THE
SOURCE

Teaching English Learners

A Publication of the California History-Social Science Project - Winter 2013/14

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History-Social Science Project*

Taft High School Faculty, circa 1945. Selected item from the "Shades of the Westside" photo collection (item number TA001-415), Kern County Library

Sources
Data from National Center for Education Statistics https://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d12/tables/dt12_047.asp, Fiscal Year 2014 Budget Summary and Background Information, California Department of Education DataQuest http://dq.cde.ca.gov/dataquest/, Supporting English Leaners www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget14/.../englishlearners.pdf. Quotes from "Stanford researcher launches national K-12 English Language Learning initiative" Stanford Report, September 13, 2011; Mary Schleppegrell, "Academic Language in Teaching and Learning Introduction to the Special Issue," *The Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 112, No. 3, Academic Language (March 2012), pp. 409-418; "Noted biliteracy expert takes over CDE's new English learner division" by Tom Chorneau, Curriculum & Instruction, SI&A Cabinet Report, p. 42; Jack O'Connell State of Education remarks, 2006. Issue art by Kevin Tsukamoto, CHSSP Statewide Office.

Teaching English Learners

FEATURES

Teaching English Learners is Hard

It is difficult enough to get kids to understand and appreciate your subject matter; teaching kids who can't understand what you're saying or what they are reading is a whole other level of difficulty. When I began teaching in 1989, it seemed like only a small number of my colleagues had any experience or knowledge teaching English learners. I thought they were mysterious and magical, these teachers who could help children who couldn't understand them. As the years went by, and my classes began to include increasing numbers of English learners, it became clear that these colleagues weren't mysterious and they didn't have magic. They worked hard to learn about their students, perfect their craft, and push for gradual but measureable growth.

I doubt there are any teachers in California who don't have English learners in their classrooms. I know teachers who *only* teach English learners, not in pull out special programs, but in every period of every class they teach every day. And while I still think their charge is very difficult, it's heartening to see increasing levels of public support for these students and a large and growing body of research dedicated to helping pull back the curtain on the magical talents of successful teachers.

Since 2000, the CHSSP has dedicated significant time, energy, and resources to provide research-based and classroom-ready support for teachers of English learners. In those early years, we brought together teams of teachers, historians, teacher educators, and linguists to closely examine the relevant literature on English language development. Our goal then, as it is now, was to provide an approach for teachers of history – social science that both increased content understanding and improved student literacy at the same time. Not everything worked and we didn't always agree with each other, but over the last thirteen years we have developed a few insights that teachers report have been helpful and, we hope, made a contribution to our field.

This issue of *The Source* is in response to the new English Language Standards, adopted in 2012. The articles are designed to shine a light on the needs of English learners and the resources teachers can employ to help them both learn English and the content we expect all students to master before they graduate. Within this edition, you'll find profiles of teachers and policymakers, sample lesson plans, and a collection of data points designed to inform ongoing discussions about how we should best serve our English learner student population.

Putting this issue together reminded me once again about the challenges English learners must face if they hope to succeed in a society where English is privileged. It also renewed my commitment to provide tools for teachers of English learners, recognizing that we aren't all magicians, but we all can make a difference if we're willing to work hard together for the benefit of our kids.

Ojo Sarco, New Mexico, 1943. One-room school in an isolated mountainous Spanish-American community, which has eight grades and two teachers. Image from Library of Congress: http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/owi2001016638/PP/

Nancy McTygue,
Executive Director

What We've Learned about English Language Development

Since 2000, the California History-Social Science Project has worked closely with a team of classroom teachers, teacher educators, historians and linguists to designed curriculum and professional development models for teachers of English learners, as well as native speakers with low levels of literacy. What follows is an admittedly incomplete list of some of what we've learned from relevant research, classroom practice, and our own trial and error. After reviewing this list, let us know what you think, by posting a response on our Facebook page or emailing us at chssp@ucdavis.edu.

- **Teach vocabulary in context.** Giving students lists of vocabulary words to define before you start teaching a topic is not as helpful as teaching students to discern unfamiliar words within text or while you are actually engaged in content. Meaningful engagement with content provides both the motivation and the contextual clues English learners can often use to support increased comprehension.

- **Focus correction on meaning first, grammar and punctuation second.** By definition, English learners have not mastered English. There will be mistakes in their writing, but those errors that impede understanding are more problematic. In order to both focus student attention on what is most significant and limit grading time, errors that prohibit understanding deserve the greatest attention.

- **Connect content and language.** Especially in those disciplines that are dependent primarily on text, such as history, content and language must be taught together in order to benefit increase content understanding and develop student literacy.

- **Prioritize privileged texts.** In each discipline, certain genres of writing are more important than others. In history, argumentation and explanation (both informational texts) are valued. Given that, focusing student attention on these privileged genres – their unique features, similar composition, and organizational style supports student literacy as well as disciplinary understanding.

- **Expand your definition of literacy.** English language development encompasses the skills of reading, writing, speaking and listening, but class time is often dedicated only to reading and writing. Providing ample opportunities for structured discussion not only develops student oral language skills, but can also increase reading and writing proficiency in the second language.

- **English learners are not the same.** Students learning English come from a variety of communities, linguistic traditions, socio-economic and educational backgrounds, and family situations. Understanding just how diverse your English learners are is a necessary foundation for the next suggestion…

- **Know your students and know your content.** Successful teachers of English learners leverage what their students bring to their classrooms in order to engage their students in grade level appropriate work.

- **Don't water it down.** In order to make their content more accessible to their students, some teachers will rewrite difficult text or tell them what it says. Despite the best of intentions, this practice does not promote either English learning or in-depth content understanding. Breaking difficult reading down into smaller chunks, providing additional time and support for English learners to engage directly with difficult and complex text is more appropriate and ultimately more effective.

English Language Learners, Abstract Language, and Teaching About the Cold War

by Dave Neumann

One implication of the Common Core Standards for history teachers is both simple and profound. By focusing on reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills in history classrooms, the standards remind educators that all learning takes place through language. The new California English Language Development (ELD) Standards underscore this point: "Language is the medium in which teaching and learning take place in schools; the medium through which we transform and develop our thinking about concepts; and in this way, language and content are inextricably linked."[1] While that point is so obvious that it is often taken for granted, it is so important that it should never be far from our minds when planning and engaging in instruction. If learning takes place through language, English learner (EL) students—who by definition are learning the language of

Bikini attol (in the Pacific ocean). Aerial view of clouds raised by test explosion of an atomic bomb. Image from Library of Congress: http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/owi2002050181/PP/

instruction—face a substantial hurdle in understanding history content and concepts. After briefly exploring some of EL students' challenges, this article will present a model for planning instruction with ELs and briefly illustrate a lesson on the concept of containment during the Cold War. The article will indicate where the lesson addresses each of the three elements of California English Language Development Standards entitled "Interacting in Meaningful Ways"—Collaborative, Interpretive, and Productive Skills.

Distinctive challenges for English Learners

What distinctive challenges do EL students face? As indicated above, they must learn academic content while simultaneously learning the language of instruction. Both tasks require attention, and both are cognitively demanding. But the two tasks also interrelate; students' ability to make sense of history instruction rests on their grasp of the language they are in the midst of acquiring. EL students still actively learning the vocabulary, syntax, and knowledge of the larger cultural context in which the English content is imbedded, may struggle to make sense of history instruction no matter how attentive they are.

Discourse in history often involves the use of metaphorical language as shorthand for describing complex processes.

The challenge that students face is greater than simply learning the distinctive vocabulary encountered in history, though vocabulary alone presents a specific challenge as much of it addresses not tangible objects or people, but abstract concepts. For example, in middle school, students confront concepts like civilization, social class, capitalism, humanism, and enlightenment. These concepts are crucial to understanding course content, and they are all extremely abstract.

