Teaching English as a 'Second Language' In Kenya and the United States: Convergences and Divergences

Zaline M. Roy-Campbell
Syracuse University

Abstract

English is spoken in five countries as the native language and in numerous other countries as an official language and the language of instruction. In countries where English is the native language, it is taught to speakers of other languages as an additional language to enable them to participate in all domains of life of that country. In many countries where it is an official language and language of instruction, which includes former British colonies in Africa and Asia, students tend to use English in specific domains, particularly school, as most communication outside of school is in the local languages. These are two contrasting contexts for enhancing English language skills. In both settings there are concerns about students' difficulties in developing adequate English proficiency to successfully learn content through that language. Focusing on the United States and Kenya, this article considers the similarities and differences in the content of English language instruction for secondary schools, in both environments and the types of challenges students encounter in the learning of English. This article broadens the understanding of what it means to teach English language for academic purposes and provides a framework for creating and evaluating teaching and learning materials for speakers of other languages who are learning through the medium of English.

Keywords

Introduction

English, one of the dominant world languages, is spoken in five countries as the native language (Australia, Canada, England, New Zealand and the United States of America), what Kachru (1985) has referred to as the inner circle. It is also used as an official language in numerous other countries where it is an imported language, the outer circle (Kachru, 1985). These countries include former British colonies in Africa and Asia. Since English is used in the outer circle, alongside multiple indigenous languages, its role differs from that of countries in the inner circle, as each country has its norms of communication (Crystal, 1997). In countries where English is the native language, English is taught to speakers of other languages as an additional language to enable them to participate in all domains of life of the target

Corresponding Author:
Zaline M. Roy-Campbell, Syracuse University, School of Education, 200 Huntington Hall., Syracuse, NY 13244
Email; zmroycam@syr.edu

country; in many outer circle countries students tend to use English in specific domains, particularly formal education, since most communication outside of school is in the local languages (Kioko & Muthwii, 2001). These are two contrasting contexts for teaching English language skills. In both settings there are concerns about students' difficulties in developing adequate English proficiency to successfully learn academic content through that medium, particularly at the secondary school level (Calderón, 2007; Short & Fitzsimmons, 2007; Sure and Ogechi, 2009).

This article considers the similarities and differences in the content of English language teaching for secondary schools in both environments and the challenges faced by students for whom English is an additional language. It focuses on the United States, as an example of an inner circle country that educates large populations of students who are learning English as an additional language, and Kenya, which exemplifies an outer circle country that uses English as the language of formal education. The purpose of this article is to broaden the understanding of what it means to teach English language when it is needed to access academic content. It provides a framework for creating and evaluating teaching and learning materials for speakers of other languages who are learning through the medium of English. Although the focus is on the United States (U.S.) and Kenya, countries with which the author is familiar, the issues this article addresses are pertinent for other countries that use English as the language of instruction for speakers of languages other than English, as it offers an alternative way of viewing the teaching of English.

English Language Teaching in Kenya

Kenya, which has more than 40 indigenous languages (termed mother tongues), has two official languages, English and Kiswahili. Official educational policy states that the first three years of schooling (Class One to Three), should be in the mother tongue, or the indigenous language spoken in the respective catchment areas where the schools are located; and that in Class Four, English is used as the medium of instruction (Nabea, 2009). Students begin learning English as a second language as a subject at the beginning of primary school, Class One, although some schools students begin instruction in English from Class One because they want to give their students a head start with the language (Gathumbi, 2008). Research has found, however, that most Kenyan students are not sufficiently proficient in English at the end of Class Three to effectively learn content in English in Class Four (Bunyi, 2008; Gathumbi, 2008). Additionally, Kiswahili (the national language and mother tongue of a small section of the population) is also taught as a subject from Class One, so that most students after Class 3 are learning content through English at the same time that they continue to learn Kiswahili language as a subject.

Since all the subjects, with the exception of Kiswahili, are taught in English, Kenyan students learn English language while using the English language to learn the curriculum. Unlike some former British colonies where English is the language of wider communication, Kenya has a language of wider communication other than English, since all students learn Kiswahili as a subject throughout primary and secondary school. Many Kenyans, therefore, rarely use English outside of school. Young people communicate with each other in their

mother tongue, Kiswahili, or Sheng (Kioko & Muthwii, 2001).   Sheng, a language form developed by young people in the urban areas of Kenya, includes words from English and Kiswahili, mixed with the mother tongues and utilizing Kiswahili morphosyntactic structure (Mbaabu & Nzuga, 2003).

