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WE

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Mission

WAESOL Educator is the biannual, professional, peer-reviewed, online journal of the Washington Association for the Education of Speakers of Other Languages (WAESOL) organization. *WAESOL Educator* publishes articles concerning the teaching of language in elementary and secondary education, higher education, adult education, and bilingual education, as well as teacher preparation for pre-service and in-service teachers.

The two main goals of *WAESOL Educator* are

- to share information related to language teaching practices, materials, research, and professional development opportunities;
- to support and mentor potential authors who teach, conduct research, administer programs, and/or study in classrooms with multilingual learners.

All manuscripts receive a double-blind review.

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Letter from the President

Greetings,

I hope this time in a new year finds you well and inspired as we continue our vital work in supporting English language learners and advancing equity in education. As the president of WAESOL, I want to take this opportunity to connect with the educators who dedicate their time and energy to empowering their students, often in the face of systemic challenges.

Our mission as educators goes beyond teaching English—it is about fostering connection, advocating for equity, and ensuring that every learner has the tools and confidence they need to succeed. As the 2025 President of WAESOL, I would like to share a reflection on our shared purpose and a call to action as we navigate the complexities of the current political and educational landscape.

As educators of language learners, every day you stand at the intersection of education, advocacy, and cultural exchange. You are not merely teaching vocabulary and grammar; you are equipping your students with the means to express themselves, connect with others, and pursue their goals. In doing so, you play a transformative role in the lives of countless individuals and their families.

The work of an English language educator is multifaceted. It requires not only instructional expertise but also deep empathy and cultural awareness. You often become advocates, addressing systemic barriers that your students face, from limited access to resources to navigating a new cultural context.

The current political climate has brought both challenges and opportunities to our profession. As issues related to immigration, equity in education, and multiculturalism come to the forefront, your role as a teacher extends beyond the classroom. You have the power to challenge stereotypes, promote understanding, and create inclusive environments where all students feel valued.

I encourage you to continue innovating in your teaching practices and advocating for your students. Explore ways to integrate culturally responsive pedagogy, embrace the diverse experiences your learners bring to the classroom, and stay informed about policies that impact their lives. Most importantly, remember to take care of yourselves. Your work is demanding, and your well-being is essential to sustaining the energy and compassion you bring to your students.

The broader context of our work cannot be ignored. The political landscape around immigration, education, and language policy directly impacts the lives of our students and the scope of our profession. As educators, we are uniquely positioned to advocate for policies that support equity, inclusion, and opportunity for all learners.

Advocacy begins with awareness. Stay informed about local, state, and national policies affecting education and immigration. Engage in conversations with policymakers and community leaders to ensure the needs of your students are understood and addressed. Support initiatives that increase funding for language programs, professional development for teachers, and equitable access to resources for all learners.

WAESOL is committed to being a platform for change. We are working to amplify the voices of educators, provide professional development opportunities, and collaborate with organizations that share our mission. Together, we can build a future where every learner has access to the resources and support they need to thrive.

As we move forward, I invite you to reflect on the values that guide our work. We share a belief in the transformative power of education and a commitment to fostering equity and inclusion. Whether you are teaching in a K–12 classroom, working with adult learners, or advocating for systemic change, your contributions are invaluable.

Let us continue to strengthen our community by learning from one another and sharing our stories. Participate in WAESOL events, take advantage of our professional development resources, contribute to our journal, WAESOL Educator, and connect with your peers. By working together, we can overcome challenges and create opportunities for growth and success.

As I move forward into a year as the President of WAESOL, I want to first, thank you for being an essential part of the WAESOL community, and to remind you that together, we are shaping a future where language is a bridge, not a barrier.

Kelli Dahmen

2025 WAESOL President

Letter from the Editor

Dearest Readers,

Welcome to the Winter 2025 edition of The Educator! It's still technically winter, right?

Bringing this edition to publication has once again been a labor of love and service. I want to extend my gratitude to Bridget Green, former editor, for her assistance with graphic design, and to Nicholas David, who has joined our team as a copy editor. I am deeply appreciative of their efforts in making this edition possible.

The WAESOL Educator is a vital regional publication that highlights the work of both scholars and practitioners dedicated to the important task of teaching multilingual learners and advancing English language education. In this edition, we are pleased to welcome WAESOL's new president, Kelli Dahmen, and we look forward to her leadership in the year ahead.

This issue features several insightful articles covering a range of timely topics in English language teaching, including culturally relevant curricula for multilingual learners, translanguaging, and a variety of practical classroom tools and strategies to support MLLs. One article examines the language demands of mathematics word problems, exploring how linguistic features shape students' understanding and problem-solving. Additionally, we are excited to include two book reviews that offer valuable perspectives for educators in the field.

Due to the delay in publishing this winter edition, we have extended the submission deadline for the Summer 2025 issue to June 15th. We encourage you to submit an article for consideration! We welcome not only empirical research but also practical insights—tell us what's working well for you in the classroom.

We look forward to hearing from you!

Kindest Regards,

Grace inae Blum *(She/Her)*

Editor

Land Acknowledgment

Washington Association for the Education of Speakers of Other Languages (WAESOL) recognizes and honors our many diverse Indigenous and Native Peoples in the Pacific Northwest, in the United States, and globally-past, present, and future. We acknowledge that the arrival of the English language impacted the traditional languages and cultures of the Native, Indigenous, and First Nations Peoples and we celebrate the work to reclaim or maintain their languages and cultures. We stand in solidarity with the Native, Indigenous, and First Nations Peoples and respect their sovereignty, cultural heritage, and lives. May we all take a moment to honor the Indigenous tribes and Indigenous lands that we reside on and pay our deepest respects.

Let's review: Student-created, content-based

Anikke Trier

Summary: Having students create games themselves to be used for content review in English language classrooms can be a fun and beneficial activity that promotes student ownership and engagement in creating and playing the games. This article introduces an activity for students to review materials they learned with a student-created, content-based activity.

Keywords: games, student-created, content-based, review

Introduction

Over the course of a semester or quarter, English Language Learners (ELL) are exposed to a lot of new information in each of their classes, and it can be difficult to remember everything learned throughout the semester. As teachers, we want students to be able to look back at our class, remember the information and knowledge from the semester or unit and say, "look at all the things I've learned." One way to accomplish this is by having students create their own games to review materials.

Many teachers use games for learning or practicing new materials throughout a semester whether it's for vocabulary, grammar, content, or other English skills. Games can bring a sense of fun and competition to a class. As Mubaslat (2012) says, "Games also lend themselves well to revision exercises helping learners recall material in a pleasant, entertaining way." Games can motivate students to want to win or do well and can be fun for students even if they are at different levels with their English skills. Usually, these games are chosen by the teacher; however, having students create the games and materials can also be beneficial. Moiseenko (2015) mentions, "One benefit of student-designed materials is that they contribute to peer teaching and learning." By creating all aspects of the games, such as game questions and rules, students are invested in the activity and using their language skills by navigating the game process with each other both when producing the game and playing their peers' games later.

This student-created, content-based activity was used as a final semester review for Japanese university students studying English skills and American culture courses in the United States. The students were beginner to intermediate in their language skills. In the American culture course, the students learned about a variety of topics related to American culture such as education, family, and U.S. history. During the course, they learned new vocabulary, concepts, and ideas in each unit. When teaching this content heavy class, I often wonder if students remember what we talked about earlier in the semester, so this activity was created as a way to help students review the content from the semester in two ways: by creating a game and then playing games created by their classmates. The procedure for this was over about 2 class periods of 90 minutes each. In the first class period, we discussed games, vocabulary, and began creating the games. In the second class period, the students played the games that their classmates created.

Before creating the games

In order for students to start thinking about games and what makes a game successful, students first brainstormed and discussed the following questions in groups:

- Do you like playing games? Why or why not?
- What are your favorite games?
- How often do you play games?
- How many games can you think of?
- What makes a game successful or fun to play?
- What are some vocabulary words people use when playing games?

Students shared their answers with the whole class. We discussed that games can be a lot of fun but they also can learn a lot from games as well. Next, students were given a vocabulary handout with some simple game vocabulary such as "dice" "roll" "turn" "space." We went through the game vocabulary so they knew what all the vocabulary words meant and could use them when they made their own game instructions later. We also did a simple cloze activity to practice using the vocabulary in game instructions. For example,

"When it is your ________, roll the _________ and move that number of _________ on the board." A variation of this would be to bring in real games and have students read and analyze the instructions for vocabulary and instruction language.

