The Iceberg Concept

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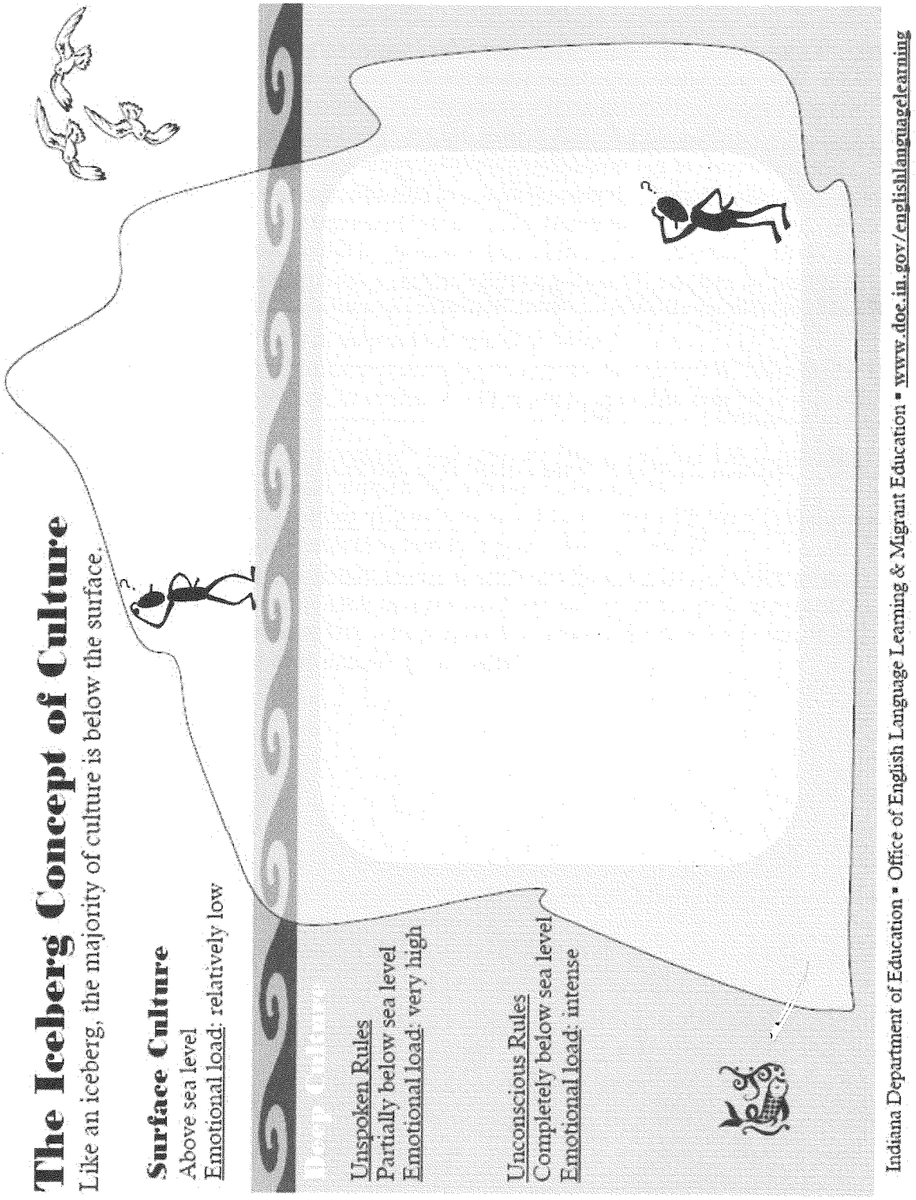

Jigsaw Reading: Misconceptions about Teaching English Language Learners

Candace Harper, Ester de Jong

Four popular misconceptions about teaching English-language learners are examined here. The authors provide ideas for effective instruction in inclusive classrooms.

Students who speak a language other than English at home and whose proficiency in English is limited are fastest growing group of K–12 students in the United States. Whereas the total U.S. school population grew by 6% between 1979 and 1999, the English-language learner (ELL) population in- creased by 138% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2003). Most ELLs spend the entire instructional day in mainstream classrooms in which the majority of students speak English as their native language and where instruction occurs in English. Teachers in mainstream classrooms must therefore be prepared to teach students who come from different linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds.