Teaching English as an Additional Language in the United States

Similar to Kenya, students who enter school in the U.S. from countries that do not speak English, learn English language while they learn the school curriculum in English.   Many schools in the U.S. provide such students, termed English language learners (ELLs), with English language support services offered by specialized Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL), referred to as English as a Second Language (ESL) teachers. Students are classified as beginner, intermediate or advanced, in terms of English as a Second Language (ESL) proficiency based on their performance on a placement test, and receive ESL instruction to develop English phonology, vocabulary and syntax along with the four language domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. However, they spend most of their school day in general education classrooms learning content with teachers who typically have not received any preparation for working with students who speak languages other than English.

In elementary schools, ELLs are typically pulled out of their regular general education classrooms in small groups by ESL teachers for specified periods of time each day. In middle and high school ELL students receive additional English language instruction as one of their class periods, alongside the academic subjects, mathematics, science, and social studies. Some schools provide sheltered instruction in the content areas, which entails lowering the linguistic demands of the content and providing additional language supports to make the content comprehensible to English language learners (Chamot, 2009; Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2013).

Some schools in the U.S. have transitional bilingual education programs, where students are instructed in their native language both in the content areas and in native language arts in the first three years of primary school, with additional daily ESL instruction. At the end of those three years, they transition from instruction in their native language to full content instruction in English, and native language instruction is dropped. This is similar to what occurs in many primary schools in Kenya. A few schools in the U.S. have dual language programs, where English language learners and speakers of English as a first language develop literacy in their first language and the additional language simultaneously, and learn content through both languages (Torres-Guzmán, 2007). The common factor in both the Kenyan and U.S. contexts is that students are taught content subjects while developing English language proficiency.

Divergent Experiences of Learning Language and Through Language

The primary difference between English language instruction for students whose native language is not English in the U.S. and in Kenya is that most pupils in Kenya are introduced to English collectively, in their first year of primary school, whereas English language learners in the U.S. come from a wide diversity of educational backgrounds with varied degrees of exposure to English. When students enter schools upon arrival in the U.S., they are typically placed in grades commensurate with their age, without regard their educational background. In some cases they may had have prior exposure to English as a subject, or even as a language of instruction. At the other extreme are students who have had interrupted prior education in

refugee camps and are not literate in any language. They may have had very little, if any, previous exposure to English.

In both countries, some students continue to struggle with English in upper primary school grades into secondary school. In the U.S., on a 2013 national assessment of reading comprehension, only 4 percent of eighth grade ELLs scored at or above the proficient level compared with 38 percent of native English speakers (NCES, 2013). There is a category of English language learners in the U.S. termed long term English learners. These are students who have been in the U.S. school system for more than 6 years but who have not yet developed proficiency in English (Menken & Kleyn, 2010). Though many may appear fluent in spoken English, they struggle with their academic subjects which are taught in English (Calderón & Minaya-Rowe, 2011). Sure and Ogechi (2009) have found that by Class Eight, in Kenya, some students are unable to communicate effectively in English. Considering that the language of instruction, English, significantly impacts students' success in other subject areas (Kioko & Muthwii, 2001), these students enter secondary schools at a disadvantage (Gathumbi, 2008). This sparks questions about what constitutes proficiency in English.

Identifying English Language Proficiency

Language acquisition differs from language instruction in that the latter is more formal and systematic (Krashen, 1988, 2003). Some people acquire additional languages in their natural environment, through interacting with speakers of those languages, similar to acquisition of their first language, a process which is typically needs-based. In multilingual countries many people, including some who have never gone to school, speak two or more languages in order to communicate with members of their community

who do not speak their language. Though they may have oral proficiency in multiple languages, they may not be able to read or write any of the languages, as these skills are not a necessary part of their communicative needs within that community. It is important to recognize that language proficiency is not monolithic. A student can be proficient using English to interact with an English speaker in casual conversations but not proficient in using appropriate language in the classroom to talk about mathematics or science (Bailey, 2007).

Formal instruction is necessary to develop reading, writing and more advanced oral/listening skills, whether in the first or an additional language. This process can be viewed as a second language learning-acquisition continuum along which speakers move from the pre-production to advanced levels of proficiency, approximating a near educated-native-speaker command of the language (Krashen, 1983). Yet, not all language learning leads to that advanced level of proficiency.

Cummins (2003) has identified three dimensions of language proficiency which second language learners develop concurrently at various stages of the continuum: discrete language skills, academic language proficiency and conversational fluency. Discrete language skills include the alphabetic principles (Blachman, Ball, Black, & Tangel, 2000), language conventions, and syntax, with vocabulary development as an essential part of each of these dimensions. Academic language comprises complex linguistic forms at increasingly demanding conceptual levels. Students can have different proficiency levels in each of the four domains: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Their conversational fluency may be stronger than their reading skills or the reverse. Proficiency is related to the amount of practice one receives in specific domains, and can be impacted by instruction (Elly & Mangubhai, 1983; Fielding & Pearson,

1994). There is a strong correlation between reading proficiency and the amount of reading a student does (Krashen, 2003; Postlewaite & Ross, 1992), as through extensive reading students develop strategies for constructing meaning from texts they have not previously encountered (Cummins, 2003).

