This handbook is designed to assist classroom teachers of English as a Second Language (ESL) in meeting the needs of their adult students. The handbook is intended for use in a variety of settings and with a variety of teaching styles. The first chapter discusses adult learners' characteristics and the factors affecting their learning. The second chapter looks at program components and considerations, including counseling and guidance, life skills, vocational ESL, academic curricula, comprehensive curricula, and textbook evaluation and selection. Chapter 3 describes several ESL teaching methods and discusses content area instruction, learning styles, and lesson planning. Chapter 4 describes the characteristics and background of effective ESL instructors, assessment of instructional strength, and means of professional growth. The fifth chapter examines aspects of adult programming to help instructors understand local programs and assist in designing orientation procedures, focusing on curriculum and materials, teachers' non-instructional responsibilities, placement and attendance, accounting, and personnel and finances. Appended materials include a sample ESL needs assessment, a sample textbook evaluation form, lesson plans for three proficiency levels, an outline of teaching methodologies, and a list of characteristics of effective lessons. (MSE) (Adjunct ERIC Clearinghouse on Literacy Education)
English as a Second Language

Handbook for Adult Education Instructors
English as a Second Language

Handbook for Adult Education Instructors
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Preface

The United States continues to be a nation of immigrants. Just as the adult students at the turn of the century, who came from such countries as Russia, Italy, and Poland, crowded into "Americanization" classes to learn a new language, so do the newly arrived immigrants from Latin America, the Middle East, and Asia come into adult ESL classrooms to acquire the language they will need for life in this country.

California is the home for many aliens and immigrants, many of whom come from countries that reflect the socio-political-economic unrest of the times. The demand for ESL classes is great and will continue well into the twenty-first century.

Mastery of the English language is one of the greatest challenges for adults in California’s English as a second language classes. Adults who have effective communication skills in English will further their own opportunities for social and economic growth.

Agencies that offer programs for limited-English-proficient (LEP) adults need to employ instructional staff who have professional preparation for facilitating second language learning among LEP adults. Such staff can serve the needs of their adult students and can assist them toward the development of communicative competence and the fulfillment of personal and academic goals.

This handbook is designed for use by classroom practitioners of ESL instruction. It focuses on adult ESL learners and describes ESL methodologies, program designs, and classroom strategies which help to facilitate learning for these adult students, regardless of their language backgrounds.

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Introduction

Immigration continues to change California's population. A 1986 report from the Assembly Office of Research indicates that more than 80 percent of all immigrants in the United States are from Mexico, Latin America, and Asia. A 1988 report from the U.S. Bureau of the Census shows that 34 percent (6.6 million) of Hispanics in the United States live in California. They represent 23 percent of the state's population. Asians constitute about 8 percent of California's current population. It is projected that by the year 2000, California's ethnic composition will be 27 percent Hispanic, 12 percent Asian, 8 percent black, and 53 percent white.

Data collected during the spring, 1988, language census by the Bilingual Education Office, California State Department of Education, show that there are 652,439 limited-English-proficient (LEP) students in kindergarten and grades one through twelve in California's schools. Enrollment data compiled by the California Basic Educational Data System (CBEDS), California State Department of Education, indicate that 432,441 adults were enrolled in English as a second language (ESL) programs for adults during fiscal year 1986-87. These ESL adult learners represent 25.1 percent of the total enrollments in the ten authorized areas of the public schools' adult instructional programs. Although ESL enrollment data are not available for the community colleges, a recent study of adult education conducted by the California Postsecondary Education Commission showed that ESL average daily attendance during 1986-87 was 25,187. The Department's Amnesty Education Office projects that it will fund educational services for about 573,500 eligible legalized aliens (ELAs).

The above figures have definite implications for English as a second language programs for adults and their instructional goals. Meeting the linguistic needs of these adult learners is important for the future of California. Recognition of this fact has prompted the expansion of existing adult basic education (ABE) and ESL programs and the development of new educational and vocational programs. This handbook addresses current needs of adult learners, as defined by demographic and accompanying programmatic changes.

This handbook is designed to assist ESL instructors in meeting the needs of their adult students. It profiles adult second-language learners, describing their educational and vocational goals, the means available for meeting their needs, and possible program designs. It includes lists of resources available for further information in each content area.

The handbook was designed for use in multiple settings and with a variety of teaching styles. This broad perspective on the teaching of ESL necessitates an approach which is:

- Descriptive, rather than prescriptive, in discussing program design and instruction
- Varied in approach, promoting no single teaching style or methodology
- Multifaceted in its objectives, reflecting the variety of goals set for adult ESL classrooms
- Multidimensional in design, describing the wide array of programs currently providing ESL instruction

As the community of limited-English-proficient adults has expanded and changed, so have the programs designed to meet their needs. Specialized ESL instructional models have been developed to meet specific learner needs, as described below:

- **Life Skills ESL.** ESL instruction specifically addressing the assessed needs of students in community settings where they must be able to function in order to manage their daily existence
- **Vocational ESL.** ESL instruction geared specifically to the linguistic and cultural competencies related to employment
- **Academic ESL.** ESL instruction designed to meet the needs of students entering or reentering the academic community at the high school, community college, or university level
- **Comprehensive ESL.** Multidimensional, often multilevel, ESL instruction that includes life skills, vocational, and academic components

Many classrooms combine features of specialized ESL programs to meet the region-specific needs of a student population. This handbook was developed from a needs-based perspective, beginning with a description of adult ESL learners and their linguistic needs. Discussions of program design, instruction, and administration are based on the identified needs of adult ESL learners.
Chapter 1

Adult ESL Learners

The purpose of this chapter is to describe adult English as a second language (ESL) learners and identify characteristics that may affect their learning. The chapter focuses on:

- Who the adult ESL learners are
- What factors affect their learning
- What their goals are

Recognition of characteristics, such as cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds; economic considerations; and learner goals, may enable ESL instructors to teach these learners in a more effective manner.

Adult ESL Learners—Who Are They?

Meet Jorge, an eighteen-year-old eligible legalized alien; Dang, a thirty-two-year-old Vietnamese fisherman; Toeu, a fifty-four-year-old Cambodian housewife; and Ali, a forty-year-old small business owner from Pakistan. These individuals, although at first glance quite dissimilar, have a common bond: All are attending adult ESL classes.

California's adult ESL population is one of great diversity. An ESL instructor entering the class at any given time can expect to find learners of varying ages, ethnic groups, and educational and socioeconomic backgrounds.

A representative adult ESL class may contain learners whose ages range from eighteen to sixty-five years or even older. Because some of these individuals receive cash assistance, they are required to participate in ESL or other training up to age sixty-five years. Many learners need certificates to attain legal status to remain and work in the United States. Learners as young as sixteen years of age may also attend adult ESL classes, although these individuals are more likely to take advantage of programs offered in secondary schools.

People from diverse ethnic and language backgrounds are also represented in adult ESL classes. These groups include permanent residents, political and economic refugees, and undocumented individuals seeking refuge and assistance in the United States.

The educational backgrounds of adult ESL learners will vary as well. A multilevel class may contain preliterates, semiliterates, nonliterates, and high school graduates, as well as adults with professional degrees. The differences in native language education present the instructors with a variety of learning styles and speeds to which they must adjust.

The ESL instructor of adults will also encounter learners from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds. Rural mountain dwellers and farmers, as well as urban professionals, all come together with a common need for acquiring English skills.

Over the past ten years, the number of adult ESL learners in California has increased, and the great diversity that exists among this population presents a challenge to ESL instructors to offer training that adequately meets these learners' varying needs.

What Factors Affect Adults' Learning?

The classroom performance of adult ESL learners is often governed by outside considerations. Listed below are some of the factors in the personal lives of adult learners that can affect their ability to function successfully in a classroom:

- Cultural background
- Family and/or personal responsibilities
- Physical and emotional health
- Economic status
- Educational background

Cultural Background

Coming from different cultural backgrounds with different learning styles, Vietnamese, Hmong, and Cambodian learners often experience difficulty in adapting to the American classroom. In Vietnam, for example, Vy Trac Do indicates that the configuration of the classroom setting promoted individual work. Students sat in rows of stationary benches. The immobility of the benches, "combined with the students' tendency to attentiveness and careful note-taking, reinforced a more isolated, individual method of learning as opposed to learning through group participation."

Because of the strong influence of Confucian philosophy, the maxim "Silence is golden" is stressed from childhood in Korea, Hong Kong, and Southeast Asia. Learners from these countries may...
have been culturally encouraged not to ask questions. This philosophical viewpoint may cause frustration for both the teacher and the ESL learner in the classroom.

Some learners come from cultures that have different expectations as to how education should be delivered. A common teaching approach in some countries is the lecture method. The teacher is the center of the instructional activity. Learners from other cultures entering the American classroom expect to listen to a lecture and to have a textbook with homework every night.

Most ESL students observe their own cultural and religious holidays, and their observances directly affect their school attendance. These celebrations can last from one day to 30 days.

Other cultural considerations may be apparent in the classroom behavior of ESL learners, such as a reluctance to speak to members of other ethnic groups or a cultural prohibition about the use of the left hand or the raising of the palm of one’s hand to indicate that someone should approach.

