English language learners (ELL) are an ever-increasing population of students in K-12 schools. Studies have found significant differences in the academic achievement of ELL students and native English speaking students. The low academic achievement and high drop-out rates found for ELL students call for changes in the education strategies employed for these students. School librarians must use effective strategies to instruct these students in the information, media, and traditional literacies that are necessary skills for 21st century learners. Since little research has been conducted recently in the field of library science on the best practices for ELL library instruction, this paper examines recent research in the field of education and presents a purposeful selection of professional resources to aid school librarians in designing effective instruction for ELL students.

Headings:

- School libraries/Services to minorities
- English language
- Multiculturalism
- Bibliographic instruction/Elementary and high school students
LIBRARY INSTRUCTION TO SUPPORT ELL STUDENTS: AN EXAMINATION OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL RESOURCES

by
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Introduction

As dedicated school librarians, we continuously seek effective ways to pursue our professional missions. One of our principle guiding beliefs, as stated by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) (2009c) is that “all students deserve equitable access to books and reading, to information, and to information technology in an environment that is safe and conducive to learning” (p. 11). Furthermore, school librarians are called to “instill a love of learning in all students” (AASL, 2009a, p. 7). One of our primary responsibilities is that of educator. AASL’s (2009c) Standards for the 21st Century Learner in Action describe the learning standards that form the basis of the school library curriculum. These standards recognize that the required competencies K-12 students must achieve not only include skills that students need in order to become effective users of information and media, but that students must also develop personal dispositions, responsibilities and self-assessment strategies. These competencies, when combined contribute to students’ growth into responsible adults, productive members of our society, and life-long learners. As school librarians, we are responsible for all of these competencies and often incorporate library instruction designed to meet these standards into collaborative lessons with content-area teachers.

In order to ensure that all students have equitable access to information in our schools and beyond, all students must receive library instruction that is conducive to their individual learning styles and that provides the appropriate supports needed for each
student to attain the AASL standards. We recognize that instruction and services must be tailored to students’ needs and that special populations of students may present unique information and instructional needs that are unfamiliar to school librarians. One special population of K-12 students, English Language Learners, hereafter referred to as ELL students, often presents unique needs to the school library.

The National Center for Educational Statistics (2011) defines ELL students as students “who are in the process of acquiring English language skills and knowledge. Some schools refer to these students using the term limited-English-proficient (LEP)” (English language learners (ELL) entry). For the purpose of this paper, these students also include those referred to as English as a Second Language (ESL) students, Low English Proficient (LEP) students, or English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) students. ELL students may come into the school library individually, with an ELL class, or within a non-ELL specific class where students have a range of English proficiency. ELL students may also be digital visitors to the school library through the school website or online resources. To be an effective educator, the school librarian must be able to recognize the needs of these ELL students in various contexts and provide appropriate instruction using methods that will address these needs.

School librarians should strive to meet the same standards of quality while instructing ELL students as the other teachers who serve these students. The Center for Research, Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE) recommends five standards for teacher competence in ELL instruction. These include: “joint productivity through teacher and student collaboration, developing language and literacy across the curriculum, making meaning by connecting school to students’ lives, teaching complex
thinking, and teaching through conversation” (NCCTQ, 2009). These standards echo the AASL (2009c) standards that call for student centered learning and collaboration between the school library and classroom teachers so that the library standards are taught within content-area context.

**Purpose and Objectives**

*Standards for the 21st Century Learner in Action* (AASL, 2009c) details the required skills, dispositions, responsibilities and self-assessment strategies that all students need to achieve in order to possess the multiple literacies required for success in today’s society. Some of these multiple literacies include information literacy, media literacy, and traditional literacy in the English language. School librarians are responsible to educate all students in the successful acquisition of these skills, dispositions, responsibilities, and self-assessment strategies, including ELL students. School librarians are also collaborative educators who support the academic success of students not only in information and other literacies detailed in the AASL Standards but across the content-area curriculums as well.

Many school librarians may not be familiar with how to provide instruction for ELL students, whether these students enter the library with ELL specific classes or within mainstream classes. The *School Libraries Count! Supplemental Report on English Language Learners* from AASL (2009b) presents the results of an extensive survey of American school librarians. A significant percentage of responding school librarians worked at schools with large populations of ELL students. In fact, 14 percent of the schools had 25 percent or more of their students defined as ELL (AASL, 2009b). According to this survey, more ELL students are found in elementary schools than
secondary schools (AASL, 2009b). This may be explained by successful attainment of English skills by ELL students as they continue through the grades, misdiagnosed older students, or ELL students dropping out of school early.

Unfortunately, many of the school librarians who participated in the survey reported that they are not differentiating their services to ELL student needs. Sadly, “more than one-third of respondents (36%) said they don’t use any of the ELL collaboration strategies listed” in the survey questionnaire (AASL, 2009b, p. 15). These collaboration strategies included:

- Allow students to select readings from a choice of materials
- Design lessons rich in content without being too dependent on language
- Set both content and language goals in learning
- Provide a rich collection of resources in multiple languages (AASL, 2009b, p. 15).

The report did not discuss why these school librarians did not participate in these collaboration strategies and it did not include descriptions of how these collaborative strategies might have been implemented. Perhaps with clear and explicit guidelines and suggestions that are based in research and supported by professional organizations, more school librarians will incorporate collaborative instructional strategies into their lessons to support ELL students.

This paper examines library and education research literature on ELL instruction, as well as instructional resources written for ELL specialists and content-area teachers, in order to recommend research articles and professional resources that will be helpful for librarians interested in learning about and implementing best practices for ELL instruction. From examining these professional resources, this paper also identifies some key guidelines and instructional practices that will enable school librarians to better
support ELL students’ attainment of multiple literacies and completion of the AASL Standards. This paper does not present the breadth of resources available for educators of ELL students, but rather selects positively reviewed, current materials that will give a librarian unfamiliar with ELL instruction an introduction in the strategies and research behind current instructional practices.

Literature Review

Who are our ELL students?

ELL students come to American schools from all around the world. While some ELL students are native-born, others have immigrated to the country. The U.S. Census Bureau reports that the 2009 American Community Survey found that immigration into the U.S. has been increasing over the past four decades, leading to an approximate total of “38.5 million foreign-born residents, representing 12.5 percent of the total population” (Grieco & Trevelyan, 2010, p. 1). These foreign-born residents come from all countries; however, the two most prevalent geographical origins of recent immigrants are Latin America and Asia. More specifically, large percentages of recent immigrants have come from Mexico and China. In fact, “[o]ver half (53 percent) of all foreign-born [people surveyed] were from Latin America” including “11.5 million foreign-born from Mexico” (Grieco & Trevelyan, 2010, p. 2). Two million foreign-born U.S. residents have come from China (Grieco & Trevelyan, 2010, p. 2). These populations of foreign-born residents span the age spectrum as well as English language abilities. A smaller percentage of these statistics represent the students that we see in our schools.

Most ELL students are native-born rather than immigrants (Goldenberg, 2008). The National Center for Education Statistics (2004) reported that ELL students made up
approximately 7 percent of the national public school population in 1999-2000” (p.1). More recently, the U.S. Census Bureau (2010) reported that across the nation, 21 percent of students speak a language other than English at home. This equals about 10.9 million children (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Of these children, Spanish is the home language of 7.8 million (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

ELL students represent a full range of educational backgrounds, academic experiences, and primary language literacy skills. Not all ELL students struggle academically and struggling ELL students do not only operate from a place of deficiencies. However, reports indicate that ELL students’ lacking English language skills tends to contribute to negative educational achievement in U.S. schools. Fry (2003) asserts that “English language ability is an important indicator for the likelihood of dropping out of high school among Latinos” (p. 8). In fact, Fry (2003) reports that “the 14 percent of Hispanic 16 to 19-year-olds who have poor English language skills have a very high dropout rate… [of] 60 percent” (p. 8). However, when Latino students have proficient English language skills their dropout rate drops to 15 percent (Fry, 2003).

Striking differences between the reading scores of ELL and non-ELL students are apparent when the 2007 National Assessment of Educational Progress’s (NAEP) (2009) data is examined. For fourth grade students, only 30 percent of ELL students scored at or above the Basic level of reading and a low 7 percent of ELL students scored at or above the Proficient level of reading ability while 69 percent of non-ELL students scored at or above the Basic level and 34 percent of non-ELL students scored at or above the Proficient level of reading ability (NEAP, 2009). The statistic for eighth grade students is even worse. As little as 29 percent of eighth grade ELL students scored at or above the
Basic reading level and 4 percent of ELL students scored at or above Proficient reading level. Compare those scores with the 75 percent of non-ELL students who scored at or above Basic and 31 percent who scored at or above Proficient and it is clear that ELL students need additional support to increase their reading skills.

ELL students also tend to score lower in mathematics and science than non-ELL students. Twenty-six percent of twelfth grade ELL students scored at or above the Basic level in mathematics and only 3 percent scored at or above Proficient, while 62 percent of non-ELL students scored at or above the Basic level on mathematics proficiency and 24 percent scored at or above Proficient (NEAP, 2005a). The NEAP science scores from 2005 show large percentages of ELL students below the Basic level. Seventy-two percent of ELL fourth grade students scored below the Basic level and 86 percent of ELL eighth grade students scored below the Basic level (NEAP, 2005b). Almost the mirror-image, 71 percent of non-ELL fourth grade students scored at or above the Basic level and 60 percent of non-ELL eighth grade students scored at or above the Basic level (NEAP, 2005b).

There are many arguments against the validity of such standardized testing. However, this data can aid us in picturing the discrepancies that exist between ELL and non-ELL students and inspire us to develop strategies to close this gap. The gaps between ELL and non-ELL students’ achievements do not have a direct answer but as Goldenberg (2008) asserted, “[w]hatever the explanation for these achievement gaps, they bode ill for English learners’ future educational and vocational options” (p. 11).