Another dimension of English language acquisition relates to the variety of the language English speakers acquire. McArthur (1998) has outlined a circle of English which includes eight broad varieties: American, British, Canadian, Australian/New Zealand, African, East Asian, South Asian, and Caribbean. Within each variety there are localized dialects spoken in different countries, e.g., Kenyan English, Singapore English, Indian English, Jamaican English, and Zimbabwean English. These indigenized forms of English incorporate functions which differ from those in native English speaking contexts (Chisanga & Kamwangamalu, 1997; Mutonya, 2008) as they accommodate the communicative needs of the respective societies (Kachru, 1997). Kioko and Muthwii (2001) have highlighted the discrepancy between the formal British English that has remained the targeted language of instruction in Kenya since the colonial era, and the sociolinguistic reality in Kenya, where the "nativised Kenyan educated variety of English" incorporates aspects of the local languages into the way English is used in the society (p. 208).

Implications for Teaching School-Based English Literacy

Since second language learning is directly related to language teaching, a crucial question which arises is, "What does it mean to teach a second language?" Language teaching is an organized activity involving choices of what to include (limitations and grading), since it is unrealistic to consider teaching the whole of the language—all of the vocabulary, syntax, usage, in

all aspects of life (Halliday, McIntosh & Strevens, 1964). In order for language teaching to be successful, it must be related to the purpose for which one is learning the language. Within the context of schooling, what it means to teach English is determined by the learning standards or syllabi that have been endorsed by the educational hierarchy of the country.

In the U.S., the professional organization for Teachers of English to speakers of other languages (TESOL) has established English language development (ELD) standards which programs across the country draw upon in planning the teaching of English language learners (ELLs) (TESOL, 2006). Some states, such as California, (CDE, 2012) and New York (NYSED, 2004), have their own set of ELD standards, while other states use standards developed by a consortium of states, called the World-Wide Instructional Design and Assessment (WIDA, 2012). English language learners are also expected to meet the English language arts standards developed for the general school population. Currently in the U.S., there is a common set of standards (adopted by 45 states), the Common Core State Standards (CCSS), that determine what counts as teaching English from Grades 1 through 12 (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2010). These are a set of anchor standards with specificities developed along a progression for each grade level, where each standard is taught at increasingly complex levels as students move through the school system from kindergarten to the end of high school (grade 12).

Countries in the outer circle that use English as the language of instruction, such as Kenya, have English language syllabi that list the specific components of the language to be taught.   In Kenya, there are separate syllabi for primary and secondary school. Table 1 provides an overview of the English language standards or syllabi in the U.S. and Kenya.

Table 1.

Overview of Standards for Teaching English as a Second Language in the U.S. and Kenya

Content of English Teaching in the U.S.	Content of English Teaching in Kenya

English Language Development: (TESOL)
 ELLs communicate for:
 • social, cultural and instructional purposes
 • information, ideas, and concepts necessary for academic success in:
      :: English Language Arts; Science; Social Studies; Mathematics
 Common Core English Language Arts anchor standards:
 • Reading for Information
 • Reading Literature
 • Foundational Skills: Grades 1-4
    :: vocabulary, syntax
 • Writing
 • Listening and Speaking
 • Language Skills
	• Language Patterns
	    :: relevant sentence structures
	 • Vocabulary
	 • Listening
	    :: and respond appropriately to information
	 • Speaking
	    :: use correct pronunciation, stress, intonation to be understood, to convey information
	 • Reading
	    :: understand instructions, to access information and to read widely for pleasure
	 • Writing
	    :: express own ideas meaningfully and legibly

Note. Extracted from the Common Core State Standards Initiative (2010); TESOL (2006), Kenyan Primary and Secondary School Syllabi (KIE, 2002a,b).

English Language Teaching in the United States

English language instruction for speakers of English as a first language in the U.S. typically begins with formal instruction in the alphabet. Since children have been using English from the time they began to speak, many native speakers of English come to school as fluent speakers of the language but have not learned how to read or write it. The first two years are focused on helping students to recognize words in print (decode) and to write words (encode) which they can aurally recognize and pronounce. This is one factor that distinguishes early English literacy development for native speakers of English from that of ELLs. Students learning English as a new language, whatever the age, will need to learn the alphabet (depending on their first language) as well as to develop basic vocabulary and syntax of English. They must receive ear training to aurally discriminate sounds which may not exist in their first language, and instruction in the proper articulation of sounds, words, intonation and stress (initial oral skills), as well as vocabulary development to attach meaning to new words they encounter. These are skills which all newcomers to English in the U.S. must learn, whether they enter school in first grade or ninth grade.