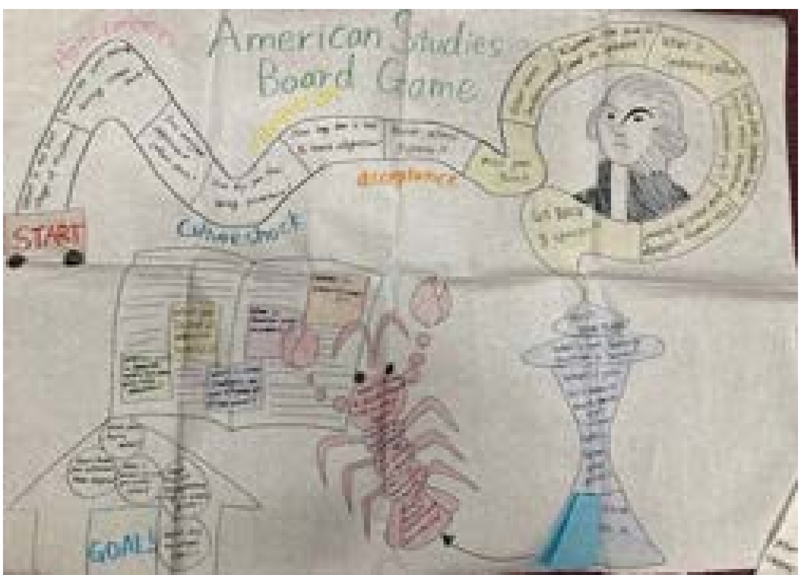

Figure 1: Student-created board game

Creating the games

Students were put into groups of 3 or 4 and then given the game assignment and shown a few game examples from past students. For my class, there were 28 students, so we had 7 groups of 4. They were given a 90-minute class period to work on this together. Anything not completed would be homework. The main assignment instructions were:

- Talk about and decide how you want the game to look, how it will be played, and what kind of questions/activities you want to have in the game.
- Review the content that we have done this semester and draw your questions from the class content.
- Make the materials for the game- the board, the questions, the pieces, anything you need (see Figures 1 and 2). Be sure to have a variety of questions from the semester. This is a review of all we have learned. You must also provide the answers to your questions.
- The game should take about 8-10 minutes to play.
- Write clear instructions for the game using your vocabulary and instruction language (see Figure 3). Your classmates will play your game, so your instructions must be very clear and easy to understand. You will not be there to explain the game.
- Be creative and have fun. Think about the different things we have learned and talked about in class and use as much knowledge as you can.
- Bring your game, instructions, and all your materials to class on _______.
- Be prepared to play games and review all we've learned this semester.

Figure 2: Student-created game pieces

Playing the games

Students brought the games and instructions to the next class. They were assigned to start at one game that was not their own, read the instructions, and play the game. After about 8-10 minutes, students rotated to the next game- reviewing the information from the semester with each new game. Since we had 7 groups in total, each group was able to play the 6 games created by their classmates. These 6 rotations took about 60 minutes. This was another learning opportunity for the students because each time they got to a different game, they had to read and understand the instructions in order to play it properly. They were not allowed to ask the creators for clarification, because part of the game creation was to write clear, understandable rules.

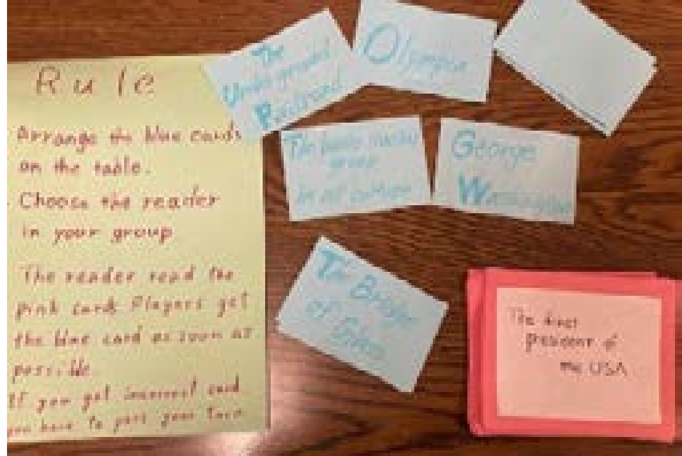

Figure 3: Student-created rules and game materials game

Conclusion

I have always found this activity to be highly successful for my class and believe it could be adapted for other subjects and proficiency levels as well. Students are really engaged in taking ownership and being creative when creating the games and choosing what content to review. In the past students have created board games, card games, and a variety of other creative games for this activity. The students review the materials from the semester when they decide what to include in their games and then must review it all again when they play. It's a fun, energetic class period and hopefully helps students answer the question "What did we learn this semester?" in an enjoyable way.

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Collaborative summaries: A powerful strategy for MLLs

Sheri Jordan

Summary: This powerful strategy coaches students to recognize main ideas in a passage and summarize them, gradually progressing from individual to pair work to larger groups. Students learn to use evidence from the text to defend their interpretations of the main ideas, which becomes more challenging (but exciting) as groups expand.

Keywords: summarizing, collaboration, MLLs, collaborative writing, group work

Here's an understatement: Teaching multilingual learners to write summaries of English text is hard. Those of us who've done this (or at least, tried to) are well-familiar with some of the challenges: The biggest one is plagiarism–because just comprehending text in the first place is hard, let alone putting it into one's own words and sentence structure. And for myriad other reasons: It can feel like a boring, meaningless task. Learners can lack the confidence to do the job at all, let alone do it well. And on and on the challenges go.

One activity that can help with these challenges is collaborative summary writing. This powerful teaching strategy coaches students to recognize main ideas in a passage and summarize them, gradually progressing from individual to pair work to larger groups. Students learn to use evidence from the text to defend their interpretation of the main ideas, which becomes more challenging (but exciting) as groups expand. I personally have tried many of the more traditional (and problematic, boring) strategies in having students write their own summaries in intermediate adult ed ESL classes, in graduate level research classes, in both online and face-to-face developmental and regular English college classes, in undergraduate academic ESL classes–you name it (particularly in the adult ed and higher ed arenas). However, when teaching K-12 teacher candidates recently, I stumbled across this collaborative summary-writing strategy and do not plan to go back. It worked extremely well with mixed groups of teacher candidates (both native and non-native speakers of English), and as many participants in my conference workshop at WAESOL 2024 attested, this method has worked well in a variety of ESL.

The first step and key to successfully utilizing this method is curating and providing engaging, relevant texts for learners to read. With K-12 teacher candidates, Malcolm X's "Learning to Read" (an excerpt, and there are various versions of this excerpt) works well, as it embodies not only the miracle of an adult teaching himself how to read, but a true-to-life example of the power of learning to read, and the complexity of racial issues in the US. With WAESOL workshop participants, an article from *WAESOL Educator* proved more relevant and engaging! (The structure for the latter was also very helpful to summarizing, including clear steps that could form the outline for the summary they came up with.) Depending on the level of learners, I may or may not choose a text with verbal and nonverbal clues such as graphics, pictures, subheadings, etc. For more advanced learners, I've shied away from these to make it more challenging. With lower levels, proving texts with these clues is critical–it encourages them to engage in the very achievable detective work of text comprehension.

Next, decide on and provide the templates and ground rules for a collaborative summarizing activity. Here is a wonderful collaborative summary writing template that I've used, but I'll be honest: I have not been able to find the origin. If a *WAESOL Educator* reader can locate it, please let us know! There are others that might be more appropriate for kids, etc. I like this one because it walks students through the steps of the process. A drawback of this particular template is that there really is not enough room to write more than a few phases. It also will be important to specify that a "main idea" is not just a group of words (i.e. a topic) but instead is formed as a sentence. In addition, you want to determine

ground rules for group work. If you regularly engage in group work already, you've no doubt already established and even co-created these with your classes (i.e. Reading Apprenticeship's classroom negotiated norms). Something along the lines of Kate Kinsella's Discussion Cards can be very helpful here.

This is where the classroom activity begins. Here are the steps of the process. You can add to or eliminate any steps/phases as you see fit for your teaching context:

1. Individual learners read and write a 5-sentence summary of a text. I've often used a text we read earlier in the unit that students are already familiar with. If not, you can do the reading together in class or assign it as homework. Options might include group readings of a text using reciprocal roles or group reading, paragraph by paragraph, of a text, having them pause and verbally summarize each paragraph. Reading Rockets offers a concise list of reading strategies leading to summarizing activities here. However, I do have students do the actual writing of summaries in class to discourage any use of unauthorized sources (AI, friends or family members, etc.) OR to supervise their use of authorized sources (if you do allow the use of AI, etc.) and also help us all to focus on the same thing at the same time.
2. Learners get in pairs. They share their individual summaries, then negotiate and collaborate to write a new joint summary of 5 sentences or so.
3. Each pair now joins with another pair and repeats the process. There is likely to be more "noise" at this stage–more negotiation and defense of ideas chosen for summaries. (Hopefully, anyway. You definitely want to avoid domination by any one learner or pair.) Groups edit their summaries for meaning, language, and word choice.
4. Now groups of 4 join with other groups of four to create groups of 8 and repeat the process. This can be a particularly contentious phase. Groups again edit their summaries for meaning, language, and word choice.
5. One student from the group of 8 presents the summary to the class–possibly just reading it out loud, or projecting it on the document camera, or from the computer if typed.
6. The finale is up to you and depends on your goals for the activity. I've had the class vote on the "best" summary, which has inevitably led us back to what a "good" summary really is–can the group's opinions be included? How much of the original text can be included? Etc.

