemic functional linguistics (SFL)-informed genre pedagogy, and how ELLs wrote science reports on organisms within this writing curriculum. This examination will be guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the teacher's metalanguage of genre and register features shape the teaching of science reports?
2. How do students' abilities to write science reports change in SFL-informed pedagogy?

Disciplinary literacy in science

Language patterns in science

The language of content areas is varied, with domain-specific disciplinary language features. Scientific academic discourse entails a distinctive way of knowing, thinking, and sharing ideas through various semiotic modes including oral language, written text, images, gestures, and interactions with material objects (Kress, Jewitt, Ogborn, & Tsatsarelis, 2001; Lemke, 1990). These semiotic systems convey scientific meanings in specific themes, genres, and stylistic norms (Halliday & Martin, 1993). Specifically, scientific informational texts used in schools represent canonical and theoretical scientific ideas by drawing on classifications of objects, relationships of classifications, and logical connections among general phenomena and processes in an echo system (Lee, Quinn, & Valdés, 2013; Lemke, 1990). The discourse of science texts employs authoritative and impersonal registers, and fact-based reasoning to maximize the objectiveness of the information that the text conveys. That is, facts are presented objectively without the author's opinions regarding the value of the facts. Similarly, the lexis of scientific texts is technical, abstract, dense, and metaphorical, which are different from narrative or everyday discourses. The lexico-grammatical features include general classes of nouns, present-tense verbs, nominalization, passive sentences, and technical vocabulary (Halliday, 2004; Halliday & Martin, 1993).

Academic scientific discourse is characterized by functional themes/elements such as topic presentations, descriptions of attributes, reports of characteristic events, and category comparisons and explanations (Lemke, 1990). In terms of these language functions, scientific texts used in the content area of science in school settings could be categorized into five basic writing genres: *procedures*, *procedural recount*, *explanation*, *report*, and *exposition* (Fang, Lamme, & Pringle, 2010, pp. 105–107). Even though the realization of a genre could be variable from one instance to another depending on text production situations, variations of genres in the different contexts of situations could be rendered into relatively stable language patterns over time. The patterns are distinct enough to note what constitutes each specific genre. In this, Fang and colleagues show the purpose, text structure, and grammatical features of the five school-based genres:

A procedural text records step-by-step information for enabling scientific activities to occur. It starts to state an aim for a science activity followed by the materials that are needed for the activity. Procedural steps are described in imperative or declarative sentences with action verbs and temporal conjunctions.

A procedural recount is intended to retell in order the aims, steps, results, and conclusion of a scientific activity (e.g., experiment). It records events in action-oriented events using action verbs and in declarative sentences with temporal conjunctions. A scientific recount retells scientific procedures in the past tense, but it employs a passive voice to suppress actors for objective scientific discourse.

An explanation is intended to explicate how something occurs or reasons for a phenomenon, and it focuses on explaining processes and factors for a phenomenon occurrence following a general statement of the phenomenon. For cause–effect relationships among factors, its lexico-grammatical features employ embedded clauses with logical conjunctions in passive voice. The scientific processes are described in action verbs with nominalization and technical terms.

A report realizes social purposes to describe attributes, properties, and behaviors of a single class or entity in a system of things. A report organizes information about things into taxonomies of classes and subclasses with a general statement of a thing and a description of various aspects of the thing. Its lexico-grammatical features rely on uses of linking verbs (e.g., be, have) to introduce technical information in descriptive lexis for defining, classifying, and contrasting things. The lexico-grammatical features that construe scientific reports entail "thing-focused" complex sentences drawing on the present tense, nominalization, technical terms, and embedded clauses.

An exposition is a text meant to persuade the reader to think or act in particular ways through scientific evidence and claim that results from the analysis, interpretation, and evaluation of data. An exposition is organized by a thesis statement that includes background information about the debated issue, followed by supporting or refuting evidence for the argument and reconfirmation

> of the thesis. It uses lexis that expresses values and judgments as well as comparisons and contrasts. Its argumentative thesis is often stated with logical conjunctions and nominalizations in a passive voice to seem more objective.

As such, academic scientific texts are written in an authoritative, distant, serious register (Wollman-Bonilla, 2000) that is different from the discourse of familiar, everyday language. This kind of decontextualized informational literacy is new and challenging to primary-grade children, considering that their language practices are contextualized everyday literacies connected with life experiences and social interactions with family and peers (Dyson, 2003). Moreover, culturally oriented language uses by children from non-dominant language backgrounds (e.g., English language learners) could be an issue when they are faced with using and developing academic, domain-specific language in school (Halliday & Martin, 1993; Newkirk, 1987).

The current initiative of the CCSS in U.S. K-12 schools requires that children be able to read, comprehend, and write informational, domain-specific texts by the fourth grade. It hastens the transition from contextualized everyday literacies into decontextualized academic informational literacies beginning in primary grades, even though studies show that children are engaged mainly with narratives during primary grades and have not had many experiences in informational texts (Duke, 2000). Therefore, providing early support for the development of decontextualized, domain-specific literacies is critical for children's academic success.

Scaffolding for young children's leaning scientific texts

Making abstract and esoteric domain-specific language comprehensible for children has been a concern for L2 educators, and a range of scaffolding has been introduced, from building upon prior knowledge to teaching text structures through graphic organizers to vocabulary instruction (Echevarria, Short, & Powers, 2006; Echevarria, Vgot, & Short, 2008). Among these scaffolding processes, in the following section I will review what Ms. Hall and her students drew on to negotiate meanings while writing science reports on organisms—visual images, graphic organizers, and metalanguage.

Studies have shown that visual image is a critical modality in young children's learning of scientific discourses and expressing

scientific meanings in their own texts. For example, Varelas and Pappas (2006) show how first and second graders developed scientific understandings and scientific genres of illustrated informational books. Children represented scientific ideas and meanings visually along with use of linguistic resources, and their texts realized scientific registers to construe the meanings. Specifically, a multimodal project such as creating illustrated books provided young children with a prominent way to engage in the meanings of science. Through such projects, children's ways of understanding science reflect their writing practice in which multiple modalities such as writing, talking, and drawing are intricately intertwined with each other (Dyson, 2003).

Similarly, graphic materials are widely used as another visual support for young learners to access the ideas in complex texts. Specifically, graphic organizers become comprehensible tools for students to identify relational concepts and structures of texts. In learning scientific genres, young learners can organize ideas coherently by employing discourse features of the scientific genre texts through use of figural organizations of text information and structure (Echevarria et al., 2006). Lee, Maerten-Rivera, Penfield, LeRoy, and Secada (2008) show that teachers' extensive uses of a variety of graphic materials (e.g., graphic organizers, Venn diagrams, pictures of measurement instruments, drawings of experimental setups, data tables, graphs, charts) helped English learners from grades 3 through 5 to understand scientific concepts and information by scaffolding the scientific language in informational texts.

Metalanguage is a meaningful scaffolding resource for teaching domain-specific language. For example, Palincsar and Schleppegrell (2014) show that use of metalanguage in a science lesson helped children from second- through fifth-grade ELLs to understand and write grade-level informational texts. Metalanguage, language about a language, includes terminologies and talk about language and meaning. From early elementary grades, children can engage in closely reading meanings of texts, talking about meanings that language resources construe, and writing their own texts by drawing on the language they are learning. Through the use of metalanguage, children can understand how meanings of texts are created with language resources in texts. Learners' metalanguage development entails "interaction and feedback in meaningful contexts, supported

by explicit attention to language itself" (p. 619). In a similar vein, de Oliveira and Dodds (2010) introduce how a fourth-grade teacher supported students' understanding of informal texts of planets through analysis of the language of science. They show how SFL-informed language analysis instruction, what they call "language dissection" pedagogy, allowed children to understand scientific meanings of complex informational texts.

Method

School and classroom contexts

Lincoln Elementary School, where Ms. Hall implemented this project, is located in an economically struggling city in Western New York. Lincoln is a Title One school serving students from low SES family backgrounds; 45% of its students received free lunches. Half of the students are from linguistically and culturally diverse backgrounds as noted in its demographics: 29% of the students are black, 14% Asians, and 7% Latino, while 6% were ELLs with limited English proficiency. Lincoln is well equipped with instructional technologies, with each class having access to wireless Internet, an Elmo projector, and two laptop carts for school in addition to its two computers. The school computer teacher supported classroom teachers' uses of computer programs or Internet resources. The schoolteachers had been using Glogster, an online platform for digital composition and interactive learning, to write and publish texts. Ms. Hall's first-grade class reflects the Lincoln school's demographic profile, with four bilingual students out of 17 students, and six students received free lunch.

The classroom teacher, Ms. Hall, was a first-year teacher when I conducted this study. She was new to teaching ELLs even though she had an opportunity to work with a few ELLs in her student teaching. She was particularly interested in ways to scaffold written language development, as many ELLs show higher basic interpersonal communication skills than cognitive academic language proficiency (Cummins, 1984). Her ELLs had difficulties writing about what they had learned even though they could perform oral presentations well. According to the CCSS in English language arts (ELA) and disciplinary literacy, her first graders were required to have the ability to write opinion pieces, informative/explanatory texts, and narratives, using a variety of digital tools with guidance and support from adults

(National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010). These text types/genres can also be guiding standards for other content areas beyond ELA, given that the CCSS takes an interdisciplinary approach to teaching literacies across content areas.

Ms. Hall had been making efforts to provide opportunities for students to learn academic language in content areas in an authentic way that reflects her young students' age and interests. Considering that young children are challenged to read and write informal texts beyond telling stories, she wanted in particular to develop expertise in pedagogical methods for unpacking disciplinary language in the content areas and explicitly teaching how to use the language for various literacy activities that she designed for content-area instruction. To address her pedagogical interests, I apprenticed her into disciplinary language development through genre-based pedagogy that is grounded in SFL (Derewianka, 1990; Fang et al., 2010). Drawing on this language-focused instruction, she created a thematic unit on writing a report on organisms, combining ELA and science curricula in alignment with the CCSS.

Curricular unit of science report writing

The curricular unit that Ms. Hall designed was based on interdisciplinary crosscutting concepts between ELA and science. That is, the Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS Lead States, 2013) that the school adopted for the first-grade science curriculum mandates the function, structure, growth, and development of organisms in isolation and in the habitat as disciplinary core ideas, while requiring that students be able to describe similarities and differences between organisms. In terms of ELA, the CCSS (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010) requires first graders "to write informative/explanatory texts in which they name a topic, supply some facts about the topic, and provide some sense of closure" (p. 19). Drawing on interdisciplinary concepts between ELA and science, Ms. Hall designed a unit on writing science reports in which students observed, explained, and described structures and functions of organisms in pond water such as guppies, millipedes, and pill bugs. She developed the unit adopting SFL-informed genre pedagogy (Feez, 1998; Rothery, 1996) and scaffolded the language of scientific informational texts

for her students' metalanguage development for various academic literacy activities.

Students learned how to write a report on organisms in a teaching/learning cycle that the teacher developed based on work by SFL scholars who collaborated with teachers to support academic writing development of ELLs in U.S. elementary school contexts (Brisk & Zisselsberger, 2010; de Oliveira & Lan, 2014; Gebhard, Willett, Jimenez, & Piedra, 2010; Harman, 2013). The teaching/learning cycle is intended to enhance students' metalanguage through explicit instruction on available meaning-making resources in a specific context of writing and critical reflection on chosen semiotic choices. The cycle entails four stages:

Orientation. The first stage was meant for constructing a shared context for learning. To build content and genre knowledge, the class started to build backgrounds related to the topic organisms by drawing on life experiences, books, and Internet resources. To build knowledge on a genre's purpose and the context in which science reports are typically used, students discussed organisms in pond water such as guppies, millipedes, and pill bugs by reading textbooks and trade books, and watched them on the Internet. In this, students also had an opportunity to build the vocabulary that they would use in their reports on organisms. They then took a class field trip to a local park and set up a fish tank for later observations and activities.

Modeling and deconstruction. After getting oriented to the content and genre of writing a report on organisms, the students started to deconstruct genre features of reports by analyzing model texts. Noting her students used to write simplified narratives about what they do or like, Ms. Hall started with simple reports on pets, and she then introduced to the students sample science reports on organisms. With the backdrop of the context of culture in which the texts are used, she guided the students to closely read the model texts at the clause level for experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings, and to examine employed lexical-grammatical resources for those meanings. To support students' development of metalanguage for composing texts in specific contexts of situation, she prepared an activity for working

on analyzing genre and register features of a science report, using a graphic organizer that she created after considering her students' age and language backgrounds.

Joint construction. With growing metalanguage on science reports that they developed in the previous stages, the students collaboratively co-constructed a class text about guppies, millipedes, and pill bugs. First, students discussed physical features and behaviors of these organisms that they observed in the class fish tank. The teacher guided students to transfer their discussion into the graphic organizer that she created. The graphic organizer visualized the features of the organisms and the similarities and differences among the organisms, as a way of making genre knowledge and semiotic choices visible to the students.

Independent construction. Following the joint construction stage, the students created their own graphic organizers and reports using the online platform Glogster. The school computer teacher helped the students to use the digital medium of composition and to post their finished texts, and Ms. Hall supported the students in drafting, revising, and editing their own texts. Glogster allowed the teacher to provide expanded audiences for student's text production and publication. In addition, the students had an opportunity to have access to other students' texts and compare their own text to others. This process of publishing and linking texts through Glogster was offered with the intension of encouraging student's critical reflection on and possible transformation of their textual practices.

Data collection and analysis

To examine the impact of the language-focused instruction on ELLs' writing a science report, I collected fieldnotes of class interactions, curricular materials, Glogster postings, informal interviews/conversations, and student texts. The unit of analysis that I drew on in this study was the writing texts within the context of the curricular unit of science reports. Drawing on SFL, I conducted a micro-textual analysis of genre texts, looking at textual organization, lexical and grammatical choices, and conventions regarding experiential, interpersonal, and textual meanings. Specifically, in analyzing the

data, I applied codes such as words relating to key concepts, technical terms, linking themes, logical reasoning, process/passive voice, abstract and dense nouns, and discourse structure.

Due to the scope of this chapter, even though I worked with all ELLs in the class, I will introduce an in-depth analysis of a single bilingual child's textual practices. Sara is a bilingual child who speaks Vietnamese and English. She used Vietnamese as her dominant language and spoke the language with her family members at home, and started to learn English when she started preschool. Her reading proficiency was at grade level according to the school-mandated reading test. The student enjoyed doing word work activities and writing about the things or people that she liked, but she struggled to expand stories after brainstorming ideas. She was shy about sharing her work with the class and preferred to share it with the teacher in a one-on-one setting. In terms of using the computers and Glogster, she did not show any particular difficulties.

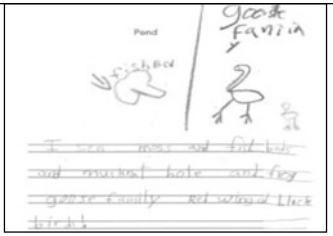
Findings

Sara's writing processes

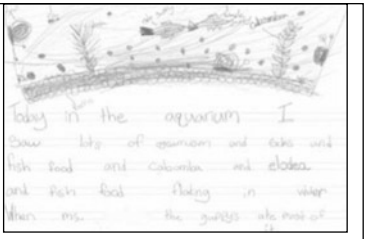
Brainstormed texts

The texts that Sara wrote over the course of the science report unit could be explained according to the four writing stages of the teaching/learning cycle. In the orientation stage, to build a shared learning context for organisms, the class went on a field trip to a park near the school and set up a class fish tank for the science report unit. Sara could observe various live animals and build content and language backgrounds through Ms. Hall' scaffolding. After the trip, Sara wrote reports on the organisms that she observed in the pond and the fish tank. Figure 7.1 shows her reports.

