



Graduate School of Education
PennGSE

Working with Multilingual Learners in the Content Classroom

Workshop prepared for ProjectCRITICAL participants

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PART I: Identity & Discourse

Agenda for Part I

“Big Picture Issues” in ENL

- who are ENL learners?
- what is the deficit discourse vs. the asset discourse of MLLs?
- what specific resources do MLLs bring into the classroom?

Who are Multilingual Learners?

- 15.3% of the total student population
215 foreign languages spoken in the home, the most prevalent of them being Spanish, Chinese, Bengali, Arabic, Haitian, and Russian.
- Range from Newcomer to Commanding in level of English Proficiency; may carry designation of *SIFE*. Finally, may carry designation of “former EL”
- Does NOT include students who come to the classroom already multilingual, if English is one of the languages in which they are “fluent” or “native.”

<http://nyseel-ell.mil.data-report-2018-2019-a.pdf>

Possible Interpretations of this information...

- 15.3% of the total student population.

Due to their sheer number teachers face more and more challenges concerning how to work with this population of students in the classroom, for which training has not prepared them.

- 215 foreign languages in the home, the most prevalent of them being Spanish, Chinese, Bengali, Haitian, Arabic, and Russian.

ELs arrive at schools speaking languages that many teachers do not know, and thus, are unsure how best to help them. Also, it is suspicious when students speak to each other in a language that the teacher does not understand– they might be cheating or bullying each other.

- Levels range from Newcomer to Commanding in level of English Proficiency; may carry designation of *SIFE*.

Students are in need of services to “pass” the NYSESLAT. In the meantime, they tend to score lower on standardized tests and thus have lower graduation rates. There is a large “achievement gap” that correlates with EL status. SIFE are in dire need of basic skills that content teachers are not equipped to facilitate. There is not enough time and not enough resources to make up for the lost years of US schooling.

*COMMENTS IN RED TAKEN FROM FIELD NOTES OF A WORKSHOP GIVEN TO TEACHERS-IN-TRAINING

Deficit Discourse

Crumpler *et al.*, 2011; Gutiérrez & Orellana, 2006; Shapiro, 2014)

- Differences in race, culture, first language, and origin are seen as obstacles to overcome rather than resources.
- Proficiencies in other languages are ignored, while limited proficiency in English is highlighted (e.g. some still use the term *Limited English Proficiency*).
- Students are often evaluated with respect to standardized test scores in ways that may be even more salient and consequential than L1 English-speaking peers.

Deficit Discourse in Action for Gifted Students

*taken from a Gifted Written Report
compiled in November 2017. Reproduced
here with permission from parents.

“Examples of behaviors of strength include: has excellent reasoning abilities, is proficient at problem finding, *asks complex questions*, and can easily relate new information to old information.”

“[name of child] employs *an advanced vocabulary, prefers advanced level books*, and *uses language in unusual or novel ways*.”

“He requires *little repetition* or practice in order to show mathematical competency.”

At end of evaluation, there is this blurb:

Include any intervening factors which may mask gifted abilities (such as English as a second language, learning disability, physical impairment, emotional disability, gender or race bias, or socio/cultural deprivation).

Princess Charlotte is already bilingual at age two

Adorable and smart



Having reportedly picked up the second language from her nanny Maria Turrion Borraro, who hails from Spain, the bilingual Princess is, according to sources, already chatting away in Spanish - and we can't help but feel inferior.

And it looks like Princess Charlotte's big brother Prince George is learning the language as well.

Last year the Duchess of Cambridge confirmed the reports of her linguistically curious children.

Mentioning to a member of the public that Princess Charlotte's nanny was teaching her Spanish, Kate also revealed that Prince George, who is only four-years-old, is already capable of counting to 10 in the language.

From Deficit to Asset: Let's flip the script!

*taken at the public school bus stop near Philadelphia, PA. Seven- and eight-year old multilinguals who speak Korean, Tamil, Arabic, French, English, and Roblox! Reproduced with permission of parents.



