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ABSTRACT

This paper is an analytic case study that analyses textbooks that are used in Saudi Arabia’s schools in courses for the students who learn English as a second language (ESL). It includes detailed information on how the curriculum is designed to teach literacy. This study won’t criticize human behavior; it critiques the textbooks that are intended to help second language learners (SLLs) to acquire the second language (L2) while simultaneously using their first language (L1). Freire (1998) describes the audience for this paper as the promising teachers “who consider… [themselves] to be… agent[s] in the production of knowledge” (p.30). The intended audience is teachers who love their job, believe in their students, and who work day and night to make sure their students’ learning roads are full of enjoyable, engaging and pleasurable experiences.
Chapter One: Introduction to The Study

1.1 Introduction

“I do research so as to know what I do not yet know and communicate and
proclaim what I discover.” (Freire, 1998, p.35)

The focus of this capstone paper is developing a literacy curriculum and my specific
area of interest: phonetics and the whole language approach. In my home country of Saudi
Arabia, the school curriculum mostly focuses on teaching reading, and writing to second
language learners (SLLs). However, sometimes, instruction involves teaching listening, but
rarely develops speaking skills. English as a second language (ESL) teachers in Saudi Arabia
forget about students being newcomers and expect them to already have some knowledge of
the topics that are taught. ESL teachers want students to only speak English, to forget their
first language (L1), and expect students to be fluent on the second language (L2) ignoring the
importance of their prior knowledge, and cultural background. Consider the following:

*Standard 1.b. Language Acquisition and Development:* Candidates
understand and apply theories and research in language acquisition and
development to support their ELLs’ English language and literacy learning
and content-area achievement. (TESOL/NCATE ESL Teacher Standards
Committee, 2010, p.32)

Whole language, using the entire language and not simply pieces of it as in phonetic
instruction, certainly is not taught. Instead language learning is reduced to memorization of
the rules of grammar. Language practice reflects what Freire (1988) refers to as “the practice
of cooking”. He states, “practice newcomers to the kitchen will confirm some of the things
they already know, correct others that they do not know, and gradually open up the way to
become cooks.” (p.29) In my country, the government-funded schools ask newcomers to be
cooks without giving them the ingredients they need for their recipe. They only focus on one
domain grammar, over others equally important domains.
Even if teachers want their students to speak, they ask them to simply memorize what they already wrote in the curriculum. According to TESOL (2010), teachers don’t care about students’ “needing time to fully comprehend all of the elements [of the L2]” (p.32). The only thing teachers care about is their performance in the eyes of others, without considering the time students need to learn. This results in a lack of motivation for students to develop their speaking and oral skills. Critique is one of the ways that helps students learn, but it is also not represented in the curriculum. Smith (1990) says “we think all the time, without effort, without awareness, and usually without gross errors” (p.27). Teachers are not providing students with opportunities to critique and reflect on the language and the skills presented. Teachers only care about how they control the curriculum and emphasize grammar as the only way to learn the L2.

Moreover, teachers sometimes make mistakes with pronunciation, and then students end up imitating them. For instance, I didn’t realize some of my mistakes on pronouncing some words until I became a student in a private college, which strongly supported teaching by speaking and communication, over memorization. My teacher noticed that I pronounced the word ‘financial’ like ‘fy-nan-see-ul’, which I was pronouncing wrong for years and none of my teachers even cared. This is an example of how teachers not only don’t care about the time we need to progress, but also their lack of noticing the damage they have caused to students by not communicating with them on ways to continue developing their knowledge of the language being studied.

Another reason of choosing this topic for my project is the important roles that ESL teachers play for Saudi Arabia's education. ESL teachers make up a large portion of the jobs available in Saudi Arabia. The Saudi government in many ways restricts individuals to become teachers because there are really only a few prominent career choices, education, business, engineering or the medical field. We will end up with a lot of teachers who are not proficient in their L2 because they are only taught fragments of it and then expected to teach it to others. This is the only way they know to teach literacy. My idea is to put together a
curriculum that includes all parts of language; grammar, phonetics, reading, and writing, not only to make language learning more practical but also complete. I want my students to have all the tools together to learn their L2. Much like learning anything new, many parts are needed. One hand needs another hand in order to clap; similarly, we need all parts of the language to acquire it.

My goal in this project is to incorporate phonemic awareness into the curriculum and balance the way we teach our students English, especially in public schools of Saudi Arabia. Where it is rare to find teachers who care or even notice students’ pronunciation mistakes. The long-term goal of this project is to create a primary grade curriculum for learning a second language that focuses on whole language, with the hope someone will use it. Specifically, the purpose of this paper is to compile a series of strategies that could serve as the foundation for the previously mentioned curriculum, and help students acquire their L2. With the ultimate goal that future generations of Saudi Arabian students will be able to communicate effectively and no longer feel the embarrassment of limited language proficiency that may lead to silence. I don’t want my students to lose their voices before they even get a chance to practice the L2 in English speaking countries. Whole language provides students with a balance curriculum that targets all areas of language acquisition. The curriculum I envision supports the following standard:

“Standard 1.a. Language as a System: Candidates demonstrate understanding of language as a system, including phonology, morphology, syntax, pragmatics and semantics, and support ELLs as they acquire English language and literacy in order to achieve in the content areas.” (TESOL, 2010, p.27)