Both of Sara's texts below represent a discourse feature that lists the organisms that Sara observed in an everyday spoken language style, without addressing or invoking any particular audience. For example, the report written after her trip to a local pond is composed of a single sentence listing what she observed about a bird, fish beds, and a muskrat hole, with no details about the organism aside from the linking word "and." As shown in many typical emergent writers' texts, the sentence starts with a participant "I" and a behavioral



I sen moss and fish beds and muskrat hole and frog goose family red winged black bird!



Today in the aquarium I saw lots of organism and rocks and fish food and cabomba and elodea and fish food floating in water When ms. [Hall fed] the guppys ate most of it.

Figure 7.1 Texts from orientation stage

process "see," and ends with a list of nouns, rather than realizing a description of organisms starting with a nominal group participant.

While building the orientation, Sara and her class started to learn how to describe organisms through a series of explicit instructions on science reports that Ms. Hall designed. Another text that Sara composed was a report about organisms in the class fish tank. Sara's text is more focused on describing organisms with use of more technical words and nominal group participant (e.g., cabomba, elodea, guppy), even though its first sentence has the same pattern of listing what she observed in the fish tank. However, it shows more linguistic complexity with a temporal clause "when ms. [Hall fed]." Like the previous report on organisms in a pond, the text does not address or invoke any audiences. The texts from the orientation stages allowed Ms. Hall to make an informed pedagogical decision in scaffolding Sara on how to write descriptive science texts. That is, Sara needed explicit instruction on how to write thing-focused descriptive sentences with a nominal group participant and to keep focused on the key ideational meaning of the text.

Co-constructed text

After deconstructing the genre and register features of science reports, Sara worked on an activity to co-construct a report on organisms with a graphic organizer support (see Figure 7.2). The class completed the organizer collaboratively as a jointly constructed text. The organizer included discourse features of science reports in a way

My favorite organism was the pill bugs because pill bugs are very cute and small and they crawl really fast and they curl up in a ball if the pillbugs are scared which I think are adorable.	May favorite part of studying organisms was what pill bugs mostly do and I really really really want to know for sure how many legs the pill bugs have.
I found out that pill bug crawl really fast and then curl up in a ball if they pill bugs are scared and they are organisms	Did you know pill bugs may have twelve legs also they dig really fast and pill bugs don't come up for a long time.

Figure 7.2 Jointly constructed text

that was suitable to the first graders. That is, the organizer utilized spoken language features in introducing discourse features of reports with a list of prompts, such as a favorite organism, favorite parts of the organism, newly learned information, and sharing the information with readers with relevant sentence starters.

Sara completed the organizer in collaboration with the classmates and the teacher. The text in Figure 7.2 shows her improving ability to describe one single organism with details. Namely, Sara stated that pill bugs were her favorite organism and described their features with use of noun groups as participants and attitudinal lexis describing features of pill bugs (e.g., cute, small, fast, favorite) to show her feelings to readers. Following a sentence starter in the organizer that underscored reader appeals with a "speaking right to the reader" language choice (i.e., "Did you know"), Sara depicted her delight in finding pill bugs to her audience. In addition to a single topic-focused discourse, each paragraph employed a theme and rheme structure in construing textual meanings. The text was composed in a more written writing style.

My favorite organism was pill bugs because pill bugs are very cute and small. They have 12 legs. They crawl really fast and they curl up into a ball when they are scared was what pill bugs do one reason.

Figure 7.3 Independently constructed text

Independently constructed text

After collaboratively composing a report using a graphic organizer, Sara had an opportunity to compose her own report on pill bugs by using Glogster. This new digital medium provided more meaning-making resources beyond texts for Sara to write her report. To brainstorm ideas, she designed a multimodal report drawing on texts, shapes, images, fonts, and colors that represent shapes of the organisms. She then wrote her report below the multimodal text (see Figure 7.3).

The brainstorming text that Sara created reflected the graphic organizer that she generated with the class graphic organizer, but it

was written in her own words with less lexical density. Multimodal designing in a new medium allowed her to express meanings in different modes without reproducing the jointly constructed text under the teacher's guidance. Her report employs more formal discourse with nominal participants and complex clauses. She described pill bugs' features and behaviors to the end of the text. In the independent stage, Sara wrote a topic-centered report instead of a topic-associating one listing similar topics such as that shown in her first draft, a common characteristic of emergent writers. Her report described attributes of pill bugs using relational processes (e.g., are, have), content-carrying words, and logical linking words (e.g., because). At the discourse level, her report employed less situation-dependent language and more written language. This kind of hybridized language and genre is reflective of Sara's emergent literacy state.

Discussion

Findings of the study show the progress that Sara made in writing science reports on organisms within SFL-informed language-focused instruction (de Oliveira & Lan, 2014; Feez, 1998; Rothery, 1996). By looking at the ways in which she processed ideas, social purposes/audiences, and linguistic and visual features in her own texts, I was able to identify four distinct features that provide insight into how the focal child learned the genre and register of science reports for the development of metalanguage for future writing activities in this setting. First, in her science report writing, in addition to accompanying reading and discussion activities, Sara was often positioned as a disciplinary language user. In this, the child initiated listing the technical words and facts that she took from the class discussions and books. Sara produced a more detailed description of an organism beyond listing names of the organisms, after actual co-construction of the class reports with the support of the graphic organizer. This aspect of Sara's writing progress shows the importance of having an opportunity to use the language directly in learning about the language of science in supporting young children's writing development.

Second, narrating ideas or facts that look seemingly unrelated to adult readers is a typical aspect of young children's writing, as Michaels (1981) shows in her study of diverse children's narratives. She explains this writing trait of young emergent writers as a

topic-associating writing style in which children list related but different topics, as opposed to a more coherent narrative of related ideas or facts for a topic as topic-centered writing. These concepts of understanding young children's writing is also clearly relevant to understanding the focal child's writing process in this study. For example, Sara's initial reports from the orientation stage listed what she saw or did in the past tense from a trip to a pond and a class fish tank, rather than describing features and behaviors of an organism. At the end of the unit, through Ms. Hall's informed scaffolding that reflected Sara's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky, 1978), she could produce a topic-centered report on pill bugs with use of general nouns for details in the present tense, even though her report still shows a tendency to list facts rather than describe connections between facts in relation to bigger ideas/pictures. Thus, this aspect of scientific writing is a next step for Sara to work on in learning science writing for developing metalanguage for science language. This process of Sara's writing development will be a useful guide for the teacher to design scaffolding or explicit instruction for science report writing.

Dyson (2003) shows that children mix languages, language domains, semiotic modes, genres, registers, times, spaces, and topics through her studies of young children's reading and writing activities in the contexts of schooling. In fact, Sara's science report represents a nexus of science report and science explanation, spoken and written language modes, and everyday and domain-specific technical words. Given this hybrid nature of children's literacy practices, it is necessary to have a dialogic approach to teaching a rage of science genres, rather than maintaining curriculum and instruction that emphasize genre differences or genre norms by overpowering the centripetal force over the centrifugal nature of genres (Bakhtin, 1982). Keeping this dialogic approach is more critical for teaching L2 young learners the academic, domain-specific language that is different from the culturally familiar language that they fluently command in various everyday social interactions with family and peers.

Fourth, young children's understanding of audiences in writing and relationships between audiences and language choices requires careful scaffolding (Wollman-Bonilla, 2001). In particular, children tend to better grasp the interpersonal meanings that their texts construe when they have a specific addressed audience rather than an invoked one (Shin, 2014). For example, when Ms. Hall provided a

sentence starter signaling an audience to the students in the graphic organizer (e.g., "Did you know …"), the statement functioned to Sara as a signifier that she should provide some new and interesting facts rather than invoking audiences for her report. In her own report, Sara employed more attitudinal lexis to represent personal emotional characteristics of pill bugs.

Lastly, the SFL-informed teaching/learning cycle of writing stages involves jointly writing a text in the target genre, followed by independent construction of an individual text. This co-construction of a text is a required stage for supporting children's metalanguage development of academic genres and critical use of academic language. However, there are common concerns about student's reproduction of other texts on their own by copying the phrases and facts in the jointly constructed text (Gebhard, Shin, & Seger, 2011). The concern is greater when young children are positioned to learn discourses of academic disciplinary genres that are sanctioned by the authority of the school curriculum. One way of promoting children's metalanguage development of academic genres may be a change of writing medium for independent construction. In this study, Sara created her own report in a digital medium, Glogster, which allowed her to produce a more original paper with her own voice engaging in new meaning-making resources in writing.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined how SFL-informed language pedagogy shaped a first-grade teacher's writing curriculum and instruction through an analysis of an ELL's science reports on organisms. The findings show that the teacher incorporated language-focused scaffolding activities that unpack the discourse of science reports throughout the teaching/learning cycle of writing. Her language-focused instruction entailed more than providing cognitive strategies for complex informational texts or offering meaningful activities for prior background knowledge building. Within this pedagogy, the focal child wrote a topic-centered report coherently with an expanded, domain-specific linguistic repertoire, and learned to use metalanguage in understanding the language of science reports.

These findings provide a few suggestions on how to support young ELLs' writing development in the era of CCSS that requires

understanding and writing of informational texts from the primary grades. First, the teachers should be able to support children's academic language with the language resources they need for success at school. It is critical for teachers to be equipped with metalanguage as part of their pedagogical repertoire for supporting ELLs in understanding language and meaning in complex texts that are written in domain-specific ways. This meaning-focused metalanguage use in writing allows children to avoid reproducing a model genre text, and promotes critical reflection on their language use (Palincsar & Schleppegrell, 2014). It helps teachers to make informed instructional decisions by providing insight into children's processes of understanding domain-specific language and meaning. Next, ELLs' ability to produce grade-level texts and tasks is dependent on teacher's robust scaffolding for disciplinary language that involves varying group work and interactions, visual graphics, sense-making materials, collective discussions, and meaningful conversations. Third, young children's writing consists of multimodal and hybrid practices. It is often reported that even a simple illustration can allow them to better represent meanings. Similarly, children often mix writing genres and enjoy crossing boundaries for complex and rich language lives (Dyson, 2003). Teacher's design of developmentally appropriate writing tasks involves understanding this aspect of children's language use.

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8

Supporting L2 Elementary Science Writing with SFL in an Age of School Reform

Kathryn Accurso, Meg Gebhard, and Cécily Selden

In the United States, English language learners (ELLs) now account for over 10% of K-12 public school enrollment. This demographic shift coincides with a succession of school reforms, such as *No Child Left Behind* legislation, English-only mandates, and the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, which place new demands on all students and their teachers (Brisk, 2015; Gebhard, Chen, & Britton, 2014; Palincsar & Schleppegrell, 2014). These demands are prompting a renewed interest in how teachers can support students in simultaneously developing academic language proficiency and disciplinary content knowledge. As teachers, administrators, teacher educators, and policymakers attempt to respond to the demands of these reforms, a new national discourse regarding the relationship between language and content learning is emerging. This new discourse is one many teachers are struggling to grasp in their attempts to design more effective instruction, particularly for the growing number of ELLs in their classes (Bunch, Kibler, & Pimentel, 2012; Burke & de Oliveira, 2012).

Teachers are not alone in their struggle to link the teaching of language and content; both L1 writing research and second language acquisition studies have longstanding traditions of separating the study of formal grammar and subject matter knowledge (Byrnes, 2002; Gebhard & Martin, 2011). However, this conceptual and pedagogical separation has hindered L1 and L2 students' progress toward learning how language works to make meaning in the types of texts they are routinely required to read and write in school (Christie & Derewianka, 2010; Rose & Martin, 2012; Schleppegrell, 2004). Halliday (1985) makes

a powerful case for reconceptualizing grammar as a functional social semiotic system, rather than seeing it as a set of decontextualized rules or list of fixed edicts regarding correct usage. A number of L2 literacy scholars have demonstrated that combining this view of language with a social theory of learning can support K-12 students, including ELLs, in making simultaneous gains in subject matter knowledge and academic reading and writing abilities (de Oliveira & Lan, 2014; Fang & Schleppegrell, 2008; Fang & Wei, 2010; Schleppegrell & de Oliveira, 2006; Schleppegrell, Greer, & Taylor, 2008).

To contribute to this growing body of research, this chapter presents a case study from co-author Cecily Selden's fourth-grade classroom. Cecily was a participant in ACCELA (Access to Critical Content and English Language Acquisition), a professional development program that supported K-12 teachers from high-poverty urban schools in earning a masters degree in education and state license in teaching reading and/or English as a second language (ESL) (Gebhard & Willett, 2008). Participating teachers were introduced to Halliday's systemic functional linguistics (SFL) and genre pedagogy while they conducted action-oriented research projects in their classrooms, schools, and communities with the support of university researchers. Co-authors Meg Gebhard, co-director of the ACCELA program with Jerri Willett at the time, and Kathryn Accurso, a researcher interested in SFL and teacher education, supported Cecily in her collection and analysis of classroom data. During Cecily's ACCELA coursework, she designed a unit that drew on genre pedagogy to address narrative writing in English language arts. Encouraged by her students' receptivity to the unit and progress in developing genre knowledge of narratives, Cecily continued to explore the potential of genre pedagogy in other areas of her teaching after she graduated from the program.

This chapter reports on a 12-week writing unit on the genre of scientific explanation Cecily designed and taught as part of this exploration of the potential of SFL-based pedagogy to support her continued professional development and her students' academic literacy development. She designed this writing unit to parallel three shorter units of study in science, with her teaching staying focused on the genre of explanation across the changing science content. In what follows, we describe how Cecily used Halliday's (1985) SFL and Rose and Martin's (2012) genre pedagogy as core constructs to design the unit and to analyze students' emerging science literacy practices.

In particular we focus on the literacy practices of a fourth-grade ELL named 'Ana Sofia' (a pseudonym). We conclude with a reflection on the potential for using SFL and genre pedagogy to narrow the persistent opportunity gap that exists between ELL and non-ELL students attending public schools in the United States in the context of current high-stakes school reforms.

Conceptual framework: a functional perspective of grammar

As outlined in Gebhard et al. (2014), a functional perspective of grammar is rooted in Halliday's SFL, which attempts to explain how people use language and other semiotic means as resources for getting things done within cultural contexts (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2004; see also de Oliveira & Schleppegrell, 2015). This view conceptualizes language as systemic in the sense that users make functional selections from a system of choices that operate simultaneously at the phonological, lexical, syntactic, and discourse levels depending on the context in which communication is negotiated. In other words, when we use language, we consciously and unconsciously choose particular ways of pronouncing or graphically rendering words, making grammatical constructions, and creating coherence across stretches of discourse depending on the ideas we are trying to communicate (such as everyday experience versus discipline-specific concepts), the relationships we are attempting to construct or maintain with our audience (for example, social distance and status), and the mode through which the interaction takes place (oral, written, computer mediated, and so on). Halliday (1975) maintains that all languages realize these types of meaning simultaneously through three generalized metafunctions. The ideational metafunction realizes ideas and experiences; the interpersonal metafunction constructs social relations, and the textual metafunction manages the flow of ideas to make discourse coherent. Halliday and Matthiessen (2004) summarize this perspective of language by stating that 'every message is both about something and addressing someone' and that the flow of information in a message is organized to create 'cohesion and continuity as it moves along' (p. 30).

