Florida Foreign Language Journal

Florida Foreign Language Journal Fall 2015

FLORIDA FOREIGN LANGUAGE JOURNAL

FLORIDA Foreign Language Journal 2015

ARTICLES

Editors Acknowledgement

Thanks you to the review board and the authors of the manuscript in this issue of the Florida Foreign Language Journal issue. The mission statement of Florida Foreign Language Journal clearly states that the Journal is the official academic organ of the Florida Foreign Language Association, and that its objective is to serve as a vehicle for expression by teachers, students and the greater general public who have an interest in furthering the instruction and knowledge of foreign languages This issue features an article by Angel Toledo-Lopez and Luis Penton on *Language immersion for adudlt learners: Bridging the gaps from childhood to college*. This study the authors presented as a paper at the Florida Foreign Language Associations in 2014. Allison Lai offers the readers a strategy or two on how important it is to use authentic materials in the classroom. In her article, *Enhancing Student Engagement throuogh Autheentic Materials in a Chinese Classroom* tells the readers about how authentic materials motivates students and adds a real life element to the students' learning experience. Qin Yao, a doctoral student from the University of Maryland, in her article *Understanding and Practice of Content-based Instruction: A Case Study of a Chinese Immersion Teacher* provides the reader with ample information and data on content-based instruction and how here data shows strong connections between teacher understanding and practices. The article from Grace Kellermeier, former French teacher and chair at her school, currently newly appointed as the school district's World Language specialist, tells the FFLJ reader the fascinating story on how she became the school district's *Teacher of the Year 2015.*

Enjoy the readings and share them with your peers. I invite you to submit manuscripts on research and review-oriented articles in the area of foreign language education and technology, program articulation, ESOL, culture, film, travel, FLES, national certification, multicultural instruction, multilevel teaching, diversity, foreign language advocacy, international programs and initiatives. See the guidelines in this journal on submissions, or visit the website www.ffla.us for more information.   --Editor
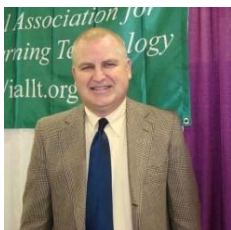
President's Message

The FFLA Board is absolutely delighted you are here, as our focus of this year's conference is to honor and celebrate our dedicated and talented language teachers . . . YOU!!! We hope that you will take full advantage of all of the wonderful opportunities that are built within our three-day conference!

It is with tremendous pride and enthusiasm that I, as your president, welcome you to our 2015 FFLA Conference in beautiful and historic Saint Augustine! Our theme for this year's conference is *Power Up Your Brain With Language!*, an appropriate title given that language learning develops and connects all parts of the brain. As the FFLA President of this prestigious event, I am deeply humbled by the challenges and learning that have brought this conference to fruition. During every given moment of this planning process, there were always FFLA colleagues available watching my back, supporting our endeavors, and providing tremendous insight and expertise. I have often stated to FFLA colleagues that our conferences mirror an incredible 'Family Reunion" where all family members get along and cannot wait to spend time with each other! As a long-time member of the FFLA, this "family environment" has been the pivotal point in bringing me back ever since. If this is your first time at an FFLA conference, you will soon find how many new family members you will have gained by the conclusion of this wonderful family get-together!

As brain-based research reveals, a "relaxed and stress-free" mind lends toward optimal learning and engagement! Therefore, you are in an ideal environment to reach out to FFLA colleagues, make new friends and contacts, and take on new risks. We encourage you to reach out to our FFLA members to see what talents and leadership skills you might bring to us! With this said, I would like to welcome you to our FFLA table!

Furthermore, this event could not take place without the involvement and generosity of our wonderful Sponsors and Exhibitors! Please make it a point to meet with them and to thank them for their partnership with FFLA.   We welcome all of you to Saint Augustine!

Sincerely,

Frank Kruger-Robbins, 2015 FFLA President

NOTE: The above message was the welcoming message for the FFLA Annual Conference Program to the members and attendees at the three-day event held in St. Augustine, October 2015. Contributing authors to FFLJ often comes from attending these conferences. -Editor

Mission Statement

The Florida Foreign Language Journal is the official academic organ of the Florida Foreign Language Association. Its objective is to serve as a vehicle for expression by teachers, students and the greater general public who have an interest in furthering the instruction and knowledge of foreign languages. The journal seeks articles, reviews, notes and comments concerning any aspect of foreign language acquisition. The era where educational funding is often limited, where foreign, immigrant, and migrant students seek instructional equity, and where a greater number of students are desirous of learning a foreign language, it seems imperative to have such a journal. The journal reaches out especially to those already teaching a foreign language as well as those who are preparing for such a career. The demands on teachers are overwhelming today. There is a plethora of methodological approaches, technical apparatuses, and multi-faceted textbooks available, amidst a variety of instructions with diverse milieus and attitudes toward foreign language instruction. Such an environment creates a daunting challenge to practitioners of foreign language instruction.

The goal of FFLJ is a modest one; it is to serve as a sounding board and a reference point for those who teach and learn foreign languages. It is hoped that the journal will help foreign language enthusiasts and professionals form a community that shares its concerns, discoveries, and successes of issue in the foreign language domain. It is further hoped that our voices will become more numerous and ring more loudly as we proceed through what promises to be a century of challenge and opportunity for foreign languages. Our emphasis will be fostering better learning conditions and results for our students and teachers. FFLJ urges all readers and participants to become ardent advocates to further and safeguard foreign language practices.

Manuscript Guidelines

The editor and editorial board welcome research and review-oriented articles in the area of: foreign language education and technology, program articulation, ESOL, culture, film, travel, FLES, national certification, multicultural instruction, multilevel teaching, diversity, foreign language advocacy, international programs and initiatives, availability of career positions etc.

We encourage you to submit previously unpublished articles for publication in the second issue that will feature pedagogical concerns, strategies, and successes in the language classroom, as well as methodologies, teacher preparation, ESOL, National Board Certification, and/or culture and diversity.

A double-blind review process will be followed, in which submitted manuscripts are distributed by the editor to 2-3 reviewers with expertise in the areas addressed in each manuscript. Written comments by reviewers and a recommendation on acceptance are returned to the editor, who then will communicate the comments and decision on acceptance to each author.

Requirements - Manuscripts must:

1. Appeal to the instructional, administrative, or research interests of foreign/second language educators at K-16 levels of instruction.
2. Be substantive and present new ideas or new applications of information related to current trends and teaching in the language field.
3. Be well written, clearly organized, and carefully proofed.
4. Include a complete reference list at the end.
5. Be formatted according to guidelines in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association, 5th Ed. (2001). APA Style Resource.
6. Be no longer than 12-15 double-spaced pages in 12 pt. Times New Roman typeface, with 1½ inch margins, black text on white paper.
7. Be sent in triplicate (3 copies are necessary for review purposes).
8. Be submitted with no authors' names indicated (for review purposes).
9. Include a cover letter with the name, postal and e-mail addresses, and phone number of the first author (or other contact person) clearly noted.

10. Include an abstract of no more than 150 words.
11. Be sent with a biographical statement of 50 words or fewer for each author, including information on current job or title, institution, degrees held, professional experience, and any other relevant information.
12. Be sent in both hard copy and electronic formats. The electronic version must be saved as a Microsoft Word, .txt or .rtf document. Electronic versions may be submitted on a CD (PC compatible), or as an e-mail attachment.
13. Include any figures and tables in camera-ready format. Photographs, graphics, figures and tables must contribute to article content. Please be absolutely certain that all materials are complete with caption/credit information. Figures and Tables must be appropriately labeled in the article.
14. Not have been published previously and may not be under consideration for publication elsewhere.

Manuscripts submitted to FFLJ cannot be returned, so authors should keep a copy for themselves. Submissions will be acknowledged within one month of receipt.

The editor of FFLJ reserves the right to make editorial changes in any manuscript accepted for publication to enhance clarity or style. The author will be consulted only if the editing has been substantial, though the author will be able to review the article prior to publication.

Please follow the manuscript guidelines and send your submission to::

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Book Review Guidelines

- Materials must have been published within the last three years.
- Review should be a maximum of three double-spaced pages.
- Each review must include complete bibliographic information, a description of the book/material, the audience for whom it is designed, and how well it accomplishes its purposes
- A cover letter should provide the author's name, postal and e-mail addresses, telephone number, and a brief (25-word) bibliographical statement.
- Reviews should be submitted as an email attachment in Microsoft Word. Send review to Dr. Vivian Bosque e-mail **bosque@nova.edu**

Ángel A. Toledo-López and Luis Javier Pentón Herrera.

Language immersion for adult learners: Bridging gaps from childhood to college

English language learners (ELLs) come from different paths of life. Teachers must identify and satisfy the academic needs of a diversity of learners, among which ELLs play an important role. Using the proper teaching and assessment techniques and strategies is, thus, instrumental in providing ELLs with an environment that promotes learning of the content and facilitates the development of skills in all four language dimensions. Theory suggests that adult ELLs are more prone to learn, rather than acquire, language skills. Facilitators must plan and design effective curricula, assess student progress, and modify strategies to help adult learners successfully develop their language skills. This article analyzes the techniques that work –and those that do not– from the perspective of facilitators who implement the *Discipline Based Dual Language Immersion Model*®, the nation's only dual language model designed for adult learners. In depth interviews were used to seek profound insight of the teaching strategies that have been more effective in teaching language and content to adult learners, and the academic setting that facilitates development and learning of language skills in all four domains.

Keywords: Adult education, Bilingual education, Dual language, Bilingualism

Introduction

Education is the process by which individuals acquire, develop and use knowledge. There are different steps to this process and techniques that facilitate knowledge acquisition. However, different student populations will respond to facilitation techniques in different ways. Facilitators must, thus, focus on planning and designing effective curricula, and constantly assessing student progress to modify their teaching strategies whenever necessary.

The complex processes that underlie successful education determine which strategies will most likely influence student learning and have a greater impact on their academic experience. Determining which strategies to use is not a simple task as it depends on the type of learners, their learning styles, and the language and content objectives that must be met. Choosing the appropriate strategies is particularly important when we work with Second Language Learners (SLL) who must develop language skills while they acquire knowledge about the content at hand. The obstacles that the lack of language proficiency may impose hamper their learning process. However, second language learners, whether they are children or adults, can and do learn.

The learning processes are undoubtedly different mainly due to experience and cognitive ability. Adults, generally, have more experiential knowledge that they can draw from to relate to the topic being discussed and to learn languages. Younger learners, on the other hand, are at a stage in which language acquisition can occur naturally and their use of the language resembles that of native speakers. Nonetheless, their life experiences and cognitive abilities are bounded by their age, and their capacity to learn language through content responds to their prior knowledge and their potential to process information in the language of instruction. Thus, it is likely for teaching strategies to have a differential impact on the learning process of children when compared to adults. Moreover, the process of language acquisition is expected to vary between the different age cohorts. This means that the teaching strategies that will work for learners at any given age group might not work for other students at a different age group, if we hold level of language proficiency constant. That is, emergent learners at an early stage of

their lives will respond to the same teaching strategies differently than emergent learners at a later stage of their lives.

This work analyzes the strategies and methodologies used to teach English language learners at different stages of their academic careers and lives, and identifies techniques that are better suited for an adult population. Research on teaching strategies to help adult learners acquire knowledge is vast, but little is known about their process of language acquisition under a dual language immersion model. These models have been implemented in the K-12 setting to develop language and cultural skills across the curriculum. However, the effectiveness of this model among an adult, college-level population has not been assessed or evaluated. A survey of the current literature related to the implementation of the dual language immersion models in a K-12 environment will give the reader a broad picture of the different ways in which this model is implemented and how it helps English language learners develop literacy skills while meeting standards of learning. This literature will serve as a framework for understanding the application of these models at different academic levels. The teaching methodologies and strategies are discussed and their application in the different grade-school stages is analyzed. Finally, a qualitative analysis of the effectiveness of the Nation's only college-level *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model*® provides an opportunity to evaluate how Hispanic adult learners can become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural while developing professional skills. The analysis is based on case studies of dual-language professionals who have actively implemented the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model* ® in college-level language and content courses.

Similarities and differences in the implementation of the Model in language courses when compared to content courses will be evaluated and explained.

Early childhood: The first step of language acquisition

The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines early childhood "as the period from birth to eight years old" (UNESCO, 2014). During this period of growth, the body and mind of children undergo remarkable changes that lay the foundation for future development. One of the most important events in early childhood is the ability to establish communication through acquisition and learning. Communication in the form of language is "used for private speech and social mediation, both of which are tools that help children learn" (Berger, 2009, p. 256). During early childhood children are introduced to an academic environment where they are expected to participate and improve progressively. This is the best period for children to acquire and learn a language, hence, the best moment to enroll them in language immersion programs if the parents so desire.

The Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH) explains best the linkage between age and the language acquisition phenomenon. Language control and fluency "take place within a specific time limit in order for the acquisition of any language to be natural and spontaneous as the language of native speakers" (Alghizzi, 2014, p.15). We can thus infer that the spontaneity, fluency, and naturalness with which individuals speak, write, listen, and read in a second language depends on the time in which they begin learning such language. If learning occurs during the critical period, it is very likely that the second language learner will communicate like a native speaker would. This is perhaps one of

the main reasons why elementary schools in the United States generally do not accept children into immersion programs after first or second grade, when their critical period has elapsed.

To develop students' language skills in different languages, two main types of immersion programs exist in elementary schools: Dual Language Immersion Programs (Two-way immersion) and Foreign Language Immersion Programs (One-way immersion). The Dual Language Immersion Program, also called bilingual immersion and/or two-way bilingual, contributes in the development of bilingual and biliterate students through a cross-cultural curriculum. It is known as a two-way bilingual program because the "student population consists of majority language speakers and minority language speakers with dominance in their first language and home language support for this language" (University of Minnesota, 2014). However, it is possible to find students whose native language is not English or the minority language but they can communicate to some extent in one of the two languages of the program. A 1:1 ideal ratio of students who speak English as a first language (L1) and students who speak the minority language as their L1 should be maintained, but a minimum of one third of all students must be native English speakers in order for the program to operate (Gomez, Freeman, & Freeman, 2005, p. 150). The two-way immersion programs vary in the allocation of time given to each language. There are two basic adaptations under the two-way immersion: the 90-10 and the 50-50 models.

In the 90–10 model, "the language other than English is used 90% of the time in early grades, and a gradually increasing proportion of instruction is done in English until sixth grade, when both languages are used equally in instruction" (Gomez, Freeman, &

Freeman, 2005, p. 148). The 10% of this approach focuses on teaching initial English literacy to all students in primary grades, while the 90% focuses on using the other-than-English language to teach content areas. This model is most beneficial for the purpose of improving the literacy and development of students in the other-than-English language at an early stage. However, it fails to provide the necessary English skills to succeed in the standardized tests because the majority of content areas are taught in the other-than-English language and the students are expected to test the same information in English.

"In the 50–50 model, students learn in each language about half the time throughout the program. In many programs, all students learn to read in their primary language and then add the second language" (Gomez, Freeman, & Freeman, 2005, p. 149). The instruction time in each language may be divided in different ways as far as it is equal, for example: half day in each language, alternate days, and even alternate weeks. Translation is not used when switching from one language to the other. Students are expected to learn and know the information in both languages in all classes. This last component makes the 50-50 approach a realistic model because the students are taught all classes in English 50% of the time. This enables them to learn the vocabulary and keywords needed to succeed in the standardized tests conducted in an English-only format.

The Foreign Language Immersion Programs, also known as one-way immersion programs, are models implemented in areas where the majority of the student population speaks other-than-the-target language. For example, in the United States a Foreign Language Immersion Program is implemented in counties where the majority of students are English speakers and they seek to become fully immersed in a foreign language.

Unlike the Two-Way Immersion Model, this program does not require a specific ratio of enrollment; the only requirement is that majority of students have limited to no proficiency in the target language. The students in this program are mainly exposed to the target culture and language in a classroom or school environment because it may not be strongly present within their community. There are two variations of this approach: the total immersion and partial immersion.

The total immersion program focuses on the teaching of a foreign language 100% of the time from kindergarten to 2nd grade and "instruction in English usually increases to 20%-50% in the upper elementary grades (3-6), depending on the program" (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007, p.1). In the partial immersion, the instruction is divided between English and the target language to approximately 50%. "Initial literacy instruction may be provided in either the target language or English or in both languages simultaneously" (Lenker & Rhodes, 2007, p.1). Students enrolled in this program are not required to have any prior knowledge of the target language, however, they are expected to gain fluency as they progress in grades. Foreign Language Immersion Programs may continue in middle and high school depending on availability and need across the county and state. Recent studies show the demand of immersion programs in 6th – 12th grade is surging, particularly in middle school (Smith & Staff, 2013). This trend reflects the current educational demands of preparing multicultural professionals who are ready for the global job market.

Regardless of the model, specific techniques and strategies must be implemented to facilitate the teaching process in these immersion programs. The goal is to promote language acquisition and development while students learn the course content. After all,

students must develop enough language skills to communicate in their personal and academic setting, but they must also achieve passing scores in state mandated content exams. The challenge of teaching language through content and of developing literacy skills among English language learners must be tackled head on with careful planning, varied strategies, and cultural and social awareness. All students must work in a comfortable environment that engages them in meaningful learning processes.

Some of the most effective techniques for helping English language learners acquire the language skills that they need include sheltered instruction, differentiated instruction, and thematic integration. These techniques assist in the development of language skills in all four dimensions of reading, writing, speaking, and listening while promoting knowledge acquisition in the various areas of content. The focus is on creating an unthreatening academic environment where English language learners can lower their affective filters (Cummins, 2000) and learn in meaningful ways. In this process, teachers, learners, school administrators, and parents must work harmoniously to create spaces for the acquisition and development of academic language skills that will help students succeed.

Sheltered instruction supplies the teaching practices and techniques that "provide second language learners with the same high-quality, academically challenging content that native English speakers receive" (Hansen-Thomas, 2008, p. 166). The focus of sheltered instruction is the development of academic language through content. It creates a learning environment in which students feel safe and where they can develop their language skills at a pace that suits their needs and learning styles. Moreover, it considers

differences among students to develop teaching strategies and activities that are tailored for each individual learner.

Second language learners must overcome the challenges of comprehending content in a language that they do not understand. This challenge can be overcome through instructional scaffolding in the form of explicit and interactive instruction. Scaffolding provides the support that students need to develop different skills in the classroom setting (Coleman & Goldenberg, 2011, p. 15-16). Explicit instruction requires clear explanations and modeling to illustrate what is expected from students. Teachers model the task at hand while providing opportunities for meaningful practice. Moreover, group work and cooperation is necessary to promote integration of knowledge, develop communication skills, and share diversity. It is through group work and collaboration that more proficient students assist our English language learners in using the language in positive ways and in performing within their zone of proximal development (Vigotsky, 1980). Through group work students engage in elaborated conversations that promote the use of key vocabulary, specific linguistic structures, and linguistic fluency (Coleman & Goldenberg, 2011, p. 16).

Teachers must create en environment that promotes and facilitates learning. Research suggests that "the child's first experience with school, both positive and negative, has… a lasting effect" (Tisssington & LaCour, 2010, p. 166). The life-long impact that academic experiences have on children merit careful attention. Lesson planning, choice of activities, and proper assessment are key in developing and maintaining an academic environment that fosters trust and promotes meaningful learning. Moreover, it is important for teachers to know who their students are beyond

mere name recognition. Teachers must identify their students' strengths and areas of opportunity to design activities and strategies that cater to their needs in equal ways. Learning is an individual process that takes place in a collective environment. Despite the significant challenges that teachers encounter in the classroom setting when dealing with many students with different learning needs and styles, identifying the individual characteristics of students is of paramount importance.

Differentiated instruction allows teachers the opportunity to evaluate students individually to identify their specific language and content needs. This, in turn, serves as a tool to develop course objectives, teaching strategies, and assessment techniques that meet each student's specific needs. Proper assessment sets the stage for learning in a differentiated environment where students feel included, considered, and important. After assessing students' strengths and needs, teachers must rely on differentiation to provide them what each need. This entails using varied teaching strategies that motivate and inspire the different learners; developing specific activities that are suitable for the learning styles and needs of each individual learner; and implementing different assessment and evaluation techniques that respond to the abilities of the different learners and allow for modification of teaching strategies and structures when necessary.

Specific differentiation strategies include but are not limited to splitting students into groups according to their language proficiency and working different activities with each group; teaching individual students specific tasks, lessons, or skills that will get them up to par with the rest of the class; or allowing for different forms of expression – speaking, writing, drawing, acting, among others – that let students complete their assignments satisfactorily and with the same level of rigor; and providing for different

forms of evaluation that capture the varying learning styles (Levy, 2008). This includes tests, essays, journals, videos, hands-on activities, songs, and other forms of expression that allow teachers to evaluate learning and language acquisition, and redesign the class if necessary. Differentiated instruction requires thoughtful planning, sensibility to students' needs, and much creativity.

Thematic integration is another teaching tool that facilitates language learning through repetition within the content and context of the different classes (Lipson, Valencia, Wixson, & Peters, 1993; Alberta Education, 2007). Thematic integration requires the joint effort of several content teachers who will plan their lessons around specific topics and concepts that run the gamut of the different subjects. This teaching strategy can focus on key vocabulary concepts, specific topics, or the acquisition of certain language structures or responses that will facilitate communication in the different language domains. This is done across the curriculum and emphasized in each course throughout the day. For example, teachers have chosen to create awareness about global warming. They want to teach students different concepts such as climate, weather, environment, and global warming. Through thoughtful and careful planning, the group of teachers can design lesson plans that will integrate both the theme of global warming and the key concepts in their courses. Social studies teachers could teach the effects of climactic change on the way that people dress and behave while science teachers cover a unit on climate, weather, condensation and precipitation, and the causes of global warming. Math teachers could include the concepts of rain, acid rain, weather, and global warming in a lesson on probabilities, and English teachers can teach question-answer structures around the topic of the climate. They could help students create complete

sentence responses to "how is the weather today?" or teach vocabulary related to pieces of clothing and climate by having them look out the window, determine what the weather is like, and explain what clothing is appropriate for the day's weather. This will engage students in meaningful learning activities that develop experience, language awareness, and a holistic, integrated view of life. Students can learn the multiple uses of words and key vocabulary, and will be able to use these words correctly in the different contexts.

Previous research has evaluated the effectiveness of these strategies in a K-12 academic setting. Research has concluded that English language learners benefit from a sheltered environment that makes them feel safe and unthreatened. Moreover, differentiated instruction helps young learners feel confortable in an environment that is shaped and organized to fit their specific needs. Finally, thematic integration stresses language acquisition and helps students develop literacy in all four language domains across the different contexts. When these strategies are implemented within the dual language immersion models, students develop long-lasting language skills. Through collaboration and cooperative learning in an assisted learning environment, the dual language models promote language and content learning to reduce the existing gap between native speakers of English and English language learners. Smith, Sheppard, Johnson, & Johnson (2005) argue that collaboration through student-student and student-teacher interaction promotes positive results both academically and personally.

These strategies have been tested and proven effective in grade-school settings, but students in different grades or of different ages have varying levels of language proficiency, cognitive awareness, and experiential learning, that may impact the learning process. This may require emphasizing some strategies more than others or incorporating

specific techniques that may help some learners achieve the desired outcomes more effectively. Adult populations have been excluded of these analyses. Adult learners can and do learn, but their cognitive processes and learning skills must be taken into account when determining which strategies are more appropriate for language acquisition and content learning. As with younger children, dual language immersion models facilitate adults' language learning processes, but paying close attention to the adult learners' experience is necessary to determine which strategies work best.

Andragogy: The adult learner experience

The term andragogy comes from the Greek words andra "man" and agogos "leader" and it refers to "the art and science of helping adults learn" (Pews, 2007, p.17). Its origins go back as early as 1833 in Europe. However, the earliest known use in the United States dates back to 1927, evolving in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Andragogy is sometimes described as a theory, but it is most often thought of as a set of assumptions and methods pertaining to the process of helping adults learn. The term andragogy and pedagogy can be easily mistaken, but they are not the same. In pedagogy, the educational focus is on teaching the content subject matter in a teacher-controlled environment (Alexander, 2003, p. 3). "In Andragogy, the educational focus is on facilitating the acquisition of and critical thinking about the content and its application in real-life practical settings"(Pews, 2007, p.17).

Adult education is the lifelong motivational process of acquiring, learning, and developing new skills to become more competitive and proficient in the real world. The term adult education is used to describe "all the activities with an educational purpose that are carried by people engaged in the ordinary business of life" (Stubblefield &

Keane, 1994, p.3). This term is widely used by all adults who learn different skills in their everyday life, whether it is in a traditional or non-traditional environment. The most important concept of adult education is that it does not require formal schooling because it is an informal and personal approach of learning new skills and information.

