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Changes in the Expertise of ESL Professionals: Knowledge and Action in an Era of New Standards

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The Current Shifting Landscape: Enacting Expertise as ESL Professionals

In February 2013, the TESOL International Association convened a meeting of teachers, administrators, researchers, and education experts to consider the changing role of English as a second language (ESL) professionals in U.S. education as the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)—hereafter referred to as the new Standards—are implemented in schools across the country. The report on this convening (TESOL, April 2013) examines concerns for the ESL-teaching profession in the United States as it enters a new era of educational reform and practice. Specifically, the report summarizes a number of issues that were raised at the convening, including the current wide variance in the roles of ESL teachers in different settings, the limited number of ESL-trained specialists, the existing ambiguity surrounding the role and status of ESL teachers, and the results of variation in teacher preparation and credentialing systems currently in place around the country. It was noted that there is a lack of recognition and uniformity in the field of English language teaching, and concern was also expressed about the lack of recognition of ESL as an academic content area equivalent to other content areas, such as math or science. Although it was noted that ESL teachers have not been part of the policy conversation surrounding the new Standards, it was also agreed that ESL teachers will play a critical role in the success of standards implementation affecting students labeled as English language learners (ELLs).

In this Professional Paper, we build on the work of TESOL's issue brief, Overview of the Common Core State Standards Initiatives for ELLs (March, 2013) as well as the convening report mentioned previously (April, 2013) to discuss the shifting landscape surrounding the new Standards and its implications for building and enacting teacher expertise.

>>> Our intention is to explain the challenges and the possibilities associated with the new Standards for the ESL profession in the K–12 context.

We intend for this paper to inform K–12 ESL professionals, a group of key individuals in U.S. education that includes teachers, teacher-leaders, school principals, district administrators, and other K–12 educators who work primarily or exclusively with students labeled as ELLs.[1] Our intention is to explain the challenges and the possibilities associated with the new Standards for the ESL profession in the K–12 context and to examine the ways in which their implementation raises important questions about our long-established views on the teaching and learning of English as a second language. We begin with a discussion of the CCSS and NGSS and provide a brief introduction to both. We then discuss English language proficiency (ELP) standards, that is, the standards that establish the goals of ESL instruction in each state as well as the assessment of expected proficiencies. We then address two key challenges facing ESL professionals in the new Standards era: the language practices required by the Standards themselves and the issue of how ELLs can best be included in standards-aligned instruction. Finally, we build upon the April 2013 TESOL report to suggest key ways in which ESL professionals can translate knowledge of changing theories about language and language acquisition into expertise and action in supporting ELLs' needs in the new Standards era.

New Content and Language Standards: An Overview

Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards

The development of the standards.

In many parts of the world, new economic and social imperatives, alongside the belief that a growing focus on measurement and accountability in education will lead to an informed citizenry and productive work force, have led to an increased emphasis on the development of standards for learning that define and establish what students should know and be able to do in the 21st century. In the United States, the CCSS and NGSS are the most recent instantiation of this emphasis. Here we present issues related to the CCSS and NGSS development that are particularly relevant to ESL professionals. (For a more thorough introduction to the development of the Standards, see TESOL, March 2013, pp. 3–4.)

Although CCSS and NGSS are both part of the new Standards context, their development processes were unique. The CCSS in English language arts and mathematics were developed through a joint effort of the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) and the National Governors Association (NGA), in which a variety of experts and education groups, including TESOL, were either involved in the creation of the standards or invited to provide feedback on drafts of the CCSS, which were then released in 2010. The CCSS (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a) are

[1] Although we do not exclude content-area teachers from this group of K–12 educators, we recognize that content-area teachers who teach ELLs may or may not have expertise in second-language teaching and are usually different from ESL professionals whose primary responsibility is teaching ELLs.

designed to establish "a single set of clear educational standards . . . designed to ensure that students graduating from high school are prepared to enter credit bearing entry courses in two or four year college programs or enter the workforce" (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2012). State adoption of the CCSS is voluntary, but since that time, 45 states and four territories have adopted the CCSS in whole or in part, which means that these Standards will guide instruction and assessment in the vast majority of K–12 classrooms in the United States, including many of those states with the highest numbers of ELLs nationwide, such as California, New York, and Florida. Additionally, although the federal government did not play a direct role in creating the CCSS, the Obama administration embedded support for the CCSS into recent federal educational funding initiatives.

The NGSS were developed somewhat differently. The National Research Council (NRC), in conjunction with the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA), the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), and the nonprofit reform organization Achieve, began this process by convening a panel of experts from scientific and educational research communities to identify core scientific ideas and sequence them across grade bands. In doing so, they were updating previous NRC and AAAS guidance from the late 1990s that states had used in the past to develop their own science standards. This convening resulted in the creation of the *Framework for K–12 Science Education*, which was released for public comment and guided the writing of the Standards, which were developed to "create robust, forward-looking K–12 science standards that all states can use to guide teaching and learning in science for the next decade" (Achieve, 2014b). This process was undertaken by experts and practitioners, including those with expertise in teaching ELLs, who were from 26 states identified as *lead partners*. After additional advisory guidance, reviews, and solicitation of comments from organizations such as TESOL, the NGSS were released in April 2013. The NGSS are not designed to align completely to the CSSS, but both English/literacy and mathematics CCSS are linked to the NGSS Performance Standards. NGSS adoption by states is voluntary (and ongoing), and the federal government has not yet incorporated the NGSS into federal initiatives as it did with the CCSS.

Specific guidance for ELLs in the CCSS and NGSS are provided in supplemental documents. The CCSS *Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners* offers general principles for instruction in English and mathematics (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010). NGSS Appendix D includes a classroom vignette as a case study to highlight strategies classroom teachers can use to help ELLs meet the NGSS (see Achieve, 2014a).

Apart from these resources in the documents themselves, the CCSSO convened a committee of ELL experts to create a document titled the *Framework for English Language Proficiency Development Standards Corresponding to the CCSS and the NGSS* (CCSSO, 2012), hereafter referred to as the *ELPD Framework*, which is discussed in more detail in the following section. This document is designed to guide states in how they can create and evaluate their ELP standards to ensure they reflect the language practices in which students are expected to engage to achieve the CCSS and NGSS. The CCSSO has also developed 11 State

Collaboratives on Assessment and Student Standards, one of which is focused on ELLs, in which professionals from state education agencies, researchers, and policy experts explore policy implementation issues related to ELLs (see CCSSO, 2014).

Questions and uncertainties.

Although a number of serious questions are being raised about the strengths and weaknesses of the Standards, the extent to which they will influence practice and policy regarding ELLs (along with other students) is undeniable: As Pearson (2013) explains, the CCSS have achieved notable "purchase" (p. 237), and although some elements of the Standards are more likely to be implemented with fidelity than others, they have already begun to influence federal funding priorities, state policies and standards, textbook creation, and teacher preparation. Questions have arisen, however: some based on a fundamental opposition to what is interpreted as a federal intrusion into education (McDonnell & Weatherford, 2013) and others based on concerns about various aspects of design and content (e.g., the expertise and background of the authors of the standards, the proposed notion of text complexity, an initial emphasis on close reading as a primary reading strategy). Implementation challenges under scrutiny include investments prioritizing test development over teacher professional development, lack of appropriate aligned curricula, and schools' varied preparedness for new computer-based testing. Standards reforms will also fundamentally impact the already-omnipresent assessment and accountability system for students, schools, districts, and states: The American Federation of Teachers (AFT), recognizing the potential for the CCSS to "transform the very DNA of teaching and learning," has publicly called for a moratorium on high-stakes testing during this time of transition (American Federation of Teachers, n.d.).

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Tempering such shifts in the day-to-day lives of educators and students, however, is the knowledge that no standard or educational reform, regardless of its value, quality, or implementation, will prove to be the "silver bullet" that produces the educational changes that many people wish for, and that education itself cannot be understood as the panacea for social and economic problems in society at large (Grubb & Lazerson, 2004). Like the CCSS, the NGSS are not immune to criticism, and it is outside the scope of this report to fully review or explore these arguments for either set of standards. Our concerns focus on helping ESL professionals explore the implications of this shifting standards landscape for their own daily instructional practices.

The assessment of the standards.

Currently, two consortia, the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium (SBAC) and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) have been funded by the U.S. Department of Education to develop CCSS-based assessments, which are to include accommodations for ELLs and students with disabilities. Current timelines project that these assessments will be ready for use in the 2014–2015 school year. Their development processes have included publishing of sample items, conducting focus groups, eliciting feedback on drafts assessments, and conducting piloting and field tests. Both consortia

>>> Optimism about the probable success of the two CCSS consortia in developing content assessments varies greatly among those who work closely with ELLs.

have created panels of experts to help make their assessments meet the needs of diverse populations, including ELLs. These appointed panels (PARCC's Accessibility, Accommodations, and Fairness Technical Working Group and SBAC's English Language Learners Advisory Committee) include a range of ELL experts. (For more information on these topics, please see the March 2013 TESOL issue brief, especially pages 6–7.) Because of the recent release of the NGSS and the lack of federal funding for assessment development, as of yet there are no testing consortia creating NGSS assessments. Because standardized, content-area assessments pose many challenges for students who are in the process of acquiring English, however, optimism about the probable success of the two CCSS consortia in developing content assessments that can accurately measure the achievement of ELLs varies greatly among those who work closely with ELLs.

Figure 1 illustrates the alignment between content standards (the new CCSS and NGSS standards) and national assessments of standards' content. The essential requirement is that content-area assessments be aligned with content standards.[2]

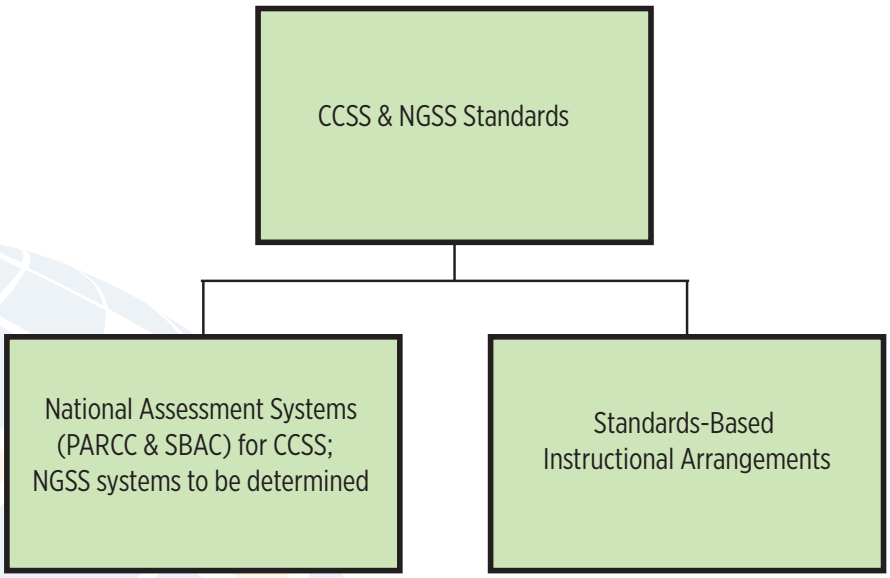

Figure 1. Alignment of Content Standards and National Assessments

As illustrated in Figure 1, content-area standards directly inform not only instructional arrangements but also the content of the assessments being designed to measure students' attainment of the knowledge and skills delineated in the standards documents. For ESL professionals, this means that the linguistic and academic demands of the new Standards—which in many cases are more rigorous than previous state standards—will also be present in the assessments, which most states require ELLs to take after very limited exemption periods.