What does evidence-based research say about this method of processing texts? In the literature, here are some of the positive outcomes of collaborative summary writing (CSW): 1. It enacts Vygotsky's sociocultural theory & ZPD with collective scaffolding (Lin & Maarof, 2013). 2. It provides an authentic opportunity to "language" (Swain, 2000). 3. It allows individual "novices" to become "experts" as a group (Sajedi, 2014; Lin & Maarof, 2013). 4. It's best integrated into a longer unit: teach content, grammar, vocabulary first 3 weeks; then writing process (sentence & paragraph writing, editing, unity, coherence); then teach summarizing & summary writing; then practice in the classroom & move toward CSW (Lin & Maarof, 2013). 5. Collaboratively written summaries are more grammatically accurate, linguistically complex, contain better content-organization-vocabulary (most studies of CSW). and 6. It promotes greater sense of accomplishment (Chao & Lo, 2011)

Reyes (2023) offers several compelling benefits of the strategy, or more generally, collaborative writing: 1. It aligns with English Language Proficiency (ELP) and College and Career Readiness (CCR) standards. 2. It affords workplace prep. 3. Students build on their own and others' knowledge. 4. It fosters a supportive learning community. 5. Writing becomes less isolating/scary. 6. It develops audience awareness. 7. Students learn to defend their choices. 8. It demonstrates writing as a process. 9. It draws on the strengths of all members. 10. It integrates the 4+ skills.

Without a doubt, collaborative summary writing is a powerful strategy to use with your multilingual learners. So far, there has not been a perfect way to make it happen, but your ideas and input are definitely welcome as we continue to explore this method of making texts and strategies come alive for our learners!

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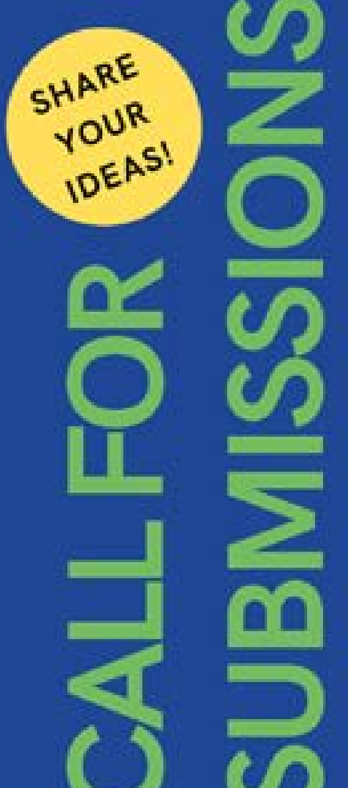

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Scholar-Practitioner

What's the story? Examining the functional language of word problems

Jennifer Green and Beth Dillard

Summary: This article describes some key language demands of mathematics word problems. We share what we learned from examining 100 middle school ratio word problems from two different publishers: Illustrative Mathematics and CK-12. Using a functional language approach (like used in WIDA), we found a patterned organization of word problems and multiple language features. In this article, we examine the staged organization of word problems and one of those language features—expanded noun groups.

Keywords: Math, WIDA, language demands, noun groups, word problems

It's been a little over three years since Washington State adopted the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards Framework, 2020 Edition. Educators have gained experience teaching the key language uses (genres): *narrate, inform, explain, and argue*. In this article, we examine a genre not found in the WIDA manual, but which students encounter regularly in math classrooms— the *word problem*. Teachers often say that word problems can be vexing for their students. Therefore, educators continue to ask themselves how to help students make sense of these problems, both mathematically and linguistically.

In this article, we take a linguistic approach, specifically a systemic functional approach, to word problems. We share what we learned from examining 100 middle school ratio word problems from two different publishers: Illustrative Mathematics (2024) and CK-12 (2023). In particular, we describe the patterned organization of word problems and examine one language feature often found in them— *expanded noun groups*.

The word problem genre

WIDA draws on a functional model of language. Put differently, people use language in culturally specific ways to "get things done" (Derewianka & Jones, 2016, p. 7). They write recipes to share with friends how to make pie. They write editorials to convince their neighbors to think differently. They write poems to celebrate nature. As people create these different *genres*, they follow—and also play with—different patterns. A functional view of language helps illuminate and describe these patterned uses of language.

In mathematics, students are called upon to make sense of the multimodal genre of *word problems*. Word problems—also called story problems—use a combination of words, numbers, symbols, diagrams and drawings. They can make math more relatable by helping students imagine real-life applications of math concepts and processes. At the same time, the cultural assumptions and language used to create those imaginary situations can obscure the math, especially when the linguistic complexity of the writing outpaces the language proficiency level of the student (Abedi & Lord, 2001; Vilenius-Tuohimaa et al., 2008; Wilburne et al., 2011). This is not to say that teachers should simplify or remove word problems for students at earlier proficiency levels; on the contrary, amplification of curriculum is more effective because exposure to complex language is critical for language acquisition (Walqui & Bunch, 2019). Instead, teachers should show students how to dissect the complex language of word problems.

Typical organization of a word problem

Genres tend to have particular stages of meaning (Hasan, 1977; Martin, 2001). Take, for example, the narrative *plot mountain*, with its stages of exposition, rising action, conflict, climax, falling action, and resolution. Of course, this is only one culturally recognizable way of telling a story (McCabe, 1997), and even within this pattern one will find variation as stages switch order or are skipped entirely (Derewianka & Jones, 2023). Nevertheless, it's a useful starting point to see how people organize meaning in predictable ways.

As we examined ratio word problems, we noticed two stages characterized by specific functions: a *scenario* and a *question* (See Table 1). Gerofsky (1996) found a similar pattern of *set-up*, *information*, and *question*.

Stage	Characteristics
Scenario	Features of narrative Sets the scene
Question	Prompts student to use math Relies primarily on symbolic discourse

Table 1. Stages and characteristics

Most word problems we examined began with the scenario. The scenario acts much like the key language use of narrative (see, for example, WIDA Narrate, , Language Arts, 6-8, 2020). It has the language functions and features one would expect, though with less rich description, and more focus on actors, actions, and relevant details of time, place, quantity, etc. The scenario sets the scene for the instructions for the question stage. Here students are directed to interact with the scenario by engaging in mathematical processes. Interestingly, the question stage can take the form of either questions or commands (see Table 2).

Question	If she makes 3 cakes, how many eggs will she need?
Command	Compare the ratio of basketballs to footballs.

Table 2. Questions and commands

Within both stages, there are many linguistic features that are typical of word problems (Huang & Normandia, 2008; O'Halloran, 1998; Schleppegrell, 2007). Here, we highlight how the use of expanded noun groups makes meaning in dense and compact ways.

Expanded noun groups

A common feature among word problems is the expanded noun group. A noun group (NG) includes a head noun and all of its modifiers, both that come before (pre-modifiers) and after (post-modifiers). All modifiers give more information about the head noun. In Tables 3 and 4, common modifiers are listed with several examples.

Types of pre-modifiers	Examples
Pointers (articles, demonstratives, possessive determiners)	a, the, those, my, Bob's
Quantifier (can be precise or vague)	seven, many, a few, a pound of
Describers (adjectives)	beautiful, delicious, funny, blue, soft
Classifiers (nouns, adjectives, numerals--how things are categorized)	a math lesson; an electric guitar, a Swedish rug, first place

Table 3. Types of pre-modifiers

Types of post-modifiers	Examples
Prepositional phrases	The vase with the green rim; a collection of rocks; the book on the shelf
Embedded (full relative) clauses	The vase that my grandfather gave me; a collection of rocks which are studied all over the world
Embedded clauses (reduced relative clauses)	The vase my grandfather gave me; the book sitting on the shelf

Table 4: Types of post-modifiers

Some noun groups are single words:

Math is fun.

Some are just a few words:

Word problems are challenging for *many students*.

Noun groups that are more than two or three words are known in WIDA as *expanded Noun Groups*.

Some of these can be very long:

The kind and experienced teacher who taught middle school math at the school down the road loved her job.

NGs can generally be reduced to a pronoun, no matter the length of the original NG:

- It is fun.
- They are challenging for them.
- She loved it.

Noun groups in word problems:

While many word problems have short NGs, it is not uncommon to find expanded NGs that pack in a lot of information pertinent to the problem. Specifically, post-modifiers (prepositional phrases and embedded clauses) further define the head noun.

The density of this language can be difficult for students to parse, as we show below in two examples. Our first example (Figure 1) is a 7th grade ratio problem from CK-12 ("5.13 Scale Factor to Find Actual Dimensions" section).

> Calvin drew a map of his neighborhood. The scale factor he used for his map was 1/800. The actual distance between Calvin's house and his best friend Frank's house is 80 meters. What should be the distance, in centimeters, between those two places on his scale drawing?