Family and/or Personal Responsibilities

Adult learners’ responsibilities outside the ESL class and their priorities may set the family higher in esteem than education. For example, one person is often the interpreter for an extended family and must accompany family members to meetings and appointments, all of which may affect class attendance.

Many adult learners are employed, and their working may interfere with their class attendance. Their work schedules may change, and the changes may interrupt class attendance.

Physical and Emotional Health

The learners’ physical conditions may range from very healthy to chronically ill. Some of the learners’ problems originated in their home countries, where, because of wars or economic hardships, health care was very poor or nonexistent. Long-term poor nutrition may also contribute to lingering health problems, which may result in erratic class attendance or an impaired ability to learn.

Some adult learners have come to this country with their families intact; some have not. The adults who are lucky enough to escape to freedom or new opportunities may feel a range of emotions, from guilt about those who were left behind to worry about their safety. One of the results of this emotional distress is the relatively unknown phenomenon affecting young Asian refugees known as sudden death syndrome, so called because death overtakes a person who has no known previous medical or health problem. Victims often come from war-afflicted countries and suffer from post-traumatic stress.

Economic Status

If learners are employed full time, their energy level may be low. Instructors need to be aware of this possibility and its effect on the pacing of lessons. Income disparity is another aspect of employment that can affect the class; some learners may be employed in professional jobs with excellent wages, while others may be receiving government aid or working for minimum wages.

Educational Background

Students with professional or university educations are often in classes with students who have had little education in their first language. The implication for instructors is the need to respond to various learning backgrounds with patience and an understanding of the students’ differences in speed and ease of learning.

Learners will enter classes with varied degrees of English acquisition. The level of English-language fluency will not indicate educational experience and proficiency. For example, learners who have attended school in their home countries will benefit from instruction more quickly than a student who has had no formal education in his or her native country.

Why Are Adult ESL Learners in Our Classrooms?

Adults have a variety of reasons for coming to school. ESL learners want to learn the new language in order to join the mainstreams of life in this country. They usually want to make immediate use of their classroom learning in order to communicate in their lives, to learn about the cultures and customs of the United States, to pass the citizenship test, to gain employability or improve job skills, and to complete their academic education. Many adults are meeting program requirements, like those of the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA), Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN), and the Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA).

The adult ESL class may serve as a social forum for many learners. In addition to their desires to learn English, these learners come to class seeking social contact with others from their home countries or Americans outside of their homes.

Knowing the immediate needs and long-term goals of adult learners will help instructors provide instructional experiences that assist learners in fulfilling their goals.
This chapter details general considerations necessary for an ESL program's success and describes four ESL program models that can respond to various learners' goals and needs. It focuses on:

- General components of a successful ESL program
- Descriptions of program models
- Life skills programs
- Vocational ESL (VESL) program design
- Academic programs
- Comprehensive programs
- Textbook evaluation and selection processes

A successful ESL program model includes an effective counseling and guidance process, including entry and placement, periodic assessment, and certification of competence. It also includes instruction at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels, with delineation of the curriculum content of each level.

Counseling and Guidance

A counseling and guidance component is an integral part of a successful program. Counselors help entering students by placing them in classes in which they can best achieve their goals.

When there is an effective guidance unit in a school, students learn about various community services and educational options available to them.

Entry and Placement Services

It is essential that a program have an effective entry process. Counselors should consider enrollees' language proficiencies and academic backgrounds and review their needs and long-range learning goals as well as their immediate objectives. They can help students understand options available to them and assist them in making enlightened educational choices.

Every entering learner needs to be assessed and placed. Agencies in which there are great numbers of enrollees at a given time usually devise their own brief oral placement tests. These are interviews in which the items become progressively more difficult; and the tests can be stopped when the entering student can no longer understand or answer the questions.

In addition, agencies can devise short paper-and-pencil tests which reflect the content of the program levels the agencies offer. Many agencies have made use of cloze tests as an assessment of language proficiency.

Levels of Instruction

In successful programs, learners are placed in classes in which they can learn best. Instruction is provided for beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels, with specified curriculum goals and objectives at each level. Students' progress is monitored, and advancement from one level to another is based not only on students' classroom performance but also on assessment of their competence through a testing program. It is important that tests reflect the content of classroom instruction.

Certification

Successful programs define the criteria for exit from the programs and certify that students meet those criteria. The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) or the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) are examples of testing instruments that could be used to determine students' success. These tests are designed to evaluate English-language instruction in civics competencies and performance in listening, speaking, reading, and writing for eligible legalized aliens. The TOEFL particularly measures the English-language proficiency of learners seeking college educations. The CASAS listening, reading, and mathematics tests can also be used to assess preemployment skills, work maturity, and basic skills in an employment context for job placement after students have completed vocational English as a second language (VESL) and vocational training. CASAS testing for general life skills, content areas of consumer economics, community resources, health, government, law, domestic, and computational skills is useful for regular ESL classes.

Educational and Vocational Counseling

in the Classroom

In classroom settings in which central guidance services are not available, instructors can fill the
roles of counselors. Their main role is to help learners decide on realistic short- and long-term goals and to channel learners into appropriate programs for meeting those goals. Ideally, instructors will be knowledgeable about entrance requirements for schools and training programs in the areas of interest to the students.

Field trips to nearby vocational training sites or colleges can help learners become familiar with educational options. Instructors can also arrange classroom visitations by counselors from other programs and schools so that the ESL students can find out more about various training opportunities.

Life Skills Programs

People who have moved from one city to another have experienced the disorientation of being a newcomer. They have had to relearn habits and make adjustments in the simple tasks of daily life, such as which newspaper to buy, the times and channels of favorite television programs, which markets and department stores offer the best bargains, and what dentist to consult for regular checkups. The length of time it takes to become comfortable in a new environment often depends on the amount of support received from family, friends, and colleagues.

Think how much more difficult it must be for adults who don’t know English to adjust to their new lives in a strange country. It takes time to establish new relationships and networks.

The goal of the life skills ESL class is to provide adult learners with opportunities to gain knowledge of, and better control over, the environment that governs their daily lives as they are learning English.

Curriculum Content

Life skills classes focus on skills or competencies that everyone living in our society must have. Listed below are five generally acknowledged life areas in which all people should be competent:

1. **Consumer economics** refers to such competencies as the ability to use comparative shopping skills, obtain housing, manage money, and use financial services.

2. **Community resources** includes such skills as being able to use the telephone (and directory), the postal system, different types of public transportation, and public and community services.

3. **Health** refers to the ability to seek medical assistance, including knowledge of, and ability to complete, related forms.

4. **Occupational knowledge** includes competencies in getting and keeping a job, such as being able to complete job applications and follow on-the-job instructions.

5. **Government and law** refers to such competencies as being able to pass a driving test and apply for permanent residency.

Generally, agencies with life skills programs have identified what they believe to be the competencies that are essential for adults to be able to function effectively in their communities. They have determined local needs, using such resources as the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System and APL competency lists. Because each community is different, competency lists are not identical throughout California; they reflect local needs and priorities.

The competency lists are usually organized by level for beginning, intermediate, and advanced classes. Some agencies have also determined what language forms and communicative functions can be appropriately taught within the competencies as well. These lists, which may be part of a course outline or syllabus, are usually given to instructors when they enter the program. Instructors can use this information in planning their classes.

In life skills classes, students learn the language and language skills—listening, speaking, reading, and writing—in the context of real-life situations. Every attempt is made to recreate real-life situations and for students to practice tasks related to the situations.

Grammar is not ignored in life skills classes but is taught within life skills contexts. For example, the present perfect tense may be taught in a situation that involves enrolling a child in school. (Have you brought Juan’s birth certificate and immunization record? Has he received his shots yet?)

A successful life skills class, then, is one in which the four language skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing are taught and grammar is integrated within the life skills contexts being emphasized.

Instructional Materials

It is essential that instructional materials include life skills content. Because classroom learning should reflect life experiences and roles, a basal textbook should not be the only source of instruction and learning; other materials can be drawn from a variety of life skills materials on the market.

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Real objects and visuals are essential in beginning classes; realia at the intermediate to advanced levels can include job application forms and income tax return forms. Information pamphlets and brochures, such as police and fire department alerts, can also be sources of reading and discussion.

**Student Needs Assessment**

Life skills instruction must reflect students' needs. Certain needs are common to all learners, but instructors must determine the special needs within their classes; they need to conduct some kind of needs assessment. Teachers have conducted successful needs surveys even in beginning-level classes. For example, visuals showing various situations can be presented to students, and they can vote by noting yes or no on the backs of the visuals to indicate whether they wish to learn the skills pictured. Bilingual aides can also assist in identifying students' needs.

As the students progress in their knowledge of the language, they can more easily express their needs. A sample of a simple needs assessment survey is included in Appendix A.

**Advancement**

It is usually the responsibility of instructors to evaluate the specific learning in their classrooms. Evaluation procedures can range from informal ratings of classroom performance to more objective paper-and-pencil tests. Many agencies test for placement and achievement.

