



NYU Steinhardt

Metropolitan Center for Urban Education

New York State Spanish BETAC



October 2007

In this issue:

Research & Practice: Native Language Support	1
Instructional Uses of the First Language	2
State News: Regulations & Assessment	3
NYU & NYC DOE	4
Home-School Connections	5
Cultural Notes: Día de La Raza	6
Mexican and Latino Forum	7
Spanish BETAC Activities and Conferences	8

Research and Practice

Native Language Support in the Classroom

Incorporating students' native languages into the classroom can enable students to draw on their strengths to accomplish classroom goals. Teachers might consider:

- pre-teaching or checking for understanding concepts in the native language
- employing the services of bilingual staff to assist in explaining content materials
- utilizing native language books, magazines, films, or other materials relating to the topic or theme of a lesson
- allowing students to keep reading logs or journals in their native language
- pairing students who share the same native language, but have different levels of English proficiency, especially for newcomer ELLs.

Literacy in the native language correlates positively with the acquisition of literacy in a second language, and better employment opportunities in the U.S. and overseas exist for those who are fluent in English and another language. Additionally, maintaining the native language is important because it helps students value their cultural heritage, develop a positive self-concept, and retain links to family and other community members.

When native language instructional support *cannot* be provided, Virginia Collier, leading researcher in second language acquisition, provides the following suggestions:

- Teach the second language through academic content by preparing activities that focus on content vocabulary and concepts before introducing math, science or social studies. For example, use an anticipation/reaction guide in which students agree or disagree with statements about the content to be learned, or have students select the ten most important words in a content area reading selection.
- Consciously focus on teaching learning strategies needed to develop thinking skills and problem-solving abilities. For example, ask students to turn to their partners and think about different ways to solve the (math) problem.
- Support staff development emphasizing activation of students' prior knowledge, respect for students' home language and culture, cooperative learning, interactive and discovery learning, intense and meaningful cognitive/academic development, and ongoing assessment using multiple measures.

Irene C. Pompetti-Szul, Ph.D.

Collier, Virginia. Acquiring a Second Language for School. *Directions in Language and Education*, 1(4), 1995. Eastern Stream Center on Resources and Training (ESCORT). *The Help! Kit for Secondary Teachers of Migrant English Language Learners*. New York: ESCORT Project.

TESOL Position Statement on Native Language Support in the Acquisition of English as a Second Language (ESL). Retrieved March 2005.

Instructional Uses of the First Language

On September 13th, 2007, Marguerite Lukes interviewed Rosa García, Kindergarten Dual Language Teacher at Amistad Dual Language School in Manhattan. Ms. Garcia addressed the instructional use of the students' native language.

Ms. Garcia's classroom is populated by students who are Puerto Rican, Dominican, Mexican, and African-American. The class includes children of new immigrants, children of European heritage, and children of 2nd and 3rd generation Latino immigrants whose families want to maintain the family language.

According to Ms. Garcia, "English is everywhere – but Spanish is not; we have to make it something they want to know, make it special – create the atmosphere where kids feel Spanish is something they want to be part of. In Kindergarten, that means lots of dramatic activities and acting, finding the many ways kids can use their bodies to understand and create knowledge, pictures they can relate to, and many books where kids can see words and attractive pictures."

One challenge, according to Ms. Garcia, is "to make kids proud of who they are. Too often, people oppose students learning a second language, and kids are made to feel ashamed to be non-native speakers of English or to be bilingual." Another challenge, she maintains, is finding good literature in the native language. "Commercial literature often does not support classroom practice." A third challenge is the importance of having high expectations for the kids. Immigrant students must be viewed as capable, rather than as having language or other "deficits."

In dual language programs, students learn content in two languages. Ms. Garcia feels that a dual language teacher must believe in what she is doing. This is so because of the increased planning time required to craft lessons that focus not only on language, but also on social studies, science and mathematics. "I am always thinking: 'How do I make language accessible to children?' and 'What are the language structures I want to teach?' But also how will I set up my centers so kids have opportunities to use what we have learned? We always sing and use songs that have rhythm, and they can dance – they learn a lot of language structure using songs and poetry. I use my hands and body to help explain words. I try to find literature that is really good that they can relate to. [You want them to] say, 'Oh, that kid looks like me or my family!' I look for books with really good pictures that kids can talk about and pictures that really support the text. I try to find native authors with last names like my kids."