Discourse in history often involves the use of metaphorical language as shorthand for describing complex processes. Empires *rise* and *fall*. Populations *explode*. Some nations become economically *dependent* on other nations. These metaphors don't always translate from one language to another—something I learned as a high school exchange student when my Spanish host family was puzzled by my use of the word "carrera" (race —as in a track competition) to discuss that year's presidential election. In addition, as the word "discourse" implies, literacy requires much more than accumulating definitions of vocabulary words, abstract or otherwise.
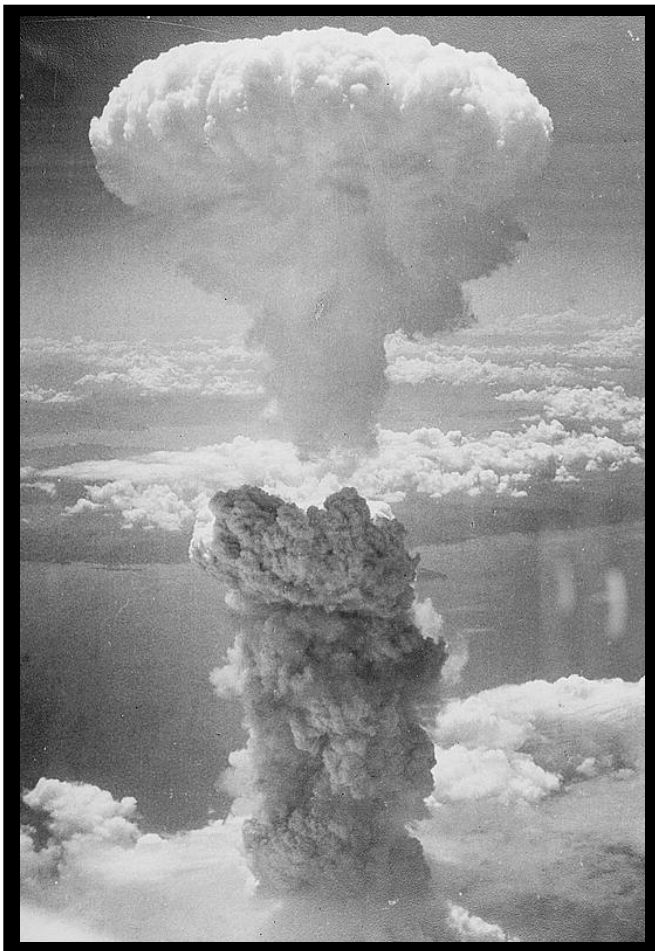
Indeed, the new ELD Standards note that, "while academic vocabulary is a critical aspect of academic English, it is only one part. The California English Language Development Standards were further informed by genre- and meaning-based theories of language, which view language as a social process and a meaning-making system and seek to understand how language choices construe meaning in oral and written texts. These theories have identified how networks of interrelated language resources—including grammatical, lexical, and discourse features—interact to form registers that vary depending upon context and situation."[2] While all students may find historical discourse challenging, text structure creates an additional challenge for those whose first language is not English.

The Cold War offers a number of opportunities for EL students to encounter abstract, often metaphorical language embedded in dense historical discourse. In general, the language surrounding foreign policy tends to describe events abstractly by personifying nations and their actions, attributing motives and emotions to them (e.g., "The US wanted to persuade its allies…"). But the introduction of nuclear weapons to the historical landscape provides additional opportunities for abstract language, with arms races, armed standoffs, weapons freezes, proxy wars, summit meetings, and détente—a term for the relaxing of tensions between the superpowers based metaphorically on releasing the tension in a bowstring.

Throughout the Cold War, US foreign policy was shaped by one key idea—a metaphor, in fact: containment. This one term implied assumptions about the nature of the Soviet Union and other communist nations, the appropriate response on the part of the US and its allies, and the forms that response might take. Thus, containment is a crucial concept for students studying the Cold War, and one that teachers should be especially careful to introduce thoughtfully to ELs.

Secretary of Defense, Robert McNamara standing at a podium in front of a map of Vietnam during a press conference, June 29, 1966. Image from Library of Congress: http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2011661229/

Six Steps for Teaching EL Students

by Dave Neumann

In our project's literacy-based Improving Teacher Quality grant, our team has worked with Long Beach teachers to design appropriate instruction for EL students. I created a six step matrix to guide teachers in this process. The matrix simplifies the much more detailed Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model developed by CSU Long Beach faculty over twenty five years ago. Most, if not all, of these elements are quite familiar to experienced history teachers. That underscores the fact that effective EL instruction is often simply good instruction. However, as a checklist for instruction, this matrix encourages teachers to intentionally build each component into their instruction, rather than doing these elements in a more intuitive, ad hoc way. While native English speakers may understand instruction even if one or more steps are missing, ELs need all components to grasp the material. The matrix identifies the following elements:

1 Background knowledge

Teachers introduce instruction by linking new concepts to students' background and experiences, connecting past instruction to new concepts, and explicitly introducing key vocabulary.

2 Clear explanation of concepts

Teachers clearly explain instructional concepts and academic tasks, providing visual/textual reinforcement of verbal explanations. Teachers need to be careful to avoid talking down to students, while also being self-reflective about use of language so they don't unnecessarily confuse students.

3 Instructional strategies

During instruction, teachers implement a variety of learning strategies, provide appropriate scaffolding for difficult concepts, and present activities that promote higher-order thinking.

4 Interaction

Recognizing that ELs are often reluctant to speak in class—but, equally, that speaking is crucial for developing language skills and understanding of content—teachers use wait time, appropriate grouping, and other strategies to require students to respond verbally to instruction.

5 Practice & application

Teachers engage students in the use of all language skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

6 Review & assessment

Near the end of the period (and larger units of instruction), teachers review key vocabulary and concepts, assess (often informally) student comprehension and learning, and provide feedback whenever possible.

Containment Lesson Based on the Six Steps

by Dave Neumann

This lesson illustrates teaching the abstract foreign policy of "containment" though a lesson that follows the six steps described on the previous page. It assumes a block period of 90 minutes. Given the lesson's important foundational concepts, teachers in a traditional classroom setting would probably be better off breaking the lesson into two separate periods and extending the recommended time, rather than trying to streamline the lesson to fit within one period.

1 *Building background* (15 minutes)—addresses Collaborative Skills 1 & 2, Interpretive Skill 5

Before introducing new content, this lesson begins by building on prior knowledge in two ways. First, teachers tap prior knowledge by reviewing US-Soviet relations at the end of World War II. A simple chart like this one might be useful for focusing students' attention.

Historical Tensions between the US & USSR	Tensions During World War II
• The Red Scare in the US • US intervention in the USSR in opposition to the Bolshevik Revolution • US refusal to recognize the USSR diplomatically until 1933	• The Hitler-Stalin Pact • American and British delay in opening a second front • Disagreements about Germany & Eastern Europe

In reality, of course, few students (EL or English-only) will be able to tap this "prior knowledge" without significant guidance from teachers, who may want to streamline this process by assigning each bullet to a different group of students and providing textbook page numbers to help them review.

2 *Clear explanation of concepts* (20 minutes)— Collaborative Skills 1 & 2, Interpretive Skills 5 & 8

At this point, teachers can introduce the foreign policy concept of containment through a short reading of George Kennan's presentation of containment to the American public in an article in *Foreign Affairs*. As the teacher guides students through a close reading of this small portion of text, students will understand the idea and its specific application to communism. As a class, they can complete a Frayer model on the concept of "containment."

Definition

What does it mean to contain communism?

Facts/Characteristics

What are some strategies a country might use to contain its opponent?

Containment of communism

Examples

What are some historic examples of containment?

Non-examples

What are some examples of relating to another country that would not be considered containment?

3 *Strategies, Interaction, and Practice* (45 minutes) — Collaborative Skills 1 & 2, Interpretive Skills 6, 7, & 8

The lesson now turns to a close reading of one portion of the Truman Doctrine speech, which provided the blueprint for US foreign policy during the Cold War. Whenever publishers or websites provide this speech for use in classrooms (whether high school or college), they always provide excerpts. Teachers may want to compare various excerpted versions before selecting one, as some excerpts more effectively capture the implications of Truman's containment policy than others. Teachers may want to reproduce the selected text in a printable handout with large margins, so students can annotate it. They may also want to define some key words for students to aid comprehension. While this document effectively established containment as the basic US foreign policy orientation for duration of the Cold War, it is important to note that neither "contain" or "containment" are found in the document itself. Thus, the close reading of the document will focus less on vocabulary than on an analysis of Truman's discourse — how he envisioned the Soviet threat in an effort to persuade Congress and the American public to adopt an active foreign policy, rather than returning to pre-war isolationism. This speech is a piece of rhetoric and should be analyzed as such. Students should learn not just what Truman says, but how he says it, why he says it, and what he is trying to accomplish through the speech.

