



I Who is the ESL learner?

Background

Who is the ESL learner?

This section of the guide provides teachers with background on recent research as well as resources for further exploration. The video clips in this segment provide an introduction to the students and their experiences. ESL learners are individuals who are learning English as a second, third or fourth language. The terms learner and student are used interchangeably in the literature.

Changing demographics in our schools require educators to develop and implement strategies that meet the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse ESL students. At the 2003 CERIS conference on 'Immigrants in Toronto Schools', researchers presented findings from a three-year study of immigrant children in the Toronto District School Board (Anisef & Kilbride, 2003). Students in the study, requested that teachers be better informed of the immigration and refugee processes (CERIS, 2003). This information would help teachers understand more about students' needs. Through our interviews it became apparent that teachers must also be informed about ESL students' experiences on the first day. In heeding this advice, the next two sections will explain to teachers why it is important to develop awareness of immigrant and refugee experiences and ESL students' first day of school.

Immigrant and Refugee Experiences

According to the 2002 Immigration and Protection Act, newcomers to Canada can be divided into two categories: refugees and immigrants (Canadian Immigration and Citizenship, 2003). This distinction recognizes that newcomers move to host countries for a variety of reasons. Some newcomers come to enhance their economic situation or education by choice, while others can be political and/or religious refugees (Trueba, Cheng & Ima, 1993).

For most refugees, unlike immigrants, returning to their homelands is rarely a viable option. Refugees may have suffered persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, membership in a social group, and/or due to expression of political opinion (UNHCR, 2000). The tragic and often violent personal histories of refugee children (Kaprielian-Churchill & Churchill, 1994) contrast starkly with the experiences of immigrant children. The refugee process can be a frustrating, demoralizing and intensive experience. It involves hearing dates and regular meetings for families and dependents. Issues that children have to contend with include family separation, economic pressure, lack of adequate housing or health care, social isolation, racism, fear of deportation, detention, and transformation of family (First & Carerra, 1988, cited by Cloud, 1991). These experiences affect students academically, socially and

emotionally. Teachers must be informed of the process in order to be cognizant of the stresses that may be placed on refugee students and their families. Those who are not familiar with the process may place undue stress on a student, penalizing him or her for missing class, being distracted or submitting incomplete work.

The immigrant experience is also challenging and many of the issues overlap with those of the refugee experience. Immigrants cope with a lengthy Canadian application process, separation from family, as well as balancing new employment, housing, and culture. According to Canadian Immigration and Citizenship policy (2003), immigration is open to those who fall under one of the following categories:

Skilled Workers Sector: People whose education and work experience will help them find work and make a home for themselves as permanent residents in Canada.

Business Sector: People who have business experience, a net worth of CDN \$300,000-\$800,000 and can make an investment of CDN \$400,000. Self-employed individuals must demonstrate their ability to contribute to cultural, athletic or farm life in Canada.

Family Sponsorship: This category can include an individual or family who is sponsored by a Canadian citizen and/or family. The immigrants are expected to be supported whether it be financially or emotionally by their sponsor for 3-10 years. This is a dual immigration process meaning that both sides are required to submit applications and sponsorship forms.

International Adoption: This category involves a complicated process and consists of an approved Canadian citizen adopting a child (18 years or younger) from overseas. This is a layered process with adoption papers, immigration papers, and approval being required from both countries.

Provincial Nomination: This category involves a province selecting skilled individuals to move to a designated region. Conditions apply to application approval and each province has different criteria.

Regardless of reasons for immigration, the process of adjustment is challenging for all. The role of the school system and teachers is very important. Researchers of the Vancouver School Board suggest that a teacher's awareness of culture shock scaffolds students for success (Helmer & Eddy, 1996). As agents of socialization, teachers may be a student's first contact with their new culture (Wong-Fillmore & Snow, 2000). Many new immigrants and refugees come from linguistic backgrounds which are different from those in Canada. The fact that cross-cultural awareness is important is not new to teachers, but often the knowledge does not translate into practice (Roberts, 1998). Awareness of immigrant and refugee issues can lead to better teaching, communication, and learning for students, teachers and families. Importantly, awareness should inform more equitable teaching practices.

The First Day of School

Teachers are often unaware of the extent of difficulties that immigrant and refugee children experience in their first weeks at a new school in Canada. One solution is for teachers to relate to ESL students' personal experiences or colleagues' experiences. A starting point is knowledge of what it is like to move to a new country where both the environment and the language are foreign. This knowledge allows teachers to identify with students and parents as well as to support them through this challenging period. In the following excerpt, Elizabeth Coelho describes the culture shock that some newcomers experience upon arrival:

The individual may experience great emotional fluctuation between feelings of curiosity, adventure, and optimism, and feelings of sadness, loss, and despair. Even voluntary immigrants experience feelings of grief in response to the loss of family and the loss of the culture that sustained them and gave them a sense of identity (1998, p.27).

Teachers also need to understand the factors that can contribute to stress and challenges during the early weeks. The students in this video repeatedly expressed concern over their inability to communicate in English. Some students expressed frustration that their teachers and peers lacked understanding about their situation upon their arrival. Other factors that can contribute to elevated levels of stress in newcomer students include: 1) place of birth, 2) reasons for migration, 3) cultural background and traditions, 4) experience with Western education, 5) level of literacy in the first language (L1), 6) previous exposure to regular schooling, 7) the grade level entered and 8) the setting previously lived in urban, rural, or for example, suburban (Edwards, 1998; Genesee, 1999).

It is important that schools be prepared to receive new ESL students in order to diminish the students' level of stress. Advanced preparation ensures a positive school entrance experience for students and their families. There are a number of strategies schools can adopt to make newcomers feel more welcome. A few of these are listed below.

Welcome Programs

A welcome program is an introduction to the school and Canadian education system. Some welcome programs are run by a reception committee. The programs' aims include introducing students and parents to the school and educational system, directing ESL students and their parents to resources in the school and the community, raising awareness of the various departments or subjects in the school, and creating networks of staff, other parents and/or students.

Interpreters

Parents and students can be made more comfortable with the use of interpreters. This service immediately sends a message to newcomers that their language is welcome in the school. Sometimes parents will bring their own interpreter, such as a family member, to the school upon registration. Bilingual staff members can also act as interpreters. If no one is available upon registration, a follow-up interview can be arranged with an interpreter from the community or the school board. Students can also act as a support. A student interpreter is beneficial for ESL students when they arrive. Teachers can also help by partnering the new student with a volunteer student who speaks the same first language (Edward, 1998).

Names

Parents and children from other countries may not share the same last name. It is important for teachers and administration to find out the correct names of both children and parents and also to find out how they would like to be addressed (Edward, 1998).

The Visual Environment

Many schools in Canada now place welcome signs in multiple languages. However, an environment that truly values diversity will go further than this. Some schools have placed photographs of teachers in the entrance and indicated the languages each teacher speaks. Other schools have made signs in multiple languages that direct students and parents. These signs can often be generated with the help of parents.

Resources

Books and Journal Articles

- Ashworth, M., & H.P. Wakefield. (1994). *Teaching the world's children: ESL for ages three to seven*. Toronto, ON: Pippin Publishing Company.
- Coelho, E. (1998). *Teaching and learning in multicultural schools*. Toronto, ON: Multilingual Matters.
- Edwards, V. (1998). *The power of Babel: Teaching and learning in multicultural classrooms*. Stoke-on-Trent, U.K: Trentham Books.
- Helmer, S., & Eddy C. (1996). *Look at me when I talk to you: ESL learners in non-ESL classrooms*. Toronto, ON: Pippin Publishing Company.
- Kaprielian-Churchill, I., & Churchill, S. (1994). *The pulse of the world: Refugees in our schools*. Toronto, ON: The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education Press.
- Lucas, T. (1997). *Into, through and beyond the secondary school: Social transitions for immigrant youths*. CA: CAL Publishing.
- Patel, N., Power, T. C., & Bhavangri, N. P. (1996). Socialization values and practices of immigrant parents: Correlates of modernity and acculturation. *Child Development*, 67, 302-313.
- Perkins, L. M. (2000). New immigrants and education: Challenges and issues. *Educational Horizons*, 78(2), 67-71.

Websites

- Citizenship and Immigration in Canada, <http://www.cic.gc.ca>
- Children's Rights <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k1/children/child3.html>
- Immigration Info and Resources
<http://www.geocities.com/kathrynewilson/immigrationinfo.html>
- United Nations Commission on Human Rights for Refugees. www.unhcr.ch

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Immigrant and Refugee Experiences

Video Excerpt:

In these video clips, students discuss their reasons for immigrating to Canada and the challenges they experienced in adjusting to a new life. We suggest that you watch the section titled *Immigrant and Refugee Experiences*, and complete the activities below. A screen will indicate when you should stop the tape.

Discussion Questions:



- a. What are some of the main reasons given by students for immigrating to Canada? Can you think of additional reasons for immigration?
- b. How might the reasons for immigration to a country differ from that of seeking asylum as a refugee? What are the similarities?
- c. What information do you need about your ESL students' background in order to understand their experiences?
- d. How would you obtain information about ESL students' (residency) status in Canada?
- e. What problems do you think you might encounter obtaining this kind of information?
- f. What difficulties do students experience in moving to Canada? How might the immigrant experience differ from the refugee experience?
- g. What are the major changes in the students' lives?
- h. What might be stressful for new immigrant/refugee students at school? What can teachers and/or administration do to reduce the stress these students are experiencing both in and out of school?
- i. How can teachers and administrators learn more about the issues facing ESL students?

Individual or Group Activity:

Part A - Immigrant Versus Refugee Experience

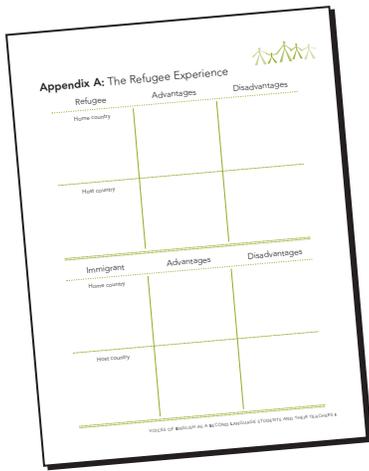


Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials:

Photocopies of Appendix A: Immigrant and Refugee Comparison Grid

The purpose of this activity is to explore reasons for immigration to or taking refuge in a new country as well as to acquaint teachers with the similarities and differences between the immigrant and the refugee experience. The refugee experience can be a turbulent process shadowed by uncertainty. Students may have lived in countries plagued by war, famine and/or other hardships. Their families may have been forced to flee in order to survive. Immigration has more of an element of choice and security.