No matter what the grade, Ms. Garcia feels that the planning process is the same. She may use fewer pictures in the higher grades, "but kids still have to see themselves in books and be able to relate to the characters. Kids get bored if literature is not engaging." Another important area of language use is in writing. Ms. Garcia encourages students to write about their lives "so they know that their own lives are important and that they have stories to tell." Knowing the students and their families an essential part of teaching. For example, many parents are afraid of authority figures in the school; however, almost all of the parents have great hopes for their children and want them to succeed. Parents need to know that the teacher believes that learning and using two languages is important.

"The key idea is that knowledge of the native language helps students learn the second language. The stronger the native language is, the easier it is for a student to learn a second language. Children use the native language as an anchor. It's also a way of acknowledging who the students are: languages are important no matter what languages they are. The more languages we know, the better off we are. Knowing more languages gives you access to more opportunities economically, socially, and educationally. It is a way to anchor children – who they are and what resources they bring to the classroom."

New York State Education Department News

NYSED Regulations and Assessment Requirements for LEP/ELLs - Q & A

With the new school year, districts and schools submit the 2007-2008 CR Part 154 reports and Title III plans, and teachers review the results of the NYSESLAT to group their students for instruction. At the same time, questions are asked about the appropriate identification and placement of new LEP/ELL students. The NYS Spanish BETAC also receives questions about how Federal, State and City regulations address programs for LEP/ELLs. Here are some preliminary questions that are often asked by new school staff.

What are the steps to identify LEP/ELL students and their educational needs?

Upon entering school, the State of New York requires that every student's home language is identified through a survey. Students whose home language is other than English are then administered the LAB-R. Those students who speak Spanish are assessed with the Spanish-LAB for Spanish proficiency. The LAB-R and Spanish LAB are hand-scored at the school site for class placement in bilingual or ESL classes, if necessary. Answer documents from NYC schools should be hand delivered to their borough ISC office by noon on the following dates: September 19, October 5, November 5, January 18, March 14, and June 20. Title III funding is granted based on the results of these assessments. Here is a link to the NYS ED webpage to the Home Language Questionnaire and the LAB-R (English): <http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/lab-r/> .

For information from NYC DOE Office of Assessment on LAB-R, please review Assessment Memo #2, available at http://schools.nyc.gov/daa/testmemos_0708/default.asp .

Schools outside of NYC may purchase the "Spanish LAB" through the NYC DOE Scan Center, attention: Stan Winograd, 718-349-5613, fax 718-349-5642.

Who takes the NYSESLAT and when?

All students identified as LEP/ELL as per the LAB-R are "entitled" to ESL or bilingual education; the language assessment that follows their yearly progress is the NYSESLAT. Therefore, all LEP/ELL students must take the NYSESLAT every spring in order to determine their progress in English. It is the yearly measure of the student's level of English proficiency and entitlement to ESL or bilingual education.

Are bilingual/ESL services determined by funding?

All districts in New York State are responsible for providing services to all entitled LEP/ELL students regardless of whether they receive funding specific to bilingual education or English as a second language.

When LEP/ELL students have IEPs exempting them from taking standardized tests, do they still have to take the NYSESLAT?

Federal and state laws and regulations mandate that all LEP/ELL students take the NYSESLAT, and there are no exemptions from the regulations.

How do we determine when LEP/ELL students have reached "English" proficiency?

The only way that LEP/ELL students show proficiency is by a score of "proficient" on the NYSESLAT. There are no alternative exit criteria or assessments to the NYSESLAT as, by law, there are no limits on the number of years a LEP/ELL student receives ESL.

Refer to the September 2007 memorandum from the New York State Education Department, Office of Standards, Assessment and Reporting at:

<http://www.emsc.nysed.gov/osa/nyseslat/cutscores07.pdf> for specific information on how to determine a student's level of English proficiency based on the "Spring 2007 NYSESLAT."

Please contact the NYS Spanish BETAC with your questions, or request a visit to your school. We are available to visit schools for specific suggestions on how to plan an instructional program following regulations for LEP/ELL students based on the needs of the school.

NYU Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development The Department of Teaching and Learning

The Department of Teaching and Learning in the Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development, steinhardt.nyu.edu/teachlearn, is a dynamic setting for pre- and in-service professionals — teachers, counselors, staff developers, administrators — who have a desire to serve urban schools through educational practice in schools and classrooms and through research. With wide array of graduate and doctoral programs, the Department of Teaching and Learning also supports a number of field initiatives in math, science, reading, as well as mentoring and teacher leadership development. In addition, several research and technical assistance centers combine the study of educational practice with work with in-service professionals. These include the Metropolitan Center for Urban Education, steinhardt.nyu.edu/metrocenter, the Ruth Horowitz Center for Teacher Development, steinhardt.nyu.edu/teachlearn/index.php?page_id=102, and the Center for Research on Teaching and Learning, steinhardt.nyu.edu/teachlearn/index.php?page_id=108.