The ELD standards focus on language for everyday communication and language of the major subject areas: science, social studies, mathematics and literature (TESOL, 2006). They are scaffolded along proficiency levels, from beginner, or early emergent users of English, to advanced, or proficient users of English. The WIDA standards specify five levels

of increasing proficiency—beginning, emerging, developing, expanding, bridging—with the proficiency level referred to as "reaching" (WIDA, 2012).

In the context of schools, proficiency is determined by performance on standardized language proficiency, such as the New York State English Language Assessment Test (NYSESLAT), and ACCESS (developed by WIDA). Each student can score at the beginner, intermediate, advanced or proficient levels. When newcomers to the U.S. enroll in schools, they are typically given a placement test to determine their initial English proficiency level. They are tested each year to determine their progress until they test at the proficient level. In the case of the NYSESLAT, the four language domains are tested, but the results are paired by listening-speaking and reading-writing strands. Reviewing results of the NYSESLAT in an urban school district, I noted that some students tested at the beginner level in reading and writing but at the advanced level in speaking and listening, as well as the reverse. This is not an anomaly as students may be fluent in spoken English, but not have sufficient resources for reading and writing academic registers (Cummins, 1980). To be considered proficient, students must score at the proficient level on both the listening-speaking and reading-writing strands.

English Language Teaching in Kenya
In Kenya, students begin English language learning with ear training to identify English sounds (initial listening skills) and instruction in the proper articulation of sounds, words, intonation and stress (initial oral skills). They are also taught to decode through identification of phonemes and words (initial reading skills) and scripting the alphabet, word formation, sentences (initial writing skills). These basic skills are pre-requisites for communication in the language, and the first two years of primary

school are spent practicing these skills, incrementally, along with vocabulary development. By the third year, Kenyan students are expected to use the skills they gained the previous two years to respond to simple stories read to them, read simple stories, and to write answers to simple questions about the stories they hear and read (KIE, 2002a). By the end of the third year they are expected to be ready to learn the school curriculum in English.

The Kenyan secondary school English syllabus adopts an integrated approach to teaching English, merging the teaching of literature with the teaching of language skills. It also focuses on the four domains. For listening and speaking there is an emphasis on pronunciation drills and listening comprehension exercises, as well as oral literature, with role play, debates and presentation of oral reports and drama. For syntax, the focus is on helping students to understand how language works and is used in different contexts. Literary texts provide the focus for reading while writing is related to helping students develop their ideas clearly and effectively, using the grammar they learn (KIE, 2002b).

While the Kenyan secondary school English language syllabus focuses on providing students with English language skills, one area that is not explicitly addressed is academic literacy, or literacy in the subject areas in which students use English as the medium of instruction, an area that is highlighted in the TESOL English development standards used in the U.S. This omission in the Kenyan syllabus implies that developing the skills and dispositions delineated in the Kenyan syllabus will automatically equip students with the necessary skills for understanding the language needs in the respective content areas. However, Lyster, (2007) pointed out that English language development should include instruction in the

types of academic language students encounter in their content classes.

Identifying Language Needs across the Curriculum

Cummins (1980, 1984) has distinguished between two types of language proficiency: Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). BICS refers to those skills necessary for communicative competence, i.e. vocabulary, grammar and rules for appropriate use of language in daily communication. In the context of learning English as an additional language in a country where English is the native language, it usually takes 3 to 5 years for students to become as fluent as their native English speaker peers (Collier, 1995; Wong-Fillmore, 1991). Because many students in Kenya do not typically interact with native English speakers, it may take some of them even longer than five years to develop BICS in English. CALP refers to higher order language skills necessary for academic success. This typically takes 5 to 10 years to develop (Collier, 1995). Bearing in mind Sure and Ogechi's (2009) observation that by Class Eight some students are unable to communicate effectively in English, it is reasonable to assume that they would encounter challenges in coping with the academic English demands of secondary school, particularly since these skills must be explicitly taught to ELL students (Carrasquillo & Rodríguez, 1996; Cummins & Yee-Fun, 2007).

Halliday's (2007b) conception of culture and context is helpful in understanding the language demands of the academic content areas. He draws on Christie's description of school as a cultural context in which "curriculum genres" emerge from the language systems of the various registers of education (p. 288). Part of the English teacher's responsibility, he contends, is to help students understand and produce language of the different subjects. Highlighting the three types of language—prescriptive, descriptive, and productive—Halliday (2007a) emphasizes productive language as the most important for language teaching, but recognizes the importance of descriptive and prescriptive language as essential knowledge for the teacher to draw upon in developing their pedagogy and selectively explaining to students where helpful.