Figure 1. Word problem 1

First, we separate the problem into the scenario and question

stages (Figure 2). The scenario stage asks the student to imagine two people, Calvin and Frank, and an imaginary situation where Calvin is drawing a map. The word problem ends with the question, directing students how to interact with the scenario as they do their own math.

Stage: Scenario
Calvin drew a map of his neighborhood. The scale factor he used for his map was 1/800. The actual distance between Calvin's house and his best friend Frank's house is 80 meters.
Stage: Question
What should be the distance, in centimeters, between those two places on his scale drawing?

Figure 2. Stages for word problem 1

Next, we identify the NGs and all of their modifiers (Table 5).

NG #	Pre-modifiers	Head Noun	Post-modifiers
1		Calvin	
2	a	map	of his neighborhood
3	The scale	factor	he used for his map
4		1/800	
5	The actual	distance	between Calvin's house and his best friend Frank's house
6	80	meters	
7	the	distance	between those two places

Table 5. Noun groups for word problem 1

This word problem relies on modifiers to guide students in correctly solving this problem. Prepositional phrases as post-modifiers are especially common (NGs 2, 5, 7). Notice that the post-modifiers in NGs 5 and 7 define the same distance, but NG 7 replaces *Calvin's house and his best friend Frank's house with those two places*. These details are critical for comprehension. Notice also the use of in centimeters. This preposition is not part of the NG. Rather, it interrupts the NG to let the reader know what unit to use. The commas help to signal that this is an interruption. Because interruptions can be confusing for students, we recommend explicitly pointing out such features to students.

Our second example comes from Illustrative Mathematics (IM) (2024) and is a 6th grade word problem ("Unit 2 Lesson 2" section) that exemplifies dense NGs (Figure 3). Once more, we separate the problem into stages (Figure 4) and identify the head nouns and noun groups (Table 6).

In a recipe for fizzy grape juice, the ratio of cups of sparkling water to cups of grape juice concentrate is 3 to 1. Find two more ratios of cups of sparkling water to cups of juice concentrate that would make a mixture that tastes the same as this recipe. Describe another mixture of sparkling water and grape juice that would taste different than this recipe.

Figure 3. Word problem 2

Stage: Scenario
In a recipe for fizzy grape juice, the ratio of cups of sparkling water to cups of grape juice concentrate is 3 to 1.
Stage: Question
Find two more ratios of cups of sparkling water to cups of juice concentrate that would make a mixture that tastes the same as this recipe. Describe another mixture of sparkling water and grape juice that would taste different than this recipe.

Figure 4. Stages for word problem 2

NG #	Pre-modifiers	Head Noun	Post-modifiers
1	a	recipe	for fizzy grape juice
2	the	ratio	of cups of sparkling water to cups of grape juice concentrate
3		3 to 1	
4	Two more	ratios	of cups of sparkling water to cups of juice concentrate that would make a mixture that tastes the same as this recipe
5	Another	mixture	sparkling water and grape juice that would taste different than this recipe

Table 6. Noun groups for word problem 2

First, notice how this scenario stage looks different than in the prior example. Rather than a story with characters and actions, the setup is simply providing the information that students will be working with. It gives students the recipe and implicitly asks them to imagine making fizzy grape juice.

Next, look at the noun groups in this example. Looking at Table 6, it is evident that this word problem has some extended NGs. In fact, NG 4 is 25 words long! It is also clear that most of the expansion is in the post-modifiers. The post-modifiers communicate what the ratios and mixtures are composed of; and that relationship is compressed into these long post-modifiers. Although it looks initially like the

post-modifiers are prepositional phrases, starting with *for* or *of*, upon closer inspection, these prepositional phrases are followed by embedded clauses in the fourth and fifth noun groups. In fact, NG 4 has two embedded clauses: *that would make a mixture and that taste the same as this recipe*.

There is one noun group that is not a word at all: *3 to 1*. It is a symbolic way of writing out *3 cups to 1 cup*. Here one can see how the symbolic language of math—which has its own syntax—does not always map on neatly to the syntax of English. We are treating *3 to 1* as a head noun, as the two numbers and *to* together represent the *ratio*.

Understanding that the term *ratio* (NGs 2 & 4) refers to a relationship between two things—in this case cups *of* water *to* cups of grape juice—is also important. This allows the students to take the third NG: *3 to 1* and connect the 3 to the water and the 1 to the juice.

Finally, the authors move from using *ratio* to *mixture*. Authors of word problems use synonyms to create cohesion. Students may not immediately notice that the two words are used to refer to the same concept. Again, by examining NGs carefully, educators can help students better understand what is given and what is requested in word problems.

Connections to the classroom

How can teachers make these layers of linguistic meaning and symbolic representation explicit to students? One excellent way to do this is by thinking aloud about the language of the word problem. In the section that follows, we show a short example of how one might do this with students identified at levels 3 and higher in WIDA (2020). There is also a longer video example linked below.

Start by identifying the scenario and question phases as well as separating the sentences. Images 1 and 2 show the word problem before and after the think-aloud.

Image 1. Word problem 2 without annotations

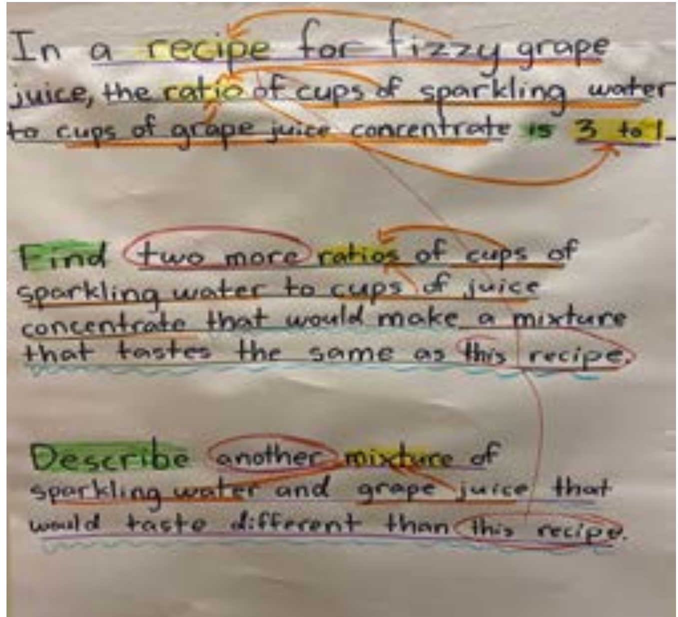


Image 2. Word problem 2 with annotations

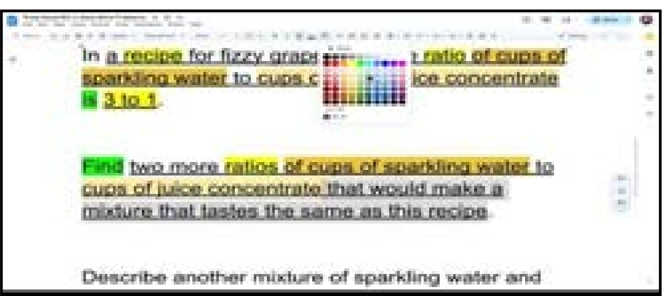
After separating the sentences, help students identify the head nouns. They may be drawn to words like *grape* and *water*, things that are concrete. In reality though, the head nouns in this example are most often *ratio* and *mixture*. Helping students see this can help them parse the language of the word problem, and better grasp the mathematical concept of ratio as a relationship between two things.

This example think-aloud assumes that students have learned about NGs as a grammatical structure previously, and that they are using this knowledge to now help them with comprehending word problems. Here is a sample portion:

> "Let's look at the first sentence in the question stage. I see the *verb* find starts the sentence. We need to find something. What is the one word that tells us what we need to find? Are we looking for *water*? Are we looking for *recipes*? No. We are look ing for *ratios*.
>
> Now, we need to figure out more about these ra tios. All the words around the word *ratios* give us this information.
>
> Let's start with the pre-modifiers, or the words that are in front of the head noun, *two more*.
>
> Okay, so we need *two ratios* in addition to the ra tio we already have (3 to 1). What are the things in this ratio? Cats to dogs? Coffee to creamer? No--*cups of sparkling water to cups of juice concentrate*..."

Please click on the link to watch the full think-aloud:

Noun Groups in Ratio Word Problem: A Think Aloud



Conclusion

Math word problems can be confusing to students, both mathematically and linguistically. In our linguistic examination of middle school ratio word problems, we identified stages and noun groups as two features that may be helpful for students to recognize when solving word problems. Teachers can engage in thoughtful think-alouds as a means of apprenticing their students in noticing these features themselves.

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A Culturally Relevant, Multimodal, and Social Literacy Curriculum for MLLs

Kali Ortiz

Summary: A bilingual educator reflects on their journey from feeling marginalized for their diverse cultural identities and skills to embracing them as assets. They advocate for inclusive literacy curricula, emphasizing cultural relevance, multimodal tools, and social interaction. Through research and teaching experience, they highlight strategies to support multilingual learners, fostering equity and empowerment.