School librarians may use statistical reports such as these to predict the kinds of changes they may see in their student body, yet each school will present different
combinations of immigrant, refugee, and native-born populations. The home languages and the ability levels of these students will also differ in individual situations. Each school librarian will need to examine their own school population and community demographics to know from where their foreign-born students have come, what languages they speak at home, and what languages native-born students speak at home.

**Language learning: How does it happen?**

To support ELL students’ second language acquisition of English, school librarians should be aware of the theories on how language is learned. Conteh-Morgan (2002) presented the three main theories of second language acquisition to inform librarians on more effective methods of information literacy instruction. These three main theories are behaviorism theory, innatism theory, and the interactionist theory (Conteh-Morgan, 2002). Behaviorism views language acquisition as a product of imitation of adult’s use of language (Thompson, 1977). Behaviorism theory relies heavily on external stimuli (Conteh-Morgan, 2002). This theoretical model has been largely rejected and has been replaced by the innatism and interactionist theories.

Innatism theorists postulate that the human mind is naturally equipped to understand and learn language (Schwartz, 1986). However, although children acquire language during “the natural developmental process” this applies to children alone and adults find learning a new language more difficult because they have passed the “critical period for language learning” (Conteh-Morgan, 2002, p. 192). More recent linguistics studies have argued against this “critical period” and assert that adults are also very capable of learning language and may even be more successful at second language acquisition. In an article directed at librarians serving adult language learners, Hoffert
(2009) quotes Frank Tang, a professor at NYU who explains adult’s increased skill at learning a second language can be due to their “motivation, cognitive development, and that they have language strategies” already (p. 22).

Secondary school librarians may see and nurture these same positive qualities in older ELL students. Innatists emphasize the importance of the affective domain and the need to create “learner-centered contexts” to aid second language learners. These contexts are important because these learners are incorporating new language skills into existing knowledge rather than just copying proficient speakers (Conteh-Morgan, 2002, p. 192). Since learners are actively constructing new language skills within their existing knowledge foundation, the environment surrounding the learner can affect the success of their construction. A comfortable and encouraging learning environment is crucial in innatist theory. This theory correlates well with constructivist education theories and school librarians’ current emphasis on inquiry-based learning. Constructivists recognize that learners incorporate new understandings into their existing knowledge structure and that their prior experiences influence their learning. Inquiry-based learning puts learners at the active center of their own learning and innatist language theorists insist that the language learner is actively building their own language development.

The interactionist language acquisition theory is also easily incorporated into current educational philosophy. Language learners, according to this theory, acquire new skills by “negotiating meaning” between themselves and speakers of their target language (Conteh-Morgan, 2002, p. 192). Interactionist theorists postulate that language learners require “authentic, real-life language materials” and “meaningful interaction” (Conteh-Morgan, 2002, p. 192). Again, inquiry-based instruction supports interactionist language
acquisition. Maintaining a rich collection of resources including fiction and non-fiction as well as monographs and serials in English and in ELL students’ native languages has been supported by the library literature. Interactionist theory agrees that such a collection provides authentic literacy opportunities that will advance ELL students’ English language acquisition. Interactionists also call for teachers to act as facilitators rather than direct instructors since learner-directed activities and communication are seen to better advance literacy than memorization or drills.

Although various language acquisition theories have been proposed, the process of ELL students’ development of English as a second language is not fully understood. Research has led to the belief that ELL students advance through different stages of development (Goldenberg, 2008). Goldenberg (2008) concluded from multiple studies that ELL students “seem to progress from beginning to intermediate more rapidly (in roughly two to three years) than they do from intermediate to full proficiency, which can take an additional three, four, or more years” (p. 12). The difference between an intermediate stage and full proficiency is the complexity and specificity of the language acquired (Goldenberg, 2008). In addition to common English language used to communicate in daily activities, ELL students need to learn academic English which is used in the content areas and also to communicate effectively using subtle nuances which come more naturally to native speakers (Goldenberg, 2008). This academic English is what learners achieve at the full proficiency stage of language development.

**ELL students in the classroom**

There is an extensive body of research on ELL students in the education literature spanning the last few decades. Annotated bibliographies and comprehensive literature
reviews exist and provide a fairly complete view of this research (see for example

*English Language Learners: Annotated Bibliography* by Hector-Mason and Bardack (2010) and *Educating English Language Learners: Building Teacher Capacity* (2008) distributed by the National Clearinghouse for English Language Acquisition).

Discussing each of the literature reviews and annotated bibliographies is outside the scope of this paper. Instead, one of the reviews of the ELL research will be presented to give some background information on what we know about the educational needs of ELL K-12 students. Following the summary of this review, current (within the last five years) original research on instructional methods for K-12 ELL students will be presented.

**Review of the literature**

Goldenberg (2008) examined the conclusions from two major studies on ELL student research from 2006, one by the National Literacy Panel (NLP) and another by the Center for Research on Education, Diversity, and Excellence (CREDE). He also incorporated the results of some smaller ELL research studies that occurred after the NLP and CREDE studies. Goldenberg’s (2008) intention was to present what instructional methods have been supported by research-based evidence so that instructors can use these methods to better serve these students. Goldenberg (2008) broke down the major conclusions from these compiled reviews into three findings:

- Teaching students to read in their first language promotes high levels of reading achievement in English;
- What we know about good instruction and curriculum in general holds true for English learners as well; but
- When instructing English learners in English, teachers must modify instruction to take into account students’ language limitations (p. 14).
Unfortunately, as school librarians we have little control over policies on teaching literacy to ELL students in their first language. However, we can provide administration and key policymakers with the research that shows that direct literacy instruction in ELL students’ first language transfers over to their English development as well.

The second and third findings can be used to influence how school librarians instruct ELL students. Best practices for non-ELL students have been found to have positive results for ELL students as well (Goldenberg, 2008). These practices would include inquiry-based teaching, creating student-centered learning activities, and giving “clear goals and learning objectives” so that students understand what they are supposed to be learning, which leads to their ability to assess themselves on their success at meeting those objectives (Goldenberg, 2008, p. 17).

The third finding, which supports the need to “modify instruction” for ELL students, is the prompt for this paper. Unfortunately, Goldenberg’s (2008) study does not include clear guidelines on what modifications are best. The lack of clear modification recommendations is due to a lack in significant research results. Goldenberg (2008) hypothesized that instructional modifications need to adjust according to a lesson’s learning objectives as well as the students’ changing English language skills.

Goldenberg (2008) also looked at some specific instructional techniques more closely to determine if any research supports their use. Some of the instructional techniques he examined included: using texts with familiar concepts to introduce ELL students to new literacy skills; direct vocabulary instruction; incorporating ELL students’ primary language into instruction; giving ELL students additional instruction time; culturally responsive instruction; and grouping ELL and non-ELL students together to
learn cooperatively (Goldenberg, 2008). None of the techniques had definitive research support; however, research suggested that several of the techniques have the potential to support more successful ELL learning (Goldenberg, 2008). The instructional techniques that were supported, although somewhat weakly, were: teaching in the primary language (particularly in giving pre-learning and review activities as well as giving direct instruction on comprehension strategies); direct vocabulary instruction; and simplifying vocabulary and text when presenting or assessing new content material (Goldenberg, 2008). Research has also shown some support for giving ELL students extra time and support through after-school programs (Goldenberg, 2008). The other specific instructional guidelines that Goldenberg’s (2008) review proposed are to increase the use of pictures along with text and to offer students multiple ways of communicating their understandings beyond text, even nonverbally. Goldenberg (2008) also highlighted the potential for the Sheltered Instruction (SI) approach (detailed below), although he called for additional research to support the extent that this approach can benefit ELL students.

**Current research on instructional strategies**

Certain instructional models or approaches have been developed to address the educational needs of ELL students. One of the main approaches is Content-Based Instruction (CBI). CBI is an overarching and prevalent instructional approach to teach ELL students by using an “integration of content and language learning” (Kimball & O’Loughlin, 2008, CBI paragraph). Rather than instructing ELL students on English literacy skills apart from mathematics, science, social studies, and other discipline area content, in a CBI approach, each lesson includes language literacy objectives and content-area objectives. According to CBI, each teacher should incorporate language
literacy instruction and support within their content-area teaching. Also, ELL teachers should give students authentic experiences with discipline concepts and vocabulary during literacy instruction (Kaufman & Crandall, 2005).

The educational philosophy of constructivism forms the foundation of the CBI approach. ELL students are understood to be building upon their prior experiences in language skills as well as their content-area knowledge to support new understanding in each set of learning areas. The CBI approach encourages collaboration and partnerships between ELL teachers and other content-area teachers. These partnerships aid in integrating language instruction and discipline instruction (Kaufman & Crandall, 2005).

The CBI approach is much the same as the AASL (2009a) guidelines that call for school librarians to be “instructional partners” with classroom teachers in order to integrate information and technology literacy skills into the surrounding context of discipline instruction. The CBI approach not only encourages the ELL teacher to collaborate with classroom teachers, it also opens up an avenue for school librarians to collaborate with the ELL teacher and become a third instructional partner to support the language literacy, technology and information literacy, and content learning of ELL students all in authentic contexts.

Under the umbrella of the CBI approach are more specific methods and models of instruction that both ELL teachers and other content-area teachers can use. “Sheltered content courses, total or partial immersion, the adjunct model, and theme-based courses” are all methods that integrate content and language learning during instruction (Kimball & O’Loughlin, 2008, CBI paragraph). Sheltered content courses follow the Sheltered Instruction (SI) model, also known as the Specially Designed Academic Instruction in
English model (SDAIE) (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). SI provides a framework for how CBI instruction takes place in ELL inclusive classrooms.

The SI model was “designed to provide second language learners with the same high-quality, academically challenging content that native English speakers receive through a combination of good teaching techniques and an explicit focus on academic language development” (Hansen-Thomas, 2008, p. 166). In SI, communication and authentic experiences with content and language are key parts of instruction (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Using the functions of language is more important than direct instruction on grammar and form (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Language functions include “negotiating, explaining, describing, and defining when discussing content concepts” (Hansen-Thomas, 2008, p. 166).