Task: Take a picture of this slide. For each point, rewrite the interpretation from an asset perspective!

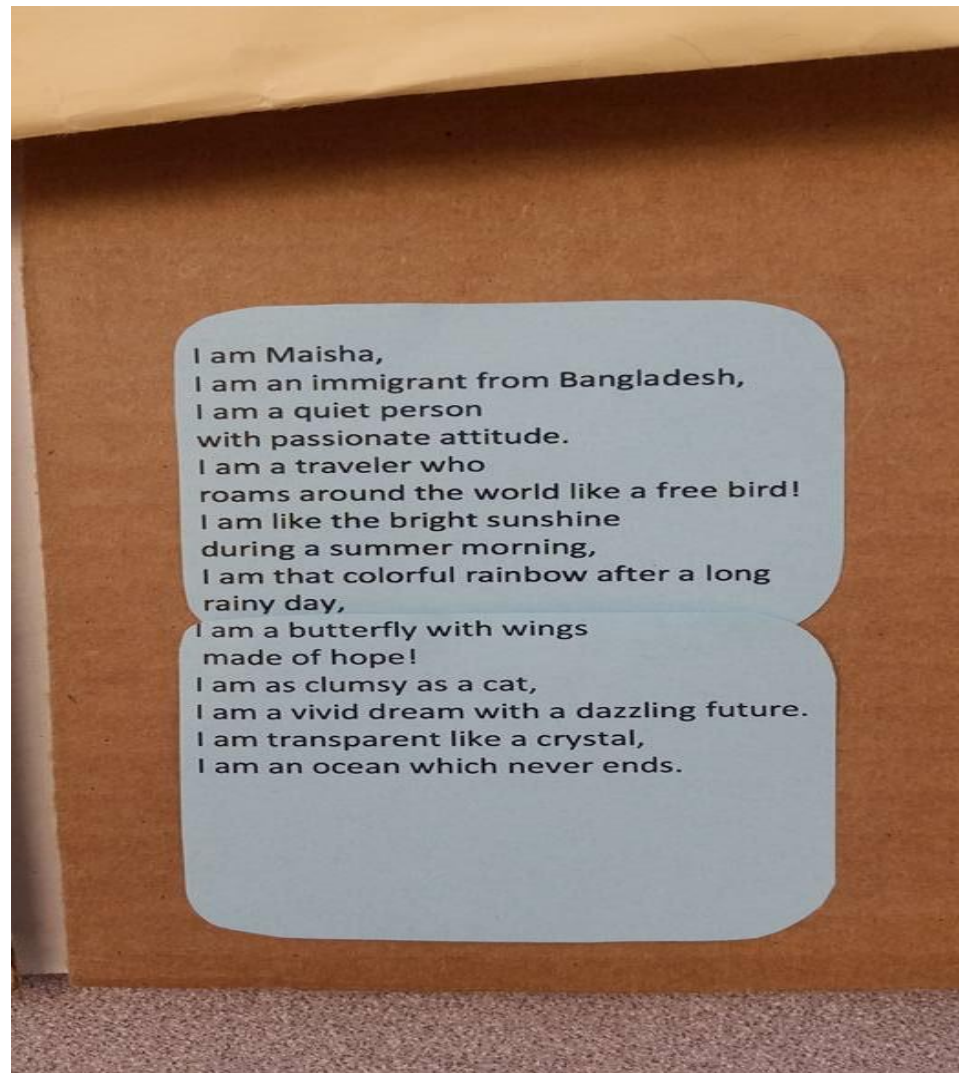
➤ 15.3% of the total student population.

many students are arriving in the classroom poised to become bilingual and biliterate, possessing skills that will be advantageous in a global economy.

➤ 160 foreign languages in the home, the most prevalent of them being Spanish, Chinese, Bengali, Arabic, and Russian.

➤ Levels range from Newcomer to Commanding in level of English Proficiency; may carry designation of *SIFE*.

*Photographed with the permission of the author in May 2017 at the Brooklyn International High School.