Depending on teachers' larger unit-long goals, the following questions might guide reading and discussion:

- How many sides does Truman think there are in the world? Briefly describe each side.

- Why does Truman say we need to contain the threat from the Soviet Union? Without using the exact word, how does he say we should contain them?

- How does he use ideas associated with freedom to make his case?

- Before World War II, many Americans had been isolationists. How does Truman try to get average Americans to care enough to be involved in world affairs?

- Why does he avoid mentioning the Soviet Union or communism specifically?
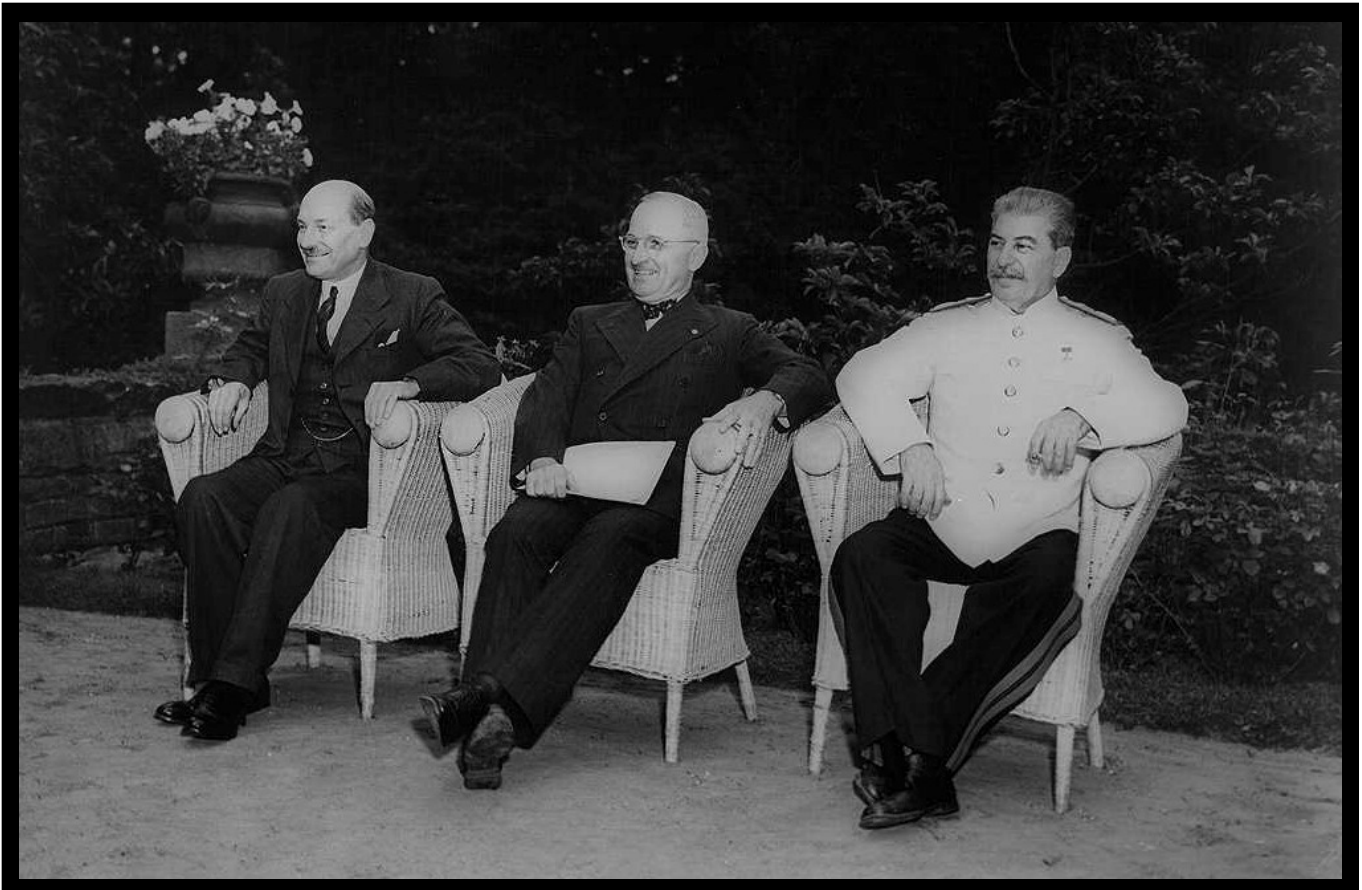
Clement Attlee, Harry Truman, and Joseph Stalin, seated outdoors at Berlin Conference.
Image from Library of Congress, http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/96522042/resource/

4 *Review and assessment* (10 minutes) — Productive Skills 10 & 11

The lesson concludes with a quick-write. Students might be asked to answer one of the following questions to demonstrate their understanding of the concept of containment:

- What picture did the Truman Doctrine create about the identities of nations? What global problems might the Truman Doctrine have faced?

- How did Truman link containment policy to freedom? How effective do you think the Truman Doctrine was in extending freedom around the world?

The homework assignment requires students to demonstrate understanding by applying the concept of containment to new content:

The US foreign policy actions listed below are described in the next three chapters.[3] Choose *one* example from each chapter and explain how it qualifies as a US effort to contain communism: Marshall Plan, Berlin airlift, formation of NATO, creation of HUAC, McCarran Act, Alger Hiss trial, Rosenbergs trial, covert actions by the CIA, the space race, the Bay of Pigs invasion, and the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Event	How does this event fit our definition of containment?	What kind of communist threat did the US see in this event?	What strategies did the US use in this event?	How effective was the US strategy?

In conclusion, this lesson supports ELs by providing a clear instructional sequence that students can easily follow. At each stage, written support—in the form of charts, written questions, texts, etc.—reinforces verbal instruction and discussion. For the crucial discussion of "containment" itself, the lesson uses visual support to uncover the conceptual implications of this foreign policy metaphor.

Like the Common Core State Standards, EL instruction can seem mystifying, and sometimes intimidating. On closer inspection, however, experienced teachers often recognize that it is simply effective history instruction in another guise. It is important, however, for those who teach ELs to routinely think about how these students might be experiencing our instruction. What pitfalls lurk in complex, abstract language? How can we facilitate understanding of these concepts while maintaining a high level of rigor? How can we use prior knowledge, carefully selected texts, and appropriate scaffolds to assist in this task?

Clearly, the kind of lesson described here requires a significant investment in instructional time for relatively little course content. However, because containment is such a crucial concept, this investment will pay dividends throughout the rest of the semester, whenever students learn about US foreign policy. Teachers should think about where to make these strategic investments to give all their students—ELs and English-only students alike—the best chance to wrestle with rich, challenging history texts.

Dave Neumann is Site Director of The History Project at CSU Long Beach, and a former high school teacher.

Notes
[1] Appendix C: Theoretical Foundations and Research Base for California's English Language Development Standards, 7. http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/eldstandards.asp
[2] Ibid., 6.
[3] From the textbook, *The Americans: Reconstruction to the 21st Century*, McDougall Littel.

Language Development within Subject Areas

Dr. Cadiero-Kaplan on the new English Language Development Standards

Nearly one quarter of students in California's public schools are English learners, while nearly forty percent of students speak a language other than English at home. The state gathers data on fifty-nine language groups spoken in California schools, though more than ninety percent of students speak one of the top ten languages: Spanish (82.7%), Vietnamese (2.7%), and the remainder consist of less than 2% each: Cantonese, Filipino/Tagalog, Hmong, Mandarin, Korean, Arabic, Punjabi, Russian. With such diversity, it is imperative that California schools provide high quality instruction to English learners.