Thus, I suggest that our curriculum have the added benefit of phonemic awareness that will be given the same amount of attention as grammar or other domains in the curriculum. My goal is asking my ministry of education if teachers can use the curriculum I created as a research tool with the intention of demonstrating that it works, and is more beneficial than the curriculum
To sum up, I want my students to know, think, and care about what’s important in their life, and not restrict their voices or focus on one thing more than the other. The expected outcomes are to ensure that all my SLLs will acquire the curriculum with unforgettable content and flexible assessment in order to obtain lifelong learning, and prepare them for future jobs. Students should be able to articulate the entire language in all its parts: speaking, reading, writing, and listening. Without forgetting the most significant thing in learning a language, daily practice in something with which they are interested in, and the ability to be creative while ensuring that “critical reflection on practice is a requirement” (Freire, 1988, p.30). Learning can be practical by making sure that students are giving more opportunities for dialogue and meaningful activities rather than using boring textbooks and lectures.

1.2 Rationale

“There is no need for you to do thinking. All you have to do is vote for this candidate and he will do the thinking for you.” (Freire, 1988, p.118)

When I came here to America, I especially expected the ESL teaching program to prepare me on how to teach grammar, because this is what happens in my country. Instead, what I experienced was students working together in small groups, discussing ideas and thoughts with each other, which shows that each student’s ideas are valuable and welcomed. I realized that learner’s thinking is not limited to teachers’ methods, textbooks, and schools. I learned that ESL learners should value what they previously know and what they consider is important to them.

This is why whole language is important; it allows students to retain their own thoughts, interests, backgrounds, and their L1. Students shouldn’t rely on anyone to think, or fill in the blanks for them instead they should be given the opportunity to acquire knowledge
themselves. ELL students need more keys to open the door to acquire the L2 where learners
can be creative and use their imagination without restrictions.

In my country of Saudi Arabia, teaching English as a second language only means
grammar. Even though different skills are parts of the curriculum, teachers ignore them. I
remember there was a part at the end of each chapter to practice speaking and listening when
I was at middle school, but now it no longer exists, because it wasn’t seen as important to the
curriculum. They omitted it for the next generation; they only now focus on grammar, which
is what they’ve always done. Therefore, I chose to focus on phonemic awareness of the
alphabet, and especially teach my students how to communicate well. I want students to speak
full of confidence.

I practiced and learned my L2, English, in my country of Saudi Arabia. I wanted to
change the way they teach English in my country, and especially in the area of speaking and
language production. I chose this area of study because all of the issues that I experienced
learning my L2 of English showed me all the mistakes and misunderstandings that I made
through my literacy development. I chose to go back to my past to learn from my mistakes in
order to inform my pedagogy as a future teacher. My mistakes of pronouncing the words in
the English language, and my misunderstandings of reading lead me to this topic, which is
teaching whole language instead of disaggregating it into different skills.

Writing this research paper lead me to realize what the curriculum may provide the
student. In this way I can address these issues and try to make them better not only for me,
but for my future students whom I hope will not have the same disappointing journey in
learning their L2 ‘English’. In this paper, I made strategies, which I think will be more valued
and interesting to students. I hope that someday one school will give me the approval to try
these strategies in their classes.

My goal is to switch the curriculum focus, and requesting English second language
acquisition be taught in the primary grade. I am hopeful that my ideas to develop the
curriculum and the strategies will help students not forget the skills they have learned because they are not just memorizing for the exams. Hopefully, these changes, and strategies will work. My research questions therefore are the following:

- What are we missing in English curriculum at Saudi Arabia that needs to be resolved?
- What are the most relevant studies on the subject?
- Are the textbooks that I used to conduct my research meeting the TESOL standards?
- Are there strategies that can be used to make education better?
- How can I create a curriculum that uses every part of language learning without excluding one for the other?

1.3 Significance

“No one is first autonomous and then makes a decision… no one is the subject of the autonomy of someone else.” (Freire, 1988, p.98)

No one has the right to decide what is most important to know and what is not. Teachers need to meet students at their level in an ongoing learning process between students and teachers. Being a teacher, adult, parent, or older brother doesn’t mean that you have the right to choose particular methods of instruction. Teachers are still making the same mistakes, it doesn’t only affect them but affects their students. ESL teachers in Saudi Arabia are not teaching their students how to speak a language. Teachers are simply teaching students to listen, and receive knowledge. Teachers ignore student’s L1, however it is necessary to acquire the L2. For example, TESOL (2010) suggests that,

“Candidates [teachers] understand that one’s first language (L1) may affect learning English… [Teachers should] build on similarities between English and students’ L1s and anticipate difficulties that learners may have with English.” (p.27)
Teachers need to build on students’ previous knowledge to help them acquire the second language. Teaching phonetic symbols, grammar, reading, listening and writing while communicating with students is a viable solution to help students learn the L2 quickly, and fluently. Otherwise, teaching students only one part of the language will not help.

Goodman (1993) states “when we were young, both as individuals and as societies, all we needed was oral language” (p.15). Our needs at that time were just body signs along with the speech sounds. Until it “becomes more complex… [then] we began to need written language as well” (p.15). I believe that the same way we learned our first language is the same way we need it to learn the second, third, fourth and so on. Oral language is what English language learners (ELLs) first need to learn the language and from the oral, they can expand their language to communicate with the whole language. ELLs must use all “outer layers” of the language including “phonemic, lexico-grammar, wording-syntax…[together] to comprehend [and] express [the whole] meaning [of the L2]” (Goodman, 1993, p.17).