The ACCELA program drew on this conception of grammar to theorize L2 literacy development, noting that as learners mature

and learn varieties of their L1, as well as additional languages, the cultural contexts in which they interact also expand and become more diverse (for example, home, school, work, social media). As this range of contexts expands, the three metafunctions also expand and become more diverse, creating more meaning potential and choice within the system. This diversification drives L2 learners' development of semiotic resources in regard to phonology/graphology, lexicogrammar, and semantics, as well as the evolution of the system as a whole (see also Halliday, 1993).

SFL-based pedagogy: Martin's genre pedagogy

Within social contexts, language users encounter recurrent language patterns Martin (1992) terms genres, or 'staged, goal-oriented social process[es]' (p. 505). Within the context of schooling, these social processes include such goals as describing a natural phenomenon in science, narrating a story in language arts, arguing a perspective regarding historical events in social studies, or explaining a statistical analysis in mathematics. Following Halliday and Martin, we maintain that as students participate in expanding networks that use different genres, they are socialized into new ways of knowing, being, and doing, which expands the semiotic resources available to them.

Martin's conception of genre captures how learning academic English reflects and constructs cultural linguistic practices (Martin & Rose, 2008). For example, while canonical scientific explanations in English have patterned genre moves (that is, identification of a phenomenon followed by an explanatory sequence that tells how or why that phenomenon exists), individual texts may vary depending on the local context of situation. This variation is reflected in grammatical choices depending on purpose, audience, and the channel through which the explanation unfolds. For instance, an explanation that a student gives to their peer face-to-face as they read an assigned text is apt to be grammatically different from one they might write on a unit test for the science teacher. To analyze variations of this sort, Martin uses Halliday's concept of register, which consists of specific field, tenor, and mode choices that realize the three metafunctions described above (Martin & Rose, 2008, p. 11). The field of a text refers to how students use ideational resources at their disposal to realize the content or subject matter of an explanation (such as

the use of content-specific noun phrases and verbs); tenor refers to how they use interpersonal resources within their repertoires to position themselves and their audience (for example, use of declaratives versus imperatives or interrogatives to construct an authoritative persona); and mode refers to how students use different textual resources to manage the flow of the discourse (such as the use of causal connectors to show the relationship between ideas).

To support teachers in making the workings of these different kinds of linguistic choices transparent and potentially transformative for students, Martin and his colleagues at the University of Sydney began collaborating with teachers in the 1980s to develop a genre-based approach to designing curriculum and instruction. Together, they developed a teaching and learning cycle as a way of apprenticing students at all grade levels to reading and writing the genres they were likely to encounter in school. This cycle provides a model for teachers to use in planning, delivering, and evaluating academic literacy instruction through three phases: deconstruction of model texts in a target genre using a functional metalanguage to notice, name, and critique patterns of language features; joint construction of a text in the target genre to make linguistic know-how visible and the nature of linguistic choices within the system explicit; and gradual apprenticeship toward independent student construction of oral and written texts by providing less scaffolding as students become more proficient users of a particular genre over time (Rose & Martin, 2012).

ACCELA teachers followed a modified version of this cycle in unit planning to adapt curricular materials they were required to use in their schools (Figure 8.1). For example, teachers would choose a target genre and content-area focus (for example, explanations and fossils) and move through these phases in ways that drew on students' collective linguistic knowledge, provided opportunities for students to use talk and print to construct new scientific understandings, and made the linguistic know-how needed to construct new meanings and understandings visible and explicit. The goal of this approach to teaching and learning is to expand students' meaning-making repertoires by providing them with hands-on experiences, dialogic interactions, models, explicit instruction, and critical analysis of authors' and their own grammatical choices as they learn to read, write, and critique academic texts across a variety of disciplines (see also de Oliveira & Iddings, 2014; Gibbons, 2015).

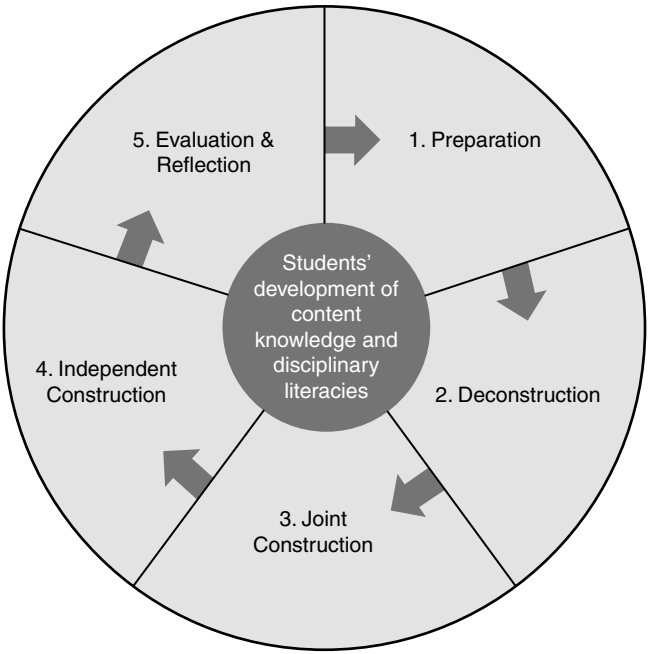


Figure 8.1 Teaching/learning cycle
Source: Adapted from Derewianka (1990) and Rose & Martin (2012).

As Cecily used this conceptual understanding of language teaching and learning to support her fourth-grade students in building new semiotic resources for reading and writing scientific explanations, our analysis of her work was guided by three main questions:

- How did Cecily attempt to enact the teaching/learning cycle in the context of school reform?
- What pedagogical choices did she make and why?
- What were the implications of these choices for the academic literacy practices of L2 students over the course of a curricular unit?

Method

School context

This study took place at the beginning of the 2013–2014 school year. At the time, Cecily was teaching in a midsize urban elementary school

in a formerly industrial city in Massachusetts. 'Turner Elementary' (a pseudonym), served predominantly Puerto Rican and African American students who lived in the neighborhoods surrounding the school, which include some of the most impoverished residential blocks in the state. Over a third of students were officially designated ELLs, a percentage that is more than twice the state average. Like many schools in cities experiencing rapid economic and demographic changes, Turner struggled to meet the needs of its diverse learners, and in 2011 was labeled one of the lowest performing elementary schools in Massachusetts. As a result, the state awarded Turner a three-year multi-million dollar school improvement or 'turnaround' grant designed to bring student performance up to state standards, particularly in academic writing. Administrators initiated several changes during this time, including mandated daily writing instruction at all grade levels to prepare students for open response prompts on state tests, and a redistribution of instructional time in fourth grade specifically to focus mainly on the high-stakes test subjects of mathematics and language arts. They also invested in an intensive quarterly assessment system that offered students timed writing practice and helped the school better predict annual standardized test performance. For Cecily and her students, this heightened focus on writing, math, and language arts meant that science was reduced to a 'special' or 30-minute pullout class taught by another teacher, 'Ms. Stryker,' three days a week.

Cecily was increasingly frustrated with demands of these school, district, state, and federal school reforms (Common Core initiatives, English-only mandates, merit pay attached to high-stakes test scores, and so on). She felt they constrained rather than supported her ability to design and implement effective instruction and were, therefore, paradoxically leading to a decline rather than an increase in students' engagement and learning. She also worried that these reforms normalized a single definition of student success (for example, a minimum required test score), made learning more of a rote activity, and replaced the practice of teaching with testing in ways that were counter-productive. For example, 22 of Cecily's 25 fourth graders were reading and writing below grade level, and 13 of them were officially designated ELLs. Based on her prior teaching experiences, she worried that the heavy emphasis on test-taking and limited exposure to certain content areas would constrain rather than

help expand students' semiotic resources for engaging with different types of academic reading and writing tasks. She predicted they would suffer most in science because this content area was getting pushed to the margins despite the fact that all of her students would be required to take a state-wide test in science the following year in grade five. For these reasons, and because she would potentially have these same students in grade five, Cecily made a concerted effort to find ways to teach science to support students' academic literacy and content knowledge development in ways that were aligned with the state science curricular frameworks.

The unit

While school reforms meant it was no longer Cecily's responsibility to deliver science instruction, she saw the mandate for daily test preparation and writing instruction as an opportunity to expand and deepen the kind of literacy instruction she provided students while simultaneously supporting what they were learning in their pullout science class with Ms. Stryker. Therefore, Cecily chose to begin the year with a study of scientific explanations with two broad goals in mind: first, to help students become active and critical science readers and writers by exploring how language makes meaning in this genre; and, second, to balance the curriculum in ways that would better prepare students for science learning the following year. Cecily justified this study of scientific explanations to her principal as a series of test preparation activities focused on writing, citing the increased emphasis on informational texts in the Common Core State Standards. After receiving approval, Cecily used the teaching/learning cycle to design a 12-week[1] writing unit focused on scientific explanations. This unit spanned three science content units Ms. Stryker covered, including states of matter, tornados, and rock formation. By using texts that addressed the topics students were already discussing in science, Cecily intended to build their awareness of text

[1] Cecily initially planned a six-week explanation writing unit. In the course of teaching, it grew in length as she decided to spend additional time building genre knowledge (see *Deconstruction*). Further, schedule interruptions (such as district assessments, school photos) prevented writing from being taught some days. These interruptions accounted for 25% of the ultimate 12-week span.

structure (genre), content language (field), authorial tone (tenor), and cohesion (mode).

Implementing the teaching/learning cycle at Turner Elementary School

As Cecily began the unit, students were studying states of matter in science class. To establish a baseline of the nature of the linguistic resources students drew on for constructing written explanations, she asked them to do a 'cold write' in which they produced uncoached writing samples on the topic they were studying.

Deconstruction: noticing linguistic features of explanations using model texts

The initial writing samples revealed that many students were unfamiliar with the purpose of explanation texts in school settings and needed to spend time with multiple sample texts to build an understanding of this genre. Accordingly, the first six weeks of the unit were spent establishing contexts in which the genre of explanation might be used, as well as discussing the stages and language features of the genre by deconstructing authentic examples. Cecily provided a blank note-taking template to support students' reading of these model texts and guide them in making explicit observations about the linguistic features authors used to explain scientific phenomena. Each week, students were asked to note similarities and variations across model texts, and to analyze which linguistic features seemed obligatory or optional for writing an explanation of a scientific phenomenon.

Students identified the following genre and register features as obligatory using metalanguage they generated in class (Graham, 2015): 'explanation organization' is naming or describing a 'big idea' and then giving 'important details' about that topic using a 'title, paragraphs, subheadings, and ordering words,' 'everything has to do with the same topic,' and it must include '"need to know" or specific content words,' 'behavioral and existential verbs,' and have a 'serious tone,' while avoiding 'I and me.' Cecily compiled these features on a large piece of chart paper and hung it on the classroom wall for continual reference. She drew particular attention to these features because she recognized that learning to read and write scientific

explanations requires the use of specialized language for constructing scientific ideas and coherent relationships between these ideas. She wanted to support students in developing an explicit metacognitive and metalinguistic awareness of how specialized language differs from everyday language and therefore designed the deconstruction phase of this writing unit as a series of mini-lessons that focused on four of the key linguistic features her students had observed: use of specific content vocabulary, 'serious tone,' cohesion, and text structure.

For example, in teaching students about the function of content vocabulary in academic texts, Cecily contrasted academic language with students' everyday communication, which is marked by linguistic choices that reflect a shared understanding of a concrete 'here and now' reality. As students were studying states of matter during this phase of the unit, Cecily illustrated this difference using the example of a physical reaction that takes place in a bottle of soda when a Mentos candy is dropped in and a geyser of foam shoots out. Students had witnessed this reaction in a class experiment, and therefore understood what she meant when she explained the reaction as, 'This thing and that thing together went boom!' However, a distant audience reading about the experiment rather than watching it would struggle to understand this statement without the shared context. Students came to agree that a more effective explanation for this purpose and audience needed to include specific and technical content vocabulary, as in, 'When the smooth candy is dropped into the carbonated soda it causes a physical reaction like an explosion to occur.' Students could then see how technical terms function to make precise meanings that can be understood by those outside the contexts in which the event occurred (Halliday, 1993; Lemke, 1990). In sum, through deconstructing authentic texts Cecily guided students to notice the linguistic choices more expert authors make in writing scientific explanations and the purpose these choices serve.

Joint construction: guided practice for planning and writing explanations

By the time Cecily arrived at the joint construction phase of her unit, students had moved on to a new content topic in science class: tornados. Consequently, her goal during this three-week phase was to continue building students' knowledge about the linguistic features

of scientific explanations by collaborating with them to research, plan, and co-write a class explanation about the topic they were studying at that time. Students began by reading published scientific explanations of how different types of tornados are formed. They collected factual information from these texts and continued their analysis of how authors make specific linguistic choices in producing scientific explanations. Based on their analysis, the class jointly planned what information to include in their text, what to exclude, and how to organize their writing by creating an outline for a four-paragraph explanation. This outline followed the organizational pattern students observed in the deconstruction phase of the unit in that their first planned paragraph introduced the 'big idea' of the text and set out three points about the big idea that would then be elaborated in a subsequent paragraph.

As this outline developed into a more fully formed explanation, students' responsibility for writing increased. Initially, they contributed ideas orally as Cecily scribed the first paragraph for them as a whole class activity. For the second paragraph, she provided sentence starters using language from the co-constructed outline (such as *Tornados are formed by* ____) and students completed the sentences with information from their research. For the third paragraph, students contributed their ideas orally as other students scribed. And for the final paragraph, students worked in small groups where they each contributed sentences to build information about the details in their outline. During each of these activities, Cecily made explicit reference to the genre knowledge students had built in deconstructing previously studied explanations about the states of matter. Thus, the deconstruction phase provided the basis for students to negotiate the process of choosing how to represent their collective ideas to explain how tornados form. During this phase, writing collaboratively with the teacher as the more expert guide was intended to scaffold students' learning by giving them the opportunity to practice making disciplinary meaning in a supported environment before writing on their own (Gibbons, 2015).

Independent construction: preparing for and writing individual explanations

The independent construction phase of Cecily's writing unit paralleled a third content topic in students' science class: rock formation.

During this phase, students drew on their existing and expanded linguistic resources, as well as experiences with the genre of explanation to write individually authored explanation texts related to this new topic. However, before students began drafting, Cecily devoted some time to explicitly building students' knowledge of the topic and attending once more to the generic structure of the text they would be writing. She capitalized on a recent field trip students had taken to observe different types of rocks and geological processes at a preservation area, using their shared experience as a springboard for class discussion about the rock cycle and as the basis for additional research, which they conducted using the Internet and texts provided by their science teacher. Students organized their research notes using a graphic organizer Cecily provided. Only after these steps did they begin writing rough drafts, which they had the opportunity to submit for feedback before writing their final explanations. The independent construction phase, as enacted in this context, was therefore comprised of several sub-phases that are associated with a process approach to writing instruction. In other words, students did not simply sit down to write independently; rather, they were guided in using their developing metalinguistic knowledge of text features to make choices about how to explain their scientific ideas regarding rock formation logically and precisely with an audience that did not share their knowledge or experiences.