[2] *Alignment* has been defined as a comparison between two equivalent artifacts (CCSSO, 2012), and *correspondence* involves a comparison between nonequivalent artifacts (Webb, 2007; Cook, 2005, 2007). Bailey, Butler, and Sato (2007) and Bailey and Wolf (2012) offer additional perspectives on alignment, linking, and systematic correspondence.

English Language Proficiency Standards

The development of ELP standards and assessments.

ELLs are currently identified and classified by each state according to strictly mandated procedures that are part of Title III of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965, as amended by the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Since the passage of NCLB, each state has been required to identify potential ELLs (students entering schools who live in households where a non-English language is spoken) and to assess ELLs' English language proficiency annually. To carry out this mandate, states developed or adopted ELP Standards that describe the expected English language learning trajectories of ELLs. Additionally they developed or adopted a corresponding ELP assessment instrument to measure students' progress in learning English. The states in which the largest numbers of ELLs reside (e.g., California, New York, Texas) each developed both its own standards and its own ELP assessment instruments (e.g., CELDT in California, NYSELAT in New York, TELPAS in Texas).

As a result of the work surrounding the implementation of the new Standards, states are now required to develop or adopt ELP standards and an aligned ELP assessment instrument that "correspond" to the language practices found in the CCSS and NGSS. These ELP standards and assessments are an essential and defining element of the education of ELLs in the context of the new Standards for the foreseeable future and will dictate how English language instruction is defined for this population. The ELP standards define expected progressions of English language acquisition; the elements, forms, or functions of language to be developed; and the levels of accuracy, complexity, or fluency to be attained. ELP assessments, aligned with these ELP standards, will measure students' progress in moving through the stages of development outlined in ELP standards documents. As described in TESOL's March 2013 issue brief, two assessment consortia are developing different ELP assessment instruments: Assessment Services Supporting English Learners through Technology Systems (ASSETS), which is WIDA's revision of the ACCESS test, and the ELPA21 Consortium's Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century, a new assessment created in response to the new Standards mandates. Those states (e.g., Texas, California) that have developed their own ELP standards will also be developing separate ELP assessment instruments.

ELP standards are far more than technical policy documents: They establish a set of consensus-derived, hypothesized progressions that describe the path that K–12 learners are expected to follow in learning English in school settings. It is important to point out, moreover, that all current ELP standards have been or are being developed by bringing together groups of experts and stakeholders who have experience with ELLs to design these important documents. ELP standards are not based on empirical evidence (e.g., longitudinal studies) of actual language growth over time by ELLs. Nevertheless, ELP standards establish for parents, policy makers, school administrators, and practitioners

- the ways that ELLs are assumed to grow in their use of English over time,
- the language abilities to be expected at different levels of development, and
- the aspects of language that will need to be measured in determining progress.

Figure 2 depicts the interlocking nature of ELP standards, ELP assessments, and instructional arrangements. ELP assessments are aligned with ELP standards and are designed to measure students' progress in moving through the stages of development as described in the ELP standards document. The ELP standards also inform the instructional arrangements that are put in place to ensure students' progress, the curricular frameworks that guide instruction, and the preparation offered to both teachers of language and teachers of content so that they can effectively provide instruction for ELLs according to the perspectives on language and language development established by the ELP standards.

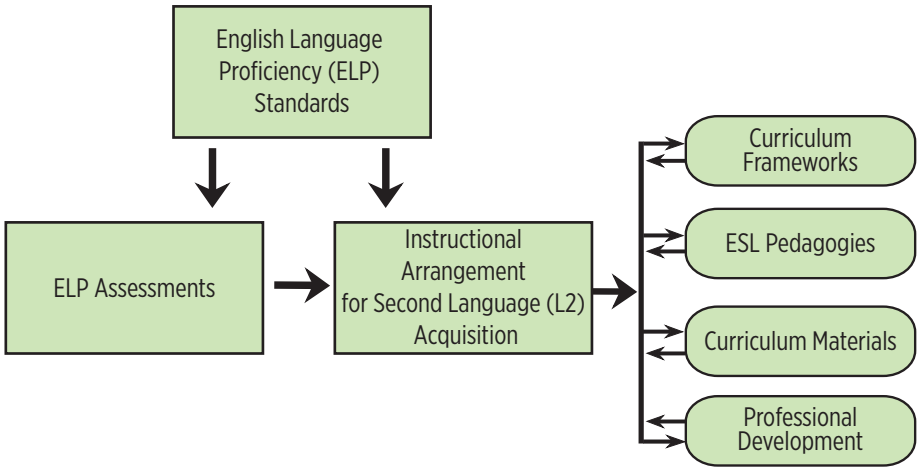

Figure 2. ELP Standards, ELP Assessments, and Instructional Arrangements

The relationship between content standards and their assessments and ELP standards and their assessments is illustrated in Figure 3, which shows how ELP standards must correspond to the CCSS and NGSS. As Figure 3 also suggests, the education of ELL students is governed by two different systems, the system that is part of the CCSS and NGSS implementation and the system specifically designed to manage the English language acquisition of ELLs. ELLs are therefore required to take two sets of state assessments, whereas monolingual students take one.

>>> ELP standards are far more than technical policy documents.

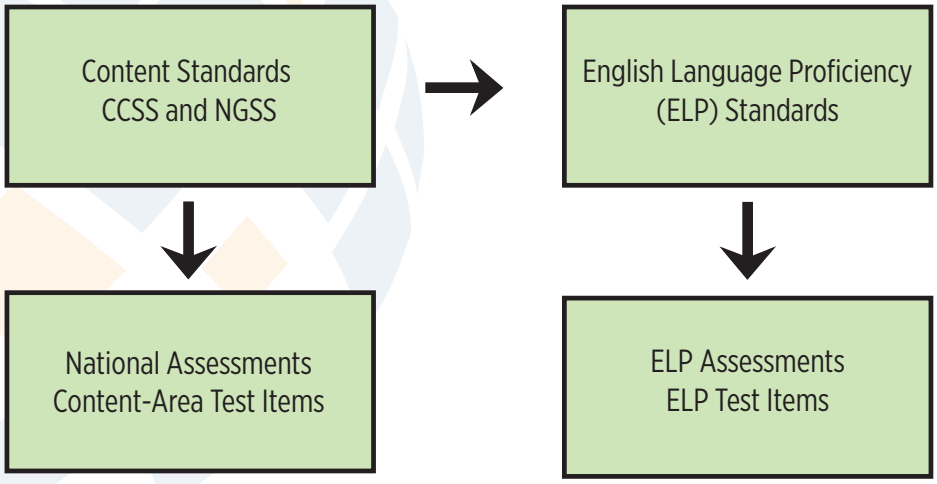

Figure 3. Alignment of Content Standards and National Assessments

Implications of ELP standards for ESL instruction.

>>> Differences in the ways that standards conceptualize and measure English language growth have many serious consequences for ESL instruction.

Differences in the ways that standards conceptualize and measure English language growth have many serious consequences for ESL instruction. For example, if it is assumed that language is a set of vocabulary and structures that can be taught in a well-established order, practiced, automatized, and put into use, then ELP standards will describe a linear developmental progression that establishes the order and sequence of vocabulary and grammatical forms and structures that students will be expected to acquire over time. ESL instruction will then be expected to produce students who can exhibit growth in the correct or fluent use of such structures or vocabulary. On the other hand, if language is viewed as a complex performance for communicating and interactively constructing meaning that involves the command of specific skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing), ELP standards will instead describe the order in which particular subskills will be acquired and directly or indirectly inform the corresponding instruction that is expected to bring about such skill development. These conceptualizations about language deeply influence instructional arrangements, classification of learners, and approaches to teaching.

Unfortunately, given different possible approaches to organizing language progressions and to developing measurement instruments, there has been and continues to be much variation among the states and testing consortia in the specifications and descriptions of different proficiency levels, and in the procedures used to determine when students can be reclassified or redesignated as English proficient and therefore no longer in need of support services to succeed in English medium content classes. These many differences have led to serious difficulties because students classified as ELLs in one state might be classified as fully English proficient by different measures used in another state. As Linquanti (2001) pointed out over a decade ago, even in a single state, the same student might be variously classified depending on the cutoff scores and procedures adopted by different school districts.[3]

The adoption of the new Standards and particularly the need to develop common content assessments in English language arts and in mathematics has led to an increasing awareness of the need to establish common screening, identification, and measurement procedures across the states—regardless of the specific ELP standards and assessments used—that can result in a single consistent definition of ELLs. It is argued that such a definition will ensure that students needing specific types of support in both instruction and assessment contexts (e.g., language instruction, testing accommodations) will receive it as needed and that this support will remain constant whether or not students move across the country (Linquanti & Cook, 2013).

[3] Much of the difficulty involving categorizations of ELLs has its roots in the federal definition of *Limited English Proficient* students and the diverse ways in which it is currently being operationalized. The question of variability in the interpretation of the federal definition of ELLs, as well as the many differences in the operationalization of the definition by states, has been pointed out consistently by a number of researchers over a period of several years (Abedi, 2008; Bailey & Kelly, 2012; Linquanti, 2001; Ragan & Lesaux, 2006).

Two Key Challenges for ESL Professionals

As rapid shifts with unknown consequences occur in English language education amid ongoing debates in this new Standards era, ESL professionals need accurate information to make principled decisions about student learning, teaching, and assessment; engage in productive collaborations; and advocate for the best interests of ELLs. A key question for any ESL professional is how the new Standards will change learning for ELL students, particularly in their mathematics, English, and science classes. The content standards may differ to varying degrees from those previously used by states and so may imply greater or fewer changes to K–12 teachers' curricula. What is clear, however, is that the Standards explicitly include ELLs and clearly frame content learning as engagement in disciplinary *practices*—implying an active learning process in which language plays a key role.

In this section, we discuss two main issues in the current policy context relevant to ESL professionals: the language practices embedded in the new Standards and the inclusion[4] of ELLs in new Standards classrooms.