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS), adopted in 2010, hold English learners to the same high expectations of college and career readiness. In order to work within the framework of the CCSS, the original 1999 English Language Development (ELD) standards were revised and adopted in 2012. The new ELD standards are intended to support English learners' access to all subject content, while providing concise and clear standards for English language development. According to the California Department of Education, the new ELD standards "are designed to amplify the language knowledge, skills and abilities of those Common Core State Standards that are critical in order for ELs to simultaneously be successful in school while they are developing English."

Leading this transition is Dr. Karen Cadiero-Kaplan, a professor of education from San Diego State University who currently serves as the Director of the English Learner Support Division for the California Department of Education. Prior to working for the California Department of Education, Cadiero-Kaplan taught in the community college and K-12 classrooms. Her background is in Special Education, English Language Development, and she holds a doctorate in Education: Curriculum & Development for Multicultural Education & Critical Pedagogy. Cadiero-Kaplan has worked extensively with students, teachers, administrators, and state education officials. The CHSSP recently sat down with Dr. Cadiero-Kaplan to discuss the new ELD Standards; the following page includes an excerpt from that discussion.

Editor's Note: At its November 2013 meeting, the Instructional Quality Commission approved the release of the draft ELA/ELD Framework for public review. California's State Board of Education is scheduled to adopt the new framework by the fall of 2014.

CHSSP: How are the new ELD Standards different?

Cadiero-Kaplan: *[They] focus on **communication**, as this is integral to what a student experiences in a school day. The new standards focus on what kind of language forms and functions students need to engage in the different types of texts they will encounter - expository, narrative, and dialogue text – for each one has different language features. Second, The former ELD proficiency level descriptors did not consider the linguistic and cognitive resources the English learners brought to their learning of English. The new standards consider both the language and the cognitive knowledge students bring. For example, a child or adolescent who has Spanish literacy will have knowledge of the Roman alphabet and may also have knowledge of specific subject matter content. Meanwhile, a student who has literacy in Arabic may have the same content knowledge as the Spanish speaker, but the linguistic resources will not transfer as readily (e.g., character alphabet and reading from right to left).*

*The alignment of the CCSS and ELD standards allows for **the linkage between language and content**. Before, language was over here, and content over there – as separate domains. But the new standards emphasize that language development occurs within subject areas, throughout the school day, and encourages the use of content-rich texts to develop literacy.*

*In the past, English Learner assessments drove instruction. **The CCSS and new ELD instructional standards will now drive the assessments**, and the curriculum is being developed to meet the standards; EL summative assessment standards will now be developed based on these new ELD standards. It's now possible to structure formative assessments to lead to summative. In the past, the summative assessment was the most important. Now it's possible to consider how all these standards lend themselves to formative assessment, at the state level as well. To me, that is exciting.*

CHSSP: What do the new standards mean for teachers?

Cadiero-Kaplan: *The 1999 standards were developed **before SDAIE and sheltered instruction were common practices**. Since then, research and fieldwork has improved how teachers meet the needs of English learners. Educators have developed a big tool kit over the years, but not a clear strategy to employ these tools. The new standards ask teachers to consider how to use these different tools depending on the text type, and based on the student's proficiency level.*

*I would say to teachers, you already have the tools and strategies necessary to teach English learner students, and now it's about reconfiguring to support the continuum of language development and **the spiraling of language development**. Instead of a linear process of step-by-step mastery, spiral language development introduces concepts and material multiple times to reinforce learning. As we implement these strategies, we can begin to release the scaffolds.*

*Teachers need to consider **context**, both historical and relational – for example, to connect their students to a distant event like the American Revolution. Newly-arrived students will need additional support to connect with the American Revolution, from which they are removed in both space and time. In some of my classrooms, students who had left their countries as refugees had a personal connection to revolution. Thus, here is a richness that these students can bring to conversations, based on their knowledge base and lived experience.*

*The new standards are about looking for the connections among/between different subjects. Teachers across subjects can engage in collaborative discussion, so that the ELD teacher who knows which texts the students will be exposed to in Social Studies can think about how to work with these **complex texts** and relate them to their students' lives and literacy backgrounds.*

*One of the concepts in the ELD standards is **discourse**, teaching register in conversation. If students are expected to engage in complex texts, then teachers need to grapple with these texts too. The standards are designed to move students toward productive and receptive modes of communication in complex and critical ways.*

CHSSP: Looking Forward?

Cadiero-Kaplan: *California has high academic standards; I think our biggest challenge is how to engage English learner students **in high rigor, critical thinking** as they are acquiring English. We need to focus on ensuring the same academic access and rigor for English learner students as for all students.*

*Meanwhile, we are coming to a greater recognition of the other languages and cultures we are working with: society is increasingly **valuing bi-literacy and world languages**. So how do we start to validate the language and cultural backgrounds our English learner students come with, and how do we use those skills as a knowledge resource?*

English Learners

An EL is a K-12 student who, based on objective assessment, has not developed listening, speaking, reading, and writing proficiencies in English sufficient for participation in the regular school program.

-California Department of Education

"In most classrooms, teachers do the talking and students do the listening...Language is kind of like a spiral; even if you're proficient in a language the more you use it and the more you use it to articulate complex subject matter, the deeper your understanding is going to get of that subject matter."

-Kenji Hakuta, Education Professor, Stanford University
Stanford Report, September 2011

"A focus on academic language reveals that every teacher is a language teacher. As children progress through the years of schooling, at each new level and in each new subject area they encounter expectations for how language should be used to accomplish the activities they engage in. Every subject is taught and learned through language"

-Mary Schleppegrell, Education Professor, University of Michigan
The Elementary School Journal, March 2012

"If these students (ELs) are not proficient in English they are going to fall behind in every subject - not just reading but social studies and science, and that will lead to a lot of frustrations. More importantly, it will lead to dropouts and all sorts of problems that we know we can help avoid."

-Tom Torlakson,
Superintendent of Public Instruction

"Imagine the potential of that diversity in today's and tomorrow's global economy. If we educate these students well, our state would not only be able to compete more effectively, but it would be able to lead our nation and the world economically."

-Jack O'Connell,
Former Superintendent of Public Instruction

By the Numbers

1,346,333

Current total, California EL students

28.9%

% of students in EL programs in California public schools*

37%

California's percentage of U.S. ELs*

$159.6 million

California's current funding for English Language Acquisition through Title III

$732 million

Dedicated funding for English Learner Education in the President's proposed 2014 budget