Unfortunately, well-intentioned efforts to include diverse learners in general education reforms are often based on misconceptions about effective instruction for ELLs. In this article, we examine the problematic nature of four popular misconceptions and discuss the implications for ELLs in mainstream classrooms. The misconceptions stem from two basic assumptions that guide much current teacher preparation for diversity. The first assumption is that the needs of ELLs do not differ significantly from those of other diverse learners; the second is that the discipline of the English as a second language (ESL) is primarily a menu of pedagogical adaptations appropriate for a variety of diverse learners.

"It's not all that different": The process of second-language learning

The tendency to view instruction for ELLs as equivalent to that for any other (diverse) native–English- speaking student derives from equating the process of learning a first language (L1) with that of learning a second language (L2). In our experience, this comparison is often reinforced through profession- al development workshops for mainstream teachers. Such workshops typically start by emphasizing those principles and characteristics of L1 and L2 acquisition that can be understood easily by teachers and readily translated into classroom practice. The following vignette, describing a typical ESL in- service workshop for middle and high school teachers, illustrates this point.

> An ESL specialist was invited to provide a series of workshops to secondary teachers from a large, linguistically and culturally diverse school district. The purpose of the professional development was to support the teachers in addressing linguistic diversity in their mainstream content classes. The first workshop focused on principles of second-language acquisition, issues of cultural adjustment, and implications for teaching ELLs. The consultant discussed ways to adapt teaching techniques to provide comprehensible input for ELLs and to develop contextual support for instruction. She also demonstrated cooperative learning techniques as examples of ways to facilitate ELLs' class participation and second-language development. The teachers responded positively and noted that most of these techniques would be useful with all learners in their classrooms.

This vignette describes a typical introductory ESL workshop for educators outside the ESL/bilingual profession in that the theoretical foundation is simplified and emphasizes the over- lap between first- and second-language learning. Complex learner variables, if addressed at all, are condensed to bulleted lists. Classroom implications are those that are easy to integrate

with teachers' existing knowledge base and classroom practices (e.g., activating prior knowledge and using cooperative group learning). Participants leave the workshop with a sense of relief—teaching ELLs appears to be a matter of "just good teaching." Unfortunately, they also walk away with two misconceptions that may limit their ability to pro- vide an effective learning environment for ELLs: 1) that learning a second language simply re- quires exposure to and interaction in the L2 and 20 that all ELLs will learn English in the same way. These two misconceptions are discussed in more detail below.

Misconception 1: Exposure and interaction will result in English-language learning

Drawing on their understanding of how young children acquire their first language, many teachers assume that exposure to language and opportunities for interaction with English speakers are the essential (necessary and sufficient) conditions for learning ESL. If ELLs are exposed to comprehensible English and provided with meaningful opportunities to interact in English, they are expected to develop English-language skills naturally and fully, just as native speakers are expected to develop their mother tongue.

There are indeed important similarities be- tween the processes of learning a first and a second language. Acquisition of L1 and L2 appears to be developmental in nature and involves constructive and social processes in which input and interaction are central components (Krashen, 1985; Long, 1985; Snow, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978). Classroom practices that facilitate rich language input and en- courage meaningful student interaction (e.g., discovery learning, process writing, and cooperative grouping) are recommended for both native speakers and L2 learners of English (Peregoy & Boyle, 2001). However, there are also important differences between first- and second-language acquisition that limit the effects of input and interaction on L2 learning, particularly for older learners.

First, mere exposure to the target language is largely insufficient to develop grade-level L2 proficiency, especially for older students who must negotiate the abstract concepts and complex language of secondary school classrooms and textbooks (Lightbown & Spada, 1990; Spada & Lightbown, 1993; Swain, 1995). To develop the advanced language skills necessary to communicate for academic purposes, ELLs often require conscious attention to the grammatical, morphological, and phonological aspects of the English language (VanPatten, 1993). ELLs do need exposure to academic language that is comprehensible, but they must also be assisted with noticing the relationships between the forms and functions of the target language (VanPatten, 1990). Teachers need to understand that older learners have more advanced cognitive skills (e.g., memory and analytic reasoning) and can therefore draw upon a more sophisticated linguistic and conceptual base than young children. They can be active participants in the L2 learning process. Failure to take advantage of the linguistic and cognitive strengths of older learners can restrict these students' L2 development.