To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps. We suggest reflecting in your journal in place of the group discussion. Complete steps 3 to 5. Once you have completed the activity, ask your students for feedback on your ideas. You can record your findings in a two-by-two grid similar to the one provided below (Appendix A).

To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Divide the teachers into groups of two or three.
- 2) Give each group a photocopy of Appendix A.
- 3) Instruct the groups to record their opinions on the grid.
- 4) Ask each group to compare the immigrant experience to the refugee experience.
- 5) As a group discuss the implications the immigrant and refugee experience would have on a child's schooling.

Copy of Appendix A for the Facilitator

Refugee	Advantages	Disadvantages
Home country	<i>e.g. family, friends</i>	<i>e.g. fear of persecution</i>
Host country		

Immigrant	Advantages	Disadvantages
Home country		
Host country		

Individual or Group Activity: Part B - Culture Shock

Time: 20 – 30 minutes

Materials:

Overhead transparency of *Appendix B: Four Stages of Culture Shock*

Appendix B: Four stages of culture shock has been adapted from Brown, H. D. (2000) *Principles of language learning and teaching*, Fourth Edition, Prentice Hall Regents p.184-5.

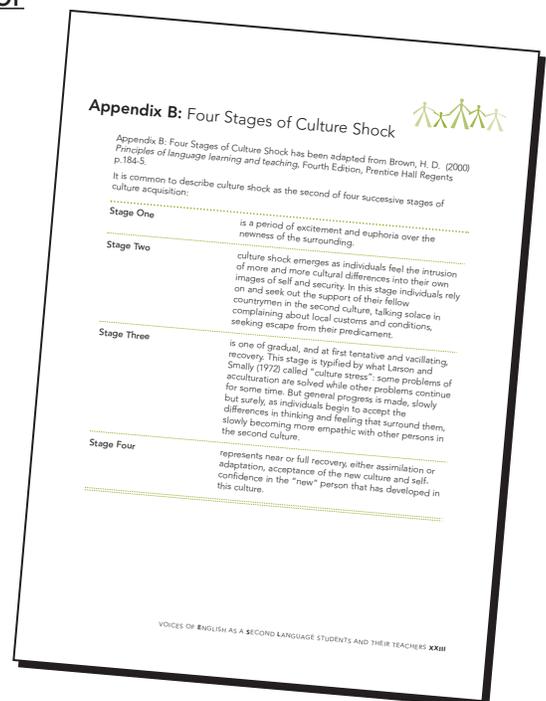
The purpose of this activity is to familiarize teachers with the four stages of culture shock in general and the disorientation new ESL students might experience upon arrival in their new host country in particular. Culture shock is the disorientation that people feel when they have moved to a culture that is considerably different from the previous culture (Helmer & Eddy, 1996).

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps and the copy of the overhead for the facilitator. We suggest reflecting on your personal experiences with each of the stages (step #3). Use your journal to record your ideas.

To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Ask the teachers to write their definition(s) of culture shock.
- 2) Invite teachers to share their definitions with the rest of the group.
- 3) Place the transparency on the overhead and invite teachers to read through the stages.
- 4) Invite teachers who have lived for a year or more in another country (and/or in another language) to share the extent to which they have experienced any or all of the stages of culture acquisition presented in Appendix B.
- 5) Ask teachers to reflect with the person next to them on the discussion and what this tells them about what their students are experiencing?
- 6) Discuss the implications of culture shock on students' performance in school.



Copy of Appendix B for the Facilitator

The Four Stages of Culture Shock

It is common to describe culture shock as the second of four successive stages of culture acquisition:

Stage One- is a period of *excitement* and *euphoria* over the newness of the surrounding.

Stage Two- culture shock- emerges as individuals feel the intrusion of more and more cultural differences into their own images of self and security. In this stage individuals rely on and seek out the support of their fellow countrymen in the second culture, taking solace in *complaining* about local customs and conditions, seeking escape from their current predicament.

Stage Three- is one of gradual, and at *first tentative and vacillating, recovery*. This stage is typified by what Larson and Smally (1972) called "culture stress": some problems of acculturation are solved while other problems continue for some time. But general progress is made, slowly but surely, as individuals begin to accept the differences in thinking and feeling that surround them, slowly becoming more empathic with other persons in the second culture.

Stage Four- represents near or full recovery, either assimilation or adaptation, acceptance of the new culture and self-confidence in the "new" person that has developed in this culture.

Practicum or In-class Activity: Talking to ESL Students

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: None

The purpose of this activity is to help teachers learn about their students' life experiences through informal interviews. If you are a practicum student you may not have access to ESL students and wish to interview colleagues in your classroom or family in place of students. Take time to talk with each student or colleague on a one-to-one basis during a quiet time in class, recess, lunch or after school. Ask your interviewee:

- how they feel about moving to Canada,
- how they feel about leaving their home country,
- the difficulties they are having in adjusting to Canadian life and
- how you might be able to help make this adjustment process easier for them



You may need to enlist the aid of a translator. Ask another student, colleague, parent, or community member for help if necessary.

Try to find out more about your students' immigration and/or refugee experience by inviting their parents for an informal meeting. Be aware of parents' comfort levels as to how much information they are willing to share. Find out the major changes and/or differences that parents feel their children are experiencing in and out of school.

Personal Reflection Activity: My Top 10 List

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Journal and pencil



This activity helps you reflect on personal experiences and relate them to those of parents and students in the school. Has your family ever moved to a country or location during your school life (primary – university)? Did you or your children have to enter a new school or school system? If you were a parent, what would you want the teacher and the school administrator(s) to do to orient your child to the new educational system? Create a list of procedures or principles that school administrators and teachers should follow in dealing with your child. Feel free to extend beyond ten items on your list.

When you have finished, look at your list and decide which items are part of your current instructional strategies and which ones you need to emphasize more.



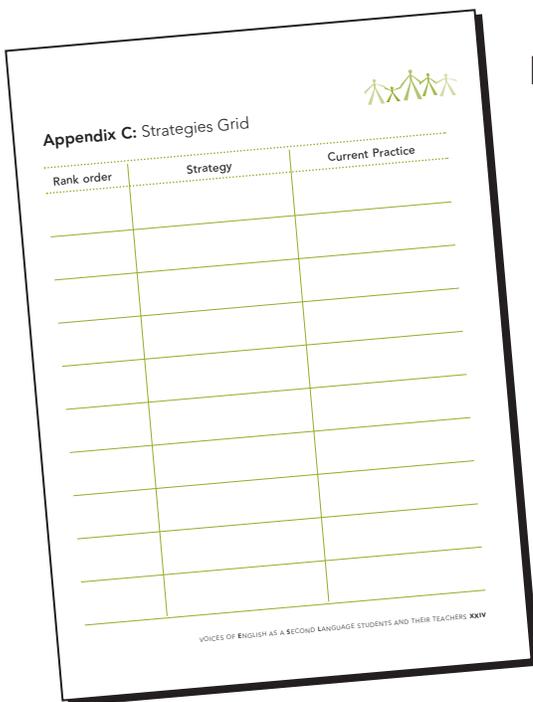
The First Day of School

Video Excerpt:

In these video clips, students discuss their experiences of their first day of school in Canada. We suggest that you watch the section titled *The First Day of School*, and complete the activities below. A screen will indicate when you should stop the tape.

Discussion Questions:

- What are the students' main concerns about their first day at school?
- According to the video, why is the first day of school such a big issue for students?
- What were the stresses for students, especially at the primary level?
- Is it easier for students of this age to enter school as a new student?
- What accommodations need to be made for the new student upon his/her arrival?
- In what way does staff need to be prepared in order to receive parents and students in a welcoming manner?
- What can a teacher do on the first day to help the new student overcome the anxiety of being in a new country and school?



Appendix C: Strategies Grid

Rank order	Strategy	Current Practice

VOICES OF ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENTS AND THEIR TEACHERS XXXV

Individual or Group Activity: Part A – Strategies for Accommodation



Time: 30 minutes (Steps 1-3 and Discussion)

Materials:

Photocopies of the grid in Appendix C: Strategies Grid

Teachers need to prepare themselves to help ESL students cope with the transition between old and new education systems. The purpose of this activity is to devise implementation strategies to enhance the accommodation procedures currently practiced in schools.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps. We suggest reflecting in your journal in place of the group discussion. Complete steps 1 to 5. Use your journal to reflect on the strategies for implementation (step #5).

To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) As a group, brainstorm tips and or strategies for accommodating new students upon their arrival. Record the ideas on the board or on chart paper.
- 2) Hand out a copy of the grid to each teacher.
- 3) Ask the teachers to rank the items on their lists. Rank the items on a scale using 1 for the most important and 7 for the least important item.
- 4) Ask the teachers to complete the next part of the activity on their own. Using the handout from Appendix C, ask the teachers to add more tips and/or strategies to the class list.

Sample of Appendix C for the Facilitator:

Rank order	Tip/Strategy	Current Practice
1	<i>Parents and students meet ESL teacher, mainstream teacher, principal and vice-principal.</i>	<i>Student meets all parties. Parents meet the mainstream teacher and principal.</i>

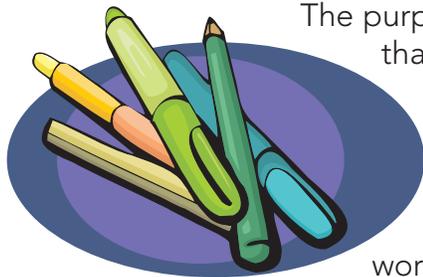
- 1) Invite teachers to reflect on their current accommodation practices and write them in the corresponding boxes.
- 2) Ask teachers to highlight the strategies they don't currently practice.
- 3) Help teachers discuss the ways in which they can implement the strategies from their lists.

Individual or Group Activity: Part B - Devising a Reception Program

Time: 60 minutes

Materials:

Chart paper and markers
Floor maps of a school (or the teacher's school)



The purpose of this activity is to initiate welcome/reception programs that can be implemented in your school to familiarize the students and their parents to the new educational context.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps.