Moreover, I perpetually ask myself why there is always a space in each dictionary that has phonetic symbols but no one is looking at it. I wonder why we as SLLs are constantly looking for the meaning of new words, but none of our teachers ask us to apply them in real life. These questions are always on my mind and I think it is important if we teach our students things that we used to ignore and dismiss. Waking up the awareness of phonemic along with communication are just as important as grammar basics. Speaking is something we need in our life, but grammar is needed only to pass the exams.

The people that I want to try the experience of my strategies are students of elementary school, because starting at this age is better than starting later. Children are more accepting to learn new things, and in my opinion I believe they are disappointed in the way they receive their education. Students at this age need to be aware of how to speak the language instead of teaching them the alphabet only. Teachers should look at their instruction in a similar way parents raise their children. Parents start teaching children from their first
years without a curriculum, rather they use the surrounding world to help their children to make sense of their environment. The same should be for our students. If we as educators teach students from their early years, they will reach a point where they will be ready to investigate the things that are interesting and enjoyable for them. This will help students develop their L2 skills, and life skills too.

1.4 What Inspired Me to Conduct This Research

There are two things that inspired me to start my research. The first one was a video sent by my wonderful mum, and the other was a T.V. show. Both of the subjects are speaking Arabic, but are critiquing the way that teachers usually teach English. These videos made me think about what I really wanted to investigate. These two videos or as I prefer to call them, ‘two lessons’ revealed to me the things that I thought I missed in my early life as an ESL, things that I wished my teachers focused on, rather than focusing on things that I can’t even remember or recall.

The first video was a video on YouTube that my mum sent to me talks about the unconscious way of acquisition of English at home without formalized courses. In the video Notcourses (2014), the speaker states that Arabic speakers in their daily life shouldn’t remove the object in the sentence. He discusses that “you can’t say I will go… and then stop. It can’t be a complete sentence” because everybody expects you to complete it. English is the same, we can’t ignore or cut things that are really important to the sentence and still expect it to make sense. Teachers shouldn’t only focus on one skill of the language and forget about others, and still expect students to have a whole understanding of the language. He also talks about the way we pronounce Arabic words are always the same, for instance he gives an example, which is “we can’t pronounce ‘work’ as ‘worki’”. It is something that our unconscious brain uses to pronounce it like that. No one taught us. These things we learned by not learning grammar, writing, and vocabulary separately, but we learned it unconsciously.
This video inspired me because first, it was from my mum. It’s like she gave me this video to remind me that she is a part of my learning process. In general, people believe that family teaches children things that school doesn’t even focus on. Children learn how to speak before they go to school. School is not the one who teaches children, but thanks to parents whom taught them their first words and were ready to listen so they could correct their mistakes. In the video Notcourses (2014), the speaker proposes that the same way we learn our mother tongue, Arabic, is the same way we should learn English. Learning English can be a lot more effective with unconscious learning. Which is demonstrating by “imitating the native speakers, and their accents”. The speaker says that L2 learners don’t need grammar to speak fluently; they simply need to pronounce the words the same way they have heard it from native speakers, in its proper context. SLLs need to practice the English language in the same manner and context the native speakers use it. English learners should not be limited to chapters and topics in a curriculum.

From this video I realized that speaking English accurately doesn’t rely only on learning grammar. If I count the years that I studied the grammar skills of English, it would be eight years. But, one disappointing thing is that I can’t remember those skills or rarely use them. I always need someone to read after me to correct my grammar mistakes. These mistakes are not because I am unable to speak English, but because of the way that I was taught. Now, I do believe that speaking a language should be by imitating the native speakers. This helps individuals learn grammar unconsciously, so learners will not need as many grammar courses that schools claim students need to learn.
The second video is an episode from a T.V. show called The Accused (2015). Mariam Nour in this video presents one of her books. She named it ‘Take it ezi’. She said “the way you feel it, the way you write it, there is no need for grammar or dictionaries to write English.” I liked the way that she seemed very comfortable with her book’s title. She gave me an idea that what really matters is our use of the language, and the way we interpret the words that we hear.

This video inspires me to focus my way of teaching the L2, in a way that doesn’t restrict my students. Instead it gives them the freedom to be creative, and explore language where they can learn it naturally. Therefore, grammar will not be the focus, a goal will be that students learn how to interpret, and use the words. I will encourage my students to write phonetically, writing the way they say it. There is no need for accurate writing, as long as those who read it understand it. I will not teach my students the exact meaning of words or make them look them up in the dictionary; rather, encourage them to use context clues where they can uncover the mystery meaning by guessing it from the environment.
Chapter Two: Review of The Literature

2.1 What The Research Says about Teaching Literacy?

There are many published works written by scholars, which discuss teaching literacy for SLLs. The majority of them are agreeing that from the moments that ELLs enter school, they generally aren’t anything but receivers of the new language Students can’t participate in the production of knowledge, and also can’t adapt the knowledge to fit their own needs, because the pedagogy of teachers doesn’t allow them (Freire, 2009). The following sections demonstrate how some scholars challenge the traditional way of teaching.