Keywords: multilingual learners, diversity, literacy development, digital literacy, multimodal tools, cultural relevance, social interaction

As a bilingual and bicultural individual, I often had experiences where I felt my Spanish and diversity was looked at as a deficit–a flaw and barrier that affected my education. I attended a private school, with no more than 250 students; the majority of my school community was monolingual, white students and teachers. When I first entered school, I only spoke Spanish at home to communicate with my parents. I found myself stuck in between two cultures and feeling as though one language was not appropriate in certain areas in my life. As I continued to spend years in a dominant English language classroom, I felt as though I unconsciously hid my bilingual skills to fit into the norm. I was never given the opportunity to use my Spanish skills in any school, unless it was for the 40 minutes of Spanish class that was taught by our white teacher, whose first language was English, second language was French, and third language was nonfluent Spanish.

Once I got into college, I finally felt like I did not have to choose an identity or culture–I was bilingual and bicultural; it was my asset. I learned how creating an equitable education for our students and providing our multilingual, diverse learners with opportunities was crucial to their success. Now, as I am obtaining completing Western Washington University's Digital Media and Literacy Certificate, I wonder how we, as educators, can integrate technology and other multimodal tools to help maintain students' home language and develop new language. My research is centered around how integrating digital literacy in a bilingual classroom can improve students' literacy development and help close the opportunity gap.

Literacy curriculum for multilingual learners: A comprehensive approach to reading comprehension

In the summer of 2022, just a month after earning my Bachelor of Education in Language, Literacy, and Culture from Western Washington University, I secured a teaching position with the Skagit Foundation for Academic Endeavors (FAE). Tasked with instructing a combined class of second and third-grade students for the five-week summer bridge program, I became part of a mission aimed at dismantling barriers to educational success for diverse learners, educators, and families.

The program's mission is to collectively break down barriers to educational achievement for diverse learners, educators, and their families and is dedicated to increasing access to summer learning through an innovative program tailored to the needs of the Skagit Valley communities. At FAE, the College Fellow and Echale Ganas programs stand out as a significant initiative. The Fellow program offers college students from the Latinx community studying education the opportunity to gain hands-on experience by co-teaching alongside experienced educators. Similarly, the Echale Ganas program offers a unique opportunity for high school students in the Skagit Valley to gain hands-on experience in the education field. Designed for 8th-12th graders, this 5-7-week commitment begins with a 2-week foundational course at Skagit Valley College. During this time, students learn about classroom management, Latinx culture, and the pathway to higher education. Following this initial phase, participants engage in a 5-week practicum, where they join a classroom as part of the teaching team. Through this guided practice, future teachers develop essential skills and cultural competence, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable education—a vision I shared as a newly certified, Latina teacher. Through this guided practice, future teachers develop essential skills and cultural competence, contributing to a more inclusive and equitable education—a vision I shared as a newly certified, Latina teacher.

Entering this role, I felt a blend of nervousness and excitement about creating a literacy curriculum that would address the needs of my multilingual, diverse learners, as well as mentoring and guiding my Fellow and two Echale Ganas teachers.

Given that all 20 my students were multilingual, bicultural, and had varying reading levels, it was crucial to consider their unique backgrounds, language proficiencies, and cultural experiences when designing instructional materials and activities. Many times, multilingual learners (MLLs) do not have opportunities to demonstrate their full understanding and comprehension (Goldenberg, 2020). Reading was an area where many multilingual students tend to underperform in comparison to their grade level standards (Ogletree and Griffin, 2020). Now, having completed a master's degree in language and literacy, I am entering year three of teaching in the program and continuing to develop my literacy curriculum to better serve my students. In my research, many common ideas arose surrounding the best way to support multilingual learners and bilingual education, while effectively integrating technology. Through both research and experience, I have discovered three strategies that positively impacted my MLLs in their reading comprehension: making the content culturally relevant, utilizing multimodal tools, and fostering social interactions within the learning process.

Make it culturally relevant

The first thing that I knew I wanted to do for my literacy curriculum was ensure I had culturally relevant materials that would not only engage students but also reflect their identities and backgrounds. Having authors such as Yuyi Morales, Matt de la Peña, Duncan Tonatiuh, and René Colato Laínez accessible and integrated into the curriculum, gives students the opportunity to see themselves represented in literature, have their experiences validated, and promote a positive self-identity. Culturally relevant authors, such as these, resonate with diverse backgrounds, including bilingual and multilingual students, and provide opportunities for language development. Additionally, these authors often explore complex themes like identity, immigration, and social justice, fostering critical thinking and empathy among students.

Integrating cultural relevance into literacy instruction not only enriches the learning experience but also fosters equity by affirming students' identities and creating meaningful learning experiences. When students encounter texts and discussions that resonate with their cultural backgrounds, they feel valued and validated, enhancing their self-esteem and motivation to engage with the material. When planning my literacy curriculum, I knew that many students had not seen their identities reflected in the literature they were reading in their schools and home—it was very similar to my own experiences. Ultimately, educators must create pathways for diverse learners to meaningfully engage with reading materials, enhancing their comprehension, and promoting inclusive learning outcomes. Recognizing linguistic and cultural diversity as assets, educators can cultivate inclusive reading materials and environments that support the development of strong reading comprehension skills for all learners.

Integrate multi-modal tools

In our educational landscape, the imperative to address the diverse needs of multilingual learners (MLLs) has never been more pressing. Too often, these students face barriers to demonstrating their full understanding and comprehension within traditional literacy instruction frameworks. However, by embracing a multifaceted approach that integrates multimodal tools and digital literacy, we can unlock their full potential and foster profound advancements in literacy skills. As educators, there are a variety of strategies we know that can support diverse learners. Some strategies include reading to students every day, teaching phonics explicitly, building background knowledge to support comprehension, using audiobooks and other tools that support students' comprehension. Technology and multimodal tools can aid what we are currently doing to increase reading comprehension. Digital literacy offers a dynamic platform for differentiation, catering to the diverse needs of learners. In my classroom, I use platforms such as Epic! and Kids YouTube for engaging read alouds that also provide access to even more diverse and meaningful texts. Having access to digital text and digital reading platforms have many advantages as well, especially when working with MLL students (Delacruz, 2014). Multimodal platforms that complement and convey meaning and information beyond the written text, such as providing translation, music, videos, and more serve as another opportunity to help our learners increase their reading comprehension. It is not enough to add technology into students' reading curriculum and hope to help increase their comprehension. We must ensure that the technology we integrate into our lessons is not just for the sake of using technology, but rather to enhance the learning experience and promote meaningful engagement. Recognizing the rich linguistic repertoires of MLLs is paramount. By harnessing multimodal tools such as visual aids, interactive software, and bilingual resources, educators can tap into the diverse linguistic backgrounds of these students (Hagen Alvarado, 2020). These tools not only scaffold comprehension but also empower MLLs to leverage their full linguistic resources, bridging the gap between their native languages and English.

Equity and access are also central considerations. Digital technologies offer avenues to mitigate disparities in educational opportunities among MLLs, ensuring equitable access to resources and support. Initiatives such as one-to-one device programs, which provides each individual student with their own device, and digital libraries bridge the digital divide, providing all students with the tools necessary for literacy development and academic success. Multimodal tools and digital literacy in literacy instruction represents a transformative approach to supporting the diverse needs of multilingual learners (Hagen, 2020). By embracing these innovative strategies, educators can create inclusive, engaging, and equitable learning environments that empower MLLs to thrive in today's digital age and beyond.

Make it social

One common misunderstanding that many new teachers—myself included—is associating noise and conversation with being off task. When working with my diverse class, I noticed many times students were talking during directions and modeling. Now, I realize that my students were using their full linguistic repertoires to help one another, ask questions, and demonstrate their understanding. A lot of learning activities are set up as individual tasks, but I shortly realized the impact of allowing social interactions in literacy classes for enhancing student reading comprehension. Through collaborative activities with classmates, students can practice language skills in authentic contexts, receive peer support and feedback, and gain insights into diverse cultural perspectives. These social interactions foster critical thinking skills, increase engagement with reading materials, and create a supportive learning environment where multilingual learners can thrive academically. Overall, integrating social elements into the literacy curriculum offers valuable opportunities for language practice, cultural exchange, and collaborative learning, ultimately aiding multilingual learners in developing their reading comprehension abilities.

Necessity of creating an inclusive literacy curriculum

Through developing my own literacy curriculum for the summer, I found that some instructional practices are pivotal for influencing students' motivation, engagement, and reading competence (Gallagher, 2023; Guthrie and Klauda, 2014). Effective literacy instruction for MLLs involves direct instruction in interactive learning environments, where the unique needs of multilingual learners are addressed with tailored support and resources. Teachers must recognize and integrate students' diverse backgrounds into the curriculum to move away from traditional, often white-centric, ways of learning. By acknowledging the flaws within school systems and curriculum and embracing the value of all students' contributions, educators can create inclusive learning environments that honor existing knowledge and perspectives (Zemelman and Duchesne 2003). Students are inherently diverse, and it is the responsibility of educators to provide them with an equitable education that honors and embraces their individual strengths and identities.