A First Challenge: Language Practices Required by the New Standards

The CCSS and NGSS conceptualize key disciplinary Practices in which students must engage in math, English, and science across grade levels. These disciplinary Practices (with an uppercase *P*) are comprised of subcomponent practices (with a lowercase *p*) of conceptual understandings, analytical tasks, and the language required to develop them and engage successfully in academic activity. Figure 4 suggests the interrelationships between these ideas:

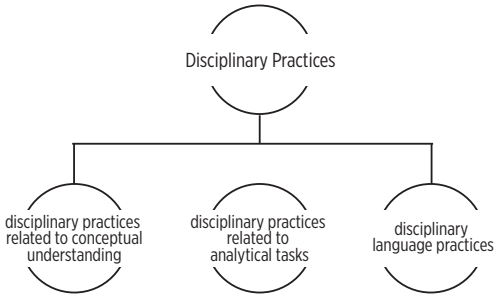

Figure 4. Disciplinary Practices and Subcomponent Practices

[4] We use the term *inclusion* not to reference practices in special education but to describe ELLs being included in Standards-based classrooms and curricula.

As ESL professionals grapple with disciplinary Practices and discipline-specific conceptual understandings and analytical tasks they have not had to teach before (other than in sheltered courses, where expectations are often different), it is also crucial that they build their knowledge of the specific language practices required by these standards to implement effective instruction in the new Standards era.

>>> It is crucial that ESL professionals build their knowledge of the specific language practices required by these standards.

Table 1 presents the key mathematical, science and engineering, and English language arts (ELA) disciplinary Practices presented in the new Standards. The first two of these can be found in the math and science standards themselves, and the English language arts practices were subsequently developed by the CCSSO (2012) in *The ELPD Framework.*

Table 1. Disciplinary Practices in the CCSS and NGSS

CCSS Key Standards for Mathematical Practice	NGSS Scientific and Engineering Practices	Key CCSS English Language Arts Practices[5]
1. Make sense of problems and persevere in solving them 2. Reason abstractly and quantitatively 3. Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others 4. Model with mathematics 5. Use appropriate tools strategically 6. Attend to precision 7. Look for and make use of structure 8. Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning	1. Ask questions (for science) and define problems (for engineering) 2. Develop and use models 3. Plan and carry out investigations 4. Analyze and interpret data 5. Use mathematics and computational thinking 6. Construct explanations (for science) and design solutions (for engineering) 7. Engage in argument from evidence 8. Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information	1. Support analyses of a range of grade-level complex texts with evidence 2. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience 3. Construct valid arguments from evidence and critique the reasoning of others 4. Build and present knowledge through research by integrating, comparing, and synthesizing ideas from texts 5. Build upon the ideas of others and articulate their own when working collaboratively 6. Use English structures to communicate context-specific messages

Note. Adapted from The ELPD Framework (CCSSO, 2012)

[5] The Standards for Literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects for Grades 6–12 (appended to the CCSS English language arts document) are linked to the same College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading and Writing as the ELA standards, and for this reason also generally align to key CCSS English language arts practices specific to literacy. The specific literacy Practices in those content areas, however, deserve explicit attention by teachers, even if they are not separately addressed in the *ELPD* document or elsewhere.

Embedded within and inextricable from each disciplinary Practice listed in Table 1 are various analytical tasks as well as receptive and productive language practices in which students must engage as they participate in disciplinary activities. For example, to engage in Mathematical Practice 3 ("Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others"), students participate in a range of embedded language practices (see Table 2). Such language practices are tailored to the specific disciplinary Practice, and although some language practices may be shared by multiple disciplinary Practices within or even across content areas, they are necessarily related to the conceptual understandings and embedded analytical tasks needed to do math, science, or language arts rather than the studying of discrete language forms or functions as means unto themselves (Lee, Quinn, & Valdés, 2013).

Table 2. Sample Embedded Analytical Tasks and Receptive and Productive Language Practices for Key CCSS Mathematical Practice 3

Key CCSS Mathematical Practice 3: Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others	
Embedded Analytical Tasks	• Understand and use stated assumptions, definitions, and previously established results • Make conjectures and build logical progression of statements to explore truth of conjectures • Justify conclusions, communicate them to others, and respond to counterarguments • Analyze situations by breaking them into cases • Recognize and use counterexamples • Make plausible arguments taking into account context from which data arose • Compare effectiveness of two plausible arguments • Identify correct vs. flawed logic/reasoning • Monitor one's own and others' reasoning
Embedded Receptive Language Practices	Comprehend oral and written concepts, procedures, or strategies used in arguments and reasoning, including • questions and critiques using words or other representations • explanations offered using words or other representations by others (peers or teachers), and • explanations offered by written texts using words or other representations
Embedded Productive Language Practices	Communicate (orally and in writing) about concepts, procedures, strategies, claims, arguments, and other information related to constructing arguments and critiquing reasoning: • Provide written or verbal explanation of an argument using language through logical progression of statements, and also using multiple nonverbal representations, concrete referents (such as objects), or more formal means (i.e., mathematical symbols, mathematical proofs) • Justify conclusions and respond to counterarguments • Recognize and use counterexamples • Respond to questions by amplifying explanation • Respond to critiques by countering with further explanation or by accepting as needing further thought • Critique or support explanations or designs offered by others

Note. Adapted from The ELPD Framework (CCSSO, 2012)

The language practices described in Table 2 include multiple registers[6] employed by both teachers and students, ranging from general-classroom to more discipline-specific language, both of which might contain more colloquial and more formal uses of language. Variations are also to be expected according to other factors, such as

- whether the language is written, spoken, or a combination of the two, possibly along with visual or gestural cues;
- whether interactions are whole-class, small-group, or one-to-one;
- what teachers', students', and other adults' roles and purposes are; and
- the genres that students are interpreting or producing.

Such concerns related to language-in-use are inextricable from the disciplinary Practices in which students engage and the language with which they do so. A lengthier treatment of this approach can be found in *The ELPD Framework* (CCSSO, 2012); see also Lee, Quinn, and Valdés (2013) for a specific focus on the NGSS. Defining language practices in this manner provides a specific, concrete means of understanding what students must be able to do with language to achieve the disciplinary standards set forth in the CCSS and NGSS.

A Second Challenge: Inclusion of ELLs in New Standards-Aligned Instruction

The current discourse surrounding the new Standards argues for the inclusion of ELLs in CCSS- and NGSS-aligned instruction (CCSSO, 2012; Linquanti & Hakuta, 2012; Lee, Quinn, & Valdés, 2013) and for ELLs' attainment of CCSS. The *Application of Common Core State Standards for English Language Learners* (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a), for example, states that

> The development of native like proficiency[7] in English takes many years and will not be achieved by all ELLs especially if they start schooling in the US in the later grades. Teachers should recognize that it is possible to achieve the standards for reading and literature, writing & research, language development and speaking & listening without manifesting native like control of conventions and vocabulary. (p. 1)

The extent of the new Standards-related shifts for ELLs and their teachers can be appreciated, for example, in the Understanding Language Initiative document, *Key Principles for ELL Instruction* (Stanford University, January 2013)[8], which lists six principles meant to guide teachers, coaches, ESL teachers, curriculum leaders, school principals, and district administrators as they work to develop CCSS-aligned instruction that includes ELLs. These six

[6] *Registers* are defined in the ELPD framework as "distinguishable patterns of communication based upon well-established language practices, such as the language used in subject-area classrooms. A 'recognizable kind of language' (p. 155) particular to specific functions and situations: a well-known non-academic example is 'sports announcer talk' (Ferguson, 1983)" (p. 91).

[7] One clear concern in the Standards is the assumption that ELLs will approximate or even become *native* or *nativelike*. See May (2014) and Ortega (2014), among others, for a discussion of why it is problematic to use monolingual competence or *nativeness* as a benchmark for L2 learning, a trend that has been present in SLA and in the English language teaching profession for some time and is also present in the CCSS. We also question to what extent *vocabulary* and *conventions* encompass the full range of language practices that ELLs must acquire and use.

[8] The Understanding Language Initiative "aims to heighten educator awareness of the critical role that language plays in the new Common Core State Standards and Next Generation Science Standards" (Stanford University, n.d.).

principles are envisioned as equally important in guiding the instruction of ELLs regardless of grade level or program type:

1. Instruction focuses on providing ELLs with opportunities to engage in discipline-specific practices that are designed to build conceptual understanding and language competence in tandem.
2. Instruction leverages ELLs' home language(s), cultural assets, and prior knowledge.
3. Standards-aligned instruction for ELLs is rigorous, grade-level appropriate, and provides deliberate and appropriate scaffolds.
4. Instruction moves ELLs forward by taking into account their English proficiency level(s) and prior schooling experiences.
5. Instruction fosters ELLs' autonomy by equipping them with the strategies necessary to comprehend and use language in a variety of academic settings.
6. Diagnostic tools and formative assessment practices are employed to measure students' content knowledge, academic language competence, and participation in disciplinary Practices. (Stanford University, January 2013, p. 1)

Principle 5 ("Instruction fosters ELLs' autonomy by equipping them with the strategies necessary to comprehend and use language in a variety of academic settings") offers some details about the skills that ELLs must develop to function in "inclusive" Standards-based classrooms. They must learn to use a broad repertoire of strategies to construct meaning from academic talk and complex text, to participate in academic discussions, and to express themselves in writing across a variety of academic situations. The best way for students to learn these strategies is for them to be included in environments in which they actively engage in different language practices such as describing, comparing, and arguing while engaged in demanding cognitive learning tasks. Tasks must also be designed to ultimately foster student independence.

ELLs' inclusion in Standards-based classrooms, however, raises many questions that have not yet been addressed in research. For example,

- How much (and what kind of) language do students need to be placed in an inclusive Standards-based classroom environment, and what criteria should be used to make such decisions?
  - How should levels of inclusion for English language proficiency be established?
  - How useful are existing notions of threshold or precursor language needed for inclusion (Linquanti & Hakuta, 2012)?
  - Are there sound theoretical views on foundational or basic language that can be used to inform decisions?
- What should classrooms look like?
  - How will inclusive content-area classrooms need to be structured? Should fluent-English-speaking students be included in such classrooms, and if so, how many?
  - What should the structure and content of classrooms be for students who are deemed not yet able to engage even in well-designed inclusive classes?
  - What kind of professional preparation and development will be needed for ESL

>>> The best way for students to learn these strategies is for them to be included in environments in which they actively engage in different language practices.

teachers to fulfill their roles successfully?

- What kind of preparation and professional development will content-area teachers need to support ELLs' development of conceptual, academic, and linguistic abilities in thoughtfully designed inclusive classrooms?
- What kind of preparation will all teachers need to work coherently in supporting the agency and competence of ELLs in their schools?
- What preparation or expertise will administrators need to plan programs and classes, examine student data, and devise interventions if needed?

Legal considerations.

The issue of inclusion is challenging because of important legal considerations also. The oft-cited *Lau v. Nichols* (1974) decision is of particular importance in setting the parameters of response to these questions and addressing the role of ESL professionals in the CCSS and NGSS era. In the most familiar part of the decision, the justices explain,

> There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand English are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education. (*Lau v. Nichols*, 1974, Page 414 U.S. 566)

>>> Arrangements that exclude students from the educational program until they have learned "basic English skills" are unacceptable.