The teaching practices surrounding andragogy are based upon six assumptions: "(a) Self-Concept, (b) Role of Experience, (c) Readiness to learn, (d) Orientation to Learning, (e) Internal Motivation, and (f) Need to know" (Chan, 2010, p.25). The assumption of self-concept refers to the idea that all adult learners are self-directed and self-motivated and for this reason the educator's main purpose is to facilitate the learning process, rather than teaching. The idea that adult learners are all the same and have the same goals is inaccurate. Adult learners are diverse in the way they understand their needs, motivations, capacities, interests, and even the goals that they are pursuing with their education. The assumption of role of experience holds that adults are students who come from diverse backgrounds and draw back from their experiences to aid them in their acquisition of knowledge. Adult learners come from all walks of life. Their experiences, ideas, goals, and learning concepts are diverse and, in many cases, religiously or culturally based.

Readiness to learn supports the idea that adults tend to be ready to learn what they need to know and what they are prepared to know. Adults do not seek higher education for pleasure; they have to see a purpose behind their choice and they have to find relevant information that they can use in the real world. Many adults do not see education as important. They decide to learn only the information and tools they need to succeed at their present job. After meeting their professional goal, they choose to stop learning.

Conversely, for the average person, education is more than just a means to an end. For this broad and diverse community of adult learners, schools have developed varied methods of learning and courses to highlight their specific wants and needs. On-the-job training, technical schools, and career colleges provide tailored education opportunities for all adult learners.

Orientation to learning holds the philosophy that "adults learn for immediate applications rather than for future uses. Their learning orientation is problem-centered, task-oriented, and life-focused" (Chan, 2010, p. 28). Adult learners are active and interested learners who want to learn information that will make an immediate impact in their lives. Culture, diversity, and inclusion play an active and important role in this assumption.

Internal motivation is also a relevant assumption of andragogy because adult learners are internally rather than externally driven. Ginsberg & Wlodkowski (2009) assert that the motivation and "the learning processes are connected to who students are, what they care about, and how they perceive and know" (p.130). Learning and motivation are an inseparable combination that dwells at the core of adult education and shapes the focus of adult learners. Finally, the need to know assumption holds that adult students need to know the value of learning and why they need to learn. Thus, andragogy is guided by specific objectives and adults are self-guided individuals in search of relevant knowledge that can be transferred immediately to their everyday life.

In short, adult learners are self-driven individuals with a wealth of experiences that impinge on their learning process. They are willing to learn only what is necessary and relevant to attain their professional goals. Generally, adults learn in practical and

hands-on educational settings that provide them with meaningful experiences that easily translate into the professional world. Finally, their motivation is aligned with their perception of what is valuable and attainable. These characteristics best align with the principles and methodologies of the constructivist approach. This theory requires learners to be actively involved in the instructional process turning the facilitators into helpers rather than providers of knowledge.

Constructivism is a learning theory that supports self-directed and active learning. In a constructivist environment, learners need to make sense of their learning experiences for themselves; they need to connect new knowledge to what they already know, and organize and apply information in ways that are meaningful to them. Constructivism enables students to understand results at a deeper level and it creates autonomous, independent learners. A recent study concluded that this approach to learning highlights the importance of acquiring learning strategies or methods used to aid knowledge acquisition, as opposed to other theories that only allow students to merely acquire information (Vogel-Walcutt, Gebrim, Bowers, Carper, & Nicholson, 2011). The instructional goals of a constructivist-based class often times include providing the students with skills or support (e.g. modeling, coaching, scaffolding) and encouraging the learner to actively construct his or her own personal learning experience (e.g. exploration, articulation, reflection).

Constructivism works well with different populations, but it is particularly effective with adult students. This teaching methodology gives adult learners the opportunity to use their wealth of experiences as a learning tool and to integrate theoretical knowledge with practice of skills that they will use in the professional

environment. Constructivism promotes the identification of immediate applications of concepts and processes, and facilitates integration and transfer of such processes and ideas into other settings or environments. The practical, hands-on, collaborative nature of the constructivist approach suits the adult learners well because it fits their schemas and styles.

This does not mean, however, that all adult learners have the same learning styles or that they process information and approach learning the same way. The differences that we observe among children are recreated in the adult learner. An analysis of the teaching strategies and techniques that best suits this cohort is, thus, necessary. The Ana G. Méndez University System provides a unique opportunity to pursue this task and evaluate the different teaching strategies that best fit the adult population of second language learners. A revolutionary and groundbreaking application of the constructivist approach in higher education is the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model* ® developed by the Ana G. Méndez University System. This model adapts many of the strategies that have proven effective in the K-12 setting to an adult-learner academic environment. It focuses on the teaching of language skills through content and promotes the acquisition of cognitive academic language proficiency in both English and Spanish.

The *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model* ®

The dual language professional is one who confidently demonstrates professional competencies in their field of study and can use both languages, Spanish and English, to communicate effectively. To develop these competencies, the Ana G. Méndez University System's *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model* ® takes into account the students' cultural, linguistic, and experiential backgrounds to create an academic

environment that promotes bilingual and bicultural literacy. Students' academic and language needs and interests are integrated into the curriculum to guarantee that the adult learners acquire the language skills that they need to succeed in the professional environment. The model offers partial immersion through balanced language distribution (50-50) of Spanish and English as a medium for instruction. Courses last 5, 8, 10, or 15 weeks and Spanish and English instruction is alternated every week.

The *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model ®* is founded on seven basic elements that, taken together, ensure the success of dual language education at the university level. The use of both languages in content courses guarantees that students develop knowledge in their professional field of interest while developing the Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) that they need to communicate in the professional environment of their choice. The adult student learns concepts that are germane to their discipline in both English and Spanish. This element is integrated with the second basic element, which fosters language development across the curriculum. In this sense, the adult learner develops language skills in all four domains in both language arts and content courses. Because of this, it is essential for all the faculty and staff to be bilingual in the multicultural academic environment in which the adult learner develops. All the facilitators of language and content courses are teachers of language and must be fully bilingual. Facilitators must strive to develop both languages through the coursework and distribute language arts domains systematically according to the course modules and the Model. In addition to the academic and linguistic support that the adult learner receives inside the classroom, all students must complete a placement test to determine their level of English and Spanish language proficiency, which will, in turn, allow the

program to place them in the corresponding language course. They also can obtain online language assistance and tutoring through an E-Lab that contains software that allows them to practice their language skills, check their work prior to submission, and perform research in areas related to their coursework. This comprehensive academic framework provides the adult students with the tools that they need in sheltered environment that fosters learning and successful implementation of academic and language skills.

According to Soltero and Ortiz (2012), bilingualism acquired through the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model*® helps the adult learner develop the ability to speak, understand, read, and write the basic terminology of both languages. It also develops in the student the ability to manage academic language that includes content-specific vocabulary, complex sentence structure, and academic discourse. Finally, bilingualism facilitates the demonstration of mastery of content-area knowledge on different academic measures. Thus, language proficiency as sought and developed through the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model*® serves the purpose of acquiring speaking proficiency, attaining literacy in both languages, developing cross-cultural awareness, gaining content knowledge, understanding contexts and contents, and demonstrating content mastery.

As a teaching methodology, the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model*® is based on Cummins' (2000) principles of bilingual development and focuses on constructivist strategies that promote effective engagement and retrieval of prior knowledge. The adult learner is motivated to engage in meaningful experiences that promote interaction, modeling, and retrieval of prior knowledge. With the appropriate techniques, facilitators help the adult learners actively construct their own knowledge.

Students engage in hands-on activities that allow them to collaborate with their peers and share their knowledge. In this learning process, linkage to past learning experiences, whether formal or informal, is key. Sheltered instruction, scaffolding, and literacy transfer techniques are used to guarantee that students receive the linguistic support that they need to acquire reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills that they can use and develop in class and in the professional environment.

The successful implementation of the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model*® is demonstrated through enrollment growth, student profile, the diversity of program offerings, increase in the number of graduates, and results of assessment activities. Today, four campuses with over 3,000 students and 30 academic programs exist in the U.S. mainland. A total of 2,139 students have graduated from one of the four branch campuses and students continue to enroll. There is student representation from 17 North, Central, and South American countries, 1 from Africa, 2 from Asia. Likewise, 16 countries between North, Central, and South America are represented among the faculty members. Finally, the Ana G. Méndez University System's *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model*® has received an Honorable Mention and a Finalist Award from *Examples of Excelencia* in 2008 and 2012, respectively. *Examples of Excelencia* is the only national initiative to identify and promote programs and departments at the forefront of advancing educational achievement for Latino students in higher education.

Practices associated with teaching and learning languages have evolved from learning a language through grammar and repetition to learning new languages through culture and immersion. Perspectives on adult education have changed exponentially over

the last decades with the inclusion of critical thinking, application of prior knowledge, and use of authentic assessment techniques in the learning process. Many of these techniques are compatible with those used in the K-12 setting. However, some of these teaching and assessment techniques are more effective than others when handling an adult population that responds to the pressures of time and a highly demanding job market.

In-depth Interviews

The final part of this work analyzes in-depth interviews of three facilitators who teach at the Ana G. Méndez University System and apply the teaching methodologies of the Nation's only dual language immersion program tailored for adult learners. The *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model*® provides a unique opportunity to evaluate the teaching and evaluation strategies that best fit the adult population. The in-depth interviews of these three facilitators provide a profound insight of the teaching strategies that have been more effective in teaching language and content, and the academic setting that facilitates the acquisition and development of language skills in all four domains.

The interviewees

Three facilitators who implement the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model*® were interviewed. One of the facilitators is a Ph.D. in Political Science and a Juris Doctor. He has been teaching for the Ana G. Méndez University System for over 13 years, two of which have been implementing the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model*®.   He is a facilitator of content courses in the areas of social sciences, statistics, research methodology, and criminal justice. The second facilitator completed a

Master of Arts in Spanish Linguistics and Literature and a Ph.D. in Hispanic Languages

and Literature. She has been teaching language arts courses of Spanish for the past 18

years, two of which have been at the Ana G. Méndez University System. Finally, the

third facilitator is professor of Spanish and English language arts, and Education. He has

been teaching for the past year at the Ana G. Méndez University System and holds a

teaching license from the state of Virginia with endorsements in Spanish and ESL

education. He completed a Master of Sciences in Spanish Language Education, a Master

of Education in Bilingual Education, a Master of Education in Adult Education and

Development, and just recently started his Ph.D. in Leadership with a specialization in

Reading, Language, and Literacy. All three interviewees provide professional

development workshops for faculty in the areas of learning styles, facilitation techniques,

and dual language assessment. Two of them are also certified in the reading component

of the Expediting Comprehension for English Language Learners (ExC-ELL) Institute

led by Dr. Margarita Calderón, Emeritus Professor at the Johns Hopkins University, and

two hold a certification in Distance Education. For processes of identification, we will

refer to the facilitators as R1, R2, and R3, respectively.

Interview Protocol and Process

The interview protocol consists of seven open-ended questions that seek in-depth

explanations of procedures and practices that the facilitators implement in the classroom

setting. Facilitators were asked to provide extensive answers to these questions and to

provide as many details as they deemed necessary to explain their positions and thoughts.

Their thoughts relate to what they deem are the best practices to promote the acquisition

of language skills in all four dimensions among adult learners. Moreover, they discuss

techniques that can be used for time management and for summarization after finishing their lessons. Finally, due to the facilitators' experience in diverse academic settings, they were asked to focus their responses on their experience teaching adult learners at the Ana G. Méndez University System. Each interview was completed in a single interview session, except for the Spanish facilitator's interview. This interview was interrupted and required a continuation because the professor had to facilitate a course.

Analysis

Question 1: How do you set the stage for learning in your academic environment?

Setting the stage is key for our adult learners. They need guidance and they need to feel that they are in control of what is going on in the classroom setting. R3 argues "the students at Ana G. Méndez are non-traditional adult learners who come from different paths of life…many of them have been out of the classroom for over 10 years". Younger students, posits R1, are more likely to wait for the teacher to initiate discussion and take control of the learning process. He asserts, "adult learners want to be in control of their own learning process and must feel that concepts and objectives are clearly laid out from the very beginning". As a result, the facilitators agree that there are specific strategies that must be implemented to set the stage to initiate discussion and foster an appropriate collaborative learning environment.

To set the stage for learning, R1 begins by discussing the content and language objectives for each workshop. This gives the adult student control of the learning process and enables them to hold facilitators accountable for the attainment of the goals and objectives. Moreover, he asserts that setting time frames for each activity is also important. While there has to be room for flexibility to accommodate the needs of

students and specific discussions, the adult student wants to know that time schedules are honored and that the class objectives are handled as planned. R2 also suggests rearranging the classroom setting to foster discussion and group work. She argues that setting the stage is done not only through discussion with the students, but also by moving tables and arranging them in a way that four to five students can sit to share thoughts, experiences, and work.