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The Potential of Translanguaging among Newcomer Students and Adult ESL Learners

Jiqing Xiang

Summary: This paper shares emerging translingual practice in Newcomer Center and adult ESL learners in Spokane County. The author shares experiences that demonstrate the benefits of incorporating home languages into educational settings, especially where there is a significant immigrant and refugee population. Unlike code-switching, translanguaging allows for a fluid use of linguistic resources, enhancing comprehension and engagement while promoting social justice by valuing marginalized languages. The paper advocates pedagogical strategies that harness translanguaging to improve educational outcomes and empower multilingual learners.

Keywords: translanguaging, multilingualism, ESL adult learners, Newcomer Center

Introduction

In recent years, the rise in global migration has resulted in increasingly multilingual classrooms. In Spokane, a significant refugee and migrant populations is contributing to the increasing diversity of languages spoken and the rise multilingual learner households with limited English proficiency. In spring 2024, Spokane Public Schools (SPS) had over 2,500 multilingual students speaking 70 languages other than English, with the largest language populations including Marshallese, Dari, Spanish, Russian, Kinyarwanda, Ukrainian, and others (Hagen, 2024). Furthermore, more adult learners from various countries have also been resettled in this city. This demographic shift has led to a burgeoning population of multilingual learners in different classrooms.

In the fall of 2023, during my visit to the Newcomer Center at a middle school in Spokane as part of an MATESOL graduate student opportunity, I worked with Kala (a pseudonym), a student from Eritrea. The Newcomer Center is a program for students new to Spokane, helping them learn English and understand the new school system for a smoother transition. This encounter prompted me to reflect on the potential of maximizing the use of minority languages to support learners' academic success and wellbeing. When the pre-service teacher asked where she was from, Kala hesitated and, with a sad expression, said she didn't know how to say it in English. However, I could see bright light shines in her eyes when she taught us her language (Tigrinya, a language commonly spoken in Eritrea and in northern Ethiopia's Tigray Region). During the same school year, the same thing happened when I worked as a coordinator in Gonzaga ESL Community Outreach (GECO) program. GECO is a community-based program offering free weekly ESL classes to immigrant and refugee adults in Spokane, organized and taught by Gonzaga University MA TESOL students. There, I had the opportunity to support multilingual learners from various backgrounds. One experience that stood out involved a Ukrainian student, Karinen (a pseudonym), who was a very beginner student. She initially had difficulty keeping up with the whole class and was generally quiet during most lessons. A group activity that encouraged sharing cultural experiences in both English and their home languages turned out to be the time I saw her have the most linguistic output, with a smile on her face. This shared experience in class even led to further conversations.

These moments encourage me to consider how incorporating home languages can enhance learning, ultimately leading to the concept of translanguaging. This paper aims to delve into the term translanguaging and its implications for multilingual learners. While much of the existing research talks about translanguaging, there is still a need to investigate groups who have recently migrated to a new country.

Definition of Translanguaging

The term translanguaging has become a widely debated topic, particularly in the last decade. It is originally from the Welsh term 'trawsieithu' and is used as a pedagogical practice to alternate languages for receptive or productive use, which officially began with the teacher Cen Williams in local bilingual English and Welsh community (as cited in Garcia 2014). In 2009, Garcia extended and defined translanguaging as "multiple discursive practices in which bilinguals engage in order to make sense of their bilingual worlds" (p.45). She sees translanguaging as an effective pedagogy for multilingual classrooms.

Since then, more researchers have joined this conversation to explore multilingual classroom language dynamics. Teachers

and students construct and participate in a flexible bilingual pedagogy, which has been adopted from the translanguaging approach (Creese & Blackledge, 2010). Students and teachers can alternately use English or community languages to facilitate learning, understanding, and interaction in the class. Compared with language separation programs, this flexible bilingualism largely reduces the boundaries between languages. Translanguaging also carries a deeper meaning and mission, which is social justice. This is obviously shown from the recently published research papers about seeing translanguaging as a decolonizing tool for marginalized language and groups (García, 2019; Wei & García, 2022). García and Wei (2022) stated that translanguaging "is fundamentally reconstitutive and transformative of the power relations between the named languages in society" (p. 322). This also can be one of the main differences between translanguaging and code-switching, which I will explain more in the next section.

The difference between translanguaging and code-switching

There is argument and confusion about code-switching and translanguaging. Code-switching is the process whereby bilingual or bidialectal speakers switch back and forth between one language or dialect and another within the same conversation (Shin 2005). Code-switching focuses mainly on two languages' changing reasons and outcomes, whereas translanguaging is taking multilingual practice as a dynamic and mobile process. Some researchers have argued that the difference between code-switching and translanguaging is rooted in ideology, where code-switching is linked to the separation of languages, while translanguaging supports the fluid use of multiple languages in the learning process (Lewis, Jones, & Baker, 2012; García & Wei, 2014; Wei, & García, 2022). Otheguy, Garcia and Reid (2015) explicitly differentiate translanguaging from code-switching, defining translanguaging as "the deployment of a speaker's full linguistic repertoire without regard for watchful adherence to the socially and politically defined boundaries of named (and usually national and state) languages" (p.283). Learners' full language practice repertoire includes varieties and vernaculars that may not otherwise be recognized as language.

Moreover, a translanguaging paradigm is designed to be transformative, "removing hierarchichy of languaging practices that deem some more valuable others" (Creese & Blackledge, 2015). The behavior of adopting translanguaging in the classroom pushes back against English language hegemonies. Doing so also promotes the maintenance and revival of minority languages. While code switching shares some similar characteristics with translanguaging from the perspective that two languages are used during the interacting process, it is, however, quite different in terms of broader perspectives towards language ideology, society, and identity.

Translanguaging for teachers

It is hard to make sure all ESL classroom teachers have multilingual fluency; however, there are still some ways to employ translanguaging in the classroom. For instance, in GECO, there were two language learners from Ukraine who had difficulties understanding the teachers' instructions due to the varying language proficiency levels within the class. This in turn hindered their progression in the learning process. Later, some teachers provided Ukrainian translations for activity instructions. It turned out that when the students understood the process, they could participate in group activities, even providing some English output. This reinforces what Espinosa, Ascenzi-Moreno, and García (2021) stated,

> Translanguaging is a potent tool for constructing meaning, for thinking, for authentic communica tion and expression; it is not simply a scaffold to support students who are not yet fluent in English. It allows students to capitalize on their linguistic repertoire without rigid language bound aries. (p.25)

A second example bears mentioning. In another GECO classroom while teaching the Christmas topic with spices vocabulary, the teacher displayed matching pictures to aid visualization and encourage students to share how to say the words in their own languages. It would be more efficient and comprehensible for them to enhance their understanding of the target language. This practice is needful for migrating adults' class, especially for beginners.

Beyond adult education, practices and potential can also be observed in K-12 education. Similar to the GECO program, there is one class in one Elementary school for all new immigrants and refugees' kids from Newcomer Center in Spokane. The classroom is linguistically diverse, including speakers of Swahili, Kinyarwanda, Marshallese, Russian, Arabic, and Spanish in a class of just 15 students. While the teacher cannot learn how to speak all those languages, she created a classroom environment that fostered multilingualism and translanguaging.

First, it is seen from the class decoration. They have word wall world languages posted with English and their home languages together hanging in the class. On top of the board area, English numbers match with Spanish numbers, "uno, dos, tres", etc. also can be seen in the class. "By creating a purposeful, multilingual space, it not only shows the languages of students and families are valued, but also provides students diverse language practice" (Espinosa et al.., 2021, p.36). Teachers can actively engage students' languages and cultures, even without fluency in those languages.

> By viewing students as valuable assets rather than barriers, educators can create inclusive environments that celebrate diversity. However, some teachers see emergent bilinguals' language differences, cultural resources, and educational histories

> are often seen as challenges, rather than as assets in their learning. (p.11).

Furthermore, in a mathematics class focused on calculations, teacher Eve (a pseudonym) organized students into groups based on their shared language backgrounds. Students could use their own language to discuss the pattern in numbers change. This resulted in increased engagement and understanding, as students felt more comfortable expressing their ideas and collaborating with peers. This is similar to translanguaging strategy that García observed in the International Network for Public High Schools in New York city for recently arrived immigrants. “Since it would be impossible to speak all the students’ languages, teachers group students in home language so that students could assist each other make meaning of the lesson” (García & Li Wei, 2014, p.111). All these practices are highly meaningful and supportive for newcomer learners in K-12 education.

