President's Letter

Dear Colleagues,

Welcome to the Fall 2018 edition of *Idiom*. My gratitude goes out to the authors, contributors, and editors who took the time to bring this edition of the newsletter to you, the readers. I hope you will find our newsletter's topics of culturally responsive and inclusive teaching and programming, and critical thinking through the use of advertisements, useful in your work.

As an extension of the statement in the Spring 2018 newsletter, I remind readers that as we educate, we advocate! As educators within a contended field, in which our students are often in need of our solidarity and support, we are called upon to act in whatever ways we can to be a part of defending our students and shaping our society in the process. Since that newsletter, some developments in federal policy have responded to the pressures you and other advocates have brought to halt the separation of immigrant families and children. I urge you to continue to advocate for these children, and I remind you of NYS TESOL's statement, released this past Spring: *"NYS TESOL joins with state Board of Regents and other national and international organizations such as the ACLU and the United Nations in condemning, and demanding an immediate halt to the policy of family separation enacted against immigrant families. As an educational advocacy organization that recognizes the rights of children to justice, safety, healthy conditions, and nurturing, and as educators, families and allies of people who are often immigrants, we unequivocally denounce this inhuman, cruel treatment of our fellow human beings."* NYS TESOL continues to stand by this position and deploy its resources in ways that show we will not relent until there is justice!

Additionally, NYS TESOL's VP of Advocacy, Carmen Díaz and I have been participating in annual state budget negotiations for this year together with a newly created coalition of statewide and local organizations. The Advocacy Committee prepared budget priorities to contribute to this coalition's effort to secure the proper funding for the needs of our students. Please stay tuned for future updates and share your budget concerns with us (vpadvocacy@nystesol.org) and with your legislators and local political leaders. All voices count!

Finally, your comments, concerns and inquiries are welcome, as are your offers to volunteer for NYS TESOL. NYS TESOL's volunteers are always ready to welcome new volunteers, incorporate their ideas, and support their work. Please feel free to email me at pres@nystesol.org to find out how you can get involved in NYS TESOL and make a difference!

Yours in NYS TESOL,

Juliet M. Luther, Ph.D.

President, NYS TESOL
Bilingual/ESOL Educator, NYCDOE/CUNY

Promising Practices – This is an ongoing column featuring advice for effective teaching. Please send article submissions to the column editor, Ann C. Wintergerst, St. Johns University at promisingpractices@idiom.nystesol.org

Using Advertisements to Teach Rhetoric and Develop Critical Thinking Skills

By Timothy Foran

Before entering college, English Language Learners (ELLs) focus on improving their language skills to meet the demands of college academics. However, ELLs also need analytical and critical thinking skills in order to be successful in academia and beyond. One method to effectively build these skills, as well as develop rhetorical awareness, is through advertisements.

Why Advertisements

Because advertisements are multimodal, meaning is conveyed in several ways, so students can understand them more easily as compared to traditional argument analyses that rely heavily on reading comprehension. Along with aiding comprehension, multimodality enriches class discussion, highlights students' capabilities, and supports overall learning, including language and content (Choi & Yi, 2016). Of course, many ELL instructors already know the value of incorporating multimodality in the classroom. However, advertisements are particularly valuable because they are familiar to students in general, and this familiarity allows them to activate their prior knowledge (Hobbs, He, & Robbgrieco, 2014). This prior knowledge includes, for example, an understanding of the general purpose of most advertisements: persuading people to purchase a product. This general understanding of advertisements is important because it indicates that ELLs already have some level of media literacy.

Advertisements and media literacy are connected because students must understand the rhetorical situation in order to analyze the advertisement. According to Chamberlin-Quinlisk (2012), media literacy "refers to the development of skills to use traditional and emerging media effectively, to the expanded use of multimodal literacies, and to the ability to decode media and understand the marketing strategies behind their messages" (p. 154). Decoding and understanding the marketing strategies behind the messages in advertisements also require an understanding of the rhetorical situation, such as author, purpose, and audience as well as the appeals of logos, pathos, and ethos.

Putting It into Practice

One way to incorporate advertisements into the classroom with the goal of teaching students how to conduct rhetorical analyses and develop critical thinking skills includes four steps.

Step 1: Activate Prior Knowledge

An effective way to activate ELL's prior knowledge and orient them to the topic is by asking questions that generate a class discussion. Simple questions such as what is your favorite advertisement and what is the most popular advertisement from your home country encourage students to speak. Then, deeper questions such as what is the purpose of the advertisement, why is the advertisement popular, and would it be popular in the U.S. can help the students think more critically about the advertisements. Unknowingly, the students are also analyzing the rhetorical situation by examining the purpose and audience.