**Produce The Knowledge:** The production of knowledge is a relationship between teachers, and learners. In the words of Freire (1998),

“This new knowledge cannot simply be transferred to them, the learners. At the same time, in context of true learning, the learners will be engaged in a continuous transformation through which they become authentic subjects of the construction and reconstruction of what is being taught, side by side with the teacher, who is equally subject to the same process.” (p.33)

In other words, educators should try their best to refuse “the banking system of education” (Freire, 1998, p.32). Both teachers, and students should contribute to the production of knowledge. No one has the authority over one another, no one is the object, or the subject, no one tells the other what to read, and what to say; rather it is a mutual relationship. Teachers need to practice the knowledge in a way that allows students to think critically. Educators should adopt “critical teaching” that puts students between “doing” and “reflecting on doing” (Freire, 1998, p.43).

**Being Able to Invent:** Humans naturally are creative beings. According to Goodman (1993),
“The concept of invention is an important one, particularly in the study of phonics… Invention is always present in language learning; it’s the creative force that each of us, and every human society, possesses to create language.” (p.62)

Goodman (1993) asserts that teachers should not restrict their students on knowing certain phonics. Students can be creative of spelling and pronouncing their own words as long as their readers can understand them. What matters is students’ abilities to show to the teacher how the words sound to them (Clay, 1972). Further, Goodman (1993) says students are “inventing, but using [their] awareness of the conventional spellings that surrounds [them]” to learn the second language (p.62).

Teachers need not focus on only one correct way of spelling or pronouncing because people have different dialects and accents. Students can “use both conventional spelling and personal phonics rules for making sense… [as far as] they learn to use phonics in the process of reading and writing” (Goodman, 1993, p.67). (See appendix A), which shows an example of the student, Shoshana, who uses her magic to solve her problem of spelling. This example shows no wrong on her writing or spelling. She is totally aware, she just invents new spelling for her words because she is not sure what’s the correct spelling is for them. Thus, she learns phonics while writing.

**Keeping The Curiosity:** The curiosity of learners is important to take into consideration. Educators need to keep students’ curiosity piqued in order to keep them motivated, wanting to learn, and without afraid of being judged. As what Freire (1988) says, teachers should “emphasize the children freedom to decide, even if they run the risk of making a mistake” (p.97). When learners are given a choice to direct their learning process, they tend to stay more engaged, and curious about the new things that they are learning.

**Respect Freedom:** Educators at some point in their professional career think they know what is the best for their students, but the fact is students often know better than
teachers (Gray, 2013). Parents also often think they know what is the best for their children, and try to protect them; instead of letting them experience failures. Once children experience those failures, they realize that patience, practice, and waiting are needed for learning. The parent and teacher’s job is to support and accept that students and children can learn and deal with their lives without limiting their opportunities.

However, teaching our students literacy should include a “pedagogy of autonomy…[that] centered on experiences that stimulate decision making, and responsibility, in other words, on experiences that respect freedom” (Freire, 1988, p. 98). By respecting the learner’s freedom, educators give them unlimited opportunities, instead of forcing them to do things that will not lead them to success during their educational lives. If restricted, and teachers control the curriculum, then surely they will prepare them only to pass standardized tests.

**Keep The Previous Knowledge:** Every child who enters school brings with them a wealth of prior knowledge and experiences, including native language; these are important to be recognized by teachers (Moll, Amanti, Neff, & Gonzalez, 2005). Further, Garcia (2009) states, “on educational grounds we recommend that the use of the mother tongue be extended to as late a stage in education as possible” (p.53). Educators should not forget that ELLs are already using their mother tongue languages before they came to the class to learn the L2. Providing opportunities for students to practice their L1 helps students to achieve competence in their L2. As Reyes & Kleyn (2010) say,

“When…[students] receive quality schooling in their country of origin or in the United States in their first language (L1) this is… [a typical] outcome. Things become more complex because of the need to hold the same expectation in the second language (L2).” (p.3)

Educators should not expect learners to know the L2 and be able to articulate themselves in the manner that they speak the L1. Teaching students their L2 should be done
by using similar strategies used by students when they learned the first one. Students don’t learn their L1 by reading textbooks; they observed the way their parents speak, and then try to imitate them. Students learn by practicing and engaging with the language in a social context.

**Communicative Competence:** Communication is a social act, requiring more than one person. Providing an environment to students where communication is central is an important part of learning. Students can understand a second language by communicating with their peers, and this wakes up their curiosity, and increases their interaction. According to Binstock (2005):

> “Speakers share common backgrounds or are tuned in to the same story…[their] conversations are mirrors of the self and others… They give rise to collaborative knowledge-building, and provide an arena to those less knowledgeable or less articulate to learn from peers who are more… capable.” (p.348-350)

Being able to practice oral language skills will help students learn, and encourage them to challenge and help each other. Communicating with their peers along with their teachers where everyone’s thoughts are welcome will give students the confidence they need to speak, and listen to the language.

Nevertheless, these conversations will provide equality within the conversations; where everyone’s ideas and thoughts matter. Binstock (2005) asserts, “the most extraordinary, and certainly most enhancing aspect of the peer conversations is it’s echo-like equality” (p.349). Building up the feeling of equality through the communicative process is a successful strategy to motivate students (Binstock, 2005). When this type of communication occurs, often students sit in a circle, and they just talk, resulting in learning that is more rich.
Chapter Three: Methodology

3.1 Procedures

This study draws on observations, and personal experiences of the author, gained through the master’s program at Boise State University. A critique of textbooks from Saudi Arabia were also utilized as tools to see where the language and literacy gaps were revealed in the curriculum and further inspired the strategies presented in this paper. The focus is on ESL students, and what can be done as educators to help them become proficient, and understand that language acquisition is an ongoing process. Articles supporting this area of study, including online sources and books, were also used to defend the presented ideas. The author plans to implement these strategies and ideas in the future in a school in Saudi Arabia.