Dr. James Fraser, educational historian and interim chair of the Department of Teaching and Learning, spoke with the Spanish BETAC about the department, the role of teacher education faculty, and the connection between research and practice: "It is not useful or ethical or in any way acceptable for a research university **not** to be involved with the direct work of teachers. *Research, teaching* and *service* are three legs of a triangle. The service piece is not something that we consider an afterthought -- we want faculty to be directly involved in support and discourse with teachers. Unfortunately, often in-service teachers do not speak highly of the schools of teacher education that prepared them. Our goal is to work with teachers on issues that they deem relevant and pertinent to their work. Right now there is way too big a gap between teachers and educational institutions. We can provide expertise and a connection to research and at the same time learn much from teachers about the wisdom that comes from practice."

"Regarding the work of the Spanish BETAC and the work of professionals who serve ELLs -- we know a great deal about what does and doesn't work regarding how to help students learn English and become bilingual -- as a faculty we want to help and become part of the national discourse regarding what does and doesn't work -- not add more dogma to the conversation."

"We look forward to strengthening the ties of the department and individual faculty to the work of professional development centers like SBETAC and to engaging in increasing numbers of conversations about how we can lend some of our expertise to conversations with teachers while learning from them in ways that will strengthen our programs."

NYU Adjunct Professor Vacancy

The Paul McGhee Division of New York University, a degree program for adult students, is seeking an adjunct professor to teach a course on the *Politics of Latin America* during the spring 2008 semester. The class is scheduled for Tuesday evenings from 6:20 until 8:50 p.m. on the Washington Square campus. Applicants must have a graduate degree and teaching experience. Please send curriculum vitae to veena.thadani@nyu.edu.

Home-School Connections

The Staten Island Jewish Community Center (SIJCC) provides adult education, family literacy, citizenship and ESL services free-of-charge to a growing immigrant community on Staten Island. Many adult students at SIJCC have children in NYC Public Schools. Marguerite Lukes interviewed Rose Shargo, Director of Adult Education, and Deborah Salmon, Coordinator of Spanish Language Family Services about the agency's work with parents.

Tell me about your work with parents.

Rose Shargo (RS): At the JCC we run adult education programs – ESL, GED, citizenship, and family literacy where parents of K-4 children meet once a week to do activities with their children.

Deborah Salmon (DS): I coordinate basic education programs in Spanish, parenting for family literacy, and serve as a liaison to the Latino community served by SIJCC and the public schools. I help parents understand and interpret their options. Sometimes small issues can become huge obstacles for parents.

Why is basic education important as part of a public school/CBO collaboration?

DS: Adult education connects the school system with the community and helps to position parents as collaborators and guides, so they are not isolated from their children's education. It helps to reduce the isolation that new immigrant parents feel in relation to the public schools.

RS: Our agency has public funding to educate adults and parents and to help schools better communicate with parents of their students – all in collaboration with administrators, staff and teachers. We work with schools that have large immigrant populations. We started the ESL program a few years ago doing our own outreach. When principals are involved we always have greater success.

As a CBO with extensive expertise in adult basic education, what works in working with schools?

RS: Our more successful programs are the ones that have supportive principals and strong parent coordinators who match adult education projects with parents' real needs. With a good partnership, we can advocate for the school, help parents get and understand information, and help the school meet its goals regarding parents. We can also announce an upcoming school event or important testing information. Our ideal is to have school-parent activities be linked to the adult education classroom

DS: We have found that children really blossom when they see their parents involved in educational activities and not solely working and earning money, so we provide many opportunities for that in collaboration with the school. We work on improving communication and getting school information to parents with different educational levels in ways that they can comprehend.

RS: My rule of thumb is if you start with 30 students and by week 2 you have 15, something is not right. You have to do constant follow-up. We have been in schools where parents are unaware of what we are offering. We need better channels of communication so that administrators and teachers can refer parents to what's going on in their own school. We should be scheduled for Parent-Teacher events and invited to school meetings so people know we exist.

What advice would you give schools about working with parents of immigrant students?