Both R1 and R2 argue that icebreaker activities are extremely important to set the stage for learning. R2 argues that her icebreaker activity helps students determine whom they will be working with during a particular workshop. She argues that the icebreakers vary from one class to the other to guarantee that students do work with different groups in each class session. She believes that sharing different experiences with different groups of students expands students' knowledge and fosters diversity and critical thinking. R1 asserts that his icebreakers "bring students back to the previous session" in an attempt to set the stage, retrieve prior knowledge, and establish the foundation for further discussion. He argues that these activities "show students that all of us come to class with at least some prior knowledge about something that will be discussed during the workshop or the course. This gives them confidence and gets them talking and sharing experiences".

R2 shared an icebreaker activity that has helped her with her adult learners to prepare them for the class discussion and get them going about the course topic. This activity is summarized here.

I give each student a puzzle piece. This activity serves a double purpose. The activity is centered on the main topic for the workshop. I print or bring large puzzle pieces and give one to each student. I ask students to write

behind their puzzle piece one adjective that describes them and to share them with the class. I use this [activity] to promote oral communication, vocabulary, and other language skills. After reading their adjective, students walk to the front of the class and tape their puzzle piece on the board. I tell them that each is an essential part of this class's puzzle and that their participation is important. Then, I divide them in groups based on the adjectives that they used. I always use a different activity that allows me to get them to talk, write, and read, and to divide them into groups. Usually the activity reviews concepts that were covered in the previous class. This [icebreaker] usually takes between 10-30 minutes.

They all focus on the objectives for the day and begin the class. R3 argues that the main goal of setting the stage is to "create and foster a learning environment that is welcoming and helps them in their transition back to education". R1 asserts that this goal is also achieved by posting the class material and presentations on Blackboard prior to the class. These presentations include the basic information that will be covered during the workshops and serve as a guide for class discussion. These presentations make students aware of the material to be discussed in each workshop prior to their class. However, they need to be supplemented with additional material, class activities, authentic assessments, and discussions to cover the duration of the workshop.

Question 2: How do you teach new vocabulary to guarantee that students understand the important content in the context that you are teaching?

Teaching vocabulary is an essential component of second language learning mainly because "vocabulary development is a correlate of reading" (Cowan & Albers, 2007, p. 34). There is a reciprocal relationship between vocabulary learning and reading (Carlo, August, McLaughlin, Snow, Dressler, Lippman, Lively, & White, 2004, p. 191) inasmuch as vocabulary learning facilitates reading and "vocabulary increases as a function of the student's reading of text that is rich in new words" (Cowan & Albers,

2007, p. 34). Many of the students at the Ana G. Méndez University System completed their grade-school education in their countries of origin and may not have the vocabulary they need or the reading comprehension capacity to evaluate and process information in academic texts. Thus, both content and language courses must focus on the development of relevant vocabulary that they can use throughout their academic and professional career.

R1 emphasizes the importance of developing vocabulary when he argues, "we can use question and answer sessions, debates, or general discussions to retrieve prior knowledge, but learning new concepts require additional strategies". All three facilitators agree that looking up words in the dictionary and writing down the definition or sentences with the key words does not work. They argue that students usually end up copying and pasting the definitions or sentences that they found on the Web even when they do not match the course content or are taken out of context. This hinders the learning process and delays the students' acquisition of new vocabulary.

R3 posits "the key to increasing vocabulary is the direct exposure to words in a relatable context". In this sense, he agrees with his other two colleagues in that referencing the context is necessary when developing vocabulary skills. He asserts that, as a facilitator, he must understand the diverse backgrounds present in his class to facilitate the teaching and learning of the new vocabulary. Focusing on each student's background, R1 and R2 give students words and ask them to figure out meanings based on the context in which they are being used. Once they have figured out the meaning, R1 asks students to look up the words in readings that relate to the class so that they can integrate the definition with the course content. This fosters critical thinking and

promotes discussion. It is important to note that these strategies are equally implemented in R1 and R3's content courses and R2 and R3's language arts courses.

R3 developed an interesting teaching strategy to promote the acquisition of new vocabulary and to practice language skills in an Education course for students who are learning to be English as Second Language (ESL) teachers. During their first workshop, students had to learn the meaning of the words "differentiation" and "scaffolding". The activity is summarized below.

I decided to introduce these two terms by creating a class where I, the teacher, would only speak Tagalog, and all my adult learners would be Tagalog learners. I began teaching using only Tagalog to speak to my students. I was speaking Tagalog while handing out worksheets. Needless to say, all my students were confused and lost. I started by asking them to complete an activity that I knew was impossible for them to complete. Little by little, I provided different cues and used scaffolding techniques to support their acquisition and understanding of what was being asked, while differentiating as necessary. I wanted my adult learners to experience the same feeling English Language Learners (ELLs) go through when they go to school for the first time in the United States, and it worked. After the activity, we talked about their thoughts and comments, and how I incorporated scaffolding and differentiation. That was the first time that I used these two terms in class, but my students understood them because they were able to see both of these terms put into practice. They were easily able to relate to these concepts because they had witnessed how these concepts translate to the real world.

Thus, an essential strategy when teaching adult learners new vocabulary is to make it relatable and evident. They can use context and experience to draw definitions in significant and meaningful ways. Through repetition of concepts in different contexts, R1 argues that students learn definitions and application in ways that they will be able to retain and use later in the class and in their career. R2 asserts that these strategies are most effective when students contribute the meaning of words. The facilitator can

scaffold the process and model different techniques, but it is the student who goes through the process of deriving the meaning of the new vocabulary and using it correctly.

Question 3: How do you integrate reading comprehension strategies into the content area?

Previously cited research suggests that a good vocabulary base is necessary to facilitate reading comprehension, and that reading skills promote the acquisition of an ample vocabulary. However "reading texts in which more than 2% of the words are unfamiliar blocks comprehension and novel word learning" (Carver, 1994). Thus, there is not only a reciprocal relationship between vocabulary development and reading comprehension, but also a vicious circle that hinders learning if vocabulary is not acquired and if reading skills are not developed. Researchers suggest that reading is the "principal language experience for enlarging a student vocabulary" and that "increasing the amount that students read is the single most productive thing we can do to increase their vocabularies" (Cowan & Albers, 2007, p. 34). Thus, integrating reading comprehension strategies into both content and language courses among adult learners is essential if their vocabulary skills are to be developed to an academic level.

R1 argues, "integrating reading activities is quite difficult with today's adult learners". His experience is that adult learners do not want to read mainly because they do not have much time after work, family, and class. Nonetheless, he argues, students must be required to read. Moreover, an activity that has certainly failed, according to R1, is to assign chapters or long readings from the book and expect students to come prepared to discuss in class. "Very few students, if any, complete this assignment and come to class ready for the discussion. Some of them scan readings only to find the answer to the

assigned questions, but not to understand the content, context, or the underlying message", asserts R1. He finds it most productive to engage adult learners in reading activities during the workshops and to have them summarize in groups what they learned from the readings. He concludes, "the controlled classroom environment promotes engagement in activities that they would not otherwise do at home by themselves. It is very likely that sharing information, reading in pairs, engaging in discussions, and collaborating with each other sparks their interest in completing reading assignments".

On the other hand, R3 argues that reading is a multifarious process that requires time and practice. Moreover, he asserts that reading proficiently in one language is difficult enough and that achieving reading proficiency in two languages requires much dedication. A welcoming and safe academic environment is, thus, necessary for students to feel safe. This lowers students' affective filters and helps them connect to the information at a personal level.

Both R2 and R3 made reference to the process of selecting which readings to include in class. They assert that the best readings for adult learners are those to which they can relate and that are clearly associated with the course topic. R2 teaches Spanish to a mostly Hispanic group of students. She chooses readings from geographic regions where her students were born and chooses topics like immigration, dictatorship, and roles of women, which are pertinent and relevant to them and their life experiences. She asks students to join in groups and read out loud during class to facilitate comprehension and analysis. Concept maps serve as a good tool to summarize the story, synthesize concepts, analyze topics, or develop writing skills.

R3, on the other hand, focused on strategies to promote reading of English text among Hispanic students. He, too, argues that graphic and semantic organizers are excellent tools to promote reading literacy and comprehension. He divides his class in four or five teams and asks each team to read a theory for class discussion, an excerpt of a story, or some interesting passage. After reading, each group chooses a graphic organizer to summarize what they have read. Finally, they present the information to the entire class. R3 argues that this activity has proven highly effective "because students are engaged and have the opportunity to work collaboratively to create a presentation that will impact the entire class".

R3 also speaks in favor of Socratic seminars. He uses them as the opening activity for class. These seminars are based on question and answer sessions in which students can explain their thoughts about the readings they did at home and share how they find the readings relatable to their everyday life. However, he asserts that this method will not work effectively if students have not read before class or if they were unable to understand the topic of the reading. If such is the case, like R1 suggested, in-class reading techniques are the solution.

Question 4: How do you teach writing in each of your content areas?

"In my English and Spanish classes, writing is an essential part of language development. The strategies used in each class depend on the level of the class and the needs of my students", argues R3. He maintains that an essential first step of teaching adult learners how to write is to help them understand the responsibility of becoming university students and how their assignments reflect their commitment to their learning process. Moreover, R1 argues that students must write not just to show that they master

the course content, but also to show that they know how to communicate. This frames writing activities in a holistic learning process that emphasizes writing as an academic, professional, and life skill.

Both R1 and R2 argue that one of the biggest difficulties when working with adult learners is that they tend to write how they speak. They ignore the syntactical and grammatical conventions that are observed in writing but are not as important in spoken language. Thus, R1 argues that meaningful writing activities must include word order and syntax, passive and active voice, word choice, and general composition. Moreover, he asserts that students must master verb conjugation, subject-verb agreement, spelling and, in Spanish, accentuation. This does not mean, however, that his content courses become grammar drills. As a matter of fact, he argues that language arts courses that aim to develop good writing skills in the adult learner should not be transformed into drills of grammar where facilitators repeat rules after rules. Instead, he believes that the best way to teach students to write is to get them to write. That is, it is through meaningful and relevant writing experiences that students learn the nuances of academic composition, verb conjugation and spelling.

R1 posits that when working with adults who are learning composition in both Spanish and English, modeling the writing process is key. He finds it difficult to have students engage in writing activities in content courses because students are scared that they do not know the content too well to produce a good piece of written work.

> I begin by teaching them how to write a complete sentence. Many of them are scared of writing because they do not know the basic composition of a simple sentence, much less of a paragraph. Once they have the idea of how to write a complete sentence, we move on to writing paragraphs. I use examples related to the course topic to teach them about the course content while they learn

writing skills. This helps them develop an understanding of what main ideas and topic sentences are, and to write meaningfully about the course content. This also saves me some time because I can teach language and content simultaneously. As adult learners, they find this effective and they appreciate it. This is a long process. It requires teaching step-by-step writing techniques while covering the course content. It also requires practicing, re-writing, modeling, and observation.

He argues that this process is particularly difficult in content courses because there is a large amount of material to cover in 5 or 8 weeks. He concludes that much of the writing is done in-class and not as assignments to do at home because adult students want immediate feedback.

R3 also finds it useful to discuss the writing process during his language arts and content courses. He argues that the writing process activity helps student break down the process to five easy steps that can be easily understood.

The first step of the writing process is prewriting. In this step, I emphasize the importance of using tools such as graphic organizers or brainstorming activities to formulate questions and find answers about their topic of choice. This step focuses on thinking rather than doing, and the main purpose is to find the message they want to transmit in their assignment. The second step is drafting. When we practice this step in class, I tell my students to simply write everything down to clear their mind. The second step is meant to clear the brain and give writers the opportunity to see their thoughts in paper. The third and fourth steps – revising and editing – are the steps to improve and make changes as needed. It is not usual for me to ask my students to work in pairs during these steps to get a different point of view about their project. The last step of the writing process is publishing, which is when students feel confident in their work and are ready to share or submit their essay. I strongly encourage my students to read aloud their work during each of these steps in order for them to see, write, and hear what they have produced.

When used during a language arts workshop, this process helps adult learners work systematically and follow easy steps that will lead them to produce good writing. The facilitator observes the process, provides guidance, and assesses student progress as

they generate ideas in writing. The adult learner feels guided in the process of independent or collaborative production of written work.