3.2 Methods

“When they don’t watch you, teach.” (Bahruth, personal communication, October 11, 2015)

The methods that I plan to use to teach second language students in Saudi Arabia will be the opposite to the expected methods currently used—the repeating, and receiving methods that focus only on grammar. I intend to utilize a balance methodology that integrates whole language ideas into the teaching.

The specific strategies that I will use as a future educator are the ones that Reyes et al. (2010) discuss; which are “Sheltering and Scaffolding…[identified as] two modifications to instructional practice that are essential to assisting students’ second language development and making the curriculum accessible” (p.88). These two instructions help students improve their L2 through social practices, which are the best things that you can give your students since they have little or no background of the L2. As what Garcia (2009) says “effective…
pedagogy… develops students’ metacognitive skills, [and] teaches critical thinking and study skill development” (p.645).

Some of the strategies for Sheltering instruction as Reyes et al. (2010) list are “Comprehensible input,… Visuals,… Context-embedded instruction (instruction based in authentic experiences), Communicative opportunities in the social environment,…[and] Embedding instruction in real life activities” (pp.88 &90). These strategies make students feel that they are willing to participate, and as a result are more engaged.

On the other side, Scaffolding strategy which “is a way of providing support to students through modeling, feedback, instruction, and questioning” (Reyes et al., 2010, p.90). These strategies are “temporary supports…. [and] are removed once they are no longer needed” (Reyes et al., 2010, p.91). These strategies include giving students assistance today, and then they can do it by themselves. Other activities that are also Scaffolding consist of “Project-Based Learning…, Literature Circles…, Cooperative learning” (Reyes et al., 2010, p.92). These scaffolding activities are giving students the support that they need to explore their confidence. So at the end they can be independent instead of dependent on others.

In the words of Garcia (2009):

“Languages are not fixed codes by themselves; they are fluid codes framed within social practices… Rather, speakers borrow heavily from their previous experiences of communication in similar circumstances, on similar topics, and with similar interlocutors.” (p.87)

Teaching someone to read and write a language can’t be easy in traditional classes. Learners exist just to listen to teachers whom they believe are the only ones that have the right answer. Teaching literacy is more effective in social practices where students can be more than chairs and tables. They can be butterflies that move smartly to catch only the things and the knowledge that really help them to survive in this harsh education system.
3.3 Ethical Considerations

There are a lot of issues that I faced while doing this research paper, which are likely raising ethical concerns. First of all, the study only focuses on curriculum, and critiquing it. The data and the findings are not collected from an observation of classes in my country, but I wish that I had this opportunity. I tried my best to get an approval from any public elementary school, so I could observe a real ESL classroom, so I could use the theories in the real world, but no one seemed interested. So, I decided to work by myself, based on my experience that I had in school, and textbooks that my relatives provided to me. This forced me to wait to conduct this study in my country once I get a job as an ESL teacher, so I can test the ideas and theories in my own classroom.

Another issue is that I didn’t use a questionnaire to deduce the focus group needs. I decided not to do so because people in my country often will not provide truthful answers. Most of them would lie because they think that I am critiquing my country or their teaching methods. But what they didn’t know is that I am just critiquing the way L2 acquisition is taught to our students, which are issues that happen in many countries, not just mine.
Chapter Four: My Philosophy

4.1 Pedagogy

In the current climate of standardization and one-size-fits-all approaches…

You will need to modify the content, language, and pedagogy to best meet
the needs of your students. (Reyes et al., 2010, p.51)

The pedagogy of teaching I believe in is where we have classes in which both students
and teachers are central and important to the learning process. A classroom where the teacher
cannot stand alone, and has a need for the students’ input in what is taught and how it’s
learned. My pedagogy is that classrooms should be environments where students can make
friends with both their teachers and classmates; pedagogy where educators focus on how to
produce new meanings, rather than memorizing the old ones. The goal for students is to live
their life with rich experiences rather than focusing on what is needed “to pass a test” (Lewis,
n.d.). My pedagogy encourages a democratic environment, “in which the learner progresses in
learning process through their actual experiences, and… in which curiosity as an expression of
freedom” (Freire, 1988, p.80).

The pedagogy that I believe in is that language should be learned from communication,
where students can all have the same right to practice it rather than being limited to only
homework. Educators should teach in different ways using the things that they used to ignore
to improve things they currently teach. In other words,

“A language… is not a table of grammar rules in some dusty old book, or a
piece of paper that you have to spread ink across in the right way for your
teacher to be happy… being locked up in your room studying it is, frankly,
antisocial.” (Lewis, n.d.)

Teaching a language should be a social act where students are able to speak it, manipulate it,
and be able to listen to it. And the most important thing is that learners should have their own freedom, and retain their own rights. As Garcia (2009) explains, “constructivist pedagogy… [which] is built on the conviction that learning should involve social negotiation and interaction with others in authentic contexts that are relevant to the learner” (p.631).