This statement clearly outlines what teachers and schools cannot do with ELLs: They cannot be included in new Standards-based classrooms designed for monolingual English or fluent bilingual speakers with no regard for ELLs' lack of access to the academic content being taught. In other words, the notion of sink or swim is unacceptable, either in previous contexts or in the new Standards era, although most ESL professionals have witnessed instances in which schools have not fulfilled this obligation under the Lau ruling. The decision goes on, however, to emphasize the importance of inclusion for students in the process of learning:

> Basic English skills are at the very core of what these public schools teach. Imposition of a requirement that, before a child can effectively participate in the educational program, he must already have acquired those basic skills is to make a mockery of public education. We know that those who do not understand English are certain to find their classroom experiences wholly incomprehensible and in no way meaningful. (*Lau v. Nichols*, 1974, Page 414 U.S. 566)

In this way, arrangements that exclude students from the educational program—which we take to include academic content across different subject areas—until they have learned "basic English skills" are likewise unacceptable, although they still exist in many K–12 settings. The justices further explain that those who do not comprehend English are foreclosed from business-as-usual classrooms, and the implication of this statement is that schools are tasked with teaching English (to make instruction accessible) while also including students in the schools' larger educational program. In other words, future access to the curriculum cannot be prioritized over inclusion of students in the curricular program.

How can this inclusion be accomplished? It is clear that inclusion and participation in what is commonly referred to as mainstream instruction cannot wait until students have been reclassified as fluent English proficient by their schools. For more advanced ELLs who are not yet reclassified or redesignated, inclusion in regular instruction is common practice in many schools, although the quality of these classroom opportunities varies. But how can teachers provide "basic English" instruction, particularly to ELLs with less English expertise, while also providing access to the educational program: in this case, the new Standards?

Curricular concerns.

Clearly, undifferentiated instruction using the new Standards is inappropriate, but given students' varied instructional needs, what curricula can best facilitate their linguistic and intellectual/academic development? For more advanced ELLs, carefully developed and implemented instructional modifications within new Standards-based classrooms can support these students in reaching standards, particularly given the CCSS's contention that "it is possible to meet the standards in reading, writing, speaking, and listening without displaying nativelike control of conventions and vocabulary" (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Council of Chief State School Officers, 2010a, p. 1). For others at lower levels of proficiency, including adolescent ELLs with limited literacy skills in their first language (L1) and English, the demands of the new Standards-based curriculum can still be met (including the interpretation of complex, grade-level texts) with significant instructional guidance and scaffolding, in which teachers recognize the developmental language proficiencies and instructional needs of these students. It stands to reason that carrying out this work successfully will require enormous expertise on the part of ESL professionals. Most teachers will then require substantive and sustained professional development as well as the opportunity to collaborate with their peers to accomplish such a task in ways that genuinely provide access to the intellectual or academic content, offer meaningful opportunities for peer interaction, and do not demand language production that is unreasonably beyond the students' current proficiency. For students at the earliest stages of English language proficiency, curriculum must be based upon and move students as quickly as possible toward the analytical tasks implicit in the standards and outlined in *The ELPD Framework* (CCSSO, 2012). The curriculum must be implemented in a manner that provides the necessary content to address students' linguistic needs and facilitate their participation in inclusive, Standards-based classrooms as soon as possible. The collaboration of both ESL and content-area teachers is necessary at all levels to ensure that beginning ELLs have as much access to the curriculum as their English and home language proficiencies will allow, but this cooperation is particularly essential at earlier levels of proficiency.

>>> The collaboration of both ESL and content-area teachers is necessary at all levels to ensure that beginning ELLs have as much access to the curriculum as their English and home language proficiencies will allow.

Placement.

English language proficiency levels and descriptors vary widely throughout the United States (an issue explored in previous sections), and for this reason relying solely upon standardized assessment results to determine placement does not well serve any student classified as an ELL. A range of program models can support the dual goals of access and inclusion necessary

for students to develop their intellectual or academic and linguistic capacities to their fullest. Although we do not advocate a singular programmatic approach for the instruction of ELLs, we suggest that the model(s) used maximize individual students' genuine access to, and not simply inclusion in, disciplinary learning through participation in authentic communicative practices. Decisions about particular classroom environments (e.g., newcomer, pull-out, push-in, ESL/ELD, sheltered, dual-language programs) must be fundamentally based on such considerations, rather than program label or students' standardized proficiency scores.

(Re)Defining, (Re)Conceptualizing, and Supporting ESL Professionals' Daily Practices in the New Standards Era

In this section we examine the ways in which the daily understandings and practices of ESL professionals (teachers and administrators) need to be (re)defined, (re)conceptualized, and supported. Recognizing the challenges present in the field and raised in the April 2013 convening report, we first look at recent examples of possible roles for ESL professionals in the new Standards era before discussing reconceptualizations of both language and language instruction that are suggested by shifting theories of language teaching and learning as they intersect with the language practices required by the new Standards. We then explore ways in which principals and administrators can support teachers with the necessary resources and expertise to meet ELLs' needs in the new Standards era and how ongoing professional development can assist.

>>> There is a clear need for the examination of promising approaches and implementations that can guide ESL professionals in taking on the roles of experts, advocates, and consultants.

Recent Examples of Possible Roles for ESL Professionals

There are many important unknowns facing ESL professionals in this era of new Standards, and there is a clear need for the examination of promising approaches and implementations that can guide them in taking on the roles of experts, advocates, and consultants (TESOL, April 2013). For example, Maxwell (2013) emphasizes the importance of the issue and points out that

> the nation's roughly 45,000 ESL teachers—many of whom split their time among schools with little chance to co-teach or plan with content teachers—have expertise and strategies that experts say all teachers will need to ensure that English-learners are not shutout of the rigorous, grade-level content that the Common Core envisions will prepare all students for college and careers. (para. 9)

She contends, moreover, that it is not clear what role teachers of ELLs will play in what she terms "a ground breaking shift to the Common Core" (para. 10). Possibilities (according to the practitioners and administrators that she interviewed) include models that many teachers and schools already use to some degree, although they will need to be made more intentional and systematic:

- coteaching or closer collaboration between content teachers and ESL teachers,
- expecting content teachers to be both teachers of content and teachers of language,
- designing push-in models in which ESL teachers are in classrooms with content teachers,
- providing professional development for content teachers in the theories of second language acquisition and best practices for supporting ELLs and enhancing the status of ESL instruction and ESL teachers (Maxwell, 2013).

Maxwell (2013) offers a number of examples of changes currently taking place in U.S. schools in anticipation of CCSS implementation. For example, at the 600-student Meadow Park Middle School in Beaverton, Oregon, a collaboration between a veteran ESL teacher and 8th grade science and math teachers has been established that involves all three educators in "*simplifying* the language and developing strategies that all of them can use to support English-learners in both content and ESL classes" (para. 5; emphasis added). Such cross-disciplinary collaboration is key to this endeavor, though we will say more about simplifying language later in this paper.

A second example of possible roles and responsibilities of teachers is taking place in the 16 high schools that are part of the International Network for Public Schools. In these schools ELLs are described as engaged with "rigorous content all day long" (para. 21) because "every single teacher is a teacher of language and content" (para. 22). Students at various levels of proficiency are mixed in different grade levels and classrooms, and teams of teachers (one of whom is an ESL expert) share responsibility for a cohort of students. Claire Sylvan, the executive director of the network, is quoted as saying, "All the units our teachers have developed are designed to have students using the language in group projects, talking with each other, and actively engaged in discourse, *no matter how imperfect it may be"* (para. 25; emphasis added). Again, we elaborate on the notion of imperfect language in the following section.

The third example involves teachers at John J. Pershing Middle School in New York, New York, where six ESL teachers are working together with content teachers to develop CCSS-aligned lessons that have explicit scaffolds and supports for ELLs. Mr. Artigliere, who is also an instructional coach at the school, comments that "the goal is that you have the ESL professional right in the room to model for content teachers how you scaffold the content for English-learners" (para. 29). How ESL teachers can model for content-area teachers the new demands and practices they may not have engaged in before also presents challenges, as we will discuss.

A final example describes activities taking place in Broward County, Florida, where the district has created digital professional development resources in addition to face-to-face learning experiences for all teachers. A best practices document has also been written for content teachers to guide them in attending to the needs of ELLs at different proficiency levels in specific content areas. It gives explicit guidance on supports that are considered most effective for the language domains of speaking, listening, reading, and writing.

Maxwell's article, like much recent scholarship on the issue of collaboration and coteaching (e.g., Baecher & Bell, 2011; Honigsfeld & Dove, 2011), also emphasizes the key roles that administrators play in facilitating the kind of school culture in which ESL professionals and content teachers can work collaboratively. Further, important status differences between content teachers and ESL teachers must be directly addressed so that productive relationships can be established. If ESL teachers are seen as itinerant workers who are solely responsible for the development of ELLs' language capacities, such collaborations will not take place.

>>> The Standards will necessitate rethinking many aspects of ESL education if ELLs are to be included in college- and career-ready instruction.

Advancing Professional Expertise: (Re)Conceptualizing Language and Language Instruction

Teacher expertise, which is defined here as the knowledge they possess and the ability to successfully enact it in situated practice, will be crucial to the success of the new demands made by the Standards. As may be evident from the several previous examples, the Standards will necessitate rethinking many aspects of ESL education if ELLs are to be included in college- and career-ready instruction. The English language teaching profession has been guided by different expectations over time, and attempts to develop students' ability to use English for a full range of academic purposes had not been uniformly successful. It is therefore important in this context of heightened expectations for ESL professionals to reexamine both theories and practices to arrive at a richer and more thorough understanding of possibilities, opportunities, and challenges.

What follows is directly informed by the work undertaken by TESOL International Association in carrying out its key mission of advancing professional expertise in English language teaching and learning for speakers of other languages worldwide. As TESOL members are aware, this focus has involved numerous activities (e.g., conferences, workshops, publications, development of curriculum, online courses, symposia, and academies). It has also included two research agendas (Brindley et al., 2000; Scovel et al., 2004) that have had as their purpose identifying the many unanswered questions that impact the practice of English language teaching. A new research agenda is currently being written by a third task force empaneled in 2013 for that purpose by TESOL President Deena Boraie.[9] Because the current task force considers that advancing professional expertise depends on a deep understanding of relationships that exist between research, practice, and policy, it is preparing a research agenda that summarizes existing knowledge in the field, areas of debate, and new areas and questions still to be explored. One of its key purposes is engaging professionals at all levels in the examination of new trends, gaps in current knowledge, ways in which views and perspectives are changing, and questions English language teaching professionals must ask about their practices and learners' performance.

[9] Members of the task force include (in alphabetical order) Neil Anderson, Kathleen Bailey, Christine Coombe, Thomas Farrell, Sue Garton, Jun Liu, Dudley Reynolds, and Guadalupe Valdés.