Hansen-Thomas (2008) highlighted some of the features of SI which echo many of the findings of Goldenberg’s (2008) review. Using ELL students’ primary languages during instruction was found to aid in ELL academic achievement and is used as a feature of SI (Goldenberg, 2008; Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Other functions include “cooperative learning activities,” “hands-on activities using authentic materials, demonstrations, and modeling,” and “explicit teaching and implementation of learning strategies” (Hansen-Thomas, 2008, p. 166).

SI is not only used in ELL classes but was actually developed for all content-area teachers to use, either alone or in collaboration with an ELL teacher (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). SI incorporates the best practices of teaching that are not ELL-specific, such as authentic learning activities, inquiry-based instruction, student-centered classroom environments, and building upon students’ background knowledge. An important
component of SI that is specific to ELLs is to effectively use ELL students’ primary languages, either through offering resources written in students’ primary languages or by pairing ELL students with other speakers of their language (Hansen-Thomas, 2008).

Another ELL-specific modification that comes with the SI model is the attention that teachers need to place on their use of language during instruction. In a best practices-focused article, Hansen-Thomas (2008) breaks down some of these modifications such as slowing down when speaking, explicitly presenting key vocabulary, and speaking clearly without slang. The vocabulary that ELL students need to learn includes lesson-specific content vocabulary that is new to all students regardless of their primary language, as well as general English vocabulary that is crucial to the lesson but not topic-specific, such as relationship words and vocabulary that explains the requirements of the lesson. All of this vocabulary needs to be addressed so that ELL students can gain content-area knowledge along with increased English language skills.

Another key component of the SI model is acknowledgment and respect for the background knowledge that ELL students bring with them to the classroom. Along with background knowledge, ELL students are also coming into the school with different education experiences. ELL students coming from other countries may have vastly different educational pasts that should be understood to assess what preconceptions, experiences, and assets these students are bringing with them to our schools (Hansen-Thomas, 2008).

The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) is a model that primarily acts as an assessment tool for teachers and was based upon Sheltered Instruction principles (Echevarria et al., 2006). Echevarria, Powers, and Short (2006) examined the
effects of a systematic and consistent application of SI teaching for one or two years on the writing skills of ELL students. The researchers developed the SIOP model to assess how well teachers implemented SI instruction. Along with using the assessments, teachers participated in professional development that supported consistent understandings and application of SI functions (Echevarria et al., 2006).

The researchers found that the professional development was a crucial factor in whether or not SI instruction was beneficial to ELL students (Echevarria et al., 2006). The ELL students in schools where the SIOP model was implemented “made greater gains during the school year” in their English writing skills as scored by the IMAGE writing assessment (Echevarria et al., 2006, p. 205). Echevarria, Power, and Short (2006) stress the importance of using a complete SI model instead of haphazardly using a few techniques here and there. Simple but unconnected strategies “may help students access the content concepts, but without systematic language development, students never develop the requisite academic literacy skills needed for achieving success in mainstream classes, for meeting content standards, or for passing standardized assessments” (Echevarria et al., 2006, p. 199).

This “systematic implementation” of SI is laid out by Echevarria, Power, and Short (2006) into eight components that are “essential for making content comprehensible for ELLs” (p. 201). These components are further divided into thirty specific tasks. Echevarria, Power, and Short’s (2006) SIOP components are: preparation, building background, comprehensible input, strategies, interaction, practice/application, lesson delivery, and review/assessment. The thirty tasks are listed out under their corresponding component in an assessment form available in their book, Making Content
Comprehensible for English Language Learners: The SIOP Model (Echevarria et al., 2006). The tasks and components fall into three main categories: tasks that teachers need to do to prepare for instruction, the instructional tasks themselves, and the assessment tasks after instruction. All tasks must accommodate the specific needs of the ELLs in the class, including their background knowledge, English language proficiency, and content proficiency. The tasks included in the SIOP model not only specify that language literacy skills should be addressed within content learning but in the SIOP model, two tasks in each lesson are “clearly defined content objectives” and “clearly defined language objectives” (Echevarria et al., 2006, p. 209).

The actual strategies of instruction in SIOP can vary according to student needs; however, each strategy must be designed so that it “emphasizes explicit teaching of (a) learning strategies so that students know how to access and retain information, (b) scaffolding instruction, and (c) promoting higher order thinking skills” (Echevarria et al., 2006, p. 201). Echevarria, Short, and Powers (2006) research has shown that when teachers participate in professional development that teaches them the frameworks of SI and are assessed on how well they are implementing the various components and tasks according to SIOP, ELL students tend to increase their language skills and content-area competencies. They assert that properly implemented SI shifts the “teaching-learning relationship [and] requires teachers to engage students in listening, speaking, reading, and writing about content in meaningful ways” which follows the best practices that school librarians also uphold (Echevarria et al., 2006, p. 207).

Carrier (2006) outlined how another approach, the Multiple Modes of Input and Output, or MMIO approach to instruction can be beneficial to ELL students’ learning of
academic concepts. MMIO can be used within SI and SIOP approaches. MMIO is based upon the principle that ELL students benefit from receiving instruction in a variety of methods beyond traditional verbal instruction, because this variety allows them to understand the content-area concepts that are at the heart of the lesson. With this approach, not only should lesson content be given in a variety of methods but students should also be allowed to communicate their understandings of the content in a variety of methods (Carrier, 2006). Carrier (2006) argued that when instruction is only given orally and students are required to present their understandings in written assessments, ELL students’ language skills may hinder their learning or ability to communicate their knowledge regardless of their abilities within the content area.

The methods that teachers choose for lessons with ELL students depend upon the individual needs of the students and the lesson content. Some of the methods that Carrier (2006) recommended are graphic organizers, simply written instruction sheets for hands-on activities, and the use of pictures to illustrate concepts. Carrier (2006) suggested that ELL students can communicate their new understandings with some of these same methods such as graphic organizers or with technology such as PowerPoint presentations. The key is to “reduce the language load for ELLs” (Carrier, 2006, p. 134). In addition to more successful learning, when ELL students interact with academic content in a variety of methods, they also increase their English language skills because they are successfully navigating how to communicate ideas (Carrier, 2006).

Beyond the concept of MMIO instruction, two key ideas that school librarians can gain from Carrier’s article (2006) are the importance of clarifying the key concepts of each lesson and the recognition that there are two vocabulary challenges for ELL students
when learning content-area material. When teachers clearly communicate the key concepts of an instructional unit in simple terms, ELL students can focus their attention on learning those concepts rather than extraneous information and vocabulary.

Carrier (2006) described the two vocabulary groups that are challenging to ELL students. These are “topic-specific” and “function vocabulary” (Carrier, 2006, p. 132). While “topic-specific” vocabulary is often new to all students, “function vocabulary” is language used to describe relationships between concepts, such as “first, next, then, bigger than, and smaller than” or words describing what the teacher wants students to do (Carrier, 2006, p. 132). Function vocabulary is often assumed to be known by students. In fact, these words may present difficulties to ELL students. Carrier (2006) recommended making word walls that include both types of vocabulary that ELL students, and other students, can reference throughout the unit.

Beyond the overarching instructional models that teachers choose to use, other instructional choices can affect the learning success of ELL students. Chang (2008) researched another choice that teachers face every day: how the class should function as a group. Chang (2008) found differences among different ethnic groups of ELL students in regard to their participation in groups and following mathematics skills assessments. The different instructional grouping methods that Chang (2008) examined were: “(a) teacher-directed whole-class activity, (b) teacher-directed small-group activity, (c) teacher-directed individual activity, and (d) student-selected activity” (p. 84). Chang (2008) reported that Caucasian and African American ELL students gained mathematics achievement in the teacher-directed whole-class activity method while Hispanic students
struggled. Lack of achievement in this method is understandable since individual students do not receive specialized support in this construct.

In the teacher-directed small-group activity method, Caucasian students’ mathematics achievement increased but no other ethnic groups benefited. In fact, Asian ELL students were negatively affected (Chang, 2008). Hispanic students had positive gains in achievement in the teacher-directed individual activity method (Chang, 2008). In this method, teachers were able to meet with students individually and give differentiated support. Although these findings cannot be generalized to all ELL students in these ethnic groups, this study raises the importance of examining all aspects of instruction with ELL students including grouping. This study also highlights the fact that all ELL students do not react to instruction the same way. Continual data collection and assessing lesson outcomes at the local level remain important to determine if instruction is supporting ELL students or not.

Another aspect of ELL education that the school library can play an important role in is connecting the school to the families of ELL students. Developing a relationship with the parents of ELL students is a key part of ELL students’ success in school. Chen, Kyle, and McIntyre (2008) reflected on past research that has shown that parental or family involvement in students’ education leads to positive academic achievement and examined how professional development could increase teachers’ outreach to ELL families. Twenty teachers participated in professional development training on SIOP and the importance of family involvement in Chen, Kyle, and McIntyre’s (2008) study. The differences of the amount and nature of teachers’ outreach to ELL families and teachers’ impressions of the importance of parental involvement
before and after the training were recorded through questionnaires and documentation of new post-training practices (Chen et al., 2008).

One of the reasons that outreach and parental involvement aid in student achievement is that during communication with parents, teachers learn about students’ background knowledge and prior experiences. In the SI and SIOP models for instruction, background knowledge and prior experiences are the foundation for building both language skills and new content-area understandings. Chen, Kyle, and McIntyre (2008) agree that “[t]eachers who understand students’ backgrounds of experiences and interests and relate what students need to learn to what they have learned previously are better able to provide the scaffolding needed by students who are confronting new academic content (and for many, in a new language as well)” (p. 10-11). Chen, Kyle, and McIntyre (2008) found improvements in the number of positive phone calls to parents, visits to students’ homes, and conscious instructional connections between academic content and knowledge about the students’ lives after teachers participated in the professional development training. Participating teachers also initiated new programs and lessons that included or increased family involvement. One especially successful program was giving parents a workshop on the writing process and how to be conference partners to their children (Chen et al., 2008). After the study, some of the participating teachers reported later that ELL parents had become more involved with school-wide programs such as the PTA (Chen et al., 2008).