Pretests serve as a means of identifying students' readiness at the beginning of instruction. Classroom teachers can use tests and their own ratings to determine student advancement and certification.

Many adult learners have programmed their own life agendas, and as they achieve their goals, they leave the sheltered classroom environment to get on with their lives. Their experiences in the life skills classrooms will help them be more successful in their daily lives and will encourage them to risk using English in their various activities.

**VESL Program Design**

Vocational English as a second language (VESL) programs can be any of three different approaches to instruction with the objective of learning an employment-related task:

1. *General VESL or prevocational ESL*—dealing with competencies related to finding, acquiring, and retaining a job
2. *Occupational cluster VESL*—dealing with competencies common to a group of occupations
3. *Occupation-specific VESL*—involving instruction in competencies necessary in a specific occupation

**General VESL**

General VESL instruction focuses on the linguistic and cultural competencies related to finding a job, acquiring a job, and finally, advancing on a job. The competencies are cross-vocational, applying to all occupations. In VESL instruction, the teacher plans and presents English communication lessons that focus on such topics as job applications, interviews, classified ads, transportation, and on-the-job communication (following directions and clarifying instructions).

Instruction can be provided in classroom settings and with classes at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. Each level should include a sequence of prevocational competencies to be mastered for promotion to the next level. Instruction may also be provided in a learning center (individualized instruction). This approach can be very useful in an open-entry–open-exit situation because it affords students the opportunity to work at their own paces and levels.

Because general VESL is the least specialized of the three VESL approaches, textbooks and other instructional materials are readily available. Some adaptation may be necessary, however, to make the materials suitable for lower-level students.

**Occupational Cluster–VESL**

Occupational cluster VESL instruction includes instruction in the linguistic and cultural competencies common to a group of related occupations. Occupations may be grouped by industry, common communication needs, or technical and basic skill needs. Grouping is based on common factors and shapes the content for instruction.

Grouping by communication needs focuses on the purpose, mode, and content of the communication as well as on the relationships among those communicating. The commonalities in these factors provide the rationale for grouping learners for instruction.

For waiters or salesclerks, whose jobs require them to find out what customers want (purpose), almost all communication is oral (mode) and the relationships are very equal—the customer is always right. In such a public contact cluster, some of the common language functions presented might be the following:

1. Understanding what the customer wants
2. Responding to service orders and requests for information
3. Coping with mistakes
4. Dealing with complaints
5. Responding to special requests

Other ways of clustering might be by commonalities of training goals, such as food preparation—whether in restaurants, hospitals, or in catering—or by basic skill needs; e.g., mathematics skills needed in such occupations as carpentry or auto mechanics.

An important element to consider in any clustering is the availability of both instructional materials and staff. There are far fewer, if any, materials specifically designed for use in cluster classes. As a result, an instructor in this area needs to research more than one occupational area and consult with vocational instructors to develop and adapt appropriate instructional materials.

Occupation-Specific VESL

Occupation-specific VESL programs include instruction in the linguistic and cultural competencies that are necessary in specific occupations. The competencies include those related to the ability to search for, get, and keep a specific job or advance in a particular occupation.

Instruction can be presented in a typical classroom, in a vocational training area, or at an actual jobsite and can be offered before, concurrent with, or after the completion of training. It involves a VESL instructor’s planning and presenting lessons focusing on a particular occupation, such as welding or auto mechanics. The following content areas might be incorporated into the curriculum:

1. Equipment (tools, parts, machines, supplies)
2. Procedures and processes (steps in performing tasks)
3. Quality control and inspection (work errors)
4. Safety (rules and conditions)

A team approach between the vocational instructor and the VESL instructor is an important element in this approach. The team approach allows problems in the vocational training or in communication to be quickly identified and dealt with.

Instructional materials in the various vocational content areas are available, but adaptation of those materials by the VESL instructor is usually necessary for an occupation-specific VESL program.

Certification

For learners in VESL pretraining classes, CASAS prevocational listening and reading tests can be used to determine readiness for vocational training.

The overriding determination of the effectiveness of VESL programs is the percentage of learners who successfully complete vocational training, obtain jobs, increase job effectiveness, and/or upgrade job skills as a result of participation in the programs.

Academic Programs

An academic ESL program is one in which the focus of instruction is on such academic skills as formal composition, reading, grammar practice and analysis, and study skills. The learners in such a program are directed to some higher form of education, such as preparation for the General Education Development (GED) test, high school diploma, or college or university entrance. They learn the skills necessary to compete with native English speakers in situations in which a more formal knowledge of English is required. The academic ESL program may be comprehensive and include learners at all levels of proficiency, from beginning to advanced. In some schools, the academic program may be offered as transitional classes at the intermediate and advanced levels to form a bridge between ESL classes and GED/high school diploma programs.

Needs Assessment

To ensure that learners will receive English instruction that best meets their needs, instructors should first administer a needs assessment and determine the students’ immediate goals. An informal assessment can be made in the form of a simple questionnaire or in an informal interview. A formal written exam can also be given to determine the students’ English proficiency levels. Grammar-based exams are common; however, instructors might also consider the learners’ proficiencies in the four basic language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Organization of Classes

Classes can be organized in a traditional format in which the students are in a self-contained classroom with one teacher. Programs with more than one teacher may involve skills approach, with students going to different classes for listening, speaking, reading, writing, and grammar instruction. Students can select the classes they need most. Even in agencies in which there is only one teacher at a site, learners can be grouped in accordance with skill levels. In such group-centered classes, cooperative learning can be encouraged, with students
taking more responsibility for helping each other and for their own learning.

Skills Instruction

Although all skills are interrelated and difficult to isolate, most academic programs are designed around the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. In addition, grammar and study skills are usually addressed. The focus is on acquisition of the skills that are necessary to function successfully in an academic setting.

Listening. Material at the beginning stages is short and controlled in vocabulary, structure, and content. As learners become more proficient, the material becomes less controlled. The goals in an academic program are for learners to be able to select relevant information, take lecture notes, and reproduce and interpret what they have heard.

Speaking. Learners practice conversational English on a variety of topics, including life experiences, cultural understanding, current events, and values clarification. Idiomatic expressions are commonly taught in conversation classes. In advanced classes, the goal is to be able to make oral presentations and speeches on outside readings or other relevant topics.

Reading. The goal for the learners is to be able to read and interpret information on a variety of topics from various sources: academic materials, textbooks, literary works, newspapers, and magazines, for example. Various reading subskills that instructors include in the curriculum are previewing, skimming for main ideas, scanning for information, recalling facts and ideas, sequencing, predicting outcomes, and drawing inferences and conclusions. Students learn to control the rate at which they read in accordance with the purpose of their reading.

Writing. A goal of instruction in writing is to enable students to write without fear of error. Writing builds on the students' interests and on their reading and oral language experiences. Students write for a variety of purposes and audiences. Writing is a process that includes prewriting, sharing, revising, editing, and evaluating. An example of a prewriting activity is to engage students in a discussion of their goal to become permanent residents or citizens of the United States. Once the students realize that they have something to say, they can begin to write. (For further information on the writing process, see Practical Ideas for Teaching Writing as a Process (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1987). An additional resource is the Writing Assessment Manual, which was developed in 1989 by the writing committee of the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) (2725 Congress Street, Suite 1-M, San Diego, CA 92110).

Vocabulary is usually taught in reading classes. Word analysis skills emphasizing the internal structures of words and the meanings of roots and affixes help increase vocabulary for many students.

Preparation for the Test of English as a Foreign Language

At the advanced levels, classes to prepare students for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) may be offered. The test is a proficiency exam required by most colleges as a prerequisite for admission. It is also required for state licensure for some professions. A passing score is determined by each school. For many schools, a minimum range for undergraduates is between 450 and 525. Instructors who deal with college-bound students need to check with the appropriate college(s) to determine the required scores. The Bulletin of Information for TOEFL, which provides information on testing procedures, test dates, and test sites, is published annually by Educational Testing Service. Many TOEFL preparation books are commercially available and cover the major areas of the test: listening, formal structure and style of written English, and reading and vocabulary on a variety of topics.

Study Skills

Study skills are tools that allow learners to use English effectively as a language of learning. Study skills include note-taking, outlining, dictionary skills, library research, and test-taking skills.

Certification

The success of an academic ESL program is determined by the number of students who enter other training and educational programs. Some agencies assess student progress through commercially available or agency-developed tests and establish criteria for successful completion of an academic program. Students may receive ESL certificates to document their successful completion.

Academic ESL programs offer adult learners the opportunity to expand their educational horizons and to be able to succeed in other academic pursuits.

Comprehensive Programs

Generally, adult learners who wish to learn English go to adult schools in their local neighborhoods. Although they all want to learn to under-
stand, speak, read, and write English, their specific needs may vary.

Victor Soto, for instance, wants to learn English quickly so that he can become a computer repairperson. Hanae Sato wants to communicate with her children's teachers so that she can better help her children with schoolwork. Sun Ae Chung wants to further her academic education.

In order to help adults like these achieve their goals, some agencies maintain comprehensive programs that include VESL, life skills, and academic tracks.