>>> ESL professionals must be part of the conversation, understand what is being debated, and examine their practices.

These debates matter. ESL professionals must be part of the conversation, understand what is being debated, and examine their practices to become aware of whether those practices contradict or support their own perspectives about themselves as teachers. Additionally, they must consider the impact of their teaching practices on students' potential, as well as possible and realistic outcomes of instruction. Developing an understanding of current shifts in the field of L2 acquisition with reference to previously established views of the process is particularly important for engaging with others in crafting a profession that must rapidly move forward. Because of the importance of the various theoretical influences that have historically determined English language teaching approaches, we very briefly review in the following sections both the theories and the practices advocated by differing second language acquisition (SLA) perspectives. Because ESL professionals have a greater need than ever before to understand (and be able to communicate with colleagues about) the development of the field of ESL teaching and from where certain practices are derived, in the appendix we provide a more complete examination of these various theories from a historical perspective and explore how certain schools of thought continue to influence contemporary ESL teaching in U.S. schools. The following sections and the appendix are informed by the resources of the International Research Foundation for English Language Education (TIRF) as well as by TIRF's view that in the last three decades revolutionary changes in language teaching theory and practice have taken place.

How to make conceptualizations of language and theories of language explicit.

According to recent work in applied linguistics (e.g., Seedhouse, Walsh, & Jenks, 2010), teaching language entails implicit or explicit assumptions and beliefs about

- what is meant by *language*,
- what must be learned and taught given that definition of language,
- what needs to be taught given different learner characteristics and goals,
- what English language teaching professionals know (and don't know) about how those aspects of language are learned, and
- what professionals know about how teachable these aspects of language are in a classroom context.

English language teaching professionals must also address what pedagogical scaffolding needs to be provided for students so that they can participate in practices that are beyond their current levels of development.

When educators—including ESL teachers—talk about language, it is not always clear that they agree on the ways that they conceptualize language or on what it means to provide language instruction. As we noted, when talking about teaching content to ELLs, educators often suggest simplifying language or allowing students to use English no matter how imperfect it may be. But what it means to *simplify* language and what it means to use *imperfect language* can be variously interpreted.

Both van Lier (2004) and Cook (2010), for example, have proposed lists of various definitions of language to illustrate existing contradictory positions. Moyer (2008) has grouped the

various existing conceptualizations into three main categories: (a) a view of language as a biologically endowed human faculty, (b) a view of language as patterns of structure, and (c) a view of language as a social practice. These various definitions of language (e.g., language is the knowledge in the mind of an individual; language is a set of building blocks that needs to be assembled; language is a communicative repertoire that is apprenticed in social practice) have given rise to dramatically different assumptions about the teaching and learning of languages and have directly contributed to existing debates in the field of SLA and L2 teaching.

Becoming conscious of the theories that underlie our practices.

In recent decades, the English language teaching profession has witnessed a proliferation of approaches (at a philosophical level) and methods (at a procedural level), and although this range of choices can be useful, it also carries several challenges for ESL teachers. For example, methods that are considered new may simply be adaptations of older approaches or may rely upon methods and approaches that actually conflict with each other. It is sometimes argued that what Valdés (2001) referred to as *informed eclecticism*, a practice characterized by the selective combination of methods and practices regardless of their underlying theories of language and language learning, can lead to successful instruction. Many researchers and practitioners, however, disagree. For example, Larsen-Freeman (1990) and Freeman and Johnson (1998) have expressed concern about the fact that teachers "teach in a manner consistent with their own implicit and somewhat idiosyncratic 'small-t' theories" (Larsen-Freeman, 1990, p. 261). Freeman and Johnson (1998) further maintain that it is essential for teachers to understand their own beliefs and knowledge about language teaching and learning and develop a questioning stance toward institutional expectations and demands. We would add that it is also important to become conscious of the theories that underlie instructional practices through a critical examination of 1) new views and understandings about the limits of classroom instruction on the process of L2 acquisition, as well as 2) the many challenges that have been raised about time-honored practices that are assumed by students and many members of the public to be essential for language teaching and learning.

Table 3 presents an abbreviated overview of some popular approaches and methods in L2 teaching to highlight the differences between them and the implications of those differences for instruction. (For a fuller treatment of these methods, please see the appendix.)

Table 3. Foundational SLA Theories, Selected Associated Approaches/Methods, and their Key Characteristics

Foundational SLA Theories	Key Characteristics	Selected Associated Approaches/ Methods	Key Characteristics
Early formal theories	• Language defined as forms to be learned • Successful students can produce grammatically correct sentences	Grammar-translation	Emphasis on the study of grammar rules and lists of vocabulary and the application of this knowledge to the slow and careful translation of the classics
		Audio-lingualism	Emphasis on habit-formation and automatization based on repetition of teacher model with focus on pronunciation, stress, intonation, and rhythm
Cognitive theories	• Language defined as underlying grammatical competence • Successful students receive adequate input and acquire cognitive rules and strategies	Natural Approach	Emphasis on providing students with simplified input that adds one level of complexity to their acquired language (i+1) and lowering students' affective filters
		Learning Strategies Approach	Emphasis on training learners to employ cognitive strategies and using practice to facilitate shifts from cognitive to automatic stages
Functional theories	• Language defined as a tool speakers use to carry out specific social acts (functions) in particular social contexts • Successful students use language appropriate to specific contexts in which interactions occur	English for Specific Purposes	Emphasis on development of well-defined competencies, based on an analysis of the eventual use to which English will be put by learners in accomplishing occupational or academic aims
		Communicative Language Teaching	Emphasis on the ability to engage in functions (e.g., requesting, describing) and learners' fluency; accuracy as secondary
		Systemic Functional Linguistics Approaches	Emphasis on the explicit teaching of language forms as meaning-making resources
Sociocultural theories	• Language defined as dialogical and learned through participation • Successful students internalize or appropriate language through participation in activities with teachers and peers	Sociocultural Approaches	Emphasis on integrated conceptual, academic, and linguistic development and activities that encourage student interaction and include both planned and in-the-moment scaffolding

Differences That Make a Difference

>>> The application of a collage of practices derived from inconsistent theories cannot be assumed to render good results for students.

Why do these differences matter? These approaches and methods offer distinct views of what language is, how language is best learned, and the most useful pedagogy that will facilitate this learning. As Table 3 suggests, foundational theories may even contradict each other. For example, formal theories that emphasize language as a grammatical system do not recognize the contextually bound nature of language emphasized by functional theories or the dialogical and participatory nature of language proposed by sociocultural theories. When teachers describe themselves as eclectic, they may not be aware of the contradictions among the approaches they are using. In other cases, they may be aware of these contradictions but feel compelled to use them because of competing outside demands, such as grammatically oriented English language proficiency exams and functionally oriented content-area assessments. The application of a collage of practices derived from inconsistent theories cannot be assumed to render good results for students, in the same way in which a mix of treatments from different medical perspectives likely will not enhance a patient's opportunities of getting well.

To illustrate how theories of language intersect and theories of teaching can actually be seen in practice, Table 4 presents three different teaching scenarios, drawn from recent classroom observations, and the theories of language and language teaching on which they are based. For each scenario, questions are also included about the implications of these practices for helping *all* ELLs, regardless of their circumstances, make progress toward reaching the new ELP and content-area Standards.

Table 4. Three Different Teaching Scenarios and the Theories of Language and Language Teaching on Which They Are Based

Brief scenario	Theory of language and teacher role	Theory of language learning and teacher role	Questions the position raised in an era of new Standards
Mr. X is teaching his ESL class in a high school. He has students fill in blanks with the correct form of the verb in the past tense, the topic for the week, in a list of isolated sentences. Students work at their desks alone, and after 10 minutes the teacher calls on individual students to share their answers with the general group, which he validates by repeating the correct answer after the student or by correcting it if it is inaccurate.	Language is a set of grammatical forms that students need to master. These forms (e.g., simple past tense of the verb) are taught in a sequence from easier to more complex. Because form is paramount, meaning making and discourse are not the priority.	Language is learned practicing patterns of use. Teachers model, correct, and recast these forms so as to reinforce the production of linguistically correct language. Learning is based on continuous mechanical practice. The teacher is the "knower" and as such supervises students' production of correct language. The teacher's job is to transmit grammatical forms to students so that they are always "correct."	Although on the surface it is easy for teachers to focus on discrete pieces of language, how does this approach develop students' ability to participate in complex disciplinary Practices? (And if not now, when will this development take place?) Atomistic knowledge of correct grammatical patterns is not what is required to be successful academically, although over time it should be an important consideration.

Mr. Y, an ESL middle school teacher, is working on a thematic unit on the concept of revolution. He asks his students to think about somebody they know who has a job and to write down the working conditions of the job: schedule, work setting, breaks allowed, whether and what employees eat, etc. He then asks students to interview each other in dyads about the person they chose for the exercise. Then, in groups of four, they share their partners' descriptions and then compare them across the four situations. Mr. Y encourages students to look at each other and add emphasis to certain elements of their statements through tone, pausing, gestures, and other features. Language errors are not important at the moment, although they will be worked on in the future. These activities are conducted in preparation for a reading that will describe how dramatically life changed in England for weavers at the onset of the Industrial Revolution, and the working conditions in the first factories that started the Industrial Revolution in England.	Language is a tool used to communicate and get things done in the world. Meaning making and action (engaging in activity and getting results) are essential. Prior knowledge serves as an experiential bridge to conceptual understanding and language learning, which are both key priorities. The teacher provides direct assistance with language as needed rather than only before engaging in the activity.	Language is learned through an apprenticeship processes that has to be carefully designed, relevant, and engaging so that all students are active; thus, all students are learning. Participation in supported activity triggers appropriation of language, concepts, and skills, even without explicit instruction regarding grammatical forms. The teacher must design structures carefully so all students engage meaningfully in activity. Learning occurs when students participate and are willing to risk using language even if they are not sure it is absolutely correct.	How can other teachers develop simultaneous content-area and language expertise to scaffold simultaneous language and content learning? Mr. Y deeply knows the subject matter and discipline, social studies, and how to develop student interest and the ability to perform orally, in writing, and then in reading practices that are new to them. When should teachers ideally implement a focus on editing students' eventual written products for effective and expected uses of language, as appropriate to the purpose and audience and conventions of the genre? Integrating knowledge of correct grammatical forms can enhance a students' eventual product but must be done in ways that do not detract from their overall language and content development.
Ms. R., a sheltered language arts teacher, starts her ninth-grade class with a list of vocabulary items that she communicates to students they all need to learn to read Guy de Maupassant's story *The Necklace.* She gives her students a list of 12 key words that are essential to this story and asks students to repeat the words after her. She then gives them 15 minutes to practice writing the words and their definitions and developing examples and nonexamples of each word. She then gives an informal quiz the next day to see whether students have learned the words and begins the reading of the story only after the majority of the class can adequately define and provide an example for each word.	Language is comprised of "building blocks," and knowledge of smaller language elements is a prerequisite for understanding and/or producing more extended language. The teacher begins with word-level comprehension before proceeding to larger texts. Similar precursor activities might also occur with grammatical structures found in the story.	Learning requires students' mastery of smaller, more basic bits of language (in this case, individual words) to then be ready for larger stretches of discourse. Learning is the consequence of direct, transmission teaching, and what is learned follows a predetermined sequence. Students must master prerequisites such as individual word knowledge before they engage with authentic written or oral texts. When this mastery is not accomplished, students are remediated before the authentic text is presented.	When will Ms. R's students be ready for authentic texts? How will they maintain their enthusiasm and keep willingly responding to classroom instruction? If too much time is spent preparing and remediating students, then there may not be adequate time for activity and engagement in practices called for by the new standards.