Building positive relationships with ELL parents through the school library may also yield positive and long-lasting results. A successful project that grew out of teachers’ home visits with immigrant families and listening to the families’ needs is the
Luther Burbank Family Literacy Project. Ferlazzo (2009) wrote on this project and the importance of engaging parents of ELL students with the school library. The Luther Burbank Family Literacy Project put computers into the homes of immigrant ELL families and gave them literacy activities to complete as a family on the computer. Families were committed to spending at least one hour a day on the school website where they found language activities (Ferlazzo, 2009, p. 20). The students from participating families had “two to three times the rate of improvement in English literacy than control groups of students without home computers” (Ferlazzo, 2009). School-age children were not the only ones to benefit; the whole participating family benefitted from increased literacy (Ferlazzo, 2009). The literacy activities and online books and resources that the families used on the computer made participating students seek out other texts on the same or similar topics that interested them (Ferlazzo, 2009). The school librarian regularly communicated with these students to stay aware of their interests and provided appropriate resources to capitalize on the students’ reading interests (Ferlazzo, 2009).

Ferlazzo (2009) differentiates between “parental involvement” and “parental engagement” (p. 20). He argues that “parental engagement” has the potential to be more effective than “parental involvement” because “engagement” is initiated by parents’ needs and energy rather than school-initiated “involvement” programs (Ferlazzo, 2009, p. 21). In “parental engagement,” the school is listening and responding to the authentic needs expressed and sought after by the family and community (Ferlazzo, 2009). The school library may be ideally situated to engage parents because of the resources the library can provide both physically and online, as well as librarians’ professional
familiarity with assessing community needs and assets. Each community will need to be engaged in ways that match their individual needs and priorities.

**Using technology with ELL students**

Two recent studies that have examined how technology can be used with ELL students provide insight for school librarians. Peng, Fitzgerald, and Park (2006) conducted a study on the process that educational technology graduate students and elementary ELL students worked through to co-design multimedia digital storytelling projects. The researchers were interested in how ELL children could become creators of technology to “express their culturally-diverse backgrounds and perspectives” (Peng, Fitzgerald, & Park, 2006, p. 261). Peng, Fitzgerald, and Park’s (2006) research built on prior research such as Druin’s research (1999) that has shown that children use technology differently than adults as well as research by Labbo and Kuhn (2000) on the potential of multifunctional texts to support different learning styles.

The ELL students who participated in the study were involved in every step of the storytelling project, from writing the story and drawing the story illustrations, to narrating the story and choosing how user interactions would function (Peng, Fitzgerald, & Park, 2006). Their deep involvement gave these students many literacy opportunities. Beyond writing the stories, they had to choose what key scenes and topics to express with illustrations, which activated their visual literacy skills. They picked out what music would be appropriate for the mood of their story and what ways they wanted the reader to interact with the story, which activated their media literacy skills. Stories were written in English and then translated into the child’s primary language as well as Chinese. Peng, Fitzgerald, and Park (2006) argued that the option to read the story in three languages
“implied that students are not limited to English, and their native language and other languages are also valued” (p. 281). Including a third language option may also break a normal versus other dichotomy that treats English as the normal or accepted language and treats the student’s native language as an other or undesired language. When three languages are presented, both English and the student’s native language are seen as options within a greater spectrum of choices not associated with importance.

Prior to the interactions with the graduate students, the classroom teacher gave lessons on folktales and assisted the children during the writing process (Peng, Fitzgerald, & Park, 2006). The stories were either retellings of folktales from the ELL student’s culture or original stories written by the students about their culture. The graduate students were the direct manipulators of the software required to change the student’s story and illustrations into a digital program, however, the children made all design decisions with the adults (Peng, Fitzgerald, & Park, 2006).

After the projects were complete, Peng, Fitzgerald, and Park (2006) asked the children about their experience. The children’s responses were all positive except for their perceptions on the quality of their own drawings. The children were “excited to share their stories with their families but not their peers in regular classes” (Peng, Fitzgerald, & Park, 2006, p. 273). This sense of embarrassment to showcase their work to other students might be addressed by developing a school-wide program of sharing and highlighting student work so that ELL students do not feel singled out. This study shows how engaged and successful elementary ELL students can be when using their multiple literacy skills to create a culturally meaningful and authentic product with the support of adults or possibly older students with experience using the necessary software.
The second study comes from school library literature and addresses how iPods can be used with ELL students alongside print materials to aid in comprehension. Patten and Craig (2007) reported on four separate iPod projects from two elementary and two middle schools. The philosophy behind these studies was that appropriate use of iPods supports students “[b]y empowering ELLs to take control over the direction of their learning, managing the speed of their learning, maintaining their own pace, and developing their own identity as English speakers, they are more easily integrated into academic and social worlds” (Patten & Craig, 2007, p. 40). The participating teachers collaborated with a teacher-librarian to use the iPods in instruction in various ways based on “the teaching objectives of the classroom and library curricula” (Patten & Craig, 2007, p. 41). All teachers were language arts teachers and the students were given iPods with audiobook versions of teacher and teacher-librarian chosen texts. Some of the activities that teachers used along with the iPods were literature circles, journaling, and Podcasts created by the students to also listen to on the iPods. One of the classes also recorded their literature circle discussions as Podcasts. The strength of these projects may lie in the variety of these activities along with the support of listening to the text while reading.

Patten and Craig (2007) described how iPod integration is a natural avenue for school librarians to collaborate with classroom teachers. Librarians not only can act as the central control over the iPods themselves and keep track of copyright licensing of published material, but can also be a collection manager of student-produced and instructor-produced material such as “pronunciation recordings and language exercises” that can then be used by other ELL students throughout the school and in following years (Patten & Craig, 2007, p. 40). Perhaps more importantly, these studies relied on
collaboration with the teacher-librarian to address both classroom and library curriculum. The success of these programs is another example of how beneficial this collaborative relationship between school librarians and ELL teachers can be and how incorporating technology can be used as an approach to begin collaboration.

Beyond the discussion around instructional uses for iPods, Patten and Craig (2007) took notice of a phenomenon that showed up throughout the studies. In the middle schools, the ELL students were observed “bragging to their English-speaking peers and boasting that, because of their native languages, they were getting to play with iPods” (p. 42). This “hot factor” (Patten & Craig, 2007, p. 42) may be a welcome change for ELL students who struggle academically and may also increase their motivation to activate the literacy skills embedded into the activities with the iPods.

**ELL students in the library**

Most recent library literature that addresses ELL students are guidelines for choosing resources, making the library an inviting space for these students, or creating specific programs that make use of new technologies. Various combinations searches for “English language learners,” “English as a second language,” “school library,” “library,” and “K-12” within major library and education databases including ERIC, Library Literature, Library and Information Science Abstracts, PsychInfo, and Academic Search Premier only leads to one original research article published within the last ten years that addresses the library’s role in meeting the instructional needs of ELL students in K-12 schools.
Since such little research exists on the best instructional practices for K-12 school librarians working with ELL students, some articles written for college and university instructional librarians may be helpful if they address overarching instructional philosophies that can transcend setting. Writing from an academic library context, Conteh-Morgan (2002) presented an instructional model for librarians to use to support university ELL students. Her model, however, is not age-specific and can be applied to K-12 school libraries as well.

Conteh-Morgan (2002) combined core elements of innatism and interactionist theory of language development to create an instructional model. Conteh-Morgan (2002) divided the key elements of instruction into four inter-related components. The first is the “affective filter” which is based upon “the social context” of the learning environment (Conteh-Morgan, 2002, p. 193). This component asserts that the learning environment must be conducive to student learning by being comfortable and “non-threatening” so that the students’ “affective filters” decrease allowing learning to flow between instructor and students (Conteh-Morgan, 2002, p. 193). The second component is the combined “inputs” of instruction which includes the language that the instructor uses during instruction, the “mode of instruction” or the teaching philosophy of the instructor, and the prior knowledge of the language learner (Conteh-Morgan, 2002, p.193-194). The third component includes the individual characteristics of the learner: what their learning style is and their motivation for learning (Conteh-Morgan, 2002). The final component is the assessment of the “output/learning outcomes” of instruction (Conteh-Morgan, 2002, p. 195). Conteh-Morgan (2002) supported the use of formative assessment during instruction to give librarians the opportunity to adjust instruction or lead learners into
different activities. These assessments allow librarians to see what competencies learners understand as well as what they do not yet understand. These components interact and combine to form the overall learning process. During instruction, librarians must make sure that the various components support each other and correlate rather than work against each other.

The one recent library science article that addressed K-12 ELL students and their instructional needs was written by Jamie Campbell Naidoo (2005) and highlighted the importance of collaboration between school librarians and ELL teachers for the education achievement of ELL students. Naidoo (2005) argued that teachers who implement the SI approach present natural opportunities for school librarians to provide library resources that will support ELL content-area and language learning. These resources are informational texts, including non-fiction materials, newspapers, journals, and primary sources that the librarian selects based upon content-area requirements, ELL students’ literacy proficiencies, and lesson objectives. The SI and SIOP models of ELL instruction both call for meaningful engagements between ELL students and content-area information and texts. Naidoo (2005) asserts that informational texts can provide these meaningful engagements in more authentic ways than textbooks. Beyond traditional informational texts, the school librarian can collaborate with the ELL teacher to use “concept books, picture dictionaries, historical fiction, biographies, multicultural literature and folktales, comic books, and native language books” in lessons to give authentic literacy opportunities (Naidoo, 2005, p. 147-148).