Second, the assumption that ELLs' interactions with native English speakers will provide sufficient input and practice is equally problematic. Interaction between ELLs and native English speakers does not necessarily occur naturally in mainstream settings (Harper & Platt, 1998). When such interactions do occur, they are often limited to brief exchanges that do not provide optimal language development experiences for ELLs (Harklau, 1999). Even cooperative learning activities where students are assigned academic tasks and are required to participate may assume language skills that ELLs do not possess at their cur- rent level of L2 proficiency, such as being able to question, agree, disagree, interrupt, present an opinion, and

with teachers' existing knowledge base and classroom practices (e.g., activating prior knowledge and using cooperative group learning). Participants leave the workshop with a sense of relief—teaching ELLs appears to be a matter of "just good teaching." Unfortunately, they also walk away with two misconceptions that may limit their ability to pro- vide an effective learning environment for ELLs: 1) that learning a second language simply re- quires exposure to and interaction in the L2 and 20 that all ELLs will learn English in the same way. These two misconceptions are discussed in more detail below.

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ask for clarification or assistance appropriately (Pica, 1994; Swain, 1985, 1995).

ELLs often need assistance with the language of classroom discourse and small-group participation. Reciprocal Teaching (Palincsar & Brown, 1984), originally developed as a technique for teaching reading comprehension strategies to struggling native English speakers, has been modified successfully as a participation structure with ELLs (Klingner & Vaughn, 1996). Harper and Cook (2003) and Harper and James (2003) described adaptations to the Reciprocal Teaching model with upper elementary and adult ELLs in which strategy roles are modeled by the teacher, who highlights the language needed to perform each role. Strategy roles are practiced by students, then assigned to and rotated among individuals in small groups. Language "cue cards" are provided to support the language demands of each role. For example, the Word Watcher's cue card provides stems such as "What is the meaning of___?" or "What does _____ mean?" Students attend not only to the content of the reading and the process of using the reading strategies but also to the language required to per- form the roles. Both the linguistic scaffolding and the structure of the collaborative process provide the support needed by many ELLs in mainstream content classrooms.

In short, exposure and interaction are simply not enough. ELLs need explicit opportunities to practice using the new language to negotiate meaning in interactive settings. Teachers need to draw students' attention to the structure of the English language used in specific academic contexts and provide appropriate feedback that ELLs can use to further their oral and written academic language development. Teachers should provide ELLs with opportunities to respond to challenging questions through response formats appropriate to these students' oral proficiency levels such as yes/no, either/or, short answer, or extended response options (Cloud, Genesee, & Hamayan, 2000; de Jong & Derrick-Mescua, 2003). In responding to ELLs' journal writing, teachers can rephrase students' errors to clarify ideas, provide input on the grammatical form, or suggest a more appropriate word or phrase rather than ignoring errors entirely or correcting all writing errors directly on the journal entries (Peyton & Reed, 1990).

Misconception 2: All ELLs learn English in the same way and at the same rate

A second misconception that emerges from equating first- and second-language learning is that L2 learning is perceived as a universal process. Because all children learn to speak their first language, teachers often conclude that all ELLs can be expected to follow the same route and rate for learning a second language. Teachers frequently report having observed L2 learners who seem to pick up the language needed for social purposes quickly and easily while they struggle with academic language and literacy. Workshops for teachers of ELLs typically address the distinction between social and academic language proficiency (i.e., the difference between using language for interpersonal purposes in contextualized settings and using language for school in decontextualized settings; Cummins, 1986). A common misunderstanding is that all L2 learners can be expected to develop social language skills before academic language skills. However, older learners who are already literate and have a strong educational foundation in their native language may not follow this pattern. Social and affective factors may also inhibit the development of social language proficiency while academic language skills progress more quickly.