Cecily evaluated students' final papers using a four-point rubric that was similar to the one used on district and state writing assessments. It included two standards-based criteria (content accuracy and mechanical conventions) and two of the linguistic features students had identified as obligatory for explanations in the deconstruction phase of the unit (text structure and use of content vocabulary). Some students used the rubric during independent construction to complete self- or peer-evaluations before revising and submitting their final drafts. For these students, the rubric may have supported the process of internalizing genre knowledge and making linguistic choices in their independent writing. Cecily's use of the rubric, however, was mainly to report quarterly writing grades and helped fulfill administrator requests for formal assessment. It was the analysis of students' final drafts as compared to their initial 'cold write' samples that allowed Cecily to gain a more nuanced understanding of how students' linguistic repertoires had developed over the 12 weeks

they had been studying explanations, and ultimately to defend her approach to administrators given that she was straying from the school's standard writing curriculum. To illustrate the impact of her use of SFL and the teaching/learning cycle on the academic literacy practices of L2 learners, we now describe changes in one student's literacy practices across the unit.

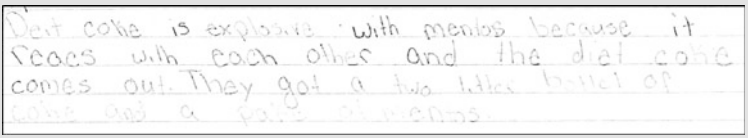
Ana Sofia: changes in the scientific literacy practices of an L2 writer

Ana Sofia and her family arrived in the United States from Puerto Rico in 2007. At the time, she was the only child in a bilingual household with her mother, father, and maternal grandfather. She began attending Turner as a kindergartener and received daily pullout English support through kindergarten and first grade that gradually diminished throughout her second- and third-grade years. According to her third-grade scores on the WIDA ACCESS test, Ana Sofia's English language proficiency was considered 'bridging,' meaning she had nearly developed grade-level English skills, and Cecily remarked that she had a 'great command' of English compared with other ELLs in the class, though she continued to need support with spelling, mechanics, and words with multiple meanings. As a new fourth grader, Ana Sofia reported enjoying writing in school because she felt she was good at it and was especially proud of her tidy handwriting. Despite her English proficiency and comfort with writing, Ana Sofia struggled with assessment activities that required fluency with disciplinary discourses.

Ana Sofia's first attempt at writing a scientific explanation

Ana Sofia was studying states of matter in science class when Cecily's writing unit began. She had watched a series of videos depicting the combination of a liquid and solid (diet soda and Mentos candies), where a geyser of foam shoots out of the soda bottle after the candies are dropped in. After replicating this experiment in class, Cecily gave students 15 minutes to write, prompting them to 'explain what happens when you put together Diet Coke and Mentos.' Her goal was to see what linguistic resources students used for the purpose of explaining a scientific phenomenon. In the allotted time, Ana Sofia produced a two-sentence response (Figure 8.2).

Ana Sofia's initial language choices for constructing an explanation



'Deit coke is explosive with mentos because it reacs with each other and the diet coke comes out. They got a two litter bottel of coke and a pake of mentos.'

Genre – hybridized genre resources to explain a specific physical reaction and recount procedural details from an experiment involving that phenomenon

Field – used some 'specific content vocabulary' (*explosive*, and *reacts*) alongside everyday language (*comes out*)

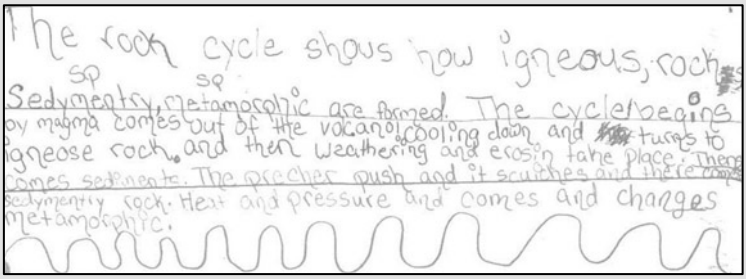
Tenor – avoided personal reference, constructing self as both scientific authority and objective reporter

Mode – established a thematic chain to keep text on-topic (*diet coke* > *it* > *bottle of coke*)

Figure 8.2 Ana Sofia's initial explanation writing sample (September 2013)

Though Ana Sofia's response was brief, an SFL text analysis allowed Cecily to note several strengths and areas for targeted instruction. For example, at the generic level, Ana Sofia seemed to be attending to the communicative purpose of explaining the phenomenon by opening her text with a statement about the nature of diet soda and the candies when combined. This attempt to communicate a generalized understanding of what she had witnessed suggested some familiarity with the types of information a distant audience may be interested in. In this part of the text, Ana Sofia used the present tense and established a causal chain to provide details about why the explosion occurs (*Diet coke is explosive with mentos because …*), and drew on specific language from her existing content knowledge of chemical and physical reactions (*reacts*, *explosive*) to signal a scientific understanding of the phenomenon. However, Cecily noticed that Ana Sofia followed this statement with a recount of specific procedural details from the videos, a more everyday language choice that relies on readers having the shared experience of seeing the experiment. This assumption of shared context was further reflected in Ana Sofia's choice of the pronoun *they* to refer to the scientists who conducted the experiment in the videos.

Ana Sofia's evolving language choices for constructing an explanation



'The rock cycle shows how igneous, rocks, sedymentry, metamorphic are formed. The cycle begins by magma comes out of the volcano! Cooling down and turns to igneose rock. And then weathering and erosin take place. Thens comes sediments. The precher push and it scuiches and there comes sedymentry rock. Heat and pressure and comes and changes metamoprhic.'

Genre – organized text using typical explanation genre moves ('big idea' followed by 'important details'), including an expanded explanatory sequence

Field – used 'specific content vocabulary' (*igneous, sedimentary, metamorphic, magma, weathering*, and *erosion*) supported by everyday language (*push, squishes*, and *turns to*) to communicate ideas

Tenor – avoided 'I and me' and personal commentary to construct self as scientific authority

Mode – relied on additive conjunction *and* to link ideas and move text forward

Figure 8.3 Ana Sofia's rough draft (early November 2013)

Becoming a more expert author: Ana Sofia's rough draft

As the unit progressed, Ana Sofia built expertise related to different content topics while continuing to study the same genre with Cecily. She practiced using her developing genre knowledge and content knowledge of geological processes to write an explanation of rock formation. Before drafting the explanation, Ana Sofia collected research notes and illustrations in a graphic organizer Cecily provided. She then selected which information to include and exclude from her text by circling in her notes what she planned to include and making the order in which it would appear clear to herself before drafting. Finally, she composed a paragraph (Figure 8.3).

In this text, Ana Sofia used a more typical explanation text structure than in her initial writing sample. She first identified and described her 'big idea' (*The rock cycle shows how igneous, rocks, sedymentry,*

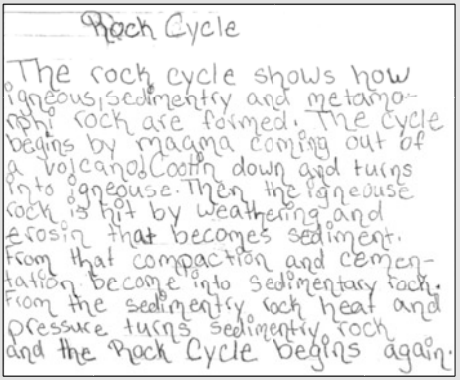
metamorphic are formed [sic]), then launched into an explanatory sequence that provided 'important details' about the topic of rock formation (*The cycle begins by …*), drawing on the organizational pattern she had noticed in model texts during the deconstruction and joint construction phases of the unit. This explanatory sequence was significantly expanded compared with her initial writing sample. Ana Sofia's early writing identified a single scientific process and resulting action (that is, *a reaction results in an explosion*), whereas now she connected multiple related processes to help explain her main topic (for example, *magma cools into igneous rock*; *weathering and erosion create sediment*; *pressure turns sediment into sedimentary rock*).

Ana Sofia's use of more expert field, tenor, and mode resources was apparent as she constructed this explanatory sequence. For example, Ana Sofia drew on a much broader range of technical language to represent the field of knowledge than she had earlier in the unit. Her use of content-specific vocabulary was still supported by everyday language, but as she planned and wrote the rough draft, Ana Sofia had begun to think beyond the 'here and now' to make language choices she felt would best communicate her ideas and understandings to a distant audience. She presented multiple connected ideas about the processes involved in rock formation, mainly using the conjunction *and* to link these ideas and move the text forward. Ana Sofia's use of *and* allowed her to build information regarding the topic by making connections within and between clauses. As she constructed her explanation, she adopted an authoritative tenor by using declarative mood and avoiding personal pronouns to construct the 'serious tone' the class has discussed as obligatory of scientific discourse.

Constructing an academic identity through explanation: Ana Sofia's final draft

Cecily was impressed with the growth in academic language use Ana Sofia demonstrated in her rough draft, but encouraged her to continue to work toward developing the ability to construct a more expert text in the final weeks of the unit. As she revised her writing, Ana Sofia also received support from the class paraprofessional in the form of spelling corrections, sentence boundary advice, and a suggested concluding phrase (*and the rock cycle begins again*). Figure 8.4 shows the final draft Ana Sofia submitted to Cecily, which

Ana Sofia's language choices for constructing a final draft explanation



Rock Cycle

'The rock cycle shows how igneous, sedimentry and metamorphi rock are formed. The cycle begins by magma coming out of a volcano! Coolin down and turns into igneouse. Then the igneouse rock is hit by weathering and erosin that becomes sediment. From that compaction and cementation become into sedimentary rock. From the sedimentary rock heat and pressure turns sedimentary rock and the Rock Cycle begins again.'

Genre – organized text using typical explanation genre moves (descriptive statement followed by explanatory sequence)

Field – attempted to replace everyday language with 'specific content words' to increase precision (for example, nominalizations such as *weathering, erosion, compaction,* and *cementation*)

Tenor – used a 'serious tone' and avoided personal reference to construct self as scientific authority

Mode – oriented the reader with a title; controlled the flow of information with ordering language (such as *begins,* and *then*), reference (*that*), and a zig-zag pattern

Figure 8.4 Ana Sofia's final draft (late November 2013)

incorporated much of this feedback. An analysis of Ana Sofia's texts demonstrates some notably different field choices. For example, during revision she identified her own use of everyday vocabulary in the rough draft, marking words such as *push* and *squish*, and attempted to replace these with more 'specific content vocabulary' from a resource book while preserving her intended meanings (for example, *The precher push and it scuiches and there comes sedymentry rock* [sic] → *From that compaction and cementation become into sedimentary rock*). Though Ana Sofia treated the nouns *compaction* and *cementation* as concrete things instead of nominalized processes, she correctly identified these as the more technical terms for the ideas she expressed in her rough draft, and in using them was attempting to more expertly describe the forces involved in rock formation.

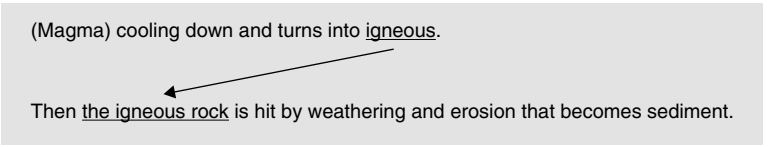


Figure 8.5 Ana Sofia's use of a 'zig-zag' pattern to present information incrementally in her final draft

As she explained the process of rock formation, Ana Sofia used three main resources to control the flow of information and create cohesion: a title, 'ordering words,' and a system of reference. Early in the unit, students noticed that model academic texts nearly all included titles that signaled the 'big idea' of a text. Therefore, in choosing to include a title for her final product, Ana Sofia oriented her readers to the topic of her explanation by using a convention Cecily had reinforced as functional for this purpose. Ana Sofia also created more logical connections between the 'important details' she presented about rock formation by relying less on conjunction to link the content (field) of her text, instead using embedding with *that* clauses to connect new ideas to previous stated ones. Additionally, she began to use a 'zig-zag' pattern to build information logically and incrementally, a strategy common in informational texts (Eggins, 2004, p. 324). Throughout much of her final draft, Ana Sofia introduced a theme at the beginning of a sentence, presented new information regarding that theme, and then drew on some piece of the new information to begin the next sentence (Figure 8.5). Though Cecily did not explicitly discuss this zig-zag pattern with students, she did encourage them to notice how they connected their ideas from sentence to sentence. In her final draft, Ana Sofia made more explicit connections between sentences using 'need to know' words for readers, which resulted in a zig-zag pattern characteristic of more expert disciplinary discourse.

Discussion

By analyzing Ana Sofia's attempts to produce more decontextualized scientific texts over the course of the unit, Cecily was able to see a

movement from the use of language to construct everyday experience to the use of language to construct more discipline-specific scientific knowledge. At the end of the unit, Ana Sofia was drawing on a wider range of linguistic resources to construct scientific meanings as well as a stronger academic identity. Accomplishing this cognitive and social work involved her choosing to use genre stages typical of school-based explanations, discipline-specific lexical resources, identifiable textual resources to create precision and cohesion in her text, and tenor resources to construct herself as a 'serious' or knowledgeable student. Our analysis, however, does not suggest that Ana Sofia mastered these aspects of scientific discourse, or that she no longer needs sustained academic English language support. For example, though she made gains in using 'specific content vocabulary' to represent the field she was studying, Ana Sofia struggled to control more abstract uses of language (for example, nominalized processes like *cementation*; see Martin & Veel, 1998, for more on abstraction and grammatical metaphor in science texts).

Cecily facilitated Ana Sofia's content and language development over the course of this unit by implementing genre pedagogy using the teaching/learning cycle to guide her and other students through explicit discussions and activities focused on learning to recognize and use the language of science to construct scientific meanings. Throughout the unit Cecily provided students with time, instructional scaffolding (such as graphic organizers to support the reading and writing of disciplinary texts), and sociolinguistic supports (for example, use of classroom talk in whole class discussion, small group and pair work activities to construct new understandings) to develop ELLs' understanding of and ability to produce grade-level information texts central to the elementary school curriculum (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010; WIDA Consortium, 2012). In addition, Cecily's practice included highly valuing the knowledge and linguistic resources ELLs bring to learning to read and write challenging texts, strategically selecting grade-level model texts to help students collectively notice linguistic patterns associated with academic writing, providing students with multiple ungraded opportunities to try out new language practices in small groups and on their own, discussing the social function of different linguistic choices to support students to make critical decisions about how to convey ideas and

construct themselves as students, and dedicating ample time to drafting and revising during the independent construction phase of the unit. With these supports, Ana Sofia was able to make the linguistic choices required to construct disciplinary knowledge and favored school identities.

Despite these successes, Cecily faced a number of challenges with unit design and implementation related to the intensification of test preparation activities at her school. For example, a reduction in prep time had led many teachers to collaborate less and to adhere to a district-wide scripted writing curriculum. However, Cecily was invested in conducting research in her classroom, and in using her professional knowledge and understanding of her students to design materials that would prepare them to pass high-stakes exams in the short term and graduate from high school in the future. Consequently, she dedicated a great deal of extra time to this pursuit that other teachers may not be able to commit even if they had the will. Moreover, as mathematics and English language arts moved to the forefront at Turner and science was no longer officially part of Cecily's role, she worked much harder to design more robust curriculum, instruction and assessments, and had to continually lobby the school administration for permission to do so.