To properly select these resources and to develop the most effective uses of these resources, collaboration between the school librarian and the ELL teacher is essential
(Naidoo, 2005). Naidoo (2005) also highlights the need for school librarians to learn from the ELL teachers the starting points of the ELL students’ information and technology skills for effective library instruction. Naidoo (2005) compared AASL’s *Information Power* standards for library curriculum against the TESOL’s *PreK–12 English Language Proficiency Standards* for ELL curriculum and identified several similarities that further argue for school library and ELL collaboration. While *Information Power* has been replaced by the *Standards for the 21st Century Learner in Action*, similarities still abound. For example, the first standard in the *Standards for the 21st Century Learner in Action* (2009c), “learners use skills, resources, and tools to inquire, think critically, and gain knowledge” (p. 13) relates to the first standard in the *PreK–12 English Language Proficiency Standards* (2006): “English language learners communicate for social, intercultural, and instructional purposes within the school setting” (Presentation of a Clear Proficiency Standards Framework section). Both standards call on students to use tools, whether they are information and technology literacy skills, informational resources, or the English language, in meaningful and individual ways that advances each student’s knowledge and learning. The methods for meeting both of these standards through collaboration can take many forms. Naidoo (2005) recommends: read-alouds, book talks, storytelling, author studies, listener centers, and puppetry. These methods can be implemented by either the ELL teacher or the school librarian but both content-area standards are to be addressed.

This collaboration between ELL teacher and school librarian is not limited to instruction and activities with students. Naidoo (2005) recommends that school librarians serve as resource providers for ELL teachers for best practices resources and new
research literature in ELL education. The school librarian is also in a perfect position to promote or give tutorials on new technologies that may be useful for ELL teachers to use in instruction. This is a role that school librarians should be serving to the whole school community, so it fits perfectly that they should also support ELL teachers’ more specific material and information needs.

Ajayi’s (2009) research with ELL students and advertisements is further evidence of the potential collaboration that could occur between school librarians and classroom teachers, including ELL teachers, to address content standards as well as AASL standards. Although Ajayi (2009) was not writing in the field of library science, his study used advertisements to discuss how ideas are communicated through text, illustrations, design, and more. These advertisement literacy skills directly relate to the visual literacy and critical thinking standards for which school librarian are responsible. Ajayi (2009) wanted to see what kind of literacy skills were activated through examining multimodal texts and found that ELL students used various literacy skills and derived meanings from the advertisements through their individual lenses based on personal experiences and culture. From his research observations, Ajayi (2009) believes that the use of multimodal texts “could foster critical literacy practices by offering ESL students opportunities to create new identities and challenge discursive practices that marginalize them” because they are given the chance to critically examine intent, authorship, intended audience, and message (p. 594).

Like Naidoo (2005), Ajayi (2009) presents evidence for the instructional use of resources and materials that can be supplied by the school library. Luckily, material
selection and book recommendations for ELL students is part of the more prevalent library literature available regarding ELL students in K-12 education.

**Methodology**

Due to the lack of original research in current library literature, school librarians need to look towards education literature to find the best instructional practices to use with ELL students. Many professional books have been published within recent years as aids for teachers to better serve ELL students. The purpose of presenting a selection of these instructional resources is to recommend helpful resources originally written for classroom teachers that provide strategies and guidelines that can be adapted by school librarians instructing ELL students. To ensure authority, the individual titles were selected based on endorsements from professional organizations and positive reviews in professional journals (see Table 1). To maintain currency, all titles were published within the last six years. Since these resources are being examined and presented for American school librarians, all titles are written in English.

**Table 1. Selection Sources for Professional Resources**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization/Journal</th>
<th>Mission/Purpose</th>
<th>Web Address</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL)</td>
<td>Professional organization for educators of English to non-native speakers of all ages. Responsible for creating the <em>PreK–12 English Language Proficiency Standards</em> for ELL education.</td>
<td><a href="http://tesol.org">http://tesol.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>International Reading Association</td>
<td>Organization for literacy professionals to promote literacy research and improvement in reading education. IRA publishes academic journals and monographs which support research in literacy development</td>
<td><a href="http://www.reading.org">http://www.reading.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
American Library Association (ALA) and divisions: Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA); American Association of School Librarians (AASL)

- Professional organization for librarians and information professionals and divisions that serve young library users. YALSA aims to improve library services to teens, both in public libraries and schools. AASL created the curriculum standards for school library programs, *Standards for the 21st Century Learner in Action*.

  - [http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/yalsa.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/yalsa/yalsa.cfm)
  - [http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/index.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/aasl/index.cfm)

Special Libraries Association Education Division

- Professional organization for librarians and information professionals working in education. Publisher of *Education Libraries* journal which provides "a forum for new and challenging ideas in the education field as well as in the field of library and information science education" (SLA, 2009).

  - [http://units.sla.org/division/ded/index.html](http://units.sla.org/division/ded/index.html)

Each title was read completely and the accompanying annotations connect each title to the literature presented earlier. Some of the best practices, key concepts, and suggestions included in each title are also presented in the annotations along with possible ways that these practices, concepts, and suggestions may be adapted for the school library to support ELL students’ acquisition of the AASL standards, content-area objectives, and English language literacies.

For an additional example of using an ELL education resource as guidance for the school library program, please see Blair, Brasfield, Crenshaw, and Mosedale’s column “School Librarians: Bridging the Gap for English Language Learners” in the March 2011 issue of *School Library Monthly* and their accompanying wiki available at
http://inls745ell.pbworks.com, which outlines the text *Literacy Instruction for English Language Learners: A Teacher's Guide to Research-Based Practices* by Cloud, Genesee, and Hamayan. The column and wiki also present helpful questions and strategies for school librarians.

**Resources**


**Overview and main concepts**

The International Reading Association published this current resource which compiles classroom research on working with the developing literacies of ELL students. The authors of each chapter present relevant research on ELL literacy development and then connect the research to specific strategies that have been implemented in actual classrooms. Stories, writing samples, and data from real students highlight the effects that the different strategies have had on ELL learning. Due to how this resource is organized, compiled chapters of separate research studies, librarians may find it easier to identify relevant chapters to read at times of need or interest rather than reading from cover to cover. Each chapter addresses a specific age group of students, as well as literacy strategies.

Right away, in the first chapter, the authors, Bear, Helman, and Woessner, echo Goldenberg’s (2008) review by stating that the strategies used with ELL students are
often the best practices that are recommended to use with all students. However, like the modifications called for by Goldenberg (2008), the authors stress the importance of “bending” the strategies to match the literacy proficiency of the ELL students, usually by including direct “vocabulary study, oral language practice, and explicit phonological support” (Bear, Helman, & Woessner, 2009, p. 11). This recommendation of using general education best practice but then providing necessary modifications continues throughout the other chapters as well.

This resource is focused upon ELL literacy instruction and support so the strategies and instructional modifications presented all relate back to literacy skills more so than content-area skills. Some of the main concepts presented in this resource include the importance of giving ELL students meaningful writing opportunities, providing a great number and variety of high quality books that interest the students, and regularly conversing about books. Books should also authentically reflect the cultural and ethnic identities of the students including life events that the students can relate to. Before any of these strategies can begin, however, the environment of the classroom must be safe and comfortable for ELL students.

Other key concepts presented throughout the chapters include the importance of giving ELL students opportunities to speak, especially with each other and other students. The authors argue that when teachers become participants of conversations rather than the constant leaders they can turn their attention to assessing the verbal skills of ELL students as well as their content understandings that manifest in their talk. Other resources, specifically *Talking, Listening, and Teaching, Assessing English Language Learners*, and *Reading, Writing and Learning in ESL* all insist on the importance of
providing a variety of opportunities for ELL students to speak out loud and converse with other students. Since listening and verbal skills in English tend to develop first among ELL students, these conversations may present knowledge that ELL students possess and critical thinking skills that they have mastered but remain unable to present through writing due to literacy development. When students are provided with opportunities to use their listening and speaking skills in English, their reading and writing abilities are also supported because they are learning grammar and vocabulary that transfers to these other literacies.

**Some recommended strategies from the text**

The authors throughout the text recommend increasing ELL student-to-student conversations and decreasing the dominance of teachers in leading classroom discussions. The IRE sequence, explained more fully in the Farrell (2009) resource below, relies on teachers giving questions and students providing recall answers. An overreliance on this traditional method of classroom communication is not the best support for ELL students. Instead, teachers are encouraged to lead students into providing their own interpretations, opinions, and reflections on the inputs of their peers. Reflective practice is needed to identify the communication patterns occurring in the classroom.

Graphic organizers and cloze paragraphs are two strategies suggested to help ELL students’ writing skills. Cloze paragraphs for ELL students are presented in two different ways. One way to use cloze paragraphs is as writing prompts that provide an overall
organization and structure to their response. Another way to use cloze paragraphs is to study a particular word type, such as prepositions.

Literature circles were found to increase ELL students’ literacy skills and class participation. How to implement literature circles is explained in depth in the resource. Some key features of literature circles include:

- Grouping students into literature circles to discuss readings assigns certain roles to each group member so that all students have a chance to participate with a clear objective.
- Giving students choices, including what books to read, group members, and group roles whenever possible.
- Utilizing high-quality literature that taps into students’ interests, respects their cultural backgrounds, and reflects the identities of students.

**Strategies for school librarians**

Many of the authors in *One Classroom, Many Learners* recommend the use of gestures during reading, modeling positive literacy skills and behaviors, and the use of objects or pictures to illustrate literary concepts. These same strategies are found in the other resources annotated below and can be easily used during library instruction, as well.

Word study is a technique used by ELL teachers that highlights phonetics and word families. Teachers use direct instruction on the phoneme of the lesson and then students interact with words that have that sound. Librarians can adapt word study to use in read-aloud times. Choosing books that highlight a repeated sound and using pre-reading discussions on that sound can support students’ recognition of the phoneme
during reading. By collaborating with ELL literacy teachers, the librarian can reinforce the word families that the students have already been exposed to in classroom activities, therefore linking their classroom content with authentic texts in different contexts.

The importance of rereading and the literacy benefits of revisiting the same book or written resource is presented in different cases presented in the text. By providing classrooms with copies of books read out loud during library visits, the librarian will provide the students an opportunity to revisit the text that they had listened to.