9.8%

% of students in EL programs in U.S. public schools*

91

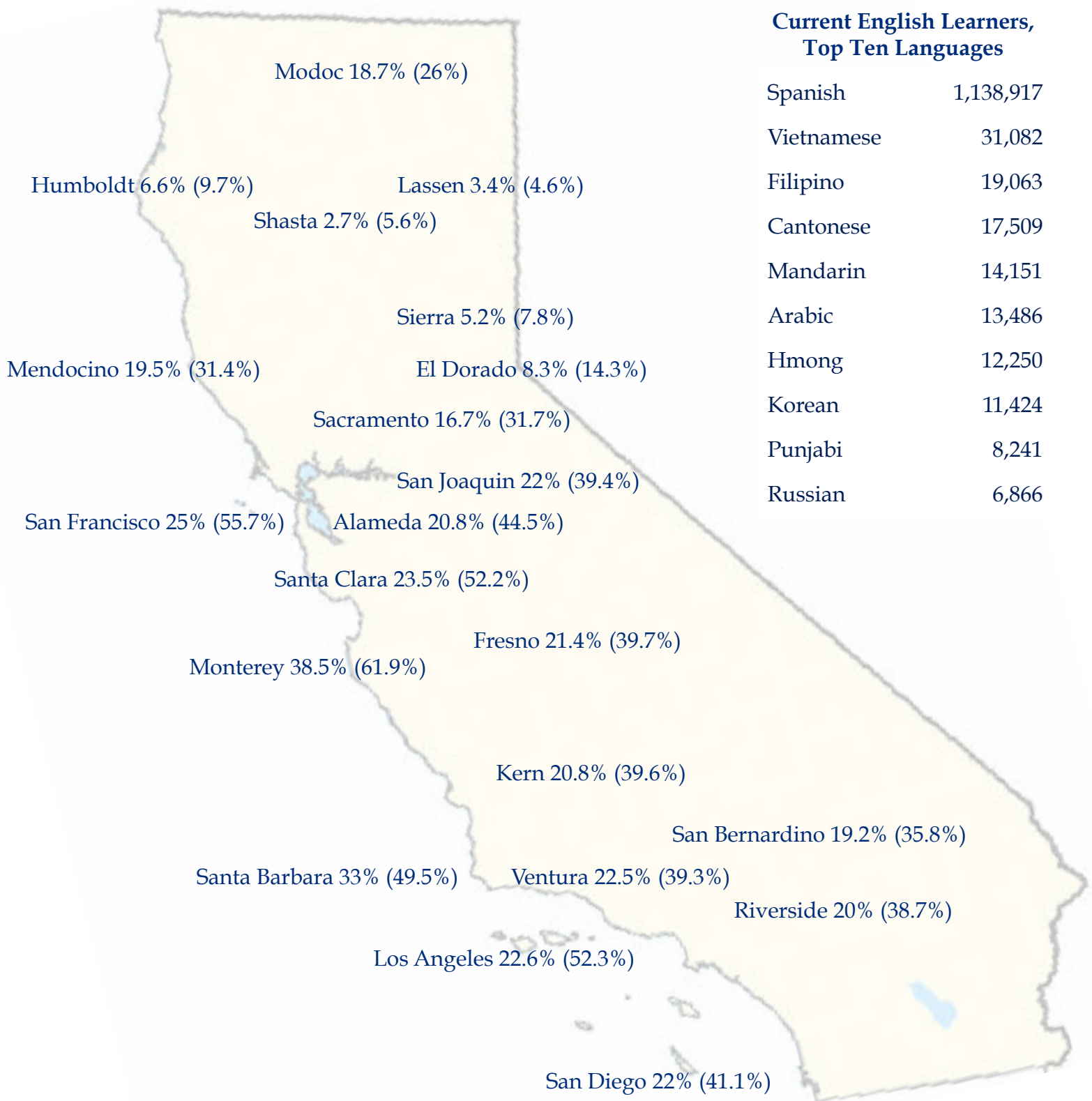Number of pages in California's 2012 English Language Development Standards

44

Achievement point gap in 8th-grade reading between EL and English proficient peers*

*based on 2010-2011 data

California's English Learners

Percentages of English Learners in public schools, and (EL + EL students re-classified as Fluent English Proficient (FEP))

Current English Learners, Top Ten Languages

Language	Count
Spanish	1,138,917
Vietnamese	31,082
Filipino	19,063
Cantonese	17,509
Mandarin	14,151
Arabic	13,486
Hmong	12,250
Korean	11,424
Punjabi	8,241
Russian	6,866

Modoc 18.7% (26%)

Humboldt 6.6% (9.7%)

Lassen 3.4% (4.6%)

Shasta 2.7% (5.6%)

Sierra 5.2% (7.8%)

Mendocino 19.5% (31.4%)

El Dorado 8.3% (14.3%)

Sacramento 16.7% (31.7%)

San Joaquin 22% (39.4%)

San Francisco 25% (55.7%)

Alameda 20.8% (44.5%)

Santa Clara 23.5% (52.2%)

Fresno 21.4% (39.7%)

Monterey 38.5% (61.9%)

Kern 20.8% (39.6%)

San Bernardino 19.2% (35.8%)

Santa Barbara 33% (49.5%)

Ventura 22.5% (39.3%)

Riverside 20% (38.7%)

Los Angeles 22.6% (52.3%)

San Diego 22% (41.1%)

California has the most diverse student population in the world, with more than 100 language spoken in the homes of those students

The Importance of High Standards

by Letty Kraus

This Fall, I caught up with Debra Schneider, a long-time History Project Teacher Leader as well as a teacher consultant for the Great Valley Writing Project to get her take on California's newly adopted English Language Development (ELD) standards. Schneider, who began teaching in 1988, recently left her Merrill F. West High School classroom to serve as Director of Instructional Media Services and Curriculum at Tracy Unified School District. She has a long history working with English learners (ELs) in her eleventh grade history classes and earned a PhD in Education from UC Berkeley in 2002.

Both in her own classroom, and now in classes throughout her District, Schneider maintains high standards for her EL students. Her recent work with UC Davis History Project this summer demonstrated classroom-tested techniques – aligned with the new standards – for close reading of primary source documents, and for helping students connect to prior knowledge, build schema, and practice academic writing. She modeled the power of four simple questions to guide student reading and discussion. Those questions - "What repeats? What contrasts? What symbols do you see? What is strange, unusual, or out of place?" - paired with carefully chosen source excerpts such as one from W.E.B. Du Bois's *The Souls of Black Folk*, elicit rich academic discussion among students. She shared her process for using "silent conversations" in which stu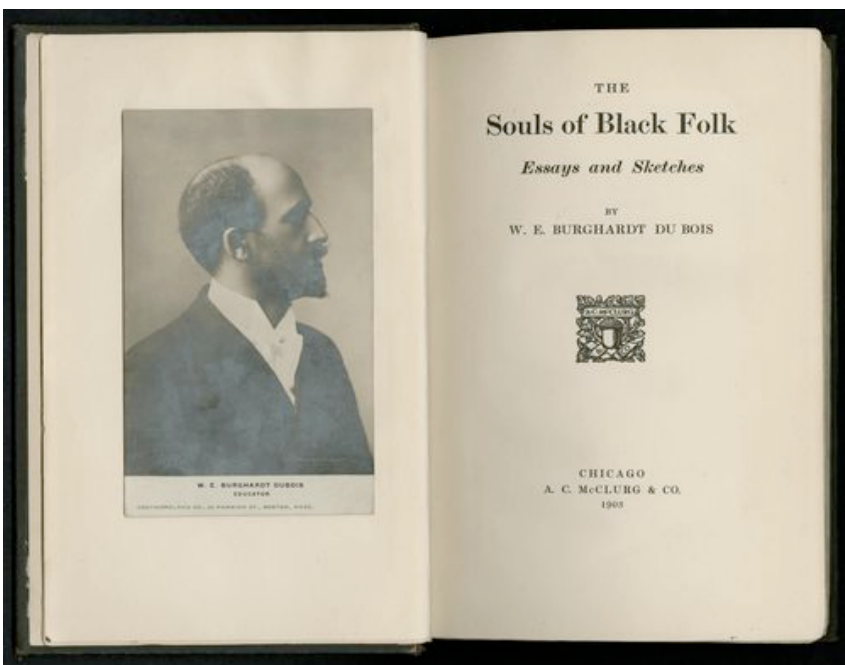dents exchange written responses to what they read to develop reasoning and analysis skills around specific primary and secondary source selection. By providing opportunities for students to do authentic history work, Schneider ensures that students benefit from rich opportunities to work with content while developing literacy.

Do I have both a content AND a language objective for this lesson?

By engaging in activities like these, Schneider's EL students had the opportunity to do much of what the new ELD standards outline—exchange ideas and information in oral discussion; collaborate on the meaning of sources, express ideas and justify opinions in writing; read text closely; and justify arguments. Debra noted that the new standards ask students to work with content to produce language through talking and writing. Interacting in the collaborative, interpretative, and productive modes called for by the ELD standards aligns with the investigative, thoughtful work done in a history classroom.

I asked Schneider whether she has any advice regarding these new standards. She noted that every teacher is a teacher of English Learners. When planning, she suggests teachers ask themselves: Do I have both a content AND a language objective for this lesson?

In sum, Schneider reports there is much to like in the new ELD standards because they align with the expectation that we provide "intellectually appealing and challenging work" for ELs. She passionately believes that "What we are doing that is intellectually challenging should be done with ALL kids" and the ELD framework supports that.

Letty Kraus is Director of Professional Development Programs at The History Project at UC Davis. Image: Debra Schneider.

THE
Souls of Black Folk
Essays and Sketches

BY

W. E. BURGHARDT DU BOIS

CHICAGO
A. C. McCLURG & CO.
1903

W.E.B. Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk, 1903.