It is possible that Mr. X and Ms. R are not fully aware of the theories underlying their practices or the impact of those practices on students and their language development in the new Standards context. Regardless of their level of awareness, however, the gap between what they are currently doing and what they need to do in the new Standards context is significant. The advancement of expertise to work with ELLs in ambitious ways requires an investment in professional development different from the isolated, piecemeal workshops many teachers have experienced. Deep,[10] transformative knowledge can only be brought about through sustained, focused professional development, which we discuss in more detail.

Adapting practices to new goals and expectations.

Historical and current developments in theories of language, bilingualism, and SLA suggest that language is being conceptualized very differently than it was even a few years ago. In the new Standards era, ESL pedagogical practices need to reflect these new understandings. The goal of the new Standards is to engage all students, including ELLs, in disciplinary Practices as soon as possible. This engagement generally requires that they possess a basic level of proficiency before they can successfully deal with the complexities of subject-matter content, particularly in later grades as this content becomes more complex.[11]

>>> Teachers must invite students to engage in rigorous cross-disciplinary activity from their first class.

Offering beginning students supportive yet rigorous, accelerated, and academically driven curricula that provide pathways to Standards-based courses presents the profession with the need to redefine its tenets and practices. In this way, teachers must invite students to engage in rigorous cross-disciplinary activity from their first class, and both ESL and content-area teachers must design and enact disciplinary teaching that simultaneously develops grade-level conceptual understandings, academic practices, and the language required to do so. In other words, the ESL professionals' challenge involves rethinking both what it means to teach English differently and how to become more content specific. Similarly, content-area teachers will need to reorient their approach to support the disciplinary language practices required by their content standards.

Supporting Teachers With Resources and Expertise

Principals and administrators as pedagogical leaders.

As emphasized in the April 2013 TESOL report, in this new environment principals and other administrators need to be pedagogical leaders, understanding the magnitude and nature of the task to promote teacher learning and engagement with new practices. For example, oftentimes teachers complain that administrators do not understand the importance of interactive student activities and do not appreciate the noise they create. Instead,

[10] Deep knowledge here is understood as knowledge that focuses on key ideas, presents them in their interrelationships, uses critical thinking, and thus is transferable or generative.

[11] The situation becomes even more complex in the case of adolescent students who arrive in U.S. schools with interrupted or no prior schooling. These concerns deserve increasing attention and effort in coming years to provide the ESL profession with instructional models and practices that are effective for this diverse population.

administrators should support and promote the offering of quality opportunities for students to learn, critiquing pedagogy whenever it needs to be strengthened and offering sound advice for how to do it. In this way, administrators can model the professionalism they expect from their teachers.

Additional roles principals and other administrators can play include being buffers who protect their teachers from mandates that distract them from the pivotal role of promoting learning and being communicators and advocates who inform the community and rally support for teaching conditions that increase educational quality. Principals, for example, could organize the school schedule so that significant time and resources can be devoted to the kinds of teacher learning collaborations described in the following section. The more ambitious teaching practices ESL professionals need to employ can be realized only through such investments of time and effort.

Redefining preparation for ESL professionals.

We now turn to another important implication for supporting for ESL professionals in the new Standards era. Engagement in disciplinary Practices cannot wait until students are ready to exit from English language programs for two reasons: First, the Standards explicitly include ELLs, and second, the ELP assessments are designed to correspond to the content areas' disciplinary Practices and standards, according the guidance provided by the CCSSO (2012). As we have suggested, academic language in the CCSS/NGSS era is now inextricable from the language that students use as they engage in these discipline-specific practices, even though, as described earlier in this paper, some ELLs at beginning levels of proficiency may not yet be included in mainstream standards-based instruction.

>>> Engagement in disciplinary Practices cannot wait until students are ready to exit from English language programs.

In the past, ESL teachers and other specialists have developed their expertise through coursework and professional development in applied linguistics, L2 acquisition, L2 methods, and related domains. Although these areas remain valuable, they are no longer sufficient for K–12 professionals in the new Standards era in the United States. Applied linguistics preparation, for example, must now provide teachers with an understanding of the traditions and patterns of language use typical of different disciplines, as well as the implicit values and traditions that undergird these disciplines and that guide language use. Although this does not mean that language teachers must become biology teachers or algebra teachers, it does imply that they need to understand how and why language is used in various disciplines. SLA courses and professional development must also be updated to reflect current understandings of SLA (see appendix) as well as the bilingual and multilingual realities in which students live. Such theoretical foundations can help ESL professionals conceptualize language and design instruction in productive ways that will facilitate ELLs' success in content-area classes. Other traditional topics, such as those in *methods* (teaching the four skills of reading, writing, listening, and speaking) or curriculum design courses, must be reconceptualized to help teachers create opportunities for learners to engage in language-rich disciplinary Practices in ESL and content-area classroom settings rather than to develop language relevant only to ESL settings. A final area of learning that now becomes essential in the new Standards era is that

>>> All teachers—not just ESL teachers—need opportunities to develop shared understandings of ELLs' learning needs.

of teacher collaboration. ESL teachers will continue to play multiple roles, and even in schools with very strong inclusion policies there will still be times in which ESL teachers will work one-on-one or with small groups of students outside of content-area classes. What is clear, however, is that ESL teachers will be working with content-area teachers to a greater extent than before, through team-teaching, co-planning, and other means, as mentioned previously. For this undertaking to be successful, all teachers—not just ESL teachers—need opportunities to develop shared understandings of ELLs' learning needs, learn strategies for effective teacher collaboration, and try various forms of collaboration in a supportive environment.

Given this substantial new body of expertise, how can the English language teaching profession transform the preparation and ongoing development of ESL professionals in the United States? For preservice teachers, re-visioned coursework in ESL certification programs could include the changes mentioned here, which in turn imply that teacher educators must expand their knowledge of disciplinary language and that publishers must create quality textbooks that support teacher educators' and preservice teachers' learning of this content.

For in-service teachers, developing this expertise while teaching is important and necessary. Because teacher expertise is not only knowledge (in this case, theoretical and pedagogical knowledge about language, language learning, and language teaching) but also the ability to successfully enact it in situated practice, teachers must adapt what they have learned in coursework to the specifics of their classes. While engaging in that ongoing work, teachers need a coherent portfolio of professional development opportunities that help them reflect on and develop their practice.

Apart from traditional course-taking, in-service teachers can develop expertise at their school or district sites by taking part in workshops and through professional learning communities that support being coached by more capable peers (and gradually learning how to coach others), collaboratively analyzing student work, offering and receiving constructive feedback on lesson plans or videotaped instruction, and engaging in analysis of other problems of practice. Analyzing effective CCSS-aligned curriculum models and developing new classroom curricula are also worthwhile endeavors that simultaneously build expertise, especially for ESL–content-area teams of teachers. Professional development can also be supported through initiatives such as TESOL online courses, virtual seminars, symposia, academies, and conferences. Deep and generative professional development should include a coherent set of experiences that develop awareness of the theories underlying particular approaches being used, and a critical stance toward theories and approaches as well as new knowledge and skills. Any teacher learning, however, must be supported by school and district administrators who devote the necessary time and resources for teachers to learn together and thoughtfully implement and refine that learning.

Conclusion

In an era of mass migration in which the focus on English as an essential language for much of the world's population is widely accepted, the development and enactment of ESL professionals' expertise becomes increasingly important. In the United States in particular, where the educational future of the children of new immigrants is to a great degree in the hands of those whose function it is to provide them with support in acquiring English, the role of these professionals is profoundly important. The new Standards context offers a transformative opportunity to (re)define and (re)conceptualize K–12 ESL professionals' roles, the instruction and advocacy they provide, the expertise from which they draw, and the contexts in which they facilitate the learning of their students.

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Appendix: Historical and Current Conceptualizations of Language and SLA in Language Teaching: A Basis for Rethinking

Beginning with the publication of Firth and Wagner's (1997) article "On Discourse, Communication, and (Some) Fundamental Concepts in SLA Research," the field of SLA has been engaged in an often contentious debate about the focus of the field itself given various contrasting conceptualizations of language (what is it that needs to be acquired) as well as conflicting positions on how the process of acquisition works. What is currently viewed as mainstream SLA is informed primarily by formalist and cognitive theories (to be discussed here) and is most directly concerned with the acquisition of particular forms and structures as well as the acquisition of an implicit linguistic system. Other approaches to SLA, on the other hand, are informed by theories that view language as a social practice and represent what has been termed the "social turn" (Block, 2003; Ortega, 2009) in the established field.

Because of the importance of the various theoretical influences that have historically determined English language teaching approaches (and their associated methods), in this section, we review both the theories and the practices advocated by differing SLA perspectives and explore how certain schools of thought continue to influence contemporary ESL teaching in U.S. schools. To create coherent new understandings for the development of ELLs' participation in rigorous academic practices in English, we must have an understanding of current teaching approaches and their theoretical antecedents. Such knowledge can inform what practices may need to be deepened, refined, or changed to meet new curricular demands.

It is important to express two caveats in this broad review of SLA theories as they relate to language teaching. First, most of the research on what has come to be known as "instructed language development" (Ellis, 1990) has been conducted in courses with adults, in postsecondary education. Second, most studies have been conducted in contexts where English is a foreign language (e.g., Donato & Tucker, 2010) in, for the most part, privileged contexts. These limitations are not trivial. ELLs in U.S. schools are children or teenagers who must not only learn the English language but also gain literacy skills and disciplinary academic practices at the same time—and they must do so in situations where they are minority students with all the tensions that status entails. Postsecondary students, on the other hand, have typically developed strong literacy and subject-matter content skills in their native language and now need to learn an additional language to express and expand these practices at the tertiary level. In the case of foreign language situations, learners are studying English as an added advantage to their education but do not need the language as a medium of instruction. Thus, the subject language for them is of a general, rather than disciplinary, nature. Further, pressures for the level of competence that needs to be developed in the L2 are not comparable: For example, in the United States, ELLs are expected to perform on par with native speakers within a fairly limited period of time, but students of foreign languages

are not. In fact, after four years of study, foreign language students only reach the equivalent of ACTFL's levels Novice-High or Intermediate-Low (CASLS, 2010), a situation that would be unacceptable for ELLs. (See the ACTFL 2012 Proficiency Guidelines for descriptions of these levels)

Why a Theoretical Focus?