The success found with using literature circles for ELL students can be extended into the library. Many school libraries host book clubs throughout the year which are voluntary for students to join. ELL students may hesitate at participating in a literacy challenging activity, but if librarians incorporated some guidelines from literature circles into the book club discussions, the familiar routine may support interested ELL students. Book club discussions do not need to strictly follow literature circle guidelines, but by beginning the conversation with descriptions of the different roles that a book club member can play in order to interact with the text, the librarian provides clear tasks that ELL students can use to enter the conversation.


*Overview and main concepts*

The professional organization for educators teaching English to non-native speakers, TESOL, published this resource on using computers to support language
learners. The author, Egbert, insists that in CALL, or computer assisted language learning, the use of computers or other technology, in and of itself, does not increase student learning, whether or not the students are ELL. Instead, Egbert argues that computers should be used to facilitate learning, not create it. This main concept is reiterated numerous times throughout the text and should be easily accepted by school librarians and other educators who see the potential for technology to support learning only when consciously integrated into instruction for a clear purpose.

Egbert presents eight conditions that influence the effectiveness of computer instruction with ELL students. These conditions are: “interaction, authentic audience, authentic task, production and exposure, time and feedback, intentional cognition, atmosphere, and autonomy” (Egbert, 2005, p. 15). These conditions are explored throughout the text. The optimum combination of conditions: 1) allows students to be actively involved in an activity that builds upon their prior knowledge; 2) provides opportunities for students to interact with each other and with an authentic audience; and 3) enables students to communicate their new understandings through the creation of student developed products. Teachers create a supportive environment for these activities to occur and provide formative feedback that advances learning. All of these conditions run through the research literature and the other resources as well. Teachers and librarians need to consciously reflect on these eight conditions in preparing and implementing lessons. Once again, these conditions dovetail with best practices that are recommended for all students.

This resource identifies benefits of using computers and technology with ELL students ranging from the ability to individualize activities based upon students’ language
proficiencies to the ability to give students access to their primary language in authentic ways. Egbert stresses the difference between individualizing instruction and pushing students to learn on their own. While educators strive to increase student autonomy, instruction with computers must still be purposefully designed to support the lesson objectives and each ELL student’s characteristics, and should also include significant interactions between teachers and students.

Egbert also uses standards to support the use of computers with ELL students by showing how the TESOL standards complement the National Educational Technology Standards (NETS). School librarians can also find connections between the AASL standards and both the NETS and TESOL standards. For example, the TESOL, AASL standards, and the NETS standards all require students to be able to use a variety of media to communicate ideas.

Some recommended strategies from the text

This resource was written for ELL teachers and provides strategies that mostly address literacy skills. Because of the rapid life cycles of software and technology, some of the specific programs and technologies that Egbert uses in the text are no longer the best choice or available. Some of the recommended websites and programs are still great resources, such as NPR and Kidspiration. These specific titles are not the take-away from the text, however. Instead, readers should focus on how students are interacting with programs to activate learning and practice with skills. Librarians can locate and provide evaluations, demonstrations, and professional development for teachers on new programs and tools as they become available.
Just as in instruction without technology, using computers with ELL students should engage them in authentic tasks for authentic audiences. One of the great benefits of computers, according to Egbert, is that access to the internet allows students to communicate with authentic audiences previously difficult to contact. Egbert advises connecting students with content-area experts via email. Content-area experts do not need to only act as providers of information but can also assess student work.

Another benefit that Egbert recommends taking advantage of is the opportunity computers present for student interactions with their primary language. Since research has shown that familiarity and strength in a student’s native language transfers to their English language skills, opening up the opportunity for students to interact with their primary language, beyond the limited physical materials that the school may have is a great benefit of incorporating technology.

Egbert recommends the use of WebQuests with ELL students. Although WebQuests are falling out of favor for mainstream students, they have certain advantages for use with ELL students. Since websites are vetted by a teacher before being an option for WebQuest participants, the language level of sites can be monitored and key vocabulary can be taught during pre-reading activities so that ELL students will be able to mine the sites for relevant information.

Computers and audio-recording software can be used by ELL students to practice their verbal and listening skills in a safe environment. Since they can re-record until they are satisfied with their contribution to an audio file, computers can lessen ELL students’ anxieties about giving oral presentations. These recordings do not have to only be for the teacher. In fact, Egbert recommends that ELL students exchange audio email or
recordings with other students. If students with differing language proficiencies are paired, the stronger language student can increase his or her command of English by correcting the other student’s speech and providing feedback. The weaker language student is able to practice his or her developing skills with a peer who may share a cultural background and provide a different perspective than the teacher. Social interaction on the computer forces both students to self-assess and reflect on whether or not they are being understood. This is an authentic environment for experimenting with language.

Egbert also warns against some uses of computers with ELL students. Beyond the overall problem of using technology without a clear strategy for how it will support learning, she warns that language drills do not provide authentic tasks and should be avoided. Accessibility concerns must also be addressed so that equity doesn’t suffer by incorporating technology into instruction. Online safety is another concern raised by the text. Online safety should be part of the library curriculum.

**Strategies for school librarians**

This text is a great choice for school librarians because school librarians are already working on effective incorporation of technology into instruction. Additionally, librarians are versed in evaluations of software, websites, and other technologies. The first thing that all librarians must agree upon is to avoid using technology for the sake of using technology. Instead, learning objectives must drive the design of instruction. Technology is then used as a tool to reach those objectives if and only if the technology presents a more accessible, more efficient, or more effective strategy than other methods.
Since this book was published, technology has only increased its presence in our schools and asserted its importance in finding and presenting information. Since technology is growing in importance and is always changing, librarians must extend their collaboration with ELL teachers and content-area teachers to include technology teachers as well.

There are innumerable ways that librarians already incorporate technology into instruction. For specific instruction with ELL students, librarians should follow recommendations from this text and research done with ELL students and technology. Egbert stresses the importance of designing student-directed activities. Technology can facilitate these activities such as with the digital multimedia stories developed in the Peng, Fitzgerald, and Park (2006) study. Librarians can present similar multimedia opportunities for ELL students. Students can use online software such as Glogster to incorporate video, audio, text, and illustrations into a communication of their understandings. Librarians can also use multimedia software to present concepts. Relationships between concepts can be illustrated statically with graphic organizers, but ELL students may better absorb the relationships between concepts if visual representations of the concepts can be visually manipulated, moved, or shown to interact right before their eyes.

Librarians can also provide ELL students opportunities to use their primary languages through links on the library webpage. These links can lead students to language programs, vetted foreign websites, or online foreign language publications, including newspapers. The librarian must make sure that these students know of these resources and the way to access them. Some direct instruction and one-on-one
conversations can highlight the availability of these resources. Pictures illustrating the purpose of these links will assist students with lower literacy skills.


**Overview and main concepts**

This resource is a helpful introduction and overview of communication patterns that occur within classrooms and academic contexts. Lewis (2011) provided a positive review of the text in *TESOL Journal* indicating its usefulness for both pre-service and practicing teachers. Although not a resource written specifically for use with ELL students, this book presents the reader with the various ways that communication occurs in the classroom and how this communication can affect student learning. Farrell draws from research in education and linguistics and uses established frameworks of communication from the research literature to examine classroom communication.

Farrell adapts Civikly’s principles to describe the process of communication. According to Civikly and Farrell, communication is “a process in constant change”; “a system of rules”; “verbal and nonverbal”; “transactional”; a process that influences the response of the other participants; and is influenced by the context surrounding the process (Farrell, 2009, p. 6). Farrell points out that an important aspect of communication in the classroom is that the teacher holds the power to determine how that communication will occur. Since the teacher holds this position of authority and control, classroom communication largely depends upon the teacher’s philosophical beliefs about
education. Unfortunately, a teacher’s belief in constructivism and student-centered learning does not always manifest in communication techniques that support that learning environment. Farrell recommends that teachers examine the communication that is actually occurring in their classroom by audio or video recording a lesson and transcribing the interactions. Only through reflective practice will teachers be able to identify how their current communication techniques are driving certain types of learning.

Farrell argues that questions are the main form of communication that teachers use in instruction. Questions and the way that they are used follow certain patterns and frameworks. The main framework that Farrell uses is Mehan’s IRE sequence. The IRE sequence is a pattern of communication that begins with a question. This question is an “inquiry” question, usually asked by the teacher. The students then provide a “response” and then the teacher “evaluates” that response (Farrell, 2009, p. 10). The inquiry questions can be various types of questions. Farrell presents a summary of Mehan’s inquiry question categories. According to Farrell and Mehan, inquiry questions can ask many things of students, from giving facts or presenting their own opinion to explaining how they came to an understanding. The range of low to high-order thinking that questions can target are determined by the lesson objective and the teaching philosophy of the teacher.

Throughout the question-asking, responses, and evaluations of responses, understanding is being negotiated based upon both the teacher and the students’ prior knowledge and experiences. This is where ELL students may be at a particular disadvantage. The cultural background and home communication styles, beyond the
challenge of language alone, of ELL students may differ greatly from this IRE construct used so often in American instruction. Farrell points out how cultures range from direct communication styles to indirect communication styles. If students are coming from indirect communication cultures (which include many Hispanic cultures and therefore a potentially very large percentage of the current ELL student population), then these students may not be aware that they are meant to interact with the teacher through question and answer dialog. Farrell argues that since these indirect communication cultures instruct more often through student-initiated discussions and back-and-forth informal conversation rather than teacher-initiated questions, incorporating some of these techniques into classes with students from these cultures will increase their comfort, participation, and learning.

Although the teacher is in a role of authority and traditionally has directed classroom communication, Farrell points out the need for teachers to become aware of themselves as listeners during instruction. He argues that teachers need to use active listening skills to reflect back to students what they are hearing. This might include information about the level of student understanding, questions that students have, and anxieties that are prohibiting them from benefiting from the instruction. Not only do teachers need to listen to what the students are vocalizing, but also what students are communicating through nonverbal cues such as eye contact, facial expressions, and body language. Nonverbal communication is also based upon cultural context and may manifest differently in ELL students than native English speakers.