To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

We recommend collaboration of all staff members to ensure that teachers have support in this initiative. Once the activity is completed teachers can present their ideas to their peers for feedback and help in implementation. Teacher candidates can complete this activity and then present their proposal for their host teachers' feedback. This would be an excellent activity to keep as part of a teacher's professional portfolio.

1) Help teachers develop the program by completing the three stages.

Stage 1: Prepare a welcome package for students. List the items that should be included in a welcome package relevant to schooling in Canada. Decide how to acquire the materials on the list. Make a list of support groups or staff members that can be involved to help create the package.

Stage 2: Plan a tour of the school for new ESL students. Think of the things that the new student should know about the physical environment of the school. If the teachers are from the same school, provide them with a school map. Ask them to chart out which areas would be visited. Who would be responsible and what information would be presented to the students? Teacher candidates can use a sample map or modify this portion by making a list of areas to be visited.

Stage 3: Determine how to best inform the student about the Canadian educational system and programs in the school. Will it be through a presentation, through an ambassador program, or a teacher-family meeting? Record the suggestions and see how this information can be integrated in your results from Stage 1 and Stage 2.

- 2) If their schools already have welcome programs in place, modify the above by making it an evaluation activity.
- 3) Ask teachers to investigate the program's effectiveness and policies through informal interviews with students. If they are practicum teachers, have them consult with their host-teachers. Recommend that they help plan or participate in the program at their partner schools.

Practicum or In-class Activity: First Day Tensions

Time: 60 minutes

Materials:
None



In order to gain a better understanding of your students' experiences of their first day in school, have them create an artistic or written representation of their experience. Encourage children with limited English to use pictures to express themselves. In order to increase collaboration and understanding between peers make this a class activity or partner activity.

Examples include:

- Have them write a short story or draw a picture book of their first day at school in Canada.
- Help them create a short play and ask them to incorporate the emotions which they felt on their first day at school in Canada.
- Brainstorm ideas and emotions. Have the students poll each other and then graph their responses on the board. Discuss the results as a class.
- Invite students to draw or paint their first day of school experience in Canada. Encourage students to depict their emotions.



Ask the students to work in pairs to highlight in their product what reception/welcome plans or accommodation strategies could have made their first day of school better. You may also choose to use this opportunity to get feedback on the activities that you designed in the 'strategies for accommodation' activity.

Personal Reflection Activity: My First Day

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Journal and pencil



The first day of primary school is often a memory that has faded. Memories for some can be flashes of classroom decor, the walk to school, the first friends met and for others it can be a detailed series of emotions. In this activity, you are asked to reflect on your first day of school or your child's first day of school. What emotions did you/they experience? If you are not a parent, try and recall your own experiences of first days whether it be as a child or as young adult in university. What were your main questions and/or concerns? What problems did you face? What helped you or could have helped you solve these problems? Is your perspective different from a parent's point of view?





**II How do ESL students
shape their identity?**

Background

How do ESL learners shape their identity?

This section of the guide provides teachers with background on the research as well as resources for further exploration. An individual's identity is shaped by both internal and external factors. People shape their identity through their experiences. The ESL students interviewed in the video frequently spoke of feelings of isolation, rejection, confusion, shyness and marginalization at school. They described coping with the challenge of merging their home culture identity with their new Canadian identity. For some students, 'being Canadian' meant abandoning their previous culture while others tried to maintain a balance. Some interviewees struggled with the feeling that were required to act differently at home and at school. Some students felt more comfortable at school without the pressure of their parents expecting them to conform to the behavioral norms of their heritage culture. Others felt more comfortable at home where they could speak freely and share jokes in their mother tongue.

Identity Issues

There is substantive research in the field supporting the benefits of teachers' understanding and maintenance of students' native languages and culture (e.g., Cummins, 1981 and 1996; Thomas & Collier, 1997). A teacher's understanding of identity issues can benefit both ESL students as well as their peers. Teachers may act as resources for coping strategies, attend to the students' needs, act as role-models by bringing the students' home culture into the classroom, or help students bond with their peers. In recent decades multicultural issues have been infused in daily practice, but this is not enough. Although the celebration of diversity and cultures has its place in the curriculum, helping students cope with adjustments between cultures has not been addressed. Teachers need to be aware that ESL students come from a wide range of backgrounds and are simultaneously learning a new language and experiencing shifts in their identity.

A study of high school ESL students in Calgary found that the term 'ESL' embodied a stigma within the larger school. Students were perceived as lazy, unintelligent and awkward (Derwing, Decorby, Ichikawa & Jamieson, 1999). These students can be presented and perceived as inferior members by the dominant culture (Skutnabb-Kangas, 1981, cited by Spener, 1988). Educators may consider these students difficult to teach simply because they do not fit neatly into what has been defined as the mainstream (Nieto, 2002). The labeling and sense of inferiority shape how students feel about themselves when in school and in the mainstream. Another study in Toronto showed that ESL students cope with more than simply learning a language. Students'

language proficiency also depends on their acceptance into the host culture (Kanno & Applebaum, 1995). The students who were interviewed expressed similar insights. They recounted the hardships of rejection and their struggles to fit in with their peers. In the middle school video a student explained how his teacher had misinterpreted his actions to be insolent when he did not respond to questions. A misunderstanding of this nature can lead to frustration and contribute to low self-esteem. Research also suggests that adolescents in particular have difficulty in making the transition because they feel distanced from their native culture and their parents. This distance is a challenge because they are more independent than younger children and attempt to cope with the challenges of identity on their own (Walqui, 2000).

Making Friends

Establishing friendships in both the ESL and mainstream contexts is important to students' overall development. Students in our videos said they worried their peers would reject them. Several ESL students recounted stories of being left out by peers at recess or in group activities because they could not communicate. Teachers can be proactive and help facilitate an environment which allows their ESL students to thrive. This inclusion can be achieved by attending to ESL needs, integrating cooperative activities into lessons and making all students more aware of the importance of being inclusive. An awareness of ESL issues and inclusive teaching practices allows educators to be advocates for the diversity which will make a difference in the lives of their ESL students.

Resources

Books and Journal Articles

Appiah, A. (1994). Identity, authenticity, survival: Multicultural societies and social reproduction. In A. Gutmann (Ed.), *Multiculturalism* (pp. 149-163). Princeton, NJ: Princeton University.

Cummins, J. (1996). *Negotiating identities: Education for empowerment in a diverse society*. California: California Association for Bilingual Education.

Derwing, T., Decorby, E., Ichikawa, J., & Jamieson, K., (1999). Some factors that affect the success of ESL high school students. *The Canadian Modern Language Review*, 55 (4), 532-547.

Kanno, Y. & Applebaum, S. (1995). ESL students speak up: Their stories of how we are doing? *TESL Canada*, 12 (2), 32-49.

Lucas, T. (1997). *Into, through and beyond the secondary school: Social transitions for immigrant youths*. California: CAL Publishing.



Websites

Queensland Education for lesson plans <http://education.qld.gov.au>

Videos

Cooperative Learning Techniques (1993) - by Mary McMullin, White Plains, NY. Longman.

Canadian Identity, (1991) - written and produced by Cathy Miller and Ernest Kreiger, Burnaby, BC. Classroom Video, 1991.

Many Voices, (2002) - a TVO Video Series on Racism, Diversity and Social Studies Issues, 2002.



II How do ESL students shape their identity?

Identity of the Student at School and at Home

Video Excerpt:

In these video clips, students discuss the factors that shape their self-identity. Teachers discuss why it is important for students to maintain their heritage language and culture. We suggest that you watch the section titled *Identity of the Student at School and at Home*, and complete the activities below. A screen will indicate when you should stop the tape.

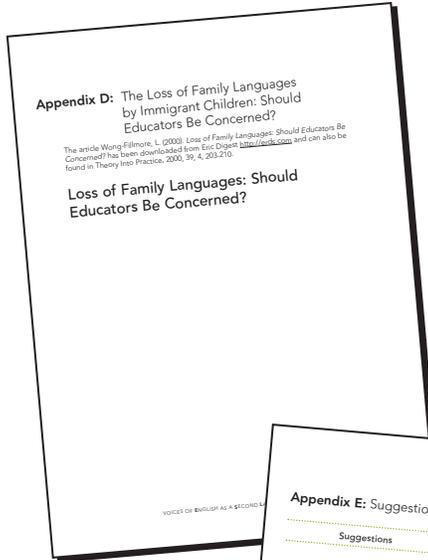
Discussion Questions:

- What identity conflicts can you identify in what the children are discussing in the video?
- How might a student's identity at school differ from his/her identity at home?
- How might a student's identity differ in a first and second language context?
- How might a student's identity in the second language differ from his/her identity in the first language?
- How do students cope with identity issues such as isolation, low self-esteem, low language proficiency and parents who do not speak the language of the host country?
- What measures can a teacher take in order to address students' identity issues in the curriculum?
- How can teachers help students foster a positive self-identity?



Individual or Group Activity: Part A - Loss of First Language

Time: 60 minutes



Materials:

Photocopies of Appendix D: The Loss of Family Languages by Immigrant Children: Should Educators Be Concerned?

Photocopies of Appendix E: Suggestions for Implementation Grid

The article Wong-Fillmore, L. (2000). 'Loss of family languages: Should educators be concerned?' has been downloaded from Eric Digest <http://erds.com> and can also be found in *Theory Into Practice*, 2000, (39), 4, 203-210.



The purpose of this activity is to help teachers better understand the relationship between first language maintenance and self-identity. A child's first language is a bond to his or her heritage and older generations. If you wish to have more time for class discussion, the facilitator may assign the article before the workshop session. Advise teachers that they will need 15-30 minutes to skim or read this article.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps and follow steps 1 through 3. Complete the grid in your journal. We suggest reflecting in your journal in place of the group discussion.

To complete the activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Give the teachers time to read or skim the article.
- 2) Ask the teachers to discuss the main themes presented in the article. How are the issues raised in the video clip similar to the concerns raised in Fillmore's (2000) article?
- 3) Brainstorm coping strategies for both ESL students and parents dealing with identity issues related to second language learning.



- 4) Hand each teacher a copy of the Appendix E grid.
- 5) Fillmore offers four suggestions to educators and teachers on how to help ESL students maintain their heritage language. As a group, write her suggestions on this grid.
- 6) Have the teachers individually devise implementation strategies for each suggestion found under "Suggestions for educators and for parents" at the end of the article. Once they have finished ask them to share their ideas with a partner.