PART II: Differentiation in the Classroom

Agenda for Part II

Moving from “big picture” to the classroom

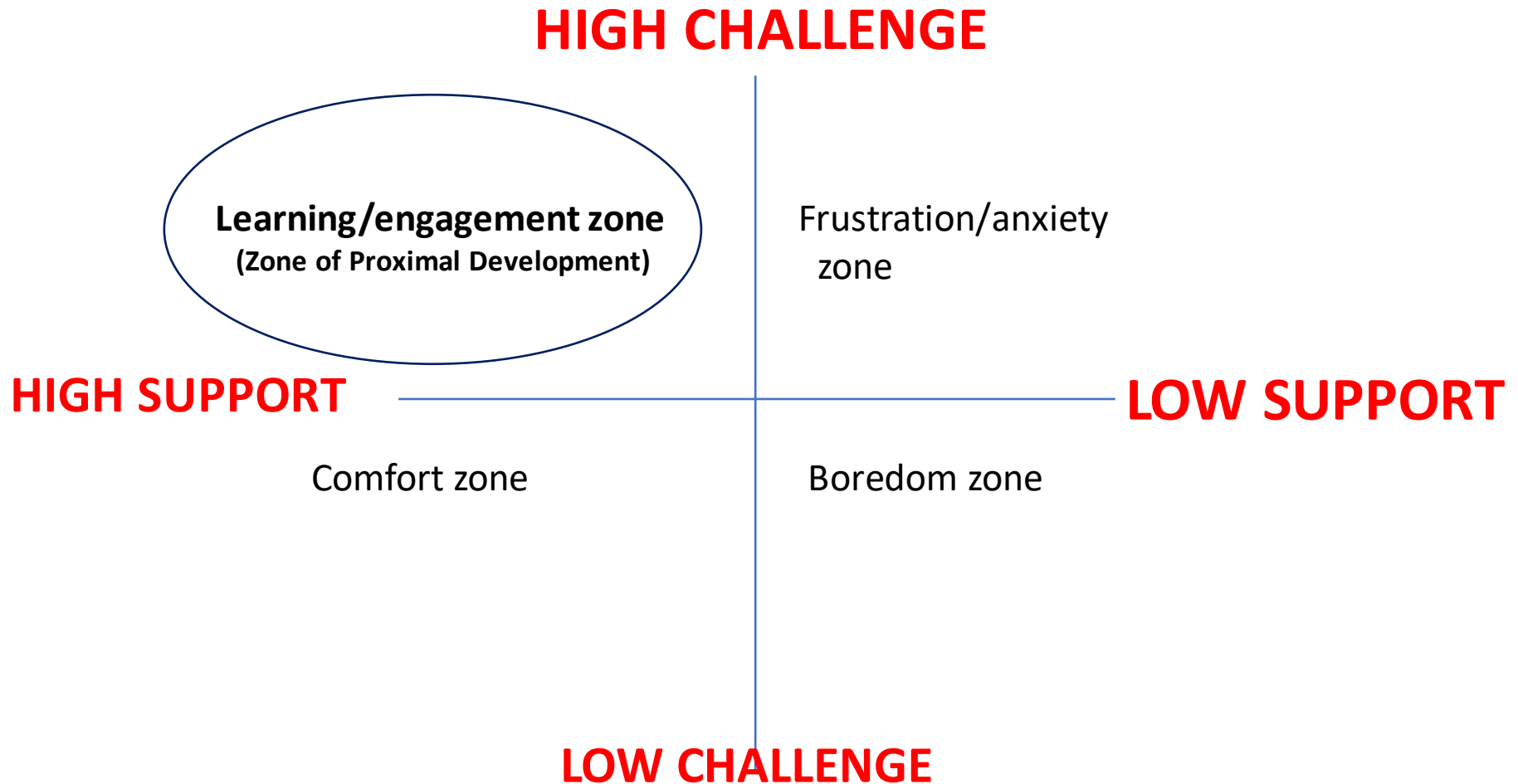
- What techniques are effective when working with MLLs?
- How can these techniques be embedded in activities **such that everyone benefits**, including the teacher(s)?