Muslim-Christian Relations in the Medieval World: A History Blueprint Lesson

by Shennan Hutton, Program Coordinator, CHSSP

The new English Language Development (ELD) standards prioritize students' academic literacy in the discipline. They require teachers to use "complex and intellectually challenging texts" in instruction. These standards are explicitly aimed at content instruction (in our case, history-social science classes) and not only at special ELD classes. Since these ELD standards align with the Common Core standards, teachers do not have to create special opportunities for their English Learners to read complicated texts; instead the challenge is to give English Learners the necessary support and scaffolding for them to understand the same complex texts that the teacher assigns to his or her other students.

There are a number of strategies that teachers can use to support English Learners. The teacher can excerpt the text and differentiate instruction by giving English Learners shorter passages. Posing a historical investigation question to provide students with a purpose for reading and then alternating between independent reading and collaborative discussion in groups allow both the opportunity to think analytically and the direct guidance needed to support that thinking. Defining difficult but noncritical vocabulary, either in the text itself or in a separate box, helps students understand the passage. Sentence deconstruction charts help unpack dense passages by slowing the students down and showing them how the words fit together to make meaning. Reference device identifiers straighten out misconceptions and help them follow a passage. Text dependent questions make them return to the text to collect evidence.

The document and activities featured below are part of the *History Blueprint Sites of Encounter in the Medieval World* unit. The activities come from the Sicily lesson, which introduces students to trade, war, and multicultural exchange in the medieval world. The site of encounter is Norman Sicily in the 12th and 13th centuries. The historical investigation question is: How did the Normans gain power, wealth and knowledge in Sicily? An important trade center in the Mediterranean Sea, Sicily had been ruled by the Zirid Muslim dynasty and was taken over by a Norman Christian dynasty in the late 11th century. The early Norman kings adopted a rather tolerant policy towards Sicily's population of Muslims, Jews, Greek Christians and Latin Christians. As a result, Sicily became one of places in which trade flourished and learning was transmitted from the Muslim to the Christian world. One of the primary sources about Norman Sicily is the travel account of an Andalusi Muslim, Ibn Jubayr.

As they read Ibn Jubayr's "Comments on Sicily," I want students to understand the writer's perspective and his use of loaded words and religious allusions. I want them to see that Ibn Jubayr had a complex, contradictory view of the Norman Christians in Sicily. Finally, I want them to grasp that because Ibn Jubayr was no fan of the Normans, his comments about Roger II's policies give historians very strong evidence of that king's multiculturalism.

Above: Tabula Rogeriana, drawn by Muhammad al-Idrsi for Roger II of Sicily in 1154. Note the orientation, South at the top.
Below: The same map of the Mediterranean, but with North at the top.

Ibn Jubayr, "Comments on Sicily," 1184 (Ibn Jubayr was a Muslim from al-Andalus. After he returned from a pilgrimage to Mecca, he wrote a book about his travels. One of the places he visited along the way was Sicily).

[Sicily] is populated by the worshippers of crosses . . . Muslims are among them as well, on their holdings and estates, and are treated well in their employment and work, but they [the Normans] impose a tax on them [the Muslim Sicilians] which they pay twice a year. They [the Normans] have come between them [the Muslim Sicilians] and the wealth of the land they used to have. May great and almighty God improve their condition . . .

Recollection of the city of Messina on the island of Sicily (may God almighty return it!): this city is inundated with infidel merchants, and [it is] a destination for ships from all quarters [parts of the world] with many parties [of merchants] there for its low prices. No Muslim has settled there; it is grim with godlessness and crammed with slaves of crosses choking its inhabitants and almost squeezing the life out of them. It is full of smells and squalor, a cold place in which the stranger will find no friendly atmosphere. . .

Messina's markets do a brisk and lively trade with an extensive range of goods to support a life of plenty. Your day and night pass by in safety even if your face, presence and tongue [language] are unfamiliar.

The character of . . . their king [Roger II] is surprising, for his decent conduct, [and] his employment of Muslims . . . . He puts a lot of trust in the Muslims, relying on them in his affairs. . . Through them radiates the splendor of his kingdom because they abound with [they have lots of] magnificent clothes and swift horses, and each has his own retinue of slaves and attendants.

Citation: Ibn Jubayr, "The Travels of Ibn Jubayr, 1184," translated by Alex Metcalfe, in Medieval Italy: Texts in Translation, eds. Katherine L. Jansen, Joanna Drell, and Frances Andrews (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press), 234-5. Image: Satellite Map of Siciliy, Tunisia, and Southern Italy, Nasa Earth Observatory, cropped by DrFO Jr. Tn, 2004, Wikipedia Commons: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Tunisia_-_Sicily_-_South_Italy.jpg. Preceding page image: Weltkarte des Idrisi vom Jahr 1154 n. Ch., Charta Rogeriana / wiederhergestellt und herausgegeben von Konrad Miller, Image from the Library of Congress: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.gmd/g3200.ct001903

An ELD-Aligned Lesson from the History Blueprint

Activity 1: Identifying Reference Devices

Instructions: In this paragraph, Ibn Jubayr used many referrers. Write whom he meant by each referrer in the space after it. The first one is done for you. Then answer the questions.

> "[Sicily] is populated by the worshippers of crosses (*Christians*) . . . Muslims are among them (_____) as well, on their (_____) holdings and estates, and a r e t r e a t e d w e l l i n t h e i r (_____) e m p l o y m e n t a n d work, . . ."

Who owned the land (holdings and estates) and employed the others?

How did the landowners treat the Muslims?

> ". . . but they [the Latin Christian Normans] impose a tax on them [the Muslim Sicilians] which they (_____) pay twice a year. They [the Normans] have come between them [the Muslim Sicilians] and t h e w e a l t h of the land they (_____) used to have. May great and almighty God improve their (_____) condition . . ."

What did Ibn Jubayr blame the Normans for?

In his prayer "May great and almighty God improve their condition," what do you think Ibn Jubayr wanted to happen in Sicily?

Map of the world created by traveller and writer, al-Idrisi in 1154 for Roger II, King of Sicily, Bodleian Library, MS Pococke 375, used by permission of the Bodleian Library, University of Oxford, http://www.mhs.ox.ac.uk/scienceislam/trade.php

Coronation Mantle, Palermo Royal Workshop, 1133/34, photograph taken by Gryffindor and stitched by Marku1988 with Autostitch, 2007. Wikipedia Commons, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Weltliche_Schatzkammer_Wienc.jpg.

Activity 2: Sentence Deconstruction

For the next two paragraphs, fill in the middle column and the blanks in the chart below. Then answer the questions in the last column.

Connectors	Subject	Verb and Verb Phrases	What? How?	Questions
Recollection of the city of Messina on the island of Sicily (may God almighty return it!):	This city (*Messina*)	*is inundated*	with infidel (*Christian*) merchants	What evidence does Ibn Jubayr give about Messina?
and	it (*Messina*)	*is*	a destination for ships from all quarters [parts of the world] with many parties [of merchants] there for its (*Messina's*) low prices.	*Messina is filled with foreign merchants and ships from all over the world. Its prices are low.*
	No Muslim	*has settled*	here (*in Messina*);	Godlessness is a compound of 3 word parts: god + less + ness. The "ness" means "the state of having…" What do you think the "less" and "god" parts mean when they are combined together?
	It (*Messina*)	*is*	grim with godlessness	
and	(Messina)	*crammed*	with slaves of crosses (*Christians*)	*The state of having less (or no) god (of not being religious, Muslim)*
	(the Christians)	*choking*	its inhabitants (*people who live in Messina, especially Muslims*)	What do the words "choking" and "squeezing" mean?
and almost	(*the Christians*)	*squeezing*	the life out of them (*Muslims in Sicily*).	*Grabbing them by the throat and strangling them* What effect did Ibn Jubayr create by using these words? *That the Christians are violent and cruel*
	It (*Messina*)	*is*	full of smells and squalor, a cold place	What were the bad features of Messina, according to Ibn Jubayr?
in which	the stranger	*will find*	no friendly atmosphere. . .	*It is smelly, dirty and cold, and the people are not friendly to strangers.*

Questions:

- *From this paragraph, what is Ibn Jubayr's perspective about the Christians in Sicily?*

- *Loaded words are words and phrases that make readers react emotionally. Loaded words create connections, or "pictures" in readers' minds. An example of positive loaded words is "soft as a bunny." An example of negative loaded words is "You stink!" Authors use loaded words as propaganda, to sway their readers emotionally. List all the loaded words from the paragraph.*

- *What impression of Sicily and the Christians do these words give to the reader?*

Activity 3: Text Dependent Questions

Read the last two paragraphs of Ibn Jubayr's account:

> "Messina's markets do a brisk and lively trade with an extensive range of goods to support a life of plenty. Your day and night pass by in safety even if your face, presence and tongue [language] are unfamiliar."