Sample of Grid for the Facilitator:

Suggestions	Implementation

**Individual or Group Activity:
Part B - Language and Identity Scenario**



Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

Photocopies or a transparency of Appendix F: The Scenario

The purpose of this activity is to explore the role of language in the child’s identity formation.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

Read the scenario in Appendix F and use your journal to reflect on how you would respond to the scenario.

To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Place the transparency on the overhead.
- 2) Ask a volunteer to read the scenario out loud.
- 3) Divide the teachers into groups of two or three.
- 4) In their small groups, ask the teachers to discuss the questions and provide feedback as to how they would respond to the scenario.



- 5) Ask teachers to share their conclusions with their peers.
- 6) In order to incorporate more perspectives, suggest that teachers share the scenario with students in their class.

Practicum or In-class Activity: Identity Conflicts

Time: 20-30 minutes

Materials:

None or Internet Access



Adults often experience the same challenges that younger students face in coping with change. The following activity will encourage teachers to explore the experiences of their peers while fostering a network of support. Interview (in person or via email) a non-native English-speaking teacher you know that has lived in Canada for at least three years. After the interview, ask yourself:

- Did this person experience identity conflicts?
- What strategies, if any, has this teacher used to cope or prevent the conflict?

Personal Reflection Activity: My Own Identity

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Journal and pencil



“All the world is a stage,
And all the men and women merely players.
They have their exits and entrances;
Each man in his time plays many parts.”

William Shakespeare

In your journal reflect on how identity has shaped you since childhood. Write down your definition of “identity”. Does your identity differ...

- at school as a teacher,
- at home (e.g. as a son/daughter, brother/sister, husband/wife, mother/father, etc),
- with a friend of the same gender or opposite gender





III What are the available support networks for students, teachers, and parents?

Background

III What are the available support networks for parents and teachers?

This section of the guide provides teachers with background on recent research as well as resources for further exploration. The video clips in this segment provide insight into the silent struggles of students, the 'wish lists' of teachers, and tips on involving parents. The interviewees from our videos suggested three systems of support that schools need to have: support for students, support for teachers, and support for parents.

Support for Students

In the section titled 'First Day' we provide suggestions on how schools can support students through the maintenance of welcome programs and buddy systems. In the section titled 'Appropriate Teaching Strategies' we provide suggestions for daily practice that can help ESL students in the mainstream classroom. Due to the amount of time students spend in school, teachers are often the first to know if an ESL student is having difficulties. Once aware, the teachers need to enlist help from others in the system to meet the needs of the student. Most ESL students will go through silent struggles, whether it be coping with their new identity, juggling their course work, or breaking socio-cultural barriers. The emotional toll of silent struggles is hidden from others. Educators can look at the level and nature of participation (withdrawal, depression or anti-social behaviour such as aggression) as one sign of these struggles. Another indicator may be the students' relationships with peers. While recognizing that a student's need for support is important, educators can also use proactive measures to scaffold ESL students for success. Teachers can enhance ESL students' motivation to learn and can promote their participation in various aspects of life at school. Effective teaching strategies are provided in this section as well as elsewhere in this guide.

Support for Teachers

Teachers can not be expected to meet the needs of students without support from their department, the administration, and ESL-related resources. In order to raise awareness within the system, teachers have to communicate the types of support needed and work collectively with administrators to ensure that they are provided. The interviewees in our videos created 'wish lists' of materials/resources that would help them in the classroom. Suggestions included ESL textbooks for mainstream curriculum, library resources, and class assistants. They also suggested changes to policies, such as smaller mainstream classes and longer preparation time during the school day.

Another key element is knowledge-sharing. Becker (2001) asserts, "In order to promote optimal opportunities for ESL students to achieve academic success in elementary and secondary school settings, ESL teachers need to share with grade-level and content colleagues the knowledge, ideas, and experiences that may help them acquire the expertise necessary to be effective teachers of the ESL students in their classes" (p. 184). Lastly, teachers require access to professional development seminars and resources.

Support for Parents

Over the last two decades research on 'parent involvement' shows that parental participation in school life is integral to the academic success of children. As a direct outcome of this kind of research, the development of resources and programs is steadily progressing. The most recent programs have focused on developing partnerships between educational institutions and communities. The involvement of immigrant and refugee parents is seen as a rich resource from which educators can learn and contribute to change in the community (Auerbach, 2002). Some examples of these kinds of partnerships that Auerbach highlights include:

- involving community participants in the selection of program and curriculum content,
- incorporating culturally familiar content and genres into the curriculum, and
- hiring staff who are tied to the participants' communities and speak the learners' language.

However, supporting and involving immigrant parents remains a challenge for many schools. Schools have found that although immigrant parents attend parent-teacher interviews, the discussion tends to be dominated by the teacher. In addition, immigrant parents usually do not attend school council meetings. One reason for this fact is that meetings are usually conducted in English with no provision for interpreters. Parents exclude themselves due to feelings of discomfort with their limited English language proficiency.

Beyond language, immigrant issues are rarely raised at school council meetings. Opinions on school council are limited to its members. While diverse membership (parents and administrators from all backgrounds) promotes diversity of opinions, councils that are limited to one socio-cultural group tend to be restrictive in their decision making and opinions. These decisions do not reflect the diverse school population or meet the needs of all parents. Heller, Labrie, Roy and Wilson (2001) explain that members of school council are often people who already have some connection to the school system. Thus, the limited representation on school council does not produce alternative perspectives on issues but rather "reproduce[s] the points of view already existing within the system (p. 9)":



This is possible for two main reasons: [1] most applicable information comes from within the school system and its distribution is controlled by members of the educational institution, and [2] most members of the school council have a social standing within the school system (Heller et al., 1997, p.4 translated from French by L. Gershater)

The result is twofold: firstly, immigrant parents rarely have the opportunity to contribute to the development of school life and school curriculum, and secondly, school staff have a limited understanding of the culture and language of immigrant children and parents within the local context (Jones, 2002).

If schools are to move forward and build bridges between community and school, the first step is for teachers and administrators to reflect on how they view parents. Through this reflection process, teachers and administrators can become aware of the prejudices they hold and of existing efforts to break down the walls that separate parents from the school. We will outline in the section below three ways that parents have been viewed by schools and in academic literature. In articulating these three viewpoints, teachers and administrators can become better aware of how to communicate with parents.

The Deficit Hypothesis

Teachers and administrators often blame immigrant parents for the declining academic achievement of their children. This tendency has been called the '**deficit hypothesis**', a perspective that is alive and well in schools. Teachers and administrators might find themselves criticizing parents for supposedly not having the desired characteristics that the school demands of them. For example, they may be perceived as having poor English skills, mainstream literacy skills, or a lack of time to attend to the academic needs of their children. Illiteracy might also be seen as a plague passed down from generation to generation .

The 'deficit hypothesis' viewpoint blames parents for the declining academic achievement of their children. In other words, a poor student is seen as a result of poor parenting. Parents can be excluded from school because educators view them as unable to contribute effectively. In the case of ESL parents, educators are often frustrated by parents' limited ability to communicate in English and their limited understanding of the Canadian education system. According to George Dei (2000), an expert in anti-racist education, the blaming of parents "diverts our attention away from a critical analysis of institutional structures of schooling (p. 34)", which treats minority parents inequitably. The deficit hypothesis does not allow for critical discussion of power issues, school organization and the manner in which school imposes its culture on family.

Margaret Caspe (2003), a consultant with the Harvard Family Research Project, offers hope for educators: "Existing research suggests that when teachers hold positive beliefs about families and view them as a child's first teacher, they are more likely to

invite parents to become active participants in their children's education." (Epstein & Dauber, 1991; Eccles & Harold, 1996 in Caspe, 2003).

Cultural Difference Theory

Other researchers have also distanced themselves from the deficit hypothesis and have deepened their understanding of parent-school relationships. A second approach to viewing this relationship has been called the '**cultural difference theory**'. This theory focuses on the relationship between families and schools, emphasizing "that school success is closely related to the degree to which the culture of the home corresponds with the culture of the school" (Young & Levin 2000). This body of research shows that families bring knowledge and values (also known as 'cultural capital') to the school which are rewarded differently by teachers and administrators (Laureau & Horvat, 1999). Knowledge and values that are closely related to that of the school are more highly rewarded than those that differ from the school. The danger of this viewpoint is that it is possible for it to mirror the 'deficit hypothesis'; blaming working class and minority parents for lacking something rather than critically examining the power relations within the school. Dehli and Januario (1994) emphasize that,

...it is necessary to attend to power relations, so as to understand how some cultural practices become 'capital' while others are relegated to the status of 'deficit' (p. 28).

Critical Theory

Another viewpoint from which to consider parental involvement is 'critical theory'. This looks at how issues of power and inequality shape school life. Critical theory identifies the political structures in which parents are encouraged to participate and from which parents are marginalized. Research focuses on...

efforts by poor and minority ethnic communities to gain access to education decision-making in urban schools and schools boards. Race, ethnicity and class (and interactions among them) have been key variables in these studies (Delhi of Januario, 1994, p.9).

An educator who is critical might ask: who has the power to make decisions within the school and how are school structures and policies designed to meet the needs of the dominant and reinforce social difference? A 'critical' educator would try to identify the dominant voice in the school and work to foreground the voices of minority parents by forming alliances and working in partnerships with parents and the community, much like the examples mentioned in the introduction of this section.

Critical pedagogy helps to break down barriers to parent involvement. These barriers include: 1) a school's agenda which reflects the needs of diverse population



and 2) the denial of the significance of race and language in the discourse and practice of parent involvement in schools (see Dei, James, Karumanchery, James-Wilson & Zine, 2000). These barriers are important to note because discussions in schools on parent involvement tend to forego critical analysis. This includes analysis of how educational institutions themselves perpetuate barriers to involvement and act as gatekeepers, keeping parents out.

Educators need be aware of the various viewpoints -- deficit hypothesis, cultural difference theory and critical theory -- if they are to make changes to the way that they perceive parents and to encourage immigrant parent involvement. Schools need to be aware of the prejudicial views that exist toward immigrant parents and overcome the barriers that inhibit participation in ESL children's schooling. In forming partnerships with immigrant parents, both the school and parents will be able to better serve the educational needs of ESL students.