The pedagogy that I believe in is almost the same as my professor Dr. Roberto Bahruth’s pedagogy. I will quote some of his words that he has said to us in his classes, so everyone will know what I mean by his pedagogy. These are the following quotes from Bahruth’s lecture ‘Applied Theoretical Foundations of Bilingual Education/ESL and Multiculturalism’ (personal communication, October 11, 2015):

- “I care about your humanity”
- “You get better at reading, writing if you use your voices”
- “Write for yourself”
- “Look for the unseen”

Dr. Bahruth has more and more of these encouraging sentences. Dr. Bahruth always asks, “Is there anyone willing to share, or want to nudge someone?” (Bahruth, personal communication, October 11, 2015). Dr. Bahruth practices patience with us; He has no problem waiting until someone is willing to cut the silence. Dr. Bahruth doesn't teach us by textbooks, he communicates, makes us engaged, and satisfies our hunger to learn. Dr. Bahruth gives us very short passages to read, but we use three hours to discuss them. We learn from each other; each one of us putting one layer of meaning on top of another. Every one has always something to share in both small and large groups. At the end of each discussion, we all were looking for deeper meaning and communicating that with one another. Dr. Bahruth wants us always to not feel disrespected in his class, and not be afraid of being judged, or having the wrong answer. Each one has our own pearls inside of us, and every time we share, everyone can notice its sparkling, and glamour. His personal and teaching characteristics are those that I hope to emulate in my own teaching.
The pedagogy of teaching that I believe in, is to never take the humanity of my students. Never judge them, or grade them. Never make them feel uncomfortable in my class. I don’t want anyone to hurt anyone else. I don’t want anyone of my student to think or care what other thinks about him or her. Never erasing their feelings. Never limiting their abilities. Never telling them that they have a paper that is filled with grammatical mistakes that will mark their grades down. What’s really important is the content of their paper and how it’s meaningful to them. What really matters is how their words connect to their life experiences.

4.2 Curriculum

“You can never speak a language by just studying it, no matter how much you study.” (Lewis, n.d.)

How can I create a curriculum that matches the pedagogy that I discussed above? Who are the people that I know or books that I have read that can help me? The following section will attempt to answer these questions. The curriculum that I want my students to depend on while I am teaching them the L2 is not a textbook or a CD that the educational system forces on them. The traditional curriculum makes students silent and easier to assess. In other words, they impose it on students “using language to limit educational… opportunities” (Garcia, 2009, p.100). Why is that? Because “the standard that is taught in school is sometimes not spoken anywhere” (Garcia, 2009, p.94). The things they teach them in the textbook are not useful to their life to their conversation skills. It’s only standard language that no one speaks in reality. Students leave from school without having any experience of speaking the L2. They are good at grammar and vocabulary, but they don’t know how to converse in real life and in social activities. The curriculum that I want my students to depend on is not the kind of curriculum that they can study, or memorize, just to prepare them for tests. The curriculum will be their class, and their life experiences. This curriculum will not supplant their current curriculum, but will be supplemental to it.

How do teachers manage the curriculum to include all the domains of language, instead
of focusing on one or the other? Teachers need to know first that their students are not crafts that they can shape into whatever they want. Their students are the ones who are important to their teaching process. Teachers need to know that teaching only grammar is not helping their students acquire the L2. Creating a curriculum that encourages their students to communicate, collaborate, and engage with a lot of enthusiasm, is what is needed. Teachers need to make sure the activities they have in their classes are inclusive and focus on the four domains of language; ‘speaking, writing, reading, listening’. Goodman (1993) says “we learn to read and write, as we learn to speak and listen, from whole to part, not from part to whole” (p.84). So, what really helps is to create a curriculum that teaches the whole language instead of bits and pieces.

4.3 Assessment

**Standard 4.a. Issues of Assessment for English Language Learners:**

Candidates demonstrate understanding of various assessment issues as they affect ELLs, such as accountability, bias, special education testing, language proficiency, and accommodations in formal testing situations. (TESOL, 2010, p.56)

How is this idea evaluated? Teachers must not only depend on textbooks to teach their students, therefore, the textbook test will not be a fair way to evaluate students. There should be different kinds of assessments to evaluate each student’s process and their development. Even I think informal assessment is important, but I still think students need formal ones. First of all, the evaluation should be an ongoing process, not only a one-day test. Who knows what the student is experiencing that day? Maybe someone close to the student died that day. Maybe he is far away from his family, and feeling homesick. Maybe he is ill, or maybe he is not even in the mood to test that day. There are a lot of reasons that students may not do well on a one-time evaluation.

Teachers need to evaluate students every day, not by asking them questions, but asking
them for feedback. They may ask them to have their own journals, where they have their own questions that they want the teacher to answer for them. Teachers can follow up with them by using these journals. The best example is what Hayes, Bahruth, & Kessler (1998), suggest when they say “Robert [the teacher] continues to keep up with them [the students] through correspondence; they write and he responds. Their reading and writing are ongoing and continual” (p.21). So, their assessment is informal, and ongoing, and at the same time is enjoyable and interesting. Consider the following:

Standard 4.c. Classroom-Based Assessment for ESL: Candidates know and can use a variety of performance-based assessment tools and techniques to inform instruction for in the classroom. (TESOL, 2010, p.64)

Teachers can also evaluate students depending on how many times they are willing to participate in the social activity. Teachers should evaluate their process, and their development. Teachers have to make sure their students are at least learning something in their classes, no matter how long it takes, as long as students are interested and find it meaningful. Teachers can accomplish this by asking their students to write one final paper or create a portfolio at the end of each class. These projects shouldn’t ask for summarization, or repetition, rather teachers should request a critical paper where students can critique their ways of teaching, or maybe agree with them (Bahruth, personal communication, October 11, 2015). In this way, teachers can evaluate students’ processes and development.