R2 breaks down the writing process in another way that suits the needs of adult learners. During the first week, students work on choosing the topic for their paper and producing a single paragraph related to the chosen topic. During the second workshop, students are expected to write a longer paragraph or more than one paragraph. They must submit a short essay during the fourth week of class. This helps them organize their thoughts and not leave their writing assignment for the last minute. They have time during class to work in pairs to develop their final paper, which is submitted during the 8th week. "During this process, I observe and guide them, but I give them the space to produce their own work; one that they will feel proud of", concludes R2.

R2 recommends another activity to develop writing skills among adult learners. She feels that it engages students in the writing process and makes it entertaining and systematic.

The class is divided into several groups of students. Each group sits in a separate working station. The first group writes a sentence about an assigned topic. It must be a complete sentence with subject and predicate, and it must fulfill the requirements about topic and style discussed in class. This sentence is passed on to the second group, which adds on a second sentence. The second sentence must be related to the first and must support the main idea. Proper transition words must be used if necessary. The two sentences are passed on to the third group, which adds a third sentence, and so on until we have gone around the class. In the end, we have a complete paragraph. Students learn that paragraphs must have unity, idea, and support. Moreover, they must be coherent and complete.

Finally, R2 argues that her adult learners need intensive help with rules of accentuation in Spanish. She finds that students in higher-level courses show the same difficulties of those in lower level classes. She uses Socratic techniques to have students

think about the grammatical errors that they make when writing. Instead of giving them the right answer, she asks them why they think that the word is incorrectly accentuated or where they think that the accent should go. They have to provide detailed explanations, which gets them to think about the rules of accentuation and about the writing process. She also finds that there is much difficulty differentiating the use of "c", "s", and "z" in Spanish, because they could sound the same. This also occurs with "j" and "g", and "v" and "b". R2 uses multiple ways of representation to get students with different learning styles to understand the uses of these consonants. For example, she shows videos that allow students to listen to these consonants used in words, and presents word charts or visuals that contain many different words that use these consonants. Many of these visuals are available for the adult students to use or to take home for future reference.

All three facilitators agreed that one technique that does not work for teaching writing skills to adult learners is lecturing about the rules of grammar, composition, and writing. The adult learner tends to be a more hands-on, practical learner that needs to see the immediate application of what they have learned. Lecturing about the topic and assigning work to take home and complete individually does not motivate them. As a matter of fact, the three facilitators agreed that when this is done, students usually come back with their assignment undone or take a long time to submit the assignment. They do not engage into the activity, they tend to get lost, and, usually, they submit incomplete assignments that do not reflect the writing process as it was discussed in class.

Question 5: How do you develop oracy in your classroom setting?

In addition to learning academic vocabulary that allows students to communicate effectively in the classroom setting, students must learn to pronounce the words correctly. Oracy skills are the ones necessary to pronounce words correctly in the language of choice. Because with naturally embedded accents among adult learners, and the different dialects that Hispanic students bring to the classroom setting, developing oracy skills is particularly challenging, but it is possible. Many students have yet to learn the correct pronunciation of some words in their native language, and must develop oracy skills in a second language that they have not mastered yet.

Many non-native speakers of English are under the impression that there is a correct way to pronounce in "American English". They want to speak fluently, use the right pronunciation, and intonation, but they sometimes forget their accents and regional dialects. R1 and R3 both emphasize the importance of identifying, cherishing, and respecting their native language when learning English as a second language. R3 argues that the variations and regional differences in meaning and use of the Spanish language make it challenging for facilitators and learners to communicate effectively. He speaks about how important it is for facilitators to understand that they are language professors as much as they are professors of content. They are required to model to students and show them the correct pronunciation of key terms in both English and Spanish.

R1 also argues that it is important for the adult learner to understand and feel confident about their accents. Very rarely will and adult learner be able to make their accents disappear to pronounce English the "American way". R1 teaches them that "there are many different accents in the United States. This teaches them that pronunciation and

accents are two different things. It also makes them more confident about their own accents".

For R3, modeling and collaborative activities are necessary to promote and develop oracy in his students. He focuses on teaching adult learners relevant information that is transferrable to their everyday lives. The focus is on relevant vocabulary words that can be immediately integrated into their toolboxes to use as needed. According to R3, adult students value turning regular class discussions into casual conversations. Not only do their affective filters lower, but they also get to practice their pronunciation skills in a non-threatening environment that helps them build confidence, self-reliance, and motivation to continue growing.

Every content or language workshop should work with the four language domains, according to R2. She uses oral reports or casual conversations to practice oracy skills in Spanish and to get them to talk in an academic environment. R1 agrees that pronunciation is better taught through casual conversations that are relevant to the students and that teach them both content and language skills. He argues that facilitators should be ready to correct students the very moment that they make a mistake. They must be careful, however, not to embarrass the adult learner who is less likely than a child to accept being corrected in front of others. He suggests practicing oracy as a group effort. "We all review, repeat, and pronounce our key words together. I teach them the difference between long and short vowel sounds, and I compare English and Spanish vowel pronunciations. I also show them how different letter combinations in English produce different sounds".

The goal, according to all three facilitators, is to include different activities that require talking. Discussions, debates, oral presentations, read alouds, and think-pair-and-share activities are some examples of activities that can be used to enhance students' pronunciation skills. Either informally through peer discussions, or formally in a final oral presentation, R1 suggests evaluating their speech, pronunciation, and fluency. He uses the list of mispronounced or misused words to review meaning and pronunciation during class.

> For example, in a master's level course we were discussing the legal statutes that guide non-profit organizations' activities for fund raising. Some students used the word "status" instead of "statutes". In this case, I first showed them the spelling of both words so that they would see that they were two different words. Then, I gave them the definition of each and asked them to use each word in a meaningful sentence. Finally, I explained them how these two words have different pronunciations that distinguish one from the other. In this exercise, the students developed not only vocabulary skills, but also oracy skills and spelling. Now, they are expected to use these words in classroom discussions and oral presentations in a way that shows that they have learned their meanings and the right pronunciation of each.

Finally, R2 uses constructive criticism to help students develop their oracy skills. Since criticism can be taken badly if it is not used appropriately, she models first during the entire first class. Students are allowed to participate in constructive criticism from the second workshop on. Constructive criticism must be respectful and guided. That is, it must focus on the specific details that can be worked on and it must include suggestions for improvement. In order to attend to the particular needs of each student, R2 provides specific comments to each student individually after class.

In essence, the biggest challenge when working with adult learners of Hispanic origin is the embedded accents and the different dialects that they bring from their

countries of origin. There is not a set standard from where to start, and each student is at a different level of language proficiency. Working oracy skills is necessary, but challenging. It must be carefully done and incorporated in every content and language class. Students must understand that it is unlikely that they will lose their accents, but that they can certainly pronounce correctly if they are properly trained.

Question 6: How do you manage your time to cover these components while discussing the course content?

Time is of the utmost importance when working with adult learners. They are very serious about honoring time limits, especially because most of them have to get home to their families immediately after class to start doing chores, working, or doing school work. Many of them have limited time to dedicate to schoolwork, and they want to be able to handle their class material as soon as possible. Thus, managing time during each session is an art that every facilitator must manage.

R1 argues that time management is definitely a challenge, especially in content courses. He is constantly juggling between the course content and the language objectives during each workshop. "I have to teach them about sociology, statistics, politics, or criminal justice at the same time that I am teaching listening, reading, writing, and speaking skills. It seems like a complicated task for just four hours of class session, especially when you have students at different proficiency levels. Planning and redesigning is of utmost importance". R1 asserts that facilitators of content courses must be flexible enough to restructure and redesign their classes as they teach. They must also be focused enough to be able to cover all the content objectives in the time allotted.

Planning is of central importance to R3 as well. He argues that he plans his classes a week ahead of time to make sure that he has enough time to cover the content and language objectives. According to R3, a regular 4-hour workshop takes him between 4-6 hours to complete because he creates a step-by-step plan that states where each activity fits and how it will be carried out. He argues that "the secret to keeping adult learners engaged and covering all the information is balance". He finds it important to find balance in the activities that will be implemented because too many activities could result overwhelming, but too few would turn the class into an undesired lecture.

R2 asserts that time management is possible if she divides her class into blocks. There is some space for improvisation due to unforeseen situations, but, in general, her class is planned into three or four blocks of time each of which comprehends a particular topic related to the course objectives.

During the first time block, I review what was discussed in the previous class. This helps students set the stage and retrieve prior knowledge to prepare them for the new discussion. It also helps clarify questions or doubts that were carried from the previous class. During the second block, students engage in individual or group writing activities. They can work in the library or in the classroom, and they can use computers or large pieces of paper that allow them to brainstorm, draw, and organize their ideas. While they are working, I assess what they are doing and provide them with suggestions. The third block is for oral presentations. They explain what they wrote during the previous block and engage in meaningful discussions about the class topic. Finally, during the fourth block, students read and engage in analyses about the readings.

Differentiated instruction must be applied in the process of teaching both content and language skills. R1 argues that the different levels of language proficiency make it necessary for all facilitators to use differentiation techniques that satisfy the needs of all the adult learners.

Sometimes students with the greatest set of skills in the content areas are not necessarily the most language proficient. This requires constant evaluation and assessment of learning. It also requires keeping track of the subject matter to guarantee that the course content is covered. We must have the set of academic and educational techniques that enable us to switch gears, reinvent our classes in a second, and incorporate activities that fit the needs of students who require extra attention. Thus, planning is essential, but it is not sufficient when dealing with our adult student population.

Question 7: What strategies do you use to bring closure to what students learned?

Closing activities are, perhaps, one of the most important parts of the session, overall. These activities can be used to review important concepts, clarify doubts, and ensure that the course's content and language objectives were met. Different assessment activities fit the needs of the course design when it comes to bringing closure to what students learned. It is important, however, that facilitators choose the right closing activity for the right group of students.

For example, "activities such as exit slips, random questioning, 1-minute reflections, and 1-minute paper have all proven effective" for adult learners, according to R3. He argues that these activities actively engage students in the discussion that the facilitator guides with comments or suggestions. R3 feels that this is better than closing the class with a personal comment or with his own summary of what was discussed. R1 agrees that these activities are very useful with an adult population, but that facilitators must be aware of the levels of language proficiency of their students. Some activities may be too demanding for students who are still learning the language and unable to express their thoughts in writing or in an oral exposition, whichever is the case.

R1 recommends getting the students to work in groups and write a summary of the most important topics that were discussed during the workshop. This helps them bring different concepts and ideas together while they work with other students. The less proficient can benefit from the skills of the more proficient, but they can all share what they know and what they

learned. Through this interaction, they all practice the concepts that were discussed in class and, perhaps, clarify questions that were left unanswered to them because they did not feel comfortable asking. Collaboration and interaction in these closure activities also help students integrate concepts from other classes in a way that makes sense to them and that is useful for their academic and professional development.

R1 also argues that his goal is to help the adult learner understand that the courses they take are not isolated from one another.

> My goal is to make sure that my students understand and that they feel comfortable with what they have learned. I want them to use language freely and confidently, while using course content in a way that makes sense to them and to the discipline. I want them to see themselves as professionals who are able to use the tools they acquire throughout the class. Course topics must be relevant and students must see their use and application in the real world. Usually, the activities that I use to close an entire course help students see the relevance of the class in the broader framework of the discipline.

Finishing classes with spoken reflections might be a good alternative for students who do not feel comfortable writing at the academic level. These reflections, according to R1, get students to talk about what they learned, use the key concepts discussed in class, and practice language skills that they have acquired. As students think critically about the topics discussed in class, they come to conclusions that show their level of engagement and cognitive ability. R2 also considers that it is important to ask students to reflect on the utility of the assignments and activities done in class. This helps them think about their learning process and take a critical look at the different exercises and activities that put into practice the theoretical matter of the course. It also helps them reflect on their mistakes and find alternatives to solve them with relative ease.

Conclusion

Bridging learning gaps between ethnic minorities who learn English and their native monolingual counterparts is imperative if we want children to pursue formal education at the college level. Research has shown that, given the right conditions and necessary tools, the cognitive processing capabilities of minority students is similar to that of their mainstream classmates (Fuller & García Coll, 2010). Schools, teachers, parents, and communities must, thus, contribute in providing the tools that students need to be successful academically and professionally.

Sometimes, however, some students do not have the opportunity to pursue their careers at an early age and must wait until later during their lives to obtain an academic degree or to complete high school. These adult learners can and do learn, and are productive both in the academic setting and in the professional arena. Nevertheless, these adult learners have specific needs that must be considered when developing curricula, classroom activities, and assessment tools. This means that the needs of an adult population are different, and so are the techniques and strategies necessary to reach out to them intellectually, cognitively, and academically.