Macken-Horaik, (2002) has drawn upon Halliday's proposed connection between social context and text meaning in her employment of the constructs of genre, field, tenor and mode to contextualize interpretation and production of text in formal school learning. She uses *genre* to refer to the social purpose of a text and *field* to identify the subject matter of the written language. In her description of how a secondary school teacher applied the model in focusing on the language features in scientific text, she noted the teacher's crucial role in organizing learning experiences for the students to initiate them into the linguistic demands of the genre.

This case provides an illustration of Halliday's construct of descriptive language as the students were engaged in the use of meta-language to guide their understanding. Assisting students in developing awareness of specific language needed to engage in the academic functions required by the different content areas is an important aspect of the linguistic and academic proficiency necessary for academic success (Dutro & Moran, 2003). In learning the language needs associated with specific content areas, teachers can identify the vocabulary and sentence patterns necessary for communicating specific content. As Hernández (2003) pointed out, this can provide English language learners with purposeful content for language use. When language is used as the medium for accessing knowledge, the language embodied in the content is implicit. In focusing on the content area as an object of instruction in the English

classroom, teachers can make this language explicit (Hernández, 2003).

Employing Halliday's systemic functional linguistic theory Schleppegrell (2004) draws a distinction between school-based texts and everyday language. She contends,

> Academic texts make meanings in ways that that are informationally dense and authoritatively presented. At the same time these texts embed ideologies and position readers in ways that can seem natural and unchallengeable (p 44).

In this respect, school-based texts require a different set of linguistic resources than everyday language, and this becomes increasingly complex as students move from primary school to secondary school and into higher education. Schleppegrell purported that this does not come naturally as a part of language development; students need to be taught these registers. Students have differential access to this form of language depending on their language background or prior experiences. Focusing on academic language in school provides this access to all students.

Learning Language and Learning through Language: Implications for ELT

Although learning subject matter through English implicitly involves learning the English language, this is not always made explicit in the context of school. The English language standards and syllabi outlined above for the U.S. and Kenya, emphasize language learning—the four domains, plus grammar and vocabulary—to enable communication through the language. These skills and competencies facilitate learning through English as the language of instruction; however, they do not automatically address the varied needs of language use across the curriculum and understanding the registers of

the different disciplines. In the U.S., there is some focus on the academic language of the school subjects, with emphasis on literacy across the curriculum. For ELLs, the WIDA framework has expanded upon the TESOL standards to illustrate how they could be implemented in schools (WIDA, 2012). Aside from identifying five levels of English proficiency, the WIDA framework distinguishes three levels of academic language: word/phrase (vocabulary usage), sentence (language forms and conventions), and discourse (linguistic complexity). For each language domain, the WIDA framework provides an example of how each of the three levels of academic language could be addressed at the various language proficiencies for each grade and for each of the major academic subjects (WIDA, 2012).

The Kenyan syllabus does not make reference to academic language needs, other than the language of literature, as part of the integrated syllabus. Recognition that success in school, particularly at the post-primary school level, where the language of textbooks tends to be dense and abstract, is related to proficiency in academic language, provides insightful implications for the English language curriculum in Kenya (Francis, Rivera, Lesaux, Kieffer, & Rivera, 2006). This is particularly significant when one considers that in Kenya, student academic performance across the curriculum on the secondary school standardized tests has tended to be below 50% in all subjects. Kenyan students' mean scores in 2010 were: English, 39.77; History, 45.84; Geography, 46.15, for Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry in the 20s (KNEC, 2011). The other factor in Kenya is that English is not widely used outside the classroom (Kioko & Muthwii, 2001). Taking this into consideration, highlighting academic language is one means of focusing on English language instruction in the classroom and the variety of ways in which it can be used to enhance the

teaching of content subjects. Just as the current integrated syllabus in Kenya uses literary works as the content for English language instruction, selected texts from other subject areas could also be used as instructional texts to practice English language skills and competencies.

Identifying Academic English

Though all teachers should be teachers of literacy, since they are using language as their medium and require students to be literate in their respective areas, this does not always occur. Even in the U.S. many content teachers do not feel equipped to teach literacy, as they separate knowledge of their discipline from the language skills used to represent it. This taken-for-granted knowledge, i.e., implicit knowledge, needs to be made explicit. Students need sophisticated vocabulary skills to successfully negotiate content-area classrooms. One common feature in English vocabulary which may cause confusion for some students is polysemy. Within the various subject areas, some words that are used often in everyday language have very specialized meanings which may differ across content areas. For example, the word *cell* has multiple meanings in different domains:

- a microscopic structural unit of an organism (Biology),
- a single unit for conversion of energy (Science)
- a small unit within a political organization (Social Studies),
- a unit of a spread sheet (Mathematics),
- a portion of the atmosphere that behaves as a unit (Geography)
- a small room, e. g. prison (everyday language)

There are many such words that students encounter in different contexts, e.g., *plot*, *power*, and *right*, which can cause confusion for some

students if they are not aware of the multiple uses of the words.