Language-focused differentiation
provides specific language supports in
the classroom designed to help MLLs
access grade-level content and
participate in lessons.

What does language-focused differentiation look
like?

Aim for the Challenge Zone!

(Gibbons, 2009)



Group Task: What do *You* Need to Succeed?

OBJECTIVE: SUMMARIZE THE TEXT.

*At first, I will give no scaffolding.

*You will brainstorm together, in groups of 3-4, a list of supports that will allow you to access the text.

*We will reconvene and I will provide the supports.

*You will go back into groups and summarize the texts.

Here bygynneth the Book of the tales of Caunterbury:

Take a picture of this
slide, and be prepared to
discuss this passage in
groups!

Whan that aprill with his shoures soote
The droghte of march hath perced to the
roote,
And bathed every veyne in swich licour
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;
Whan zephirus eek with his sweete breeth

Inspired hath in every holt and heeth
Tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne
Hath in the ram his halve cours yronne,
And smale foweles maken melodye,
That slepen al the nyght with open ye
(so priketh hem nature in hir corages);
Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,
And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,
To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;
And specially from every shires ende
Of engelond to caunterbury they wende,
The hooly blisful martir for to seke,
That hem hath holpen whan that they were
seeke.



Visual Aid #1

The Shipman



The Parson



The Miller



The Summoner



The Pardoner



The Prioress



Visual Aid #2

Teacher-Led Schema Activation

Teacher Led

- **About Geoffrey Chaucer:**

Geoffrey Chaucer, an English poet, was born in 1342. Historians are uncertain about his exact date of birth. Geoffrey's well-to-do parents, John Chaucer and Agnes Copton, possessed several buildings in the vintage quarter in London. Not much is known about Geoffrey's school career. He must have had some education in Latin and Greek. Out of school he went on as a page in the household of the Countess of Ulster. Chaucer rose in royal employment and became a knight of the shire for Kent. As a member of the king's household, Chaucer was sent on diplomatic errands throughout Europe. From all these activities, he gained the knowledge of society that made it possible to write *The Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer died in October 1400 and was buried in Westminster Abbey in London. He was the first of those that are gathered in what we now know as the Poet's Corner in Westminster Abbey.

About *The Canterbury Tales*:

Geoffrey Chaucer wrote *The Canterbury Tales*, a collection of stories in a frame story, between 1387 and 1400. It is the story of a group of thirty people who travel as pilgrims to Canterbury (England). The pilgrims, who come from all layers of society, tell stories to each other to kill time while they travel to Canterbury.

If we trust the General Prologue, Chaucer intended that each pilgrim should tell two tales on the way to Canterbury and two tales on the way back. He never finished his enormous project and even the completed tales were not finally revised. Scholars are uncertain about the order of the tales. As the printing press had yet to be invented when Chaucer wrote his works, *The Canterbury Tales* had been passed down in several handwritten manuscripts.

Student-Led Schema Activation

You can elicit the following types of information from your students--

- 1) Are there famous religious monuments/pilgrimages in places you have lived or visited?
 - 2) What is Springtime like in places where you have lived or visited?
 - 3) What kinds of activities do people do in Springtime?
- *examples include: Turn and Talk, [Illustrations](#), Whole-group or small-group share, [Compare/Contrast personal experiences with Venn diagrams](#), [Discussion Boards or Threads on Learning Management Platforms](#)... all depending on how much time you have and how engaged the students are in sharing their experiences.
 - Allowing entering/emerging ELs to draw or gesture (or use a bit of their first language) rather than speak in English can further scaffold participation.