Resources

Books and Journal Articles

Auerbach, E. (Ed.). (2002). *Community partnerships*. Alexandria, VA: Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc.

Cline, Z., & Necochea, J. (2001). Basta Ya! Latino parents fighting entrenched racism. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 25(1 & 2).

Coelho, E. (1998). *Teaching and learning in multicultural schools*. Toronto, ON: Multilingual Matters.

Dei, G. J. S. (1997). *Home, family and community-based learning: Lessons for curriculum and pedagogy*. Toronto, ON: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education/University of Toronto.

Dei, G. J. S., James, I. M., Karumanchery, L. L., James-Wilson, S., & Zine, J. (2000). *Removing the margins: The challenges and possibilities of inclusive schooling*. Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Edwards, V. (1998). *The power of Babel: Teaching and learning in multicultural classrooms*. Stoke-on-Trent (U.K.): Trentham Books.

Websites

The Harvard Family Research Project Graduate School of Education.

<http://www.gse.harvard.edu/hfrp/projects/fine/resources/digest/incorporating.html>

III What are the available support networks for students, teachers and parents?

Support for Students, Teachers and Parents

Video Excerpt:

In these video clips, teachers discuss the various support networks available at school for teachers, students and parents. We suggest that you watch the sections titled *Support for Parents and Making the Connection*, and complete the activities below. A screen will indicate when you should stop the tape.

Discussion Questions:

- What support networks are available at the school in the video for parents, teachers and students?
- What does this teacher enjoy most about working with ESL students?
- Discuss with colleagues other ways to build parent/school/teacher connections.
- How can parents learn about the Canadian educational system?
- What are some of the challenges teachers might face in meeting with parents?
- What are the parents' concerns about interacting with teachers and administrators?

Individual or Group Activity: Part A - Discussion

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

Chart paper and markers



It is important to be aware of the support networks at your disposal. The purpose of this activity is to generate ideas on the types of support needed in schools that serve ESL students and their families. Teachers will share the various types that they are aware of and list those which are lacking within their schools.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps. Follow steps 1 to 3. Use your



journal to generate a list of programs, resources, and to identify those responsible for helping support parents. Refer to steps 5 through 6 for further instructions.

To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Ask the teachers to list the interpretation/translation services offered by their schools and the effectiveness of this service.
- 2) Using the chart paper, draw a vertical line down the centre.
- 3) Ask teachers to list the support programs from the video. Next, ask them to compare the support programs in the video to that of their school.
- 4) Divide the teachers into groups of two or more.
- 5) Provide each group with a piece of chart paper.
- 6) Divide the paper into three columns with the heading. Ask the teachers to generate a list of support services needed in schools. Beside each suggestion teachers should also indicate who would be responsible for implementing it and what resources would be needed.
- 7) In the groups, ask teachers to discuss ways in which you can inform the stakeholders (i.e. the next school meeting).

Individual or Group Activity:
Part B - Role-Play of Teacher-Parent Meeting

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:
None

The purpose of this activity is to have teachers discuss the types of problems and concerns that parents of ESL students have in meeting with teachers and administrators. The teachers will participate in a role-play.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

Modify the workshop activity by using your journal to reflect on your practices. Create a list of questions that you commonly ask parents as well as frequently used terminology in discussion with parents. Next, consider if there are any areas that would require clarification.

To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Divide the teachers into groups of three or more.



2) Tell each group that they are to respond to the following scenario:

The mainstream teacher is planning to invite an ESL parent to school for an orientation session. Various members in the school will be invited to participate. The members will have to determine what will be discussed in the meeting and what approach they will use. Teachers will bring forth concerns or areas of expertise which the players can contribute to the discussion.

3) Have teachers look at the above scenario. Next, ask the group members to choose one of the following roles:

- the mainstream teacher
- the ESL teacher
- the interpreter
- the principal
- the vice-principal
- the support teacher
- the settlement worker
- a parent council representative

4) From the various viewpoints or roles, ask the teachers to address the following issues:

- Decide what you would need to tell the parent.
- Anticipate questions the parent might ask.
- Discuss the concerns the parent might have.
- Reflect on whether you think ESL parents would have similar concerns? How might they differ? Do you think there would be any cultural differences in this respect?
- Plan ways to ensure all parents receive all the information they need to know despite their cultural differences.

5) Once the groups have had ten minutes to generate what and how things should be discussed, have one person choose to play the role of the mainstream teacher and the other two the role of parents. If possible, role-play the scenario with the parent speaking another language and the interpreter translating the conversation.



Practicum or In-class Activity: Teacher-Parent Communication

Time: 45 minutes

Materials:

Paper and pencil



The purpose of this activity is to establish an open line of communication with parents. By providing parents with a handout of classroom policies, a teacher encourages communication as well as allows parents to have a clear understanding of their and the student's responsibilities. If you are a practicum teacher, take advantage of this opportunity to create a finished product that can be incorporated in your professional portfolio.

Prepare a letter to send to your ESL parents providing information on:

- the course,
- homework activities,
- types of assessments,
- purpose of parent meetings,
- the marking scheme, and
- suggestions on how they can support their child.

Stress to parents that they can communicate with you in their first language. If possible have the board or a member from the community translate the letter into the parents first language. Mail the letters to the parents.

Personal Reflection Activity: My Communication Skills

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Journal and pencil



The purpose of this activity is to have teachers explore both their verbal and non-verbal communication in their interactions with students and parents. In your journal, explore the following issues:

- Your perceptions of the parents' role in their child's education
- Your strengths and weaknesses in communicating with parents
- The verbal and non-verbal actions you take to make parents comfortable in interactions with them.





**IV What do teachers need to
know and do to support
ESL students?**

Background

IV What do teachers need to know and do to support ESL students?

This section of the guide provides teachers with background on the research as well as resources for further exploration. Across Ontario, school boards (especially in urban centers such as Toronto) have called for teachers and administrators to re-evaluate English as a Second Language (ESL) programming. Several factors have played significant roles in this change. Demographic trends have shown a rise in the number of students requiring ESL support (Toronto District School Board, 2002). Government funds have not been allocated to make needed adjustments to existing programs based on these demographic changes. As a direct consequence of these budgetary restrictions, students from non-English speaking countries who have been Canadian residents for over three years and students born in Canada do not qualify for ESL support (Bullock, 2000). The existing funding formula based on the provincial government's educational policy and the continued growth of the ESL population in Ontario schools provides educators with a formidable challenge. Since it is unlikely that school boards will be in a financial position to expand ESL programs, various strategies need to be considered to remedy the existing limitations of the system in order to adequately meet these students' needs. The most important consideration is that all teachers need to be language teachers.

In addition, educational reforms (such as the Educational Quality Accountability Office Standardized Tests in Ontario) place tremendous pressure on both students and teachers. These reforms require ESL students not only to master the content-area curriculum but also to become highly competent users of their second language. Therefore, teachers need content and pedagogical knowledge to ensure that they are providing appropriate instruction to all students. Teachers also need to have an understanding of students' countries of origin and their previous educational systems. Professional development in this field must include the knowledge of language acquisition, background information and effective strategies to support teachers' overall practice (Wong-Fillmore & Snow, 2000).

Information on Language Learning

Teachers who do not know the theory behind language learning can 'undermine' a student's confidence (Wong-Fillmore & Snow 2000). There are several factors which need to be considered, including time, materials, methods for learning a language, and the role of the first language.

Research concerning the most effective programs for ESL students highlights the importance and benefits of native language development. Nieto (2002) maintains that bilingual education is generally more effective than other programs such as ESL on its own, even for English language development. However, research on the role of the first language has been virtually ignored by the ministry and teacher education programs (CERIS, 2003). The connection between first and second languages and cultures has also been ignored (Gonzalez & Hammond, 2003).

The ESL teachers in the videos called for an awareness of the length of time required to acquire a second language. Students generally need at least between 5 and 7 years to become academically proficient in a second language (Cummins, 1981; Thomas & Collier, 1997). Cummins (1979) has used the acronyms BICS and CALP to refer to a distinction between Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS are related to ESL learners' conversation and fluency abilities. CALP refers to students' competency in understanding academic language appropriate for their grade. Conversational fluency is often acquired within about two years of initial exposure to the second language whereas at least five years is usually required to catch up to native speakers in the academic dimensions of the second language (Cummins, 1996; Roessingh & Kover, 2002).

A student's first language plays a role in the acquisition of the second language. Allowing students to use their first language in the classroom from time to time serves two purposes. It not only recognizes the value of a student's mother tongue in the dominant culture, it also allows for transfer between concepts. A student who understands that *amor* and love have the same meaning will learn the word quickly. In contrast, the student who must first decipher the concept of love in English and then learn the word will take longer.

Teachers may also be familiar with the process of transfer which takes place when a person thinks in one language and then translates to the other to express the idea. In the translation process students may be using grammar concepts from their first language. For example, in some other languages a time phrase is added to the sentence to indicate the concept of the past instead of changing the form of the verb. It is important that teachers recognize the fundamental difference between learning BICS and CALP so they may support their students even when they have developed oral fluency in English.

The information in this section is not exhaustive but provides a starting point for further investigation. The activities in this section of the guide provide teachers with an introduction to theories about language learning. The resource list indicates materials that can provide additional information.



The ESL Students' Background

To support the academic and adjustment needs of the very diverse students in Ontario schools, teachers should consider taking the time to learn about their ESL students' backgrounds including the structures of their family and cultural values. Educators also need preparation to understand cultural practices, belief systems and life experiences that may run counter to mainstream expectations regarding the role of children and parents as well as the structure of the school system (Bhavnagri & Gonzalez-Mena, 1997).

Immigrant families often experience a cultural transition as parents may be faced with new and different attitudes about child rearing and the role of the child. Consequently, inherent in this transition is a process of accepting some new values, and adhering to some long-held ones while modifying others. Images of schooling and education are socially constructed; parents who have grown up in a different context may find their views differ significantly from those of the teachers and administrators (Clabaugh, 2000). The education terminology often used by teachers assumes previous knowledge about school practices which many immigrant parents do not have (Ovado & Collier, 1998). As a result, teachers and administrators can facilitate new Canadian students' and parents' entry into the school culture by learning about their varied backgrounds and cultures. However, Perkins (2000) argues that a general apprehension and appreciation of cultural diversity is not enough. Teachers who do not know a family's experiences prior to their arrival in a new country can not make assumptions about how those experiences affect the child's and parents' reactions to school. By educating themselves, teachers can lessen the 'intimidation factor' (Holman, 1997, p.37) and extend themselves to build warm and non-judgmental relationships with parents. Furthermore, an increasing number of studies suggest that teachers and schools need to build on, rather than diminish, the contributions students bring to school. In other words, they need to understand and incorporate cultural, linguistic and experiential differences as well as differences in social class, into the learning process (Abi-Nader, 1993; Hollins, King & Hayman, 1994). Above all successful teaching means that teachers must change their attitudes towards language minority students, their languages and cultures, and their communities (Cummins, 1996).