Teachers need to look for an alternative way to evaluate their students. Reyes et al. (2010) assert that,

“Second language learners may not be able to show their full competency when an exam in their non-dominant language. Authentic assessments, by contrast, allow students to use language in a more contextualized way to show understanding through a variety of formats, such as visuals, drama, or presentations.” (p.111)
An example of this is asking students to draw illustrations if they don’t know how to complete their assignments by writing. Teachers can also ask them to do anything outside the class to show that they understand the content of what has been taught. For instance, students can conduct an interview with people outside the school zone asking them about the topic that they discussed in the class. Other things that teachers may use to evaluate their students is observing them while they are sharing in groups in the class, paying attention to how they are willing to listen, and learn from each other.
Chapter Five: Analysis of Saudi Arabia’s Textbooks

5.1 What is Missing in Saudi Arabia’s Curriculum?

According to Aldihnayn (2015), Saudi Arabia’s curriculum focuses on reading and writing. There are always some passages, and questions about the reading in each chapter of the book. These are simple questions anyone can answer without even thinking (See figure 5.1). Students can simply find the answers by going back to the text, even if they don’t read the whole passage. There are rarely questions which require critical thinking. There is always a table that contains the basic grammar from each chapter. For example, one chapter will focus on simple present; another will focus on simple past, and so on. There is no focus at all on speaking or communication with students. Even exams and quizzes are focused on just reading, writing, and grammar. There is not even a section for assessing speaking in the exams.

As evidence to what I say here, I captured some pages from English courses that are taught in Saudi Arabia’s public schools, especially secondary high schools. I will provide
pages here, and explain them one by one. I want to describe them to show that there is no focus on communication with students, or the joint production of knowledge. The activities only ask for memorization of grammar basics.

\[\text{LESSON 1 The walk with Fahad part 2}\]

Listen, say and answer. \\
\(\bullet\) ask and answer. \\
a) Who is this woman? \\
b) What is the family name? \\
c) Who is this boy? \\
d) Where is the background? \\
e) What is the background? \\
f) Who is this girl? \\
g) What is the background? \\
h) Who is this girl? \\
i) What is the background? \\
j) Who is this girl? \\
k) What is the background? \\
l) Who is this girl? \\
m) What is the background? \\
n) Who is this girl?

\(\text{Listen again. Tick (✓) true (T) or false (F).}\)

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\(\text{Listen and check.}\)

\(\text{Listen and repeat.}\)

\[\text{Figure 5.2: A scanned document of lesson 1: The walk with Fahad part 2 (Thompson et al., 2013, pp.78&83). This image shows a type of activity for students to participate in, but teachers ignore it.}\]

In Figure 5.2, you can see that the pages that asked students to listen and imitate the speaker or find the correct stress are totally empty. There are not even notes on them, and teachers usually skip these pages, thinking that students will do it by themselves. Unfortunately, people kill trees for useless paper. Teachers are not going to grade their students even if they complete these papers or not. They count as more useless pages, which usually teachers say are not required for exams, or for daily classes. I really feel disappointed when I see these pages are being ignored. These pages have really good activities including opportunities to speak like the native speaker by listening to audio as well as talking with classmates about the topic. These areas need to be included in the curriculum, instead of focusing on things that are not going to help students when they finish school and go searching for jobs.
Figure 5.3: Activity focus on speaking domain (Thompson et al., 2013, p.79).

Figure 5.3, demonstrates an activity where students can speak with their partners about the text. It is a really good activity to practice the speaking as well as listening, where students can all learn from each other. I don’t want to say that these kinds of activities will not help students learn the phonetics, but will be more effective if they choose their own topics. It’s a really challenging activity, but it should be about something they are experiencing or interested in so they can take maximum advantage of learning how to speak a language. In other words “why not discuss with the students the concrete reality of their lives” (Freire, 1998, p.36).

Figure 5.4: A page from the glossary (Thompson et al., 2013, p.148).
Figure 5.4 is really one that shocked me. It’s an Arabic-English dictionary. Here, teachers don’t even want students to look for the meaning from the context or do their own research. They have these special pages, which give them definitions for every word that they may not understand. Students need more than a meaning of a word. They need to know how to use it as well as how to say it. One way to do this is

“To avoid those that have text in both the first language (L1) and the second language (L2) on the same page, or two adjacent pages, because the reader will be inclined to read the text in his or her dominant language since that is easier and more natural… [teachers need to] order separate copies of picture and chapter books in the first language (L1) and the second language (L2).”

(Reyes et al., 2010, p.13)

Otherwise, having their dominant language along with the second language will not help students to develop their L2 skills. How about the idioms or things that can’t be translated exactly? They can’t translate those into their L1 because they may take it literally, so teachers need to contextualize it for them.