Whether consciously or unconsciously, teachers possess ideas that inform their instructional decisions. That is, teachers' perceptions of learners and learning are guided by theoretical understandings, although they might or might not be able to articulate them. These understandings direct their choice of what, when, and how to teach. Broadly defined, a theory is a more or less abstract set of claims about the units that are significant within a phenomenon under study, the relationships that exist among them, and the processes that bring about change. At a minimum, theories guide descriptions, but stronger theories explain why something happens as it does or help to predict what will happen as a consequence of specific actions. Educators involved in English language teaching must be able to coherently explain what they are teaching and how they develop it; to determine why certain activities help learners to develop English but others don't; and to predict the consequences of pedagogical actions with ELLs.

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In the case of English language teaching, our review—limited to those theories that have most heavily influenced trends in current language teaching—discusses each theory's assumptions regarding the elements proposed to constitute language and the L2 learning process before describing teaching approaches and methods aligned with each. For purposes of our analysis, we map the field of teaching ESL into four main strands, or approaches, to SLA that have traditionally influenced language teaching (formal, cognitive, functional, and sociocultural)—with the knowledge that these strands do overlap to some degree. Then we explore the potential of new developments in bilingualism and SLA theory to influence future language teaching.

Early Formal Theories of Language Influencing English Language Teaching

How language and learning are defined.

Formal theories define language as composed of specific forms to be learned. These forms, which encompass vocabulary, sentences, sounds, and other features, are integrated into phonetic, morphological, lexical, and grammatical systems. Successful L2 learners are those who can produce grammatically correct sentences in the target language.

Associated teaching approaches and methods.

Grammar-translation. In language teaching, the grammar-translation approach historically initiated a focus on form. Used for centuries, this approach tasked L2 learners with using texts

>>> Formal theories define language as composed of specific forms to be learned.

considered the masterworks of literature as the basis for learning the patterns of language, or grammar, and its vocabulary by translating the original texts into the student's primary language. A normative perspective influenced this type of language learning, which was reserved for the educated few. From this perspective, it was assumed that the authors of these texts knew best how to use the language under study, and thus students had to learn from those sources. The focus of this approach to language learning was written English emphasizing the study of grammar rules, lists of vocabulary, and the application of this knowledge to the slow and careful translation of the classics. Although few elements of the grammar-translation approach are still present in school today, its focus on grammar, correctness, authority, and written language as an object of study, rather than one of use, has survived.

Audiolingualism. During the 1950s, at the height of the influence of structuralism in linguistics and behaviorism in psychology (Skinner, 1957), *audiolingualism* became a primary approach used to teach L2 learners. Because the audiolingual approach had proven successful with military and diplomatic personnel training during and after World War II, its practices were extended to the teaching of foreign languages in universities, language centers, and schools. In this approach, language was conceptualized as patterns that are structured into three systems: the phonological system accounted for the sounds of the language, the morphological system focused on words, and the syntactical system addressed grammar at the sentence level.

Behaviorism, a second theoretical underpinning of the audiolingual approach, proposed that learning was the result of conditioning produced by students' repeated exposure to a sequence of stimulus-response and reinforcement. Beyond the repetition of isolated sounds in English, language classes included sentence pattern practices. The teacher would model a sentence, which students would repeat, emphasizing pronunciation, intonation, stress, and rhythm—all of which were considered essential if a good accent was to be developed. After students' repetition of the model sentence, the teacher restated the sentence once again to leave a final echo in the students' mind of the teachers' production, a reinforcement considered essential by the behavioristic approach. Additionally, teaching for habit-formation included substitution and mechanical transformation drills (e.g., from the present to the past tense). Per the audiolingual approach, student mistakes were immediately corrected out of fear that the wrong usage patterns might become automatic.

Oral language, listening, and speaking became central skills in L2 teaching, with relatively less emphasis on reading or writing. The selection and ordering of what was to be taught followed a hypothetical sequence moving from simpler to more complex structures, and from vocabulary items and expressions that were hypothesized to be more immediately useful to those that were less immediately relevant. Teachers needed to closely follow procedures dictated to them by the materials, with no deviation. This meant that no specialized knowledge was required to teach language, and the notion that native speakers (a concept we critique later) were ideal L2 teachers gained currency.

Several components of the audio-lingual approach still influence current language teaching practices. Many ESL curricula continue to evidence the assumption that language teaching should progress along universal paths and that language grows in bits and pieces, moving from simpler or more useful to more complex. The belief also persists that the native speaker is the model to be acquired, and that policies and programs should value adherence to a curriculum above teacher expertise. Teachers influenced by audiolingualism often fear the consequences of learners' imperfect productions and therefore continue to immediately correct learner errors. Finally, the assumption that teachers teach what they are given to teach with no flexibility, not deviating from plans created by outsiders considered experts, has been maintained in many settings.

Cognitive Theories of Language Influencing English Language Teaching

How language and learning are defined.

>>> Cognitive theories of language define language as competence: Native speakers have tacit knowledge of the rules.

Chomsky's publication of *Syntactic Structures* (1957) and his 1959 review of Skinner's *Verbal Behavior* strongly criticized behaviorism and proposed that language was competence—the tacit knowledge that native speakers have of the rules of language, which enables them to produce and understand utterances in communication—and consequently, competence should be the center of linguistic study. Performance, speakers' actual realization of their competence, considered flawed and imperfect, is therefore left outside of the realm of linguistic interest. Chomsky's ideas had a delayed yet long-lasting effect in English language teaching. Although Chomsky was not interested in applied linguistics himself, his cognitive revolution marked a transition in applied linguistics and the field of L2 teaching from emphasis on habit automatization and drilling to input and cognitive rule learning. We will review two main approaches developed within this tradition to underscore their current impact.

Associated teaching approaches and methods.

Krashen's natural approach. Building on notions of language learning as knowledge of rules that develop in universal ways, during the 1970s and 1980s Krashen, and later Krashen and Terrell (1983), developed an approach to L2 acquisition and teaching that is based on five premises:

1. The *acquisition-learning hypothesis* proposes that the structures of second languages are acquired by learners subconsciously, as a result of exposure to the L2.
2. The *monitor hypothesis* states that consciously learned language can help students to check, correct, and refine their performance but in the process can slow down their production.
3. The *natural order hypothesis* stipulates that learners acquire the rules of language in a universally predictable way that is not influenced by what is taught.

4. The *input hypothesis* states that the sole trigger of language acquisition is exposure to language production that is targeted to one level higher than students' proficiency.
5. The *affective filter hypothesis* emphasizes the importance of a nonthreatening environment for learning, proposing that raising the affective filter obstructs and impedes language acquisition but that lowering it promotes language acquisition.

Krashen's continued influence in ESL pedagogy includes teachers' uptake of his caution to avoid asking students to focus on their performance because raising the affective filter impedes acquisition, as well as the teacher practice of providing students with simplified input (that adds one level of complexity to their acquired language, the oft-quoted i+1), a practice that is often challenging for teachers to enact when students have to participate in content-area classes where the language used will necessarily be beyond their competence.

Learning strategies. For Krashen a strong emphasis on the conscious monitoring of linguistic activity was not desirable; however, a group of applied linguists alternatively proposed that if learners deliberately apply cognitive techniques to their L2 learning, they will overcome difficulties and enhance their results. Building on the notion that learning is an active process through which learners make use of a variety of information and strategic modes of cognitive processing, several taxonomies of teachable learning strategies have appeared in the field (see, for example, Oxford, 1990; Rubin, 1987; Wenden, 1987). In one model (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990), strategies thought to facilitate learning were classified into three distinct groups: (a) *metacognitive strategies* (e.g., planning, focusing attention selectively, monitoring, evaluating); (b) *cognitive strategies* (e.g., organizing, inferencing, deducing, transferring, rehearsing, summarizing); and (c) *social* or *affective strategies* (e.g., clarifying by questioning, cooperating, engaging in self-talk). O'Malley and Chamot's model built on Anderson's *information-processing model* of learning (Anderson, 1983), which considers three stages in skill learning: (a) the *cognitive stage*, where the learner consciously applies strategies, resulting in declarative knowledge; (b) the *associative stage*, when connections are built among diverse elements of the skill; and (c) the *automatic stage*, where the learner begins to execute strategies subconsciously and autonomously. The proposal drawn from learning strategies theories for ESL teaching has been for teachers to train learners to employ particular strategies whenever they are having difficulties in their learning process, and to facilitate through practice a move from cognitive to automatic stages. Although the perspective of learning strategies has not been fully adopted in ESL pedagogy beyond its use in the well-known cognitive academic language learning approach (CALLA)(Chamot, 2009) and sheltered instruction observational protocol (SIOP) model (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2012), it has been partially influential as a result of its application to literacy instruction in L1 language courses at the secondary level (see, for example, Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999).

Functional Theories of Language Influencing English Language Teaching

>>> Functional theories of language see language as a tool used to carry out specific social acts or functions.

How language and learning are defined.

Based on a focus on communication in real-world social settings, language is defined as a tool speakers use to carry out specific social acts, or functions, in ways that are appropriate to the specific societal contexts in which interactions occur. Inspired by the work of Halliday (1974) in the United Kingdom and Hymes (1974) in the United States, among others, many sociolinguists in this tradition began to focus not on structural forms or idealized competence, but on the social use of that understanding: performance. In theoretical sociolinguistics, the study of patterned variation, as determined by social constraints, became the main focus of study, and in applied linguistics the development of communicatively-focused approaches to L2 teaching manifested this new understanding of language. In this endeavor, study of the function(s) of language acquires preeminence over the study of linguistic forms or strategic cognitive behavior. The focus of L2 teaching therefore moves from correctness (accuracy) to appropriateness (societal match between communicative purpose and linguistic instantiation). Three main strands within language teaching merit highlighting because of their influence today and their potential for proposals that address learners' current communicative needs.

Associated teaching approaches and methods.

English for specific purposes (ESP). This pedagogical approach focuses on the design and teaching of courses aimed at the development of well-defined competencies based on an analysis of learners' eventual use for English in accomplishing occupational or academic aims. It is important to note that this approach begins with an analysis of the communicative needs of learners. Having a clear idea of who the learners are, what they know, and what they need to do in English is essential for the design of syllabi and curricula. It is equally important to specify the language that the learner will most likely encounter, and so curricula are *aim-oriented.* Widdowson (1983) made the distinction between aims and objectives in language teaching, characterizing *aims* as what the learner needs to do with the language once he or she learns it, and defining *objectives* as "what the learner has to do in order to learn, [and] in this sense it relates to pedagogic objectives" (p. 20). In this way, ESP courses are concerned with the development of learning needs as defined by eventual aims and focused on the functions of language (e.g., defining) and the language options that realize those functions (based on genre analysis). ESP courses have challenged a number of assumptions about the teaching of English. For example, classes intended to develop the L2 in well-defined contexts can be carried out partially in students' L1s. The sequencing of what is to be explored in English depends more on the usefulness of specific items for the learners than on any hypothesized natural order of acquisition. Although it has not been highly influential in K–12 settings, ESP approaches have offered K–12 ESL pedagogy alternative ways of conceptualizing the selection and progressions of curricular content, with need determining what is taught.