In a similar vein, several of the ESL teachers and students in our videos have requested that teachers take the time to learn about the background, culture, personal histories and previous educational systems of ESL students. A student's experiential background can be used as a 'point of departure' for inclusion in the classroom (Walqui, 2000). An understanding of a child's personal history and education provides insights into a child's academic abilities. In order for schools to provide a welcoming and safe environment for these newly arrived children, it is critical that teachers learn about the cultural, linguistic and historical influences that shape ESL learners' behaviors and attitudes towards education.



Appropriate Teaching Strategies

Currently in Ontario, qualified ESL teachers are unable to provide all the needed programming for ESL learners in their schools. This responsibility is being shared with, or, in some instances, has become the exclusive domain of, mainstream classroom teachers. Upon enrollment new ESL students are either partially or fully integrated into mainstream programs. After a maximum of three years of ESL support, students are usually fully integrated into the mainstream and no longer receive special support as language learners. Consequently teachers — often by necessity- need to augment their existing teaching skills to better serve these children. Currently, a dichotomy often exists between ESL and mainstream teachers' responsibilities. The former usually concentrates on aiding linguistic development and the latter mainly focuses on content instruction. In order to optimize cognitive development ESL teachers should plan for more support in subject matter/disciplinary content learning and mainstream teachers should increase their awareness of ESL students' linguistic needs and support students in developing English language skills.

The following is a summary of some strategies mainstream teachers can incorporate in their lessons.

Content Based Instruction (CBI)

Teachers sometimes assume that ESL students are incapable of participating in content subjects such as science and social studies because of their limited language abilities. However, if we look towards French immersion in schools this is clearly not the case. Students in these programs continue learning content subjects while learning French, their second language (Genesse, 1995). CBI involves the integration of content and language in teaching. The subject matter in Ontario classrooms would be based on the Ontario curriculum and the language skills would be determined by the Ontario ESL Curriculum as well as by the students' needs (Brinton, Snow & Wesche, 1989). In practice this implies that language acquisition can take place in the context of subject matter learning. In content classes, teachers need to focus on language instruction including grammar and vocabulary instruction as discussed below.

Form-Focused Instruction

Findings based on research support an approach to language teaching which calls for the integration of form-focused instruction in content-based and communicative activities. There are two main conceptual approaches to integrating form in CBI, they are: *focus on form* and *form-focused instruction*. Long (1991) defines focus on form as, "any pedagogical attempt to overtly draw students' attention to linguistic elements as they arise incidentally in lessons whose overriding focus is on meaning or communication" (pp. 45-46). Spada (1997), defines form focused instruction as:



Any pedagogical effort used to draw the learner's attention to language form either implicitly or explicitly (this may include focus on form). Form focused instruction may invoke the direct teaching of language but it should occur within meaning based (communicative) approaches to L2 instruction. Focus on language can be provided in either spontaneous or predetermined ways. (p. 74)

In short, a focus on linguistic structures can arise incidentally or be a predetermined objective incorporated as part of a meaning focused lesson.

Form focused instruction can be integrated into CBI through cooperative learning strategies. Group work presents students with opportunities to discuss language-related questions as they work toward the completion of their assignment. Collaborative inquiry, using dictogloss and jigsaw activities, can foster a deeper understanding of metalinguistic concepts (Swain, 2001). Moreover, teachers can utilize group discussion activities in their effort to recognize linguistic elements that might need further clarification or consolidation in subsequent lessons. Therefore, research supports the finding, that form-focused instruction in the context of communicative programs can assist in developing academic language proficiency without compromising content learning opportunities (Stern, 1992).

Vocabulary Learning

In CBI classes ESL student success can be greatly increased through vocabulary instruction. This notion is supported by research which has shown a strong relationship between vocabulary knowledge and academic achievement (Echevarria, Vogt & Short 2000). In a CBI class there is place for both explicit and implicit vocabulary instruction.

Explicit vocabulary teaching is an opportunity for the teacher to introduce key terms that are critical to the students' understanding of the subject matter and raise their awareness of particular words so they recognize them in their reading of content material. The teacher can introduce or revise words at the start of a lesson, encourage students to find corresponding words in their L1, demonstrate how each word is used and show the words' significance within context (Echevarria et al, 2000). Teachers can also assign students a vocabulary list to be studied at home and elaborate on the list in the classroom (Schmidt, 2000).

In contrast to learning vocabulary explicitly, vocabulary can also be learned implicitly or incidentally. Implicit vocabulary learning allows students to obtain maximum exposure to a language because it is usually acquired through extensive reading (Schmidt, 2000). As Nation (1999) observes, "to be effective, an extensive reading program needs to involve large quantities of reading at an appropriate level". Studies have found that the more students read, the greater their vocabulary size.



Resources

Books and Journal Articles

Cummins, J. (1984). *Bilingualism and special education: Issues in assessment and pedagogy*. Clevedon, England: Multilingual Matters.

Cummins, J. (1994). Knowledge, power, and identity in teaching English as a second language. In F. Genesee (Ed.), *Educating second language children: the whole child, the whole curriculum, the whole community* (pp. 33-58). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University.

Echevarria, J., Vogt, E., & Short, D. J. (2000). *Making content comprehensible for English language learners: The SIOP model*. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon.

Genesee, F. (1995). *Integrating language and content: Lessons from immersion*. National Center for Research on Cultural Diversity and Second Language Learning. Retrieved 13 July, 2003, 2003, from the World Wide Web:

<http://www.cal.org/ericcll/digest/nrcrds05.html> Helmer, S., & Eddy C., (1996) *Look at me when I talk to you: ESL learners in non ESL classrooms*. Toronto: Pippin Publishing Company.

Nation, I. S. P. (1999). *Learning vocabulary in another language*. Wellington: English Language Institute Occasional Publication.

Roessingh, H. & Kover, P. (2002). Working with younger arriving-ESL learners in high school English: Never too late to reclaim potential, *TESL Canada Journal*. 19, 2, Toronto: Ontario Modern Language Teacher's Association, 1-17.

Spada, N. (1997). Form-focused instruction and second language acquisition: A review of classroom and laboratory research. *State of the Art Language Teaching*, 30(2), 1-15.

Thomas, W.P., & Collier, V. P. (1997). *School effectiveness for language minority students*. Washington, DC: National Clearinghouse for Bilingual Education.

Walqui, A. (2000). *Access and engagement: Program design and instructional approaches for immigrant students in secondary school*. California: Center for Applied Linguistics and Delta Systems Co.

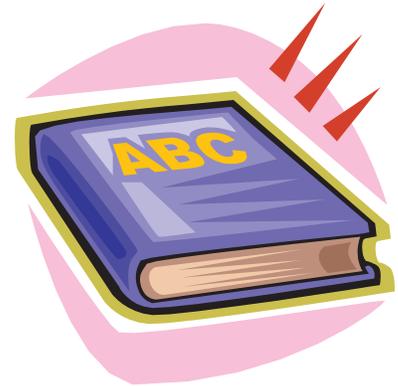


IV What do teachers need to know and do to support ESL students?

Information on Language Learning

Video Excerpt:

In these video clips, teachers discuss the challenges of learning a second language. We suggest that you watch the section titled *Information on Language Learning*, and complete the activities below. A screen will indicate when you should stop the tape.

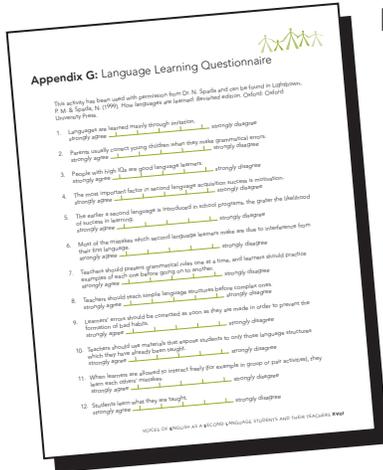


Discussion Questions:

- a. How long do the teachers in the video say that it takes to become proficient in a second language (L2)? What are the implications of this on the provision of ESL support for students in schools?
- b. What suggestions are these teachers making with respect to the role of the first language (L1) in second language learning? What is the role of students' L1 in the second language context?
- c. How would you react to students' use of the L1 in the classroom?
- d. Do you think the L1 supports second language (L2) development? If no, why? If yes, how?
- e. When do you think you should avoid allowing the students' to use their L1 to assist them in the process of second language learning?
- f. How should the students' L1 not be used in the process of second language learning?
- g. How can a heritage language program assist students in the process of second language learning? This is a program where students learn their home language (Spanish, Hindi, Korean...) either during the school day, after school or in weekend classes. In Toronto this program is called International Language Education (formerly known as the Heritage Language Program).

Individual or Group Activity: Part A - Language Learning Questionnaire

Time: 60 minutes



Materials:

2 copies for each participant of the Appendix G:
Language learning questionnaire

Photocopy of the Appendix H: Lightbown and Spada: Chapter 7 (1999)

This chapter has been reproduced with permission from Lightbown, P. M. & Spada, N. (1999). *How languages are learned: Revised edition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press (pp.161-70).

The purpose of this activity is to encourage teachers to reflect on a number of commonly expressed opinions about how languages are learned, and to explore the extent to which these beliefs are supported by research and theories of second language acquisition.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through steps and complete steps 1 to 5. Reflect on the knowledge gained and share your responses with others at <http://www.eslinfusion.oise.utoronto.ca/stories.asp> Sharing TESL and ESL Stories.

To do this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Give each teacher a copy of the questionnaire.
- 2) Ask the teachers to complete the first copy of the questionnaire.
- 3) Read through the chapter from Lightbown and Spada (1999) as a group.
- 4) Ask teachers to highlight information that is new for them.
- 5) When they have finished reading hand them a clean copy of the questionnaire.
- 6) Ask them to complete the questionnaire for the second time.
- 7) Ask teachers to compare their first and second responses to determine whether any ideas have changed as a result of the reading.