Agencies with comprehensive programs are generally large; it is difficult for the "little red schoolhouse" to have a multilevel class that includes VESL, life skills, and academic tracks.

A few agencies with comprehensive programs maintain VESL, life skills, and academic tracks at the beginning, intermediate, and advanced levels. Other agencies offer beginning and intermediate life skills classes. As students progress to the advanced level, they can choose to go into a VESL program while enrolling in vocational training, or they can select ESL transition, or bridge, classes as preparation for the academic program at their schools.

Textbook Evaluation and Selection Process

Instructional materials are critical to the success of any program. In the not too distant past, there were only a few basal series, workbooks, and skills textbooks (in grammar, reading, writing, and so on) designed for use by adult ESL learners. Today, a bewildering number of instructional materials are being published.

Many program administrators conduct textbook studies some months before the beginning of a new term in order to select books they feel are most appropriate for their adult students. Publishers are invited to submit textbooks for examination, and a representative committee of teachers, administrators, and curriculum advisers conducts an in-depth study to develop a recommended list of textbooks for various types of classes.

As aids in evaluating textbooks, rating sheets are usually developed that are based on criteria considered important to program success and that emphasize format and supplemental support resources, such as teachers' guides, workbooks, and videocassettes.

An example of an evaluation sheet for rating basal and supplementary textbooks is included in Appendix B of this handbook. Schools need to develop special rating forms for use in evaluating materials of special focus, such as general VESL and academic textbooks as well as skills textbooks. Textbook studies and recommended lists are becoming increasingly important as aids to the busy classroom instructor.

Conclusion

ESL programs for adults in California have evolved—whether they are life skills, VESL, academic, or comprehensive programs—in order to serve the needs of their adult learners better. Flexibility and willingness to adapt are hallmarks of adult education, and today's program models will inevitably change as adults with different needs participate in them.
Chapter 3

ESL Instruction

The purpose of this chapter is to examine variables of instruction, such as teaching approaches, diverse learners' learning styles, acquisition of skills, and lesson planning. Awareness of these instructional variables can enable instructors to manage classrooms effectively and design appropriate lesson plans.

ESL Teaching Approaches

There are two major approaches to teaching a second language. One focuses on language functions and communicative competence, and the other focuses on grammatical forms, or structures.

Communicative/Functional ESL Approaches

In a communicative/functional approach, the instructional objective is for students to achieve communication in real-life, personal situations with language that is closely related to their needs, interests, and desires. Although quite structured, this approach represents an attempt to promote natural acquisition as opposed to formal learning of language. An attempt is made to imitate natural situations and processes that are the bases for first language acquisition in children. Language drills, translations, overt corrections of structural errors, and grammar-oriented lessons are not used as teaching techniques. Errors are seen as developmental, disappearing as the student is provided more comprehensible input. There is extensive use of body language, visuals, objects, props, and natural conversational situations. Among the most commonly used communicative/functional methods that promote language acquisition are Asher's total physical response, Wilkins' functional method, the Gaylean confluent approach, Terrell's natural approach, and Curran's community language learning. For more information the reader should refer to the Foreign Language Framework for California Public Schools: Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1989) and to appendixes D and E in this handbook.

Grammar-Based ESL Approaches

Grammar-based approaches focus on teaching structures and grammar as the primary objective of instruction. A restriction on the use of the student's primary language, overt correction of grammatical errors, and exercises or drills related to material structurally sequenced by the instructor or in the textbook are characteristic of these approaches. Although grammar-based lessons are often based on a natural sequence of understanding, speaking, reading, and writing, the underlying objective is learning, as opposed to acquisition. (See Appendix E.) Operant conditioning, contrastive or structural linguistics, and cognitive psychology are the bases for these methods. The most common grammar-based approaches are the audiolingual, cognitive code, and grammar-translation approaches. (See Appendix E.)

What is learned using these methods is thought to be helpful to the student but does not provide a basis for nativelike fluency. Rather, what is learned is stored in a hypothetical monitor that the student uses to adjust speech or writing for correctness in accordance with the conscious rules or conventions he or she can remember. The student, for example, might backtrack and correct an utterance that was misspoken, hesitate and compose a sentence that is grammatically correct before speaking, or correct and rewrite a rough draft before producing a final, nativelike piece of writing. In other words, the learned rules or skills applied through the monitor are thought to form the basis for refinements of an overall language proficiency that is otherwise acquired through large amounts of comprehensible input in low-anxiety, natural contexts.

Comprehensible English Input

Regardless of the approach used, the basic ingredient of a successful second-language lesson is a high level of comprehensible instruction (i.e., the language of the lesson must be understandable to the student). When high percentages of the words or structures in a lesson are unknown to the student, meaning must be conveyed in other ways, such as using body language, familiar words to explain new words, objects, pictures, situational contexts, and communicative interaction between the teacher and the student. However, if the learner is required to produce too soon (i.e., before there has been sufficient comprehensible input), anxiety or uninterest may block whatever understandable input that is being provided. Improper grouping, such as involving beginners and advanced students in the
same group, may dilute the comprehensible input possible in a lesson, since the teacher may find it difficult to adjust his or her level of speech to the wide range of comprehension levels within the group. Improper grouping often results in the teacher's boring the advanced students or speaking over the heads of the beginning learners.

Comprehensibility is not just a function of the language structures, vocabulary, and delivery of the teacher. It is also affected by how the content of the instruction matches the performance level of the learner. The teacher must take care during instruction to talk about subjects or concepts with which students are at least somewhat familiar. Adjusting instruction in a second language to the students' achievement levels is critical and makes the difference between the students' hearing just noise or actually being meaningfully engaged in the lesson.

Summary

Effective English instruction for ESL students is characterized by:

1. High levels of comprehensibility
2. Low-anxiety situations
3. Content adjusted to match the students' developmental levels
4. A primary focus on the meaning or message rather than on structural or grammatical correctness, especially in the initial stages
5. Language lessons that correspond to the needs, interests, and desires of the students (See appendixes E and F for a more detailed summary of second-language approaches and lesson characteristics.)
6. Communicative interaction between the teacher and the students that promotes a negotiation of meaning

Content Instruction in ESL Classes

Teaching adults new concepts or skills in a second language depends on (1) the levels of comprehensible language provided in low-anxiety situations, and (2) the student's level of literacy.

Instructors can increase the comprehensibility and effectiveness of their instruction in English by following a few basic rules:

1. Adjust the content. Adjust the level of difficulty of the lesson to correspond as closely as possible to the developmental level of the students in the given subject area.
2. Adjust the delivery. Adjust the level of speech used with the students to a native-to-nonnative level as opposed to the customary native-to-native level. This can be done by:
   a. Repeating key words and phrases
   b. Slowing down one's speech and pronouncing words clearly
   c. Controlling vocabulary, idiomatic expressions, and the complexity and length of sentences
   d. Using body language, props, objects, and visual aids to convey meaning
   e. Emphasizing key words and phrases through intonational variations
   f. Giving concrete examples and explanations of key ideas and vocabulary
3. Follow an L-S-R-W sequence. Follow a listening-speaking-reading-writing sequence as closely as possible, especially in the initial stages, so that students are not asked to say what they have not heard, read what they have not said, or write what they have not read.
4. Negotiate meaning. Verify that students understand the lesson by asking questions, checking for comprehension, and speaking with students as much as possible.

Learning Styles

Kinesthetic and tactile learners retain information best when they are physically involved in the learning process. These adults should write the information and handle and smell the objects they are dealing with.

Aural learners retain information they hear. They should repeat the material to remember it. Very effective teaching methods for use with these learners include class discussions and dialogues.

Visual learners must see what is being discussed. For them, hearing about something is not enough; they must be able to visualize the topic. Instructors of such students should use picture cards, films, real objects for demonstration, written samples for notes, and so on to help these learners progress most effectively.

Most learners do not fit into any one category. They learn more easily when teaching is done in the style that is most effective for them, but they may learn best when a mixture of styles is presented. For example, a concept such as using a pay telephone can be introduced with a demonstration involving a real telephone, or a phone can be drawn on the
chalkboard. Then, the process of using the telephone can be presented with a discussion (oral), a total physical response exercise (visual and kinesthetic), and practice using the phone to call others (kinesthetic and oral). Teaching that uses a variety of methods ensures that adult learners receive the material in a form that is easy for them to retain.

Lesson Planning

From course outlines provided by the sponsoring agency, the instructor should develop lesson plans that cover the areas of required instruction. Typically, the course outline is based on the assessed needs of the students in the school attendance area.

In making lesson plans, the instructor should consider the following: goals and learning outcomes; teaching techniques; diagnostic information and test results of the learners; and available instructional materials, visuals, realia, supplies, and equipment.

Each daily lesson plan should include a competency objective. The lesson should begin with an introduction or a warm-up session in which items from previous lessons may be reviewed. The instructor should then present and model the day’s new material. After the presentation, students should use the material singly, in pairs, and in small and large groups. Student practice needs to be monitored by the instructor to be sure each student understands the material that has been presented. After student practice, the instructor provides a simulated real-life situation in which the students apply the language that they just learned. The final step is to evaluate students’ progress toward the lesson objectives. (See appendixes C, D, and F for sample lesson plans.)
Chapter 4

ESL Instructors of Adults

This chapter describes the characteristics and background of effective ESL instructors of adults, presents a self-evaluation checklist, and suggests means for professional growth.