Step 2: Introduce Rhetorical Analysis

Once the discussion ebbs, introduce the definition of rhetoric, analysis, and the main elements in the rhetorical situation by connecting the concepts to ideas that the students discussed. The students should also be introduced to the main elements of the rhetorical situation—author, purpose, and audience—and the rhetorical appeals—ethos (the author's use of credibility), logos (the author's use of logic or reasoning), and pathos (the author's use of emotions). One effective way to teach these concepts is to conduct a guided practice in which the instructor shows an advertisement that is easy to analyze and asks students to identify the rhetorical situation and appeals. The instructor can help the students connect the parts and ask the students if the advertisement works. In other words, after deconstructing and analyzing the advertisement, does the author use the proper rhetorical appeals to persuade the audience?

Step 3: Group Work

The next step entails giving the students freedom to conduct their own rhetorical analysis in groups. The instructor should give them several advertisements, print or video, out of which each group will select one to analyze (see Appendix). Along with the advertisements, the instructor should also give the students a list of guiding questions for analyzing advertisements, so they can focus their efforts and stay on track for their analysis. These questions (some of which are inspired from Rogow, 2007) can include the following:

1. Author:
    - Who made the advertisement?
2. Purpose:

- What is the purpose of the advertisement?

- Why did the person/company make the advertisement?

3. Message:
    - What is the message in the advertisement?
    - What lifestyles and values are represented in the message or advertisement?
    - Is the message true? Does it depict reality?
    - How does the message relate to your own experience?
4. Audience:
    - Who is the audience?
    - What are their values and beliefs?
    - How does the advertisement appeal to its audience?
    - What techniques are used?
    - Do you think the advertisement appeals to the entire audience? Why?
    - If a different audience in another country saw the advertisement, would it appeal to them?

These questions help guide the students to learn the rhetorical situation and conduct an analysis by learning how the parts—the rhetorical situation and appeals—relate to the whole—the purpose of the advertisement—and whether it achieves its purpose. These questions also help students develop crucial critical thinking skills because the students examine the *why*, which allows them to come to a deeper understanding rather than having a surface level understanding. Every time the instructor asks *why*, the students uncover more and more complex information embedded in the advertisement. Once the groups complete their analysis, they can present their findings to the class, and the teacher can ask additional questions to guide or deepen their analysis as needed.

Step 4: Individual Rhetorical Analysis Essay
Once the instructor feels that the students understand rhetoric, analysis, and the rhetorical situation, the instructor should let the students select their own advertisement to write their essays, and the students should use the guiding questions to help them with their assignment. Prior to this assignment, it is advisable that the students read an example advertisement analysis, such as Hannah Berry's (2016) "The Fashion Industry: Free to Be an Individual" found in *The Norton Field Guide* (pp. 95-99).

Closing Thoughts

Although research shows that advertisements are useful in secondary education, I frequently use them in higher education to teach rhetoric and critical thinking. Most students enjoy the

assignment, especially the class discussion and group work, and they show great potential in understanding the rhetorical situation and appeals with teacher guidance. During the discussion/group work stage, instructors should ask the right questions to further the students' understanding of rhetoric and to activate their critical thinking skills. It is important to note that not all my students' learning transferred from the group work to the individual written assignment. For the written assignment, most students identified parts of the rhetorical situation. Although they had a good grasp of purpose and audience, they demonstrated a limited understanding of the rhetorical appeals. Students also showed a deeper level of critical thinking during the group assignment and class discussion. The slight disconnect between the group work/class discussion and the individual assignment can be reduced if students receive more guidance in terms of drafts, student-teacher conferences, and peer review.

Instructors can also use this activity to have students analyze a target audience and teach them cultural norms, assumptions, and stereotypes. By using their critical thinking skills, students will find complex issues of representation embedded in advertisements, and instructors can have students critically read advertisements as cultural texts (Chamberlin-Quinlisk, 2003, p. 37). These are some ways that advertisements can be incorporated in the classroom.

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Appendix: Advertisement Examples

Figure 1. Find your greatness. Adapted from "Nike—Find Your Greatness: Jogger," by

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Nike France, 2012, *YouTube*. Retrieved May 8, 2018, from
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A9pmgoETgQQ

Figure 2. Tom Ford black dress. Adapted from "Tom Ford Ad Campaign Spring/Summer 2014,"
by *The Essentialist*, 2014. Retrieved May 8, 2018, from
http://theessentialist.blogspot.com/2014/01/tom-ford-ad-campaign-springsummer

Culture Corner– This is an ongoing column highlighting issues and insights on advocacy, social justice and inclusion within the TESOL community. Please send article submissions to the column editor, Genie Smiddy at editors@idiom.nystesol.org

Demystifying Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Practices

By Dr. MariLuz Genao

The WHY

As Donald Schön (1983) states "The need for public learning carries with it the need for a second kind of learning. If government is to learn to solve new problems, it must also learn to create the systems for doing so and discard the structures and mechanisms which grew up around old problems" (109).