This work analyzes the teaching and assessment strategies that work with an adult population of English language learners. The first part discusses the characteristics of early childhood education and the methodologies that are implemented to teach children at an early stage of their lives. This discussion includes a survey of current literature related to the implementation of dual language immersion models in a K-12 setting. This literature sets the stage for an in-depth discussion of how adult English language learners develop literacy skills while meeting standards of learning. Specific strategies and methodologies are discussed and their application is analyzed.

The Ana G. Méndez University System provides the setting for the analysis portion of this work. The analysis is based on the implementation of the Nation's only college-level

Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model®, which provides a unique opportunity to evaluate how Hispanic adult learners can become bilingual, biliterate, and bicultural while developing professional skills. Two language professors and one content professor shared their insights about the effective practices and strategies that facilitate the teaching of language and literacy skills throughout the curriculum to a population of adult English language learners. Their recommendations and suggestions of what works in this specific academic setting and what does not are included and discussed.

One significant implication of this study is the importance of continuous professional development training to facilitators teaching adult learners. Studies show that the current professional development training "offerings do not appear to meet the needs of adult education providers" (Henry, 2013, p.46). Unlike K-12 educators, facilitators of adult learners are typically not required to complete yearly trainings that incorporate cutting-edge instructional practices and technological advances in education. Educators of adults need ongoing training that will avoid fossilization and will equip them with updated tools to succeed teaching learners in the 21st century. Moreover, student-centered instruction rather than teacher-centered activities is imperative. In andragogy, the focus is to equip adult learners with the necessary tools to succeed in the real world. It is important for educators to include engaging activities that promote the application of theoretical matters discussed in the classroom. The effectiveness of the skills learned by adult learners is measured by their ability to transfer the knowledge acquired in the classroom into the outside world. Only activities that promote critical-thinking and hands-on learning will give students the opportunity to accomplish their purpose for learning.

The current analysis is the second of a series of works that look into the implementation and effectiveness of the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model®*. It is limited to the impressions of only three facilitators who put into practice the teaching and assessment strategies of this academic model. Their evaluation and recommendations help determine which strategies,

techniques, and methodologies are more effective and productive with their students. Thus, further analyses will look into the impressions of adult learners who study under the *Discipline-Based Dual Language Immersion Model®*. They will share their thoughts about the effectiveness of the model in helping them develop literacy skills while they acquire content knowledge in their academic areas of choice. This will provide a broader and clearer picture of the model, its implementation, the teaching strategies, and their effectiveness in the classroom setting.

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Qin Yao   **Understanding and Practice of Content-based Instruction: A Case Study of a Chinese Immersion Teacher**

Abstract:

Content-based instruction provides second language learners instruction in subject matter and language, and is greatly valued, particularly in the language immersion context where a language other than students' first language is the vehicle for teaching school curriculum. Chinese immersion programs are one of the fastest growing areas of language education in American schools. There has been a paucity of empirical research examining pedagogies that integrate second language into subject-matter instruction within the US context, and the Chinese immersion teaching is also under researched. The study explores an in-service teacher's understanding and practice of content-based instruction in the Chinese immersion setting, and the data show the teacher's understanding and practice are strongly connected.

Introduction

The content-based instruction (CBI) is an instructional approach "in which nonlinguistic content is taught to students through the medium of a language that they are learning as a second, heritage, indigenous, or foreign language" (Tedick & Cammarata, 2012, p. S28). The origin of CBI can be connected to the language immersion programs in Canada in mid-1960s (Hardwick & Davis, 2009). This approach has been promoted by many foreign

language educators (Crandall, 1993; Curtain & Pesola, 1994; Short, 1997; Snow, 1998; Stoller, 2004), as such instruction fosters academic growth as well as language development. A detailed analysis of research provided by Grabe and Stoller (1997) shows that there are evidences from second language (L2) acquisition, instructional strategies, educational and cognitive psychology and program outcomes that support CBI.

The content and language integrated approach has also been termed other names, such as content-based language teaching (CBLT) and content and language integrated learning (CLIL). CBLT and CBI are interchangeable and are commonly used in North America, while CLIL is "a corollary to CBI" and was mostly common in Europe (Tedick & Cammarata, 2012, p. S29). Met (1998) has provided a description of a range of CBLT settings varying from content-driven programs, such as immersion, to language driven programs which refer to language classes with content used for language practice. Immersion is considered as a typical context for CBI, where students' achievement in both language and content is the goal. There is minimal research focusing on teachers' understanding of CBI and their actual experience with implementing CBI (Tedick & Cammarata, 2012). Teachers play an important role in deciding what enters their classroom, and their perceptions and experiences are essential to the success of CBI implementation. Freeman (1993) has indicated a link between teacher education, teacher cognition and teacher practice. Teacher education is important in shaping the teacher cognition. Teacher cognition has an effect on many aspects of teaching practice including teaching goals, procedures, materials, classroom interaction patterns, teacher roles, students, and the school context. Teachers' understandings and perceptions of instructional approaches as part of

teacher cognition are thus worthy of exploring. The area of Chinese immersion is yet developed, and there has been limited number of recent research studies (De Courcy, 2002). In addition, none of the studies specifically examine the integration of content and language in the context of Chinese immersion. Thus, the research questions for this study are: how does the Chinese immersion teacher understand CBI? What instructional strategies the teacher uses to achieve the integration of language and content in the classroom?

Research Methods

The participant of this study—Ms. A (pseudonym) is a Chinese native speaker, who was born and grew up in China and moved to the US along with her family. Ms. A is a full-time Chinese (Mandarin Chinese) immersion teacher in a one-way immersion program of an urban school. Students who are enrolled in a one-way immersion program tend to have the same first language, in this case, English. At the time when this study was conducted, Ms. A had taught in the Chinese immersion program for four years. The data were collected through classroom observation and individual interview. The researcher observed one 3rd grade math lesson taught by Ms. A, and took field notes. A phone interview with the teacher followed three weeks after the observation. There were 14 students in the class with one Special Education student, and the lesson was 50 minutes. The interview lasted for 30 minutes and was audio recorded.

Understanding of CBI

Overall, Ms. A considered CBI as the main approach to immersion teaching and believed that designing content lessons with consistent attention to language was important but also challenging. When asked directly what her understanding of the CBI was during the interview, she replied that she considered the immersion teaching as equal to the CBI— teaching the subject matter such as math, science and social study through the target language:

> *Because when I first heard this phrase, my first reaction was, this is what us immersion teachers are doing. We integrate the language and the science, and integrate the language and the social study. My understanding is, the language is embedded in the pedagogy and in the content.*

To illustrate her point, she explained one strategy she used in the math lesson that the researcher observed as an example of reinforcing the academic talk. She put a note of a Chinese sentence describing certain academic content on every student' table. By doing so, students would be reminded constantly of the sentence pattern and quickly associate the content knowledge with the corresponding language. To further illustrate her point, she gave an example of her science lesson on atmosphere with the 7th graders. In the lesson, she had the students read a short article about the return of a spacecraft through the atmosphere. She explained that she had reinforced the language component by leading the students' discussion about different atmospheric layers and reactions the spacecraft caused

when crossing different layers. She emphasized that she helped students to say the relevant terminology accurately.

Ms. A was clear that the goal of immersion program was to teach both the language and the content. First, she brought up the idea of "academic talk", which she defined as "technical and academic discussion" and being something beyond the "conversational language". However, she also pointed out that it was challenging to engage students in academic discussions:

> *For example, academic talk is very important, and how you use the target language to do academic talk (is also important).*
>
> *…*
>
> *It's not just about the language. …and they have very good conversational language ability; however, when it comes to the classroom, they are not able to talk when you expect them to have some technical and academic discussions.*

She then compared the world language class with the English as a second language class, and emphasized that talk with an academic content should be the common focus in both classes. Immersion education as a branch of world language education should surely put the teaching of the "academic talk" in the priority:

> *It is happening in the English (as a second language) classrooms. They have been paying a lot of attention to how to transfer the students' high conversational level to accurate academic talk. We want to do the same thing in the world language classroom.*

In addition, when being asked about the identity, Ms. A agreed that she strongly identified herself as both a content teacher and a language teacher, and considered the dual identity as the basic requirement for the immersion teaching.

> R(esearcher): *I think you are doing pretty well. You identify yourself both as a content teacher and a language teacher. You combine the two identities.*

> A: *Absolutely, because immersion is very different, and this is the basic requirement.*

Practice of CBI

The learning objective of the math lesson the researcher observed was telling time with the number line. Ms. A had introduced how to use the number line to tell time in the previous lesson and she designed this lesson with more opportunities for students to practice. Three themes emerged regarding how the teacher tried to attend to both language and content in the lesson. First, the lesson was designed with a cyclical structure, which allowed multiple opportunities for students to revisit and explore the content and relevant target language. The teacher followed a reviewing-modeling-practicing procedure in the whole class instruction: she reviewed the concept of number line, demonstrated how to locate time on the number line by herself, and then picked on some students or the whole class to tell the time. In this way, the students had the chance to revisit what was the number line while being exposed to the target language, and also had the opportunity to use Chinese to talk about time and location. Ms. A also repeated the reviewing-modeling-practicing

procedure in a hands-on activity. The activity required students to describe pictures in Chinese, draw a number line, and cut and paste each picture on the appropriate position of the number line according to the time implied by each picture. Ms. A closely monitored students' progress when they were doing the task. For instance, for students who were unclear of the activity requirement, she repeated the reviewing step by explaining the activity again; for those who struggled with putting the pictures on the right position of the number line, she repeated the modeling step by doing demonstrations on the white board.

Second, the teacher used different techniques to guide students' attention to the target language form, so as to establish a strong link between language and content. At the beginning of the lesson, Ms. A led a warm-up activity, which was designed to reinforce students' Chinese vocabulary of time and date. In the activity, students needed to stand up when they heard the teacher mentioned their birth month or their daily routine time (e.g. *Stand up if you were born in January! Stand up if you got up at 7!*). Ms. A also used the questioning technique frequently either in whole class instruction or in individual interaction with students, ranging from questions eliciting simple answers like *what time is it now?* to questions checking students' understanding of the relation between time and the number line, like *How do you find half past six?* Furthermore, Ms. A used explicit correction to get students' attention on the accurate structure of the target language. Through correction, students were able to know what was acceptable in Chinese and what was not.

Third, Ms. A provided students with differentiated instruction on the basis of their language proficiency level. For example, in the hands-on activity, one student had trouble

writing down a descriptive sentence in Chinese for one of the daily routines, she helped her recall the Chinese characters by reminding him of the context where the characters could be used as well as handing him the textbook with those characters in it; the Special Education student had hard time understanding the activity, so she repeated every step to him, reviewed how time is located on the number line, offered multiple options for him to choose from when he could not give an answer himself, and even acted out the three daily routines she wrote on the board in order for him to have a better comprehension.

In general, Ms. A. paid close attention to students' comprehension of her instructional language and their production of Chinese while delivered the mathematic content, which proved her awareness of her dual identity as an immersion teacher. As she emphasized in the interview, "some basic sentence pattern must be repeated" and the focus of the academic language would help students express the academic content fluently and accurately, going beyond the conversational talk.

Discussion and Conclusion

Examining the process of content instruction while attending to the target language in this classroom provided a way of focusing on the building of bridges between content knowledge and the target academic registers, which must be integral to any immersion program or content-based program in which a second language is used to construct new subject knowledge. Describing these bridges contributes to an understanding of what might constitute effective instruction in such context. In addition, the investigation into the

teacher's perception and understanding about the CBI revealed that the teacher had a clear understanding of her role as an immersion teacher and the importance of using CBI to achieve the dual objectives in the immersion classroom, namely, learning the second language and the subject matter knowledge. As previous research suggested, teacher cognition can powerfully shape what teachers do and, consequently, the learning opportunities students receive. The interview data and observational data in this study show Ms. A has put her belief about CBI into practice. In other words, what Ms. A did in the math lesson—from warm-up activity, whole class instruction, to hands-on activity with individual teacher-student interaction, all serve to one goal, that is achieving the level that students engage in the mathematic discourse in Chinese, specifically, comprehending the instruction in Chinese and solving the mathematic tasks with Chinese. This is just what Ms. A articulated about her understanding of immersion teaching and CBI—students have chance to incidentally learn the second language through the exposure to the target language environment created by this particular form of education, and the second language should also be made explicit with purposeful instruction while it entangles with academic content, so that student can reach the sophistication and richness in their second language development.