The misperception of universal development also affects the ways that teachers interpret L2 learners' errors as they develop and practice their new language. Errors are seen as

deviations from target language forms and may be interpreted as cognitive disorders instead of evidence of a learner's interlanguage (Selinker, 1972) or as signs of developmental progress or changing hypotheses about the new language. Teachers' efforts to understand the source of ELLs' errors are restricted by their own experiences with learning a second language and their limited knowledge of the structure of English and other language systems. Teachers need to be aware of common writing errors for ELLs, such as problems with verb tenses, plural and possessive forms of nouns, subject/verb agreement, and the use of articles (Ferris, 2002), and they should realize that many of these errors are developmental and/or influenced by the student's native language and are not equally responsive (or impervious) to correction.

Despite predictable patterns and identifiable stages of L2 development, teachers cannot assume that ELLs will progress toward English-language proficiency at the same rate. Many teachers' under- standing of how prior L1 literacy and school experiences influence L2 development is vague. They may overlook myriad personal factors (e.g., personality, aptitude, and motivation) that interact with learning rate and ultimate attainment in the L2. In addition, attitudes toward the native and target languages and cultures, as well as other affective and sociocultural factors, influence second-language learning approaches and outcomes in complex ways (Cummins, 1986; Portes & Rumbaut, 2001; Valdes, 2001). For example, prior education and L1 literacy level can have both facilitating and complicating effects on ELLs' L2 learning. Reid (1998) distinguished students who learned English through written text ("eye" learners) from those who learned English primarily through oral communication ("ear" learners) and argued that these are different types of learners who require different kinds of support in writing instruction. Teachers should provide multiple modes of input for ELLs, writing out instructions on the board to accompany directions, expectations, or important assignments that are explained orally in class.

ELLs have much in common with native English speakers from diverse socioeconomic, racial, or ethnic backgrounds, but their needs do not completely overlap. Teachers need an under- standing of language differences and develop- mental stages of L2 learning, and they cannot expect ELLs to follow the same learning path or timeline for English-language development. This linguistic knowledge must be accompanied by an inquiring stance that seeks ways to understand how individual students' social and cultural characteristics can affect their process and progress toward academic language proficiency.

"It's just good teaching": ESL as pedagogy

A reductive approach to analyzing the nature of L2 learning leads to the impression that teaching ELLs is simply a matter of using "good teaching" strategies developed for native English speakers. Though the use of such effective teaching strategies is in- deed important, we argue in this section that effective teachers of ELLs must also know how to address the language demands of their subject. This added perspective is necessary because ELLs spend most of the school day in classrooms with content area teachers and these classrooms offer great potential to develop academic language skills in English (Chamot & O'Malley, 1994). Acting on this opportunity, however, requires an understanding of the language learning needs of their students as well as the language demands of their subject areas and their classrooms. The following vignette illustrates this challenge for teachers.

In a follow-up workshop with the secondary teachers, the ESL specialist showed a video of a social studies lesson and asked the teachers to identify the sources of language difficulty for

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> In a follow-up workshop with the secondary teachers, the ESL specialist showed a video of a social studies lesson and asked the teachers to identify the sources of language difficulty for ELLs within the lesson. She then asked them to develop specific language objectives for ELLs in terms of functions, structures, and vocabulary in this lesson. This posed a challenge for the content area teachers. With the exception of key vocabulary, they had trouble conceptualizing the les- son in terms of language demands and developing language objectives for ELLs at different proficiency levels. They appeared uncomfortable and expressed doubts about the relevance of this exercise for main- stream content area teachers.

In this second workshop, the ESL consultant moved beyond language acquisition theory and general instructional approaches to specifically ad- dress integrated language and content area instruction for ELLs. This vignette highlights two important points. First, the language demands of content instruction are often invisible to main- stream teachers. Second, most teachers (and particularly secondary-level math, science, or social studies teachers) are not accustomed to thinking of themselves as language teachers. In other words, "English is an invisible medium" (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2002, p. 117). English is invisible because its role in teaching and learning academic content is assumed rather than made explicit. For example, the K-W-L chart (Ogle, 1986), a common means of accessing background knowledge and setting a purpose for reading, is frequently recommended as a "good teaching" technique for all learners, including ELLs. The K-W-L chart assumes, however, that learners possess the language skills to participate in the various steps of the activity (i.e., stating facts, proposing ideas, asking questions). The language demands of this simple task are rarely considered or addressed (and neither are the cultural assumptions that may prohibit effective student participation). The following sections focus on teachers' misconceptions about native-speaker norms and practices and the need to explicitly support language development within content area classes.

