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# A Learner-Centered and Participtory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL

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A LEARNER-CENTERED AND PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

TO TEACHING COMMUNITY ADULT ESL

by

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In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

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GRADUATE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

of a project submitted by
Haley L. Wiggins

This project has been read by each member of the following graduate committee and by majority vote has been found to be satisfactory.

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As chair of the candidate's graduate committee, I have read the selected project of Haley L. Wiggins in its final form and have found that (1) its format, citations, and bibliographical style are consistent and acceptable and fulfill university and department style requirements; (2) its illustrative materials including figures, tables, and charts are in place; and (3) the final manuscript is satisfactory to the graduate committee and is ready for submission to the university library.

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ABSTRACT


A LEARNER-CENTERED AND PARTICIPATORY APPROACH

TO TEACHING COMMUNITY ADULT ESL

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Department of Linguistics and English Language

Master of Arts

This MA project examines the creation, implementation, and effectiveness of the guidebook, *Moving Forward*: *A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL*, designed to help adult English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers base their classes on the specific needs of community adult education students. This guidebook was created in response to the need for lesson plans and activities that help teachers focus on learner needs. The activities in the guidebook are based on the National Institute for Literacy's (NIFL) adult literacy initiative, Equipped for the Future (EFF) because it focuses on the tasks adults must perform to function successfully on a daily basis. Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD) was used to create the specific activities in the guidebook because its focus is on creating curriculum based on the needs of learners.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

This MA project examines the creation, implementation, and effectiveness of the guidebook, *Moving Forward*: *A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL,* designed to help adult ESL teachers base their classes on the specific needs of community adult education students. This guidebook was created in response to the need for lesson plans and activities that help teachers to do so. The activities in the guidebook are based on the National Institute for Literacy's (NIFL) adult literacy initiative, Equipped for the Future (EFF) because it focuses on the tasks adults must perform to function successfully on a daily basis (see chapter 2, review of literature, for a thorough discussion of EFF). Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD) (see chapter 2, review of literature, for a thorough discussion of PCD) was used to create the specific activities in the guidebook because its focus is on creating curriculum based on the needs of learners. The remainder of this chapter will explore the background from which this project emerged.

*Background*

In the summer of 2001, Dr. Joan Dixon, a number of other college students, and I started a community-based adult English as a Second Language (ESL) class called Communication for Community (CFC). The class was based on Lynn Curtis's (1990) *Literacy for Social Change* model, which focuses on four areas of language and literacy learning:

1. Fundamental skills: the basic skills necessary for dealing with the written word—including writing, listening, speaking, and math

2. Critical thinking: the capacity to understand and react to information

3. Cultural expression: emotional or spiritual learning through music, drama, folklore, dance, literature, art, etc.

4. Action: action taken to address and improve the lives of learners as a result of instruction

Our goal was not to use the traditional academic approach for teaching English grammar and vocabulary, but rather to focus on creating an environment where teachers value learners' ideas and experiences, and where both learner and teacher contribute to curriculum development. According to Dixon (2001), the reason for communicating and learning English is community building. The class focused on daily communication skills, and on helping students feel more comfortable and knowledgeable about community resources.

Throughout the program, volunteer facilitators and language "coaches" helped beginning, intermediate, and advanced students cultivate and practice their English skills in an environment based on real-world settings. Topics were based on community issues and learners' needs such as promoting better health, finding work, communicating at work, communicating within and understanding the public school system, cooking, getting to know the neighbors, etc. Codes or visual representations of issues that the students commonly face were used in many of the classes in order to help build critical thinking skills and promote action. Learners were encouraged to use authentic language and to "move beyond mere language learning to a level of using language to solve

problems and plan group action" (Dixon, 2001). This type of language learning was designed to help students feel a sense of ownership for their ideas and internalize new vocabulary and grammar structures.

From participation in this program I learned two important lessons. First, I learned the importance of training in TESOL. When I first started teaching these community classes I had little or no training. I soon realized that it takes more than knowing English to be a good teacher of English as a Second Language (ESL). For this reason I decided to get training by applying to the TESOL program at BYU.

Second, it became obvious to me that learner needs must be addressed and that learners respond best when they take responsibility for their own language learning. The majority of the students that I work with are Spanish-speaking adult-immigrants. This population has different needs for learning English than do individuals in an English as a Foreign Language (EFL) situation or learners coming to the United States to attend a university. These students live and work in a society and language that they do not yet understand. They express English learning needs such as how to communicate in the grocery store or with coworkers. They want to know how to take their children to the doctor and how to communicate with their children's teachers. These needs are not necessarily addressed in the typical ESL class or grammar book. They are daily, real life issues that need to be addressed on an individual learner-guided basis. These individuals know what they need and want to learn. They are not coming to the United States without skills and knowledge. They are trying to transfer their skills and knowledge from one culture and language to another.

While these basic topics that interest community students are addressed in various survival-skills ESL books and community classes, they are not easily applicable to the real lives of learners.  A book may talk about how to communicate at work, but not take the extra step of applying that vocabulary and information to the lives and situations of the students in a meaningful way. Standardized tests address certain vocabulary and grammar skills, but do not look at how to use those skills to accomplish tasks that learners must perform on a daily basis. For these reasons a guidebook to help teachers base lessons on the real-life needs of learners in a way that they can be applied to everyday tasks is needed.

Shortly after working with the Communication for Community class and starting the TESOL program at BYU, I learned about a new national literacy initiative that focuses on meeting the real-word needs of adult students. This literacy initiative is entitled "Equipped for the Future" (EFF). Because EFF claims to focus on learner needs I decided to learn more about it and try to apply it in the ESL classroom. I found that EFF was created in response to the same concerns that I had about adult education. It was created in order to refocus adult literacy education and assessment on the learners and their everyday needs. EFF is a new initiative and is still in the creation phase. It does not have any type of curriculum but is rather a framework and set of content standards that take into account the tasks that adults must perform in order to function successfully in their everyday roles.

After learning about EFF I decided to use its framework in the ESL classroom. In order to create lesson plans based on EFF, I used a curriculum development technique called Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD). I chose PCD because it mandates

the involvement of learners every step of the process. It is similar to the Literacy for Social Change method used in the Communication for Community class started by Joan Dixon in 2001. It was first adapted to adult ESL in Elsa Auerbachs' book *Making Meaning, Making Change*. I decided to use PCD in order to create a guidebook for community adult ESL teachers based on the EFF framework. I felt that this would help teachers focus on the needs of their learners in a more concrete way.

In order to create this guidebook I taught an adult ESL class in an apartment complex in Southwest Provo. Through teaching this class for a year and a half I was able to identify needs facing Spanish-speaking adult immigrants, create activities based on those needs, try the activities out with the students, and revise them according to student and teacher feedback. The result of this process is a guidebook for teachers of adult ESL entitled, *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL*. It will be used by BYU TESOL interns, teachers at the Provo School District Adult ESL program, and other community adult ESL teachers to help base classes on the needs of adult ESL learners.

The remainder of this MA project report addresses the development, implementation, and analysis of this guidebook. Chapter 2 carefully examines the relevant literature associated with learner-centered and participatory teaching focusing on EFF and PCD. Chapter 3 outlines the developmental stages as well as the components and participants associated with the guidebook. Chapter 4 analyzes the effectiveness of the guidebook and chapter 5 addresses the limitations of the project and suggests future research.

Chapter 2: Review of Literature

*Introduction*

This chapter examines the relevant literature associated with the different

methodologies and techniques used to create the guidebook, *Moving Forward: A*

*Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL*, the

focus of the project. This guidebook was created in response to the need for concrete

activities based on the Equipped for the Future (EFF) framework. EFF is a national

literacy initiative designed to help adults (both native and non-native speakers of

English) function successfully in the 21$^{st}$ century. This review of literature will give a

general background for the need of learner-centered and participatory curriculum in adult

ESL. It will then introduce three of the main parts of EFF and how they apply to ESL.

Following a discussion on EFF, Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD), which is

the principal curriculum development technique used to create the lesson plans and

activities in the guidebook, will be examined.  Finally, this review of literature will

address three other techniques related to PCD that also helped in the creation of the

guidebook. These three techniques are Language Experience Approach (LEA),

Authentic Assessment, and Participatory Action Research (PAR).

*Adult ESL*

Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) education is the fastest growing

aspect of federally funded adult education (NCLE, 1998).  In 1998 the National

Clearinghouse for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) at the Center for Applied Linguistics

(CAL) developed a research agenda for adult ESL.  It was created in conjunction with a

larger effort to develop a national research and development agenda for improving Adult

Basic Education (ABE), ESL, and Adult Secondary Education (ASE) by various national

education organizations including the National Center for the Study of Adult Learning

and Literacy (NCSALL), the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), and the U.S.

Department of Education's Office of Vocational and Adult Education and its Division of

Adult Education and Literacy (OVAE/DAEL). In order to create this agenda NCLE

conducted an extensive literature review of adult ESL publications, created a tentative

agenda, and then worked in conjunction with a group of adult ESL researchers, program

staff, and policy makers to refine and approve it. The purpose of this agenda is to provide

researchers, practitioners, and funding organizations with a list of the most important and

pressing issues in adult ESL. This research agenda focuses on five relevant areas

including:

1. The learners themselves,

2. Program design and instructional content and practices,

3. Teacher preparation and staff development,

4. Learner assessment and outcomes,

5. Policy.

This MA Project focuses on the area of *Program Design and Instructional Content

and Practices* (see Appendix A). The main objective of this section of the NCLE

research agenda is to promote the idea that "research and development should lead to a

better match between adult learner needs and program types and provide a clearer

sequence of steps to facilitate learning" (NCLE, 1998: pg. 7). Most practitioners in adult

education agree that participants learn best when they are involved in all aspects of their

instruction (Auerbach, 1992; Peyton & Crandall, 1993; Holt, 1995).  In order for this to happen, adult ESL participants must learn to define their needs, conditions, techniques, and materials.  They must then acquire the conviction that they are enriching their lives by being responsible for their own learning (Armanet & Obese-Jecty, 1981).

Elsa Auerbach (1993) defined and distinguished between learner-centered and participatory instruction.  According to Auerbach, participatory approaches focus on social transformation and draw curriculum from the context of learners' lives.   The role of the teacher is to identify issues and problems in the learners' lives and to use these in the content of the class to promote dialogue, reflection, and action.  Learner-centered approaches focus on self-realization and on involving participants in the curriculum development process.  They are based on the idea that adults learn best when they are in charge of their own learning and when curriculum is based on their needs.  The role of the teacher in this approach is to act as a facilitator.   Although these approaches vary in their objectives they both place the learner at the center of pedagogy (Auerbach 1993).  The methods and theories discussed in this review of literature are based on one or both of these types of instruction.

*Equipped for the Future (EFF)*

Equipped for the Future (EFF) is a national literacy initiative based on the results of six years of research conducted by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL). The goal of this literacy initiative is to provide learners, educators, policymakers and other stakeholders with a common language and set of skills to help educators and students focus on meeting the real-world needs of adult students.  It proposes that the definition of

literacy has noticeably changed over time. "The meaning of 'knowing' has shifted from being able to remember and repeat information to being able to find and use it" (Stein, 2000). This is also true for adult ESOL: knowing English means more than being able to remember and repeat words or grammar principles; it also means being able to use English in daily life for everyday tasks.

*EFF Purposes for Learning*

The EFF framework is complex and multidimensional. It is divided into various parts including *Purposes for Learning*, *Adult Roles,* and *Content Standards*. The *Purposes for Learning* were identified by adult learners across the country. They are based on reasons learners identified for going back to school—to learn how to read, write, learn English, etc. The four main purposes include (see Appendix B)

1. **Access**: To gain access to information and resources so adults can orient themselves in the world.

2. **Voice**: To be able to express ideas and opinions with the confidence they will be heard and taken into account.

3. **Action**: To solve problems and make decisions on one's own, acting independently, as parents, citizens, and workers, for the good of their families, their communities, and their nation.

4. **A Bridge to the Future**: Learning how to learn in order to be prepared to keep up with the world as it changes.

(Stein, 2000)

These purposes for learning are important because they help adult learners identify and relate to reasons for furthering their education. Education helps adults *access* information that they might not otherwise have. This can be done in numerous ways. For example, many adult education centers have information about various community resources (e.g. housing information, other educational opportunities, medical information, legal information, etc.) that learners can use. Also education, and in this case English, opens up doors to understanding the written and spoken word in everyday interactions.

The second purpose, having a v*oice* is also important. Education empowers. It allows learners to express their opinions in a more confident manner. Everyone wants to be taken seriously and sometimes lack of education impedes this from happening. Having a *voice* means being taken seriously and being heard. For example, a female adult ESL student told her class about a car accident that she was in where the other person involved told her to pay him money. She knew enough English that she was able to have a *voice* and tell the man that she would not pay him and that they should call the police.

The third purpose, *Action,* is similar to V*oice* but takes matters a step further. Education gives individuals the knowledge and know-how to make change happen. When students learn about particular topics, themes, or languages they are able to take action and change their reality. Knowledge and education also build confidence. Individuals will be taken more seriously and be able to improve situations if they have the background knowledge and confidence to do so. For example, an ESL student that has learned about how to open a bank account is more likely to actually take that action step and open up the account.

The fourth EFF purpose for learning is *a bridge to the future*. Learners go back to school in order to make their future better. Adult ESL learners want to learn English in order to get better jobs or advance at their current employment. They want to learn English in order to get more training and education or to be able to help their children have better futures. All four of these purposes for learning are important and relate to the lives of adult learners.

*EFF Adult Roles*

Another aspect of the EFF framework addresses the 3 main adult roles. They include:

1. Parent/ Family Member
2. Community member
3. Worker

Adults have different responsibilities in each of these three roles. They also belong to all three of these groups in one way or another. The purpose of identifying these roles and creating role maps for each of them is to define *broad areas of responsibility* that adults have in each of the roles as well as *key activities* that they must perform.

For example the *broad areas of responsibility* for community members are to *become and stay informed, form and express opinions and ideas, work together,* and *take action to strengthen communities.* Each of these *broad areas of responsibility* is then broken down into four or five *key activities* that focus on what adults do in order to fulfill these responsibilities. For example, the four key activities associated with *take action to*

*strengthen communities* are: 1. *help yourself and others,* 2. *educate others,* 3. *influence decision makers and hold them accountable,* and 4. *provide leadership within the community.*

The other two adult roles are also divided into *broad areas of responsibility* and *key activities* (see Appendices C, D, E). Each of the EFF *Adult Roles* focuses on a different aspect of learners' lives. The three role maps help define what adults need to be able to do to function successfully in that particular role. Identifying these roles in the ESL classroom helps adult learners realize that they act in these different roles regularly and that they need English in order communicate successfully in each of them.

*EFF Content Standards and Skill Areas*

EFF also identified four different skill areas divided into sixteen content standards. They include (see Appendix F)

1. Communication Skills

    a. observe critically

    b. convey ideas in writing

    c. listen actively

    d. speak so others can understand

    e. read with understanding

2. Decision Making Skills

    a. use math to solve problems and communicate

    b. solve problems and make decisions

    c. plan

3. Lifelong Learning Skills

   a. reflect and evaluate

   b. learn through research

   c. use information and communications technology

   d. take responsibility for learning

4. Interpersonal Skills

   a. resolve conflict and negotiate

   b. advocate and influence

   c. cooperate with others

   d. guide others

The content standards are the basis of EFF; they define the skills that adults need in order to function successfully in the three adult roles. They take a broader look at literacy and ESL than more traditional approaches. For example, the communication skills listed above are similar to the skills addressed in the traditional approach to ESL.  EFF not only takes these aspects into consideration but also looks at the importance of decision-making, interpersonal, and life-long learning skills.

*Impact of EFF*

As of March 2003, programs in thirty-four states were using EFF in their adult education programs.  Various states have adopted EFF statewide. Numerous ESL textbooks now align their chapters with the sixteen EFF content standards. A few examples include

1. A series entitled *Taking Off* by Susan Hancock Fesler and Christy M. Newman
   published by McGraw Hill in 2003

2. A series by Barbara Foley and Elizabeth Neblett entitled *English in Action* published
   by Thomson and Heinle in 2003

3. A series entitled *Stand Out* by Rob Jenkins and Staci Lyn Sabbagh published by
   Thomson and Heinle in 2002

Even though EFF is recognized throughout the USA, Utah has not had much exposure to it. In October 2003 Joan Dixon and I introduced EFF at the Utah Association for Adult, Community, and Continuing Education (UAACCE) Conference. We also introduced EFF to various ESL providers in the Provo/Orem area. The guidebook that is the product of this project will be used to further familiarize ESL providers in Utah with EFF. It will be used by BYU students interested in teaching community adult ESL as well as by teachers in the Provo School District Adult ESL program. It will also be used in community centers and in other MA projects. Outside of Utah it will be used in several settings including Washington DC and possibly Indonesia.

*Need for the Guidebook*

Because EFF is based on learner needs I decided to create the guidebook, *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL,* using the EFF Framework. While EFF offers standards, an overall framework, and other supports it is not a specific curriculum for teachers to use in the classroom. As mentioned above there are various new ESL textbooks that are aligned with EFF. These textbooks are also aligned with nationally recognized assessment measures like the

Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) and Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS). This shows that EFF is nationally recognized. But, these textbooks that are now available and aligned with EFF only point out what content standards are addressed in any given chapter or activity. The activities in these books are not created around the EFF framework nor do they directly tie the framework to the specific curriculum or activities.

The activities in *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL* are based on the EFF framework and use the different parts of the framework, *purposes for learning, adult roles,* and *content standards* throughout. The guidebook supplies teachers with specific activities based on this framework that they can use in the ESL classroom. In order to create this guidebook based on EFF I needed a curriculum development method that takes into consideration the real life needs of adult learners. I decided to use Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD) because it involves learners in every step of the curriculum development process and allows teachers to identify and focus on the real-life needs of their learners.

*Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD)*

Paulo Freire, a renowned Brazilian educator, promoted the idea that literacy and empowerment are not just personal goals but social objectives (Frederick, 1998; Archer & Cottingham, 1996; Roberts, 2000). The central tenet of the Freirean approach is that education and knowledge have value only if they help people liberate themselves from the social conditions that oppress them. The starting point for change must be at the level

of the participant's understanding of reality and be based on their forms of action and struggle (Freire & Faundez, 1989). This means that learners must take responsibility for their own learning and that in order for literacy or English instruction to be important it must be based on the needs and realities facing students in their real lives. Instruction must lead to the improvement of learners' lives and social conditions.

Freire (1970) contrasts participatory learning with the traditional banking model of education where the teacher is all knowing and passes information to blank-slated students. In Freire's theory the role of the teacher and the participants are reciprocal; the teacher acts as a facilitator not as the one and only source of knowledge (Frederick, 1998). A teacher's role in this approach is to first help learners identify real life issues, then guide learners in comparing and contrasting experiences, looking at their root causes, and imagining possibilities for change (Auerbach, 1992). It is a process of empowering learners and promoting social change.

For example, if learners express the need to improve the safety of their neighborhood the teacher could facilitate learning by leading a discussion on the topic, looking at reasons why the neighborhood is not safe, and what they can do to make it safer. This discussion could be done in English and, among other language activities, key vocabulary could be identified and discussed in more detail. Then the teacher could facilitate some type of action step to make the neighborhood safer. This could possibly be done by starting a neighborhood watch group and discussing how to recruit interested neighbors and conduct meetings in English.

The primary adaptation of the Freirean theory to ESL is Elsa Auerbach's idea of *emergent curriculum* where learners identify their own problems and issues and seek

their own solutions (Auerbach, 1987; Frederick, 1998).   This process is based on five steps:

1. Engage in ongoing needs assessment;

2. Present a code-picture or representation of a problem or concern that the students face;

3. Involve students in analysis of the problem and decision making;

4. Help students take action and plan to overcome the problem; and

5. Treat learners as partners to teachers in the evaluation of their progress (Auerbach 1993).

The first step in this process, *engage in ongoing needs assessment*, emphasizes the need for teachers to constantly identify and address issues and concerns facing their students on a daily basis.  A needs assessment in this sense is not an activity done at a single point in time. Rather, it is a constant awareness of the issues facing the students and a flexibility to address them on a regular basis. For example, it is important to constantly assess the applicability of the topics addressed in class. If the class is focused on preparing for job interviews and the teacher notices that the students are concerned about preparing for parent-teacher conferences at the local elementary school it would be important to recognize the new topic, push the job interview topic to another time, and address the issue at hand.

The second step utilizes a *code*, or a visual representation (e.g. picture, poem, etc.) of an issue or problem students face in their daily lives.  These codes are generated from the findings of the needs assessments and must represent something learners can personally relate to; they act as vehicles for reflection and action (Frederick, 1998).

Codes generate open-ended discussion that lead to ideas for action. For example, a picture of an obstacle course could be used to talk about the obstacles that students face as they try to learn English. This code could then be used to discuss the importance of finishing the course, i.e. learning English, and doing so by setting goals.

The third step deals with analyzing the issues and problems brought up in the code. In this discussion students are able to talk about root problems and in the process generate useful and practical language for future lessons. Teachers can then design lessons around the language gathered during these discussions in order to help participants solve real-life problems and facilitate change. For example, if the code is a written dialogue between a boss and a co-worker, this step may include a discussion about how to get along with a boss or how to improve students' working conditions as well as language activities associated with the workplace. These activities could include new vocabulary, grammar structures present in the dialogue, writing similar dialogues, practicing pronunciation of the dialogue, etc.

The fourth step takes the language lesson one step further and requires that an action step to improve or change a situation be taken. In this process teachers help students develop the language skills necessary to take action. For example, if students feel that their work environment is unsafe, a language lesson could be designed in order to help students with the vocabulary and communication skills necessary to talk with their employer or supervisor about the problem. Then, the student would actually talk with their employer or supervisor in English in order to improve the work environment.