8) Next, the facilitator will draw a tally chart similar to the one below for each item on the questionnaire. Use this grid to tally the teachers' choices.

Sample of Grid for the Facilitator

1	2	3	4	5	6

9) Ask each individual for their choice and their reason for their choice.

10) Ask teachers to reflect on what this activity tells them about commonly held beliefs about language learning.

Individual or Group Activity: Part B – Article and Discussion

Time: 60 minutes



Materials:

Photocopy of Appendix I:
What Elementary Teachers Need To Know About Language
Chart paper and markers

These articles are available to the public and have been retrieved from the Eric Digest on July, 20, 2003, from <http://www.edrs.com/DocLibrary/0501/ED447721.PDF> and <http://www.edrs.com/DocLibrary/0501/ED447721.PDF>

If possible download the complete article: Fillmore, L.W., & Snow, C., (2000) What teachers need to know about language, 41 pages, from *ERIC Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics* <http://www.cal.org/ericcll/teachers/teachers.pdf>.

The purpose of this activity is to provide insight into 'why' and 'what' elementary educators need to know about language.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps. Complete steps 1 to 5. We suggest reflecting in your journal in place of group discussion.



To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Have the teachers read the article from Appendix I.
- 2) Ask them to list five reasons from the article on “why teachers need to know more about language”.
- 3) Next, in point form, write down the items listed in the article that “classroom teachers should know about language”.
- 4) Ask teachers to take two minutes to reflect on their personal knowledge of the items in the article. Make this step a group activity (if teachers feel comfortable) and have them share their reflection as well as their knowledge of resources which would help them gain this new knowledge.
- 5) Ask the teachers to add the items that they need to learn about on their “to do” list of professional development.

**Practicum or In-class Activity:
Language Learning Interview**

Time: 60 minutes

Materials: None

Second language learning is often described as a complex, long-term effort. Interview three non-native English-speaking teachers in order to learn about their (a) commitment, (b) involvement, and (c) efforts to learn a second language. Take notes during the interview so that you can recall information review the information. When on your own, reflect on what these interviews tell you about the different patterns of learning. Reflect on any cognitive or affective blocks you notice in your peers experiences in their attempts to learn a second language. Provide suggestions in your notes of how they could overcome the barriers of cognitive and/or affective blocks. Can you apply any of this strategies to your students?



Personal Reflection Activity: Language Learning Time Line

Time: 30 minutes

Materials:

Journal and pencil



Using a timeline, write a summary of your language learning history and answer these questions:

- What language learning experiences have you had and how successful have they been? What are your criteria for labeling your experience a success (e.g. speed the language was learnt or fluency)?
- When you were learning a foreign language, what advice do you wish you were given?
- If you were representative of all language learners what would someone learn from reading your autobiography?
- What can be learned about effective language teaching from your autobiography?



Information About ESL Students' Background and Culture

Video Excerpt:

In these video clips, students share their experiences about their lives in their home countries. Teachers explain the importance of understanding students' background. We suggest that you watch the section titled *Information About ESL Student's Background and Culture*, and complete the activities below. A screen will indicate when you should stop the tape.



Discussion Questions:

- What were the main ideas that teachers and students discussed in the video?
- What challenges do teachers face when working with ESL students in mainstream classes?
- Why is it important for the teacher to be aware of students' personal histories and culture?
- How might the ESL students' background lead to marginality or alienation from other students?
- What measures can the teacher take to alleviate problems of marginality, discrimination or racism?
- How might the students' previous experience in a different education system influence his/her learning and/or performance in the new educational context?

Individual or Group Activity: Part A -Finding Out More about ESL Students

Time: 45 minutes

Materials:

Paper and pencils

The purpose of this activity is for the teachers to discuss the importance of learning about students' background, culture and educational system and how these might influence students' performance and behavior in the new educational context.



Practicum or In-class Activity: Plan in Action

Time: 60 minutes

Materials:

Questionnaire prepared in Part A - Finding Out More About ESL Students



Having discussed the importance of understanding more about students' background culture and previous educational system, this activity aims to put the plan in action. Using the questionnaire you developed in Part A take time to interview (informally) each of your ESL students during a quiet time in class or during recess to learn more about them. If you are a teacher-candidate you may choose to try this with your pre-service peers. Interview them informally during a break, lunch or after-school. Write down your findings. Try to make connections between your observations of the student's behavior and performance in class and your new information about their histories and cultures.



Personal Reflection Activity: My Memories

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Journal and pencil



In a journal, reflect on how your background and culture and have influenced your educational and work experiences.



- What incident(s) in your life has/have had a positive or negative influence on you?
- How have your background and culture shaped who you are today?
- How have these incidents shaped who you are today?



Appropriate Teaching Strategies - Advice from Teachers

Video Excerpt:

In these video clips, teachers discuss appropriate strategies for teaching ESL students.

We suggest that you watch the section titled *Appropriate Teaching Strategies – Advice from Teachers*, and complete the activities below. A screen will indicate when you should stop the tape.

Discussion Questions:

- What teaching strategies did the teachers suggest?
- What are the advantages and the disadvantages of these strategies?
- What strategies would you include?
- How can course content be modified to meet the needs of ESL students?
- What modified assessment techniques can teachers use to help ESL students?

Individual or Group Activity: Materials Analysis

Time: 45 minutes

Materials:

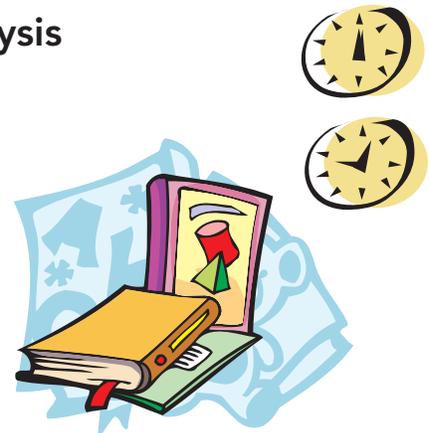
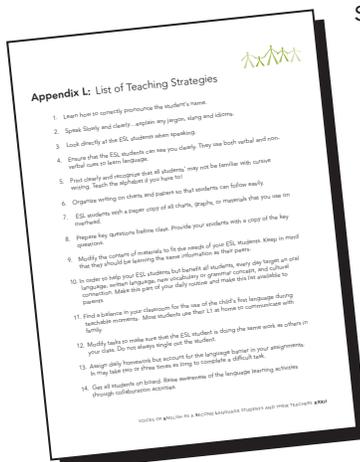
Photocopies of Appendix L: List of Teaching Strategies
Textbooks and other materials from the classroom.

The purpose of this activity is to introduce teachers to a variety of teaching techniques and modification

strategies that can help them meet the needs of their ESL students. The goal is to have teachers include these teaching techniques in practice.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps. Go through Appendix L and complete steps 3 to 8. We suggest that you create a pros and cons list in your journal in place of the group discussion.



To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Divide the teachers into groups of two or more. It would be best if the teachers could be matched with others from the same grade level.
- 2) Introduce the list of practices in Appendix L and ask the teachers to read through the list.
- 3) Ask the teachers to randomly select a content book appropriate to their grade level (e.g. math or geography, etc).
- 4) Ask the teachers to identify the issues and concerns that ESL students may have with the material.
- 5) Ask the teachers to choose a lesson from their book. They will specify the adaptations that would need to be made in order to tailor it for ESL students.
- 6) Some areas to consider include:
 - difficult vocabulary
 - cultural knowledge
 - unfamiliar concepts
 - unknown structures
 - new format
- 7) Help facilitate the task by asking groups the following questions: Are the tasks and activities appropriate for ESL students? Would the teachers modify the activities listed or would they use some other task for their ESL students? Should the ESL and regular students be working on the same kind of tasks at all times? What are their suggestions with respect to tasks and activities, and modification of the activities to meet the needs of ESL students?
- 8) Once the teachers have finished discussing, ask them to share their ideas, strategies and techniques with the class.

Practicum or In-class Activity: Testing and Assessment

Time: 45 minutes

Materials:

Ontario Ministry of Education (2000), *The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1 - 8 English as a Second Language and English Literacy Development Resource Guide*, Toronto: Queen's Printer.

Or Internet Access to the Ontario Ministry of Education's website at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/esl18.pdf.



The purpose of this activity is to introduce a resource for teachers' of ESL students. If you have a hard copy of the Resource Guide read pages 21-23. If you don't have a hard copy you can download the pages on Assessment, Evaluation, and Reporting at www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/document/curricul/esl18.pdf. If you are a teacher-candidate read the document. Critically observe how your host-teacher implements or does not implement these strategies.

If you are a classroom teacher, follow these steps:

- 1) Read the excerpt.
- 2) Reflect on the assessment tools you are currently using in the classroom. Some suggestions include:
 - the information presented in the activities
 - the skills required to complete the activities (listening, speaking, reading, writing)
 - the length of time allotted for ESL and non-ESL students to complete the activities
 - the expectations for the students on what is to be completed in the activities...long term goals and short term goals
- 3) Reflect on further modifications and strategies that can be used to meet the needs of ESL students.
- 4) Make an effort to incorporate the new strategies into your assessment and reporting practices.

Personal Reflection Activity: My Personal Qualities

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Journal and pencil



If you are a mainstream teacher or an ESL teacher, think of yourself as a potential peer coach for the other. In your journal state your own personal qualities that would make you a good peer coach. If you are already working with another teacher also reflect on the qualities of that teacher. What other qualities would you want him or her to possess?



Appropriate Teaching Strategies - Advice from Students

Video Excerpt:

In these video clips, students share lists which they have generated for teachers and new ESL students. We suggest that you watch the section titled *Appropriate Teaching Strategies – Advice from Students* and complete the activities below. A screen will indicate when you should stop the tape.

Discussion Questions:

- What is your reaction towards the student-generated list of “strategies for new students”?
- How can the teacher raise the new students’ awareness of such coping strategies?
- What teaching strategies did the students suggest?
- What are the students’ main concerns in the video?
- Do emotional factors (affective variable) override an individual's language learning ability (cognitive variable)?