Qualities of Effective ESL Instructors

Effective ESL instructors of adults are sensitive to the values and cultures of their students. They not only know about our country but also try to learn about other countries and cultures in order to understand their students better.

Instructors are sensitive to the interests and needs of different age groups. Young adults may need ESL instruction to complete their educations, while older students may have other goals. Effective instructors are patient and able to deal with a wide variety of needs and priorities.

ESL instructors are aware of different styles of learning. Most of the literature dealing with learning styles refers to the cognitive, affective, physiological, and psychological aspects of learning. The physiological aspect, for example, deals with the auditory, visual, and kinesthetic ways of learning, while the psychological aspect involves the learner's self-worth. Since people learn differently, instructors need to employ different instructional strategies, multiple techniques, and a variety of materials to reach all learners.

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Effective ESL instructors consider the students' special needs, based on individual abilities and educational backgrounds. A nonliterate student who has never picked up a pencil will need much help and direction. The instructor will have the challenge of providing instruction in both basic motor skills and language development.

ESL instructors are willing to serve as counselors. In many instances, they will be the only counselors their students will ever have. At times they will have to serve as referral persons to different agencies.

ESL instructors want to be effective teachers. They encourage student growth in language development. They provide a climate that promotes learners' success by making language learning enjoyable, and they participate in professional growth activities.

Qualifications of ESL Instructors

ESL instructors, in addition to possessing certain personal qualities, must meet some minimum qualifications and should have certain training and experience that promote success in ESL instruction. ESL instructors should demonstrate proficiency in:

1. Spoken and written English, combining the qualities of accuracy and fluency
2. Language teaching principles and methodology, demonstrating the ability to apply these to various classroom situations

Additionally, effective ESL instructors are familiar with:

1. Language characteristics that are vastly unlike the linguistic characteristics and internal structure of English
2. Language acquisition theory as it concerns first and subsequent language learning
3. The role of teamwork in ESL instruction; that is, the importance of effective interaction with administrators, counselors, and instructional staff

Assessment of Instructional Strengths

Assessment of professional growth needs is an ongoing part of ESL instruction. Both formal and informal assessments help instructors to gauge their progress and chart individual courses for professional development. Formal performance evaluations are used in some, but not all, adult education programs. The following informal means of evaluating performance are available to all ESL instructors:

1. Self-assessment—Self-assessment instruments or checklists may be available to provide a framework for thinking about habits, models, and teaching styles.
2. Information sharing—Instructors can organize informal rap sessions, selecting a time and topic and inviting participation. Classroom visitations can be organized either by instructors or by a program lead teacher. These sessions and classroom observations offer opportunities for feedback and
coaching. Peer coaching involves having another instructor observe the performance of a particular skill or strategy and offer constructive feedback on teaching behaviors. Instructors can exchange observations regularly in order to share helpful information and feedback. This coaching system helps instructors to reflect on teaching and implement alternative teaching approaches.

3. Observation by coordinator/resource instructor—Even if no formal means of performance evaluation is used by an agency, an instructor can request feedback from a supervising coordinator or resource instructor, based on classroom observations.

Means of Professional Growth

Professional growth is the personal responsibility of every ESL instructor for many reasons:

1. English as a second language and learning research continue to influence classroom practice in order to make teaching and learning more effective.
2. Student populations are continually shifting, along with changing immigration patterns. Cross-cultural understanding is in great demand.
3. Funding changes often necessitate additional teacher training. The funding for an ESL class determines its focus, perhaps causing a shift from an academic to a citizenship to a vocational program.

There are many routes to professional growth:

1. Workshops and consultations—Agencies hosting workshops and demonstrations often send announcements inviting others to participate. Teachers can request that these announcements be made available. Consultants are often needed for staff development. When an agency has no staff skilled in a particular area of need, the agency should consider hiring a consultant.
2. Participation in professional organizations—Attending professional conferences is a stimulating and invaluable means of growing professionally. Conferences offer theoretical and practical presentations and workshops, materials exhibits, and opportunities for interaction with other ESL professionals. Professional organizations that provide opportunities for ESL development are:
   - CATESOL—The California Association of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages is a state affiliate of TESOL (Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages; see below) concerned with instruction in English as a second language and bilingual education. Members receive the CATESOL News, which has many practical articles about teaching ESL, as well as job and conference listings. Regional conferences take place in the fall, and the annual state conference is in the spring.
   - TESOL—Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages is an international professional organization founded in 1966. Members receive the TESOL Quarterly and the bimonthly TESOL Newsletter. TESOL holds a large annual spring convention that attracts thousands of participants. TESOL also sponsors a summer institute which offers courses, workshops, and seminars related to ESL instruction.
   - CCAE—The California Council for Adult Education is a professional organization affiliated with AAACE (American Association for Adult and Continuing Education; see below). CCAE membership provides access to workshops, conferences, job information, legislative representation, interactions with other adult educators, and a newsletter. CCAE's annual conference is in the spring.
   - AAACE—The American Association for Adult and Continuing Education is a national adult education organization based in Washington, D.C. It provides services similar to those of CCAE, but on a national level. AAACE offers an annual conference, two journals, and a monthly newsletter. ESL, adult basic education (ABE), competency-based education, and international education are a few of the interest groups associated with AAACE.
3. Teacher training courses—College and university degree and extension programs are important sources of professional growth. ESL instructors can benefit greatly from courses in linguistics, educational psychology (theory of learning), methodology of language teaching, student teaching and training, preparation of teaching materials (evaluative instruments, audiovisual aids), and cultural anthropology. TESOL publishes the Directory of Teacher Preparation Programs in TESOL Bilingual Education.
The Adult Education Unit of the California State Department of Education maintains a list of videotapes available for staff development. These videotapes are available through the Resource Services Division, California State Department of Education, P.O. Box 944272, Sacramento, CA 94244-2720. Videotaping of individual classes for self-evaluation by instructors is also a useful staff development tool.

4. Reference reading—Reference reading is another way to remain current in the field of ESL. Each of the professional organizations previously listed publishes a journal and/or newsletter. The August, 1985, issue of the TESOL Newsletter has a list of 47 journals of possible interest to ESL instructors. Free or low-cost newsletters, materials, and bibliographies available through the agencies (such as those listed in “Resources” below) are excellent sources of materials and advice or information.

Resources

The following resources are recommended to ESL instructors:

The Center for Applied Linguistics

The Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) is a private, nonprofit organization involved in the study of language and the application of linguistics to educational, cultural, and social concerns. CAL carries out research, information collection and analysis, and program development and houses the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Clearinghouse on Languages and Linguistics. CAL publications range from practical guides, papers, and monographs to major interdisciplinary works. The Linguistic Reporter, CAL's newsletter, is published monthly. For more information, contact CAL, 1118 Twenty-second Street NW, Washington, DC 20037; (202) 429-9292.

ERIC

ERIC (Educational Resources Information Center) is a nationwide service involving the collection, processing, and dissemination of information on significant literature in various educational fields. ERIC maintains two clearinghouses of particular interest to adult education ESL teachers. One is the Clearinghouse on Language and Linguistics, 1118 Twenty-second Street NW, Washington, DC 20037. The other is the Clearinghouse on Adult Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, 400 Maryland Avenue SW, Reporters Building, Room 522, Washington, DC 20202. In addition to adult-education-related services in general, this clearinghouse also has useful information on ESL instruction for adults.

VOICE

VOICE (Vocational and Occupational Information Center for Educators) is a statewide resource center for materials and information in vocational and occupational education. It is also a clearinghouse for technical assistance and consultant services. VOICE is part of the California State Department of Education.

Employment Training Network

The Employment Training Network (ETN) provides resources and technical assistance to Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA) programs. It is federally funded through the Employment Preparation Unit of the Department of Education and the California State Job Training Coordinating Council.
Chapter 5

Adult-School Systems

The purpose of this chapter is to help ESL instructors of adults understand their local programs and to assist administrators and coordinators in designing local orientation procedures. The chapter includes questions that instructors can ask to get information about policies and procedures that affect the operation of their local agencies. The chapter focuses on:

1. Curriculum and materials
2. Noninstructional responsibilities
3. Placement and attendance accounting
4. Personnel and finances

Curriculum and Materials

Questions such as the following will assist instructors in determining what decisions have or have not been made regarding their curricula:

What Are the Program Goals?

ESL adult school programs are funded by the state to provide language instruction to limited-English-proficient (LEP) adults. Some agencies may receive funding under the Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA) (Public Law 99-603) to provide instruction in English and in civics to eligible legalized aliens (ELAs).

Is There a Mandated Curriculum?

Funding sources may require, recommend, or encourage a specific curriculum approach or specific curriculum objectives. The State Department of Education's Adult Education Unit has established a State ESL Curriculum Committee to establish model curriculum standards and quality indicators for adult ESL programs.