Students also need to understand the demands of function words as they are used across the curriculum, e.g., explain, describe, enumerate, justify, analyze, contrast, evaluate, and illustrate (Chamot, 2009). They will encounter these words on formal standardized tests and should have prior exposure to them and practice in using them in assignments. Understanding how words relate to each other and can be morphed into different words through manipulation of word parts (roots, suffixes, prefixes) can assist them in building their vocabulary and working out the meaning of new words (word families), e.g., act, action, active, activity, activate.

Additionally, students encounter complex syntactic features in academic texts, in particular grammatical metaphor, including nominalizations (Nagy & Townsend, 2012) and embedded clauses, frequent use of passive voice, and use of conditionals (if. . .then) in science and math. Students need to have opportunities to see how varied linguistic features occur in texts and use them in writing (Xu, 2010). Proficiency in academic language includes knowledge of common and less commonly used vocabulary as students are required to interpret and produce increasingly complex language. Since it is not feasible to expect students, especially those learning English as an additional language, to know all the words they encounter in academic texts, providing varied ways of categorizing words can be a helpful way of organizing words for them to learn, and increasing their vocabulary.

It is not the intent of this article to identify all the aspects of academic language, but rather, to underscore and signal the importance of teachers possessing this knowledge: Teachers can identify the features as they appear in texts which their students use. Teachers need to have

this deeper knowledge of language in order to help their students understand concepts in the content areas. Kenyan researchers have indicated that teachers have difficulty explicating scientific and mathematical concepts simply and clearly due to their insufficient lexical resources (Sure & Ogechi, 2009). This should not be surprising since these teachers are themselves also learners of English as an additional language.

Integrating Language and Content as an Approach to Teaching English

Integrated content and language, an instructional approach where the focus is on meaning in context rather than on form, can assist in developing fluency and accuracy in all four language modalities of listening, speaking, reading, and writing. It utilizes content-relevant tasks to enable the students to build mastery of content knowledge (Gibbons, 2003) and facilitate second language acquisition. Using excerpts from science, mathematics, and social studies textbooks as reading comprehension passages would enable students to identify and become familiar with different features of academic texts and this could assist them in their content classes.

Highlighting academic language in the different subject areas would also be a feasible approach to addressing teachers' inadequate proficiency in English while preparing them to teach English. In teacher education programs, teachers could learn how to categorize English vocabulary in meaningful ways which they could teach their students. Teacher education faculty and curriculum developers would need to partner with secondary school teachers to develop teaching resources to implement this approach and best practices. An initial stage in this process would be to identify the academic language demands in the different academic disciplines.

Conclusion

This article has considered an alternative focus for the teaching of English both in the preparation of teachers in teacher education programs and in secondary schools, in outer circle countries where English is the language of education, to encompass the varying needs of students learning English as an additional language. It is grounded in the recognition that because secondary school students continue to struggle with English as the language of instruction, it could be taught more effectively. Comparing the English language needs in Kenya, an outer circle country, and the U.S., an inner circle country that struggles with educating large numbers of English language learners, provides a rationale for the alternative focus. Most Kenyan students, and comparable students in other outer circle countries, continue to be English language learners in secondary school, despite eight or more years of studying English and learning content through English.

The WIDA standards framework used in the U.S. provides a model for integrating academic content and language, with attention to the varying English proficiency levels of students. In considering what Kenya and other countries that use English as the language of instruction could take from this model, it is important to acknowledge that despite some universals, each country has its own distinctiveness with respect to language. The framework outlined in this article could be utilized by classroom teachers, teacher educators, and curriculum developers in the field of English, to construct and evaluate materials for teaching English at the secondary school level in their specific contexts.

Although this article focuses on Kenya and the U.S., its premise that students should be taught academic language is applicable to other countries that use English as the medium of

instruction. Research on how to implement such a language policy should, therefore, not be limited to Kenya or the U.S. There could be collaborative projects, across countries, looking into how to incorporate understandings of academic language into English language syllabi, and how to develop English language teaching standards with attention to language proficiency levels such as those developed by WIDA. Studies could also examine African, as well as other Englishes, considering similarities and differences in the varieties of English used in different countries, and their impact on the teaching of English in the respective countries. The major point of convergence is the notion that in order to improve the teaching of English at the secondary school level and maximize student success, teachers have to acquire the pedagogical knowledge base to help their students access the language in academic texts across the curriculum. This has important implications for the preparation of both elementary and secondary school teachers of English for speakers of other languages and content instruction teachers who teach English Language Learners.