Implications for the Teacher Education

Research has shown educational experience is one of the sources that shapes the teacher cognition. Given the strong link between the teacher cognition and practice the study has demonstrated, teacher education is essential in developing effective teaching practice. In the case of this study, to improve the effectiveness of immersion teaching, there

needs to be advancements in the education of immersion teachers. Learning a second or foreign language through immersion program is relatively new compared to the traditional approach, such as audio-lingual approach. Immersion teachers are facing different challenges, such as the absence of materials and resources that are specifically designed to integrate language and content, clear language standards, professional development programs designed to meet the unique needs of immersion teachers (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012). During the interview, Ms. A also mentioned that compared to some successful immersion program models at elementary level, immersion program at secondary level is still in its infancy and resources are in great needs. However, Ms. A indicated that the collaborations with other Chinese immersion teachers in the program and English language teachers to some extent compensated the shortage of available materials. Ms. A suggested that the weekly meeting of the Chinese immersion teacher team had been of great help in terms of learning different language pedagogies from others, and the meetings with English language teachers who taught the same group of students provided a forum for discussing the content instruction and classroom management. Thus, collaborations among teachers would be another area that teacher educators could focus on.

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Allison Lai   **Enhancing Student Engagement through Authentic Materials in a Chinese Classroom**

Abstract

There has been an increasing trend towards incorporating authentic materials into foreign language and cultural classrooms. Authentic materials reflect the kind of situation students may face in a foreign language-speaking environment.

They build bridges between language learners and the target culture. The trick of implementing authentic materials is not to edit the "text", but the "task". The author synthesizes the challenges when using authentic materials in language classrooms and provides several examples of integrating authentic materials in a beginner level Chinese class. The evidence-based reflection shows how authentic materials motivates students and adds a real-life element to their learning experiences.

Today I spent another 3 hours browsing the Internet. I found some photos, a website and several videos on YouTube. Yes, it is so time-consuming! Why can't I just ask the kids to count from one to ten and tell me their ages? Is the video about a Taiwanese family celebrating the birthday of a little girl important? What do Chinese number gestures have anything to do with kids who live a million miles away in the States?

Introduction

In the context of teaching foreign languages and cultures, authentic materials have been defined as samples that reflect a naturalness of form and an appropriateness of cultural and situational context that would be found in the language as used by native speaker. There has been an increasing trend towards their incorporation into foreign language and cultural classrooms for the past twenty years (Erbaggio, Gopalakrishnan, Hobbs and Liu, 2012). According to Melvin and Stout (1987), fully exploited, authentic texts give students direct access to the culture and help them use the new language authentically themselves, to communicate meaning in meaningful situations rather than for demonstrating knowledge of a grammar point or a lexical item.

> *After playing the YouTube video -Most Lucky and Unlucky Numbers for Chinese People (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QwvlAbisiRc), one of the 4th graders yelled loudly "No, I was born on April 14th" (the most unlucky number in Chinese culture is number 4). I had to comfort him and told him that it's OK. Relax! You are not Chinese. Not until that moment had I realized that the video could have such a huge impact on the students.*

Using Authentic Materials in the Foreign Language Classroom

Some educators argued that authentic materials may be too culturally biased. There are many headlines, adverts, signs, and so on that might require good knowledge of the cultural background (Tamo, 2009). Too many structures are mixed causing lower levels to have a hard time decoding the texts. Besides, the vocabulary of authentic materials might

not be relevant to the students' immediate needs. Polio (2014) pointed out that one of the most difficult aspects of using authentic materials with beginners is finding interesting and accessible materials. Moreover, the materials can become outdated quickly. Some teachers have said that using authentic materials takes up too much time. Erbaggio et al. (2012) suggested that students can experience anxiety when faced with authentic materials. Students may also experience frustration when they are unable to understand authentic language input, which may negatively impact their receptiveness to authentic materials.

Authentic materials should be used in accordance with students' ability and add that suitable tasks can be given to learners in which total understanding is not important (Tamo, 2009). Authentic materials reflect the kind of situation students may face in a foreign language-speaking environment. They also encourage and motivate students when they can **conquer** a real text. Although it will take some work to find and incorporate authentic materials and take class some time to help the students through the materials, students will benefit from exposure to language as it is really used.

Language and culture are inseparable. Through online authentic materials, I can create effective learning environments by making learning more social, enjoyable and meaningful. When students learn the games I used to play when I was their ages, I know that it is not a dull and mechanical lesson. I know they can share the same experience with children in Taiwan/China.

Implementing Authentic Materials

Authentic materials make a significant contribution to bridging the distance between language learners and the target culture by linking students to other language speakers and to target language texts (Sanchez-Lopez, 2006). They prepare learners for real life, meet learners' needs, affect learners' motivation positively, encourage teachers to adopt effective teaching methods and present authentic information about culture. The use of authentic materials is associated with the development of the communicative approach in language teaching. Matsuta (n.d.) emphasized the importance of implementing videotaped materials in a second language classroom. Videotaped materials offer more clues for comprehension to the students than other materials because of the visual contexts and nonverbal clues, such as gestures and facial expressions. He further explained that using authentic materials not only is effective in teaching the target language but also in teaching the target culture. Video programs from the target country provide a rich source of information about the target culture, including a country's verbal and nonverbal ways of communicating.

Authentic materials might be difficult for language learners, especially beginners. The trick is not to edit and grade the "text", but to edit the "task" according to students' abilities. Melvin and Stout (1987) suggested that the best way to reduce the initial anxiety is to design exercises that draw the students' attention to things in the text they will understand. Teachers can help students realize that they can interact productively with a text that appears at first to be too difficult. As Gilmore (2011) commented, authentic materials offer a much richer source of input in the classroom and have the potential to

raise learners' awareness of a wide range of discourse features and more likely to encourage the development of a broader range of communicative competencies in learners. Below are examples showing how to implement authentic materials into a beginner level Chinese class.

∗ **Children's Newspaper in Chinese**

The purpose of using this authentic material (children's newspaper in Taiwan) is for students to identify numbers in Chinese characters. Students will also recognize the fact that **CHINESE WAS WRITTEN IN VERTICAL COLUMNS** from top to bottom traditionally. Chinese write the dates in the order of year, month and then day (年/月/日). In Chinese culture, the week normally starts on Monday.


Numbers in Chinese character

Characters Written vertically

∗ **Comparing the Tally Systems**

The character "正" consists of five strokes:

Chinese use "正" to mark numbers when voting, scoring or ordering food. According to ACTFL Standards for Foreign language Learning 4.2, students who learn a foreign language should be able to demonstrate understanding of the concept of culture through comparison of the culture studied and their own. When doing class activities, the teacher can ask the students to use Chinese tally marks. Using the tally system to count numbers also aligns with Standard 3.1, which is to connect other disciplines through the foreign language.
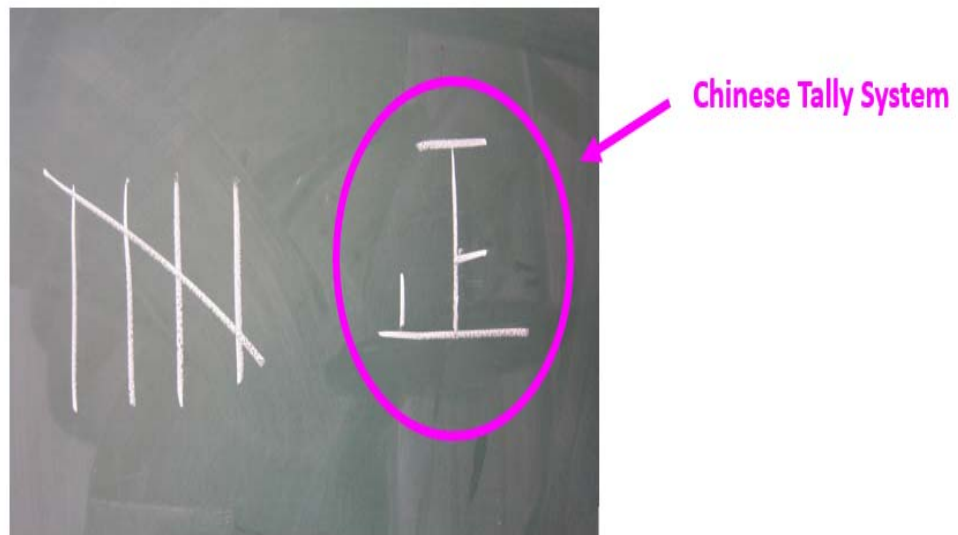
∗ **Chinese Number Gestures- Counting 1-10 in Chinese**

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mt0UeTwIet0

Chinese tend to use one hand to signify the numbers from one to ten. This method may have been developed to bridge the many varieties of Chinese—for example, the numbers 4 and 10 (四, 十) are hard to distinguish even among Chinese. Some suggest that it is also used by business people during bargaining when they wish for more privacy in public.

∗ **Invitations (Wedding, anniversary or birthday party invitation)**

The Year of Rabbit

Creative Ideas

Lucky Color- Red

Apart from learning the way to great people during Chinese New Year, to address people in a Chinese letter format and obtain simple information from the letter, there are a few culture elements embedded in this invitation. For example, student will learn that year 2001 is the year of the rabbit in Chinese zodiac. The color red represents happiness, joy and good fortune. Chinese are very creative in terms of mixing the meaning and pronunciation with different languages ("兔" is pronounced as "tu". Here the designer borrows the character "兔" to symbolize the year of rabbit and it also sounds like Happy New Year "to" you.)

> When *I see the excitement appearing on the students' faces, I know the magic comes from using the authentic materials. I enjoy answering questions about my people, country and culture. I feel a satisfaction beyond description, the satisfaction from both the students and myself.*

Conclusion

Deeper learning occurs when learning is social, active, contextual, engaging and student-owned. Such learning maximizes students' internalization of the taught knowledge and skills, and results in a meaningful understanding of material and content (Polio, 2014). Authentic materials stimulate students' interest and motivation, expose students to different styles of expression and offer them a window into another culture (Martin, 2012). Bringing authentic materials into the classroom can be motivating for the students, as it adds a real-life element to the student's learning experience. The use of authentic materials is significant since it increases students' motivation for learning, explores the learners being exposed to the real language and reflects the changes in the use of a language (Berardo, 2006). In addition, the use of authentic materials results in a more positive

attitude toward the target culture. It allows students to connect with the target culture in a more personal way rather than through someone else's narrative. Once students are outside the safe-controlled language learning environment, the learners will not encounter the artificial language of the classroom but connect to the real world and already have some insight into how the language is really used.

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Grace Kellermeier   TOTY

Abstract:

This article describes how a French teacher in a large school district became the district teacher of the year. It goes on to explain a few highlights of the teacher of the year experience. Lastly, the article outlines the impact that a world languages teacher as teacher of the year had on the district and all of the world languages teachers.

"For her ability to inspire a love of learning in students of all backgrounds and abilities, we welcome to the stage Grace Kellermeier, Volusia County's 2015 Teacher of the Year." These are words that return to me, as if in a dream. Serving my district as a representative of all of our excellent teachers is a humbling honor. There are so many great teachers, working hard every day, doing the best they can do on any given day. As I was approached to write this article about how a French teacher became the teacher of the year for a large, Florida school district, I was reminded of my recurring question, "Why me?"

On several occasions, the newspapers published articles with erroneous headlines, such as "best teacher named." There is no best teacher. A teacher of the year is merely a representative of dedicated teachers. Good teachers seek to continuously improve, to practice the flexible mindset that they encourage in their students. Well-intentioned people sometimes congratulated me and attributed my selection to my doctoral degree. Some asked about national board certification. I knew that had to be based on more than

that, because I am more to my students and my community than my credentials. I returned to the chairperson of the teacher of the year selection committee and asked her why I was selected. She outlined the process and shed light on the basis of my particular selection.

In early September in Volusia County, each school solicits nominations for teacher of the year. Although early in the school year, a generous colleague took the time to write a beautiful, standard one-page nomination. The greatest surprise in this whole process was being selected by my school-site colleagues. Among the nominees were a veteran English teacher, a strong leader and mentor to many of us, and our drama teacher, who works tirelessly for her students and the program. At that time, the district requests an application from school nominees. The application includes a 2-page educational history and professional development activities, and a 2-page response to each of 4 questions, such as how we incorporate the core standards, our philosophy of education, how we impact student learning, and how we define leadership. The application also requires 3 letters of recommendation. Traditionally, one is from the principal, and I requested one from my nominating colleague, as well as one from a former student. This former student was a sophomore on-track for dropout, but saw something in her French teacher that made her want to retrieve her missed credits and graduate. One of my most precious treasures after all these years is a hand-written thank you card from her father.