Conclusion

Cecily's implementation of the teaching/learning cycle and Ana Sofia's progress across the unit suggest there is a great deal to be gained from applying this pedagogical approach to support ELLs' academic literacy development in the context of current school reforms (Gebhard, 2010; Palincsar & Schleppegrell, 2014). Cecily and Ana Sofia's experiences using SFL and genre pedagogy contribute to the growing body of qualitative and quantitative studies that demonstrate the potential of a Hallidayan perspective of language to inform literacy research and approaches to teacher education (Bunch, 2013; de Oliveira & Iddings, 2014). Specifically, over the course of the unit, Ana Sofia demonstrated changes in her ability to make linguistic choices to support the construction of scientific explanations and herself as a 'good student' (Harklau, 1994). She began the unit by participating in an explicit exploration of the explanation genre, using both her own language and a metalanguage Cecily provided (*genre*,

tone, *obligatory*, *optional*, and so on) to discuss the specific ways that home and school language differ. As students' unconscious linguistic choices became more conscious over the different phases of the unit, Ana Sofia talked about and practiced using language in different ways to construct information for a particular audience and for a particular purpose. By the end of the unit, she was able to articulate and draw on specific knowledge about the linguistic features of written explanations, and used an expanded repertoire of linguistic resources to communicate her ideas and experiences in ways that are valued in formal educational contexts.

It is important to note that Ana Sofia's experiences are not generalizable. Like all students, she relied on her individual resources for making meaning in addition to Cecily's instruction to complete her assignments. These resources include drawing on her home language, prior experiences, and scaffolding from her teachers, peers, and others to support the development of her academic work. Further, Ana Sofia had a level of English proficiency that allowed her to participate in English-only instruction—something not all ELLs who are in English-only classes have. Accordingly, her case does not predict how students in the very early stages of academic English development might participate in a unit like this one, or how other students will engage with their own sets of cultural and linguistic resources in choosing how or whether to participate in this type of academic writing instruction.

Likewise, Cecily's experiences are not generalizable given that not all teachers are invested in conducting action-oriented research in their classrooms and in taking up oppositional stances to current school reforms with their administrators, especially given the degree to which many teachers are already over worked and discouraged by the demands of current school reforms. However, the findings from this case study support the findings from other studies of teachers using SFL and genre pedagogy to support their students' academic literacy development and their professional practices (Bunch, 2013; Gebhard, Chen, Graham, & Gunawan, 2013). For example, at the end of this study, Cecily reflected:

> Before now, I hadn't fully made the connection between analyzing how science texts function and our ability to write within and

> about [the genre of explanation]. This was important for me and my students, especially for ELL students. We so often use model texts to simply teach emulation in writing and students come away with empty knowledge. Teaching them how the obligatory parts function together to create meaning and flow in different genres of writing is really effective.

However, Cecily also remarked that contextual constraints made it difficult for her to realize the teaching/learning cycle directly as it was proposed. For instance, school reform efforts removed academic writing from content instruction to a separate test preparation block, making implementing genre pedagogy difficult professionally and personally given other demands on Cecily's time. Though Cecily believed the gains she documented in students' writing substantiated the commitment of time and energy to the process of teaching academic text production, she felt school reforms were increasingly forcing teachers to focus almost exclusively on writing as a product of testing. She captured this sentiment when she stated:

> The major problem with teaching this way in a high stakes environment and with testing accountability is that there is an expectation that pacing will be rapid. Writing in different genres and knowing how to do so takes time – time for studying, understanding, and praxis. All of which is impeded with testing demands. I think if we took more time with the different writing types and showed students the *why* as well as the *how* we would see even greater gains.

Cecily's experience in attempting to incorporate the teaching/learning cycle into her practice makes clear that for genre pedagogy to reach its potential in U.S. classrooms, aspects of the theory will be recontextualized because of school reform efforts unique to an American context. The Sydney School's genre pedagogy was developed with the goal of equalizing students' access to the genres of schooling and exposing the mechanisms of marginalization at work in schools (Rose & Martin, 2012). However, to continue this work and instantiate a robust version of this model in a U.S. policy context, we must take into account institutional constraints and teachers' professional development. Nevertheless, the success of this unit

indicates that when literacy instruction is explicit and anchored in authentic content texts supported by meaningful discussions about how language functions to accomplish disciplinary purposes, L2 writers like Ana Sofia can demonstrate strong growth in science writing.

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Part III
Teacher Education

9

Bridging the In- and Out-of-school Writing Practices of ELLs through Postmethod Pedagogy: One Elementary Teacher's Journey

Sarah Henderson Lee

The face of U.S. public education has changed considerably in recent decades. English language learners (ELLs) now make up 10 percent, or approximately five million, of K-12 students (U.S. Department of Education, 2013). Regardless of the fact that they have been the fastest growing group of American students for some time, ELLs continue to be outperformed by their non-ELL peers.[1] With the new Common Core State Standards (CCSS) highlighting the interdisciplinary nature of language and literacy instruction, eliminating the achievement gaps between these two groups of students can no longer be viewed as solely the responsibility of English language (EL) teachers. Rather, this critical undertaking must be recognized as the shared responsibility of all involved educators, including grade-level and content teachers who, in many cases, are the primary source of instruction for ELLs (Davison, 2006; de Jong, Harper, & Coady, 2013; Leung, 2007). Unfortunately though, less than 30 percent of mainstream teachers report receiving any professional development related to effectively working with linguistically diverse student populations (Ballantyne, Sanderman, & Levy, 2008). Such a disconnect raises an important question about the role of teacher education

[1] Since 2002 the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) reading scores of ELL fourth and eighth graders have been lower than those of non-ELLs (U.S. Department of Education, 2013).

in meeting the language and literacy needs of ELLs. Specifically, what type of knowledge construction and application should both TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages) and general teacher education programs foster to adequately prepare all pre- and in-service teachers to instruct ELLs in an effective and linguistically and culturally responsive way?

The findings reported in this chapter stem from one in-service elementary teacher's journey through a graduate TESOL teacher education program. In looking at the participant's knowledge construction and application of a postmethod approach to second language writing over the course of the program, the fluid relationship between theory and practice is highlighted. Additionally, issues of inadequacies and ineffectiveness in both TESOL and general teacher education programs are identified. By discussing these much-needed areas of change in teacher education through the lenses of biliteracy and postmethod pedagogy, this research aims to help bridge the home–school language and literacy gap of young ELLs.

Literature review

Research on young second language (L2) writers has been largely positive, highlighting the capability and successes of these learners. Earlier literature aimed to improve instruction by emphasizing the similarities between first language (L1) and L2 beginning writers and debunking such myths as L2 speaking and reading are prerequisites to L2 writing (Han & Ernst-Slavit, 1999) and L2 writing is negatively influenced by L1 use (Dávila de Silva, 2004; Moll, Saez, & Dworkin, 2001). Moving away from orientations of cognition, more recent research on young L2 writers has shed light on the complexity of individual writing development through a sociocultural lens. One notable theme here is the role of talk in L2 writing. Replacing the promotion of oral language before written language are self-talk (Gutierrez, 1994; Patthey-Chavez & Clare, 1996) and student–student/student–teacher dialog (McCarthey, Garcia, Lopez-Velasquez, Lin, & Guo, 2004; Nassaji & Cumming, 2000) as key components to L2 writing development. Another socially situated theme of particular relevance to this study is the home–school literacy connection. Writing, in particular, has been seen as a vehicle for young ELLs to explore links between home and

school cultures (Maguire & Graves, 2001). More recent scholarship has approached the home–school literacy connection linguistically, advocating for students' multiple and mobile language and literacy practices to be recognized as learning resources (Hornberger & Link, 2012; Lucas, Villegas, & Freedson-Gonzalez, 2008).

With an increase in socioculturally oriented research, the roles of teachers in L2 literacy development have received much-needed attention. A noted shift from teacher as authority to teacher as facilitator of literacy possibilities is evident (Masny & Ghahremani-Ghajar, 1999; McCarthey et al., 2004; Solsken, Willet, & Wilson-Keenan, 2000). Here, the multiple discourses of the learners' communicative repertoires rather than the dominant school discourses drive the pedagogy. Regardless of the literature recognizing students' home languages and cultures as advantageous to L2 literacy development (Buckwalter & Lo, 2002; Perez, 2004), many teachers continue to approach literacy instruction from a monolingual and monocultural perspective. While this may be due to both the pressures of standardized testing and the lack of teacher training specific to the needs of ELLs, raising awareness and working toward positive transformation of the latter is the focus of this chapter.

Conceptual framework

To reorient TESOL and general teacher education programs to the language and literacy practices of L2 writers, this study is framed by concepts of bi(multi)literacy and postmethod pedagogy. Recognizing the conjunction of bilingualism and literacy, Hornberger (1990) defines biliteracy as "any and all instances in which communication occurs in two (or more) languages in or around writing," where instances refers to events, interactions, practices, and sites, among others (p. 213). Rather than viewing language and literacy in terms of dichotomies, biliteracy operates as interrelated and fluid continua of a complex whole. In fact, Hornberger (2003) notes that it is in the "dynamic, rapidly changing, and sometimes contested spaces along and across the intersecting continua that most biliteracy use and learning occur" (p. xiv). The continua model of biliteracy (Hornberger, 2003; Hornberger & Skilton-Sylvester, 2000) represents the related areas of development, media, contexts, and content.

Development of biliteracy continua include reception–production, oral–written, and L1–L2; media of biliteracy continua include simultaneous–successive exposure, dissimilar–similar structures, and divergent–convergent scripts; contexts of biliteracy continua include micro–macro, oral–literate, and bi(multi)lingual–monolingual; and content of biliteracy continua include minority–majority, vernacular–literary, and contextualized–decontextualized. Such a model offers a lens through which to view pre- and in-service teachers' preparedness to effectively work with young L2 writers.

To refute the one-size-fits-all approach to language and literacy positioned on the traditionally more powerful ends of Hornberger's (2003) continua of biliteracy model, I draw on postmethod pedagogy (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, 2003). As an alternative to method, postmethod pedagogy consists of parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility. Like Kumaravadivelu's (2001) re-visioning of language programs through the parameter of particularity, TESOL and general teacher education programs "must be sensitive to a particular group of teachers teaching a particular group of learners pursuing a particular set of goals within a particular institutional context embedded in a particular sociocultural milieu" (p. 538). A shift to the parameter of particularity would require general teacher education programs, not solely TESOL programs, to prepare grade-level and content teachers to use the context-sensitive local knowledge of the individual learner to identify needs and address them with appropriate solutions. Referring to the relationship between theory and practice, the parameter of practicality moves beyond the dichotomy of theorists as the producers of knowledge and teachers as the consumers of knowledge to reflective (Farrell, 2008) teachers as authentic producers of practicing theory. Here, the role of teacher education programs in preparing autonomous teachers is critical. Stemming from Freirean critical pedagogy is the parameter of the possibility, where empowered learners critically reflect on their lived experiences. "Their lived experiences, motivated by their own sociocultural and historical backgrounds, should help them appropriate the English language and use it in their own terms according to their own values and visions" (Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 544). This is analogous with students claiming their right to write both in- and out-of-school and must be recognized, supported, and fostered by all educators.

Contextualizing the study

This case study, conducted at a private university in the Midwest, is part of a larger ongoing study of pre- and in-service teachers' knowledge construction and application of critical pedagogy in TESOL. The university's graduate TESOL program is housed in the School of Humanities and includes coursework for both a Master's degree in TESOL and a K-12 ESOL certification. Additionally, students pursuing the certification may transfer their TESOL coursework to a Master's degree in Education. Of particular importance to this study are two semester-long courses required of all students in the TESOL program: TESOL Methods and TESOL Practicum (hereafter "methods" and "practicum"). The methods course, typically taken in students' second semester, emphasizes critical pedagogy in all language modes and requires students to do the following: (1) engage in scholarly discussions of relevant literature; (2) observe classes in their preferred English language teaching (ELT) context; (3) design and adapt teaching materials for instructional activities; and (4) create and demonstrate original lesson plans. The practicum course, typically completed at the end of students' TESOL coursework, is a 90-hour fieldwork experience. Practicum students are expected to plan, implement, and monitor ELLs in a classroom context of their choice under the supervision of both a mentor teacher and a faculty supervisor. In addition to regular evaluations and follow-up meetings, students are required to submit a reflective teaching journal.

Elaine,[2] the focus participant of this chapter, was purposefully selected because of her completion of the above two courses and her elementary teaching experience. She entered the university's graduate TESOL program as a public school elementary teacher with three years of full-time experience. More specifically, Elaine taught fifth grade in a rural, accredited K-12 district of approximately 6,000 students, of which 89.5 percent were Caucasian and 44.3 percent were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. While the overall enrollment of the district had seen a steady decline, the enrollment of ELLs, specifically Spanish-speaking students, was on the rise (Midwestern State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2013). In addition to wanting an advanced degree in Education, Elaine was

[2] All names are pseudonyms.

especially interested in better understanding and meeting the needs of these ELLs often placed in her grade-level classroom. Throughout the course of the program, Elaine demonstrated a strong orientation toward literacy learning and instruction. Additionally, as a monolingual speaker of English, she was motivated to advance her beginner-level Spanish. Following foundational coursework in second language acquisition and linguistics, Elaine enrolled in the methods course during her third semester. Because she was simultaneously teaching full-time, Elaine took a reduced course load, extending the traditional four-semester graduate program to seven fall, spring, and summer semesters. In her final semester, Elaine enrolled in the practicum course and was placed with a veteran middle school EL teacher in her district. To meet her practicum requirements, Elaine participated in an early first-period EL class for sixth graders prior to the start of her day as an elementary teacher in another building. Her practicum classroom consisted of five Spanish-speaking students and one Amharic-speaking student, all of varying English proficiency levels.

Because an interactive and value-mediated link exists between qualitative researchers and participants (Guba & Lincoln, 2004), it is necessary for me to acknowledge my positionality. In addition to being a participant of this study, Elaine was simultaneously my graduate student and advisee. During the data collection period, I regularly discussed possible related tensions between us and invited her to do the same. I also highlighted my former experience as a K-12 EL teacher in the same state. While my experience as a K-12 EL teacher turned TESOL teacher educator provided valuable insight to the study, it also served as a potential limitation, biasing design decisions and interpretation of findings, for example. To address my subjectivities and enhance the credibility of the study, I used a researcher journal to engage in ongoing critical reflections.

Data collection and analysis

Data from multiple sources were collected for this research and include: (1) a researcher journal; (2) written artifacts submitted by the participant (that is, a critical pedagogy paper from the methods course, a reflective teaching journal from the practicum course, and lesson plans from both the practicum course and the participant's full-time teaching); (3) non-participant observations conducted during the practicum course; and (4) an end-of-program interview.

Here, Rubin and Rubin's (2005) responsive interviewing model was employed. The characteristics of this model include: (1) obtains interviewees' interpretations of their own experiences; (2) considers the personality, style, and beliefs of the interviewer; (3) generates ethical obligations for the interviewer; (4) allows for breadth in interviewees' answers; and (5) is flexible and adaptive in its design (pp. 30–36). Such interviewing was essential to this qualitative research, which is "not simply learning about a topic, but also learning what is important to those being studied" (Rubin & Rubin, 2005, p. 15).