[*These can be done asynchronously. Be sure to provide *feedback*, and do as many *share-outs* synchronously/f2f as possible.](#)

Vocabulary Support (much more on this next time)

“pre-teach” vs. “during-teach”

"shoures soote" = sweet showers [of rain]

"droghte" = drought, dry spell

"veyne" = vein [of a leaf]

"swich" = such

“engendred” = created [in other words, the rain flows through the plant stem and makes the flowers bloom]

"Zephirus" = personification of the west wind, which in England blows in the Spring

"eke" = also

“tendre croppes” = the tender crops [in other words, the farm crops are just starting to grow again]

"the yonge sonne ... in the Ram" = in springtime, when the Sun is "young," he passes (as seen from the Earth) through that zone of background sky known as the Ram, corresponding to the first — i.e. the first after the Spring equinox — zodiac sign Aries.

"smale foweles" = small birds

"priketh" = pierces

"hem ... hir" = them ... their

"palmeres" = palmers, holy pilgrims

"straunge strondes" = strange shores

"ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes" = distant shrines, known in various lands

"blisful" = blessed

"sike" = sick

Quick advice in blended environments: do only critical vocabulary asynchronously (words that are necessary to understand the material). Too much on a list is overwhelming. Have a running list (like Word Wall, but in a file) available for students to access as you read a text. We will discuss more on how to maximize those kinds of word lists in the next session.

1 **Whan that Aprill with his shoures soote**
 When April with its sweet-smelling showers
2 **The droghte of March hath perced to the roote,**
 Has pierced the drought of March to the root,
3 **And bathed every veyne in swich licour**
 And bathed every vein (of the plants) in such liquid
4 **Of which vertu engendred is the flour;**
 By which power the flower is created;
5 **Whan Zephirus eek with his sweete breeth**
 When the West Wind also with its sweet breath,
6 **Inspired hath in every holt and heeth**
 In every wood and field has breathed life into
7 **The tendre croppes, and the yonge sonne**
 The tender new leaves, and the young sun
8 **Hath in the Ram his half cours yronne,**
 Has run half its course in Aries,
9 **And smale foweles maken melodye,**
 And small fowls make melody,
10 **That slepen al the nyght with open ye**
 Those that sleep all the night with open eyes
11 **(So priketh hem Nature in hir corages),**
 (So Nature incites them in their hearts),
12 **Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages,**
 Then folk long to go on pilgrimages,
13 **And palmeres for to seken straunge strondes,**
 And professional pilgrims to seek foreign shores,
14 **To ferne halwes, kowthe in sondry londes;**
 To distant shrines, known in various lands;
15 **And specially from every shires ende**
 And specially from every shire's end
16 **Of Engelond to Caunterbury they wende,**
 Of England to Canterbury they travel,
17 **The hooly blisful martir for to seke,**
 To seek the holy blessed martyr,
18 **That hem hath holpen whan that they were seeke.**
 Who helped them when they were sick.

- Language supports work to meet the various language needs within your class. The supports should provide opportunities for multilingual learners to work at the same level as their peers.

Task Support Checklist

(adapted from Peregoy & Boyle, 2017)

SCHEMA ACTIVATION

- ✓ Prepare students for tasks by activating background knowledge **with an asset perspective in mind**.
- ✓ Provide rich contextual information for tasks.

DIFFERENTIATION OF INPUT/OUTPUT

- ✓ Provide **multiple opportunities** for students to process information in **multiple ways** (visuals, dramatization, review, guiding questions, think-pair-shares)
- ✓ Use **abundancy and redundancy strategies** when introducing key vocabulary. (repeat often, use in different contexts, write on board, highlight when using it, have students repeat it, give opportunities for students to use it).
- ✓ Provide **multimodal** directions/explanations (modeling, gestures, write & say simultaneously, read aloud).
- ✓ Ensure participation of all students through providing **sentence frames**, allowing **non-verbal contributions**, and group task **monitoring**.

MATERIALS

- ✓ **Enhance input** through bolding key vocabulary in materials.
- ✓ Provide word banks and glossaries for important terms. Provide brief explanations of grammar points as needed.
- ✓ **Include sentence frames** to support students as they engage with written language.



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Thank you!

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