References

Bailey, A. (Ed.). (2007). *The language demands of school: Putting academic English to the test*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.

Blachman, B. A., Ball, E. W., Black, R. & Tangel, D. M. (2000). *Road to the Code*. Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing Co.

Bunyi, G. W. (2008). Introduction to English language teaching and learning in Kenya. In T.

Groenewegen, (Ed.). *Benchmarks for English language education* (pp 25-44). Nairobi: Phoenix Publishers.

Calderón, M. (2007*). Teaching reading to English language learners, grades 6-12: A framework for improving achievement in the content areas*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

Calderón, M. & Minaya-Rowe, L. (2011). *Preventing Long-Term ELs: Transforming schools to meet core standards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

California Department of Education (CDE) (2012). English-Language Development Standards For California

Public Schools: Kindergarten through Grade Twelve, Retrieved from http://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/eldstandards.asp

Carrasquillo, A., & Rodriguez, V. (1996). *Language minority students in the mainstream classroom*. Bristol, PA: Multilingual Matters.

Chamot, A. U. (2009) *The Calla Handbook: Implementing the Cognitive Academic Language Learning Approach*, New York: Prentice Hall.

Chisanga, T. & Kamwangamalu, M. N. (1997). Owning the Other Tongue: The English Language in Southern Africa. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, *18*(2), 89-99.

Collier, V. (1995). Promoting academic success for E.S.L. students: Understanding second language acquisition for schools. New York: Bastos Educational Books.

Common Core State Standards Initiative (CCSSI). (2010). *Common core state standards for English language arts & literacy in history/social studies, science, and technical subjects*. Retrieved from http://www.corestandards.org/assets/CCSSI_ELA_Standards.pdf

Crystal, D. (1997). *English as a global language*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Cummins, J. (2003). Reading and the bilingual student: Fact and fiction. In G. Garcia (Ed.).

English learners reaching the highest level of English literacy, (pp. 2-33). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Cummins, J. (1984). Wanted: A theoretical framework for relating language proficiency to academic achievement among bilingual students. In Rivera, C. (Ed.). *Language proficiency and academic achievement*. (pp. 133-147). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, Ltd.

Cummins, J. (1980). The construct of language proficiency in bilingual education. In J. E.

Alatis (Ed.). *Georgetown University Round Table on Languages and Linguistics*, Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Cummins, J. and Yee-Fun, E.M. (2007). Academic language: What is it and how do we acquire it? In J. Cummins & C. Davidson (Eds.), *International handbook of English language teaching* (pp. 797-8100). New York: NY: Springer.

Dutro, S., & Moran, C. (2003). Rethinking English language instruction: An architectural

approach. In G. C. Garcia (Ed.). *English learners reaching the highest level of English literacy* (pp 227-258). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Echevarría, J.,Vogt, M. E., & Short, D., (2013). *Making content comprehensible for English learners: The SIOP Model*. (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson/Allyn & Bacon.

Elly, W.B. & Mangubhai (1983). The impact of reading on second language learning, *Reading Research Quarterly*, *19*, 53-67.

Fielding, L.G. & Pearson, P.D. (1994). Reading comprehension: What works, *Educational Leadership*, *51*(5), 62-68.

Francis, D. J., Rivera, M., Lesaux, N., Kieffer, M., & Rivera, H. (2006). *Practical guidelines for the education of English language learners: Research-based recommendations for instruction and academic interventions*. Portsmouth, NH: RMC Research Corporation, Center on Instruction. Retrieved from http://centeroninstruction.org/files/ELL1-Interventions.pdf

Gathumbi, A. W. (2008). The process of developing English literacy norms. In T. Groenewegen, (Ed.). *Benchmarks for English language education* (pp 45-88). Nairobi: Phoenix Publishers.

Gibbons, P. (2003) Mediating language learning: teacher interactions with ESL students in a content-based classroom. *TESOL Quarterly*, *37*(2), 247-273.

Halliday, M. A. K. (2007a). Linguistics and the teaching of English (1967). In J. J. Webster (Ed.). *Language and Education: The collected works of M.A.K. Halliday* (pp. 25-48). London: Continuum.

Halliday, M. A. K. (2007b). The notion of context in language education (1991). In J. J. Webster (Ed.). *Language and Education: The collected works of M.A.K. Halliday* (pp. 269-290). London: Continuum.

Halliday, M. A. K.., McIntosh, A., & Strevens, P. (1964). *The linguistic sciences and language teaching*. London: Longmans.