Another idea adapted from this work is the pedagogical usefulness of employing students' L1 in classes where students and the ESL teacher all share the same language, a context that is common, though far from universal, in U.S. schools.

Communicative language teaching. Moving away from the idea that ELLs' goal in learning English is to produce grammatical sentences, communicative language teaching emphasizes the learners' ability to carry out communicative functions in the second language by producing utterances that are appropriate for specific communicative contexts. Communicative instruction places an emphasis on learners' fluency, or ease of use in the L2, leaving issues of accuracy, or correctness, as secondary. Although in the past language structures had been taught one after the other, in discrete sequences, in communicative courses the structures are replaced with functions, such as requesting and describing, which require students to engage in communication that reflects natural language use. At times, functions tend to be presented atomistically rather than in integrated ways that could deliberately build students' overall communicative competence in English. Despite European efforts, which attempted to start with student needs first (see, for example, the European language portfolio), communicative language teaching in the United States has tended to be based on abstract assumptions about these needs. English language teaching materials are developed accordingly, matching function to form and at times keeping students in activities isolated from integrated communication in discourse. With its emphasis on interaction, however, communicative language teaching has provided the field with an important acceptance of learner error, validating hesitation and reformulation as necessary in the process of communicating with others in the L2.

Systemic functional approaches to L2 teaching. Halliday's (1974) efforts to account for the meaning potential of texts led him and other linguists who followed his lead into a functional perspective characterized by the linking of grammar to meaningful functions. This move paralleled British linguists' efforts in the late 1960s and 1970s to design a system of categories based on the communicative needs of the learner, in which function dictated language content. Systemic functional linguistics expands the application of this perspective to language teaching, which focuses on the explicit teaching of language forms as meaning-making resources. In this way, an emphasis on both meaning and forms, though this time from a new perspective, is central to the approach. In the U.S. context, Schleppegrell (2004, p. ix) has explored "the linguistic features of the language students need to learn for success in school" with the understanding that this new emphasis will help both ELLs and speakers of nonstandard varieties of English to develop academic uses of English. Systemic functional linguistic approaches to teaching, which have been used extensively in Australia, are gaining a foothold in the United States as well, primarily through teacher professional development related to writing across the content areas (e.g., Brisk & Zisselsberger, 2011; Gebhard, Harman, & Seger, 2007).

Sociocultural Theories of Language Influencing English Language Teaching

How language and learning are defined.

The last three decades have seen the development of several sociocultural approaches to L2 learning that build on ideas initially proposed more than eight decades ago. Weaving Vygotsky's (1962, 1978) notions of learning as co-construction in the zone of proximal development (the area beyond what the learner can do autonomously) and Bruner's metaphor of pedagogical scaffolding (Bruner & Sherwood, 1976), sociocultural theory proposes that language is, in essence, dialogical. L2 learning is therefore always an active process, and through participation in carefully constructed activity (i.e., pedagogical scaffolding) students consciously internalize or appropriate language.

Associated teaching approaches and methods.

Distinct "schools" of sociocultural approaches have not been formalized within English language teaching to the same extent as those listed previously, but instruction tends to share several characteristics. As Tharp (1991) explains,

>>> Sociocultural theories of language propose that language is, in essence, dialogical.

> A key feature of this emergent view of human development is that higher-order functions develop out of social interaction. Vygotsky argued that a child's development cannot be understood by a study of the individual. We must also examine the external social world in which that individual life has developed... Through participation in activities that require cognitive and communicative functions, children are drawn into the use of these functions in ways that nurture and 'scaffold' them. (pp. 6–7)

Pedagogical activity designed to promote L2 learning engages students in interactions with peers and teachers and presupposes a number of conditions to be effective. van Lier (1996, 2004) discusses these conditions as

- *continuity*, the use of routinized participation structures that free students' attention to the content and novelty in the interaction
- *contextual support*, which highlights the importance of an inviting context in which students are legitimate albeit peripheral participants (Lave & Wenger, 1991)
- *intersubjectivity*, the reciprocal agreement established in the group that all students will be listened to attentively
- *contingency*, the idea that teachers will scaffold in response to students' immediate actions and needs (as well as in planned ways)
- *handover/takeover*, the understanding that supports are offered to students so that they develop their agency and autonomy and soon take over responsibility for increasing parts of the action
- *flow*, the match between the strengths and needs of the students and the supports offered for successful participation

Sociocultural theories of learning, in their multiple varieties, support language-teaching approaches that integrate conceptual, academic, and linguistic development in tandem. In this way, instruction is designed and adapted so that students gradually appropriate practices that embed appropriate language use in the carrying out of academic practices. Central contributions of this perspective include the notion that apprenticeship through meaningful activities moves students from peripheral to central participation (or appropriation) over time, and that scaffolding that is contingent upon the emerging strengths and needs of the learners is required to do so (Walqui & van Lier, 2010). The impact of sociocultural approaches to teaching can be seen in growing emphases on the importance of pedagogical scaffolding and classroom interaction to facilitate language development.

These formal, cognitive, functional, and sociocultural theories have impacted U.S. ESL teaching in K–12 schools to various degrees in recent decades, and their legacies can be seen in many ways in curricula and classroom pedagogies. In the new Standards era, however, which demands that the language practices in schools and the role of ESL professionals be reconceptualized, new theories of SLA and bilingualism must be studied to understand what insights they can also offer the current situation.

The Multilingual Turn and Journeys Into Alternative Theories: Changing Perspectives on the Nature of Bilingualism and SLA

How language and learning are defined.

Until very recently, it was generally assumed that the end-state of the SLA process was acquiring the implicit linguistic system of the monolingual native speaker. Such nativelike, ultimate attainment, though seldom achieved by most L2 learners (Han, 2004), was nevertheless established as the goal of L2 instruction, and learners were evaluated primarily in terms of their acquisition of forms, structures, or communicative behaviors thought to be characteristic of educated speakers raised from birth in a monolingual environment. Monolingual competence and monolingual performance were seen as the norm, and deviations from this norm were labeled using terms such as incomplete acquisition, fossilization, and interlanguage.

In the last decade or so, work carried out by various researchers on the nature of bilingualism (Auer, 2007; Grosjean, 1998; Wei, 2013) as well as the roles of socialization (Duff & Talmy, 2011), interaction (Kasper & Wagner, 2011) and language variability (e.g., de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007; Larsen-Freeman, 2010, 2012; Larsen-Freeman & Cameron, 2008) in L2 acquisition has raised many questions about a number of these and other commonly accepted assumptions about SLA and bilingualism. For the most part, such views have not yet begun to influence mainstream ESL teaching, but they have great potential to do so and are therefore fundamental to ESL professionals' knowledge and preparation, particularly as they reevaluate their roles in the new Standards context.

>>> It is now generally accepted that bilinguals are specific speaker-hearers who are not two monolinguals in one.

Primarily due to scholarship on bilingualism from cognitive, linguistic, and sociolinguistic perspectives (e.g., Bhatia & Ritchie, 2013), it is now generally accepted that bilinguals are specific speaker-hearers (Grosjean, 1985, 1989) who are not two monolinguals in one. Rather, they use their multiple linguistic repertories in a variety of ways to meet their communicative needs. Bilinguals do not normally have the same levels of proficiency in all language modalities (speaking, listening, reading, and writing) in each of their languages, and as a result there is increasing concern about the construct of *language proficiency* as it has been used to measure bilingualism by researchers (Hulstijn, 2012). As Wei (2010) explains, it has become increasingly obvious that bilinguals should be compared only to other bilinguals and not to monolinguals in any one of their languages.

May (2014) refers to these changes in perspective as the *multilingual turn* in applied linguistics that is a natural consequence of the increasingly globalized world in which the teaching of English is now taking place. According to May (2014) and Ortega (2014), dissatisfaction with and concern about the tendency to view individuals acquiring a L2 as failed native speakers has been present in SLA and in the English language teaching profession for some time. Bley-Vroman (1983), for example, pointed out the comparative fallacy of using monolingual competence as a benchmark for L2 learning. Cook (1992, 2002a, 2002b, 2003) argued for a multicompetent view of language learners and questioned the tendency to refer to individuals who acquire an L2 perpetually as *learners* rather than *users*, and Beacco (2005) has offered the term *plurilingualism* to describe individuals' capacity to use more than one language in social communication even as they have varying commands of those languages. A number of other scholars have also criticized monolingual assumptions and the narrow views of language experience they imply, beginning in the early 1990s (Amin, 2004; Canagarajah, 1999; Davies, 1991, 2003; Doerr, 2009; Doer & Kumagai, 2009; Kramsch, 1997), but Ortega (2014) contends that mainstream SLA research communities still do not fully understand the ideological or empirical consequences of the native-speaker norms and assumptions they rely upon in their work. Ortega (2014) suggests that usage-based linguistics, which emphasizes the language that learners experience rather than the goal of obtaining "a monolingual-like command of an additional language" (Ortega, 2009, p. 5) can help to inform the multilingual (and inherently more social) turn in SLA.

In addition to the multilingual turn, developments in alternative SLA theory have introduced new perspectives for ESL professionals to consider that, although often rooted in functional and sociocultural theories to some degree, offer new insights. Language socialization theories of SLA (e.g., Duff & Talmy, 2011), for example, suggest that students' learning of language is inseparable from socialization into the values, identities, ideologies, stances, and practices of communities. Socialization is, however, a contested and often bidirectional process for learners and teachers, and one that involves far more than the learning of language structures and forms. Discourse-focused alternative theories, such as the conversation-analytic approach to SLA (e.g., Kasper & Wagner, 2011), suggest that language competence can only be seen through interaction with others, which is therefore the venue for both the development and demonstration of SLA. In a third recent SLA theory development, scholars drawing from chaos and complexity theory (e.g., Larsen-Freeman & Freeman, 2008; Larsen-

Freeman & Cameron 2008) and dynamic systems theory (e.g., de Bot, Lowie, & Verspoor, 2007) have argued that L2 acquisition is an inherently nonlinear, variable process that will not result in nativelike end states. Rather than viewing L2 acquisition as a uniform or linear process, Larsen-Freeman and colleagues suggest that language should be seen as a *complex adaptive system*, in which language is inherently variable and language capacities change as a result of being used. The implications of this approach are clear: In a provocatively subtitled article, "Second language acquisition and the issue of fossilization: There is no end and there is no state," Larsen-Freeman (2006) argues that by focusing on errors in relation to a supposedly stable end state, English language teaching professionals may overlook what students are already doing successfully and assume a linear progression that will not materialize.

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