To better understand Elaine's knowledge construction and application of critical pedagogy in TESOL, content analysis was used. Referring to "any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings" (Patton, 2002, p. 453), content analysis requires recursive and careful reading of data. This was done at all stages of collection – the methods course, the practicum course, and post-program – to identify meaningful patterns, themes, and relationships across all data sources. Additionally, collected data and written interpretations were member checked to enhance the credibility of the study.

Findings and discussion

The findings of this study highlight the complex, dynamic, and fluid relationship between TESOL theory and practice, specifically as it relates to L2 literacy. As detailed below, I identify the following central themes in Elaine's related experiences: (1) knowledge reconstruction of critical pedagogy for L2 learning; (2) challenges in "doing" critical pedagogy; and (3) a commitment to the active role of teacher–scholar.

Knowledge reconstruction of critical pedagogy for L2 learning

Elaine remembered being introduced to critical pedagogy as an undergraduate elementary education major. Specifically, she recalled learning the term and its general connection to students' background and prior knowledge. Until her graduate TESOL coursework, however, Elaine had never explored explicit connections between critical pedagogy, ELLs, and/or literacy. Reflecting on her pre-service self, she noted:

> I originally did not give second language learners much thought in regards to writing. I just naively figured they would learn English and writing though the same strategies that all of my other students would.

In a state where an introductory TESOL course still has not been finalized as a requirement for all pre-service teachers, Elaine's reflection was not surprising. In fact, it mirrored the reflections of other K-12 in-service teachers who had enrolled in the same graduate program. Especially problematic was that Elaine could not recall a single instance from her initial teacher education coursework where issues of second language learning and teaching were addressed. Rather, she remembered discussions of ELLs being linked to multicultural education topics, including "foods and holidays around the world." Here, the majority power-weighted side of Hornberger's (2003) content of biliteracy continua privileges predetermined cultural connections in the classroom over the actual lived experiences of ELLs. Professional development in areas of L2 teaching and learning from a critical perspective would initiate a shift toward the less powerful minority end of the continua where meaning made from students' cultures is valued.

The one-size-fits-all approach to literacy instruction presented in Elaine's initial teacher education program resulted in her, as a beginning in-service teacher, prescriptively teaching writing to all of her students, including ELLs:

> I thought that my students needed to learn all the grammar rules and do this through a lot of practice and even sometimes drills. I thought that students needed to be exposed to the different aspects of grammar and know the different parts of speech.

Here, Elaine understood her role to be teacher as authority where she prescribed linguistic knowledge to students. Such a role favors the traditionally more powerful literary and decontextualized ends of the content of biliteracy continua by rejecting meaning made from learners' multiple and mobile languages/discourses and surroundings. In witnessing the continued struggles of many of her students, Elaine, after a few years of teaching, began to question her teacher as authority role and specifically her preparedness to effectively teach

ELLs. Ultimately, she decided to pursue a graduate degree related to TESOL to fill this gap in her own professional development.

In Elaine's methods course, the study of critical pedagogy followed an introduction to a variety of language teaching methods. Like her classmates, she made initial associations between critical pedagogy and the following individual approaches to language teaching: Communicative Language Teaching, Task-Based Learning, Learning-Centered Instruction, Cooperative Learning, Interactive Learning, Whole Language Education, and Content-Based Instruction. By the end of the methods course, however, Elaine had broadened her working definition of critical pedagogy to "any combination of approaches involving all aspects of the learner, teacher, and context." Here, a shift from compartmentalized to interconnected methods is evident, as is Elaine's realization that constructing local knowledge is important in informing pedagogy. While these changes were essential to Elaine's knowledge reconstruction of critical pedagogy, the fact that they came about at the end of the methods course meant that there was little time remaining for application practice, as evident perhaps through some of the practicum struggles detailed in the next section. Elaine also never directly linked critical pedagogy to L2 literacy during the methods course. This may have been largely due to the fact that only two weeks of the course curriculum were reserved for L2 reading and writing content. Flipping the methods curriculum to begin with a study of critical pedagogy would promote "an alternative to method rather than an alternative method" (Kumaravadivelu, 2006, p. 73). Additionally, it would create space for reflective pre- and in-service teachers to produce practicing theory for the literacy development of their current and future ELLs.

In preparation for her practicum, Elaine reconsidered her role as teacher through Kumaravadivelu's (2001, 2003) parameters of particularity, practicality, and possibility. Regarding the parameter of particularity, Elaine focused on herself as a reflective practitioner:

> I would incorporate the idea of particularity by making sure to regularly evaluate my teaching and make decisions as an effect of these evaluations. For example, if a lesson does not go well, then I need to recognize that and adapt the lesson or the strategies for the next time I teach. This will enable me to help my students be successful. Also, I need to make sure to find solutions to any

> problems within my lesson, either immediately or after a lesson is taught. Then, I need to try out those solutions with my students and always be willing to try new things or ways of teaching to help my students learn. I need to remember that this process is a cyclical pattern and, as a teacher, I need to be reflective in every lesson that I teach and every decisions that I make.

While it is evident from the above excerpt that Elaine recognized reflection as a tool to help her find solutions for her students' learning success, she remained in a teacher as authority position. Here, she is the sole searcher of solutions for her students who seem to be perceived as one group rather than many students. To fully embrace the parameter of particularity, teachers, together with their students, must use the context-sensitive local knowledge to identify learner needs and address them with appropriate solutions. Such a commitment would facilitate a shift toward the traditionally less powerful ends of all the continua of biliteracy.

Elaine understood the parameter of practicality as the relationship between theory and practice. As evident in the excerpt below, however, Elaine saw this relationship as unidirectional, moving from theory to practice:

> I would use the idea of practicality in my pedagogy by recognizing the current theories that are available and understanding which of those theories would work with my group of students. I need to be an active researcher and understand that all theories are not going to be universally workable with my group of students. After researching a new theory, I need to be sure to interpret and adapt it for my students, instead of just jumping in and trying something that may not have anything to do with my students. Also I need to make sure that my students will be able to relate to the theory. I cannot try to incorporate something that the students will not be able to have any connection to. This would just be setting them up for failure, and no teacher should do that to their students.

Even though Elaine imagined herself as a reflective practitioner and active researcher, she did not see herself as an authentic producer of practicing theory. To her, theory was something created by scholars,

researched by graduate students, and applied by teachers. The disconnect between using context-sensitive local knowledge to inform pedagogy and authentically producing practicing theory speaks to the greater need of teacher education programs providing pre-service teachers with more in-class experiences.

Considering her role as teacher through the parameter of possibility, Elaine emphasized the need to create classroom conditions supportive of her students' lived experiences. As seen in the following passage, Elaine associated students' lived experiences specifically with their cultures:

> With pedagogy of possibility, I need to remember that all of my students come from different cultures and backgrounds, and I need to incorporate their culture as much as possible in our discussions and lessons. My goal would be to make sure that all of my students are active participants in our classroom, and also not afraid to be proud of who they are and where they came from. I would encourage my students to share their own personal stories when discussing and also encourage other students to be curious about other cultures, especially those of their fellow peers. I need to remember to have and promote sensitivity to cultures and not to forget that those cultures are a part of my students' identities.

Such a limitation, however, excludes students' linguistic repertoires. Additionally, it runs the risk of forcing cultural connections in the classroom from the power-weighted majority end of the content of biliteracy continua, as was the experience of Elaine during the practicum. In creating classroom conditions that empower learners to critically reflect on their lived experiences, teachers must also recognize possibility in students' languages, literacies, and discourses. By doing so, they move toward the less powerful vernacular and contextualized ends of the content of biliteracy continua giving agency and voice to the learners.

Challenges in "doing" critical pedagogy

Reflecting on her working definition of critical pedagogy during her practicum, Elaine resisted redefining it, stating instead that "you have to do critical pedagogy." The semester-long practicum provided Elaine with an opportunity to apply her reconstructed knowledge of critical

pedagogy in an EL classroom context, a first for the grade-level elementary teacher. The main challenges she faced in doing so involved the role of the mentor teacher, forced linguistic and cultural lesson connections, and a unidirectional school–home literacy connection.

In her early observations of her mentor teacher, Elaine identified any incorporation of students' home language and culture as examples of critical pedagogy. Building in similar connections to each of her lessons, Elaine was surprised that her mentor teacher always marked "not observed" on the critical pedagogy related evaluation questions. After a second similar evaluation by her mentor teacher, Elaine decided to ask about this. The mentor teacher explained that she was not exactly clear on what was meant by critical pedagogy and marked "not observed" to mean "not applicable." The conversation stopped there with Elaine feeling like it was not her place to "teach" the mentor teacher anything. This speaks to a greater need for increased communication between practicum student, faculty supervisor, and mentor teacher and postmethod professional development. Instead, Elaine credited her mentor teacher for evolving her understanding of critical pedagogy indirectly through the teaching of grammar and writing:

> Through my TESOL practicum experience, my critical pedagogy has been changed a little. I have witnessed how my mentor teacher teaches grammar and writing and it has been a learning experience. I now believe that students, especially ESL students, need to have practiced writing as well as be guided on certain parts. For my context, I observed and taught sixth graders, so they were still in the beginning stages of five-paragraph writing. My mentor teacher guided the students through the writing process, beginning with organization and visualization of what they were writing about. She had them draw what they were writing about first. Then each group took charge of a paragraph and outlined it with the facts since they were writing an expository essay. Next, they discussed what they needed to write, which I now see is very important for writers, to be able to think through their writing. Once the students wrote their body paragraphs with the facts that were outlined, she guided them through the introduction and conclusion, teaching them how to hook the reader into the paper and how to wrap up their paper in a clear and concise manner. I

> see through this experience that with writing and language learning, there needs to be social discussions as well as guided practice whenever possible. This is until the students feel more comfortable with developing the structure themselves.

Unlike the prescriptive approach to writing instruction she described using as a beginning teacher, Elaine witnessed substantial student progress with the more descriptive, process-oriented approach modeled by her mentor teacher. Specifically, she valued having students visualize and discuss their writing, as well as guiding them through practice. In these strategies, Elaine identified the use of multiple language modes and the opportunities for dialog between students and teacher. Such dialogism is foundational to critical pedagogy, a realization Elaine had when she proudly reported that she was facilitating her students' learning by "talking less."

Elaine demonstrated her ability to successfully incorporate the above strategies in one of her formally observed lessons. For a unit on descriptive writing, Elaine first led the students on a physical walk-through of their classroom. She then asked students to return to their seats and close their eyes. With their eyes closed, students took turns verbalizing the walk-through they had just completed while Elaine transcribed the description on the white board. When students opened their eyes, they were surprised to see a "very big" paragraph. After rereading it, Elaine asked each student to suggest one revision and provide justification. With the sample paragraph on the board, students partnered up to visualize their own bedrooms and verbally walk through them. While one partner described his/her bedroom, the other partner mapped the space. Groups were then given time to review the maps and make adjustments before beginning the writing task. Using the map that represented their own bedroom space, each student wrote a corresponding descriptive paragraph. While this observation of Elaine's teaching best represented her working knowledge of critical pedagogy in writing instruction, her other observations revealed some of the struggles she faced during her practicum. For example, during her first observation, Elaine taught a chapter from a sequential vocabulary development textbook. Because her mentor teacher had assigned the chapter, Elaine was not comfortable raising her initial concerns about its decontextualized nature. Rather, she proceeded to go step by step through the

chapter with little engagement from her students. She later expressed frustration in her inability to move beyond a prescriptive approach during this lesson, noting her authoritative role and the lack of student–student/student–teacher dialog. Additionally, she acknowledged her lesson plan's forced critical pedagogy link in "allowing students to use their L1s as need be." While she positioned herself toward the less powerful simultaneous exposure end of the media of biliteracy continua here, she remained on the power-weighted decontextualized end of the content of biliteracy continua where students' use of their L1 was limited to speaking for clarification and not meaning making. Similarly, during her final lesson, she situated herself toward the majority end by linking her critical pedagogy to the lesson's cultural theme. Here, she paired students up to interview each other about their holiday traditions. By providing a list of interview questions, though, Elaine missed an opportunity for a more substantial connection, that of meaningful learning through students as researchers.

The semester after completing her practicum and graduating, Elaine reflected on the home–school literacy connection as a grade-level teacher of ELLs:

> I try to bridge the gap between home and school literacy by giving parents plenty of sources from online to look at and use to help their children be successful at reading and writing. I also try to meet with parents or talk to them over the phone and share any ideas that I have for them to help their child at home. For ELL students and families, I use the letters in Spanish out of our textbook series or get the translator from the district and send home the letters in their first language whenever possible. I found that this way helps the families to know what is going on at school and it gives them the same opportunities to help their children be successful as any other student. For parent–teacher conferences with ELL students and families, my district provides an interpreter. This way the parent can tell me anything that he or she feels and I can tell them how I think their child is doing in class and what he or she can work on further at home. Many times, I have the students read a book or something they have written out loud at home to their families. This way, families can see their child's progress and hear some of the stories they have written. It is up

> to the ELL students to either read their story or book in their first language or English.

Here, the assumption that all ELL families have online access at home and the Spanish language limitation of readily available parental resources are both positioned outside of Kumaravadivelu's (2001, 2003) parameter of particularity, ignoring the lived experiences of both student and teacher. Additionally, Elaine's unidirectional view of the relationship between school and home resists the parameter of possibility by considering how academic literacies can be developed at home but not how home literacies can be incorporated at school. While she acknowledges students' right to read their L2 writing in their L1 at home, there is no indication of encouragement to write or read in their L1 at school, supporting the dominant school discourses and limiting students' own knowledge construction.

Commitment to the active role of teacher–scholar

Elaine realized early in her graduate TESOL coursework that her approach to L2 teaching, specifically L2 literacy, would need to be fluid. At the end of the methods course she commented:

> I envision my approach to teaching second language writing along with utilizing my critical pedagogy as a process that I would continuously be evolving and changing according to the needs of my students.

Here, she recognizes her role in driving pedagogy. This signified a reclaiming of her teacher identity which, according to her, had "gotten lost" during her first few years in the classroom. As a new elementary teacher, Elaine valued professional over personal theories (O'Hanlon, 1993) and did not deviate from "expert-approved" strategies. A shift from this position was evident during her practicum experience, where Elaine identified teacher autonomy as a goal of critical pedagogy and focused on expanding both her professional and personal knowledge bases:

> I must continue to build my personal knowledge base through my experience as a teacher and be able to tell what is working or not working with my students. Also, I will need to gain professional

> knowledge through professional development, workshops, and research that I will participate in to build my awareness of current theories and practice.

Elaine understood the personal knowledge base to consist of her interpretations and applications of professional theories. The parameter of practicality, however, seeks to move beyond the professional–personal theory dichotomy by encouraging "teachers themselves to theorize from their practice and practice what they theorize" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001, p. 541). Such autonomy is developed in teacher education programs that assist pre- and in-service teachers in constructing their own context-sensitive pedagogy rather than expecting them to practice theories created by others.

Post-program, Elaine expressed concern about no longer being part of an active TESOL community. While happy to have completed her graduate coursework, she knew that opportunities for TESOL-related conversations and professional development in her district would be few due to the small size of the ELL population and the fact that no other teacher had received recent TESOL training. Elaine, however, vowed to start conversations with the EL teachers in her districts, as well as her grade-level colleagues. Additionally, she was motivated to stay in touch with her graduate cohort and join the regional TESOL affiliate. Elaine's post-program concern sheds light on the need for interpersonal conversations between all educators of ELLs and stronger relationships between teacher education programs and K-12 schools.