Volusia has 46 elementary schools, 13 middle schools, 10 high schools, plus a virtual school. The selection committee includes members of the community, teachers, administrators and parents. The reading committee reads all 70 applications and ranks

them. The whole group reads the top 12 applications and ranks them. Of those, the top 5 are considered to be "finalists." At that point, the superintendent and principals entered my classroom to announce that I was a finalist. My first thought was "Oh gosh, I'm probably going to address 1,000 people!" The 5 finalists are observed and interviewed by another committee. Another lesson and separate interview are conducted and videotaped for each of the 5 finalists, edited and shown at the banquet. The committee chairperson told me that I was ranked at the top by the reading committee, the classroom observation and the interview committees. There is no discussion among committee members during the ranking process and the chairperson is the only one who knows the identity of the next teacher of the year, prior to the banquet. She told me that they seek a well-rounded individual who will represent the district teachers well. I asked her to share with me the specific reasons for my high rankings.

Partnerships with community to bring real world experiences into the classroom, as well as her own life experiences. I have led annual student travel to France. I have enjoyed support from the local French baker, who has provided pastries for our French club and French classes. He also participated with me in a reading grant for the French classroom and is a regular speaker in the AP French classroom. The students in my classroom also benefit from French-speaking parents and relatives, community members, as well as any French-speaking exchange students. When available, these are always invited into the classroom, to share their language and their experiences. At cross-country running camp one summer, I was immediately approached by a collegiate runner who had heard one of the coaches was a French teacher. A Congo genocide survivor, he

frequently sought my company during the week to practice his childhood French, his mother's language. From the eastern side of his country, he also speaks Swahili, like his Kenyan colleagues at the camp. He agreed to share his incredible story of survival with our team. That particular "classroom" was under a tree.

My own upbringing is quite international. Born and raised in rural Scotland (my village still doesn't have a traffic light!), my family moved to Abu Dhabi, UAE, for 4 years, my middle school years. There, I started to learn French in the classroom, aged 9. Although code-switching in Scotland between the local Scots dialect and English, it was in the Middle East that I became aware of the richness of people, their diversity, their languages and their cultures. I attended a Lebanese international school Saturday to Wednesday, enjoying the local weekend of Thursday and Friday. At 13, my family immigrated to the United States, where my education in diversity continued. At 15, a senior in high school, I also started studying Spanish. At Rutgers University, I added Italian and Latin. I value the power of languages.

Instills trust and confidence in students. I believe that relationships between people are the most important aspect of education. Students are often motivated to perform for a teacher whom they respect, who shows them respect. Learning comes from motivation, and teachers must try to motivate those who don't motivate themselves. I was not successful with all students, and there are surely a few students who thought that the nominating committee is crazy, but I never stop trying-every day is a new day and the slate of negative history is wiped clean! I teach French 1 through AP French and try to instill trust and confidence in all students, particularly for speaking and leading French

Club. Everyone is treated with respect in the classroom, regardless of the natural gifts they've been given. Some require a bit of extra care, and classmates quickly learn how to interact. I cherish the relationships that have been created. After up to 4 years together, many students and their families become an extension of my own.

Team player who took over the cross country coaching duties mid-season. Over my 18 years at New Smyrna Beach High School, I have assisted many coaches who were starting out and wanted some seasoned support. I have always been a runner and enjoy coaching cross-country, but can only assist for a couple of years until the new coach has solid footing, so to speak. I then have to step away to dedicate myself to teaching. As the only French teacher, I teach 5 preps, sometimes without a planning period, and coaching stretches me too thin. The week after the teachers at my school nominated me as our teacher of the year, the cross-country coach resigned under suspicious circumstances. My nominating colleague joked that I should hide! In my mind, kids are first. My conscience required that I step up the next day, offer stability to the team and their concerned families, and lead them through a long and successful season, with the help of the new assistant coach. There was nothing else I could do.

Lifelong learner, so she never loses touch with how students feel when they are learning something new. I do love to learn. I have a bachelor's degree from Rutgers University in French, with a specialization in philosophy. My master's degree was in Education Leadership, because I wanted to learn how school administration functions, how the pieces all fit together into the big picture. Throughout my study, I shared relevant learning with students. During the curriculum courses, I involved them in

projects. My doctorate is in curriculum and instruction, with a specialization in foreign language instruction. They were helpful in the formulation and completion of my dissertation. For a year, my AP students' tests were printed on recycled copies of the dissertation. Once finished, they would flip it over and start reading it, and I'd overhear them later, sharing anything they found to be interesting. This special group was a part of the most difficult year in my studies. I was awarded a scholarship by the French Consulate in Miami to attend the *Centre de Linguistiques Appliqués* in Besançon, France, and enjoyed a 3-week home-stay. My French fluency is a proud product of the classroom, first as a student and then as a teacher. This was the first time I "lived" in France, and it was very exciting. I do enjoy travelling and insist on spending time learning some of the local language. I quickly realized how vulnerable it feels to be a novice learner and saw implications for the world language teacher. I am always learning a language, to remind me how humbling it feels to be a learner.

I didn't sleep properly in the days that preceded the banquet. Volusia County does an excellent job at celebrating our teachers of the year. There is a reception, attended by all 70 teachers of the year and their principals. At this reception, a professional photograph is taken of each nominee, which will be the photo for the school sites, the newspaper and one for the teacher of the year for the district office. The banquet is held at the Daytona Beach Hilton Oceanfront, and it is a grand affair. Each nominee is assigned a round table for 10. Each of the 5 finalists is assigned 3 tables for 10. Including the school board members, sponsors and guests, there are almost 1,000 people. The 2014 teacher of the year had organized the finalists, to help us to create a relationship and get

to know each other before the banquet, and to remind us to prepare some remarks to share, just in case. I was supported at the banquet by my family, friends, colleagues, most of my school administration team, my beloved former principal and 2 former students (the drop-out wannabe and her husband, to whom I taught Spanish, and at whose wedding I officiated! Really.) I didn't go to school that day, as I had so many visitors in town. I couldn't eat. I was afraid to drink a glass of wine. We arrived at the Hilton, who graciously offer a complimentary room to each of the 5 finalists. At the banquet, we hear remarks, have a meal, process the teachers of the year, each has a photo with the school board president and superintendent and receives a bag that is filled with goodies from local sponsors and businesses. Everyone watches the videos of the 5 finalists. The current teacher of the year delivers a speech. I had to watch the DVD, later, to be able to process her words-I was so nervous that I couldn't attend to her lovely speech when she was standing on the stage, directly in front of me. Lastly, they announce the new teacher of the year. My life changed in that moment.

I had been so nervous but I felt a strange sense of calm wash over me. The people at my tables erupted. I took my cards with me to the stage, received a plaque, posed for pictures and received more jubilation than I have ever experienced. I spoke to the large group with what I hope was appreciation, sincerity and humility. I proclaimed our pride in finally having a world languages teacher represent the district. I explained what we do, the circumstances in which we teach, the varied populations that we serve, how we complement and enrich the other subject areas. I knew it was a large platform from which to speak our message, to introduce ourselves to anyone who had not had the pleasure of

hearing a colleague from the world languages. None of our 46 elementary schools has a FLES program, so we are not represented in that large part of the audience. Even at middle and high schools with world languages teachers, there are many misconceptions about whom we serve. Our teaching challenges are often inadvertently minimized by those in the core who teach whole population more publicly. In addition to teaching those students who are headed to advanced degrees, we teach those whose paths are less academic, usually sitting in the same classroom. Many of us teach more than 4 preps, sometimes more than 1 world language or other subject, always striving to increase enrollment in our programs.

Over the course of the year, I spoke at many community events, such as Phi Delta Kappa and teacher recruitment events. I was interviewed on the radio and once on TV. What had originally been a terrible nervousness to speak to 1,000 people, I started to embrace it. I never read a speech because I don't like to be read to. I prefer to be spoken to. So, I plan what I'll say, write bullet points on flashcards and take those with me to the podium. That way, I feel like I'm just speaking to people and telling them stories, with full emotion and facial expression, like a passionate and engaging teacher.

I submitted my state teacher of the year application, which is very similar to the Volusia County Schools application. Commissioner Pam Stewart's office contacted all 74 district teachers of the year, inviting us to Orlando for the state "round table." We stayed at Disney's Boardwalk for 3 nights, enjoyed professional development with the commissioner and her staff, were given gifts by the sponsors, met and had photos with the governor. The naming of the Florida teacher of the year 2015 (for the year ahead)

took place at a gala event, held at the Hard Rock at Universal Studios. It was very stimulating to be in such esteemed company, including dedicated professional educators who do amazing things for their students and the Commissioner's staff.

Commissioner Stewart started a teacher lead network, to foster growth among the district teachers of the year. We were invited to engage throughout the year in professional development for leadership, coaching and mentoring other teachers. This was facilitated by the New Teacher Center, a national organization that is based in California. There were webinars as well as face-to-face meetings, all paid for by the FL Department of Education. There was a Governor's Summit, which took place in Tallahassee, and allowed us to see the Capitol, House, Senate and Governor's Mansion. I met and spoke to each of the members of the State Board of Education at a reception and attended a school board meeting. Commissioner Stewart noticed me as I slipped into a seat at the back and immediately recognized me by name, district and discipline. The World Languages were represented! Although the DOE paid for travel and lodging, the group of 74 district teachers of the year dwindled down to 14 of us by the end of the year. Many were not supported by their principals, on whose budget the substitute funding fell. I am thankful that my principal was able to support the commissioner's vision.

We have all benefitted from the recognition brought by having a teacher of the year in the World Languages. We have not had a district specialist in 6 years. At the time of the recession, world languages was combined with ESOL. The ESOL coordinator and her replacement worked hard but were not able to allocate much support to the world language teachers, particularly as we were facing 54 end of course assessments in 9

languages. Last summer, the district office asked me if I would be willing to do curriculum leadership as an extended duty. I accepted, knowing how we have missed district support. The president of our association worked tirelessly to modify and continue our world languages festival, a celebration of language-learning in Volusia County. Some teachers continued to participate but many teachers have fallen away over the years, feeling unsupported at the district level. Excited to have "one of us" lead the pre-planning meeting, we took a step in the right direction, once again. Despite an insanely busy year, we were able to adopt textbooks and write 54 exams, with varying levels of reliability. These would not have occurred without the trust, support and flexibility of the teachers who volunteered to pitch in. I will be forever indebted to my colleagues in the world languages. Together, we are such a team. I made our case to the district for the need to bring back a world languages district position. I was fortunate to survive last year, let alone sustain it. In trying to do too many things, nothing is done well, and my AP French scores felt the pinch. In early August, a district position was announced and no fewer than 5 people called or texted me to ensure that I had noticed. I applied, interviewed and was brought to the district on the first day of pre-planning. As it turns out, I am a district-level resource for both world languages and PE teachers! Although I am still processing the loneliness of being away from my students and missing daily contact with those who share my passion for the world languages, I am embracing the challenges that come with a new position. I am confident that I am in the right position, called to a different type of world languages service and advocacy.

In the final speech that I delivered as Volusia County's teacher of the year, a speech that the five 2016 finalists probably had to watch later on DVD to process, I spoke about the diversity that is required to make us great teachers to a diversity of learners. Each of us brings something different to our craft, whether it's an international background, a passion for travel, empathy for those who have survived a rough childhood, a passion for technology or a home-grown hero, as is the case for our current teacher of the year. Representing Volusia County teachers was one of the greatest experiences of my life. It has been humbling to be surrounded by so many great educators, dedicated to the success of their students and colleagues. Much like the diversity of the students in our classrooms, each educator brings his or her own set of experiences to the profession. It takes our collective effort to reach all of our students. Thank you for your interest in my teacher of the year experience and the changes that it brought about for all of the world language teachers in Volusia County. Thank you, also, for your passion for teaching world languages and the gifts that you offer to your students and colleagues. I wish you a wonderful school year

Grace Kellermeier lived in Crossford, Scotland, though 4th grade. When her family moved to Abu Dhabi, UAE, she attended the National College of Choueifat through 7th grade. She skipped 8th and 9th grades when her family immigrated to the United States and she completed 10th through 12th grades in Freehold, NJ. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in French with a minor in secondary education from Rutgers College, a master's degree in education leadership from Stetson University and an EdD in curriculum and instruction from UCF. She also holds Florida certification in French and Spanish and is Volusia County's 2015 teacher of the year. She taught French and Spanish at New Smyrna Beach High School for 18 years and is now the district resource teacher for world languages and physical education. She lives in New Smyrna Beach with her husband of 16 years and 2 rescued dogs. (Her Dad lives down the road.) She enjoys church, family, traveling, running and knitting.