The old saying is, if it ain't broke, don't fix it. When it comes to conducting appropriate disability evaluations, the system does in fact, appear to be broken. Solutions that purportedly work are often taken for granted (Schein, 2010). Standardized scores appear to resolve the problem of limited time capacity for school practitioners, since tests are quick and efficient to administer and score (Arias & Friberg, 2017). Decisions are also deceptively easy to make since scores alone can suffice for service eligibility. Standardized scores have also served to address the problem of communication, since these scores represent a common understood language among different disciplines (Arias & Friberg, 2017). Standardized score based disability evaluations, however, have historically over identified students who are culturally and/or linguistically diverse (Grossman, 1995; Restrepo, 1998; Hart & Risley, (1999); August & Shanahan, 2006; Ravitch, 2014). Therefore, we can no longer view standardized scores as a viable solution, when they are, in fact, a big part of the problem.

Legislation has made it clear that the use of standardized assessments for identifying disabilities is not necessary nor sufficient in the identification of a disability and/or appropriate identification of required treatment or services (IDEA, 2004). Over reliance on standardized scores has

resulted in disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students identified as having a disability across New York State and an increase in all students across all subgroups being identified for special education services especially for "Learning Disabilities" (NYSED, 2016). The use of standardized scores to make service decisions has also created a

misallocation of appropriate and required treatments. Meaning that we are inaccurately matching the students' needs to the treatments provided. To address this phenomenon, educators are encouraged to implement a CLD and individualized Response to Intervention (RtI) system to reach a broader audience of learners who are differently abled. In sum, we want to create systems that are responsive to the true needs of each child. Since disproportionality at the school level impacts the greater sociopolitical and socioeconomic arena, this will enable our WHY, which is to ensure equitable outcomes for all students in school and beyond!

HOW do we do this? Let's start with some clarifying points:

1. RtI is not just for students at-risk. Tier 1 is how we support all students.

2. If a student needs to address goals that are related to English as a New Language (ENL), speech and language pathology, or psychological fields of expertise, such interventions can be provided without the identification of a disability within a CLD responsive RtI system. For example, a student might have a speech and language goal to address that doesn't necessarily mean they have a speech and language disability. Further, if ENL services are provided whenever language needs are present despite NYS language proficiency test results, this can help close the achievement gap of ELLs vs. Non-ELLs (Shin, 2017).

3. Just because a student has met the expanding or commanding level on the New York State language proficiency test doesn't mean that they have acquired all the prerequisite knowledge, skills, and content needed to be at grade level expectations. This means they have developed a foundational set of Standard American English (SAE) skills and vocabulary to better access the curriculum in English. They may still need to continue to develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALPs) and pre-requisite skills to be at grade level curriculum expectations in SAE (Durandisse, M. C., 2013).

4. A double dose of a reading program, such as Fundations, is not RtI. Reading programs may not target a student's actual needs and therefore shouldn't be a set protocol within an RtI system. Rather it can be one tool that may be used where and when appropriate.

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5. Progress monitoring of sight words isn't always appropriate. Sight words are not an indicator of depth of word knowledge and students who have limited exposure to SAE because of SES, exposure to a different dialect of English, or another language, may be lacking a depth of words within our expectations of SAE, CALPs. We also know through research that semantic measures show a truer understanding of what a student knows and are a stronger indicator of potential for

word learning unlike current measures of vocabulary which are focused on labeling rather than cognition.

6. Did the student learn exactly what they were exposed to in their unique life? This would demonstrate ability, not disability just because it is different than our expectations. If they learned a different grammatical set of rules or even a broken form of a language that would still demonstrate their ability to learn given exposure. This potential and ability should not be confused for disability when it is different than our expectations.

WHAT does CLD appropriate Tier 1 look like (in a Nut Shell):

1. Language Objectives to accompany Learning Objectives: Language objectives may be classroom-wide and/or specific students may have their own individualized language objective. Example: The classroom learning objective may be: The students will be able to identify the information needed to solve a word problem. The classroom language objective may be: The student will be able to verbally describe the steps needed to solve the word problem to their partner. The individual language objective for a specific student may be: The student will be able to identify and define the key words in the word problem using their personal dictionary.

2. Vocabulary focused lessons: Research shows us that the academic gap is essentially a vocabulary gap (Carlo, et al., 2004). Lessons should include instruction and engagement with 2-3 high-impact vocabulary words per lesson. High- impact words are words that can be used outside of the lesson, in a variety of contexts, which increase the understanding of the concept at hand. Words like complex, identify, flexible…these words are also identified as tier two vocabulary words (not to be confused with RtI tiers).