Since traditional direct classroom communication differs from many ELL students’ home and cultural learning styles, students need to be taught this new form of
communication. Farrell encourages teachers to explicitly show all students how they are expected to respond to questions, raise questions, work in groups, and participate in all other forms of classroom communication. Without a clear understanding of what communication behavior is expected, students will only be functioning from their prior experiences, which may clash drastically with teachers’ expectations.

Teachers’ communication patterns can affect student achievement along ethnic and gender groups as well. Farrell presents research findings that show that teachers communicate more often and in greater depth with white children compared to minority children. He also presents research that finds that teachers communicate about content with boy students more than they communicate with girl students. Reflective practice of taping instruction may shed light on these practices that can then be consciously addressed.

Farrell, following the method of communication that he highlights as teachers’ main form of communication, incorporates questions consistently throughout the text. These questions force readers to examine their educational philosophies and current practices.

**Some recommended strategies from the text**

Avoid overuse of “final draft” talk, which indicates that the teacher has the only correct answer and instead, increase use of “exploratory” talk, which asks for student feedback, experiences, and ideas. This exploratory talk features questioning tones, leading discussions into a topic rather than providing answers, and asking for opinions and predictions from students. By using exploratory talk, students are more active
participants and their background knowledge is activated because they have to draw upon what they already know to continue in the conversation.

Listen for student anxieties. These anxieties can hinder learning if they are left unresolved. Student anxieties can manifest in refusals to participate, interruptions, and changing topics. By addressing student anxieties, the class can move on to the lesson objectives.

Be transparent with students on the learning objectives of a lesson, as well as the expectations that they will have to meet to show that they have completed the objectives. Beyond clearly communicating lesson objectives, also show students how teaching strategies and activities are working towards those objectives. Understanding the teaching and learning process allows students to take more control over their own learning.

After asking a question, give students at least three to five seconds to respond. This longer wait time allows ELL students to work through language difficulties that may hinder their speed of responding although they understand the content information. Also, during question and answer dialog, give students a warning that a question is going to be directed at them by giving their name at the beginning of the question instead of asking the question and then calling upon them. If students’ names are called at the beginning of questions rather than afterwards, ELL students and other anxious students can stop worrying about whether or not they will be called upon and instead can focus on the content being discussed.

Since communication affects so much of the learning environment, all teachers can improve their instruction by increasing their planning of what questions and verbal
communication will be used during a lesson. This planning ensures that communication is used intentionally and that challenging vocabulary (both topical and functional) can be identified and addressed before ELL students are lost in unrecognizable language.

Farrell also provides specific advice such as lists of productive and unproductive question characteristics as well as many real-life examples of successful and unsuccessful teacher-student communication. Readers can adapt this advice into different strategies to use in their own classrooms or libraries.

**Strategies for school librarians**

Farrell’s text is a useful resource for librarians to use to better understand the communication happening or not happening during library instruction and how to change the ineffective communication so that students can successfully learn the lesson objectives.

Understanding the communication patterns in the library is crucial due to the limited time that librarians have for instruction with students. To make sure that instruction is effective and efficient, school librarians should adopt the strategies suggested by Farrell. Perhaps the most important strategy is being reflective. Audiotaping and videotaping (to capture verbal and nonverbal communication) library instruction sessions will give librarians evidence of the ways communication is being used. This data can be transcribed and analyzed to suggest possible changes in communication techniques to increase student learning.

Reflective practice is expected from school librarians, as stated in AASL’s (2009a) *Empowering Learners* guidelines for planning and evaluating the school library
program. One of the actions expected of all school librarians is that the librarian “uses evidence of practice, particularly in terms of learning outcomes, to support program goals and planning” and “uses research findings to inform decision making and teaching practices” (AASL, 2009a, p. 31). Teaching practices, including communication practices, must be based upon research evidence, including evidence collected during practice. When analyzing communication data, a good practice might be to examine how often ELL students are engaged verbally and nonverbally and the nature of these interactions. Do ELL students tend to respond to certain interactions and avoid others? Learning about the communication styles of ELL students’ homes or cultural backgrounds can also inform what communication techniques will be more successful and make ELL students more comfortable during instruction.

The transcripts from recording library instruction can also be used in other ways. If ELL students struggle with written academic English yet are engaged in verbal communication during instruction, these tapings could be used as part of the ELL students’ academic assessment. Watching or listening together to taped interactions, the librarian and other teachers can plan questioning strategies or interactions that include ELL students. ELL students themselves may also benefit from watching or listening to taped instruction with the librarian or teacher. By discussing one-on-one how the interactions during instruction were successful and/or unsuccessful, the librarian and ELL student can unpack their assumptions of how the instruction went and instead delve deeper into understanding the perceptions of the other.

**Overview and main concepts**

Although this resource touches upon all aspects of instruction with ELL students, including incorporating content material and language lessons, the author’s focus is upon effective assessment as part of instruction. The title is “strongly recommended for all levels of school and academic libraries” by Mestre (2006, p. 32) in a review for *Education Libraries*. The review even indicates that this resource would benefit other foreign language teachers because the “useful strategies, reflections, templates, and tools” are applicable in a variety of instructional situations (Mestre, 2006, p. 32). Partially a response to the increased need for accountability and standardized testing accompanying NCLB legislation, this text approaches assessment as a combination of approaches including classroom-designed assessment and required assessment implemented from the district or state.

Although teachers do not have control over the standardized testing that ELL students will have to complete from the district and state, they are responsible for incorporating these standardized tests into a more encompassing assessment that includes classroom assessment. Students, especially ELL students unfamiliar with American education and testing, must be supported in preparation for this testing. Gottlieb does not advise to “teach to the test” which robs students of authentic learning, but does advise to teach how testing works. Giving ELL students strategies for preparing for standardized tests and preparing them for the testing atmosphere should be incorporated in ELL
instruction. Gottlieb also insists assessment needs to become more standardized within
the school so that ELL students can become accustomed to expectations and feedback.

Testing is not the focus of this text, however. Instead, Gottlieb writes about
assessment, the use of observations, evaluations, and evidence of student learning to
influence instruction. Gottlieb argues that assessment of ELL students is incredibly
important to examine because it is more complex than assessment for non-ELL students.
Since ELL students are tackling both language learning and content learning, teachers
need to assess them in both of these areas. With weak language skills, routine assessment
tools may not be applicable for ELL students. Overall, “our assessments must match best
instructional practice, reflect the characteristics of English language learners, and yield
useful information” (Gottlieb, 2006, p. 41). Content-area teachers, as well as librarians,
may not feel comfortable assessing the language skills of ELL students. Gottlieb
encourages collaboration. In fact, she calls for collaboration beyond a content-area
teacher and an ELL teacher developing assessment for an ELL student. Ideally, she
argues for collaboration across the whole school to develop consistent assessment
strategies and evaluations of student work and participation.

The text begins by explaining the assessment processes that students go through
when entering a school to get designated an ELL student. These assessments vary from
school to school and state to state but some measures are common and can be used
beyond identifying ELL students to actually influence instruction. Home language
questionnaires, English language questionnaires, and past education questionnaires can
all tell teachers about the literacy and education backgrounds of students, which become
the foundation for new instruction. Once ELL students are identified, Gottlieb asserts
that each student should have a year-long assessment schedule that is developed by content-area and ELL teachers. This assessment schedule will include large-scale assessments given by the district or state and the planned individual classroom assessments. This strategy requires a great deal of collaboration and planning in advance by all teachers.

Gottlieb argues that traditionally, ELL students have been assessed based upon their social language skills rather than their academic language skills. With standardized testing, academic language is being evaluated more often. Academic language skills are also directly connected with content-area learning. Gottlieb supports content-based instruction such as SI because with this approach instruction addresses language learning along with content-area learning. Assessments for ELL students should be divided into different levels of language proficiency so that the language abilities of the students do not deter teachers from being able to assess students’ content-area ability. Because content-area teachers may not be experienced with assessing ELL students, Gottlieb assures readers that the easiest method of assessment is to use the same activities used during instruction. However, teachers must be careful to assess students at their actual learning level rather than at the zone of proximal development where instruction tends to take place.

Another one of the key and overarching ideas presented by Gottlieb is that assessment must be fully integrated into instruction. The objectives of each lesson must be able to be measured. This is true for both the language and content-area objectives for ELL students. Gottlieb provides guides for language proficiency levels in listening,
speaking, reading, and writing skills. These guides can be used in developing rubrics and scales for assessment.

Each chapter of the book includes reflection questions to prompt readers to examine their use of assessments and intentions of changing their methods and also encourages the reader to begin dialogs with other teachers on assessment. Many templates for assessment are also included in each chapter. The author also includes a glossary of ELL and education terms found in the text.

**Some recommended strategies from the text**

ELL students are a varied group with a range of proficiencies and background knowledge. The text asserts that assessment for ELL students should include multiple methods including observation, student journals, hands-on activities, peer assessments, self-assessments and more. Gottlieb argues that one of the best methods of assessment is to use portfolios of student work. Portfolios can be created from many types of student outputs, making this assessment method easily incorporated into Carrier’s (2006) MMIO approach. Portfolios build a more complete view of the student that can span content areas. Portfolios also allow for evidence of ELL students’ language development and their content-area learning because of the ability to include student-created projects and outputs.

Continuing the support of a MMIO-type approach, Gottlieb reminds readers that ELL students should have a variety of output possibilities to communicate their content-area understanding within their language proficiencies. For example, outlines and bullet points might be a possible assessment product rather than an essay or full research paper.
Graphic organizers can also be a student output to show their understanding of relationships between concepts.

Teacher observation is an assessment method highlighted by Gottlieb. One of the benefits of teacher observation is that it is ongoing. Teacher observation also encourages self-reflection on the part of teachers as well. Assessment should not only evaluate student learning but should also inform teachers on the effectiveness of instruction and lead to changes when necessary.

Peer and student self-assessments are also encouraged. Peer assessment strategies can be student conversations or with written forms. Self-assessments can also be based upon filling out reflection forms on individual projects or lessons but can also be part of larger assessment tasks such as choosing portfolio pieces and presenting portfolio work to teachers and parents. When students are given the opportunity to participate in assessment, “the assessment itself is part of the learning process” (Gottlieb, 2009, p. 111).