Misconception 3: Good teaching for native speakers is good teaching for ELLs

Teachers use district, state, and national standards to shape their instruction and assessment for all learners across the curriculum. Documents such as the National Science Education Standards (National Research Council, 1996), Principles and Standards for School Mathematics (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2000), the National Standards for Social Studies Teachers (National Council for the Social Studies, 2000), and Guidelines for the Preparation of Teachers of English Language Arts (National Council of Teachers of English, 1996) describe what students need to know and be able to do in effective science, math, social studies, and language arts class- rooms. In spite of inclusive claims regarding student diversity, most standards are based on approaches for a diverse native–English-speaking student population (Dalton, 1998). At the secondary level, they assume that students have already mastered sufficient levels of oral language and literacy skills in English to effectively participate in language-rich content classrooms (e.g., being able to respond to higher order thinking questions, debate, compare and contrast texts, or argue a position in writing). Within the secondary language arts curriculum, for instance, process writing and literature discussion groups often mistakenly assume sufficient control of English to allow participation by ELLs.

Other than allowing ELLs to use their L1 when possible, recommendations in the national standards documents do not specify the knowledge and skills teachers need related to linguistic diversity. Davison (1999) warned that native- speaker–based content area benchmarks can be inappropriate for ELLs who often follow a different developmental trajectory and rate in language and literacy in the new language. For example, oral and written language development may occur simultaneously in ELLs, and some ELLs may be able to read before they can speak in the L2. Most secondary teachers expect their students to have at least minimal reading skills

and are unprepared for the basic literacy needs of some ELLs. Many assume that reading intervention programs de- signed for low-literacy native English speakers would also be appropriate for ELLs who do not read well in English. However, while ELLs at the secondary level typically do have limited English vocabularies and reduced reading fluency and comprehension in English, they usually do not have the more basic decoding difficulties displayed by many "struggling" readers. Interventions aimed at improving decoding skills may therefore be inappropriate for many ELLs.

Effective L2 literacy instruction can differ from effective L1 literacy instruction in other ways. Reading skills and strategies developed in a student's L1 can transfer to the L2, though this may not occur automatically (Garcia, 1998; Jiménez, 1997), and ELLs may need targeted instruction and extended practice in applying L1 literacy skills to English. Furthermore, ELLs' native languages and writing systems (e.g., alphabetic, syllabic, logographic) differ in important ways from English, and teachers need to under- stand how they can contribute to literacy learning in English. This might mean, for example, building on readers' existing word-recognition skills or on their knowledge of cognates or, for learners who are literate in nonalphabetic languages (such as Chinese), giving greater attention to developing letter–sound associations.

In writing instruction, teachers may assume that process approaches to writing will provide the necessary opportunities to address L2 writers' needs along with those of native–English- speaking students. As a result, they may fail to acknowledge the unique needs of L2 writers. Reyes (1991) noted that while process-oriented approaches to instruction using literature logs and dialogue journals provided students with in- creased exposure to authentic literature and greater opportunities for connected reading and writing, these techniques were not successful with ELLs when teachers failed to make linguistic and cultural modifications for them. Ferris and Hedgecock (1998) outlined key differences be- tween L1 and L2 writers, including L2 learners' different understandings of paraphrase and citation conventions and their lack of experience with peer review, revising, and teachers' indirect forms of feedback, such as the use of questions or suggestions rather than directives. Teachers can-not expect ELLs to have access to the same intuitions regarding what sounds "right" or "best" that native speakers of English have in reading their own or others' writing. They must be aware of the ways that native-language literacy can serve as a resource for ELLs' developing English reading and writing skills. They also need to be aware of cross-linguistic differences at the phrase, sentence, and discourse levels (e.g., basic differences in word order at the phrase or sentence level, or differences in purpose and position of a topic sentence at the paragraph level).

One technique that is helpful in supporting ELLs' reading and learning in academic content areas is "frontloading" a lecture or assigned reading with activities that highlight key language. Such activities may include discussions aimed at eliciting and linking students' related background knowledge, hands-on experiences that invite key questions, and the highlighting of key vocabulary. In this way, important concepts, vocabulary, and questions are identified before a lecture or reading begins. Jameson (1998) referred to this process as "teaching the text backwards."