Translanguaging for multilingual students

After talking about from teachers’ perspective, shifts can be turned into students’ points of view. First, translanguaging as a scaffolding tool for multilingual students would make the transition to normal classrooms more smoothly and more comfortably. Garcia et al., (2017) explain one of the purposes for translanguaging is supporting students’ engagement with complex content and texts. “Rather than watering down our instruction, which risks oversimplification and robs students of opportunities to engage in productive grappling with texts and content, translanguaging enables us to teach complex content” (García et al., 2017, p.8). For most immigrants and refugees’ language learners who are adults, are ideologically mature to understand complex topics and have more deep-thinking.

I worked and volunteered in two ESL class settings. Interviews and conversations were conducted with the learners to explore their perspectives on translanguaging. There were conversations after each class and a final interview at the end of the entire session. The conversations focused on scenarios where learners used their home languages, during which I received clarification on what they were discussing, the context in which it occurred, and the outcomes. Adult learners frequently use translanguaging in situations involving new vocabulary, complex concepts, or new grammar. Additionally, they often used it to compare their home language with English to avoid confusion and better understanding. Finally, they also use the home language when they need to fully express themselves. Then, I would like to share two short conversations.

The first group is from a class of a local ESL program, the family is from Russia. The parents and their son are learning English in a same level. During my several observations, the mom Natalia frequently helped another classmate from the same country to clarify and explain the teacher’s instructions in Russian. You also could hear they were negotiating the meaning of English grammar in their home languages. After that, this classmate could speak out in English. As Natalia’s husband Alexander told me about using Russian in the class, “It helps, some people understand, some don’t; We help each other.” The second group are students from GECO. They are two sisters from Mexico, the younger sister is 65 years old, one returning student, and the older one just arrived in the US several months ago. Sometimes, when they both could not catch up with teacher activities’ explanation, I used Spanish to help them to follow along with the teacher. Most of the time, the younger sister helped the older one translate or explain the meaning and organize answers. It is the combination of both languages that keeps the task moving forward (Creese & Blackledge, 2010, p,110). The younger sister told me “My sister English is good; she helps me to understand the teacher, and then I can speak.” The same situation happened with the Ukrainian daughter and her mother. As a beginner class, we could hear Spanish, Ukrainian, and English during the whole class session. All of them are using their ways to approach this new language. The advantage of educating adult migrants with translanguaging theory and pedagogy in mind is that in focusing on the practices of people, it gives agency to minoritized speakers, decolonizes linguistic knowledge, and engages all of us in the social transformations that the world so sorely needs today (García, 2017). All participants expressed positive attitudes toward using their native language in the learning process.

Conclusion

This paper explores the potential of translanguaging practices among newcomer students and adult ESL learners in Spokane. The study sheds light on several translanguaging strategies, including language grouping, where students in K-12 and adult ESL classrooms were grouped by shared languages to facilitate communication and collaboration, enhancing their understanding and engagement. Cultural and linguistic sharing was another key strategy, with teachers encouraging students to share vocabulary and cultural experiences in their home languages, fostering a sense of belonging and valuing their linguistic identities. Additionally, visual supports and home language integration were used, with teachers displaying multilingual materials like word walls and bilingual number charts to create an inclusive environment, allowing students to connect English with their home languages for improved comprehension.

Translanguaging is increasingly showing its influence on scholarship, education development, and social justice. “We should expect that translanguaging would be positioned as a tool, both for improving educational outcomes as well as for questioning and subverting hegemonic linguistic norms” (Poza, 2017 p.117). It will bring tremendous benefits to bi/multilinguals, particularly for newcomer kids and adults who gain less attention. Drawing on previous literature,

ethnographic observations, and interviews, this paper reflects on the significance of translanguaging. Given this learning experience, I intend to further explore and integrate translanguaging into my future teaching. Specifically, I plan to incorporate multilingual materials, promote peer support using home languages, and create opportunities for students to engage with content through their full linguistic repertoires. Furthermore, this work highlights the need for increased awareness among scholars and educators regarding the pedagogical value of students' home languages in the classroom.

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A book review of

Snow, D., & Campbell, M.A. (2017). *More than a native speaker: An introduction to teaching English abroad (3rd ed.).* TESOL Press.

Navigating the multifaceted terrain of English language teaching abroad

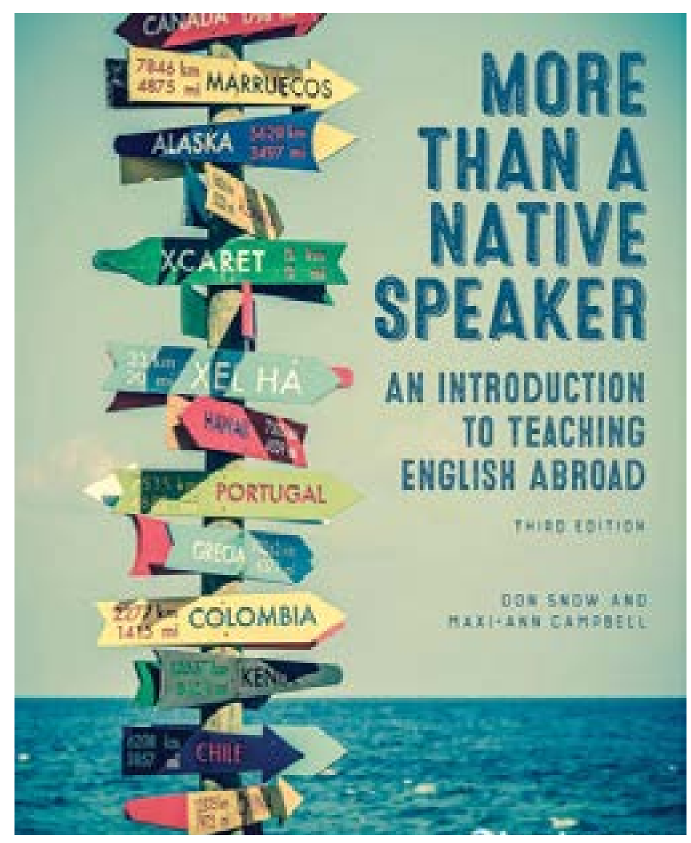
Aaron David Mermelstein

Teaching English as a second or foreign language has become an increasingly global endeavor, with educators from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds seeking an adventure in the vibrant landscape of language education. In this dynamic environment, *More Than a Native Speaker: An Introduction to Teaching English Abroad* by Don Snow and Maxi-Ann Campbell emerges as a creative guidebook, empowering aspiring and seasoned educators alike with the essential knowledge, skills, and insights to navigate the multifaceted terrain of English language teaching (ELT) abroad. In this review, I discuss the pages of this comprehensive volume, highlighting its theoretical foundations, practical applications, and significance in the environment of international education.

At its core, *More Than a Native Speaker* incorporates pedagogical beliefs founded in inclusivity, cultural sensitivity, and pedagogical efficacy. Snow and Campbell convey their experience and insights, offering a complex perspective on the skills need to teach English in diverse cultural and linguistic contexts. Through their collaborative effort, the third edition of this creative text undergoes a change incorporating contemporary research, innovative pedagogies, and reflective practices that relate to the ever-changing needs of teachers and educators worldwide.

The book is structured into three interrelated sections, each discussing distinct areas of English language teaching abroad while creating coherence and continuity in instructional practice. The first section, Foundations of English Language Teaching, serves as a conceptual scaffold, explaining the theoretical foundations and pedagogical principles that support effective language instruction. Snow and Campbell navigate through the pedagogical landscape, drawing upon foundational theories such as communicative language teaching, task-based instruction, and intercultural competence to inform instructional decision-making. By foregrounding the importance of learner-centeredness, communicative competence, and cultural responsiveness, they advocate for a holistic approach that respects the diverse linguistic, cultural, and cognitive backgrounds of language learners.

Building upon this theoretical foundation, the second section, Practical Approaches to English Language Teaching, delves into the pragmatic aspects of language instruction, offering a variety of strategies, techniques, and activities to scaffold the teaching process. Snow and Campbell adopt a hands-on approach, guiding teachers and educators through the repetitive process of lesson planning, materials development, and classroom management. From communicative language



activities to project-based learning tasks, the book includes a broad spectrum of pedagogical approaches that cater to the multifaceted needs and preferences of diverse learners. Moreover, the inclusion of authentic classroom scenarios, reflective exercises, and practical tips enriches the pedagogical discourse, encouraging active engagement and critical reflection.

The final section, Professional Development and Beyond, overcomes some of the traditional limits of instructional practice, emphasizing the dynamic interplay between theory and practice in the professional development of English teachers and educators. Snow and Campbell stress the importance of continuous professional growth as a booster for instructional efficacy and career advancement. By engaging in reflective practice, peer collaboration, and ongoing professional development activities, teachers and educators are empowered to refine their instructional practices, address emerging challenges, and gain on professional opportunities in the global ELT market.

One of the prominent features of *More Than a Native Speaker* lies in its inclusivity and accessibility. While grounded in theory, the book avoids jargon, rendering complex concepts intelligible to novice teachers and educators and seasoned practitioners alike. Moreover, the incorporation of diverse voices, perspectives, and instructional contexts enriches the pedagogical discourse, encouraging a sense of inclusivity and cultural responsiveness.