The final step of this process is joint teacher-student evaluation. In this step learners are able to assess their progress in a meaningful way by talking to the teacher

about their experience.  Teacher and students can talk about progress made and set goals

for future language learning and action.   For example the student that talked to his or her

supervisor about an unsafe work environment could report on the experience, talk about

what went well, what he or she did or did not understand, and what he or she would

change.

PCD is learner-centered and participatory in nature. Learner-centered teaching is

addressed frequently in teacher training but specific learner-centered and participatory

activities are rarely identified. Elsa Auerbachs' book, *Making Meaning Making Change*,

defines Participatory Curriculum Development in a very thorough manner. It goes

through each of the steps in the process in a detailed way and gives various examples

from teachers that have used the technique.  It is a wonderful book full of examples and

ideas but it does not contain specific activities and lesson plans that teachers can use in

the ESL classroom.

The guidebook, *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory

Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL,* contains specific learner-centered and

participatory activities created using PCD and based on EFF that teachers can use in their

classrooms. It also helps teachers follow this process to develop their own activities and

apply the EFF framework on their own.

Three other learner-centered approaches in conjunction with PCD are used in the

activities in the guidebook. They are the Language Experience Approach (LEA),

Authentic Assessment, and Participatory Action Research (PAR). Each of these methods

is based on learner needs and for this reason work well with the EFF framework.

*Language Experience Approach (LEA)*

The Language Experience Approach (LEA) encourages reading and writing using the personal, real-life experiences of learners (Peyton, 1995; Taylor, 1992). There are several basic steps in the LEA approach, which can be done on an individual or group basis. The first step is to choose an experience.  This experience can be an individual learner's experience or a group experience, such as personal story or a class field trip.  In both cases the experience is told orally by the learner or learners and transcribed by the teacher or students. If a group experience is used, the group must first have an experience together whether it is a planned field trip or activity or a spontaneous event or happening in class, such as field trip to the grocery store to practice speaking English, or a fire drill in the middle of class.  Then they must discuss the experience, write about the experience, read the account of the experience, and finally extend the experience to a classroom activity (Taylor, 1992).

According to Peyton (1995), LEA is especially good for ESL students with high oral skills but low literacy skills because it capitalizes on their strengths and allows reading and writing to develop naturally from speech.  LEA stories use vocabulary that students already know in oral form and help them learn the words in written form. They also provide a unique source of written texts for learners, based on their own experiences (Peyton, 1995; Taylor, 1992). For example, a story that is written down in class can later be used for numerous language activities. The vocabulary and schemata are already familiar to the students because they created the story themselves. Once the story is written down it can be used for pronunciation practice, grammar practice, writing practice (students can write their own stories based on a similar experience), etc. Various chapters

in the guidebook created for this project, specifically chapter 6 *Writing Student Stories* and chapter 7 *Writing Evidence Journals*, are based on this approach to reading and writing.

*Authentic Assessment*

Another approach used in the activities in the guidebook is Authentic Assessment. This term is used in various contexts in education. In the context of this project authentic assessment does not deal so much with the idea of assessment in a traditional sense (e.g. tests), but rather refers to constant, learner-guided assessment throughout the course of a language learning experience. It is based on the idea stated in a 2002 report by the National Center for ESL Literacy Education (NCLE) that learners acquire language as they use it in social interactions to accomplish purposeful tasks. This report refers to assessing the progress of adult ESL learners through documenting successful performance on tasks as opposed to assessing them through standardized tests (NCLE, 2002).

The Missionary Training Center (MTC) of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (LDS) is a good example of this type of assessment. The MTC is where prospective missionaries for the LDS church go to prepare for their missions and to learn a new language (if applicable). In the MTC, there are no formal tests; rather the missionaries are able to view their own progress as they successfully complete a task or communicate with the teacher or other missionaries. They also participate frequently in Missionary Performance Check (MPC) interviews where they role-play a situation with

their teacher. MPC's help both the missionaries and the teachers to gage their progress with the language through their performance in the role-play.

Authentic assessment also works well in an adult ESL setting. When learners are able to see progress in real-life communication, they are likely to be more motivated in their language learning. When adult ESL students are faced with real-life situations that require them to use language in order to get a point across they are more likely to take it seriously. For example, if students learn about phone conversations in English and are then able to answer the phone and communicate successfully in their real lives, that particular ESL lesson is going to be much more meaningful to the student. The successful phone conversation is also going to be an excellent assessment technique to know that the content of the lesson was learned.

Authentic assessment requires continual evaluation throughout the course of a class. It focuses on daily activities, real-life tasks, and gives learners control of their own learning and assessment. According to Hancock (1994), assessment is an interactive process that engages both teacher and student in monitoring the student's performance. It looks at how learners are approaching, processing, and completing real-life tasks in a particular domain (Tannenbaum, 1996). When learners know that educators understand and want to address their needs and interests, they are motivated to continue in a program to learn. According to Auerbach (1992), "process minded and participatory oriented adult educators sit beside learners to learn about their proficiencies and backgrounds, educational goals, and expected outcomes, immersing themselves in the lives and views of their students."

Self-evaluation should be a component of on-going authentic assessment. Programs that involve learners in on-going curricular development can see an increase in retention rates and in enrollment because the program is responsive to their needs. As Wendell (1997) states "involving the learners as agents of change in their personal growth through education impacts the curricular process…participatory curriculum development is interactive and ongoing." According to Frederick (1998) learner self-assessment can be a valuable tool for the students by making them aware of their own language use, and providing a non-threatening means of recording progress, and involvement in goal setting. Learner self-assessment assists the instructor in identifying student's individual progress and needs; it also allows the learners to actively participate in their own education. In a learner-centered system, based on authentic assessment, learners will be encouraged to monitor and assess their own progress and curriculum (Frederick, 1998).

Authentic Assessment is an underlining theme throughout the guidebook. Each of the activities included in the book encourages learners to take responsibility for their own learning and to use what they learn in the classroom in real-world encounters. The activities also stress that both teachers and learners constantly assess the progress, needs, and goals of the students.

*Participatory Action Research (PAR)*

The third approach used throughout the guidebook is Participatory Action Research (PAR). PAR is not only an approach used throughout the guidebook it was also

used as a research technique to create the guidebook. PAR focuses on empowerment and positive social change (Seymour-Rolls & Hughes, 1995; Community Development Society; Merrifield, 1997). It is a byproduct of social and educational research; it is a unique research method that is based on participation and reflection (Seymour-Rolls & Hughes, 1995). PAR can be broken down into a four-part cycle consisting of *reflection*, *planning*, *action,* and *observation*. This cycle allows both the researcher and the participants to take part in the research.  It is repeated numerous times throughout the research and teaching process.

The purpose of *reflection* in this cycle is to allow participants the opportunity to identify a shared problem or concern. As the cycle repeats itself it allows the participants and the researcher to reflect on the research carried out to that point in time.  In this step a new topic is identified or current topic is reevaluated. For example, if a class were learning about how to get a driver's license, at this stage the teacher and the students would decide if they wanted to continue with the topic or move on to something new.

The second stage, *planning,* arises from the reflection process and allows the participants and researcher to plan their next step of action.  Continuing the example above, at this stage the teacher and students would plan to start a new topic of study relevant to their lives. Or, if they decided to continue learning about driver's licenses they would decide what more they needed to learn about that topic.

The *action* step focuses on putting the plan in place.  PAR is "different from other research methods in that the action or change is happening in reality and not as an experiment 'just to see if it works'" (Seymour-Rolls & Hughes, 1995).  An action step

that might go along with the driver's license example would be a trip to the DMV to get example forms and more information about the process of obtaining a driver's license.

The final step in the cycle, *observation*, focuses on the more traditional research of collecting and analyzing data. For example in this step, the teacher could observe how well the field trip to the DMV and the overall unit on driver's licenses improved learners' English skills through oral, written, or other assessment.

This cycle combines traditional research with action and participant involvement. PAR teaches individuals how to get information for themselves rather than relying on the researcher to gather information for them.  It is a participatory process because it is based on an issue or problem pertinent to the learners' lives and chosen by the learners themselves.  PAR focuses on the definition of literacy as "not just the technical ability to read and write, but the use of these skills in daily life to solve problems and make a better world" (Merrifield, 1997).  Traditional "top down" research excludes the participants, those who are being researched. Instead, in PAR, those who would traditionally be the subject of research decide what problems are worth investigating and what the important research questions are.  PAR focuses on learning and action, not just on research; for these reasons, it may be used as a tool for improving program and practice.

*Conclusion*

The Language Experience Approach (LEA), Authentic Assessment, and Participatory Action Research (PAR) are all approaches used throughout the guidebook created in this project. All of these techniques value the learners and their needs. For this

reason they are complimentary to Participatory Curriculum Development which is the main curriculum development technique used to create lesson plans and activities based on the Equipped for the Future (EFF) framework. The guidebook created using these techniques provides concrete activities for community adult ESL teachers. These activities are unique because they are based on EFF and they take into consideration the everyday, real-life needs of adult learners.  The following chapter, Project Description, takes a closer look at the guidebook and the different activities it contains.

Chapter 3: Project Description

*Background*

The product of this project is a guidebook for community adult ESL teachers based on the Equipped for the Future (EFF) framework entitled, *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL*. Its purpose is to provide teachers with practical activities they can use to make their classroom more learner-centered and participatory. It is not a specific curriculum: rather, it provides concrete lesson plans and activities that can be used in any community adult ESL classroom to help focus the class on learner needs. Since EFF is a framework and not specific lesson plans, this guidebook is needed to help teachers base classes on EFF. The activities in the guidebook were created using Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD), which is a curriculum development technique that involves learners in every step of the process. EFF and PCD are central themes throughout the guidebook and are explained in such a way that teachers can apply them in the classroom. This guidebook is an important resource for community adult ESL teachers who want to incorporate EFF in the classroom and that see a need to base curriculum on learners' lives.

*Setting*

The setting for the creation of this book was an adult ESL classroom in the Boulders apartment complex in Southwest Provo. This ESL class was part of a larger effort by the local police station, BYU law students and professors, and others to help increase the quality of living and decrease the crime rate in this particular apartment

complex. One of the characteristics of this apartment complex was its high population of non-native-English speakers and the need to help English-speaking and majority Spanish-speaking tenets to be able to communicate more effectively with each other.  For this reason the apartment management donated an apartment in the complex to be used as a community center where, among other things, English could be taught to Spanish speakers. This class originally started in February 2003 at a nearby elementary school and in May 2003 moved to the apartment donated by the management. The content of this guidebook is based on a year and a half of classes taught by the researcher at the Boulders. The class provided the means to develop, test, and improve the lesson plans based on EFF through the PCD process.

Three teachers in the Provo Adult ESL program have already used chapters from this guidebook. Their feedback helped me to modify and improve it. From observing these teachers I was not only able to improve the guidebook but I was also able to see that the lessons plans worked well with other teachers and students. The teachers each taught a different level and I was able to see that the lessons worked well with low-beginning, intermediate, and high-intermediate classes.

This guidebook will help adult ESL teachers in similar community settings to focus more closely on the needs of their students. It will be used by BYU students interested in teaching community adult ESL, especially but not exclusively in the Provo/Orem area. It will continue to be used at the Boulders and in the development of another MA project. It will also be used at the researcher's new employment in Washington DC, has been introduced to at least one adult educator in Indonesia and will

be introduced to individuals working with EFF in Washington DC. The guidebook is flexible and can be used in many adult ESL settings.

*Participants*

The participants in the class in which the guidebook was created and tested are all adult Spanish-speakers; most of them live in the Boulders apartment complex. They range in English proficiency from those who are able to hold a 5-minute conversation in English to those who are learning the phrase "hi, how are you?" for the first time: from beginning to high-intermediate. They range in age from 15 to 83 years old. Over the year and a half in which the guidebook was created, around 40 students attended the class. Twenty-six of them attended for at least a one-month period over the year and a half with an average of 8 students each class period. Four of the students that came to class on the first day still regularly attend class now. Most of the students are from Mexico but throughout the course of the class there have been many students from Argentina and one student from El Salvador. Although I do not ask, most of the students are non-documented immigrants and deal with issues of their legal status on a daily basis.

The majority of the students are women with young children. In general, the women struggle with using English because they are at home most of the time and are rarely required to use English. Many of them have expressed frustration to me about not being able to get out of the house or being afraid to leave the house because they do not speak English. The men that have come to class tend to be at a higher proficiency level because in the workplace they are forced to use English more than the women do at

home. Most of the men are manual laborers with poor wages. They are constantly looking for new jobs and commonly face discrimination in the workplace.

The guidebook is geared toward teachers teaching high-beginning to high-intermediate level students but can be adapted to both beginning students and advanced students. It is meant to be used in classes with community adult ESL students whose main focus is learning how to function in an English-speaking society on a daily basis.

*Teachers*

The researcher of this project is the main teacher at the Boulders, but various other teachers have helped teach the class and refine the guidebook over the year and a half. From January to April 2003 Javier Rodriguez and Erin Thomas (BYU TESOL graduate students) co-taught the course. Erin Thomas continued to help with the class through August 2003; her journals were used in the creation of the guidebook. From August 2003 to December 2003, Carol Lynn Allen helped teach the class while doing her BYU TESOL minor internship; her journals were also used in the guidebook development. Vicky Hickman (TESOL graduate student) has been helping off and on with the class since January 2004 and continues to help. She will take over the class in August 2004. Carla Castano has also been a high school student intern with the class from June 2003 to the present. Carla Castano and Vicky Hickman have helped with the guidebook by giving the researcher suggestions about her activities as they observed them in the classroom.

Three teachers from the Provo School District Adult ESL program have also used chapters from the guidebook in their classrooms. Their feedback was used to improve the guidebook.

This guidebook will help adult ESL teachers focus their class on the needs of their learners. It will help them involve learners in assessment and curriculum development. The first two chapters of the guidebook give the teachers the necessary background information about the major techniques used in the activities chapters. Teachers will be able to use the guidebook to compliment their already existing curriculum or to help them create a curriculum based on learner needs.

*Class*

The Boulders class was held every Tuesday and Thursday from 6:00-8:00pm. The first few sessions were organized into 10-week periods of time. The 10-week periods did not work well because students could join at any time and because attendance varied greatly. The class was changed to meet continually with breaks for holidays or other occasions.

The class atmosphere was very laid back and comfortable. All learners were encouraged to participate and were listened to. The class was very flexible depending upon the students and their needs. For example, if a topic was particularly interesting or difficult it was discussed for several weeks. If a topic was not applicable or interesting, the teacher and students decided to move on to another topic.

The guidebook is meant to be used in similar community classes that are flexible and based on learner needs.   It takes into consideration issues that commonly face

community adult classes like irregular attendance, open enrollment, and multilevel classes. The guidebook does this by providing the teacher with activities that are flexible and can be used with students at varying English proficiency levels and that are flexible enough to be based on individual needs. For example the *identifying levels* activity (see chapter 4) allows students to define their own levels and make goals based on their personal level.

*Guidebook*

The guidebook is divided into two sections: one that explains the background methodology and another that provides lesson plans and example activities that can be used in class.

*Section 1*

Section 1 of this book focuses on simplifying and explaining for teachers the two main methodologies upon which the book is based, Equipped for the Future (EFF) and Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD). Both of these methodologies are complex and difficult to understand without training and study (see chapter 2, the review of literature, for a thorough discussion of each). For this reason it is very important to present both of them in a way that is applicable and understandable to teachers in the shortest and clearest way possible.

*Chapter 1*

Chapter 1 introduces the 3 main aspects of the EFF Framework to teachers. Since EFF is used throughout the guidebook and is a growing national initiative, it is important for teachers to be introduced to it and familiar with it and how it is applicable to adult ESOL. While there are various parts and aspects of EFF, the guidebook focuses on three of them: the four purposes for learning, three adult roles, and sixteen content standards. Chapter one is divided into three sections each focusing on one of these aspects of the EFF framework.

*Chapter 2*

Chapter 2 introduces the idea of Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD). PCD is the basis for all of the activities included in the guidebook. Each of the activities focuses on identifying and meeting the needs of the learners, and on helping the learners take responsibility for their own language learning inside and outside of the classroom. Since the activities included in the book are based on PCD it is important for teachers to understand what it is and why it is important. Understanding PCD helps teachers understand and carry out the activities in the book more effectively.

*Section 2*

The second section of the book introduces concrete activities that can be used in the classroom. These activities were created and tested in the adult ESOL class at the Boulders apartments. They were created using the Participatory Action Research (PAR) cycle of reflection, planning, action, and observation (see chapter 2, review of literature,

for a thorough discussion of PAR). As part of PAR, the lessons were originally created based on EFF, PCD, and the expressed needs of the learners. The lessons were then tested in the classroom (both the author's classroom and the classrooms of three other teachers) and changed/modified depending on feedback from students and teachers. Once the lessons were changed and modified they were tried out again and then reevaluated. Learners that participated in the Boulders class played a major role in the creation of these activities.  Their responses to the activities were used to choose which ones to include in the book. Their feedback was also important in the change and modification process. Their stories and experiences are used throughout the book. The students are very excited about being part of the guidebook. They would not only like their stories to be used but also their names and pictures.

*Chapter 3*

Chapter 3, the first chapter in Section Two, provides three mini-lessons that can be used by teachers to introduce the different parts of EFF in the classroom. Because EFF is based on the lives and needs of adult learners it is not only important for teachers to understand this new framework, but it is also important for learners to understand the framework and be able to apply it to their lives. Each mini-lesson in this chapter gives a rationale for introducing that particular part of EFF to the students and then explains how to present it and how to apply that aspect to the learners' lives. The different aspects include the EFF 16 *Content Standards and 4 Skill Areas*, the EFF 3 *Adult Roles* and the EFF 4 *Purposes for Learning.*

*Chapter 4*

Chapter 4 outlines an activity used to help learners and teachers set up applicable levels for the class, do a needs assessment, and identify topics for future lessons. It also helps learners recognize and define the language learning process they go through and that they see their peers go through while learning English.

The first part of this chapter focuses on the learners identifying and defining five different levels of English from beginning to advanced. They do this by first identifying non-native English speakers that speak English very well and listing concrete English abilities of these speakers. This helps identify the advanced level. Then, the students identify and list concrete English abilities of someone that has recently arrived in the USA and has no previous English experience. This defines the beginning level. Once these levels are defined, students fill in the middle levels by looking at their own language abilities in comparison to the two levels already established. Each of the five levels is divided into the five different skills that make up the *Communication* portion of the EFF skills wheel: reading, writing, listening, speaking and observing.

The second main part of this activity helps learners recognize and identify the language learning process as they name each of the five levels according to the characteristics of students at each level. This part is particularly important because it helps students become more aware of the steps they must go through in order to move from one level to the next. Naming the levels focuses more on the metacognitive aspects of language learning while the identifying levels part focuses on the actual language skills.

*Chapter 5*

Chapter 5 follows up on chapter 4 by examining the levels identified by the activity described in chapter 4 on a more individual learner basis. In this chapter teachers learn to help students place themselves in the different levels according to the five communication skills. This means teaching learners that they might place themselves in level 2 for writing and level 3 for understanding, or level 1 for speaking and level 3 for reading, etc. Once learners have placed themselves in levels according to each of the skill areas, they set goals. In this step learners write obtainable goals for each of the skill areas. They set goals that they can work on on an everyday basis. For example, some goals my students have set have been to read for 10 minutes in English everyday, to talk to a neighbor in English, or watch TV in English for a certain amount of time. In the final step in this chapter students make their goals visible by writing them down and placing them at home and in the classroom so they are constantly reminded of the goals they set.

*Chapter 6*

Chapter 6 introduces the idea of writing student stories. The techniques used in this chapter are also used throughout the book in other chapters. This activity is similar to the LEA approach. In this chapter students write stories based on their personal experiences. A code or visual representation or sometimes a story itself is used to encourage dialogue on a topic of interest to the students. Once a topic has been identified students discuss it and relate it to their personal lives by telling stories and relating experiences. After the topic is discussed students choose a story to write about as a class.

Once the story is written it can be used for various other language activities including pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, writing, reading, etc. This chapter outlines the steps for completing this process in the classroom.

*Chapter 7*

Chapter 7 introduces a journal activity that can be used at the end of each class period. This activity tracks language learning and use inside and outside of the classroom. At the end of every class period students write about what they learned in class that day on one side of a large sheet of paper. On the other side they write about one student's use of English outside of the classroom. This gives students a chance to report on their progress and reminds them that they need to use what they learn in class outside of class. This activity is very empowering as learners become more aware of what they are learning in class and of their responsibility to use English out of class.

*Assessment Measures*

Two methods were used to assess the effectiveness of the guidebook. First, Participatory Action Research (PAR) was used throughout the length of the class to create and assess the activities. Second, select chapters were given to three community adult ESL teachers for them to use in their own classrooms.

*Participatory Action Research*

The main research tool used to assess the guidebook is Participatory Action Research or PAR (see chapter 2, review of literature, for a thorough discussion). This

type of research is imbedded in the teaching/learning process. Through the PAR cycle of reflection, planning, action, and observation, teacher and student feedback was used to create and refine the activities in the guidebook.

*Teacher Feedback*

Select chapters of the guidebook including what are now chapters 1-5 were given to 3 community adult ESL teachers. These teachers read the chapters and then taught them according to their understanding of what they contained. The researcher then observed the classes and interviewed the teachers. Observing the classes helped the researcher to see how well the chapters were written and how well the activities worked. The feedback from the observations and interviews were used to improve the existing chapters. Specifically, Chapters Two, Three, and Five were created as a result of these observations.