Is There a Document That Identifies Curriculum Content?

Funding sources may request programs to submit curriculum-related information with their proposals. This information may be general, identifying program or course goals only. It may also be detailed, identifying specific objectives and instructional materials that focus on content related to those objectives.

What Should ESL Course Outlines Contain?

Course outlines should contain the following elements: (1) goals and purposes; (2) performance objectives, student outcomes, or competencies; (3) instructional strategies; (4) units of study and the approximate number of hours allotted for each unit; (5) evaluation procedures; and (6) a repetition policy that prevents perpetuation of student enrollment.

Are There Required Textbooks?

In some small districts, selection of textbooks is left to the discretion of the individual instructors. In other agencies, textbook selection decisions may be made by administrators and/or department chairpersons or resource staff, with or without input from instructors.

How Do Students Get Textbooks?

The law prohibits adult schools from charging fees of any kind for enrollment in ESL and citizenship classes. Students may purchase books but are not required to do so as a condition of enrollment. Adult schools provide materials and books free of charge for classroom use.

How Do Instructors Obtain Supplementary Instructional Materials?

Supplementary materials include such items as visuals, realia, and audiocassettes or videocassettes, as well as class sets of supplementary textbooks. Procedures for obtaining these supplementary materials vary greatly. For example, an agency may:

1. Provide instructors with lists of available supplementary materials and procedures for obtaining them.
2. Have budget allowances for the purchase of supplementary materials. Instructors may submit recommendations for ordering items for their classrooms.
3. Reimburse instructors for purchases of materials for classroom use up to a specified amount. Prior approval is usually required.
4. Maintain supplementary materials in a centralized place, such as a resource center. Instructors can review, evaluate, and/or check out items.

5. Maintain supplementary materials at individual sites. Instructors pick up materials needed for a class session and return them after the session.

Whether supplementary materials are kept in a centralized location or at individual sites, instructors may be required to reserve specific items in advance. Checkout periods may be for as short a time as one class session or as long as a semester.

What Supplies and Equipment Are Available?

Supplies include such items as chalk, paper, ditto masters, overhead transparencies, and transparency pens. Schools may have supply rooms from which instructors can take whatever supplies they need at their own discretion. Instructors may be expected to inform the clerk or supervisor in charge of supplies when items need to be restocked. Schools may require that instructors requisition or sign for supplies through a designated clerk or supervisor. Obtaining items such as chalk or paper may not require the completion of paperwork; obtaining more expensive items, such as transparencies or blank videocassettes, often requires the completion of a requisition or other form. There may also be a limit on the number of items that instructors may order per semester or on the dollar amounts they may spend. Sometimes, less frequently used supplies, such as blank audiocassettes and videocassettes, may not be available through the school site. In this situation, instructors might be requested to purchase the materials and then request reimbursement, or they might have to cover the expenses themselves.

Equipment includes such items as duplicating machines and photocopiers as well as overhead projectors, cassette players and recorders, and video recording and playback machines. Most agencies have duplicating machines available for the use of instructors. Most also have photocopiers, though their use may be more restricted. Some agencies expect instructors to do their own copying, while others assign clerks or aides to perform these tasks. When instructors request large numbers of copies, they may have to submit the work order in advance. In either case, there may be a limit on the number of copies allowed per instructor per week or month. The availability of classroom equipment varies greatly from agency to agency. A well-equipped school may have overhead projectors and screens in every classroom, while other sites may have only one or two projectors available for the entire school. In the latter situation, there may be a formal checkout system that requires instructors to reserve equipment in advance, or equipment may be available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Less frequently used equipment—cassette recorders, movie projectors, and video recorders and playback machines—may be located at each site or at a centralized location. In schools with a formalized procedure for accessing equipment, there may be a limited checkout period (e.g., one week, two weeks). In schools with no formal checkout system, instructors may have difficulty accessing equipment that may or may not have been returned by the previous user.

Noninstructional Responsibilities

It is the responsibility of instructors to be knowledgeable about their schools' policies and procedures for sharing and maintaining classrooms, obtaining substitutes, arranging for field trips, handling emergencies, and dealing with problem situations. Sometimes, these procedures are specified and distributed in written form. Frequently, however, procedures are not written, and an informal orientation of staff may overlook important details. The following questions will assist instructors in obtaining this essential information:

Who Shares the Classroom?

In most adult programs, instructors do not have their own classrooms. Obtaining the names of others who share the rooms, meeting them, and discussing ground rules may help to avoid misunderstandings.

Sometimes, adult school instructors use classrooms that are used by teachers from the kindergarten through grade twelve program. Often, the adult school instructor uses the room only one or two evenings a week; the daytime teacher uses the same room five or six hours every day. In these situations, the daytime instructors usually expect to find the classrooms the way they left them the day before.

When the entire building is used only for the adult program, instructors usually share classrooms. In these situations, desk drawers and storage space are treasured. Instructors assigned to the same classroom year after year sometimes need to be reminded that other instructors using the room also need storage space.
How Do Instructors Obtain Substitutes?

Schools or other instructional sites have established procedures for obtaining substitutes. Some schools maintain a list of available substitutes, and instructors call the substitutes themselves. In other schools, the instructors must inform other staff persons (either supervisory or clerical) that they need substitutes, and the staff members arrange for the substitutes. It is important to know telephone numbers and the hours during which it is possible to contact someone to request a substitute. When other persons arrange for substitutes, instructors usually give their lesson plans to the staff persons who arrange for the substitutes or to the substitutes themselves after they have been contacted by the staff persons.

How Are Field Trips Handled?

Support and paperwork requirements for field trips vary greatly. Some agencies support field trips by providing transportation or money to cover the cost of transportation. Other agencies may actually discourage field trips because of concerns about insurance. Paperwork may be as informal as signing out on a sheet on an office bulletin board the day of the trip. Or the process may be more formal, requiring the instructor to complete an official form and have it signed by a supervisor several days or weeks prior to the trip.

What Is the Process for Dealing with Emergencies?

Emergencies include natural disasters, such as fires and earthquakes, and medical problems, such as illnesses or accidents.

Instructions and exit paths in the event of a natural disaster should be posted in each classroom. The school or site may also hold periodic practice drills.

For medical emergencies, the instructor's only responsibility may be to refer the problem to the appropriate staff person on site. However, if there is no such staff person, the instructor may be responsible for keeping a list of emergency numbers, informing the student's contact person, arranging for an ambulance or paramedics, determining who is responsible for charges, and completing the appropriate paperwork.

What Support Systems Are Available for Problem Situations?

In the event of problems related to discipline or drug or alcohol use, an instructor must be aware of the support systems offered by the agency. Instructors of adults rarely encounter discipline problems, but a situation may arise in a class of concurrently enrolled students (younger age group) that requires disciplinary measures. The agency should clearly delineate the extent of the instructor's authority (e.g., does the instructor or a counselor have the authority to remove a student from class?). The agency should also delineate the alternatives available (e.g., call the administrator, call an agency that deals with the problem, call a family member or sponsor).

Placement and Attendance Accounting

Given below are important questions and answers regarding student placement and attendance:

How Are Students Placed?

Methods of student placement vary from agency to agency. They may be centralized or decentralized, formal or informal. Because of the possibility of students' being placed inappropriately, it is important for instructors to be familiar with the placement processes in their agencies.

In larger districts, enrollment may take place only in the central office in accordance with formalized placement policies. In smaller districts and off-site locations, individual instructors may enroll adult learners in their classrooms.

Large programs at single sites tend to have centralized placement systems. Students go to designated rooms for oral interviews and placement exams and are then sent to a class at the appropriate level of instruction. Programs with a number of sites tend to have decentralized placement systems. Each site may have its own placement system or rely on individual instructors for accurate placement.

What Relevant Student Information Is Available?

In some agencies, the enrollment process involves gathering information such as the students' previous education, first language, and length of time in this country, as well as test scores and goals. Instructors must inquire as to what information is available from the school and what additional information they are expected to obtain.

How Is Attendance Documented?

Instructors are expected to be knowledgeable about the procedures for documenting student attendance. Some school districts, for example, have color-coded sign-in sheets that require the students' signatures and their times of arrival and departure.
This information is then entered in a class rollbook or a computerized attendance accounting system. In some agencies, the secretarial staff or an aide assists the instructor with attendance accounting. In others, the instructor alone documents attendance. In either case, verification of student attendance is usually the legal responsibility of the instructor.

Personnel and Finances

In most educational agencies there are two categories of staff: those in certificated positions and those in classified, or noncertificated, positions. Certificated personnel must have credentials from the state Commission on Teacher Credentialing. Noncertificated personnel are not required to have credentials.

Certificated personnel include both teaching staff (instructors) and nonteaching staff (administrators, counselors, coordinators, and resource instructors). Most staff in noncertificated positions (e.g., clerks and secretaries) are not directly involved in classroom instruction; however, paid and volunteer aides who assist in the classroom are usually noncertificated. Their specific duties and responsibilities relate directly to the operation of the instructional program in the agency. However, the assignment of these duties can vary greatly from agency to agency.