In addition to its theoretical and practical dimensions, *More Than a Native Speaker* incorporates a global perspective, going beyond cultural and linguistic boundaries. Snow and Campbell's insights are enriched by their cross-cultural experiences and collaborations, offering a nuanced understanding of English language teaching practices in diverse sociolinguistic contexts. By giving emphasis to cultural sensitivity, equity, and social justice, they make an argument for inclusive pedagogical practices that honor the diverse linguistic, cultural, and socioeconomic backgrounds of learners worldwide.

One specific example of social justice the authors describe is their emphasis on the importance of culturally responsive teaching. The authors stress the need for English language teachers to recognize the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students and to value students' identities, experiences, and knowledge. They encourage teachers to move beyond a "one-size-fits-all" approach and adapt their teaching methods to be more responsive to the cultural contexts of their students, contributing to a more just and equitable learning environment.

Furthermore, the collaborative effort by Snow and Campbell enhances the comprehensiveness and depth of the volume. Their combined knowledge in language education, intercultural communication, and teacher training enhances the discourse with different perspectives and insights. Through careful editing and organization, they ensure the coherence and cohesion of the volume, consolidating its position as an original resource in the field of English language teaching abroad.

While *More Than a Native Speaker* represents an original and creative contribution to the pedagogical literature, it is not without of limitations. The dynamics of language teaching and learning require continual updates and adaptations to reflect emerging trends. While the book remains relevant, future revisions or supplementary resources may be needed to address developments in online learning and digital teaching tools, particularly in the post-pandemic era. Educators must remain flexible and adapt the book's insights to their specific teaching contexts.

In conclusion, *More Than a Native Speaker* stands as a beacon offering a comprehensive synthesis of theory, practice, and reflection. Snow and Campbell's knowledge, coupled with their editorial skills, unite to create an original resource that goes beyond disciplinary boundaries and cultural diverseness. As English teachers and educators navigate the dynamic environment of international education, their work serves as a source of inspiration towards more inclusive, effective, and transformative language instruction

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A book review of

"Dallas, S. (2019). Someplace To Call Home (1st ed.). Sleeping Bear Press."

From Hardship to Hope: *Someplace to Call Home* as a Tool for Multilingual Learners

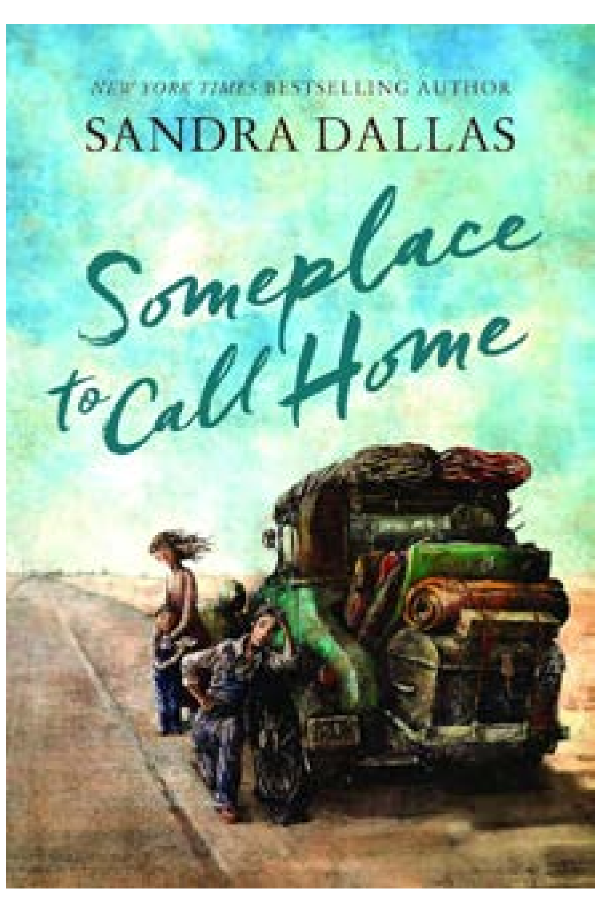
Darlene Ramirez

Sandra Dallas's historical fiction novel Someplace to Call Home provides an in-depth look at young people searching for a place of belonging in the United States. Although the main characters in this story move from one part of the country to another, their journey mirrors the experiences of many multilingual learners arriving in the U.S. for the first time. The characters struggle to establish themselves in a new environment, facing obstacles similar to those encountered by newcomers adjusting to an unfamiliar culture.

Forced to flee the hardships of the Dust Bowl, the three orphaned Turner children—Tom, Hallie, and Benny—embark on a migratory journey in search of basic necessities. Throughout the story, they grapple with the challenges of fitting in, finding work, and adapting to a new way of life while holding on to their core values of honesty and integrity. Constantly facing the threat of being labeled as squatters and treated as burdens on society, the Turner kids find hope in an unexpected place when they meet the Carlson family.

This culturally responsive novel offers intermediate-grade students valuable historical knowledge about the Great Depression and the Dust Bowl while encouraging critical analysis of the economic challenges of the time. Someplace to Call Home introduces multilingual learners to fundamental economic concepts, such as the distinction between wants and needs. The Turner children, for example, must decide between buying food or repairing a flat tire—both essential to their survival. Additionally, this book allows educators to teach students about the physical characteristics and locations of places in the United States and the ways in which people interact with the land. Dallas's novel presents historical events in a compelling, character-driven narrative, offering insight into the difficulties of starting over in an unfamiliar place.

Due to its 580 Lexile score and 3rd–6th grade interest level, this book may not be suitable for newcomer multilingual learners. However, it could be an excellent choice for high school multilingual learners or students with interrupted formal education (SIFE), depending on their academic proficiency. While Washington State provides a recommended list of books for social studies instruction, Someplace to Call Home offers a fresh, modern perspective on historical events. The novel encourages students to analyze character interactions and explore how ideas influence individuals. Educators can support multilingual learners by incorporating graphic organizers and sentence stems across the four domains of language—listening, reading, speaking, and writing—to help students interpret characters' dialogue, body language,



actions, and tone, all of which contribute to the development of the plot. The novel also contains historical slang, which, when compared with contemporary language and Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills (BICS), can enhance students' understanding of language evolution. The included glossary serves as a valuable resource for deciphering unfamiliar terms.

This 222-page novel is an excellent literary tool for designing a research project in which students create a timeline tracing the Turner children's journey from Oklahoma to their eventual arrival at Someplace to Call Home.

As one of my favorite authors, Sandra Dallas has crafted a story with the power to inspire students to persevere and move forward, regardless of the challenges they face. Just as the characters in the novel grow and develop, so do we—learning, adapting, and discovering hope and success in our own journeys. Though each of our circumstances may differ, students engaging with this story will come to realize they are not alone in the struggles of starting anew. The themes of resilience, perseverance, and self-discovery in Someplace to Call Home extend beyond the novel itself, fostering connections through shared experiences of growth and change.

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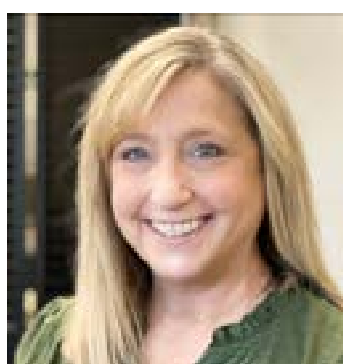

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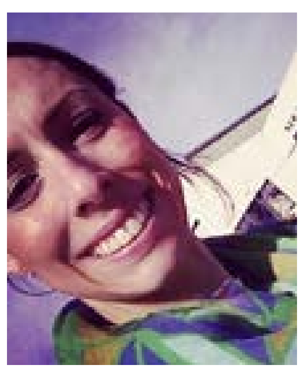

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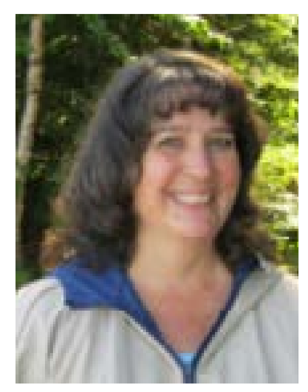

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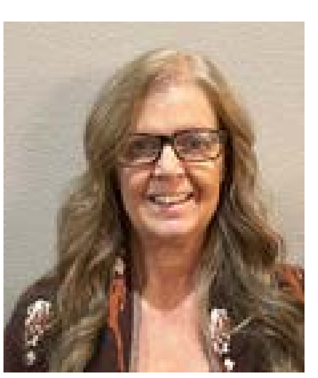

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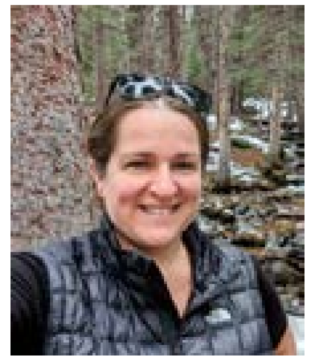

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