# Moving Forward:

A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching
Community Adult ESL

By

Haley Wiggins

# Table of Contents

# Introduction

## To The Teacher

Have you ever wondered how to address some of the common problems that face community adult ESL teachers? Issues like how to deal with attrition, multi English level classes, multi literacy level classes, and open-enrollment classes. How do you make sure that you are really teaching what the students need and want to learn? If you face these issues regularly, then the activities in this guidebook can help you focus on the daily needs of your students as well as address these common problems that plague community adult ESL.

As the author of this guidebook, I have faced all of these issues in the community adult ESL classroom. From my experience and research of learner-centered and participatory teaching techniques I have created this guidebook to address these basic problems that face all community adult ESL classrooms.

The activities in this guidebook are not based on a curriculum but are



rather a framework that can be adapted to an already existing curriculum. They help focus on learner-needs and learner-involvement in the classroom.

We have all heard of learner-centered approaches to teaching, but sometimes it's hard to find concrete activities to use in the classroom. The nature of learner-centered teaching implies that activities in the classroom should be based on the learners and their needs. For this reason, it is difficult to use preset activities and still focus on individual and class needs.

The lesson plans in this guidebook provide a framework for activities that can be applied to individual

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classrooms and learner-needs. Each chapter also includes examples of how the activities were used in an adult ESL classroom.

This guidebook is divided into two sections. The first section, which includes two chapters, *Equipped for the Future (EFF)* and *Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD),* explains the main learner-centered techniques used to design the activities. These techniques are important for teachers to understand because they provide the basis for creating learner-centered activities. Not only does this guidebook supply teachers with concrete activities, it also provides a background of the techniques used so that teachers can create their own learner-centered activities.

The second section of the guidebook includes five learner-centered activities based on EFF and PCD that help eachers focus on learner needs and stress helping learners take responsibility for their language learning. They each include various examples of how the activities were used in the classroom.

The five activities include, *I ntroducing EFF in the Classroom Using PCD, Identifying Levels, Goal Setting for Individual Levels, Writing Student Stories,* and *Writing Evidence Journals.*

This guidebook will help community adult ESL teachers identify and meet real-world learner needs. It will help teachers implement and/or create learner-centered activities that motivate students take responsibility for their own language learning. The implementation of these activities and techniques in the classroom will keep students involved and participating in the class. The activities will also help teachers address common issues in the community classroom like retention and multilevel classes by supplying activities that are based on learner needs and that are adaptable to multiple English proficiency levels.

Try them out and you will see!

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# Chapter 1

# Equipped for the Future (EFF)

## Introduction to EFF

The Equipped for the Future (EFF) Framework is a standards-based national literacy initiative promoted by the National Institute for Literacy. It defines what adults need to know and be able to do to function successfully in the 21$^{st}$ century (Stein, 2000).

EFF is complex and multi-dimensional; it is also extremely useful and focused on real life issues addressed by adult students in their daily lives. It will be used throughout this book because it focuses on meeting the real world needs of adult learners. It is especially useful when applied to community adult English as a Second Language (ESL).

This chapter will give an overview of 3 different aspects of EFF. It will address the *4 Skill Areas* and *16 Content Standards*, the *3 Adult Roles,* and the *4 Purposes for Learning.*



Figure 1
EFF Skills Wheel/Content Standards

## EFF and TESOL

In a traditional communicative approach to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) the focus is on communication in the different skill areas including reading, writing, listening and speaking. The traditional approach is comprehensive from a linguistic or academic perspective, but in terms of the broader picture of adult education it only addresses a fourth of the picture (see figure 2). It does not take into account other important skills needed by adults in their daily lives.

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The EFF approach takes into consideration how language skills are used in the lives of learners through their interactions in an English-speaking society and culture. EFF adds three other dimensions of skills needed for adult ESL learners: *Interpersonal Skills, Decision Making Skills*, and *Life-long Learning Skills*.

# 1. EFF Content Standards and Skill Areas

EFF identified 16 content standards and divided them into 4 important skill areas pertinent to the daily lives of adults in the 21st century (see figure 1). The skill areas are

1.    *Communication Skills*
2.    *Lifelong Learning Skills*
3.    *Interpersonal Skills*
4.    *Decision-Making Skills*

The content standards in the *Communication Skills* section of the EFF skills wheel cover the basic skills of the traditional communicative approach to TESOL

1.    ***Listen*** *Actively*
2.    *Convey Ideas In* ***Writing***
3.    ***Speak*** *So Others Can Understand*
4.    ***Read*** *With Understanding*
5.    ***Observe*** *Critically.*

The content standards in the other three skill areas define language functions and address the application of the *Communication Skills* in meaningful real-life situations.
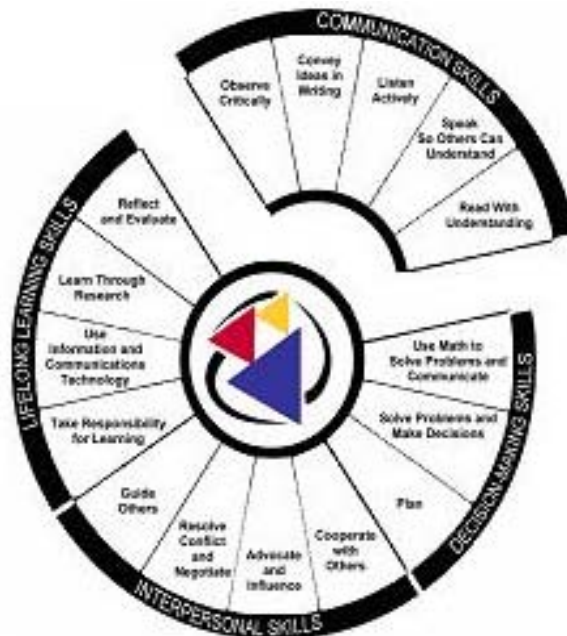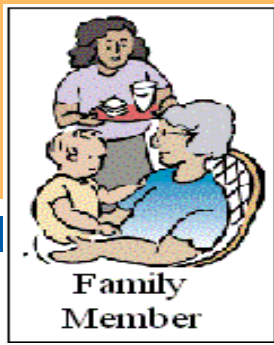


Figure 2
EFF Communication Skills

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Family Member     Community Member     Worker

In other words, the *Communication Skills* address the basic skills needed to communicate in a way that others understand while the other 3 skill areas address the basic tasks that adults need to be able to do in order to function successfully in society. ESOL students need to learn English in order to communicate and function well in these different daily tasks.

# 2. EFF Adult Roles

Another aspect of EFF addresses the main roles that all adults play in their lives. These roles are an important part of the framework because they take into consideration the fact that adults have various roles that they play on a daily basis and each role can be addressed in the classroom. The 3 Adult Roles are

1. *Parent or Family Member*
2. *Worker*
3. *Community Member*

Combining the language functions and tasks of the content standards mentioned in section 1 with specific situations encountered by students in these 3 roles is the basis for creating meaningful language learning activities using EFF.

For example, the *Parent* and *Worker* and *Community Member* roles can be combined with *Interpersonal Skills* to form language activities. The four content standards identified under *Interpersonal Skills* are *Guide Others*, *Resolve Conflict and Negotiate*, *Advocate and Influence* and *Cooperate with Others*.

A parent in an ESL class might need to communicate with his or her child's teachers in order to *advocate and influence* or be able to *guide others* (their children).

A worker on a construction team may need to communicate with his or her co-workers in order to *cooperate with others* to get the job done.

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A community member may need to *resolve conflict and negotiate* with his or her neighbors in order to make their community better.

Once these relationships and student needs are identified, language activities can be designed to address the specific content standards relevant to the adult roles. Section 2 of this book focuses on developing these types of activities in more detail.

# 3. EFF Four Purposes for Learning

The third aspect of the EFF framework addresses the four main purposes for learning. These purposes were identified by adult learners across the United States. They identify the main reasons why adults go back to school.  The 4 purposes are

1.     *Access*
2.     *Voice*
3.     *Independent Action*
4.     A *Bridge to the Future*

(see figure 3 for a definition of these concepts).

These purposes are important in the ESOL classroom because adult students relate to them. They provide motivation for learning. They also help learners realize that they are part of a larger population of learners with similar goals and needs.

When students identify what they want and need to learn it's important to help them realize that other adults have similar desires.
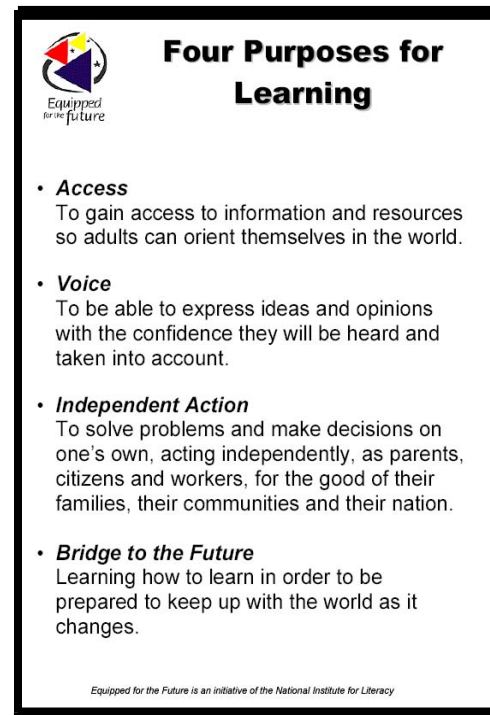


## Four Purposes for Learning

*Equipped for the future*

- **Access**
  To gain access to information and resources so adults can orient themselves in the world.

- **Voice**
  To be able to express ideas and opinions with the confidence they will be heard and taken into account.

- **Independent Action**
  To solve problems and make decisions on one's own, acting independently, as parents, citizens and workers, for the good of their families, their communities and their nation.

- **Bridge to the Future**
  Learning how to learn in order to be prepared to keep up with the world as it changes.

*Equipped for the Future is an initiative of the National Institute for Literacy*

Figure 3
Purposes of Learning

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Let's look at one of the examples from section 2 of this chapter. If students identify that they need to be able to communicate with their children's teachers, you as a teacher can help them choose which purpose for learning this task addresses. (Many language tasks will address more than one of the 4 purposes.) This example would address *Access* and *Voice* most directly. Identifying these purposes helps students recognize their reasons for learning English and how it will help them better their lives. It also may make them more motivated to learn.

## Keeping Track of EFF in the Classroom

The strength of EFF is that it grounds language and literacy learning in real life roles and activities. The challenge of EFF is that, like life, it can often seem overwhelming to keep track of the many dimensions of content standards, adult roles, and activities. Therefore, it is useful to routinely keep track of the different classroom activities and lessons that address one or more of the 16 content standards.

An important step in making EFF a part of your class is to make it a visual part of your classroom. This can be done by posting the 16 EFF content standards/skills wheel (figure 1), 3 adult roles, and 4 purposes for learning (figure 3) on the walls of your classroom. Copies of each of these can be found on the main EFF Webpage http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/eff/eff.html under downloadable masters (see, also Appendices 1-3).

An additional way of keeping track of EFF in your classroom is to create a class "achievement log" (see figure 4 & appendix 4). The achievement log helps both you and the learners see how the content standards are addressed on a daily basis in the classroom.

This can be done by posting a page similar to figure 4 in your classroom. At the end of each lesson discuss

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with your students the different content standards that were addressed in your class that day. You will be surprised at how many of them are addressed every lesson, especially when the lesson is specifically focused on the learners and their needs.

For example, if your lesson was focused on filling out job applications you may address the standards *Convey Ideas in Writing, Read With Understanding, Solve Problems and Make Decisions, Plan, Take Responsibility for Learning* and many others.

| Date | Standard | Activity |
|------|----------|----------|
|      |          |          |
|      |          |          |
|      |          |          |
|      |          |          |
|      |          |          |
|      |          |          |

Figure 4
Achievement Log

# EFF Resources

This book provides a basic guide for implementing EFF in the adult ESOL classroom.

You will find that EFF provides a framework for developing all kinds of ESOL, literacy and adult basic education learning projects.

More information on the wide range of resources being developed for practitioners who want to use EFF can be found on various Websites that are practical and useful for teachers.

The main EFF Website is http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/eff/eff.html. This Website includes an introduction to EFF and its many components. It also links to various publications on EFF and downloadable masters of the 16 *Content Standards*, 3 *Adult Roles*, 4 *Purposes for Learning* and many other EFF resources that can be used in the classroom.

Other Websites that are very useful to teachers include:

¨ A Busy Teacher's Guide to Equipped for the Future Lesson Planning
http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/publications/teacher_guide/

¨ EFF and Adult ESOL Instruction
http://www.nifl.gov/lincs/collections/eff/eff_esol_instruction.html

¨ EFF Teaching/Learning Toolkit
http://cls.coe.utk.edu/efftlc/

The EFF teaching/learning toolkit is especially helpful for teachers because it outlines the teaching-learning process, guides teachers through this process, and gives numerous examples of activities teachers can use in their classrooms.

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# Chapter 2

# Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD)

## Introduction to PCD

The Teaching-Learning process used in most EFF programs is based on a method of teaching called Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD). PCD is a process for developing a curriculum that involves the learners in all aspects of instruction from pre-assessment to planning to implementation to evaluation. PCD is based on Paulo Freire's adult literacy theory, which ties action and social change to literacy education.

According to this approach instruction should not just focus on language learning but also on the power of language and what learners can do to make their lives better as a result of improving their English skills. Auerbach states, "[t]he message is a simple one: people learn best when learning starts with what they already

> "People learn best when learning starts with what they already know, builds on their strengths, engages them in the learning process, and enables them to accomplish something they want to accomplish" (Auerbach, 9).

know, builds on their strengths, engages them in the learning process, and enables them to accomplish something they want to accomplish" (9).

The EFF framework is an example of this approach because it was created specifically to meet the needs of adult learners and involves many of them in the development and implementation of the program.

A very helpful book that explains how Freire's ideas and PCD can be applied to ESOL is entitled *Making Meaning Making Change* by Dr. Elsa Auerbach an ESOL and Bilingual Education professor at the University of Massachusetts, Boston.

This chapter will explain four of the main principles of participatory curriculum development as well as the PCD process.

## PCD Principles

1)   Students are engaged in curriculum development every step of the process.

2)   The content comes from the social context.

3)   The teacher's role is one of problem-poser rather than problem-solver.

4)   Individual experience is linked to social analysis and goes back to the social context.

***1. Students are engaged in curriculum development every step of the process.***

The first principle of the PCD approach is that students are engaged in curriculum development every step of the process. This principle is the basis for PCD. It is the main point that distinguishes PCD from traditional teaching. Most teachers draw on numerous resources to help meet the needs of students. They generally assess the needs and the English level of students and try to incorporate these needs into the curriculum. Many teachers have specific standards to which they must adhere and a specific curriculum that they must follow.

PCD takes the next step and involves students in every step of the curriculum development process. Students help to choose topics, make materials, evaluate their progress, etc. Learners take responsibility for identifying, prioritizing, and selecting topics.

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The teacher then responds with activities based on student choices and input. Learners help make materials by writing stories that are later used in other language activities. They also make materials by collecting realia and bringing experiences and materials from their lives into the classroom. Learners evaluate their progress by constant self-assessment, by recognizing their progress and use of English and by deciding when they are ready to move on and what they would like to learn next.

Adults like to know what they are learning and why, are aware of what they need and want to learn, and can be involved in all aspects of the adult ESL class.

For example, students in my class participate in assessing their own language ability and the general level of the class by participating in an activity to identify levels of language skill (see chapter 4: Identifying Levels). Through this activity they are able to identify topics of interest and evaluate their own progress

based on their movement both within a level and from one level to the next.

Having students identify their own English levels addresses the EFF standards *Reflect and Evaluate* and *Take Responsibility For Learning.* It also involves learners in the curriculum development process from choosing activities to making materials to evaluating their own progress.

## *2. The content comes from the social context.*

According to the second PCD principle, content should come from the real lives of the learners and the issues that they face on a daily basis. Students are more motivated to learn when they see a direct relationship between language learning and their daily lives. Teachers can use experiences students have in their lives to teach English.

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For example, one evening a student came to class and told us that he had been pulled over by a policeman. This experience triggered various questions from the students about what to do if they are pulled over. They wondered about what rights they have and what types of documents they need to show the policeman when they are pulled over.

> Questions for the Police Officer
>
> 1. Does a police officer have the right to function as an immigration officer?
>
> 2. Is it permitted that a police officer search me?
>
> 3. Is it permitted that a police officer search personal documents?
>
> 4. What is the limit for us and the police to search us?
>
> 5. Why is it obligatory to sign a ticket before the court defense?
>
> 6. Why is it obligatory to use handcuffs all the time?

Figure 2.1
Police Officer Student Questions

We decided to write down various questions about personal rights and about what to expect when pulled over (see figure 2.1). I was able to answer a few of their questions but not all of them, so we decided to invite the local community police officer to come to class and answer the questions. At first many of the students were apprehensive about inviting a policeman to class but after talking it over a few times they decided that it was a good idea. They prepared numerous questions in writing and practiced them verbally to ask the policeman when he came.

The students learned from this experience that their issues could help drive the curriculum. We applied the EFF standard *Learn Through Research* as we sought to answer real questions. The students' language ability progressed, because they were motivated to practice asking questions by the real-life

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possibility that they would have to speak so that he would be able to understand their questions (EFF standard *Speak So Others Can Understand*).

Once a student experience like this one has been shared, discussed and written down as a class there are numerous linguistic activities that can be done with it. These stories elicit vocabulary that can be taught, reviewed and expanded. They can be used as role-plays where students play the different individuals involved in the story or write similar dialogues with partners or groups. Key grammar points can be taken from the story and expanded. Individual writing activities can be done using the original class-written piece as a model.

In this way the content is meaningful and applicable to the learners because it comes from their lives and social context. For example, grammar points, vocabulary and dialogue phrases are easier for learners to remember because they are embedded in something that is important to remember and relevant to their lives.

### 3. The teacher's role is one of problem-poser rather than problem-solver.

Because PCD addresses and values the social context of the learners' lives, many social issues are addressed in the classroom. They are not only addressed, but encouraged. This does not mean that the teacher is in charge of solving the problems and issues that come up in class, but rather that he or she encourages learners to share experiences and facilitates discussion and action on these issues.



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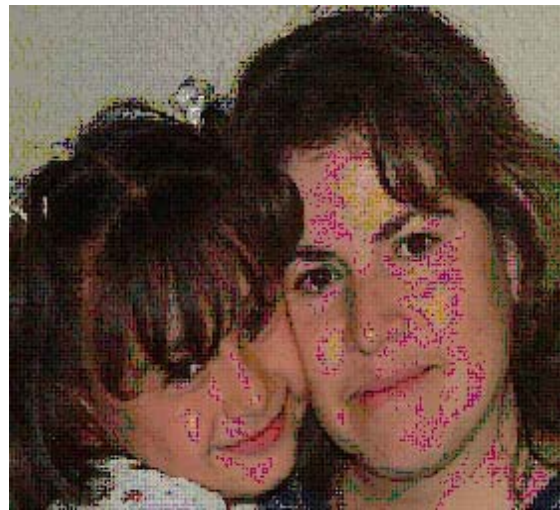
It is important to dispel the notion that the teacher is the "expert" in helping students solve their problems. Rather, the teachers' role is to ask questions and encourage student inquiry and research. Depending on the issue being addressed, this can be done by sharing experiences, surveying class members or neighbors, researching available resources in the community, etc.

In fact, the teacher can even draw upon the students to help solve class administrative problems such as poor attendance. For example, at one point in class my students mentioned that we needed to recruit more students. We discussed why they thought students weren't coming and what we could do to get old students to come back and new students to join. The students decided it would be a good idea to have a party with lots of food and invite everyone in the apartment complex to come.

As a class we decided to plan the party and make and deliver all of the invitations. The students decided to make a colorful bilingual invitation for all of the Spanish-speaking families in the neighborhood (see figure 2.2). They also divided up the responsibilities for food, decorations, music, etc.



Figure 2.2
Student Invitation

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In this activity students addressed numerous EFF content standards including *Cooperate With Others*, *Plan*, *Solve Problems and Make Decisions, Convey Ideas in Writing,* and *Take Responsibility for Learning.* They were involved in every step of this process and led the way most of the time.  They developed their speaking skills as they planned together and their writing skills as they made the invitations and wrote down their plans. They were also able to address an important issue by recruiting a few new students.

### 4. Individual experience is linked to social analysis and goes back to the social context.

When learners talk about their individual experiences in the classroom, not only can their stories be linked to linguistic skill development, they can also lead to further analysis of social issues and help learners find solutions to societal problems.

For example one of my students was having problems at work and felt like
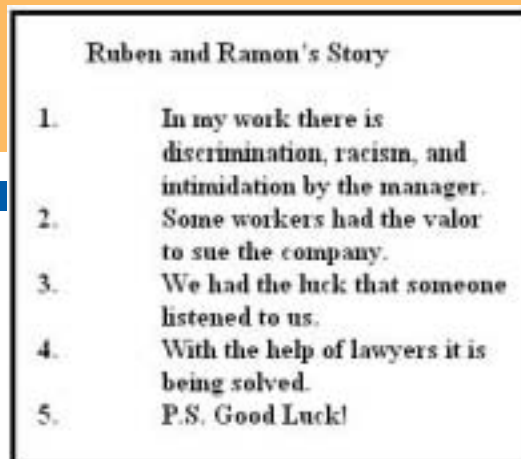


Figure 2.3
Student Story

he was being treated poorly.  We discussed the issue in class for a few minutes and other students expressed similar feelings.  After our discussion we wrote a story about an experience this student had had  at work where he felt like he had been discriminated against.

 In this case I was able to act as a facilitator of discussion and writing.  I was also able to act as a resource and refer this particular student to someone that could help him address these types of problems at work (see figure 2.3).