RS: Strengthen partnerships with CBOs, appoint a liaison, and open and improve channels of communication. Schools are not isolated; they are out in the community. The need is great enough for several organizations to be involved.

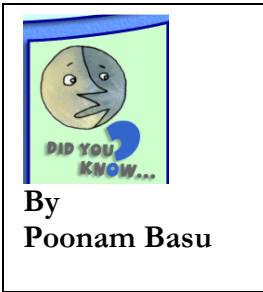
Why is it important for schools to consider partnering with CBOs?

DS: We refer parents to services and resources they need. As a CBO we are linked to many community services so we can help schools close the service gap in terms of parents' and families' needs.

RS: We refer people to legal and health services, jobs, and help with citizenship, counseling, and housing - - this opens other doors for them. We have many arms. Our job is to partner; it strengthens the family.

Cultural Notes

Día de la Raza



Christopher Columbus arrived in the Americas on October 12th, 1492 thinking he had discovered a new route to India. When he realized it was not India, he claimed the new land in the name of the Spanish monarchy since he had been sent by Queen Isabella of Spain. Although many people believe that America had been discovered long before Columbus arrived, he was first to establish a lasting connection between Europe and the New World.

According to sources, more than one million people lived in the lands discovered by Columbus in 1492. However, due to killings and deaths through illness and hard labor, only 32,000 remained by 1514. As a result of the diminution of the various indigenous peoples, the colonial governments of the various regions of the American continent brought slaves from the African and Asian continents to fill the labor gap. It is not surprising that the Latino heritage includes aspects of many cultural and ethnic groups. Latinoamericans, as a group, could be said to be culturally and ethnically *mestizos preciosos, con toques de indio, africano y europeo, mezcla que nos hace lucir bellos*.



Map of the world published in *Cosmographia* of Lienhart Holle press of Ulm, Germany - July 6, 1482

In the United States, October 12th is now celebrated as *Columbus Day*, but it is known by other names in Spanish-speaking countries. The most famous of these is *Día de la Raza*, celebrated in Argentina, Chile, Ecuador, Honduras, Mexico, Uruguay, and other countries to commemorate the Hispanic heritage of Latin America. October 12th is known by other names in other parts of the World. For example, is called as *Discovery Day* in the Bahamas, *Hispanic Day* in Spain, and *Día de la Resistencia Indígena* in Venezuela.

In Costa Rica, this holiday now embodies a celebration of all the peoples who constitute the base of the country's culture. Recognizing the strong influence on present-day Costa Rican culture by the Indians, Europeans, Africans and Asians who have settled and lived there throughout history, Costa Rica utilizes *Día de las Culturas* to commemorate their invaluable contributions to culture, a similar intent as with the “Plazas de las Tres Culturas” in Mexico City.

Ya sea el *Día de la Raza*, el *Día de la Resistencia Indígena*, *Discovery Day*, *Hispanic Day*, el *Día de las Culturas*, or *Columbus Day*, lo cierto es que Octubre 12th celebra las Américas, su gente y sus culturas.



Plaza de la Constitución de la Ciudad de México

News from a Latino Community of Learners Educating Mexican and Latino Youth and Adults

The picture at right was taken at the Mexican Consulate of New York during a meeting about *Plazas Comunitarias* with representatives of the Mexican Government and New York State *Plazas* leaders and coordinators in January of 2007. The NYU *Plazas* network was represented by Nellie Mulkey and Dr. Gail Slater from NYU Metro Center -NYS Spanish BETAC.



On September 7, 2007, the forum entitled “The Effects of the Collaboration between Mexico and the United States in the Education of Mexican and Latino Youth and Adults” was held in Mexico City. It brought together representatives of American institutions in charge of educational programs implemented by the Institute of Mexicans Abroad (*IME*) and the National Institute for the Education of Adults (*INEA*). The goal of the forum was to review and analyze ways to advance educational opportunities for Mexican and Latino migrants in the United States, and one of the specific objectives of interest to NYU Metro Center was to review the status and results of the education programs provided online through *Plazas Comunitarias*.