3. Basic Interpersonal Communication System (BICS) and CALPs: The CALPs level words should not be confused for only being complex or higher-level vocabulary words. Almost every word has a BICS and CALPs definition that may be a barrier to a student's understanding. For example, the word give can mean a physical act or it could mean flexibility, generosity, giving a thought and not an object (Thomas & Collier, 1997). This is why a focus on the depth of word knowledge can provide access to the curriculum for all students. Keep in mind that the level of

BICS and CALPs across two languages can vary based on the situation, context, and content depending on exposure levels. Research tells us that non-native speakers with no prior schooling in their first language may take up to 10 years to develop CALPs level in a new language whereas ELLs who have had prior schooling in the first language may take anywhere from 3 - 7 years to develop CALPs (Thomas & Collier, 1997).

When trying to determine why a student is falling behind your expectations take into consideration the student's unique profile and ask the following bigger question: What prerequisite skills/knowledge would the student need in order to meet this expectation that they may have not yet been exposed to? Then start there, because we can't expect what we have not yet taught. That level of consideration will help you adapt your level of services, and may help you achieve your WHY, specifically, ensuring equitable outcomes for all students!

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A Call for Culturally Responsive Approaches to ELL Programming

By Jasmine Byrd

How would you feel if your superior told you that your job could be done by 0.7 people?

This was an ELL expert's response when I approached them for solutions to accommodating the influx of ELLs in our school. I was confounded by the dissonance of such a quantitative approach existing within the culturally responsive narrative of our current education system. Several researchers have noticed that "despite the progressive pedagogy and inclusive rhetoric, ELLs continue to be marginalized in mainstream contexts" (Harper & Jong, 2009, p.137). Although ELL students have steadily increased over the past decades, even states with moderately high concentrations and detailed guidelines for ELL services like New York are still grappling with responding effectively to these students' complex needs, in part because they fail to acknowledge programming needs for subgroups such as ELLs with disabilities (National Center for Education Statistics, 2015; Sugarman, 2016). Over half of the ELLs at my school have disabilities which require particular classroom settings. Thus, they are split between multiple rooms and need at least two ELL teachers to fulfill their learning needs – yet, I am the sole ELL teacher in our school.

If stakeholders truly care about educating these students, we need to ensure that support is both quantitative and qualitative. Determining the number of ELLs and funding broaches on this issue, but social emotional and cultural knowledge of ELLs is needed at every level within our school system in order to fully support them. By acknowledging attitudes towards ELLs and ELL programming, we can determine where our system is lacking and contextualize recommendations for improving ELL programming.

ELL Programming Realities

So far in my career as an educator, I have confronted a range of attitudes towards ELLs and ELL

programming, although mostly negative and placing the responsibility of ELL education solely on the ELL teachers. Regarding attitudes towards ELLs, I have personally observed teachers' resistance to teaching them, deficit thinking (e.g. calling students 'low'), and perpetuating misconceptions such as *all ELLs are SPED students* or *students should be able to pick up English in a year*. These observations parallel findings from recent studies which confirm that teachers welcome ELLs in their school communities but do not want to be directly accountable for them, lack culturally responsive teaching practices, and perpetuate misconceptions

(Karabenick & Noda, 2004; Walter, Shafer & Iiams, 2004).

Regarding attitudes towards ELL programming, there is a clear focus on quantitative factors. In my experience, this manifests as a heavy focus on compliance and inadequate access to relevant professional development and learning materials. Researchers have found that education officials and ELL administrators tend to view ELLs as a monolithic group and are "focused on making tradeoffs to maximize scarce resources rather than on creating a plan that reflects ideal pedagogical choices and the exact funding amount needed to implement them" (Sugarman, 2016, p.2). In fact, schools take full advantage of additional state funding to compensate for the insufficient allocations granted by federal algorithms, receiving additional funding for ELLs with disabilities (Millard, 2015; ECS, 2015). Ultimately, ELLs are positioned as prized human capital lacking thorough investment from their communities.

Next Steps for Leaders in ENL
If we truly believe in the culturally responsive narrative, stakeholders need to ensure that ELLs are supported quantitatively and qualitatively. This requires that we extend the culturally responsive mentality – creating a conducive space for learning based on *who* the students are – to how we structure ELL programming. Researchers recommend increasing related professional development in addition to qualitative analysis, defined and personalized structure, and integrating SPED programming structures in ELL programming (Hammond, 2015; Sugarman, 2016; Walker, A., Shafer, J. and Iiams, M, 2004). The bottom line is equipping schools with **all** that is needed to teach a diverse population. Imagine how different student outcomes would be if students, not numbers, were at the forefront of programming.

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