Conclusion

While there has been an increase in research on the complexity of L2 literacy development and the literacy practices of ELLs over the last decade, more attention must be given to students and teachers in the K-12 context. The findings of this study demonstrate a need for teacher education programs to more effectively prepare pre- and in-service teachers to work with young L2 writers. In documenting Elaine's knowledge construction and application of critical pedagogy across a graduate TESOL program, a few key areas of possible improvement are identified for teacher education programs.

Elaine attributed her sense of preparedness to teach ELLs at the start of this study to a required multicultural education course in her

general teacher education program. Here, the focus was on culturally responsive teaching, or as Elaine described it, "how to incorporate cultures into lessons." Such an approach to multiculturalism is positioned on the power-weighted majority end of the content of biliteracy continua. A stronger presence of critical pedagogy in all general teacher education coursework would lead to a shift toward the traditionally less powerful minority end where the lived experiences of ELLs are recognized as socially, culturally, and linguistically influenced. At no point in her pre-service career was Elaine introduced to content related to the linguistic needs of ELLs or possible strategies for helping them succeed academically. While Elaine's experience supports a minimum requirement of an introductory TESOL course for all pre-service teachers, it also identifies a greater need for TESOL and postmethod professional development among all general teacher educators.

In the context of the methods course, Elaine's knowledge reconstruction of critical pedagogy was limited by the order and content of the curriculum. Starting with an introduction of compartmentalized language teaching methods and ending with a study of postmethodism, the methods course did not provide Elaine with enough time to construct and practice her context-sensitive pedagogy. A reversal of this order along with a simultaneous practicum would promote teacher autonomy by preparing pre- and in-service teachers to be authentic producers of practicing theory. The disconnect between Elaine's understanding of Kumaravadivelu's (2001, 2003) postmethod parameters in the methods course and her limited application of them in the practicum are supportive of this need. Additionally, the mentor teacher's inability to assist Elaine in her development of critical pedagogy during the practicum speaks to a greater need for stronger relationships between teacher education programs and K-12 sites. Regarding content in the methods course, a two-week-only study of L2 writing left Elaine with more questions than answers, as evident from her practicum experience. A stand-alone L2 literacy course in TESOL teacher education programs would allow for a more in-depth study of biliterate context, development, content, and media issues. Furthermore, it would give students an extended opportunity to explore the teaching of writing from a postmethod perspective.

In reconceptualizing teacher education programs and professional development through a critical lens, pre- and in-service teachers

are reoriented toward the needs of ELLs who deserve nothing less than "our continual reimagining and opening up of educational spaces that foster their ongoing development and creative transformation of their transnational – and biliterate – lives and literacies" (Hornberger, 2007, p. 333).

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10

Pre-service Teacher Preparation for L2 Writing: Perspectives of In-service Elementary ESL Teachers

Ditlev Larsen

Introduction

After more than 20 years of development, second language writing, or more specifically ESL (English as a second language) writing, has reached maturity as a scholarly field—not necessarily as an entirely separate field of research from ESL/TESOL (teaching English to speakers of other languages) but more as a complementary subfield. However, since the first issue of the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, the flagship journal of the discipline, was published in 1992, historically the early focus was on investigating the characteristics and experiences of international student writers at the college level in both ESL and EFL (English as a foreign language) contexts (Matsuda & DePew, 2002). To a certain extent, this is not surprising, as that is traditionally where the bulk of academic writing instruction takes place. As the field of L2 writing has evolved, investigations of immigrant ESL writers transitioning from U.S. secondary schools into college have become a focus of numerous studies throughout the 1990s (Leki, Cumming, & Silva, 2008). More recently, interest in adolescent ESL writers has emerged and picked up in frequency as evidenced by a number of studies (e.g., Bunch, 2006; Enright, 2013; Kibler, 2011, 2013; Ortmeier-Hooper, 2010; Ortmeier-Hooper & Enright, 2011; Reynolds, 2002, 2005; Villalva, 2006; Yi, 2010). However, Harklau (2011) has lamented that, despite the increasing proportion of English learners in U.S. primary and secondary education, research on adolescent students is still sparse in relation to the entire body of

scholarship on ESL writing. Yet, even more limited or scarce is research examining ESL writing and writers at the elementary level.

The tendency to associate ESL writing with learning how to write academically may be one reason that the elementary level of education has been neglected as an area of concern in L2 writing research—after all, exactly how 'academic' is elementary school. It is not uncommon to hear writing referred to as 'the last language skill,' which may lead to the assumption that for English language learners in elementary schools, the skill areas of listening, speaking, and reading (literacy) will, or even should, occupy the bulk of instruction. So, where does writing instruction and learning fit in?

As research and other scholarly work on L2 student writers have advanced, it is also notable that such work has largely overlooked the teachers of those students and how they are trained to deal with student writing at different levels. It was not until a special issue of the *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 'Writing Scholars as Teacher Educators: Exploring Writing Teacher Education,' that the field specifically started looking into teacher education in connection with ESL writing. In that issue, Hirvela and Belcher (2007) argued that the lack of attention to teacher education in connection with ESL writing might have to do with how L2 writing scholars traditionally have viewed themselves. At any given time, they consider themselves L2 writing teachers concerned with their own writing classroom or L2 writing researchers investigating learners to develop theories and improve pedagogy. However, they rarely, if at all, consciously recognize their identity as 'teachers of teachers of L2 writing' (p. 125). Coker and Lewis (2011) in their article 'Beyond writing next: A discussion of writing research and instructional uncertainty' have echoed this sentiment, noting that L2 writing research rarely is conducted by scholars in teacher education programs, and therefore training in teaching writing does not become part of teacher preparation. Let us turn a little more explicitly to that issue.

With the *Common Core Standards* (implemented in 2014) emphasizing issues of argumentation and persuasion as early as the elementary level of education, it appears that there is an expectation that some writing instruction should take place at that level (Hirvela, 2013), but traditionally pedagogy courses in ESL teacher preparation programs apparently, as noted above, have not focused very much, if at all, on writing pedagogy, maybe partly also as a result of the 'last language

skill' assumption. In fact, it may be appropriate to say that while the recognition of L2 writing as a major component of both the second language acquisition process and the academic success of English language learners has emerged over the last couple of decades, research has continuously shown that L2 writing pedagogy has not necessarily become a significant and integrated part of the curriculum of K-12 teacher education programs (Grisham & Wolsey, 2011; Grosse, 1991; Larsen, 2013; Lee, 2010; Ramanathan, Davies, & Schleppegrel, 2001; Yi, 2013). Consequently, Hall and Grisham-Brown (2011) have argued that we have very limited knowledge of how pre-service and in-service K-12 teachers learn to teach writing. It is, however, imperative that L2 writing professionals accept their roles as teacher educators and use their expertise to prepare future ESL teachers at all levels for writing instruction—such preparation ought to include both knowledge of L1 and L2 writing theory and pedagogical/methodological concerns. Unfortunately, issues of writing pedagogy are usually included only in a general methods class in teacher education programs, which typically does not allow enough time devoted specifically to writing, possibly because language pedagogy traditionally, and mostly implicitly, seems to have emphasized the spoken language (Harklau, 2002). This emphasis has also lead Coker and Lewis (2011) to decry the dearth of attention to teaching writing pedagogy in teacher education programs, with the consequence that new teachers lack adequate preparation for teaching writing. To that end, Hirvela and Belcher (2007) have indicated that there is a continuing need for examining *how* and *to what extent* ESL teacher education programs prepare pre-service teachers to work with student writing.

This chapter will explore the experiences of elementary ESL teachers by investigating to what extent they 'teach' writing in their classrooms and whether they feel they were adequately prepared or trained to appropriately to do so during their pre-service teacher education programs. Based on the findings, the chapter will also discuss the role of writing instruction in elementary ESL classrooms.

The study

Research questions, participants, and data collection

The survey of elementary teachers presented in this chapter is part of a larger study involving ESL teachers at all educational levels

although the project's main purpose was to investigate teaching of ESL writing in K-12 with specific emphasis on the proliferation of writing instruction and teacher preparedness. An online questionnaire (see Appendix) was sent to approximately 500 teachers in the upper Midwest, representing K-12, college, and adult education. 155 teachers responded to the survey; 51 identified themselves as elementary teachers, whose responses are the ones investigated in this chapter. It should be noted that a report on the findings for the secondary teachers (Larsen, 2013) has already been published in a companion volume to this book (de Oliveira & Silva, 2013).

The study addresses three main research questions:

1. Do elementary ESL teachers commonly work with their students' writing, and, if so, how often?
2. What are the typical requirements of ESL teacher education programs in terms of ESL/L2 writing theory/pedagogy?
3. To what extent do in-service elementary ESL teachers feel that their pre-service teacher education programs prepared them to deal with ESL students' writing?

The questionnaire included multiple-choice items and a few open-ended questions for teachers to provide details on different aspects of their teacher education program, their perceptions of preparedness after finishing their program, and any subsequent training and professional development they may have completed. The first part of the analysis of the data focused on the multiple-choice items in order to quantify the answers to the three research questions. The first research question involved items 6 and 10 on the questionnaire; the second research question, item 5; and the third research question, item 7 (see Appendix). In order to investigate the third research question fully, however, some more reflective responses would be necessary, and items 8 and 9 on the questionnaire were designed to provide such reflection and details. These open-ended responses allowed the responding teachers to provide insight into their perceptions and opinions of their pre-service training as well as make observations about the effectiveness of their professional development as practicing teachers. It is hardly surprising that there was great variety in the commentary the teachers provided, but there were also several commonalities. In the analysis of these responses,

it was the commonalities that became the focus and that will be reported here as they represent trends rather than isolated examples or commentary.

Findings

Ideally, the goal was to have as many participating teachers as possible who finished their ESL teaching degree within the last 15 years. According to the information they provided on the demographic portion of the questionnaire, 85 percent did so (37 percent in the last 5 years; 62 percent in the last 10 years). These numbers indicate that the vast majority of the participants went through ESL teacher education programs after L2 writing gained prominence as a separate field of study and scholarship, and developed its own theoretical basis and pedagogy. Their degrees include MA/MS TESOL (K-12 licensure/certification), BS TESOL (K-12 licensure/certification), and a variety of other undergraduate/graduate education degrees with added ESL certification. Most of them, 72 percent, fall into the first group.

Turning specifically to the first research question addressing how often elementary teachers are working with student writing, their responses clearly help invalidate any assumptions about writing as a secondary or marginal skill at the elementary grade level of L2 learning. If anything, the responses illustrate the significance of learning language through writing. An overwhelming majority of the teachers responded that they deal with their students' writing almost every day in their classrooms, and their commentary indicated that they find writing inevitable in helping their language learners develop literacy skills. Figure 10.1 shows in detail how the teachers answered the question about the frequency of responding to student written work.

This clearly indicates that writing is a major component of the teachers' daily work. A total of 68 percent of the teachers indicated that they respond to/comment on student work from two to three times a week to every day (39 percent and 29 percent). However, expressions such as 'respond to' and 'commenting on' do not necessarily cover everything that a teacher might do in connection with students' written work. Therefore, an additional question was added at a different point in the questionnaire in order to verify the accuracy and provide an additional measure for teacher attention

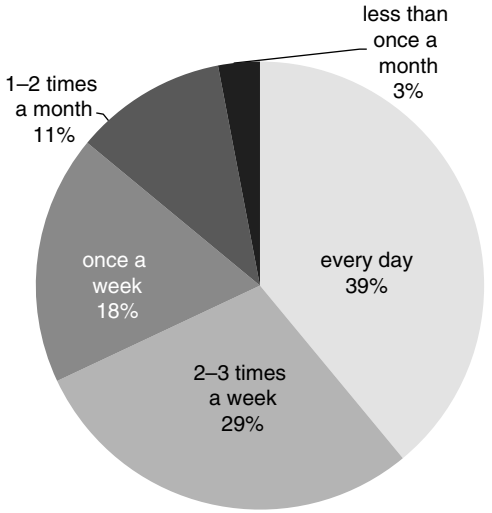

Figure 10.1 Distribution of responses to question 10: 'I respond to, or comment on, ESL students' written work …'

to student writing. This question asked the teachers to indicate to what extent they work with their students' writing in more general terms ('How often do you deal with your ESL learners' writing?'). This question revealed an even more marked picture of the proliferation of writing in the elementary ESL classroom: 89 percent chose the response 'all the time' (69 percent) or 'often' (20 percent). In fact, only two of the teachers chose one of the other three options ('sometimes,' 'rarely,' or 'never').

Based on these responses, there is no question that student writing consumes a major amount of time and plays a significant part in the day-to-day work of ESL elementary teachers. It would stand to reason, then, that teacher education programs should and would emphasize L2 writing pedagogy in the curriculum. Given the development of L2 writing as a separate field of study, the next step was to examine to what extent the participants reported that their ESL teacher education programs offer specific coursework in L2 writing theory and pedagogy. The results are shown in Figure 10.2.

From these numbers we learn that a writing pedagogy course is far from being universal in teacher preparation programs. In fact, we can

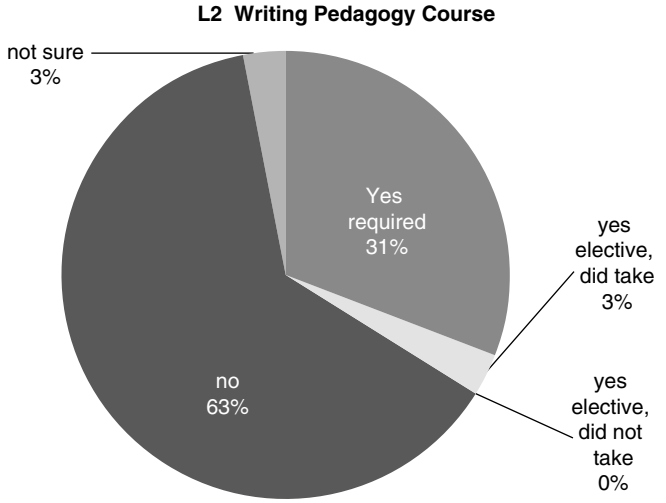

Figure 10.2 Distribution of responses to question 5: 'Did your teacher education program offer a separate course focusing specifically on ESL/L2 writing theory and pedagogy?'

hardly even say it is common since less than one-third of the respondents had the opportunity to take such a course (required or elective). In other words, almost two out of three teacher candidates completed their degrees with limited or no training at all in L2/ESL writing theory and practice as they did not have a chance to take a course focusing specifically thereon; yet, they report being extensively faced with student writing in their daily work. I use the term 'limited training' here as it is likely, as pointed out in previous research (Grosse, 1991; Ramanathan et al., 2001), that a general TESOL pedagogy course at least has some partial coverage of writing. The question remains whether rudimentary treatment of such a complex and academically essential skill area is enough, which leads to the third research question addressing whether the participants found that their pre-service teacher education programs prepared them to deal with students' writing. The results are shown in Figure 10.3.