 The student took action, talked to the individual that I had referred him to and started working on a lawsuit

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which resulted in some improvement at work, not only for himself but for other Latinos at his workplace.

As a class we followed this students' progress on the issue and wrote numerous stories about his situation as it progressed. It also seemed to encourage other students to analyze their own workplace situations.

# PCD Process

In *Making Meaning Making Change,* Elsa Auerbach not only identifies various PCD principles as explained in this chapter but also outlines the PCD process. The four main steps in this process include

### 1. *Ways in: Listening to find student themes*

It is important to always listen for student themes (topics applicable to the students' lives). Many times themes come up as students talk before and after class. For example, I was able to pick up on the traffic and police theme when a student talked about being pulled over in class.

### 2. *Tools: Dialogue and literacy development around themes*

Once you identify a theme important to the students the next step is to develop language activities based on the theme. In the police example, we practiced writing and pronouncing questions in preparation for the policeman's visit.

### 3. *Action inside and outside the classroom*

Action in this sense means attempting to make some type of change in the class, in the lives of the students, or in society. The action step can be large or small depending on the identified theme and student interest. In the police example the action step was to invite a community police officer to come to class, answer and clarify students' questions.

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### 4. *Evaluation of the learning and action*

Evaluation can be done by both the teacher and the learners. One aspect of evaluation is evaluating students' language learning. For example, after preparing questions for the police officer are students able to pronounce the questions and make similar questions on their own? Another type of evaluation is of the action step, in this case arranging the meeting with the policeman, and the overall activity. For example, the students and I talked about how the action step went and decided when to move on to another topic.



## PCD Activities

Section 2 of this book (chapters 3-7) will describe the steps of participatory curriculum development in more detail through examples and activities.

The chapters included in section 2 are entitled

# Chapter 3
## Introducing EFF in the Classroom Using PCD

## Introduction

### *Why introduce EFF in the classroom?*

The value of the Equipped for the Future Framework outlined in this book is that it is based on the needs and interests of adult learners. Learners relate to the different aspects of EFF because they were identified by adult learners across the United States in similar adult education programs.

The first activity in section 2 of this book is to introduce the three main aspects of EFF (outlined for teachers in chapter 1 of this book) to adult learners using Participatory Curriculum Development.

This approach helps students look beyond merely learning English. It helps them recognize how they will use their English to function successfully in their various roles in the family, work, and community. The introduction of EFF in the classroom is a good way of conveying to the students that their opinions are valued and that the class is based on their needs.

### *How?*

When you introduce the different parts of the EFF Framework to your learners, help them identify how they are applicable to their lives. This will make the different aspects more interesting and important to the students. If they see how it relates to them personally they will be more likely to participate in and learn from the activities.

Student/teacher dialogue is an important part of this activity because it relays to the learners that their opinions, questions, and life experiences are important to the class and classroom activities. It lets them know that the class is for them and will be modified based on their expressed needs and concerns.

When introducing these concepts in the classroom it is always necessary to take into consideration the English level of the students. It is easier to talk about these ideas with advanced and

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Figure 3.1
EFF Skills Wheel/Content Standards

intermediate students who have larger vocabularies. When using these activities with beginners it's usually necessary to use actions and simple language to help everyone understand. You may also want to decide which points are most applicable to the students and focus on those issues rather than trying to fit everything in. (Don't be afraid to use beginning students' L1 for discussion purposes if this is an option in your classroom.)

This chapter provides a method of introducing the EFF framework to ESOL learners. It is divided into 3 mini-lessons that address each of the 3 aspects of EFF discussed in chapter 1. These aspects are

1.  The *16 Content Standards and 4 Skill Areas*
2.  The *3 Adult Roles*
3.  The *4 Purposes for Learning*

These 3 aspects of EFF can be taught in the same class period or separately over a period of time.

# Section 1: EFF Content Standards and Skill Areas

**Objective:**

This activity is designed to introduce learners to the 16 EFF *Content Standards* and 4 EFF *Skill Areas* and to relate them to their own lives (see chapter 1 section 1).

**Time:** 30-40 minutes

**Materials:**

1.  EFF Skills Wheel Handout
2.  markers/chalk
3.  white board/blackboard

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### Step 1: Introducing the 16 EFF Content Standards

Introduce the learners to the 16 content standards/skills wheel. Read through each of the standards with the learners and discuss how these apply to their English language learning. For beginning classes focus on the key words (you may want to use pictures) and not the entire standard. For example instead of *Read With Understanding* stress *Read.*

### Step 2: Introduce EFF Initiative

Explain to the learners that EFF is a national initiative for all adult learners (not just ESL learners) and that it is based on needs expressed by other adults like themselves. This will help them identify with EFF and let them know that adult learners have a voice and that these standards are important to people just like them across the USA.

### Step 3: Applying the Standards

Talk to the learners about how EFF can be used in the classroom. Ask them what skills they are most interested in learning and what content standards they would like to focus on.

As a class identify and write down the standards that are most important. At this stage I like to vote on the areas that are most important and focus on those in the upcoming lessons. As a class or individually you can also have students set goals based on the most important standards.

This would be a good time to introduce the idea of keeping track of EFF in the classroom (see Chapter 1 page 5 ).

Family Member

Community Member

Worker
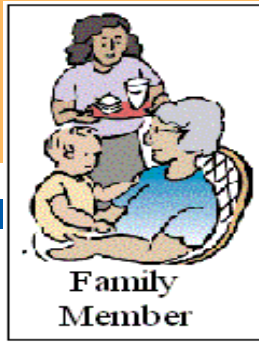
# Section 2: EFF Adult Roles

**Objective:**

This activity is designed to introduce learners to the 3 EFF *Adult Roles* and to relate them to their own lives (see chapter 1 section 2).

**Time:** 30-40 minutes

**Materials:**

1. 3 adult roles handout
2. markers
3. sticky notes or small pieces of paper

**Set-up:**

Draw a large circle on the board (or on a large sheet of paper) and divide it into three sections. Label each section one of the 3 adult roles, worker, family member/parent and community member.

## Step 1: Introducing the 3 EFF Adult Roles

Introduce the 3 EFF adult roles of family member, worker and community member to the students. Ask them if these roles apply to their lives and in what ways. Do they need English to communicate in each of these roles?

## Step 2: Identifying English Needs

Hand out sticky notes and have students write different things that they would like to be able to do or say in English (1 idea per sticky note). To help learners with ideas ask them where they use English. Where would they like to be able to use English? Who do they need to be able to talk to in English and for what reasons?

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For example, some of my students wrote things like "speak with the manager," "talk with other people on the street" and "talk to my North American grandsons, granddaughter and great grandson."

### *Step 3: Comparing Student Needs and Adult Roles*

Ask the learners to place each of the sticky notes in the corresponding area on the board depending on the adult role it is most associated with.

For example, "speak with the manager" would fall under the worker role, "talk with other people on the street" under the community member role and "talk to my north American grandsons, granddaughter and great-grandson" under the family member/parent role.

These ideas can later be used to help students set goals and to establish curriculum pertinent to the learners' lives and needs (see chapter 5).

# Section 3: EFF Purposes for Learning

**Objective:**

This activity is designed to introduce learners to the 4 EFF *Purposes for Learning* and to relate them to their own purposes for learning English (see chapter 1 section 3).

**Time:** 30-40 minutes

**Materials:**

1. purposes for learning handout (see appendix 3)
2. markers/chalk
3. white board/blackboard
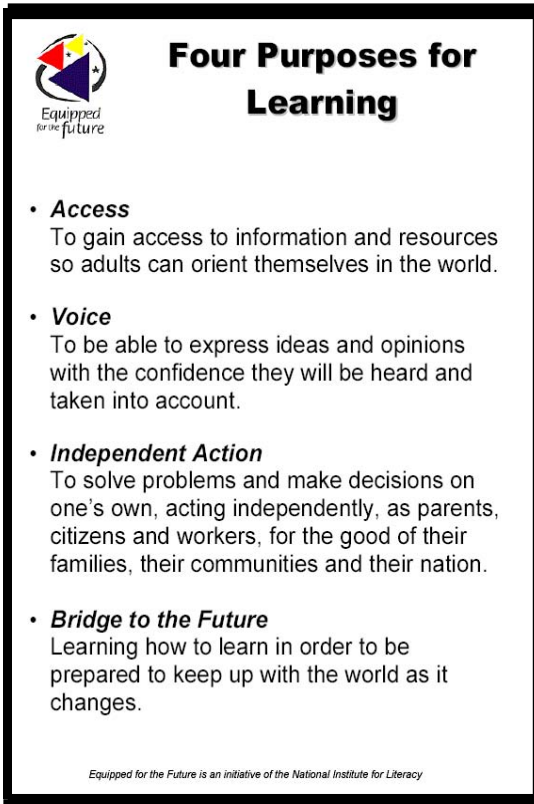4. index cards and tape or sticky notes

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**Four Purposes for Learning**

- **Access**
  To gain access to information and resources so adults can orient themselves in the world.

- **Voice**
  To be able to express ideas and opinions with the confidence they will be heard and taken into account.

- **Independent Action**
  To solve problems and make decisions on one's own, acting independently, as parents, citizens and workers, for the good of their families, their communities and their nation.

- **Bridge to the Future**
  Learning how to learn in order to be prepared to keep up with the world as it changes.

*Equipped for the Future is an initiative of the National Institute for Literacy*

Figure 2
Purposes of Learning

## *Step 1: Identifying Purposes For Learning*

Ask your students to write down on index cards or sticky notes why they come to class. What are their main motivating factors for signing up for an English class? What are their purposes for learning English? Have students post or tape their reasons, in English, on the board. Take time to make sure that everyone understands all the items on the list.

For example, in an intermediate level class students mentioned things like "to communicate at work," "to help kids at school," "to advance in employment," etc.

## *Step 2: Comparing Purposes*

Show the learners the four EFF purposes for learning (Figure 2). Go over any unknown vocabulary and discuss the meaning of the different purposes. Ask students to match their reasons for learning with the four EFF purposes for learning.

For example, using the reasons for learning English mentioned in

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Step 1 the students matched their reasons for learning with the four EFF purposes in the following way. They placed "to advance in employment" under *independent action* and a *bridge to the future*. "To help kids at school" with *voice*, and "to communicate at work" with both *voice* and *independent action*.

## Conclusion

The types of discussion with learners outlined in the chapter provide the basis for further use of the EFF standards and activities in the classroom. It also provides a basis for many of the activities explained in this book.

Introducing the 16 EFF *Content Standards*, 3 *Adult Roles* and 4 *Purposes For Learning* in the classroom help learners and teachers realize that ESOL instruction focuses on more than just explicit language learning and teaching. Adult ESOL learners need to learn how to function in an English-speaking society with a language, culture, and set of norms and values that may be different from their native country, language, and culture.

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# Chapter 4

## Identifying Levels

### Introduction

The next activity to bring Equipped for the Future (see chapter 1) and Participatory Curriculum Development (see chapter 2) into the classroom is to identify student levels of English ability. The Identifying Levels activity is a pre-assessment activity that maps, for learners, the range of English language skills that need to be learned starting with beginning and moving toward advanced levels.

Traditional ESOL classes are based on levels and books that go along with the established levels. In a learner-centered approach like PCD, teachers work together with learners to identify what levels 1,2,3, etc. mean to them in a real world setting. The students also determine where they already are in their English knowledge and skills and where they would like to be. This activity focuses most specifically on the EFF Content Standard *Take Responsibility for Learning* (see figure 4.1 under Lifelong Learning Skills).



Figure 4.1
EFF Skills Wheel/Content Standards

### *Why should learners participate in an activity to identify their own levels?*

This activity is important for learners because it lets them know where they stand in terms of language ability. It requires them to define what it means to be at a certain level and what it takes to get to the next level. It also places more responsibility on the students to learn and use English outside of the classroom rather than depending on the teacher to teach

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them everything they need to know. It helps students to take responsibility for their own language learning.

### *Providing Evidence and Identifying Levels*

In this activity, students will be asked to provide evidence for why they should be placed in the level they are in. Providing evidence is important because it helps learners to really focus on what makes someone a good English speaker and what concrete steps it takes to reach that level. The more evidence is stressed in the process of identifying levels the more concrete the levels will be. It is important to constantly remind the learners that you are looking for evidence and examples not just broad ideas. The tendency in the beginning of this activity is for learners to give broad reasons for why someone is at a certain level. Keep asking for evidence until you get more concrete examples of what someone at each level can do.

For example, at the beginning of the activity students may say that someone is an advanced learner because they can speak English well. In this activity the evidence needs to be more specific than to *speak English well*. A more concrete example would be that someone is an advanced learner because they can translate for others at the hospital, or that they can watch the news on TV and understand everything that is said.

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# Lesson Plan

**Objective:**

This activity is designed to engage learners in identifying their own language levels.

**Time:**

2 sessions (2 hours each session)

**Materials:**

1. 1 or more copies of the EFF Skills Wheel (appendix 1)
2. 5 large sheets of chart paper
3. markers
4. tape

**Set-up:**

1. Divide each piece of chartpaper into 5 horizontal sections. Label the sections *observe, write, listen, speak* and *read* (see figure 4.2).

2. Tape the 5 sheets of chart paper in a row in a visible and accessible area of the classroom.

| Observe: |
|---|
| Write: |
| Listen: |
| Speak: |
| Read: |
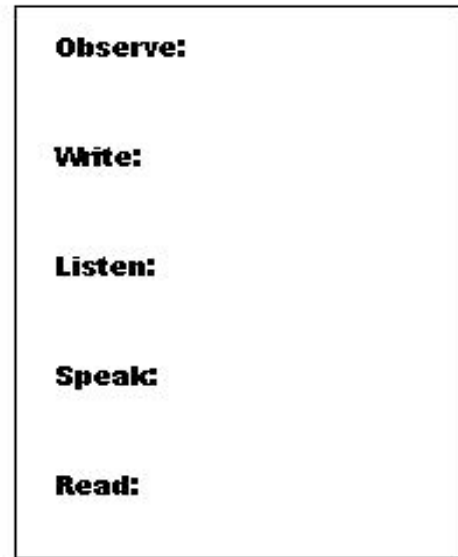
Figure 4.2
Example Levels Sheet

## Step 1: Explain the 5 EFF Communication Skills

For step 1, depending on the level of the learners act out or explain the 5 EFF communication skills. Focus on the highlighted key words. For beginning classes use Total Physical Response (TPR) method, i.e. actions, to introduce the key vocabulary words. Practice the 5 highlighted words (observe, write, listen, speak and read) until the students can easily identify the actions and their respective meanings.



Figure 4.3
Communication Skills

1. **Observe** Critically

2. Convey Ideas in **Writing**

3. **Listen** Actively

4. **Speak** So Others Can Understand

5. **Read** With Understanding

## Step 2: Discuss the Importance of the 5 EFF Communication Skills

In step 2, discuss the importance of each of the 5 communication skills. Are they important to the learners? Why? Are some more important than others? (Because these are the traditional communication skills most students recognize them as being important.)

## Step 3: Identify Evidence for the Highest Level

In step 3, help the learners identify the highest (5th) level. It

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Figure 4.4
Example Level 5



Figure 4.5
Example Level 1

will give them a goal to look toward and a person or people to identify with.

Instruct the learners to think of the best nonnative English speaker they know. Ask for some specific examples (family members, boss, or famous person). Ask them how they know that these people speak English well. What is the EVIDENCE that proves they can speak English well?

Fill in the 5th chart (furthest right) with the evidence that these nonnative English speakers know English very well in each of the 5 communication

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skill areas. How do you know that they can speak well? Listen well? Observe well? Read well? Write well?

Remember to stress the idea of evidence. Learners might start out by saying things like, "they can read everything." This may be true but for this activity you are trying to get more specific examples of what they can read, speak, write, etc. Keep encouraging the learners to give more concrete examples and evidence, like "they can read and understand newspapers and magazines" (see figure 4.4).

## *Step 4: Identify Evidence for the Lowest Level*

After filling in the chart with this high level evidence, ask the learners to think about when they first arrived in the United States or when they first started learning English. Start filling in the 1st chart (furthest left) the same as before but focus on what beginning learners can and cannot do (see figure 4.5). What are the first

things people learn when they get to the US? Learners have a tendency to say, "nothing." Keep working at it; they will give more concrete examples of what they could/can do. For example, in figure 4.5 students mentioned things like being able to understand "what is your name?" and "where are you from?" Fill in each of the 5 skill categories for this level.

## *Step 5: Fill in the Evidence for the Middle Levels*

Instruct each learner to stand in front of the level they would place themselves in (including blank levels 2-4). Some students will need some prodding to place themselves in a more appropriate level—don't tell them what level you think they should be in but rather ask questions about why they put themselves in that level. Many students will place themselves in level one because they are timid or insecure, just ask them if they can already do the things listed in level one. If they can, they can see they are not really in level one and can move appropriately.

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Once students have placed themselves in their self-assigned levels, ask the students in level 2  why they placed themselves in that level.  What is the evidence that they are in that level? What can they do in each of the communication skill areas that shows they are in level 2? Go through each skill just like for level 5 and 1 asking the students that placed themselves in that level for evidence and examples (see figure 4.6 for a full example of student levels).

Follow this same pattern for levels 3 and 4.  If there are no students in the class that place themselves in any certain level ask learners above and below that level to give examples of what they think is one step up or one step down from where they are (see chapter 5 for a follow-up goal setting activity).

## Your class levels are set!

### *Step 6: Naming the Levels*

Naming the levels is the most important part of the activity. It will give you and the learners clues into what enables a learner to move to the next level.

Ask the students to think of names for each level based on the characteristics of evidence listed in each level.  Let the students talk about it for awhile —without interjecting your own ideas.  Don't necessarily go with their first idea but let them talk about it until they have a name that really characterizes a learner in that level. A few examples from previous classes are included in figure 4.7.

Be patient with the students! Let them come up with their own ideas.  The levels and the names will be much better and much more meaningful if you let the students come up with them on their own.  This may mean that  there are a few moments of

# Complete Example of 5 Levels and Names

| New Goal (1) | Overcoming Fear (2) | Making the Decision (3) | Confident in Communicating (4) | Goal Completed (5) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Listen** | **Listen** | **Listen** | **Listen** | **Listen** |
| Â Hi, how are you? | Â What is your phone number? | Â Understand a lot but speak little | Â Understand almost everything 80% | Â Understand telephone conversations |
| Â Where are you from? | Â What is your address? | Â Understand and can give directions to others | Â Music 80% | Â Radio |
| Â What is your name? | Â Can I help you? | Â Understand directions at work | **Speak** | Â TV |
| Â Where are you going? | Â Can I see your driver's license? | Â What are you looking for? | Â Ask for information on the phone | Â Movies |
| Â money | **Speak** | **Speak** | Â Ask for information from public service organizations | Â Understand any conversation |
| **Speak** | Â What's up? | Â Ask what to do at work | Â Translate a song | **Speak** |
| Â Hi | Â Will you help me? | Â I'm finished. | Â Converse with almost everyone 80% | Â Translate for others |
| Â My name is _____. | Â What did you do? | Â Words at work (what color?, screen, clean-up) | **Write** | Â Answer the phone |
| Â How much? | Â No more | Â Speak a little with teachers, administrators at school. | Â Letter | Â Speak with gringos |
| Â I'm sorry! | **Write** | **Write** | Â Work report | Â Be a manager |
| Â 1 moment | Â Numbers | Â Applications | Â Note to school/teacher | **Write** |
| Â 1 second | Â Colors | Â Checks | **Read** | Â Take notes or write about a class in English |
| **Write** | Â Alphabet | **Read** | Â More complicated books | Â Formal letter |
| Â name | Â Telephone number | Â Applications | Â Notes from school | **Read** |
| Â nothing | **Read** | Â Simple books | Â Information brochures | Â Everything |
| **Read** | Â First part of an application | Â Newspaper want ads | Â Words on TV (commercials) | Â Magazines |
| Â Stop | Â Cognates | **Observe** | **Observe** | Â Newspaper |
| Â Work | Â Police | Â Movements and gestures/signs mean different things in different cultures | Â Almost everything | Â E-mail |
| Â School | Â Street signs | | Â Hand movements | Â Internet |
| Â Free | Â Speed limit | | | Â Ingredients |
| Â Yard sale | Â Exit | | | Â Bills |
| Â For sale | **Observe** | | | **Observe** |
| Â Only | Â Signs | | | Â Language rules |
| **Observe** | Â Stop lights | | | Â Gestures |
| Â People speaking and trying to understand but don't. | Â With a few words you can get your point across. | | | |
| Â Some gestures | | | | |

Figure 4.6
Example Levels and Names

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silence or many moments of discussion before a decision is made. The conversations and names will give you and the learners insights into the language learning process and self-identified steps that students go through as they learn English.

## Class A

New Goal (1)

Overcoming Fear (2)

Making the Decision (3)

Confident in Communicating (4)

Goal Completed (5)

## Class B

Desire to Learn (1)

Secret English Speaker (2)

Practical English Speaker (3)

Knocking at the Door (4)

I did it! (5)

Figure 4.7
Example Names

For example, in figure 4.7 are listed the names chosen by both classes for level 2: "Overcoming Fear" and "Secret English Speaker". These names describe how students at this level feel about their English skills. Class A said that they were at the stage where they were beginning to overcome fear and starting to speak English more but that they were still scared. Class B expressed a similar feeling by identifying that they understood a lot more than they were willing to speak. Many students at this level really do know a lot more than they may appear to know because they are afraid to make mistakes or say the wrong thing. Recognizing and overcoming this fear helps student progress in their English learning. This activity helps learners recognize these language learning stages on their own.

# Conclusion

This process of identifying levels and naming levels gives learners ownership of the learning process. You have now identified levels that students can place themselves in and measure their progress by. You have also named the levels in such a way that the main characteristics of the levels and the learners at those levels are identified.