Instructors should know which staff persons are responsible for:
- Selecting and assigning instructors
- Contacting substitutes
- Assigning instructional aides and other support staff
- Placing students in classes
- Providing counseling and referral services
- Planning and coordinating staff development activities
- Ordering and disbursing instructional materials and supplies
- Completing time sheets and payroll records
- Approving sick leave, bereavement leave, and other requests for paid and/or unpaid leave

Instructors should also know whether they are covered by a union agreement and, if so, have a copy of that agreement. Instructors may want to ask the following questions:

Who Is Responsible for Specific Aspects of the Program?

A small agency with an adult education program may have only one administrator, assigned part-time, to supervise the adult education program. Agencies with large programs may have several sites, each with an administrator, such as a principal or director, and one or more vice-principals, assistant directors, or deans.

Instructors need to know the chain of command in their agencies. Normally, ESL instructors are principally accountable to the site administrators (principals or directors) but may also be directly accountable to departmental chairpersons. For example, instructors in large agencies normally go to the principal or vice-principal if they want to request additional working hours but may go to the ESL chairperson or resource instructor if they want direction about instructional methods or materials.

Are Counselors Available?

Some schools have full-time counselors who assist the instructors in placing students in special or specialized programs. For example, counselors place adult learners in programs that will help them develop certain necessary occupational skills. The school expects the instructor to be aware of and to make use of this support system.

In other schools, counselors may not be available at the times or locations of ESL classes. Therefore, instructors are expected to counsel the adult learners enrolled in their classes. The problem is sometimes further complicated when classes are held at individual, physically distant teaching sites and the population being served has difficulty accessing those counseling services.

It is important for students to be aware of available counseling services. The instructor may describe these services or invite a member of the counseling staff to class to describe them.

Counseling services can help ESL students make the transition into other classes, such as high school diploma, GED, vocational training, and citizenship classes, into the job market in the community, or into local colleges or universities. Instructors should also be aware of any special-focus classes that their agencies offer. Enrollment in classes in which the instruction is targeted to employment-related needs, such as GAIN (Greater Avenues to Independence) or the Job Training Partnership Act ("JTPA), or to the citizenship goals of eligible legalized aliens, may assist some students in attaining their goals in a shorter period of time.

Are Aides or Volunteers Available?

Instructional aides can be of invaluable assistance to instructors in handling some of the most taxing demands of the ESL classroom, including enrollment, assessment, individual and small-group
instruction, recordkeeping, and preparation of materials. Bilingual aides can assist in student needs assessments and interpretations of cultural concepts.

Whether an instructor is assigned an aide may depend on such factors as the number of students or the number of levels in the class. Instructors who are assigned aides or volunteers should check to see whether their agencies have developed job descriptions that delineate what aides can legally be assigned to do. Some agencies also have training classes available for prospective aides or volunteers.

Is There a Relationship Between Attendance and Money?

Programs supported by state adult education monies receive their funding based on average daily attendance (a.d.a.). In such programs, attendance recordkeeping is crucial because it is directly related to monies generated; the more hours a student attends and the more students in a class, the more financial support the class generates. Attendance records are kept for every day that class is held in order to document the a.d.a. Missing sign-in sheets and signatures missing from sign-in sheets mean lost revenue for the program.

The instructor's attendance records are legal documents and can be subpoenaed for court evidence. Roll books are usually reviewed in any school audit.

Is There a Relationship Between Student Outcomes and Money?

Some programs have certain objectives to meet in order to obtain funding. GAIN programs, for example, must show significant gains in students' skills. JTPA programs have to have a certain percentage of their adult learners enter the workforce. In such programs, documentation of student achievement is especially important because it may affect the programs' levels of funding. The more outcomes a student achieves or the more students that achieve the outcomes, the more money the program may receive. When enrollees do not achieve the desired outcomes, a program may lose revenue. There is often a direct relationship between a program's budget and the documentation of student outcomes that the instructor must prepare.

Who Determines the Budget?

In some agencies, a principal prepares the budget and submits it to the superintendent, who then requests governing board approval. In other agencies, instructors provide input through questionnaires, surveys, or committees. Input may influence program design, materials selection, equipment, and staff development.
Selected References


Appendix A

Sample ESL Needs Assessment

I. Please check only eight. I need to learn more English to be able to:

- Talk on the phone.
- Talk to the bus driver.
- Talk to my neighbors.
- Talk about cars.
- Talk to my children's teachers.
- Get a driver's license.
- Talk to the police.
- Give and follow directions.
- Go shopping for food.
- Talk to my manager (apartment).
- Go shopping for clothes.
- Talk at the post office.
- Order food in a restaurant.
- Talk at the bank.
- Talk to a doctor.
- Talk at the hospital.
- Talk to the police.
- Talk to a doctor.
- Talk to a party.

II. Please check only six. I need to learn to read:

- Signs
- The newspaper
- Food ads
- Stories
- Food labels
- Telephone bills
- Medicine labels
- Traffic laws
- Bus schedules
- Directions on forms

III. Please check only three. I need to learn to write:

- Letters
- Forms for school
- Checks for the bank
- Forms for my children's school
- Job applications
- Forms for welfare
- Applications to rent apartments
- Forms for the bank
- Forms at the doctor's office
- Forms for the post office

IV. Please check only two. In my English class, I want more:

- Conversation
- Reading
- Listening
- Pronunciation
- Writing
- Idioms and vocabulary
### Sample ESL Textbook Evaluation Form

**Overall Rating __________________**

**Appendix B**

**Sample ESL Textbook Evaluation Form**

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|-------------------------------|------|------|------|-----------------|------|

**Rating system:** Superior (5) Good (4) Average (3) Poor (2) Unsatisfactory (1)

**Structural content**

- Teaches grammatical patterns
- Allows for ample, appropriate practice
- Provides for constant review (spiraling)
- Provides exercises in context
- Teaches language functions
- Teaches usage
- Provides communicative practice
- Coordinates with course outline

**Listening**

- Provides prelistening exercises
- Provides focused listening for tasks
- Provides listening comprehension exercises
- Provides tape of natural speech

**Reading**

- Provides for predictive skills
- Provides for vocabulary development
- Provides comprehension exercises
- Provides for practice of structures presented
- Provides topics of adult interest and/or life skills

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_Courtesy of Greta Kojima, Adviser, Adult English as a Second Language Programs, Los Angeles Unified School District._
Appendix B (cont.)

Writing
___ Provides for controlled development or writing
___ Includes prewriting activities
___ Addresses the writing process (brainstorming, organizing, editing)
___ Addresses mechanics, including capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
___ Provides for practice of structures presented
___ Provides for free writing

Speaking
___ Provides for controlled practice
___ Provides for communicative activities
___ Provides for free language practice (group discussions, problem solving, role playing)

Pronunciation
___ Provides for teaching the sound system
___ Provides for teaching intonation, stress, rhythm
___ Provides for pronunciation practice

Format
Yes No
___ ___ Appropriate and relevant for ESL students in community adult schools
___ ___ Emphasis of life skills
___ ___ Use of natural, everyday English
___ ___ No stereotype or bias evident in material
___ ___ Adequate print size for all adults

Comments: 

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________________________
Appendix C

Sample Lesson Plan for the Beginning Level

Lesson Objective

Given a work sheet with pictures of containers and names of food items, the student will be able to identify which food items are purchased in which containers by matching the container to the food item.

Introduction

1. Use pictures of food items to review names of foods.
2. Set various food containers on a table (e.g., jar, bottle, can, box, carton, bag).
3. State the objective.

Presentation

1. Describe each container and give students different containers.
2. Check students' understanding by asking the following series of questions for each container:
   a. Who has (e.g., the jar of jam)? Students can respond by pointing or using the student's name.
   b. Does (e.g., Maria) have (e.g., the box of cereal)? Students respond yes or no.
   c. Does (e.g., Chantan) have (e.g., the can of peas or the bag of cookies)? Students respond with the appropriate item.
3. Collect containers by asking students to bring items back to you (e.g., please bring me the box of soap).

Guided Practice

1. Group work: Put students into small groups. Give each group a packet that contains pictures of food and a work sheet that has pictures of containers. Have the students match the food item to the food containers as you give the command. When the work sheet is completed, hold up your copy so the groups can check their copies. Repeat several times.
2. Correct as a class.

Evaluation

Give each student a work sheet with pictures of containers and names of food items. Have each student work independently. Have students draw lines from the food items to the appropriate containers. Check.

Independent Practice/Follow-up

Give each student a work sheet with pictures of containers. Have each student bring in an item from his or her kitchen which comes in that container.
Appendix D

Sample Lesson Plan for the Intermediate Level

Objective

Given a work sheet with pictures and questions about coupons, the student will be able to identify the key elements of a coupon by demonstrating his or her ability to respond correctly to questions about the product, quantity, size, limit, amount, and expiration date on the coupon.

Introduction

Ask students how many of them shop for groceries. Ask how many like to save money when they shop. Ask how many of them use coupons. State the objective.