Assessment through rubrics is also supported by Gottlieb because specific skills can be identified on a range or scale rather than in absolutes. Rubrics must present a scale for both the language proficiencies as well as the content-area objectives.

**Strategies for school librarians**

The use of portfolios for assessment presents an opportunity for library collaboration. Librarians can contribute to student observations and assessments of collaborative projects for portfolios. Portfolios can also be digital. Librarians can assist teachers in gathering students’ digital products or begin digital project collaborations.
The importance of giving ELL students opportunities to speak is highlighted in this book just as in the texts by Peregoy and Boyle as well as the text by Coppola and Primas. Gottlieb recommends having ELL students give book talks as an assessment of their reading comprehension. Libraries can provide a safe place for ELL students to speak and practice their verbal language skills by giving live book talks to younger students or by creating online book talks using audio recording software that can be published through the library website or attached to catalog records.

The suggestion for ELL students to use graphic organizers as outputs requires someone to teach the students how to use graphic organizers. Librarians are versed in organizing information and communicating relationships between concepts. By instructing ELL students in various graphic organizers, from Venn diagrams to concept maps, librarians can give ELL students communication skills that they can use across content areas for assessment.


Overview and main concepts

Peregoy and Boyle have created an overarching resource intended to be used by ELL teachers across K-12 grades. Martinez (2011) highly recommends this text for ESL pre-service and practicing teachers in a review for TESOL Journal. The American Library Association’s YALSA division (n.d., print resources section) also recommends
this resource for the professional development of librarians working with ELL teens. Some helpful features of this resource include rubrics, checklists, and samples for use when evaluating the development of ELL students’ oral and written language skills. Each chapter also includes activities and suggestions for further reading. There is also an online component to this resource that includes videos and additional exercises.

Within *Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL*, the authors use education, linguistics, and ELL research to introduce the main concepts of verbal, reading, and written literacy development of all students and specifically ELL students. The opening chapters present clear and concise introductions to language systems, language forms and usages, and primary and secondary language acquisition theories. Peregoy and Boyle have included cultural awareness topics in the resource and they advise teachers to investigate the home experiences of ELL students as well as to understand the cultural challenges that occur when children begin to acquire a second language and assimilate into a different culture from their family.

One of the key concepts presented in this resource is the importance of building upon the literacy experiences of ELL students. The authors warn against viewing ELL students as having no prior literacy experiences or background from which to build upon. All students have been exposed to language, although in different ways. Teachers need to identify what ways these students have begun a relationship with language and use these prior experiences and knowledge as the foundation for moving forward with English language learning.

Peregoy and Boyle present effective ELL instruction as a combination of two pillars, SI and differentiated instruction. SI, the incorporation of both language and
content-area objectives into every lesson, requires that ELL students are given the proper support to learn their grade-level content knowledge and avoids giving these students simpler or incomplete content which, beyond being unfair, does not prepare these students for their future learning. Differentiated instruction is a teaching practice used with all students, not only ELL students. Differentiated instruction entails the use of modifications that address students’ interests, strengths, and multiple intelligences. Peregoy and Boyle recommend that teachers ask themselves “what, who, how, and how well” when designing SI and differentiated instruction. These questions indicate that the teacher understands what the content objectives for a lesson are; what proficiency levels, talents, skills, and needs the students have; the chosen instructional strategies to address the content objectives with the combination of student proficiencies, skills, and needs; and finally the method by which the lesson will be assessed.

Another key concept that the authors present is the importance of verbal language skills. ELL students should be given consistent authentic opportunities to speak with each other and other students to practice communicating orally. Reading and writing literacy skills are often the abilities formally assessed which draws more attention to these skills; however, verbal language literacy supports these written literacies and is also crucial for student success.

**Some recommended strategies from the text**

Overall, the authors recommend strategies that combine scaffolding, modeling, and direct instruction. Peregoy and Boyle assert that teachers need to first create a classroom environment that is safe, comforting, and gives ELL students a feeling of
belonging. The authors recommend assigning another student as the ELL newcomer’s buddy so that the student familiar with American schools and the rules of the classroom can assist the ELL newcomer in learning these rules and social norms around the school. Keeping a consistent routine also lets ELL students feel safe because they can begin to predict what each day will bring. To include ELL students into the class and give them a sense of belonging, ELL students should sit in the front or middle aisle of a classroom so that they receive regular eye contact and recognition from the teacher. Once students feel comfortable in the classroom, they can focus their attention on learning rather than their anxieties. Routines do not only lessen student anxiety, but Peregoy and Boyle explain that routines are accompanied by vocabulary and language use which gets repeated every time a routine is followed. This repetition of language aids in literacy development at the same time that the repetition of behavior increases the students’ comfort levels.

The authors of this resource support the use of thematic units that tie different content areas together along with literacy learning. Similar to Carrier (2006), Peregoy and Boyle support the use of a variety of formats to present information to ELL students and giving students a variety of options for expressing their learning outcomes, which provides support for their growing literacy skills. One of the benefits of thematic units is the opportunity that they provide to integrate multiple literacies since verbal communication and written communication are naturally linked.

Peregoy and Boyle recommend using journals with ELL students. They present a sequence of journaling that starts with students keeping private journals. The privacy of these journals is respected. Teachers regularly give students time to write in the journals but students write on their own chosen topics. The second stage of journaling is keeping
dialog journals. Students write journal entries which are shared with their teacher. These entries can be on student-chosen topics or be answers to teacher prompts. Teachers write responses to students that are based upon the content in the journal. Grammar, spelling, and other mistakes are not corrected directly but within the teacher’s responses correct usage is modeled. The third stage is journaling with a student partner. Student pairs journal back and forth to each other, offering suggestions or giving their opinions and reflections on what their partner has written. This kind of journaling increases student autonomy and meaningful critiquing skills.

**Strategies for school librarians**

The library may be an intimidating environment for ELL students, especially if they do not have prior experiences with libraries. There is setting specific vocabulary to learn such as “circulation,” “check-out,” and “non-fiction,” which may be challenging for ELL students trying to navigate the library. Unless classes regularly come into the library, instruction in the library is a break in the normal routine for ELL students, which may also present anxieties. Librarians need to understand the ELL students in their school to develop strategies for lessening the anxieties presented by the library. Using pictures along with written signs to designate different areas of the library may be one way to give ELL students more autonomy and comfort in navigating the space. If ELL students are paired with peer buddies, holding a special event in the library for buddy pairs might provide an opportunity for the students familiar with the library to show the ELL student how to find materials. The librarian can take this opportunity to talk with students and show that they are there to help them.
Although most of the strategies presented in *Reading, Writing, and Learning in ESL* rely on consistent classroom interactions with students and focus upon language acquisition, school librarians can adapt many of these strategies to library instruction. Elementary school librarians may be able to use the dialog journals that Peregoy and Boyle recommend if they have regular interactions with the students. Librarians could also collaborate with the classroom teacher and turn traditional journaling into electronic journaling in the form of blogs.

Librarians can also support other aspects of ELL literacy such as understanding the overall formats of resources. Direct instruction on the formats of different written documents, such as letters, informational books, charts, and more can have significant effects on reading comprehension. By collaborating with content-area or ELL teachers, the school librarian could offer mini-lessons on the written format structures of authentic texts that address content-area topics as well as provide multiple examples with library materials. Librarians can also support the literacy learning occurring in the content-area classrooms by providing students with authentic environments to publish their written work, either in a printed form that lives in the library or electronically on a library webpage.

Other literacy strategies encouraged by the text are the use of word walls, dictionaries, read-alouds, and word wizard activities. These strategies can be adapted by the librarian. Before giving instruction, the librarian can present key vocabulary and display this vocabulary with definitions visually to the students on a wall or whiteboard that stays visible during the lesson. Not only do librarians select dictionaries for inclusion in the collection with the needs of ELL students in mind, but librarians can also
provide instruction on how to use these resources. Modeling how to look up an unknown word supports ELL students’ autonomy by giving them the needed skills to find unknown words in the future.

**Conclusion**

Running throughout the research literature and professional resources is the understanding that best practice supports ELL students just as it supports non-ELL students. However, best practice as usual may not be enough. Modifications to practice, in order to address ELL students’ additional needs, depend on the curriculum objectives, individual learner characteristics of the ELL students, and teaching philosophy of the teacher. All library instruction with ELL students should address both the information literacy objectives and language objectives that the students will need in order to master the library objectives.

One practice that is highlighted throughout the professional resources is for teachers of ELL students to consciously plan their instructional strategies and to make these decisions as transparent as possible to the students themselves. This conscious planning includes having a school-wide instructional framework for teaching ELL students such as the SIOP approach and also coordinating assessment guidelines that all teachers use to evaluate student learning and instructional success consistently. Librarians, serving as teachers for the whole school, have the opportunity to take a leadership role in coordinating these consistent instruction and assessment frameworks that will better support ELL students. Hand in hand with this conscious and transparent planning is the need for reflective practice. Librarians need to gather evidence of library
instruction and student learning, including communication patterns occurring in the library. This evidence must then be used to improve teaching and learning. Only with this evidence will librarians understand what instruction is effective for their ELL students.

A more precise strategy recommended in several resources is journaling. Journaling serves several purposes, from private practice with language, to relationship building between students and teachers, to being a tool for assessment. Connecting school with students’ family lives and individual cultures is another constant of best practice championed by the literature and resources. These connections can be made by librarians in a number of ways from including authentic multicultural resources in the library collection to collaborating with other teachers to provide programs for ELL parents and families. The library can be a community resource rather than solely an academic one. The library could host displays of ELL student work and invite parents to attend presentations or view their children’s work at convenient times for them.

Research is needed in the library field that examines the relationships between K-12 ELL students and school libraries. Until then, education literature and professional resources can lend information and strategies on how we can best serve these students during our collaborations and instruction.
References