Misconception 4: Effective instruction means nonverbal support

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using visuals or other nonverbal means such as graphic organizers or hands-on activities, teachers can make their instruction more comprehensible. These nonverbal supports help mediate the language demands of content learning and, in fact, help ELLs "get around" the language used in texts and class discussions. Though such accommodations increase the comprehensibility of texts or tasks, they fail to meet the needs of ELLs when teachers are unable to use them as tools for language development within content classes. As Leung and Franson (2001) pointed out,

> Through the skillful use of adjusted talk, realia, graphics and role-play, teachers can make even very complex information accessible to ESL pupils. There is, however, little reason to assume that comprehension of content ideas at a broad level would automatically lead to an ability to use English to carry out academic tasks effectively. (p. 171)

Because ELLs are simultaneously acquiring content and language proficiency, teachers are responsible for planning both conceptual and linguistic development for these students in order to meet grade-level standards for all students. They must therefore develop the skills to integrate language and content instruction (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2000). Teachers need to be able to identify language demands of their content area that may be particularly challenging for ELLs. For example, math teachers need to recognize that the vocabulary of mathematics poses special challenges for ELLs not only in the specialized terms that may be unfamiliar to all students, such as equation and de- nominator, but also in the specialized use of common terms such as table, column, and round for which ELLs may have learned meanings that do not apply to mathematics (Dale & Cuevas, 1987). The syntax of math also poses particular challenges for ELLs, who often follow the surface structure in interpreting mathematical statements. For example, the statement "the value x is 10 less than the value y" may be interpreted as "x = 10-y" or "x-10 = y," which are both incorrect. Prepositions (two multiplied by three) and logical connectors (if…then, therefore…") play critical roles in the expression of math concepts and are problematic structures for ELLs (Kessler, Quinn, & Hayes, 1985).

Teachers should include ways to reduce the language demands for ELLs (i.e., provide comprehensible input) while simultaneously providing opportunities for ELLs to develop the necessary academic language skills. Tang (1992) described the effective use of graphic organizers as a means of understanding text structure and of supporting the development of academic writing proficiency in social studies. Using this technique, students construct graphics from text using basic "knowledge structures" such as classification, description, and sequence (Mohan, 1986); key vocabulary to represent concepts; and cohesion devices to specify relationships among concepts. They then write expository prose using the conceptual and linguistic scaffolding provided in the graphic.

Misconceptions and their implications

The context of learning for ELLs differs from that of native English speakers and has important implications for instruction. The tendency to equate L1 and L2 learning and teaching can result in misconceptions that limit the extent to which ELLs receive appropriate instruction and feedback to develop academic language proficiency. Cummins (2000) argued,

> Development of academic knowledge and skills in the majority language will not "just take care of itself;" it requires explicit teaching with a focus on the genres, functions, and conventions of the language itself in the context of extensive reading and writing of the language. (p. 23)

What distinguishes a classroom that explicitly ad- dresses the needs of ELLs is that "English is very much present and accounted for...teachers extend practices of good teaching to incorporate techniques that teach language as well as content" (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2002, p. 117). Mainstream teachers must learn to look at rather than through language used in the classroom in order to under- stand the linguistic demands of their content areas and, in response, carefully structure learning tasks according to ELLs' needs (Gibbons, 2002).

First, teachers should understand that, de- spite many similarities, L1 and L2 learning are not identical processes. In addition to providing exposure to a language-rich environment and creating opportunities to interact with native speakers of the target language, teachers must also

- ensure that ELLs have the language skills to perform a task (if not, these skills should be taught through explicit modeling and scaffolding).
- ensure that ELLs can actively and appropriately participate in cooperative learning structures by paying attention to language demand and task structure.