Presentation

1. Ask students to think about what kinds of information they would find on coupons. Make a list on the board.
2. Show an overhead transparency of a coupon and label the key parts. Discuss with class.
3. Put up a drawing of a coupon on the wall. Provide vocabulary cards that name the key points of the coupon. Ask various students to use the vocabulary cards to label the parts. Discuss. Ask yes or no questions to check for understanding.
4. Show overhead transparencies of four coupons. Ask yes or no questions and have students respond by raising their hands. Check for understanding.

Guided Practice

1. Ask students to list the key elements of a particular coupon. Have them paste the coupon to a piece of paper and write down the product's name, size, quantity, amount, limit, and date.
2. Group work: Put students in groups of three. Give each group a packet of coupons, a work sheet, and a shopping list. Have the students determine their purchases and total up the costs. (Note: There are several confusing aspects of coupons relating to expiration date and quantity. Not all of the coupons may be valid. Students will have to read each coupon carefully to determine which are valid.)

Evaluation

Work sheet: Give the students coupons and work sheets. The questions on the work sheets are about the products; quantity, size, limit, amount, and date. Collect and correct.

Independent Practice and Follow-up

Have students make lists of five items they regularly buy. Have them search through the food section of a newspaper for coupons for those items. This activity could lead into a lesson on comparative shopping.

Courtesy of Mary McMullan, ABC Unified School District Adult School, Cerritos.
Appendix E

Sample Lesson Plan for an Advanced Level Class

Objective

Given the entertainment section of a newspaper, students will be able to use the section to plan four activities for the weekend for out-of-town visitors.

Introduction

Ask how many students have had out-of-town visitors. Ask students what they do with such visitors. Ask them whether they use a newspaper to find interesting activities to do with their visitors. State the objective.

Presentation (Give information, explain, model, demonstrate, check for understanding, monitor, and adjust.)

1. Ask students what kinds of activities they would expect to find in the entertainment section. List responses on the board. From student responses, create these categories: movies, restaurants, theater, music, and other amusement categories. Together with the class, list specifics. (See list for ideas.)

2. Divide students into groups. Check to see whether students can find the entertainment section in the newspaper by asking the group to write down the page numbers of the section. Check with the entire class. (See work sheet.)

Guided Practice (Provide help, receive responses from students, report results.)

1. Students are to remain in the same groups to do the activity. Give each group scissors, paste, and an instruction sheet. Each group is to find advertisements on the specific types of activities listed on the instruction sheet. Students are to cut and paste the advertisements on poster board.

2. When the groups are finished, check to ensure that the items are correct.

3. The finished posters are then placed on the wall.

Evaluation (Each student's progress toward the objective is checked.)

1. Each student is given a work sheet that asks him or her to go around to the posters on the wall and plan a weekend for a visitor. The work sheets are not all the same. The students must follow the instructions on their own work sheets.

2. Check each work sheet.

Independent Practice and Follow-up (Little or no teacher help is required. This activity can be useful for reinforcement. Report the results.)

Students are asked to use a weekend newspaper at home to plan a series of activities for themselves and their families.

Courtesy of Mary McMullin, ABC Unified School District Adult School, Cerritos.
Appendix F

Second-Language Teaching Methodologies

Four methods of teaching ESL classes are described below. For convenience, they are labeled methods A, B, C, and D. The methodologies described are from Individual Learning Programs for Limited-English-Proficient Students (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1984, pp. 67–68).

Teaching methods A and B can be described as primarily grammar-based approaches that promote learning forms or structures, whereas methods C and D are more communicative/functional approaches that promote acquisition of language proficiency.

Although the following outline tends to characterize each methodology in the abstract as self-contained and independent of the others, these approaches are rarely implemented in their pure forms. In practice, instructors often draw on overlapping features of several methodologies and develop their own personalized and, to varying degrees, eclectic approaches.

A. Audiolingual

1. Lessons are usually introduced with a conversational dialogue that is expected to be memorized.
2. Linguistic structures are carefully ordered and presented one at a time in small, sequential steps in order to avoid errors.
3. Emphasis is on structured pattern drills in which language is manipulated. Quick responses are elicited, and correct responses are positively reinforced.
4. Grammar is taught inductively with little or no formal explanation.
5. The natural order of acquisition of language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) is followed.
6. Vocabulary is limited, and its usage is highly controlled.
7. Much attention is given to achieving nativelike pronunciation and intonation.
8. Since most errors are believed to be caused by interference from the native language, contrastive analysis is used to identify teaching points.
9. The use of the native language is avoided.
10. Language is seen as habit formation. Habits must be overlearned in order to ensure automatic response (stimulus/response).
11. Grammar is based on descriptive linguistic analysis (what the native speaker says).
12. Listening and speaking (primary skills) prepare students for reading and writing (secondary skills).

B. Cognitive code

1. Language is viewed as rule-governed behavior and as a creative process.
2. Grammar is taught deductively.
3. Grammar is based on transformational-generative grammar (what the native speaker knows).
4. The native language and translation are used in order to conceptualize the second language.
5. Errors are a natural part of the language acquisition process and are analyzed to determine their sources. Appropriate remediation follows.
6. Structural pattern drills are used, but all drills must be meaningful. Very little repetition occurs.
7. Students should always understand what they are saying and what they are to do. Materials stress communication and content.
8. Pronunciation exercises are not emphasized; nativelike pronunciation is not possible for most students, nor is it seen as necessary.
9. Reading and writing are not secondary to speaking and listening. Written and oral language are used concurrently.

C. Direct method

1. Lessons begin with an enacted story, anecdote, or conversational dialogue.
2. Materials are presented orally with actions and visual aids.
3. No use of the mother tongue is allowed.
4. Question-answer is the most prevalent type of exercise.
5. Grammar is taught inductively.
6. Only meaningful exercises are used, with no artificial language manipulation.
7. Material is not highly linguistically controlled or sequenced.
8. Lessons often center on survival language needed for specific situations.

D. Natural language acquisition method
1. Situations or lessons are characterized by:
   a. A high percentage of “comprehensible input”
   b. Functional or simulated real-life circumstances
   c. Students communicating about personal interests, desires, and needs
   d. A low-anxiety context for students
2. Students are grouped by English language comprehension levels.
3. Speech is the product of opportunity plus needs and is allowed to emerge naturally in progressively longer and more complex utterances.
4. The teacher’s role is to give students opportunities to acquire functional communicative skills as opposed to teaching them to learn specific language forms in a structurally sequenced continuum of skills (i.e., teaching/learning versus functioning/acquiring).
5. The primary goal is the development of comprehension skills and the communication of messages rather than the mastery of language forms or structures per se.
6. No restriction is placed on students’ use of language during lessons.
7. The overt correction of structural errors is believed to have minimal positive impact on language acquisition and is, therefore, avoided. Errors are considered to be developmental and are self-corrected by students on receipt of more comprehensible input.
8. Input is made comprehensible via context (e.g., situational, grammatical, visual, kinesthetic, and tactile).
9. The early and extensive development of a large passive vocabulary and comprehension skills is seen as a prerequisite for taking advantage of more comprehensible input outside the second language classroom and as a prelude to the eventual acquisition of nativelike language forms and structures.
Appendix G

Characteristics of Effective Second Language Lessons

The characteristics described below are from Individual Learning Programs for Limited-English-Proficient Students (Sacramento: California State Department of Education, 1984, p. 69).

1. The teacher focuses mainly on communication rather than on language forms.
   a. Forms are never used without recourse to their meaning being reinforced through movement, context, concrete referents, or occasional translations.
   b. Exercises and activities are related to real-life communicative needs and situations.
   c. Exercises are personalized to meet the needs, interests, and desires of the learners.

2. The teacher uses concrete contextual referents.
   a. Body language, actions, pantomime, and so forth
   b. Pictures, objects, symbols, and so forth
   c. Situational contexts, grammatical contexts, synonyms, antonyms, and so forth

3. The teacher groups students so that all participants receive comprehensible English input.
   a. Students are grouped by English proficiency.
   b. All students in a group appear to understand English material to approximately the same degree.
   c. English input appears to be substantially comprehensible (70 to 80 percent) to the students in a given group.

4. The teacher does not correct language form errors.
   a. The teacher does not spend time pointing out errors and drilling on error corrections in pronunciations, use of tenses or endings, word order, and so forth.
   b. The teacher models the correct form after student response while maintaining focus on content:
      Teacher: And what did she do?
      Student: She help him washed the car.
      Teacher: Good. She helped him wash the car.

5. The teacher creates motivational situations.
   a. Language situations and forms are always drawn from students' current needs, desires, and interests.
   b. Language is practiced in the context of real or simulated real-life situations.
   c. Lessons incorporate real needs to communicate information, feelings, desires, opinions, and so forth.

6. At the production stage, the teacher promotes teacher-student and student-student interactions.
   a. Interactions are characterized by clarification, comprehension, and confirmation checks.
   b. The teacher uses frequent "who, where, why, when, what" questions.
   c. Conversation in class is interdependent, with both parties contributing substantive information during conversation.
   d. The teacher personalizes the language.
   e. The teacher provides expansions, restatements, and explanations.
Publications Available from the Department of Education

This publication is one of over 600 that are available from the California State Department of Education. Some of the more recent publications or those most widely used are the following:

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