This activity is the basis for many activities explained in this book including goal setting and interviewing. Make sure that you keep these levels visible in your classroom and that you frequently refer back to them.

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# Chapter 5

# Goal Setting for Individual Levels

## Introduction

After completing the identifying levels activity it is important to help the learners apply the levels established in class to their individual lives. This can be done through individual reflection and goal-setting.

In a traditional classroom students are told what level they are in and generally are not asked to evaluate their own skills. This activity gives learners the chance to evaluate their skills and place themselves in the appropriate level for each skill. This takes the levels activity in chapter 4 one step further as students place themselves in levels according to the five different communication skills (see figure 5.1). It also asks them to justify why they are in a certain level based on language tasks that they can perform.



Figure 5.1
Communication Skills

This activity addresses 4 key EFF content standards including:

1. *Convey Ideas in Writing*

2. *Take Responsibility for Learning*

3. *Reflect and Evaluate*

4. *Plan*

# Lesson Plan

**Objective:**

This activity is designed to engage learners in individual reflection and goal setting based on the levels established during the identifying levels activity (see chapter 4).

**Time:**
30-40 minutes

**Materials:**

1. Completed class levels
2. Copies of Identifying Individual Levels handout (see appendix 4 and figure 5.2)
3. Markers
4. Blank white or colored paper

**Set-up:**

Post competed class levels from the identifying levels activity in chapter 4 in the room.

## *Step 1: Review Class Levels*

Review the class levels that were set during the identifying levels activity (see chapter 4). If some students were not in class for the identifying levels activity have students that were there explain the activity and the established levels with them.

## *Step 2: Identify Individual Levels*

Pass out the individual identifying levels handout and ask students to place themselves (by circling the appropriate number 1-5) in the appropriate level for each of the 5 skills: speaking, listening, reading, writing and observing (see figure 5.2 and appendix 4). Let students know that they can place themselves, for example, in level 3 for listening and level 2 for reading. This activity focuses on the individual skills and not the overall proficiency level.

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**Self Assessment**

Place yourself in the appropriate level for each category according to the 5 levels we established in class.

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. OBSERVE Critically | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. Convey Ideas in WRITING | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. LISTEN Actively | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 4. SPEAK So Others Can Understand | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 5. READ With Understanding | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 6. Overall | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

**Evidence**

1. OBSERVE Critically

2. Convey Ideas in WRITING

3. LISTEN Actively

4. SPEAK So Others Can Understand

5. READ With Understanding

6. Overall

Figure 5.2
Individual Identifying
Levels Handout

## *Step 3: Evidence of Individual Levels*

Next, ask students to write down concrete reasons (evidence) for placing themselves in a particular level for a particular skill. Have them look at the levels established in class and place themselves in the appropriate level according to what they can do in the evidence section of that level. This may be difficult at first but be patient. If a leaner is stuck on a particular skill ask them what they can already do in that skill area. For example, if they can already do the writing tasks listed in level 3 ask them if they can do the tasks listed in level 4. Have them do this until they reach the point that they can no longer complete all of the tasks listed for a particular level.

For example an intermediate student placed himself in level 2 for *Read With Understanding* and wrote for evidence "I now read signs on the freeway and in the city." A more advanced student placed herself in level 3 for *Listen Actively* and wrote "because when somebody speak to me I have to pay attention because they speak very fast and there are words that I don't understand yet."

WRITE:     I need to write a work
           report daily
LISTEN:    I want listen news and
           translate music
SPEAK:     I practice English with
           people daily in stores, gas station
READ:      I want read more the
           newspaper, bills, flyers,
           announcements
OBSERVE:   Observe the movements
           of the mouth of gringos

Figure 5.3
Example Student Goals

## Step 4: Goal Setting

Once learners have given evidence for placing themselves in a certain level for a particular skill, instruct them to set goals in each of the skill areas that will help them move from one level to the next. Think of some example goals together to make sure that the goals that they set for themselves are specific and appropriate. For example, a goal for listening might be to watch the news in English for 20 minutes every night.

Figure 5.3 demonstrates 5 goals written by an intermediate adult ESOL student.

Another student that is a stay-at-home mom with a 6 year-old daughter who is learning to read set the goal to read with her daughter in English everyday.

### Step 5: Making Goals Visible

In order to help the students remember the goals that they set in class, it's fun to make small posters or reminders that they can hang in their house.

Hand out markers and a blank (or colored) piece of paper to each student. Instruct them to write their goals in large writing on the piece of paper. Encourage them to be creative (bright colors, pictures, whatever they come up with). Once students are finished, tell them to hang their goal sheets in a visible place in their house that they will see often.

As a teacher, you can set goals along with the students to give them an example. If you have a classroom to yourself you can have students make two posters and put one in the classroom as well as at home.

### Conclusion

Goals that students identify in this activity will also give you ideas for future lessons and themes. Look for similar goals among the students and address them in future classes. Chapters 6 and 7 will address this idea of using student ideas in future lessons in more detail.

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# Chapter 6

## Writing Student Stories

## Introduction to Writing Student Stories

Student stories are an important tool in a participatory classroom because they are not only a language activity in and of themselves, but they also supply learner-generated content for future classes. Student stories act as the basis for curriculum development. The issues that are brought up in the stories are incorporated into the ESL instruction.

EFF makes more sense and is easier to understand when it is based on a concrete story. The process of writing student stories addresses each of the 4 EFF skill areas

1.    Lifelong Learning Skills
2.    Communication Skills
3.    Interpersonal Skills and
4.    Decision Making Skills

### 1. Lifelong Learning Skills

Student stories help learners *research* their own lives. The stories highlight learners' experiences and help them to analyze their lives. They give students a chance to bring the issues that they face on a daily basis into the classroom so that the issues can be analyzed and action can be taken to better them. They help learners take responsibility for their learning.

For example, Chapter 2 mentions an example of writing questions for a visiting police officer. This is an example of how students took responsibility for their own learning and researched questions that were pertinent to their lives and that they really wanted answered so they would know what to expect if they were pulled over.

### Communication Skills

Writing student stories also addresses all of the EFF communication skills: read, write, listen, speak, and observe. It is a great activity because it gives students a chance to write about

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themselves, their lives and the issues that they face on a daily basis.

The stories are first produced orally and then in written form. Students write and practice vocabulary that they can already produce in spoken form. They listen to other students and the teacher as they tell the stories and write them down. They also read the stories after they have been written down.

Once the stories are written down various language activities can be created from them. You can review new vocabulary, create grammar exercises based on the structures and problems that come up in the writing process, write other stories around similar themes, etc.

### *Interpersonal Skills*

In this activity students work together to write each other's stories. Students with the same L1 can help each other express their stories in English. All of the learners work together to write the stories down for the class.

### *Decision Making Skills*

This skill area includes skills such as planning and problem solving. This activity encourages discussion and analysis of social situations which then can lead to planning, problem solving, and action.

# Lesson Plan

### Objective:

This activity is designed to help students write meaningful stories of their life.

### Time:
30 min--1 1/2 hours

### Materials:

1    Markers/chalk
2    White board/chalkboard
3    Applicable picture/code

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### Step 1: Identify Topic

Identify a topic applicable to the students' lives and their English needs. This can be based on the current topic being addressed in the classroom or on a topic brought up by students in class. It's important for the teacher to be observant and notice themes and issues brought up by students in class. Many themes come up before or after class as students are discussing their lives. Other themes come up in written journals or student questions.

For example, one of my students wrote in her journal (journals will be discussed in chapter 7) about an issue that she was facing. She wrote about being invited to share information about her native country in her daughter's school class. When she went to the class and the students realized that she didn't speak English they began to make fun of her daughter and tell her that she was different. After reading about this issue I asked her if I could address it in the class-room

because I felt like other students were facing similar problems. She agreed and I decided that it would be a good topic to write a story about.

Sometimes topics present themselves on their own through class discussion. These ideas are expressed by learners in some form (written or oral) and picked up on by the teacher. An example of this is the journal entry written by the student mentioned in step 1.

### Step 2: Present the Topic

The chosen topic can be presented to the class in various ways. One way is to bring a visual representation of the topic/issue to class. This could mean a picture, a written story or dialogue, or other representation of the topic or issue applicable to the learners' lives. This type of visual representation is sometimes called a code. According to Elsa Auerbach, a code should represent a topic that is familiar to the students, emotionally charged/ meaningful, two-sided, and open-ended. Codes then act as catalysts for discussion of the topic in class.

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| | |
|---|---|
| **Interviewer**: | Tell me a little bit about your work experience. |
| **Juanita**: | I worked as an accountant for a large company in Guanajuato, Mexico. |
| **Interviewer**: | Have you worked in the United States before? |
| **Juanita**: | No, but I worked for 10 years in Mexico. |
| **Interviewer:** | We, don't have any openings in the accounting department. But, there is one in the janitorial department. Are you interested? |
| **Jaunita:** | Sure, I need a job. |

Figure 6.1
Written Code
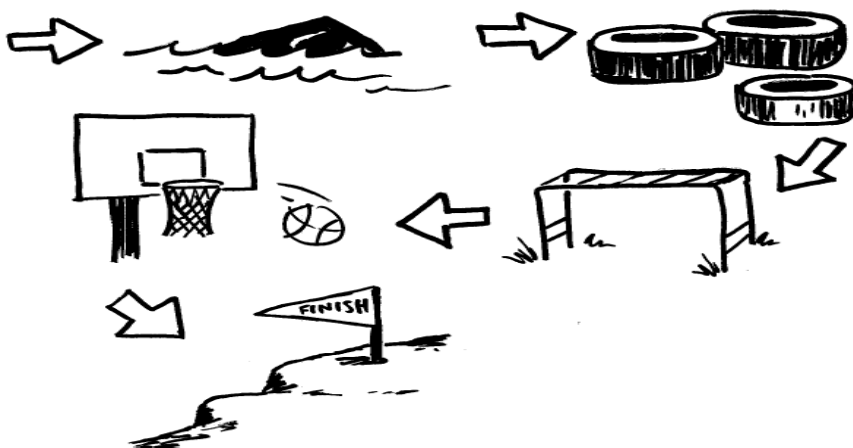


Figure 6.2
Picture Code: Obstacle Course

### Step 3: Discuss the Topic

In this step students get to share their feelings about the presented topic. Encourage them to share experiences and thoughts that they have on the topic. If they don't share ideas on their own ask them questions about the code or about similar situations they have had in their lives. It is very important that you choose a topic that is relevant to the lives of the learners so that they have something to discuss.

In the journal entry example mentioned earlier my student wrote that her daughter was treated poorly because she (the mother) did not speak English. In order to start the discussion I asked my student to tell the class about her experience. After she told her experience I invited the other students to share similar experiences from their lives. The conversation became very emotionally charged because everyone could relate to the feeling of being mistreated for not knowing English well.

### Step 4: Choose the Story

Once all the students have had a chance to discuss the issue ask them to decide which of the stories told by the students, they want to write down as a class. Sometimes only one story has been shared but many times various stories have been shared and the class can decide which one that they want to write about (you can also choose more than one story to write about depending on time and student interest).

In the example situation my students chose to write the original story written in the journal.

### Step 5: Write the Story

In this step students write a story together with minimal help from the teacher. Ask the students to recount the chosen story as one of the students (or the teacher

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depending on the level of the students) writes it down (this could also be done in small groups). Encourage all of the students to participate. You may need to ask quieter or beginning students to contribute and encourage more advanced students to help the beginners produce the language and make any corrections that they see. Do not focus much on grammar during this stage but rather on content and production.

My class wrote the following story

## Angelica's story

1. At first, my daughter had friends.

2. The problem happened when I went to the school to tell a story about when she was little.

3. Her friends shunned her because they said that she was different.

4. My kids felt sad.

5. They want to overcome the problem so they can help other kids that come here like them.

### Step 6: Using the Story

Once the story has been written down by the students there are various activities that can be done with it.

For example, sentences or phrases can be isolated and examined. Just with the sentence *my kids felt sad* various grammar activities can be done. You can talk about possessive pronouns i.e. *your kids felt sad, her kids felt sad.* You can discuss emotions, *my kids felt happy, excited, scared, etc.* Or you can focus on the past tense, *my kids were sad, my kids played soccer.* A combination of these aspects plus many others based on this simple story could be addressed in the classroom.

Students can also write their own individual stories and then share them with the class. Since students are working on the story together some students will understand certain words while others will not. So, new vocabulary words can be highlighted and expanded.

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# Chapter 7

## Writing Evidence Journals

### Introduction

Another method for providing evidence and encouraging students to take responsibility for their language learning is to use Evidence Journals. The purpose of an Evidence Journal is to track language learning inside and outside of the classroom. The Evidence Journal is especially important because it helps learners recognize what they learn in class and how they use English outside of the classroom. It encourages students to use English in their daily interactions so that they have experiences to share with the class.

Like the identifying levels activity this class activity stresses the idea of evidence. In a sense the students are "proving" that they learned in class and that they used English outside of class. It also helps to identify students' language needs as they express their everyday life successes and failures with the English language.

For example, one of my beginning students shared an experience that she had with her family in the mall. She was trying to go down the escalator with her child in a stroller but the escalator was not working. Her husband and other children walked down without noticing that she needed help. With a few English words she was able to ask a man, "you help me?" and the man helped her down the escalator with the stroller. This was just one small experience and yet it meant a lot to my student to be able to communicate in English.

Having a student share a small experience like this one each class period increases the energy and confidence level of the class. It also motivates learners to have and share these types of experiences.

I recommend that you do this activity with your class at the end of each class period. It acts as a review of what was learned in class and it reminds students to use English when they leave the classroom.

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# Lesson Plan

**Objective:**

This activity is designed to help the class record their language learning use and progress in and outside of the classroom.

**Time:**

The last 15 minutes of each class period.

**Materials:**

1. 1 large sheet of chart paper
2. markers
3. tape or easel to hang chart paper

**Set-up:**

1. Hang one sheet of chart paper on the wall with tape or set it on the easel.
2. Write "evidence journal" on the top of the chart paper in big letters.
3. Draw a line vertically down the middle of the chart paper.

| Evidence Journal | |
| --- | --- |
| In Class | Out of Class |
| | |

Figure 7.1
Example Evidence Journal

4. Write "in class" on one side of the page and "out of class" on the other side (see figure 7.1).

This activity addresses 8 of the EFF Content Standards directly including

- *Learn Through Research*
- *Guide Others,*
- *Take Responsibility for Learning*
- All 5 *Communication Skills*

## Step 1: Record Evidence of "in class" Learning

On the "in class" side of the chart paper students write what they learned in class that day.

Depending on the level of the students, either the teacher can write while the students dictate or a student can write while the rest of the class dictates. Let the students come up with their own sentences without teacher input. Error correction is usually not necessary or recommended unless the type of error has been explicitly explained in class (this may depend on the level of the students in the class. If it is a more advanced class, error correction may be more beneficial).

For example students in a beginning class wrote, "Today we learned verbs 'to be' and 'to have'. We made sentences with the verbs."

## Step 2: Record Evidence of "out of class" Learning

On the "out of class" side of the chart paper write an experience shared by one of the students on how they used English outside of the class.

Ask the students for a volunteer to share an experience with English use outside of the classroom. Make sure that a different student shares a story each time. Sometimes it might take the students a few minutes to think of an experience or to be willing to share an experience. Give them time to think and keep encouraging them until someone volunteers. You may want to ask questions about when and where they have used English in the last few days to trigger their memory.

The student story can be a positive or negative experience. Whether the experience was successful in the students' eyes or

not, identifying the language experience helps learners realize how much they need English and recognize when and where they use or would like to use it. It helps them think about their language learning and use outside of the classroom. It also helps to identify language issues and situations that can later be addressed in class.

Have the student tell their story to the class (depending on the level of the students and the make up of the class, this part may be done in the students' first language or a mix of the two languages). Once the student is done sharing the story be sure to clap or in some form reward the student for sharing his or her experience and for using English outside of the classroom.

Once the student has shared his or her story with the class ask the other class members to summarize and simplify the story in their own words while the student who told the story or the teacher writes the

simplified version on the chart paper. (Beginning students that speak the same L1 can help translate for each other to get an English version on paper.)

For example one student told us about a car accident she had been in recently and how she was able the defend herself. After telling the story the students wrote "Carmen had a car accident and she defended herself with the people. The other person said 'pay me $150 now' and Carmen said 'I won't pay; I'm going to call the police.'"

Again, error correction is generally not recommended unless the particular error has been addressed in class. This activity takes place at the end of class and focuses on sharing stories and evidence of success. The learner-generated texts provide teachers with useful insights into the grammatical skills of learners. Teachers then have time before the next class to identify and prepare simple grammar activities based on the written text.

Once the students are done writing the experience in English thank the student who shared the story again. Remind the rest of the class that one of them will need to share an experience the next class period.

Students who have many experiences in English on a daily basis (or more advanced students) can be encouraged to share experiences dealing with the specific goals that they set in the goal setting activity (see chapter 5).

For example, one student had the goal to practice English with her daughter. She shared an experience about asking her daughter, "'Do you want washing?' Her daughter corrected her and said, 'No mom, it's do you want to take a shower?'" When the student told us the story in class she couldn't remember the wrong way to say it. We called her daughter in from the kid's play room and asked her to retell the story and remember what the mistake was. As a class we then briefly discussed how family members can help each other learn English.

### *Conclusion*

This activity really focuses on helping the learners take responsibility for their own learning. It helps them realize that they are learning, and helps them recognize when and where they use English. The student stories really bring energy to the class as individuals share experiences from their daily lives with each other. When students hear others' stories it seems to give them more confidence to use English and also helps them realize that others are in their same situation. It gives them an opportunity to relate to each other and support each other. It also helps identify topics that can be addressed in future classes.
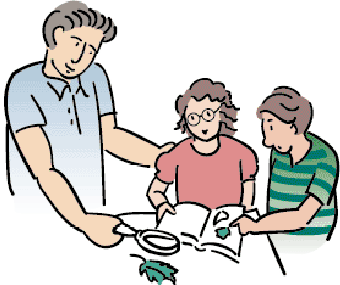
Appendix 1: EFF Skills Wheel/Content Standards

# Parent/Family Role Map

*Effective family members contribute to building and maintaining a strong family system that promotes growth and development*

| Broad Areas of Responsibility | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Promote Family Members' Growth and Development** *Family members support the growth and development of all family members, including themselves* | **Meet Family Needs and Responsibilities** *Family members meet the needs and responsibilities of the family unit* | **Strengthen the Family System** *Family members create and maintain a strong sense of family* |
| **Key Activities** | | |
| • Make and pursue plans for self-improvement<br>• Guide and mentor other family members<br>• Foster informal education of children<br>• Support children's formal education<br>• Direct and discipline children | • Provide for safety and physical needs<br>• Manage family resources<br>• Balance priorities to meet multiple needs and responsibilities<br>• Give and receive support outside the immediate family | • Create a vision for the family and work to achieve it<br>• Promote values, ethics, and cultural heritage within the family<br>• Form and maintain supportive family relationships<br>• Provide opportunities for each family member to experience success<br>• Encourage open communication among the generations |

# Citizen/Community Member Role Map

*Effective citizens and community members take informed action to make a positive difference in their lives, communities, and world.*

## Broad Areas of Responsibility

| Become and Stay Informed | Form and Express Opinions and Ideas | Work Together | Take Action to Strengthen Communities |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Citizens and community members find and use information to identify and solve problems and contribute to the community* | *Citizens and community members develop a personal voice and use it individually and as a group* | *Citizens and community members interact with other people to get things done toward a common purpose* | *Citizens and community members exercise their rights and responsibilities as individuals and as members of groups to improve the world around them* |

## Key Activities

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Identify, monitor, and anticipate problems, community needs, strengths, and resources for yourself and others<br>• Recognize and understand human, legal, and civic rights and responsibilities for yourself and others<br>• Figure out how the system that affects an issue works<br>• Identify how to have an impact and recognize that individuals can make a difference<br>• Find, interpret, analyze, and use diverse sources of information, including personal experience | • Strengthen and express a sense of self that reflects personal history, values, beliefs, and roles in the larger community<br>• Learn from others' experiences and ideas<br>• Communicate so that others understand<br>• Reflect on and reevaluate your own opinions and ideas | • Get involved in the community and get others involved<br>• Respect others and work to eliminate discrimination an prejudice<br>• Define common values, visions, and goals<br>• Manage and resolve conflict<br>• Participate in group processes and decision making | • Help yourself and others<br>• Educate others<br>• Influence decision makers and hold them accountable<br>• Provide leadership within the community |

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# *Worker Role Map*

*Effective workers adapt to change and actively participate in meeting the demands of a changing workplace in a changing world.*

## Broad Areas of Responsibility

| Do the Work | Work With Others | Work Within the Big Picture | Plan and Direct Personal and Professional Growth |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Workers use personal and organizational resources to perform their work and adapt to changing work demands* | *Workers interact one-on-one and participate as members of a team to meet job requirements* | *Workers recognize that formal and informal expectations shape options in their work lives and often influence their level of success* | *Workers prepare themselves for the changing demands of the economy through personal renewal and growth* |

## Key Activities

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Organize, plan, and prioritize work<br>• Use technology, resources, and other work tools to put ideas and work directions into action<br>• Respond to and meet new work challenges<br>• Take responsibility for assuring work quality, safety, and results | • Communicate with others inside and outside the organization<br>• Give assistance, motivation, and direction<br>• Seek and receive assistance, motivation, and direction<br>• Value people different from yourself | • Work within organizational norms<br>• Respect organizational goals, performance, and structure to guide work activities<br>• Balance individual roles and needs with those of the organization<br>• Guide individual and organizational priorities based on industry trends, labor laws/contracts, and competitive practices | • Balance and support work, career, and personal needs<br>• Pursue work activities that provide personal satisfaction and meaning<br>• Plan, renew, and pursue personal and career goals<br>• Learn new skills |

# Four Purposes for Learning



Equipped
for the future

- **_Access_**
  To gain access to information and resources so adults can orient themselves in the world.