With the lack of in-depth attention to L2 writing pedagogy in the teacher education curriculum that was revealed in Figure 10.2, it is not surprising that Figure 10.3 indicates the majority of the

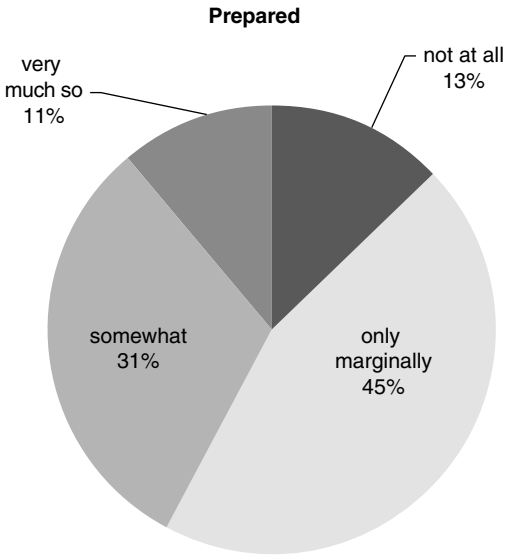

Figure 10.3 Distribution of responses to question 7: 'Do you feel that your teacher education program adequately prepared you for dealing with the written work of ESL learners in your classes?'

teachers in the study did not consider themselves adequately prepared for teaching writing. More than half, 58 percent to be exact, of the responding elementary teachers reported that they felt either 'marginally' or 'not at all' prepared to teach and work with student writing (45 percent and 13 percent). Only about one in ten of the teachers answered 'very much so.'

Discussion

The pre-service teacher education curriculum: training and preparedness

Commenting rather negatively on their own preparedness for dealing with student writing, the teachers appear to acknowledge the need for a strong focus on writing pedagogy in TESOL programs. This is most likely a result of the daily realities of their teaching situations, which the survey indicated was dominated by work with student

writing. It is obviously problematic, as revealed by these findings, if only one out of every ten teachers consider themselves well prepared to teach writing to ESL learners. This should certainly be of concern for teacher educators.

It would be reasonable to assume that the non-preparedness or under-preparedness that the teachers indicated is, at least to some extent, a result of the lack of a specific L2/ESL writing theory and pedagogy course since only a little more than three out of every ten (34 percent) had a chance to take such a course. This can be further supported by looking at the relationship between the level of preparedness individual teachers expressed and whether they took an L2 writing class. For example, every single one of the few teachers in the study who considered themselves well prepared (11 percent) had taken such a course. Out of those who had taken it, 64 percent considered themselves well prepared and not a single one responded they were not prepared at all (30 percent said 'somewhat' and 6 percent said 'marginally'). In contrast, of the teachers who reported not having the course, not a single one responded that they felt well prepared, whereas 36 percent found themselves not prepared at all (39 percent 'marginally,' 25 percent 'somewhat'). In other words, none of the teachers who said they were not prepared at all had taken an L2 writing pedagogy course.

Although taking an L2 writing course does not guarantee that the teachers will find themselves well prepared, these numbers clearly indicate that the course improves teachers' perception of their preparedness to teach ESL writing. As mentioned previously, ESL writing pedagogy has traditionally been addressed in a general TESOL methods course that is the foundation in nearly all teacher preparation programs (Grosse, 1991). However, such a course is forced to cover an extensive amount of material, which means it can only superficially address a sub-topic as complex as ESL writing. L2 writing theory and pedagogy includes such issues as writer characteristics, L1 and L2 differences, responding to student writing, error correction, and assessment/grading, to name just a few. Seen in the light of this, it is rather discouraging that as many as seven out of ten of the teachers in this study did not get to take a course preparing them in-depth for the writing of their ESL students, especially considering the amount of time they reported spending on their students' writing. Overall, these findings certainly confirm Coker and Lewis's (2008) contention

and criticism that there is little to no attention to teaching writing pedagogy in teacher preparation programs.

So in summary, it appears that ESL teacher education programs generally do not provide a specific course focusing on L2 writing pedagogy, and as a result, teachers may not be well prepared to teach writing to their ESL students once they find themselves in an elementary classroom. The root of this problem may be found in the fact that it is often assumed that writing represents an advanced skill, which is not of major significance in aiding language learners in their second language acquisition process and therefore not essential for the teaching of elementary age students (Harklau, 2002). However, Harklau (2002), among others, has questioned this assumption in detail, noting that writing actually plays a prominent role in second language acquisition; it is not only a question of how students learn to write in a second language but just as much how students learn a second language through writing.

Additionally, if nearly 90 percent of elementary teachers perceive themselves as doing something related to student writing 'often' or 'all the time,' it is obvious that pedagogical attention to writing is paramount in teacher education. It is possible that the communicative paradigm of language teaching that has dominated L2 language pedagogy since the 1990s has lead the profession to perceive language teaching as an oral/aural endeavor. The findings here, however, indicate that communication through writing is as important and common for elementary teachers and learners as any other language skill area, and therefore pedagogy in teacher education programs may need to make a stronger connection between 'communication' and 'writing.'

Teacher commentary: observed inadequacies in pre-service preparation

As part of the questionnaire, the teachers were invited to reflect on what they believed to be missing from their pre-service teacher education programs if they indicated that they deemed themselves less than well prepared for teaching L2 writing. Their comments are varied and illustrate the need for both broader and more detailed treatment of several aspects of theory and pedagogy in ESL writing; however, two general categories seemed to emerge from their reflection: (1) The need for more pre-service attention and focus on

identifying the characteristics of ESL student writing/writers; and (2) practical training in specific strategies for providing effective feedback, conducting appropriate error correction, and determining suitable assessment procedures. The teachers almost universally acknowledge that a separate L2 writing pedagogy course would be able to provide this focus as they mention time being an issue in covering these topics in other classes. Several of them reflected on a general 'literacy' course, not specifically L2/ESL literacy, that was required as part of their programs. This class supposedly was to address writing, but apparently it did not have time for the necessary depth. In addition, most of them saw the peripheral overview of writing in their general TESOL methods class as insufficient. The following list of comments serves as examples of some of these criticisms, which were common among the responding teachers:

> 'The time we spent on addressing writing was very short. We had methods courses, but they focused on general language pedagogy and I don't recall anything focusing on writing specifically.'
>
> 'We did a very brief unit on writing in my ESL methods course, it was only a few class periods—it seemed there was not time to address it in depth with everything else we had to cover. I wish it would have been prioritized better.'
>
> 'I had a course on literacy. It seemed it focused on reading comprehension; I don't remember much talk about writing and certainly not writing pedagogy. I never thought about writing pedagogy before I was out teaching.'
>
> 'I remember doing a unit on writing and ELLs, but I think I needed more. I would have liked to go more in depth.'

There seems to be an implicit, and erroneous, assumption that courses in literacy and general TESOL methods will be able to sufficiently provide pre-service ESL teachers with the pedagogical knowledge and training needed for L2 writing instruction. What is lacking from such an assumption is, as Harklau (2002) pointed out, an acknowledgement of the role writing plays in second language acquisition. In addition, the lack of attention to writing that the students express their frustration about in these comments resonates,

almost uncannily, with Coker and Lewis (2008): 'When teachers complete their training and enter the classroom, they may begin teaching without the breadth and depth of understanding needed to carry out effective writing instruction' (p. 243).

The above commentary reflects the teachers' general concerns about depth of coverage. However, there were also some more specific aspects of writing that they observed as lacking in their pre-service preparation. The problems expressed most strongly and commonly were the absence or scarcity of training in error correction, feedback, grading/assessment, and identifying student writing needs at this early stage. The following comments encapsulate these concerns:

> 'I feel I needed specific instruction and practice with responding to student errors—how to correct them. I would also have liked to learn more about how to grade writing or what kinds of assessments to use.'
>
> 'What to focus on first when correcting writing. What kind of errors and how. Grading also was something I feel I needed more training in.'
>
> 'How to correct the grammar and sentences of these young learners. I would also have liked to know more about how much and what kind of writing to do. I mean just sentences, paragraphs or actual essays.'
>
> 'With the grade and proficiency level of the students, when, why and how much to edit and how to give feedback.'

A lot of the content of these comments has to do with responding to students' written work in various ways, and consequently it seems that solid preparation in these areas should be ensured in teacher education programs through instruction in theoretical underpinnings as well as practical training. However, it is also important to recognize, as Ferris (2007) has pointed out, that it is extraordinarily challenging to provide a really beneficial response to student writing, and full confidence and competency in doing so may require years of repeated practice and experience. Therefore, newly educated teachers may always feel some level of frustration and apprehension as we saw

was expressed in these teachers' comments. The job of teacher educators, though, should still be to provide a strong foundation through specific preparation in all areas of ESL writing theory and pedagogy, for, as Ferris (2007) also concludes, experience is not likely, by itself, to make a teacher confident and effective in providing appropriate feedback and error correction 'but solid principles, useful techniques, and thoughtful reflection and evaluation probably will' (p. 179).

We notice that the teachers also included grading and assessment of student writing as one of the areas where they needed more training, which supports a concern expressed by Weigle (2007) that there appears to be a lack of attention to assessment of student writing in teacher education programs. She notes that programs often do not include courses in assessment, which means that thorough treatment of assessment specifically for writing is unlikely to happen. If programs rely on general TESOL methods courses to cover assessment and writing pedagogy in addition to everything else, it is not surprising that ESL teachers find themselves underprepared.

Teacher commentary: solutions to lack of pre-service preparedness

The teacher respondents were given the opportunity to reflect on what they have done to remedy any initial unpreparedness they may have experienced after completing their teacher education programs. The aim was to find out if they had taken any steps to educate or train themselves to work with their ESL students' writing. Most of those responses revealed no true solution but rather a 'trial and error' or 'hit or miss' strategy toward writing instruction. One respondent noted that it had been 'largely a trial and error process. I'd try something I think might work—the problem with that is that it may not always be clear if it works, or whether something else might work better.' Another teacher bemoaned that 'when you are going by trial and error and learning by doing yourself, you may not learn *why* things work well when something does work—and vice versa.' This is a very insightful and telling comment as it underscores the importance of learning about theoretical foundations as well as previously tried and tested principles in order to effectively and efficiently learn from one's own practical experiences (as mentioned by Ferris, 2007). Similarly, one respondent noted that she had tried to overcome deficiencies by 'read[ing] and consult[ing] textbooks on writing,' 'using on-line

resources' and otherwise 'experimenting with what might work and learning from experience.' It would be reasonable to expect that 'reading textbooks' is an integrated part of teacher preparation programs, but if in-service teachers experience a need to catch up on this while in-service, better and more thorough coverage is needed pre-service. It is probably deluded to think that by providing a course in L2 writing theory and pedagogy, covering everything from L2 writer characteristics to sound strategies for providing feedback, we will eliminate the need for novice teachers to resort to self-study and learning from experience and experimentation. It may, however, through the reading of textbooks and resources specifically designed for L2 writing, provide the appropriate theoretical background and solid principles (Ferris, 2007) upon which to conduct effective in-service self-study.

A final recurring comment in terms of how the teachers try to cope with under-preparation had to do with networking. For example, one teacher observed that her best recourse had been 'communication with other EL teachers and workshops or conferences.' As Weigle (2007) pointed out, even though many new teachers step into the classroom unprepared for assessment and many other L2 writing issues, there are resources available through regional and national associations and conferences that pre-service and in-service teachers alike can use for their professional development and continued preparation. As illustrated by the comment above, fortunately many of the teachers participating in this study have acknowledged that and appear to be taking advantage of such opportunities. Consequently, the ingenuity shown by teachers to resolve any perceived deficiencies in terms of ESL writing in their pre-service teacher education programs is reassuring. As teacher educators we must, however, also acknowledge that it may be a disservice to leave it up to the teachers themselves to gain the appropriate knowledge base through self-study, and accept that to a large extent it is our responsibility to optimally prepare teachers. After all, the trajectory of a teacher's professional development is, at least partly, determined by pre-service preparation in the teacher education program.

Conclusion

In summary, returning to the concern expressed by Hirvela and Belcher (2007) that research and scholarship in the field of L2 writing

may have been neglecting the *teachers* of ESL writers, particularly at the K-12 level, many of the findings of this study reaffirm that concern, and show that such negligence might have detrimental effects on how effectively teachers are educated.

We saw from the teacher responses in this study that teacher education programs generally did not provide a specific course focusing on L2 writing theory and pedagogy, and, as a result, the teachers did not feel well prepared to teach writing to their ESL students once they found themselves in an elementary classroom. The responses also offer important insight into what they perceived was missing in terms of background knowledge and practical training that could help them achieve a better pre-service foundation for teaching L2 writing. In short, the chapter has provided the following answers to the three research questions introduced earlier. The participating elementary teachers overwhelmingly reported:

- that they work with student writing on more or less a daily basis (research question 1);
- that they had no in-depth, specific instruction in L2 writing theory and pedagogy, including ESL writer characteristics, best feedback/error correction practices, and assessment during their teacher education programs (research question 2);
- that they found themselves, at best, 'marginally prepared' or at worst 'not prepared at all' to teach L2 writing after completing their ESL teacher education programs (research question 3).

The teachers' commentary also showed the importance of writing at the elementary level and demonstrated as a fallacy any assumption that writing represents an advanced skill that comes after the oral language. Based on this, it can be concluded that the voices of the participating elementary teachers and prior scholarship suggest:

- that we recognize the significance of writing as a major component of early second language acquisition;
- that such recognition of writing must result in a specific and explicit focus on L2 writing theory and pedagogy in teacher education programs;

- that L2 writing pedagogy should address the teaching of writing at all educational levels.

As a final remark, it is the hope that this investigation will help bring about knowledge of the major role that writing plays for elementary English language learners and their teachers, and through such awareness prompt more research and scholarship for the teachers and students of L2 writing at this level. It is also important to note that all this teacher commentary on the proliferation of writing in their daily instruction was collected before the introduction of the *Common Core Standards* in 2014, which emphasize argumentation in texts as early as the elementary level (the data for this study was collected in fall of 2011 and spring of 2012). Given the expected increasing influence of the *Common Core Standards*, it seems reasonable to conclude even more emphatically that ESL teacher education programs in the future should focus more explicitly on L2 writing pedagogy to make sure pre-service teachers are adequately prepared for teaching those standards.

Appendix

1. Which of the following best describes your teaching situation?

___ Elementary school
___ Middle school
___ High school
___ Adult education
___ College

2. How long have you been teaching ESL at this level?

___ 5 years or less
___ 6–10 years
___ 11–15 years
___ 16–20 years
___ More than 20 years

3. Have you taught ESL at other levels? If so, at what level and how long?

4. Which of the following best describes your degree(s)?

___ B.S. TESOL (K-12 License)
___ M.A. or M.S. TESOL (including K-12 License)
___ M.A. TESOL (no K-12 License)
___ Other. Please specify: _____

5. **Did your teacher education program offer a course focusing specifically on ESL writing or second language writing theory and pedagogy?**

   ___ Yes, it was required
   ___ Yes, as an elective, but I did not take it
   ___ Yes, as an elective, and I did take it
   ___ No
   ___ Not sure

6. **How often do you deal with your ESL learners' writing?**

   Never Rarely Sometimes Often All the time

7. **Do you feel that your teacher education program adequately prepared you for dealing with the written work of ESL learners in your classes?**

   ___ Very much so
   ___ Somewhat
   ___ Only marginally
   ___ Not at all

8. **If your answer to question 7 above was anything other than "very much so," can you specify what was missing?**

9. **If your answer to question 7 above was anything other than "very much so," what have you done to train yourself in dealing with the writing of your ESL learners?**

10. **I respond to, or I comment on, ESL students' written work**

    ___ Every day
    ___ 2–3 times a week
    ___ Once a week
    ___ Once or twice a month
    ___ Less than once a month

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