When he used the word "you," whom do you think Ibn Jubayr meant? (Remember that he wrote in Arabic.)

What impression of Sicily and the Christians do these words (in the short paragraph) give to the reader?

> "The character of . . . their king [Roger II] is surprising, for his decent conduct, [and] his employment of Muslims . . . He puts a lot of trust in the Muslims, relying on them in his affairs. . . . Through them radiates the splendor of his kingdom because they abound with [they have lots of] magnificent clothes and swift horses, and each has his own retinue of slaves and attendants."

What words does Ibn Jubayr use to describe the Muslims who work for King Roger II of Sicily?

Now let's consider the entire text of Ibn Jubayr's comments on Sicily. Answer the following questions to identify Ibn Jubayr's perspective.

Where was his home?   What was his religion?   Was he male or female?   When did he write?   What was his class?

Look at your Sicily timeline. What other events were happening in Sicily around the time that Ibn Jubayr visited the island?

How did all these factors affect Ibn Jubayr's perspective?

One of the most interesting things about Ibn Jubayr's account is that he wrote both negative and positive things about the Kingdom of Sicily and the Norman Latin Christians. On the chart, write down at least 3 examples of each.

Positive Statements about Sicily & Christians	Negative Statements about Sicily & Christians
•	•
•	•
•	•

Ibn Jubayr's writing about Sicily is one of the few sources historians have from the 12th century. How reliable is his account? (How much should historians believe what he wrote?)

EL Innovation:
The Teacher Research
Group

With the introduction of new ELD Standards, which call for the centering of planning and instruction for English learners, UC Berkeley History Social Science Project (UCBHSSP) Director Rachel B. Reinhard sat down with UCBHSSP's Director of Teacher Development, Phyllis Goldsmith, to discuss the UCBHSSP Teacher Research Group and how it has shaped how UCBHSSP thinks about teaching English learners.

Beginning its 13th year, the Teacher Research Group is composed of approximately 20 Bay Area teachers who meet monthly on the UC Berkeley campus to collaboratively create and innovate on literacy strategies they can bring back to their classrooms and that UCBHSSP can share with its network of teachers. While the TRG was initially convened in order to develop literacy strategies for English learners, participants soon realized that these strategies could benefit all learners.

Phyllis Goldsmith, who directs the Teacher Research Group, earned her teaching credential in 1988 after working as a research scientist at UC Berkeley. Before entering her credentialing program she thought she would be a science teacher, but she quickly became enamored with writing across the curriculum and language development. She worked as a bilingual elementary school teacher for six years in Oakland Unified before teaching a sheltered class for 4th and 5th graders in the district. In 2003, she joined UCBHSSP full time to lead its academic literacy work.

UCB: Why did you start the Teacher Research Group?

PG: In 2001, I had been leading institutes for K-2 teachers on integrating ELA and social studies, when the California Subject Matter Projects, of which UCBHSSP is a member site, were offered funding to develop an approach for working with second language learners in order to increase their access to rigorous content. I was a full time elementary school teacher in Oakland, and Donna Leary [former Director of UCBHSSP] asked me to lead a group of teachers in a focused program of research: reading academic articles, testing strategies, and returning with new ideas. We had eight teachers in the initial cohort. It was an opportunity to bring together several smart and inquisitive minds and really experiment, apply research, read the research, try it out, bring back the student work, and have someone else try it. So it became a think tank and a place where people could really innovate. We combined what linguists and scholars said and came up with an approach, which led to our first academic literacy institute in the summer of 2002.

Image: Teacher Research Group end of year dinner, 2012.
Phyllis Goldsmith seated on stool.

UCB: Why were you interested in literacy and English learners?

PG: I had been a bilingual teacher and understood what the difficulties could be for these really smart kids who didn't have the levels of language proficiency to allow them to engage in academic discourse in the history classroom.

UCB: How has the TRG changed?

PG: For many years I determined the research focus, but now the teachers develop that focus. So, it is more organic in terms of how they choose problems to focus on and how they work collaboratively on a particular problem. Also, teachers now work in grade level groups – elementary, middle, and high school. And, as a result, the developmental focus is much more specific.

English learners are still at the center, but it shifted to encompass instruction for all learners when we realized that the textbook and the discipline itself were a foreign language for many students. Although we initially looked at English learners as our focused population, there were some universal take-aways about sharing discipline-specific literacy with all students. We realized that this was not a unique issue for second language students but a challenge for many of the students we teach.

UCB: How would you describe the impact of the TRG?

PG: From the beginning, it was exciting to flip our concept of what it means to be a teacher, from the deliverer of declarative knowledge to testing and reflecting on our practice on students. For me personally, as soon as I started seeing my students and my classroom as a place to test out new strategies, my ideas about being a teacher really changed. And, it became much more fun.

Teacher Research Group access discussion.

UCB: What has the TRG meant for how UCBHSSP thinks about working with teachers of English learners?

PG: With teaching English learners, I think there are a couple of things teachers always have to keep in mind: 1) Looking from a deficit perspective – only focusing on problems facing student learning -- is not helpful to your instruction or to the students; 2) the kinds of support that the kids need should not be removed too quickly; and 3) even our most struggling students, regardless of English fluency, can be critical thinkers -- Given adequate support and time with materials, even some of our most emerging English speakers can engage in very rigorous and complex thinking.

UCB: What has been a highlight of the TRG?

PG: The real highlight has been the strategies teachers collaboratively develop and improve over time. It has been a tremendous kick to see the excitement in the group when a teacher innovates upon a colleague's strategy and brings back even better student work.

It is inspiring to be a part of a group of teachers who are excited about other people's ideas, willing to revise and refine them, own them, make them apply to their particular student population and the content they teach.

UCB: What do you wish everyone knew about the TRG?

PG: It has a very simple premise: All teachers can engage in this type of in-depth collaboration if given the time, space, and support to explore their own practice.

Below is a brief interview with Teacher Research Group participant Beth Levine. Levine taught for six years at Verde Elementary and is in her ninth year at Montalvin Manor Elementary where she teaches fourth grade. This year she was awarded the West Contra Costa Teacher of the Year Award.

UCB: How has your work with the TRG influenced how you plan instruction for English learners?

BL: TRG has provided me with a foundation for understanding how to rigorously teach content while supporting language development for English language learners. The writing frames also support my students in developing as writers. The "Tickler" technique [a strategy developed by a former TRG participant to identify main ideas in texts] has been a significant strategy to guide my students in identifying the main idea of a paragraph. I use all of these strategies routinely in order to support my students to access written material.

Last year, I also worked extensively on "Socractic Seminar"/Roundtable Discussion, focusing on reviewing a primary source. I would never have attempted this strategy without repeated training and discussion at the TRG. I found the Roundtable Discussion to be a very effective tool to support my students who are English learners, in particular, in speaking and listening skills to critically understand content.

UCB: How else has the TRG affected your instruction?

BL: Beyond the literacy strategies, there are other elements of the TRG which I find very supportive. Seeing other teachers, particularly through video, has been very helpful. I rarely get "inside" other classrooms, so the sharing of videos and "real-live" implementation is great.

In addition, regularly reviewing student work and discussing it with colleagues is excellent support. Time for reflection and critical review of lessons is rare, so I appreciate the opportunity to come together with others to do this.