Second, teachers need to understand the complex contribution of individual learner variables to the L2 learning process. L2 learners' behavior often cannot be reduced to a simple explanation. For instance, rather than attributing a student's continued silence to a lack of motivation or ability, teachers need to consider culture shock or a response to discriminatory language practices in school. Teachers therefore need to do the following:

- examine the linguistic and cultural assumptions underlying their activities and instructional choices.
- consider a wide range of factors when trying to understand and explain the behaviors of ELLs. These include affective factors (i.e., personality, motivation, attitude); cultural and educational background; L1 literacy level; age; and approaches to learning.
- attempt to learn more about ways that other cultures structure their children's educational experiences and to explore ways that languages are similar and different.

Finally, as indicated by Cummins (2000), teachers must learn to critically examine the role of language in teaching and learning. Although making content comprehensible through visual aids and hands-on experiences is important, they need to move beyond strategies that help ELLs "get around" language to include teaching academic language. As classroom practices align with national content standards and content learning occurs through extensive oral and written discourse (i.e., talking to learn), teachers must know how to provide appropriately scaffolded opportunities for ELLs to learn to use academic language (i.e., learning to talk). These efforts should be ac- companied by scaffolding for reading and writing instruction. In addition to good L1 literacy practices (e.g., process writing, dialogue journals), teachers must therefore do the following:

- identify the oral language and literacy demands of their content area,
- set instructional objectives and select class- room tasks that promote academic and social language as well as content learning, and
- provide appropriate and sufficient feed- back to scaffold students' mastery of the functions, structures, and vocabulary of the second language.

In short, teachers must first of all understand second-language learning as a process. They must recognize similarities and differences between L1 and L2 learning and understand the implications for their own instructional practices. They must also be able to identify how language is used as a medium of instruction and not assume that ELLs have the same access to the language of the class- room as native English speakers. Finally, teachers must understand the role that language plays in learning and acknowledge that language development must be integrated as a goal of instruction when teaching ELLs. Effective teachers of ELLs therefore integrate language and content objectives and organize their instruction accordingly.

Helping ELLs succeed in schools

Harklau (1994) warned of the challenge of main- stream classroom settings for ELLs when there is no explicit attention to the special language needs of ELLs. She noted,

> It has been suggested that one of the most powerful arguments for mainstreaming...is that it provides naturally occurring opportunities to use and develop language through purposeful use. Yet in the mainstream classroom the main teaching purpose is to get on with the curriculum content. The classroom exchanges are primarily concerned with curriculum meaning; language development work is not necessarily the focus of attention. (p. 171)

Reform initiatives aiming to address the in- creased diversity in mainstream classrooms emphasize similarities among native speakers and L2 learners but tend to overlook differences between them that require teachers' explicit attention. This reductive approach to understanding the process of second-language learning and the practice of teaching ELLs results in several critical misconceptions. The most critical, particularly for older students, are that simple exposure and interaction will result in English-language learning, that L2 learning is a universal process that standards and strategies designed for diverse native speakers are appropriate for ELLs, and that effective instruction for ELLs is largely a matter of providing non- verbal support.

We have argued that unless teachers address these misconceptions, their curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices will only partially meet the needs of ELLs in their classrooms and will only superficially include ELLs in mainstream classrooms. Not integrating ELLs into the academic goals and discourse of the classroom, for example, by not calling on ELLs to answer questions (Schinke-Llano, 1983; Verplaetse, 2000), by lowering expectations for ELLs, or by asking lower order thinking questions of beginning L2 learners (de Jong & Derrick-Mescua, 2003), has been referred to as a "benevolent conspiracy" in which native speakers ignore or cover up communication gaps with ELLs (Hatch, 1992, p. 67). Language and content learning goals for ELLs should be coordinated with, not subsumed by, those for native speakers of English. Individual students' strengths and needs should be made visible in mainstream classrooms where generalist approaches to literacy and content area instruction and assessment practices are based on native speaker norms. Au (1998) noted that "Even inclusive constructivist approaches to teaching will be inadequate when they assume that similarities among students override differences related to ethnicity, primary language, and social class" (p. 306).

Most ELLs, including those who have access to direct language support (e.g., pullout ESL classes, sheltered English content classes, or bilingual instruction), spend most of the school day in main- stream classrooms. Therefore, all teachers must be prepared to accept responsibility for the academic content and language development of ELLs. This means that

teachers need to be aware of the language of their subject area, the process of second- language development, the role and interaction of learner variables, and the complex ways in which they can influence the process of learning a second language and succeeding in school.

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