Licenciado Carlos Rico Ferrat, Undersecretary at the Mexican Department of Foreign Affairs (“Secretaría de Relaciones Exteriores”), mentioned at the Forum that the educational program through *Plazas* has three objectives: first, to facilitate the educational development of human resources of migrants in the United States; second, to promote the Spanish language; and third, to facilitate the integration of migrants into American society. The Forum also brought attention to the needs of children of migrant workers returning to Mexico. The Department of Public Instruction of Mexico is identifying ways to validate the course of studies taken by the children once they return to Mexico from the USA. Rico Ferrat also indicated that in the fall of 2007 the government of Mexico will contribute nearly 900 thousand dollars in scholarships for immigrants of Mexican origin enrolled in programs for adults in the USA. Additionally, and as a result of the campaign for additional funding for *IME* Scholarships in Latino and Mexican communities in the USA, *IME* Scholarships will include an additional 200 thousand dollars for adult education programs, which are expected to reach out to more than 17 thousand adult learners in the *Plazas* programs throughout USA.

Currently there are 370 *Plazas Comunitarias* programs in the United States linked to *INEA*’s network that provide education to Mexican and Latin American youth and adults. *Plazas Comunitarias* also exist in 36 U.S. prisons and correctional facilities. In New York, there are 25 programs in the *Plazas* network led by the NYU Metro Center’s NYS Spanish BETAC. All New York programs provide participants free education that spans from basic literacy to baccalaureate in Spanish, ESL classes, and preparation for GED (English and Spanish). Students at the *Plazas* study through the use of free books, videotapes, and online modules.

During the closing ceremonies, representatives of each *Plazas* programs from the United States received commemorative plaques of the event. New York University Metro Center and the network of New York *Plazas Comunitarias* was honored with two separate plaques from the Director of *INEA* in recognition of the support provided by New York University to the local *Plazas* network of the State of New York, and the leadership of Dr. Pedro Noguera, Executive Director of Metro Center. Nellie B. Mulkey, Director of the NYS Spanish BETAC, represented NYU Metro Center at this event.

Spanish BETAC Activities

Differentiated Instruction Study Group at PS 192, Manhattan

On Thursday, September 20th fourteen teachers at PS 192 in District 6 participated in the first of several study groups to be facilitated by Spanish BETAC Resource Specialist, Dr. Irene C. Pompetti-Szul. Four additional sessions have been planned using the text *Differentiated Instructional Strategies: One Size Doesn't Fit All* by Gayle Gregory and Carolyn Chapman.

Some of the participants already differentiate by allowing students choices as to which reflection questions to answer, using different instructional strategies with different students, and pre-assessing students' prior knowledge through various means so as to better ascertain which students are already knowledgeable about the topic and which students need additional help.

The first chapter of the text contains a myriad of suggestions, including a variety of questioning techniques, and the use of "cubing." "Cubing" is a technique that allows differentiation through the use of activities differentiated according to the levels of knowledge of Bloom's Taxonomy. A green cube might have choices of activities at the knowledge level, while a yellow cube might list activities at the comprehension level. Differentiating still further, a red cube might contain activities at the application level, while cubes of other colors might feature activities requiring analysis, synthesis or evaluation. In this way, the teacher can challenge individual students to achieve at levels that are attainable by them.

While the text by Gregory and Chapman contains useful suggestions for use with English language learners, most of the techniques are beneficial for all students.

NYS Spanish BETAC
Steinhardt Metro Center

726 Broadway, 5th Floor,
New York, New York 10003

Professor Pedro Noguera
Executive Director
NYU Metro Center

Pedro Ruiz, Ph.D.
Coordinator
NYSSED OBE/FLS

NYS Spanish BETAC
Bulletin Staff

Nellie B. Mulkey
Director & Publisher

Irene Pompetti-Szul, Ph.D.
Bulletin Editor-in-Chief
& Resource Specialist

Gail M. Slater, Ph.D.
Bulletin Editor
& Resource Specialist

Marguerite Lukes
Bulletin Contributor
& Resource Specialist

Poonam Basu
Bulletin Coordinator
& Project Associate:

Hector Mirabal
Contributor-at-Large

Contact information:
poonam.basu@nyu.edu

Upcoming Conferences about the Education of ELLs

Maximizing Success for Adolescent ELLs: Developing Academic Language and Content
At Long Island City High School, November 6th

Assessments and Accountability for English Language Learners
Two workshops in collaboration with NYC Regional and Language BETACs
At LIU Regional BETAC Center, October 12th and October 26th

NYSTESOL	November 2 - 3	White Plains, NY	www.nystesol.org
NABE	February 5 - 8	Tampa, FL	www.NABE.org
NY SABE	March 14 - 16	Melville, NY	www.nysabe.org
TESOL	April 2 - 5	NY, NY	www.tesol.org

*Watch for emails from the NYS Spanish BETAC with
2007-2008 Workshops and Conference Announcements*