As an elementary school teacher, it has also been very illuminating to be in a group with cross grade levels to hear the challenges and expectations of secondary teachers. Cross grade level collaboration has informed my thinking about the importance of teaching foundational comprehension, writing, speaking, and listening skills.

Phyllis Goldsmith opens the new year of the Teacher Research Group, 2013. Beth Levine seated at far left.

Sample TRG Participant Log

Editor's note: The following is based on Levine's compare and contrast lesson developed as a member of the UC Berkeley Teacher Research Group in 2012-2013.

Literacy strategy implemented or used as basis of innovation:

I used **"Keep it or Junk it"** to have students define useful and not useful terms from the collection of key words in their social studies text about the Yokut Tribes. I also used the compare and contrast reading strategy organizer to contrast the information from two different tribes. In addition, I used a strategy called **"dictogloss"** in which I read a model compare and contrast paragraph and the students wrote key words as I was reading.

What worked?

- The completion of the compare/contrast graphic organizer allowed them to successfully understand the differences between the two tribes.
- The use of "Keep it or Junk it" strategy provided an opportunity for a productive discussion on how the two native American tribes depended on their natural resources. The students were able to practice discussing the content in a meaningful way.
- The dictogloss strategy was quite useful as a listening strategy and encouraging them to hear the words in the paragraph. Most students were able to write a strong list of key words from my reading.
- The sentence frames were useful to help guide the students to writing coherent sentences.

What didn't work?

- I don't think having the text read as homework was particularly effective. Or, if I was to use it as a homework assignment I should have also read it with them the next day.
- Some students did not understand that they were to replicate my paragraph as much as possible. I reworked the paragraphs with one of the groups.

Questions:

Will the dictogloss technique translate into the students being able to independently write a compare/contrast paragraph?

Ideas for revision:

I will teach topic sentence independently before the completion of the whole paragraph by giving them choices for the topic sentence of the paragraph.

More reading and discussion in class of key words and content.

Language as a Way of Knowing and Learning

by Adrienne Karyadi

What would *your* first and foremost concern be if you were a student in a classroom where instruction was in a completely foreign tongue? No matter how much you know about history—and perhaps *because of* how much you know about history—the switch in language would create numerous problems for you. Even the most advanced English learners are anxious about fitting in, worried about being able to express themselves, and frustrated at their inability to contribute or understand. A skilled history teacher plays a vital role in helping with that transition.

The good news for social studies teachers used to working with English learners is that the English Language Arts Common Core State Standards (CCSS) look a lot like the four domains tested by the California English Language Development Test (CELDT): listening, speaking, reading and writing. In other words, now ALL your students are being evaluated for whether they are developing content-based and academically appropriate language, not just the English learners. But you might be surprised to learn that there are new English Language Development Common Core State Standards (ELD CCSS) as well as the English Language Arts standards. It makes sense because English instruction is not simply about "good teaching;" it's about thoughtful and targeted teaching that facilitates fluency in English. But will these new standards require different ways of teaching as well?

The new ELD CCSS emphasizes that language is not only a subject to be learned but is a way of knowing and learning in and of itself. This view incorporates elements of the Natural Language Approach, which many of us learned as we sought our Crosscultural, Language, and Academic Development (CLAD) - or equivalent - credentials. But newer research has added to the picture we have of how students, especially in secondary school, acquire language and improve fluency in content area classrooms. This means that while the ELD Common Core looks familiar to the ELA Common Core, the goals—and perhaps the implementation by your district—might look very different (a bit more like a total immersion program than a gradual transition to mainstream classrooms).[1]

Think back to your CLAD training. Two key components of the Natural Language Approach called for teachers to lower the affective filter of new English Language Leaners (ELLs) and to provide them with comprehensible input (you might remember this as "i+1"). The ELD CCSS asks teachers to go a bit further. Anticipate what literacy skill is being worked on in class during a debate - is it critical thinking? expressing a viewpoint while addressing a counter-argument? agreeing or disagreeing using appropriate language? Now think of a way to model this limited literacy skill for English learners; pair a student up with a peer to rehearse this skill; check for understanding before the debate; and, once the debate is underway, *ignore the fluency issues which are not a part of the goal you decided on at the outset*—because those fluency issues were not a key part of the literacy you were planning to assess.

You might therefore find yourself letting some content errors, which you formerly would not let slide, go unchecked. It might mean that you evaluate English-only students on two literacy issues and an English learner on one. It might mean that your goal for most of the class is to show mastery of three ELA Common Core standards and two California History/Social Studies standards, but your goal for ELL students is adjusted to reflect their fluency level. Whatever your adjustment is, however, it needs to be rigorous for the ELL in your classroom and targeted to meet his or her language learning needs.

In order to implement the new ELD CCSS, teachers will have to find ways to encourage ELLs to participate with peers in meaningful conversations as required by the Common Core Speaking and Listening Standard #1. Fortunately, history classes are well suited to this task. By using background knowledge about the world and how it works, teachers can incorporate a student's cultural heritage into classroom instruction by bringing up current events which relate back to students' life experiences as well as the unit being studied. Of course, teachers can also facilitate introductions to peers in order to make small

group interaction more comfortable, and can ask ELL students to be in charge of interactive tasks in the classroom that encourage social interaction. I think the most powerful motivator for student success, however, will be if teachers discover what their ELLs are interested in and good at and find ways to build on those strengths. Again, this is more than "just good teaching;" it is a professional skill that requires, more than anything else, an awareness of each student's needs and the potential pitfalls students face on the tasks teachers present in class.

In closing, I want to share with you a story from my own history class at Santa Monica High School. Eight ELLs who would formerly have been in a Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) world history class are instead mainstreamed into a college-prep world history class. Their fluency varies wildly from a student who scored early intermediate (EI) on last year's CELDT to the student who was just a bit shy of being redesignated as "fluent"; and they are mixed in with English-only students whose ability levels and interest in history also vary wildly. We began the year as many of you did: discussing what happened in the world this summer. By asking open-ended questions such as, "Have there been other parts of the world experiencing unrest besides Egypt?" or, "Where else in the world is religion in the news, besides in Brazil with Pope Francis I?", students are able to share any part of their background knowledge they want. For those who refuse to share, a quiet word at the end of class about what I plan to discuss tomorrow and a suggestion about where to find an article in their primary language helps them relax. After two days of this, I call on those students when I see they've brought in print-outs of a story from Syria. Even if their halting read of the headline from that story leaves the class leaning forward, and louder students asking, "WHAT did she say? I couldn't hear her!", I will praise the student and ask others to elaborate on what they've heard about chemical weapons in Damascus. Perhaps a peer trying to pick up pointers will lean over and whisper, "Can I see that?" while pointing to the ELL student's article.

What was my instructional goal? To make current events, and knowledge about them, the norm in class is an obvious goal, as well as the use of textual evidence for analysis (a Common Core Reading Standard for

Literacy in History-Social Studies). Is it necessary for the student to read these events in English to share them in class? No, but they must speak in English to get points. Beyond the obvious goal, however, I have lowered the affective filter for the very low-level ELL, made it obvious to the high-level ELL that their life experiences can be extremely valuable to their peers, and set the expectation that students must listen to and talk with each other, regardless of fluency level—all key expectations in the new English Language Development Common Core State Standards.[2]

Notes

[1] For more information on what this might look like in your classroom, refer to the series by the Stanford University Graduate School of Education: "Understanding Language: Language, Literacy and Learning in the Content Areas." One good place to start is the article "Realizing Opportunities for English Learners in the Common Core English Language Arts and Disciplinary Literacy Standards," found at http://ell.stanford.edu/sites/default/files/pdf/academic-papers/01_Bunch_Kibler_Pimentel_RealizingOpp%20in%20ELA_FINAL_0.pdf

[2] To read the ELD standards and accompanying documents that explain how to implement the standards by grade level, follow this link to the California Department of Education website: http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/eldstandards.asp

Adrienne Mooney Karyadi is a 9th and 10th grade teacher at Santa Monica High School, where she teaches World History. The ELL population of approximately 150 students speak over 30 languages and are a tiny proportion of a student body with close to 3000 students; ELLs at all proficiency levels are mainstreamed for every core subject.