- **_Voice_**
  To be able to express ideas and opinions with the confidence they will be heard and taken into account.

- **_Independent Action_**
  To solve problems and make decisions on one's own, acting independently, as parents, citizens and workers, for the good of their families, their communities and their nation.

- **_Bridge to the Future_**
  Learning how to learn in order to be prepared to keep up with the world as it changes.

*Equipped for the Future is an initiative of the National Institute for Literacy*

# Activities Log

| Date | EFF Standard | Activity |
|------|--------------|----------|
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |
|      |              |          |

Chapter 4: Project Evaluation

*Introduction*

This chapter assesses the usefulness of this MA project.  The success of the guidebook depends upon the progress of learners in the class that used it and the ease with which teachers other than the researcher were able to apply it in their classrooms. Qualitative research is the basis for the evaluation of this project. This chapter will first discuss these research techniques and then assess the guidebook from two perspectives. The first perspective will look at the progress of students that participated in the Boulders class and how that relates to the activities in the guidebook. The second perspective will look at the activities in the guidebook based on feedback from teachers who used the activities in their adult ESL classrooms.

*Qualitative Research*

Qualitative data collection techniques are very important to this project. According to Strauss and Corbin (1998), qualitative research refers to any type of research that "produces findings not arrived at by statistical procedures or other means of quantification." Interviews, observations, and documents (the analysis of written of documents) are the three main types of qualitative data, all of which were used in this project.  The nature of this project, in particular the development of the guidebook, requires that these types of methods be used in order to understand the learners' needs and analyze their progress. They were also used to analyze the successfulness of the guidebook when used by other teachers.

Ethnography is a type of qualitative research. Ethnographic research refers to a detailed study of a particular group of people (Feagin, Orum & Sjoberg, 1991). The nature of participatory curriculum development requires a deep understanding of a particular population of students and their needs. Case studies are the main data collection technique used in ethnographic research. Feagin, Orum & Sjoberg (1991) describe a case study as an "in-depth, multifaceted investigation, using qualitative research methods." This technique was used to observe and examine each class, the students in the class, and the lesson plans in the guidebook.

*Learner Progress*

Learner progress was assessed through various qualitative measures. Qualitative measures were chosen because the Boulders class varied greatly in English proficiency level from beginning to high intermediate. Each student in the class was at a different level and formal tests cannot always take into consideration such individual learner differences. Qualitative assessment is also more conducive to a learner-centered approach to teaching because it focuses on more subjective progress. The main purposes for assessment in the class were to help learners (and teachers) see their progress and to plan, implement, and assess activities based on learner feedback and progress that could later be used in the guidebook. This was done through journal writing, goal setting, interviews, and surveys.

*Student Journals*

Throughout the length of the class learners wrote either individual or class journals. For the first few months of class, students wrote in their individual journals for

the last few minutes of every class period. They were instructed to write about what they learned in class, how they had used English outside of class, and any questions or concerns they had about the class. Some of these journal entries were very insightful. They helped me see progress in the students' writing, and learn about their experiences with English outside of the classroom. Students sometimes wrote about their needs and concerns, which was also helpful and allowed me to create lessons around those concerns.  For example one student wrote about how her daughter was treated poorly by her daughter's friends when they found out that she (the mother) did not speak English. As a class we wrote this story in English and then other students shared similar experiences from their lives and wrote about them in English.

Overall these journals were not very informative. Students generally wrote the same thing everyday and I did not see much progress. Every once in a while, in order to improve their journal writing, we would write a class journal. This type of class journal turned into the *Evidence Journal* (see guidebook chapter 7) that I now use every class period.

Class *Evidence Journals* are very informative and help learners see their progress. This activity is done the last 15 minutes of class everyday. An *Evidence Journal* is a posted journal that students write together. On one side of a large sheet of paper, one student acts as a scribe to write about what they learned in class that day. This side is usually very simple but it helps learners become more aware of what they actually learned in class. On the other side, one student volunteers to tell about an experience he or she has had using English outside of the classroom and as a class students simplify the experience and write it down in English. This activity gives students a chance to tell

about the progress they have made in English (see Table 1). Since many of my students never used English outside of class, this activity encouraged them to do so and recognized them for doing so. A different student shared an experience every class period, which reminded other students that their turn was coming up and that they needed to focus on using English outside of class.

Table 1

Sample Entries from Student Evidence Journal

| Student Entries |
| --- |
| Hector called his boss he said, "I no work today because I'm sick." |
| Juana talk to the teacher she said, "I'm sorry that papers were late." |
| Ruben's spoke with police officer the last Saturday because he had a car accident. |
| A man asked Rosa if the coffee was fresh and she understood. |
| Bertha received a call from her husband's boss she said "he is working, number<br><br>telephone" he understood her. |
| Carmen had a car accident and she defended herself with the people. The other person said " pay me $150 now" and Carmen said "I won't pay I'm going to call the police" |
| Last Saturday a man helped Angelica carry the stroller and she understood what he said. She said OK and thank you. |

The realization that the individual journals were not working very well helped in the creation of the guidebook. The lack of improvement with the individual journal

informed me that something needed to change and led to the creation of the *evidence journal*, which worked much better and more clearly showed learner-progress and interest. When students share experiences, they realize that they can use English outside of class. They see that they are able to communicate even if it is in the smallest way. I saw an increase in their confidence level as they began to concentrate on using English and had the opportunity to share their successes and sometimes failures with the class.

*Goal Setting*

Learners periodically set goals throughout the course of the class. For the first few months of class, I used a *code* picture of a man in an obstacle course to start a conversation on goals and help students set concrete goals. This activity went well and learners set goals to work on outside of class. At this stage I did not really stress goals or follow up on goals in any systematic way so this activity went well but did not make much of an impact.

After I developed and tried out the identifying levels activity (see chapter 4) I realized that a goal-setting activity would go really well with it (see chapter 5). Following the identifying levels activity, learners place themselves in the appropriate levels for each of the 5 communication skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking observing). After doing this they set concrete goals for improving each of the 5 skills (see table 2). They then place their goals in a visible place at home and in the classroom. This approach to goal setting works better than the first one because it is more focused. Students first have the chance to evaluate their English proficiency level, which helps them set concrete goals. As they evaluate their levels they also see what the next step is in order to progress to the next level. This also helps learners set more concrete goals

Table 2

Concrete Goals for Improving Communication Skills

| Skills | Ruben's Goals | Juana's Goals |
|---|---|---|
| Write | I need to write a work report daily | Write to class |
| Listen | I want listen news and translate music | Conversations of people |
| Speak | I practice English with people daily in<br><br>stores, gas station | Speak in the stores; speak by<br><br>telephone for 5 minutes |
| Read | I want read more the newspaper, bills,<br><br>flyers, announcements | Read with my daughter |
| Observe | Observe the movement of the mouth<br><br>the gringos | The mouth of my daughter |

The most direct learner progress I saw in connection with goal setting was that students began to tell about working on or meeting their goals in the *evidence journal* stories. For example, one student set the goal to talk to her daughter in English and then told the class about an experience she had while speaking English to her daughter. Other students set goals to talk to neighbors or others in the community and then told stories about their progress in the *evidence journal* activity.

Interviews and Surveys

Throughout the course of the class I did various interviews with the students to find out how they were feeling about the class, if their needs were being met, how well they felt they were progressing, and if there was anything in particular they wanted to

learn. These interviews were useful and I was able to get to know the students on a more personal level. They were also helpful in assessing their oral progress when students felt comfortable enough to speak in English. Some of the more beginning students only spoke in Spanish and so their interviews were not very useful in that way. I also found that it was hard to coordinate interviews during class hours and I was not able to conduct them as often as I would have liked.

Rather than discontinue the interviews for these reasons, I decided to incorporate them into the goal setting activity in a written form more like a survey (see chapter 5 in the guidebook). This form asks students to place themselves in individual levels based on the class levels identified in the *identifying levels* activity (see chapter 4 in the guidebook). It then asks them to supply evidence for why they placed themselves in that particular level for each of the 5 skills (reading, writing, listening, speaking, and observing). I decided to use this activity in the guidebook because it helps learners self evaluate their own English proficiency level. And also provides a starting point for setting goals and tracking progress (see Table 3).

Table 3

Student Self Evaluation Results for English Proficiency

| Student 1: Self Evaluation | Student 2: Self Evaluation |
|---|---|
| *Listen level 2:* I can understand my name and address. | *Listen level 3*: I can understand 60-70%. |
| *Speak level 3*: I speak little I can give directions. | *Speak level 3*: I talk a lot at work and in stores. |

| | |
|---|---|
| *Write level 2:* I now write my name my phone number and some words. | *Write level 2-3:* I lack writing numbers and letters. |
| *Read level 2*: I now read signs in freeway too in city. | *Read level 3:* I don't read a lot. I read applications and books. |
| *Observe level 2:* I try to express myself with some peoples at work. | *Observe level 3:* I understand gestures and hand movements. |

The students also filled out surveys to assess their English level and their perception of their progress in the class. The assessment survey was given to students at the beginning of class to get a sense of how much English they already knew and place them in appropriate levels. This survey was only used in the first session of class because after that we did not divide into levels. After the first session students filled out a survey asking about their English needs and wants.

Students also filled out an English/literacy survey, which asked about their perception of the class and how much they had learned. The survey results were very positive but I do not feel like they were very useful. Even though the survey was anonymous I feel like students merely answered yes to the questions without necessarily thinking about them.

### *Teacher Feedback*

I used various types of teacher feedback in order to create and revise the guidebook. First, I used my own reflective journals. Second, the feedback and journals from other teachers that helped to teach the class. Third, feedback from teachers that tried out the activities in their own classroom.

*My Reflective Journal*

The main source of teacher feedback I used in the creation of this guidebook was my own collection of reflective journals (see Appendix G for example journal entries). These journals were based on my observation of the classes that I taught and that other teachers taught. I tried to pay particular attention to how the students were responding to the activities. I reread the journals many times for lesson planning and when selecting activities to include in the book. The process of writing itself helped me to really focus on the class and what and how I was teaching.

This journal writing technique is very characteristic of ethnographic research. As I began to create the guidebook I analyzed and coded the journals looking for themes, insights, and evidence of learner progress. A few of the main themes that I identified include: responses of learners to the activities, attendance, classroom routines, student initiated discussion, embedded grammar [when grammar lessons occurred spontaneously from another activity], learner stories, changes in lesson content, and connections to the learners lives. Identifying these themes gave me important insights into the creation of lesson plans, learner progress, teaching techniques, etc.

For example, through rereading my journals I noticed that one of the main activities we did in class was to write student stories. I looked at various stories we created in class and reflected upon the way in which we had written them. The journals helped me answer questions like how to get students to share stories, how to help students translate stories if they were told in Spanish and then how to use them as language lessons. This insight led to the creation of chapter 6 in the guidebook, *Writing Student Stories.*

*Co-teacher Feedback*

Throughout the course of the class I received feedback from Dr. Joan Dixon that helped me to create and improve all of the activities in this guidebook. I also received written feedback from Erin Thomas (a fellow graduate student) and Carol Lynn Allen (an undergraduate intern) throughout almost the entire year and a half. Their feedback helped me to see what I was doing from a different perspective and helped me to define how I was teaching so that I could explain it to them. It helped me realize that I needed to first explain EFF and PCD to teachers before introducing activities based on these concepts. This insight led to the creation of section one of the guidebook, which includes an introduction to both EFF and PCD.

*Outside Feedback*

After completing a draft of the *Identifying Levels* activity (see chapter 4 and what are now chapters 3 & 5) and a chapter explaining EFF and PCD (see chapters 1 & 2), I gave these chapters to 3 teachers from the Provo School District Adult ESL program to try out in their own classroom. I would have liked to have done this with each of the activity chapters in the book but time did not allow me to do so. I asked the teachers to teach the class according to how they understood the chapters that I gave them. I then observed the classes and interviewed the teachers afterward.

This process was extremely helpful. From observing the classes, I was able to identify parts of the chapters that I had not explained well based on the way the teachers had understood and presented them. For example, I realized that teachers were trying to explain too much about EFF before beginning the *identifying levels* activity. Students

seemed very bored until they actually started writing about the levels. For this reason, I added Chapter 3 in the guidebook, *Introducing EFF in the Classroom*, and divided it into three more interesting mini-lessons to help learners understand the importance of the EFF framework. I also decided to take two chapters to explain EFF and PCD in more detail to the teachers.

From observing the classes, I also got new ideas for improving the lesson plans. For example, one of the teachers came up with the idea to have students list their reasons for learning English and then line up their reasons with the four EFF *Purposes for Learning*. This was very effective because it made the *purposes for learning* more personal and applicable to the learners. I ended up using this approach in chapter 3 *Introducing EFF in the Classroom* as the mini-lesson for introducing students to the 4 purposes.

I had already used the *individual levels and goal-setting* activity (see chapter 5) with my own students before giving these chapters to the teachers. It wasn't until I observed one of the classes that I realized that it was an important and naturally flowing activity in conjunction with the *identifying levels* activity. I then decided to write about it, refine it, and use it in the guidebook.

Observing the classes also gave me ideas about how to adapt the activities for different proficiency levels. Two of the classes I observed were intermediate and high intermediate. The activity went fairly smoothly with these students because they were able to understand the basic instructions. The teacher still did a lot of explaining and clarification, but I got the idea that the students did understand the basic activity. The third class was a low-level beginning class. I was particularly interested in this class

because I knew that the teacher did not speak Spanish and that I would truly be able to see if the activity would work with beginning students without any help in their native language.

The part of the activity where the teacher was trying to introduce EFF was very difficult and the students did not understand what was going on (since I do speak Spanish I could understand what the students were saying and knew that they were confused). Once the teacher started with the actual identifying levels part of the activity the students started to catch on and really participate. It was great to see them help each other and express their ideas in a basic but understandable way in English. I later asked the students in Spanish how they felt about the activity. They all stated that they enjoyed it and found it useful. After observing this class I added notes, specifically in Chapter 4, about how to adapt the activities for different English proficiency levels.

All three of the teachers that tried out this activity in their classroom also mentioned that students who normally did not participate in class participated in the *identifying levels* activity.

*Conclusion*

This effectiveness of this project was assessed through qualitative research methods including observation, interviews, journals, surveys, and goal setting. Each of these methods not only helped in the assessment of the final project but also in the assessment of the project in an ongoing basis in order to create, implement, and revise the guidebook.  Feedback from both students and teachers was used in this process. Through qualitative and ethnographic research techniques, learner progress and activity effectiveness were recognized and taken into consideration to improve the class and the

guidebook.  This type of assessment was used throughout the development of the project in order to improve it. Feedback from teachers who used various chapters in their own classrooms was then used to improve the activities and the overall guidebook even more. The activities that these teachers used all worked well and received positive feedback. Their feedback and suggestions for improvement have already been taken into consideration and used to revise the activities. I would still like to get more feedback from these and other teachers on the revised and new activities at a future time.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This MA project report has explored the creation, implementation, and improvement of the guidebook, *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL*. This guidebook was created in response to the need for an ESL book with concrete activities based on the real lives and needs of community adult ESL students. Many textbooks address learner needs in the sense that the chapters are organized according to basic survival skills such as shopping, going to the doctor, working, etc. but these textbooks do not necessarily teach learners how to use these skills in their own circumstances. Many of these textbooks are also aligned with different tests that focus on the specific vocabulary or grammar contained in the book but not necessarily on the everyday real life tasks learners must perform.

The Equipped for the Future (EFF) Framework was created by the National Institute for Literacy (NIFL) in order to better align the needs of learners with the goals and objectives of adult literacy and ESL programs (Stein, 2000). EFF provides a framework, including sixteen content standards, for placing learner needs at the center of curriculum development and instruction.  While EFF has provided this framework, to date, it does not furnish a specific curriculum or concrete activities based on the content standards. *Moving Forward*: *A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL* is unique in that it contains concrete activities based on the EFF Framework. These activities help community adult ESL teachers use the EFF framework and focus classes on specific needs and circumstances identified by learners.

They also help teachers motivate learners to take responsibility for their own language learning, set goals in order to progress, and use English outside of the ESL classroom.

This guidebook is specifically designed for adult ESL teachers working with community adult ESL students. The activities in the guidebook are unique because they help to individualize instruction by allowing learners to participate in the curriculum development process. Students are involved in every step of the learning process from setting their own English proficiency levels to tracking their use of English outside of the classroom. Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD) was used to create the activities in the guidebook based on learner feedback and participation. This curriculum development technique is also introduced to teachers in chapter 2 of *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL,* in order to help them understand the activities in the guidebook as well as to learn how to create their own activities using PCD.

The effectiveness of this guidebook was assessed through qualitative measures including feedback from both students and teachers. The finished product, *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL,* provides teachers with much needed activities that can be used in the community adult ESL classroom to meet the individual needs of learners at all levels. The teachers that have used select chapters from the guidebook in their classrooms reported that the activities helped learners evaluate their English learning progress as well as helped normally quiet students participate more openly in class. Overall this guidebook is unique and fulfills the need for concrete activities based on the needs of

community adult ESL students. The remainder of this chapter will examine the limitations of this MA project and suggest ideas for future research.

*Limitations*

While the development, implementation, and improvement of the guidebook, *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL,* was successful, there were also a few limitations of the overall MA project. Three of the limitations of this project are (1) the lack of quantitative research about the different techniques used in the guidebook; (2) not all of the chapters in the guidebook were used by adult ESL teachers in other classrooms, so assessment measures for these chapters were not conducted; (3) no formal assessment tools or quantitative analyses were used on a regular basis to track learner progress. These three limitations will be discussed in the following sections entitled *Teaching Techniques, Teacher Feedback,* and A*ssessment Measures*.

*1. Teaching Techniques*

The first limitation of this research project is, while various articles have been written by researchers and practitioners addressing the methods used in the guidebook, no studies quantitatively assess the effectiveness of these techniques, which is a limitation of this study and others based on these techniques. Equipped for the Future (EFF), Participatory Curriculum Development (PCD), Language Experience Approach (LEA), and Authentic Assessment are the main techniques used throughout the guidebook. Articles describing these techniques were very useful in order to understand and implement the methods in

the classroom (see chapter 2, review of literature, for a thorough discussion of these techniques). Through my experience using them, I can attest that they are useful and that they address learner needs.  While my experience is helpful, it does not verify the usefulness of these techniques in the broader spectrum of community adult ESL. I looked for studies that showed the effectiveness of these techniques statistically or comparatively, but was not able to find any. The next two sections will specifically look at EFF and PCD and the lack of quantitative research on these two methods.

*EFF*

The EFF framework is the basis for the activities in the guidebook because it focuses on the daily needs of adult learners. While its purpose is to refocus literacy instruction on helping adults function successfully in their adult roles, it is a relatively new literacy initiative still in the creation and refinement process. The framework is well established but its usefulness and effectiveness has not yet been examined rigorously. Teachers and administrators in more than 34 states have already implemented aspects of EFF in the classroom and have provided positive feedback (NIFL, 2003). But, as far as I know, no study has been done to test the effectiveness of this approach. In the future, this type of research will most likely be done, but at this time the quantitative effectiveness of EFF has not been explored.

*PCD*

The second method used throughout the guidebook, PCD, is a curriculum development technique based on participatory and learner-centered teaching. The main

source of this approach is Elsa Aurbach's (1992) book *Making Meaning, Making Change.* This book explains the PCD process and also includes various examples from teachers using this technique in their adult ESL classrooms. There is even a companion book to *Making Meaning Making Change* entitled *Talking Shop* (1992) that explores the experiences of teachers using this technique and provides example activities. Other than these two books I have not found any studies that directly explore the PCD technique to curriculum development and its effectiveness.

Each of the techniques used in the guidebook has been used by other practitioners that attest to its usefulness. They have been written about and explored by both practitioners and researchers. For example, Holt (1995), Peyton and Crandall (1995), and Taylor (1992), all address the Language Experience Approach (LEA) in articles but none of their articles examine the effectiveness of this literacy technique. McGuire (2000), Stein (2000), Marshall (2002), and Nash (2000) each address EFF but on an introductory and explanatory level rather than assessing its effectiveness. The articles that I found about each of these techniques were very useful and helped me to understand and apply them in the classroom. While I found them to be useful and based the guidebook around them I was not able to find research addressing them in a quantitative manner or comparing them to other techniques.

*2.  Teacher Feedback*

The second limitation to this MA project is that not all of the activities in the guidebook were tested by adult ESL teachers in their own classrooms. The feedback that I got from the three teachers that tried out lesson plans in their classroom was extremely

valuable. It helped me to revise the lesson plans and to create new chapters in the guidebook (see chapter 4, Evaluation of Project, for a thorough discussion). I initially gave each of the teachers the first two chapters, which at the time comprised a chapter explaining EFF and PCD and a chapter introducing the *identifying levels* activity. Feedback from the teachers turned these two chapters into five chapters that were more focused and useful.

Due to lack of time I was not able to test the other two chapters with teachers other than myself and those working with me. I also did not have time to retest the chapters originally given to teachers after the five, more detailed chapters, were completed. This is a limitation to this MA project and the completed guidebook because I could have improved the chapters based on more teacher feedback and classroom observation. I would still like to do this before distributing the guidebook to other teachers.

*Assessment Measures*

The third limitation of this project is the lack of routine measures to assess learner progress in the Boulders class. I do not suggest that a routine measure for assessment needs to be included in the guidebook, rather that it would have been helpful in the creation of the guidebook to be able to more systematically track progress. Because attendance was so sporadic throughout the course of the class it was hard to assess the progress of students in a uniform way. This is a factor that affects most community adult classes. Some type of pre- and post-survey or interview to assess progress would have been helpful to show the effectiveness of techniques used in class.