Individual or Group Activity: What Students Tell Students

Time: 30 minutes



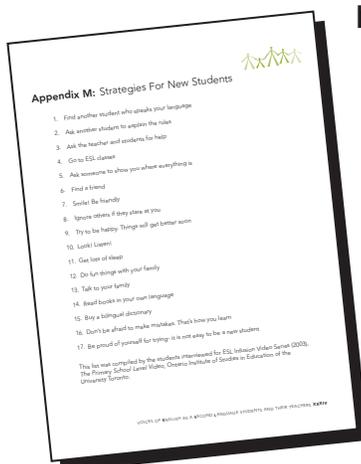
Materials:

Photocopies of Appendix M: Strategies for students

The purpose of this activity is to discuss the strategies that can help students adjust to their new educational context. The ultimate goal is to assist the new students in implementing these techniques in their daily practices.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps and complete steps 2, 3, and 5. We suggest reflecting in your journal in place of the group discussion.



To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Divide the teachers in groups of two or more.
- 2) Each group will review the list of “strategies for new students” generated by the ESL students in this school. Ask teachers to suggest other ideas add them to the list.
- 3) Next, ask them to choose five strategies (from those added and the original) that are the most important or compelling. Ask the teachers to rank-order them according to their degree of importance. One means most important and a foundation principle. Five means that the strategy would improve the situation but is not crucial.
- 4) With their partners, ask teachers to discuss how they use coping strategies to support students. For example, teaching students how to ask for clarification of a concept.
- 5) As a group, ask teachers to share their rank-ordered list with their colleagues. Ask them to tally how often the five strategies were selected as first second, third, fourth or fifth by their peers.
- 6) As a group, discuss implementation strategies to help new ESL students upon their arrival.

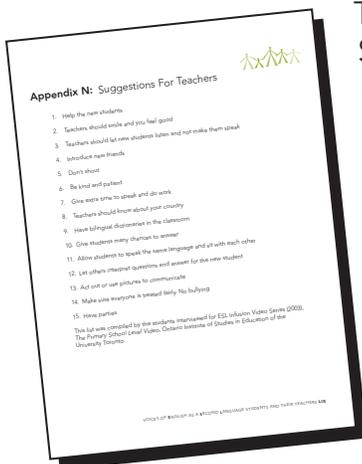
Practicum or In-class Activity: Students as Teachers

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Photocopies of Appendix N: Suggestions for teachers

The student-generated list of “suggestions for teachers” can be found in Appendix N.



The suggestions were proposed by the students from the Primary School Level Video. This list includes what they feel teachers can do to help their new students. Using the list reflect on your teaching practice. Next to each item, put a plus “+”, a check or a minus “-”. The plus indicates that this is a strategy employed in your daily practice. The minus indicates that this is something you may need to work on.

If you are a classroom teacher extend the activity by designing a similar task for your students. Reflect on whether their suggestions were comparable to the original list. Reflect on the differences and try to find reasons or justifications for differences.



Personal Reflection Activity: What Worked for Me?

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Journal and pencil



In your journal, reflect on your experiences learning a foreign language. What techniques or strategies helped? Think of the best language teacher that you had. What qualities or teaching strategies did this teacher possess that made him or her stand out? If you have never learnt a foreign language, watch the news in another language. What helped you decipher what they were saying?





**V What types of programs
do Schools offer ESL
students?**

Background

V **What type of programs do schools offer ESL students?**

ESL Programs

It is important that all teachers be aware of the type of ESL instruction a student is receiving and how the ESL curriculum relates to the content curriculum (Becker, 2001). Programming dynamics which work against the ESL learner include fragmented school days, departmentalized programs, age-gender inflexibility, and streaming (Walqui, 2000). It is important to share information on what needs are and are not being met in the various programs (Morales-Nadal, 1991). According to the interviewees in the video, the ESL classroom was seen as a safe haven away from the chaos of the mainstream classroom. Schools should critically examine why ESL classrooms are considered safe havens while mainstream classrooms are often not. Through the video we introduce teachers to a number of successful exemplary ESL programs in the Toronto District School Board. We encourage viewers to reflect on the structures and programs in their school to determine which areas could be improved to support ESL students.

Newcomer Programs

ESL students may be at risk for academic failure and early drop-out because of weaknesses in literacy skills, English language skills or academic skills (Genesee, 1999). Many schools now run newcomer programs that meet the unique needs of a diverse ESL population. The goals of a newcomer program may vary from school to school depending on the needs of the ESL population, the resources available, the educational goals and the staff available (Genesee, 1999). There is no “one-size-fits-all” program. However, in general, the goals of newcomer programs include the following: 1) receive new students in a way that puts the student at ease; 2) help students to develop basic English language skills; 3) help students develop academic skills; and 4) assist students in becoming acculturated to their new environment (Genesee, 1999). Some schools may offer a full-day program for absolute beginners that includes content classes. Others may offer a one or two-hour a day program where students are integrated into the mainstream for the rest of the day. In other schools, an ESL teacher may be assigned to support ESL students in the mainstream class in such a way that they never leave the regular classroom to receive ESL instruction.

Sheltered Instruction

Sheltered Instruction is a particular model of content based instruction as previously described in the “Teaching Strategies” section of this guide. The main elements of a sheltered language classroom include the following 1) units designed for ESL learners exclusively, 2) classes taught by an ESL or mainstream teacher, and 3) a content course syllabus with corresponding curricular expectations appropriate to the grade level, 4) language modified to suit the needs of students, and 5) commercial texts and other meaningful resources (e.g., newspapers/magazine articles, videos, Internet resources and books) selected with sensitivity to optimize the proficiency level of students (Britton et al., 1989). Programs such as these have different names in school boards across Canada. In the Toronto District School Board there are several types of sheltered programs including the following: 1) a Literacy Enrichment Academic Program (LEAP) program offered in some elementary and middle schools, 2) English Literacy Development (ELD) for high school students, and 3) ESL subject matter course such as ESL History or ESL Science in certain high schools with a large ESL population.

Partial Support in Elementary and Middle Schools

Typically in elementary and middle schools in Ontario, students receive partial support from an ESL teacher on a daily basis. The level of support greatly depends on the ESL staffing allocation at the particular school. In contrast to secondary schools, where the ESL curriculum is policy, the document published by the Ontario Ministry of Education on ESL for elementary schools is a Resource Guide. This means that schools are not legally required to provide ESL support to students from a qualified ESL teacher. ESL support can be delivered by mainstream teachers. Because of the lack of specific requirements for ESL programming in elementary schools, some principals have chosen to use their ESL teacher allocation creatively. In other words, the ESL teacher may be used to reduce class sizes or to avoid a split grade (E. Coelho, personal communication, June, 2003). As a result, mainstream teachers often find themselves without support in providing an ESL program for their students.

High School ESL/ELD Courses

According to the Ontario Curriculum, secondary schools in Ontario are required to provide ESL and English Literacy Development (ELD) courses that range from beginner level to advanced level. Students would typically take one ESL/ELD course, supplemented with sheltered content or mainstream courses depending on their level. They may also receive intensive, partial or tutorial support. There are five levels of ESL courses ranging from a course for total beginners to the fifth level which provides a bridge to regular secondary level English courses. There are four levels of ELD courses for students who have had limited access to schooling in their first language. These



courses range from introducing literacy skills to preparing students to continue education in the mainstream or the workplace.

The activities in the guide help teachers explore the programs listed above as well as a range of extracurricular and support programs. The key to successful programming is the involvement of all levels in the school system — administrators, teachers, parents and students.

Resources

Books and Journal Articles

Genesee, F., (Ed). (1999). *Program alternatives for linguistically diverse students* [Educational Practice Report No. 1]. Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence. Retrieved from the World Wide Web:
<http://www.cal.org/crede/pubs/edpractice/EPR1.pdf>

Miramontes, O. B., Nadeau, A., & Cummins, N. L. (1997). *Restructuring schools for linguistic diversity: Linking decision making to effective programs*. New York: Teachers College Press.



V What types of programs do Schools offer ESL students?

ESL Programs: Mainstream versus Pullout

Video Excerpt:

In this video clip the teachers describe the programs in their school and the advantages of ESL classes. Students also discuss how ESL classes helped them. We suggest that you watch the section titled *ESL Programs*, and complete the activities below. A screen will indicate when you should stop the tape.



Discussion Questions:

- What are the students' attitudes towards their ESL classes?
- What type of program is available at this school?
- How do you compare it with the programs/resources available in your school?
- Do you think these programs and resources could be made available in all schools? If not, what coping strategies would you suggest?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of ESL programs?
- How could you increase the effectiveness of these programs?



Individual or Group Activity: Program Brainstorm and Action Plan



Time: 30-40 minutes

Materials:

Chart paper and markers

The purpose of this activity is to raise awareness about the issues that ESL teachers and classroom teachers face in implementing ESL programs.

To complete this activity on your own, read the following:

The steps you will follow are similar to those outlined for the workshop. Please read through the steps. Follow steps 2-4. We suggest using your journal to record your ideas.

To complete this activity in a workshop, the facilitator follows these steps:

- 1) Divide the teachers in groups of two or more.
- 2) Ask them to brainstorm issues and concerns about the nature of ESL classes. Some suggestions include:
 - age of the students
 - level of the students
 - the part of the mainstream classes students miss while attending ESL classes
- 3) Devise a plan which helps open the lines of communications between teachers (memos, notice board, e-mails).
- 4) Reflect on the collaboration required between the ESL teacher and the mainstream classroom teacher.



Practicum or In-class Activity: Role Play on Considering Compatibility

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Paper and pencil



The purpose of this activity is to highlight the importance of compatibility between the ESL teacher and the classroom teacher. With a colleague role-play the experience of meeting a team teacher--one takes the role of an ESL teacher and the other the role of the mainstream teacher. Discuss how you might work towards compatibility.

Reflect on how the role-play might evolve under the following circumstances:

- you reverse roles with your colleague and act as an ESL teacher or mainstream teacher
- you are colleagues who have chosen to work together
- you are colleagues who have been assigned to work together
- you are strangers who have been assigned to work together

Personal Reflection Activity: ESL Programs in My School

Time: 20 minutes

Materials:

Journal and pencil



In your journal, reflect on the ESL programs available in your school. What are the advantages and disadvantages of pull-out ESL programs? A pull-out program is often used in the elementary system. This is when students are removed from the classroom during class time for an ESL class. What are the challenges in your classroom when it comes to teaching ESL students?