Hernández, A. (2003). Making content instruction accessible for ELLs. In G. C. Garcia (Ed.).

English learners reaching the highest level of English literacy (pp 125-149). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.

Kachru, B. B. (1997). World Englishes and English-using communities. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *17*, 66-87.

Kachru, B. (1983). *The Indigenization of English: The English Language in India*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kachru, B. B. (1985). Standards, codification and sociolinguistic realism: the English language in the outer circle. In R. Quirk & H. Widdowson (Eds.). *English in the world: Teaching and learning the language and literatures* (pp 11-30). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) (2002a). Kenya Primary School English Syllabus. Retrieved from http://kenya.elimu.net/Primary/Kenya/KCPE_Student/English/English.htm

Kenya Institute of Education (KIE) (2002b). Kenya Secondary School English Curriculum. Retrieved from http://www.elimu.net/Secondary/Kenya/KCSE_Student/English/English.htm

Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC) (2011). Candidates' performance Report. Nairobi: The Kenya National Examinations Council.

Kioko, A. N. & Muthwii, M. J. (2001).The Demands of a Changing Society:

English in Education in Kenya Today. *Language, Culture and Curriculum*, *14*(3), 201-213.

Krashen, S. (2003). *Explorations in language acquisition and use: The Tapei lectures*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Krashen, S. D. (1998). *Second Language Acquisition and Second Language Learning*. New York: Prentice-Hall International.

Krashen, S. D. (1983). *The natural approach-: Language acquisition in the classroom*. New York, NY: Pergamon Press

Lyster, R. (2007). *Learning and teaching languages through content: A counterbalanced approach*. Philadelphia: John Benjamins.

Mbaabu, I. & Nzuga, K. (2003). *Sheng-English Dictionary: Deciphering East Africa's*

Underworld Language. Dar es Salaam: Taasisi ya Uchunguzi wa Kiswahili, Chuo Kikuu cha Dar es Salaam.

Macken-Horaik, M. (2002) "Something to shoot for": A systemic functional approach to teaching genre in secondary school science. In A. M. Johns, *Genre in the classroom: Multiple perspectives* (pp 17-42). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum, Inc.

McArthur, T. (1998). *The English Languages*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.

Menken, K. & Kleyn, T. (2010). The long term impact of subtractive schooling in the educational experiences of secondary English language learners. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, *13*(4), 399-417.

Mutonya, M. (2008). African Englishes: Acoustic analysis of vowels. *World Englishes*, *27*(3-4), 434–449.

Nabea, W. (2009). Language policy in Kenya: Negotiation with hegemony, *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, *3*(1), 211-138.

Nagy, W. & Townsend, Do (2012). Words as tools: Academic vocabulary a language acquisition. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *47*(1), 99-108.

National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) (2013). National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), 2013 Reading Assessment, U.S. Department of Education, retrieved from

http://nationsreportcard.gov/reading_math_2013/files/Results_Appendix_Reading.pdf.

New York State Education Department (2004). The Teaching of Language Arts to Limited English Proficient/ English Language Learners: Learning Standards for English as a Second Language, Retrieved from http://www.p12.nysed.gov/biling/resource/ESL/00FMESL.pdf

Postlewaite, T. N. & Ross, K. N. (1992). *Effective schools in reading: Implications for educational planners. An exploratory study.* The Hague, The Netherlands: The International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement.

Schleppegrell, M. J. (2004). *The language of schooling: A functional linguistic perspective*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Short, D.J. & Fitzsimmons, S. (2007). *Double the work: Challenges and solutions to acquiring language and academic literacy for English language learners*. NY: Alliance for Excellent Education. Retrieved from http://www.all4ed.org/files/DoubleWork.pdf.

Sure, N. & Ogechi, E. (2009). *Linguistic human rights and language policy in the Kenyan education system*. Oxford, UK: African Books Collective Limited

TESOL (2006). *Pre-K–12 English Language Proficiency Standards,* Alexandria, VA: TESOL International Association.

Torres-Guzmán, M. (2007). Dual language programs: Key features and results. In, O. García & C. Baker (Eds.). *Bilingual Education: An Introductory Reader* (pp 50-63). New York: Multilingual Matters.

WIDA (2012). *World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment.* The Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System. Retrieved from

Wong-Fillmore, L. (1991). When learning a second language means losing the first. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly 6,* 323-46.

Xu, Shelley Hong (2010). *Teaching English language learners: Literacy strategies and resources for K-6.* New York: Guilford Publishers.

About the Author

Zaline M. Roy-Campbell, PhD, is an associate professor and director of the Teaching English Language Learners Program at Syracuse University. Her current research interests include issues of language, culture and literacy in education, preparing effective teachers of English language learners and the intersections between knowledge production and language of instruction.