The guidebook addresses ways for learners to self-assess and for teachers and learners to see progress through activities like *evidence journals, identifying levels,* and *goal setting.* These activities demonstrate their own effectiveness through learner responses and participation.  But, this study lacks an overall assessment tool to show learner progress. I cannot demonstrate in any concrete way that student A started at point 2 and moved to point 3 because of the activities in the guidebook.

While most likely there are numerous limitations to this study, I decided to focus on three of them, the lack of quantified research supporting the techniques used in the guidebook, the lack of teacher feedback on all of the chapters in the guidebook, and the lack of uniform assessment measures for students in the Boulders class. These three limitations were chosen because they were the most noticed throughout the writing, implementation, and revision of the guidebook, *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL*. The remainder of this chapter will examine suggestions for future research.

*Suggestions for Future Research*

Due to the lack of studies on the effectiveness of techniques used in the guidebook by numerous adult ESL teachers, it would be extremely useful to conduct research looking at the effectiveness of these methods. They are obviously effective or they would not be used by so many practitioners, but the field lacks quantitative research to support their effectiveness. One of the main problems associated with the lack of research is that practitioners do not have time and do not generally get paid to research. They merely try something out in the classroom, see that it works with their students, and

continue to use it.  In an ideal situation, practitioners would get paid to conduct research in their classrooms on effective practices or researchers would study what practitioners are using in their classrooms but this is not usually the case. It would be extremely useful for someone to take a closer look at methods used by practitioners in the adult ESL classroom and conduct studies based on the effectiveness of these techniques.

Another suggestion for future research associated with this guidebook and MA project would be the continuation and improvement of the guidebook by testing it out with numerous community adult ESL teachers, assessing its effectiveness, and improving it. Due to time constraints all of the activities were not tested by other teachers and no assessment tool was used to assess the progress of students using these techniques over a period of time.

A third suggestion for future research and development would be the addition of more concrete activities based on EFF and focused on learner needs. The current guidebook contains five activity chapters, three of which are closely tied together. The addition of more activities would strengthen the guidebook and would give community ESL teachers more ideas and options for centering their class around learner needs and the EFF framework.

*Conclusion*

In conclusion, this chapter examined three limitations of the guidebook, *Moving Forward: A Learner-Centered and Participatory Approach to Teaching Community Adult ESL,* and made three suggestions for future research. This guidebook supplies community adult ESL teachers with specific learner-centered activities based on EFF that

they can use in the classroom. These chapters were created in response to the need for concrete activities aligned with the EFF framework and centered on the real life activities, identified by adult learners, that they perform on a daily basis. Teachers can easily use this guidebook to identify and address learner needs. After reading the guidebook, teachers will have an understanding of EFF and PCD and be able to create their own learner-centered activities. This guidebook is extremely useful for community adult ESL teachers who want to focus their classes on learner needs.

Appendix A: NCLE Research Agenda: Program Design and
Instructional Content and Practices

# Program Design and Instructional Content and Practices

**D**ifferent types of adult ESL programs have been developed to meet the diverse goals of both learners and program funding agencies. Demand for programs of every type is high, and many programs have waiting lists (The waiting game, 1996). Adult ESL program types include survival or life skills, pre-employment ESL, workplace ESL, pre-academic ESL, vocational ESL (VESL), ESL for citizenship, and ESL family literacy (Chisman, Wrigley, & Ewen, 1993). Services are provided by a wide variety of institutions that include local education agencies, community colleges, libraries, community-based and volunteer organizations, churches, businesses and unions, small for-profit language schools, and some four-year colleges and universities (Center for Applied Linguistics, 1995).

Adult learning theory stresses the value of instructional approaches that respect and draw upon learners' experiences and strengths (Knowles, 1980). Most adult ESL practitioners agree that adults learn best when they are actively involved with all aspects of their instruction, including identifying content, choosing activities, and assessing progress. This learner-centered philosophy can be found in many different approaches to instruction (Auerbach, 1992; Crandall & Peyton, 1993; Holt, 1995; Wrigley & Guth, 1992).

Current instructional approaches include competency-based, whole language, participatory, and more traditional approaches such as grammar-based, the direct and the oral/aural method. Programs often combine approaches and may implement the same approach with a variety of techniques. In fact, many practitioners and academics maintain that, because no single approach is suitable for all ESL populations and contexts, multiple approaches may be required to meet the needs of individual learners (Bell, 1991; Holt, 1995; Shank & Terrill, 1995; Wrigley & Guth, 1992). The use of instructional technology is also growing in programs for adults, although its use remains limited (Gaer, 1998; U.S. Congress, 1993).

## Questions for Research

**1** How can the need be met for regular and systematic data collection about programs that serve adults learning English? What kinds of data would be useful to teachers and tutors, administrators, staff developers, and funders in order to improve the quality of service? How can this data be collected and made accessible to the various stakeholders?

**2** What are the key features differentiating program types (life skills, pre-employment, etc.), and what criteria should be considered in decision making about program design and instructional content and practices? What existing program design models facilitate learner participation in the development of curricula and choice of instructional methods?

How do we integrate personal, academic, and learning skills development with language skills development?

**3** What instructional sequences and approaches work most effectively for different groups of learners (e.g., low-level readers or learners with professional degrees)? What instructional techniques have the ability to move adult learners from being passive to empowered learners? Research and development should lead to a better match between adult learner needs and program types and provide a clearer sequence of steps to facilitate learning.

**4** How can the use of technology enhance the effectiveness of programs? What are the critical variables that make the use of technology effective? How can technology best be integrated into different types of programs?

**5** What program models and curricula facilitate transitions between courses and programs?

**6** What program designs encourage adult English learners to use various community resources to learn language outside of limited classroom hours?

**7** What are inexpensive and yet effective strategies for providing instructional services to learners who are not yet formally enrolled in programs?

**8** How have local, state, and national policies (including the creation of learning and program standards) affected the kinds and quality of programs that are available to adult English learners?

# Four Purposes for Learning

- *Access*
  To gain access to information and resources so adults can orient themselves in the world.

- *Voice*
  To be able to express ideas and opinions with the confidence they will be heard and taken into account.

- *Independent Action*
  To solve problems and make decisions on one's own, acting independently, as parents, citizens and workers, for the good of their families, their communities and their nation.

- *Bridge to the Future*
  Learning how to learn in order to be prepared to keep up with the world as it changes.

*Equipped for the Future is an initiative of the National Institute for Literacy*

# Parent/Family Role Map

*Effective family members contribute to building and maintaining a strong family system that promotes growth and development*



| Broad Areas of Responsibility | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Promote Family Members' Growth and Development** *Family members support the growth and development of all family members, including themselves* | **Meet Family Needs and Responsibilities** *Family members meet the needs and responsibilities of the family unit* | **Strengthen the Family System** *Family members create and maintain a strong sense of family* |
| **Key Activities** | | |
| • Make and pursue plans for self-improvement<br>• Guide and mentor other family members<br>• Foster informal education of children<br>• Support children's formal education<br>• Direct and discipline children | • Provide for safety and physical needs<br>• Manage family resources<br>• Balance priorities to meet multiple needs and responsibilities<br>• Give and receive support outside the immediate family | • Create a vision for the family and work to achieve it<br>• Promote values, ethics, and cultural heritage within the family<br>• Form and maintain supportive family relationships<br>• Provide opportunities for each family member to experience success<br>• Encourage open communication among the generations |

# Citizen/Community Member Role Map

*Effective citizens and community members take informed action to make a positive difference in their lives, communities, and world.*

## Broad Areas of Responsibility

| Become and Stay Informed | Form and Express Opinions and Ideas | Work Together | Take Action to Strengthen Communities |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Citizens and community members find and use information to identify and solve problems and contribute to the community* | *Citizens and community members develop a personal voice and use it individually and as a group* | *Citizens and community members interact with other people to get things done toward a common purpose* | *Citizens and community members exercise their rights and responsibilities as individuals and as members of groups to improve the world around them* |

## Key Activities

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Identify, monitor, and anticipate problems, community needs, strengths, and resources for yourself and others<br>• Recognize and understand human, legal, and civic rights and responsibilities for yourself and others<br>• Figure out how the system that affects an issue works<br>• Identify how to have an impact and recognize that individuals can make a difference<br>• Find, interpret, analyze, and use diverse sources of information, including personal experience | • Strengthen and express a sense of self that reflects personal history, values, beliefs, and roles in the larger community<br>• Learn from others' experiences and ideas<br>• Communicate so that others understand<br>• Reflect on and reevaluate your own opinions and ideas | • Get involved in the community and get others involved<br>• Respect others and work to eliminate discrimination an prejudice<br>• Define common values, visions, and goals<br>• Manage and resolve conflict<br>• Participate in group processes and decision making | • Help yourself and others<br>• Educate others<br>• Influence decision makers and hold them accountable<br>• Provide leadership within the community |

Appendix E: EFF Worker Role Map

# *Worker Role Map*

*Effective workers adapt to change and actively participate in meeting the demands of a changing workplace in a changing world.*

## Broad Areas of Responsibility

| **Do the Work** | **Work With Others** | **Work Within the Big Picture** | **Plan and Direct Personal and Professional Growth** |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Workers use personal and organizational resources to perform their work and adapt to changing work demands* | *Workers interact one-on-one and participate as members of a team to meet job requirements* | *Workers recognize that formal and informal expectations shape options in their work lives and often influence their level of success* | *Workers prepare themselves for the changing demands of the economy through personal renewal and growth* |

### Key Activities

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Organize, plan, and prioritize work<br>• Use technology, resources, and other work tools to put ideas and work directions into action<br>• Respond to and meet new work challenges<br>• Take responsibility for assuring work quality, safety, and results | • Communicate with others inside and outside the organization<br>• Give assistance, motivation, and direction<br>• Seek and receive assistance, motivation, and direction<br>• Value people different from yourself | • Work within organizational norms<br>• Respect organizational goals, performance, and structure to guide work activities<br>• Balance individual roles and needs with those of the organization<br>• Guide individual and organizational priorities based on industry trends, labor laws/contracts, and competitive practices | • Balance and support work, career, and personal needs<br>• Pursue work activities that provide personal satisfaction and meaning<br>• Plan, renew, and pursue personal and career goals<br>• Learn new skills |

Appendix F: EFF Skills Wheel/Content Standards
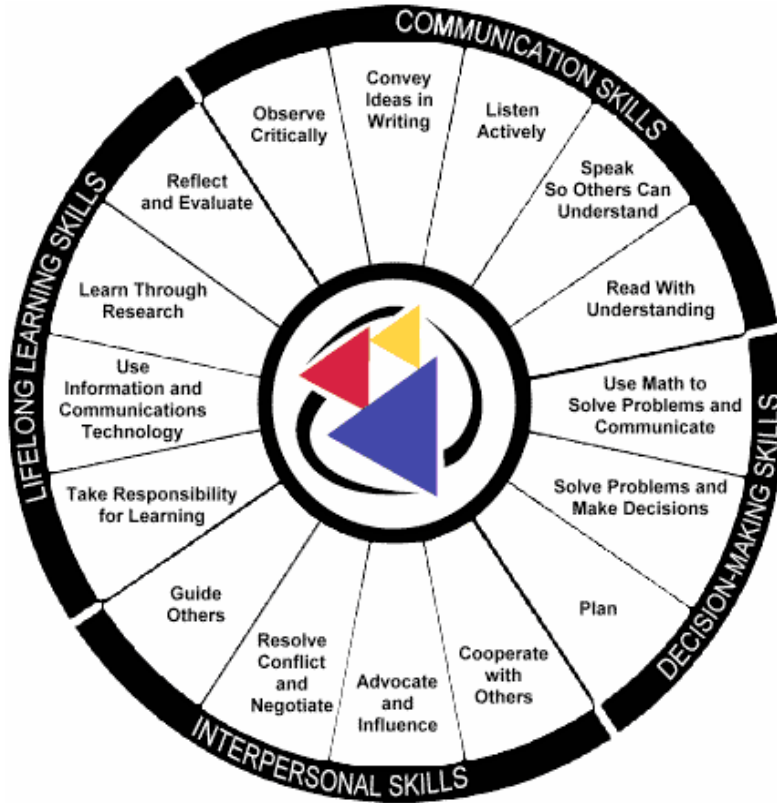
Appendix G: Selected Reflective Journals, June 2003-November 2003

Boulders Lesson Plan 6/3/03

Lesson Plan written by Joan:

**Pathway to English**

**EFF Standards for Communication Skills**
> Speak so that others can understand
> Listen actively
> Read with Understanding
> Convey ideas in Writing
> Observe critically
> Take Responsibility for learning

**Class Activity:** Establish the benchmarks for the pathway and characteristics for each benchmark.

**Materials:** Flip chart paper, markers and tape

**1st Flip Chart: Best ESL Learner:**
1. Have class brainstorm characteristics for speaking, listening, observing, reading, and writing.
2. Write characteristics on cards (in English and Spanish, and tape them to the flip chart.

**2nd Flip Chart: Just Beginning**
Brainstorm characteristics, write them on cards in English and Spanish, tape them to the flip chart

**Self-Ranking**
1. Post one flip chart on each side of the room with three blank flip charts in between.
2. Ask the learners to stand where they think their speaking ability is.
3. Interview the learners who are standing by the second flip chart. Ask them what kinds of things they are able to do. How do they know they are at this level? Write the characteristics in English and Spanish on the cards and tape them to the flip chart.
4. Repeat step 3 for the third and forth flip charts. If no one is standing by them, ask learners to think about what a person would need to be able to do at this step in order to make progress toward flip chart five.
5. Have a discussion about how the group can help each other move from level to level. How can someone one level up be a role model and helper? How can someone at the highest level be a role model and helper?

**Name the levels:**
What is a name that we can give to each level that will inspire the person to know what they need to do to move ahead?

Attendance:
Angelica     Joan
Ramon     Haley
Polo      Carla

We brought copies of the EFF skills wheel in Spanish for everyone.  I briefly described EFF and we read each of the four skills and sixteen content standards.  We focused on the 5 content standards under Communication Skills.
We wrote the 4 skill areas on a flip chart and asked the students to identify which ones they were in Spanish.
We wrote down the 5 content standards and Joan taught and reviewed them by acting out read, write, listen, speak, and observe.  She acted them out numerous times until everyone seemed to get them.
We then asked them to think of Latinos that could speak English and to give us evidence as to how they knew they could speak English well.  At first the idea of evidence was a little bit difficult but after we gave them some examples they seemed to catch on.  At first we used Carla as an example.  We asked them what Carla could in English that proved that she was at level 5 or 4.  We came up with a good list and then moved on the level 1.  What can someone do when they first arrive in the country?  At this point we started to come up with the evidence dividing them into the 5 different categories.
Joan facilitated all of this part; she wrote in English and Carla translated into Spanish.

Ramon even mentioned that it was too bad that not more people were there because it was such a good lesson.

Next we had them stand by the level that they thought they were at.  Ramon stood next to level 2 and we based the evidence for level two on Ramon.
It was interesting to see all of the ideas and evidence that they came up with.
I don't remember if we did any more that day or not.

For homework Joan had them think of names for the different levels.

Boulders Lesson Plan 6/5/03
Attendance:

| | |
|---|---|
| Angelica | Joan |
| Rosa | Haley |
| Ramon | Carla |
| Ruben | |
| Polo | |

This day we continued our previous lesson plan.  Luckily more people were here today.

Ramon was really excited and energized about what we had done Tuesday.
To start off we reviewed the EFF standards.  Ramon explained them to the rest of the class and did a really nice job.  We then reviewed what we had done as far as setting up the different levels.  Again, Ramon explained what we had talked about and the levels that we had set up.  He also talked about the need for evidence and explained that concept to the other students.

Next we finished writing the evidence for the other 2 levels and noticed some patterns.  Level 2 dealt more with work and specific situations while level 3 encompassed numerous situations.  Level 3 was where people started to overcome their fear of talking.  At this level they realized that if they tried gringos would help them rather than criticize them.   It was very interested to watch these insights emerge.

Next we had everyone stand by the level that they felt they were at and we asked them why they felt that way—what was the evidence?

Finally we came up with names for each of the levels based on the characteristics identified for each of the levels.
Level 1: Desire to Learn
Level 2: Secret English Speaker
Level 3: Practical English Speaker
Level 4: Knocking at the Door
Level 5: I did it!

Ramon came up with most of the names or at least many of the ideas for the names.  He thought of different names for homework and came to class with suggestions.

Today and Tues. we went over to try and find Lucy and Maria.  I know that Lucy came last Thursday when I wasn't there and ended up going home early because there was no one there to take care of the baby.

Boulders Lesson Plan 6/10/03
Attendance:

| | |
|---|---|
| Rosa | Haley |
| Angelica | Cindy |
| Ruben | Carla |
| Ramon | |
| Polo | |
| Lucy | |
| Cecilia | |
| Vianey | |

Carla's grandparents ( Olga % Ramon)

I was planning on doing interviews with the students today and Erin was going to teach the class but she wasn't able to make it—so I changed plans. Joan helped me come up with this one.

We had lot's of people here today—more people than chairs.

We all introduced ourselves first. There were quite a few new people.
To start off we reviewed what we had done last week. Again, Ramon explained to the rest of the class what we had talked about as far as setting up the levels and EFF.
First we explained EFF to those who weren't there last week. We talked about the overall picture and the 5 specific content standards under Communication Skills.
I reviewed read, write, observe, listen and speak by acting them out. Cindy did them in Spanish.
Then we introduced each of the levels and their names and again talked about the idea of evidence. After we had read over and lightly discussed each of the levels they wrote in their journals for 10 minutes explaining at what level they were in and giving the evidence for why they were in that level.
After they finished writing everyone shared a little bit of what they had written.
Next Carla taught them a few simple phrases:

      I am in level _____
      Because I can _____

Next we had them write what they had written in Spanish (most of them) in English using these simple phrases. After this, we went around the room and everyone told the class what level they felt they were at and why.
Some of the students were hard on themselves and put themselves in low levels. Ramon and Rosa both said they were 1's while others like Lucy said 2. I didn't necessarily agree with where they put themselves so I razzed them a little bit.

At the end of class we reviewed the alphabet and sang the alphabet song. A few people asked about letters and numbers and wanted to practice them more. They said that they were "lo basico". I told them that that is what you normally learn first in the language classroom but that it is not what you need first in real life

I think that some of the old students were bored with the song because we have done it so many times.

The discussion after class was very interesting.
Ramon and Ruben announced that Thursday would be their last day of class and that they were headed back to Mexico.  I guess that social security or INS sent their work a list with names and social security numbers that were fake or didn't match up.  From what I understand now I guess that INS is giving them until December to get rid of all their illegals or deal with a "raid".  When Ruben and Ramon first told us what was going on they made it sound like when they went to pick their checks up on Thursday the INS was going to be their and send them home.  I guess that really wasn't the case.  They were able to get their checks on Thursday and as of now are still working there.  I guess that the company is slowly getting rid of all their illegal employees and replacing them with legal ones.  Other students in the class told Ramon and Ruben not to give up and go back to Mexico but rather to look for another job here.  Quite their jobs and go somewhere else.


Boulders Lesson Plan 6/12/03

Attendance:

| | |
|---|---|
| Angelica | Haley |
| Rosa | Cindy |
| Ramon | Joan |
| Ruben | Erin |
| Lucy | |
| Leopoldo | |

The beginning of class was a little bit frantic.  I had such a crazy week and Cindy was there all week.  Anyway, Joan, Cindy, Erin and I were the first one's there.  We had a little bit of time to talk about the lesson.  Erin had just gotten in a car accident with her sister so she was frazzled and we talked about car accidents for a while.
It was a raining day so we talked a little bit about the weather at the beginning of class.  We also did our normal "how's it going?, what did you do?" conversations.  Once we got started and everyone was there I started interviewing students and talking about their level and their goals.  Today I interviewed Angelica, Rosa, and Ruben.  The interviews took me longer than I thought that they would but I think that they went really well.

I started off the interviews by reading over with them what they had written in their journals the previous class.  What level they were at and why.  I then went through each of the evidences form level 1 and 2 (and with Ruben 3) and asked them if they could do those things.  I checked off what they could already do and wrote a "work on it" or something next to the ones that they need to work on.  It was nice because this way they could see exactly what level they were at and why.  We then set goals together based on what they needed to improve on.  All of their goals are written in their journals.

At the beginning of each interview I asked how everyone was doing. Angelica talked to me for quite awhile about the situation with her husband and the American woman that is always at their house. She has mentioned this woman numerous times before. She is English speaking and always comes over to "hang out" with Angelicas husband (see next Tuesday's lesson). This woman only speaks English, which means that Angelica can't really communicate with her. Although in the interview Angelica mentioned that she could understand her a little but better now. She also mentioned that the women is always over talked to her children and teaching them English. She told me a story about going dancing with her husband and this other woman and this other woman getting mad and making them walk home and her husband getting mad and not talking to her and not coming home for the night, etc. I don't think that I caught all of it but that is what I remember from the conversation. Angelica wants to talk to some type of a counselor she wants to see if she is the one that is "messed up". I told her that it wasn't her that was messed up.

**These are Joan's notes about what they did while I was interviewing:**
(Joan and Cindy both mentioned that Lucy was the most active student and that she was helping other people. That's awesome! With me Lucy usually struggles. I think it was good for them to have only English speaking teachers. While I was interviewing I could hear Joan and Cindy trying to do things in Spanish—that's awesome!=)
What we talked about with ESL students while you were interviewing last Thursday.
What are you doing?
I am running, I am working, I am teaching, I am welding, etc.
Then we looked at word endings and created nouns
I am a runner, I am a worker, I am a teacher, I am a welder, etc.
We played around with the theme, what did you do today?
*I went to work*
What did you do at work? I packed candies, I inspected labels, I welded pipes, etc.
Each person had to come up with a sentence describing what they did at work. The whole group was asked to assist each person to make their sentences.
I'm sorry that I didn't write down the sentences that they came up with. They were very good sentences. This is a good method to have them work together to explain something. You could have them do a group language experience story.

Boulders Lesson Plan 6/19/03

| Time | Activity | Facilitator |
|---|---|---|
| 35 min | Review<br>• Weather<br>• What did you do today<br>• Vocabulary cards: pictionary | Haley/Erin |
| 1 hr | CLE<br>• Tell me about a miscommunication at work. (something you didn't understand or said wrong, etc)<br>• Chose a story and write it in +/- 5 short sentences<br>• Draw pictures?<br>• Past, future, plural, etc. | Haley/Erin |
| 25 min | Restaurant:<br>Menu<br>Ordering expressions<br><br>I would like_____<br>What are your specials?<br>Can I order _____? | Haley/Erin |
| Journal | What did you learn in class this week?<br>What did you learn outside of class this week? | |

Attendance:
Angelica            Haley
Ruben               Erin
Ramon
Lucy
Polo

For the first 15 minutes or so Angelica, Lucy and I were the only ones there. I told Lucy that we missed her on Tuesday and she told me that she had a toothache and that's why she didn't go. That started a conversation about different types of aches: toothache, stomachache, backache, leg-ache, etc. This led us to the different body parts. I started with all the parts of the arm and hand and moved to the leg and foot and finally the head and face. Erin played "Simon says" or "Erin says" after we learned the vocabulary. I think the "Simon says" part should be taken out of this game in an ESL setting, it's too confusing. It's a good game but not necessary to confuse the students with the "Simon didn't say".

For the next part of the class we did a CLE story.  We talked in Spanish for a few minutes about different examples of miscommunication at work.  Several people told stories (Ruben, Ramon and Lucy—Angelica left before we got to this part, she couldn't see her kids from the class).  I then asked then to choose a story to write about.  They chose Ramon's story about a woman he works with.

1. Ramon had problems with Diana at work.
2. Ramon wanted a tool for the welding gun because he needed it for work.
3. Diana did not want to change the welding gun.
4. She said, "go see the manager."
5. Ramon felt bad because he did not know how to answer her.

We finished the dialogue right at 8:00 but they stayed a few minutes and wrote in their journals (since they got out a little bit early on Tuesday ☺)

Boulders Lesson Plan 7/08/03

| Time | Activity | Facilitator | Materials |
|------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| 10 min | Questions<br>• How are you?<br>• What did you do _____? | Haley | |
| 30 min | • Where do you use English outside of class?<br>• How did you feel?<br>• Will the situation happen again?<br>• Write about it in journal | Haley | |
| 15 min | Review verbs (be, have,)<br>• To feel<br>• Emotions<br>• I fell _____<br>• I felt_____ | Carla | |
| 25 min | Confidence is…<br>• Evidence<br>• In class?<br>• Outside of class?<br>Observations<br>• I am confident when_____<br>• I was confident when____<br>• I will be confident when__<br>• I was not confident when__<br>• I am not confident when___<br>Write about it in journal | Haley | |
| 30 min | Summarize police article<br>Write a dialogue (have students chose a situation and write an appropriate dialogue) | Haley | Newspaper |
| 10 min | Journal:<br>Read goals and write about your progress.  Set new goals.  What have you learned this week in and out of class? | | Journals |

Attendance:
| | |
|---|---|
| Angelica M. | Haley |
| Lucy | Carla |
| Angelica V. | Vicky |
| Ramon | Young Ju |
| Ruben | |
| Leopoldo | |

I feel like class went really well today. I'm not exactly sure why but I liked it. Vicky and Young Ju came to observe for their 572? class. Everyone got there really late. Polo was the first one and he didn't get there until 6:15, I was a little bit nervous for awhile. Then, everyone came at once. First we did introduction because there were new people in class. They taught Young Ju how to introduce herself in Spanish. We did the regular, Did you have a good weekend? and What did you do this weekend? stuff.

Next we started with the where do you use English question. We came up with a pretty comprehensive list of where they use English or need to use English. Next we talked about how they feel when they are in an English-speaking situation. We first made a list of the "bad" emotions of not understanding and then the "good' emotions of understanding. I then asked them to tell me about English-speaking experiences. I asked for the evidence. Lucy talked about how she had worked in quality control for 7 years and now someone else is getting paid her salary because she does the work but she can't read and fill out the paperwork in English. They all talked about how poorly they are treated at work and elsewhere by other Latinos. They say that gringos usually try to understand them and are patient but that other Latinos are not and are rude to them. We did all of this in Spanish and we talked for quite awhile but I felt like it was a very interesting and informative discussion. (I felt bad for Young Ju, the only one that couldn't understand Spanish.)

In the middle of this discussion Angelica V's little girl got hit in the face by her brother and got a bloody nose. I think she ok. Ramon was nice he ran over and got toilet paper and then some ice.

Next I explained to them that those are the stories that I want them to write about in their journals and talk about in class. I want to understand what they face outside of English class in their real lives. I want them to understand. We took 5 minutes to write down a story or experience in English or Spanish.

Next Carla introduced the verb "to feel" in present and past and practiced it with the students. Of course Ruben caught on really fast. Ramon did also, I think Angelica V. did and Angelica M. Lucy had a hard time with pronunciation like usual. Polo struggled most of the time but really seemed to get it at other times. Next Carla taught them different emotions using the flash cards. They did an example of every card using feel + an emotion. It went well. It took awhile but went well. By the time we finished with that class was over. I had them stay and write a bit more in their journals using feel = emotion about the experience they wrote about earlier. I'm excited to read what they wrote. At the end we talked about our party and decided that next Monday night would work best since Carla can't do it this weekend. Our 10 weeks are actually up—CRAZY.

Boulders Lesson Plan 8/5/03

| Time | Activity | Facilitator | Materials |
|------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| 10 min | Questions<br>• How are you?<br>• What did you do _____? | Haley | |
| 30 min | • Review Angelica's story: explain to others that were not in class last week.<br>• Share similar stories/ experiences<br>• Compare Angelica's story to Ramon's story | Haley | |
| 40 min | Review pronouns<br>• Matching game<br>• Write new sentences<br>• Adapt story | Haley | |
| 30 min | Talk about Police class<br>• Fears/concerns<br>• Questions to ask<br>• Schedule a time | Haley | |
| 10 min | Discuss the class<br>• When should we take a break?<br>• For how long?<br>• Recruiting new members<br>• Time? | Haley | |
| 10 min | Journal:<br>Read goals and write about your progress.  Set new goals. What have you learned this week in and out of class? | | Journals |

Attendance:

| | |
|---|---|
| Leopoldo | Haley |
| Ramon | Carla |
| Ruben | Joan |
| Angelica B | |
| Bertha | |
| Jesus | |
| Juana | |
| Yesenia (1st time) | |
| Liliana (1st time) | |

We had so many people today it was great!! Just last week I was so discouraged because no one was coming. It is really refreshing to see so many new faces and to feel the energy. We had more people than chairs.

For the first little while we did introductions and taught the new people how to do introductions. Then we started working on the story. Leopoldo retold it again for those who hadn't heard it yet and Angelica made a few additions. Then I had the students read the English version one sentence at a time. We then spent a few minutes practicing the pronunciation together—which is always pretty boring and I don't know if it's helpful. I guess it is a little bit helpful because after we practiced I had them read it again and their pronunciation was better.

Next I took out one of the sentences that we used last time and we practiced just the simple pronouns (I, you, he, she, we, you, they). We used the sentence from the story _____ went to the school. First we practiced the pronouns and then we replaced schools with other places that they could go (bank, class, work, park, etc.). Next I had them each come up with 3 modifications of the sentence with different pronouns and places. Everyone came up with good sentences. Liliana felt a little uncomfortable and wanted my help but she seemed to catch on. Ruben wrote very complicated sentences—with a little help from Joan. It was nice because he could come up with sentences at his level while the other students worked on very simplistic sentences at their level.

We spent the rest of the time talking in Spanish about the police officer coming to the class and the continuation of the class. They decided that they do want to police officer to come and I assured them that Ann Richey told me they would ask nothing about status. The students wanted the officer to come as early as Thursday. I told them that Tuesday would probably be more practical and now I'm just waiting to hear back from him. We will prepare some more questions for him on Thursday.

Next we talked about the continuation of the class. I asked the students if they wanted to take a break from class for a few weeks. The tricky part is that the new people want to continue because they just started. Ramon suggested that we do some review with the new students to catch them up with the old students. The old students are welcome to come but they don't need to. Everyone seemed to like the idea so after the police officer comes we will review for 3 sessions, take 1 week off while I am in Washington DC and officially start again the following week.

We finished by writing in journals. I forgot most of them on my bed because I took them out to read them. Almost everyone just wrote on a piece of paper.

Anyway, overall I felt much better about the class. I think it was smart to focus only on the "I, you" stuff first and them we will get into the "my, your" stuff—1 thing at a time. Thursday we will talk about the question words and work on "Where did _____go? _____ went to _____".

Boulders Lesson Plan 8/7/03

| Time | Activity | Facilitator | Materials |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10 min | Questions<br>• How are you?<br>• What did you do _____? | Haley | |
| 20 min | • Review Angelica's story: explain to others that were not in class last week. | Haley | |
| 20 min | Introduce questions words<br>• What<br>• When<br>• Where<br>• How<br>• Why<br>• Who | Carla | |
| 30 min | Sentences:<br>Where did _____ go?<br>_____ went to the _____.<br>Dialogue questions and responses with partner.<br>Share with class. | Haley | |
| 30 min | Prepare questions for the police class | Haley | |
| 10 min | Journal:<br>Read goals and write about your progress.  Set new goals.<br>What have you learned this week in and out of class? | | Journals |

Attendance:
Leopoldo                          Haley
Ruben                             Carla
Tina
Angelica
Bertha
Jesus
Yesenia
Iduvina (1st time)

We had a large group again today which was great.  Iduvina came for the first time.  At the beginning of class we did our regular introductions and then once again we reviewed Angelica's story.  Ruben explained it to the rest of the class.  We then talked for a minute about the sentence "_____ went to the _____".  I asked them what the associated question would be.  They had a hard time coming up with it and Carla ended up saying it

in Spanish before they came up with it.  So, I introduced the sentence "where did _____ go?

Next Carla taught the different question words.  She first introduced them and then went around the class making sure that everyone knew them.  This put students on the spot but I think it was good for them. Carla had to leave after this.

After she left I reviewed the question words for a few minutes and then talked specifically about the "Where did _____go?" question.  I divided the students into pairs and had them come up with 4 questions, 4 answers, 2 of each.  They then shared their questions and answers with the class.

For the remaining hour or so we talked about the class with the police officer.  We reviewed the questions that they came up with a few weeks ago and came up with new questions.  I had them write the questions in Spanish and then we translated them into English together.  I did see some progress with their English as we formed sentences.  They seemed to know more and more and they recognized patterns from one sentence in forming the next.

Ruben lost his job.  Ramon is still working there but Ruben isn't.  He stayed after class along with Tina and talked for quite a while.  I think he wanted to ask me something but didn't.  He really wants to learn English and is really struggling.  He went in for an interview at Geneva steel but didn't pass the oral and written English interviews.

Boulders Lesson Plan 9/16/03

| Time | Activity | Facilitator | Materials |
|------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| 15 min | Introductions<br>• Info sheet<br>• The class is OUR class | Haley | Info sheet |
| 20 min | Introduce EFF<br>• Background<br>• Skills wheel<br>• Communication skills<br>• TPR Comm skills | Haley | Skills wheels |
| 65 min | Start to set up levels in English and Spanish<br>• Stress evidence!<br>(follow Joan's lesson plan) | Haley, Carla, Carol | Chart paper<br>Markers |
| 20 min | Group Journal<br>• Write an example journal together. | Haley | |

Attendance:
Ruben                           Haley
Yesenia                         Carol
Iduvina
Ana
Felipe
Bertha

Today we finished coming up with the levels. We started out again with introductions because Carol hadn't met Felipe or Bertha. I then asked the students that were there on Thursday explain what we had done to the students that weren't there. We briefly talked about EFF and reviewed the 5 communication skills with actions.
We spent most of the time today coming up with the in between levels. I first reviewed what they had come up with for the 1st and 5th levels (and 2nd) and then we started with the new ones. The women who put themselves between 1 and 2 helped (along with everyone else) to identify level 2. Felipe and Ruben who placed themselves in level 3 helped to identify level 3. Level four was in some ways a little trickier because no one was in that level.
After we finished writing the levels everyone once again stood in front of the level that they placed themselves in. I asked each person what level they were in and they responded with "I am in level 3", or "I am in between level one and level two".
Our next task was to name the levels. It took them a little while to understand what I meant by naming the levels but once we looked at the examples from last time they seemed to get it. I told them to think of characteristics that described each of the levels.

They came up with NEW GOAL, OVERCOMING FEAR, MAKING THE DECISION, CONFIDENT IN COMMUNICATING, and GOAL COPLETED. I thought that these names were all really insightful. I handed out the markers and had a different person label each level as we came up with them. By the time we finished naming the levels time was up and we didn't even have time to write in journals.

An interesting side note…I need to be able to explain to Carol some of the basic ideas that guide my teaching. It was interesting because as we were naming the different levels she kept participating and coming up with different names like "in the middle" or "half way there" for level three. I kept wanting to tell her to let them think of their own names and that even the fact that she was suggesting anything affected what they thought and said. I then realized that I had never explained to her that that concept was important to me and the way I want to teach the class. If I had explained that to her sure wouldn't have participated in that way. I need to be able to explain to her what I'm doing and why so that I can explain it in this book that I am supposed to write.

Anyway, class went well.

Boulders Lesson Plan 10/2/03

| Time | Activity | Facilitator | Materials |
|---|---|---|---|
| 15 min | • Introductions<br>• Questions | Haley | |
| 20 min | Writing checks intro<br>• When and where do we write checks?<br>• What do we need to know in order to write checks?<br>• Practice writing checks | Haley | Check books<br>$$ |
| 35 min | • Divide in to groups and write a dialogue using checks (store, bank, etc.)<br>• If time, practice money | Carol | Props |
| 20 min | Group Journal and evidence sheet<br>• Write an example journal together. | Haley | Journals |
| 30 min | Immigration clinic | Community Lawyers | |

Attendance:
Ruben                                    Haley
Iduvina                                  Carol
Yesenia                                  Lawyers
Bertha
Angelica
Rosa
Maria
Juana
Ana
Felipe
Ramon (only at the very end to say hi)


Joan,
I feel like class went well today. I think everyone that I consider to be a students right now was there. It was even raining when class started I was very proud of them for coming to class. We started the in class and out of class evidence sheet on Tuesday and I feel like it is going well. So far we do one in class and one out of class experience per day. I told them that a different person needs to share the out of class experience each day.
Next we learned how to write checks which also went well. I introduced the actual writing of the checks and then Carol had the students buy things she brought from home

that she had priced. I think they got the hang of it. I guess we'll see on Tuesday when we review.

The lawyers came at about 7:30 and talked to the students for 1/2 hour about what they would like the lawyers to address. They mostly asked about worker rights and a few immigration questions. It was a little bit frustrating because they announced that next Thursday a lawyer would be coming at 6:30 to talk to them (right in the middle of class and they hadn't mentioned it to me). When they talked to me about it later I understood a little bit more but they need to talk to me about it first. They were also asking me about recruiting more people. I'm not sure what we would do if there were more people in the class. Some days we have no one and definitely need more people but other days the room is full and I have no idea where anyone else would fit. They asked me about moving the class to another location and about having the immigration clinic in another location. Isn't that why we have it there--because we want to focus on the Boulders residents and have things in a location that is so close they have no excuse not the go? Anyway, a representative from Warner Woodworth's?? microcredit project came by also and talked to my students about that program a little bit. He came to help the lawyers so he didn't have brochures with him but he will get them to me in case any of my students are interested.

There were tons of kids today and my the end of the day they were really loud. I need to figure something out with that. We should talk about it as a class again. Were some of the lawyers going to check on that or did I need to? He acted like they would but I'm not sure.

Boulders Lesson Plan 10/7/03

| Time | Activity | Facilitator | Materials |
|------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| 15 min | • Introductions<br>• Questions<br>• Outside of class evidence | Haley | |
| 20 min | STORE<br>• Practice store vocabulary<br>• What do they need to be able to say, ask?<br>• Have students buy a variety of items using checks or cash | Haley/Carol | Check books<br>$$<br>Props |
| 35 min | • Divide into groups and write a dialogue using checks (store, bank, etc.)<br>• Have each group present their dialogue to the class | Haley/Carol | |
| 20 min | Talk about goals<br>• How are we doing?<br>• What can we do to improve? | Haley | |
| 30 min | Group Journal and evidence sheet<br>Write an example journal together. | Haley | |

Attendance:
Ruben                              Haley
Juana                              Carol
Angelica
Bertha

Ahhh,
It's been a week I should have written earlier.
Today only four people came but the class still went well.  For the first part of class I interviewed Angelica since I hadn't gotten a chance to yet.  She is very dependent.  She wanted me to help her with every question.  I think that by the end she got the idea that she could do it on her own.  She is really depressed.  She doesn't speak the language and she has to rely on her husband to do everything.  He works two jobs and doesn't know English very well himself.  She doesn't drive and feels like she is trapped in her house all day long.  Sometimes she feels like she isn't learning any English but then she will notice that she is and that she understands a little bit better.

One we got to class we noticed a sign on the window that said the nurses were having a depression class at 7:00—right in the middle of our class.  Anyway, they came while I was interviewing Angelica outside and I told them that we had class until 8:00 but that they could use the back room if they needed to.  They waited outside for about 20 minutes until there were about 6 of them.  No one came to take the class so they left.  I hope that the scheduling thing is all worked out now.

Angelica and I talked for awhile because she just wanted to talk about how she was feeling and how hard it was to be at home all day and to be dependent on others.  She wants to get her driver's license.

Carol taught the class while I interviewed Angelica.  She was going to do store role-plays but she didn't think that they needed.  When I came in they were working on the parts of the face.

At the end of class I asked them how they were doing on their goals.  They said that they were working on them.  Then I talked about journals and how I wanted their journals to be better.  We did a journal together and it went really well.  I didn't really have an outline for what I wanted the journal to look like but as I talked to them about it and explained it to them it made a lot more sense to me and I now have a better idea of what I want.  I divided into 4 sections.

1.  What did I learn today? ENGLISH
2.  English use outside of the classroom.  SPANISH if needed
3.  How am I doing on my goals?
4.  Questions, concerns, needs

I'm excited to see how this works.  The on that we did together in class went really well.

Boulders Lesson Plan 10/9/03

| Time | Activity | Facilitator |
|------|----------|-------------|
| 15 min | • Introductions<br>• Questions<br>• Outside of class evidence | Haley |
| 20 min | STORE<br>• Where do you shop? | Haley/Carol |
| 35 min | • Divide into groups and write a dialogue using checks (store, bank, etc.)<br>• Have each group present their dialogue to the class | Haley/Carol |
| 20 min | Talk about goals<br>• How are we doing?<br>• What can we do to improve? | Haley |
| 30 min | Journal | Haley |

Attendance:
Ruben                                   Haley
Juana                                   Carol
Angelica
Rosa
Ana
Felipe
Raquel
Gloria?? (1st time)

I feel like class went well today. For the first 45 minutes or so there were only four students—Ruben, Angelica, Juana, and Rosa.  Carol ran to the store.  I asked them where they shopped and we identified things that they hear and can understand in the store. Next we identified things that they didn't understand or that they would like to be able to say.  We came up with a fairly good list.  Next we wrote a dialogue together.  Then they paired up and wrote a dialogue in pairs.  Ruben and Rosa wrote about a trip to the bank and Juana and Angelica a trip to the grocery store.  Right when they were about to present Carol came back and we sang happy birthday to Blanca Angelica's daughter and gave her balloons and cookies we made into a cake with candles.  After we sang Angelica

ran home and brought Pozole for everyone and the rest of the students showed up. As we ate we introduced ourselves and then I had the groups present their dialogues and explain what we had been talking about in class. We then divided everyone up into pairs again and had everyone write another dialogue. One thing that I noticed was that the first time I assigned them a certain situation and their dialogues were much better. The second time I didn't assign them anything and most of them copied the example dialogue. Except for Ruben and Ana they did a trip to the bank. Ruben wanted the change (cash) a check, Ana asked him if he had an account there and he said yes, she then asked if he had an ID, he said no, and she said, no problem. It was fun.

We ended by writing languages experiences. This time Ana shared the story and Raquel wrote it down. Felipe wrote the in class one.

Boulders Lesson Plan 11/11/03

Attendance:
Jose                          Haley
Juana                         Carol
Ruben
Olga

I liked the lesson today. After the basic introductions and questions we did a code from *ESL for Action* about language at work.  It was series of pictures of a boss instructing an employee to do certain tasks.  The employee said that he understood and when the boss left he had no idea what was going on.  We took awhile reading and understand the words on the code and then they shared experiences about when they felt similarly.  We wrote one story together as a group and then they each wrote their own story to share with the class.  They were really good stories and they were definitely more advanced than normal because all the students seem to be more advanced.

Class story
1. The building superintendent told Jose, "I need insulation for the stairs.  Jose, so you understand me?"
2. Jose said "yes sir" but he didn't understand.
3. After a few minutes the superintendent saw that Jose wasn't working on it.
4. So, he explained it again and took him to the stairs.
5. So, Jose understood.

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