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**Figure 5.5:** Guessing the meaning of unknown word’s activity (Mitchell & Malkogianni, 2013, p.8).
Figure 5.5 focuses on the meaning of words. Students guess the meaning by reading where the words are in the text. The assignment asks them to go back to the text, so they can guess its meaning from the context. This is an effective strategy because it asks students to figure out the meaning from the context, not through the dictionary. Yet, there is still no focus on communication or negotiation with students here. What I really wish is that I could find one activity that combines all the domains of language; grammar, reading, writing, and speaking. So, students will learn the language as a whole. Unfortunately, the critique of the textbooks didn’t reveal any such activities.

Akhavan (2006) states it is better for this kind of activity to ask students to do “semantic maps…[that contains] words directly connected to a specific unit of study” (p.47). Students can relate it back to their backgrounds, experiences, and their ways of understanding the world. Students can all equally go to the blackboard and add their understanding to the words. At the end, they will come up with a blending of ideas from all students, which is much more collaborative than having them discover the meaning by themselves. For more clarification of what semantic maps will look like, (See Appendix B), which shows Cary Stolpestad’s classroom at Manchester Gate Elementary School in Fresno, California

![International Language School Oxford](image)

Figure 5.6: Grammar activity (Thompson et al., 2013, p.82).
Figure 5.6 is another example of how curriculum focuses more on grammar. It asks students to read passages, and write verbs in their correct forms. Usually, this is an activity that students will have as homework. Students are not creating their own words; they only repeat the grammar that they learned in the class. Furthermore, there is no focus here on how students can use these verbs in their real life. This assignment limits the student to only one correct answer.

In Figure 5.7, the review, which is usually at the end of the chapter, you still see the kind of questions that only focus on grammar, and writing some words or sentences. It asks students to match words with their meaning, complete sentences using grammar basics, and/or correct the verb tense. Even at the review, students don’t have the opportunity to speak with the teacher about the topic that they learned about, or at least write about something that they found interesting.
Another example of focusing on grammar is Figure 5.8, which asks for the type of verbs; regular or irregular. It also asks for the past participle of the verb. Clearly, these textbooks focus on grammar. What I really noticed is that all the books are similar in their organization. They only have pages with questions to be answered. They contain a lot of repetitive activities. I wish that these activities asked for something different and more creative. Creating a more interactive learning environment will ensure proficiency in language learning (Keeves, 2007).

Figure 5.8: Past participle activity (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ministry of Education, 2009, p.26).

Another example of focusing on grammar is Figure 5.8, which asks for the type of verbs; regular or irregular. It also asks for the past participle of the verb. Clearly, these textbooks focus on grammar. What I really noticed is that all the books are similar in their organization. They only have pages with questions to be answered. They contain a lot of repetitive activities. I wish that these activities asked for something different and more creative. Creating a more interactive learning environment will ensure proficiency in language learning (Keeves, 2007).

Figure 5.9: Complete conversations activity (K.S.A Ministry of Education, 2009, p.33).
Figure 5.9 made me laugh when I first read it. It asks students to complete sentences about things that they have never experienced. They can only imagine themselves as speakers of that conversation and then try to complete the missing sentences. Freire (1998) suggests that teachers need to have

“Another kind of knowledge necessary to educational practice…[which] is the knowledge that speaks of respect for the autonomy of the learner, whether the learner be child, youth, or adult. As… educator[s], …[we] have to constantly remind…[ourselves] of this knowledge because it is connected with the affirmation of respect for…[ourselves too].” (p.59)

The remaining pages in these textbooks are really good pages for teaching students writing. It asks students to summarize the passages again, and to locate thesis statements and infer the main point of each paragraph. I found many pages like this in the curriculum. I am not saying that there is no benefit from these activities. Indeed, it taught students grammar, reading, and writing. I just want to point out that we need more pages in our current curriculum that focus on speaking, pronunciation, and contextualization. We need activities that teach students phonetic alphabets, where they can learn the accurate ways of pronouncing words; activities that help them to recognize their mistakes of pronunciation and fix them, so they can later be proficient in conversations.

Saudi Arabia’s curriculum doesn’t even include a part that provides students with opportunities to improve their pronunciation of words. Even if there are parts with this opportunity, it is often ignored by teachers. We really need “a common theory of language learning…[that] respect... (a) Listening, (b) speaking, (c) reading and (d) writing” (Keeves, 2007). A theory that can be represented by strategies that teachers can add to the current curriculum to make it serve the four domains of the language instead of just one or two of them. Every teacher should make their own strategies in order to help their students’ learning journey full of success where they can retain information better. Teachers should try their best
to make changes for the benefit of their students, and not only teach the basics of English, but provide opportunities for students to learn things that they really need to be socially active.
Chapter Six: Developing a Literacy Curriculum

6.1 Strategies for Change

In this section, I will provide strategies designed by the author, which I think, if teachers make a little effort to design strategies like these, students will be better at pronouncing English words, and speaking fluently. First, it would be better to start teaching English in elementary schools, because it is easier for kids to learn a second language when they are young, and they are faster learners (Paull, n.d.). Garcia (2009) suggests that teachers should not ignore children’s L1, but use it as they learn the L2. Kids at this age are more flexible and it is easier to shape their process of learning. I prefer to focus my research ideas on children that are in elementary school, through first to sixth grade levels. These strategies are not meant to replace the original curriculum, but to add to it. It will be good if the teacher gives these kinds of activities two to three times a week.

In these strategies the focus is on learning IPA, the International Phonetic Alphabets, and the way to pronounce English words. Further, the focus will be on learning how to use words in different situations, not just knowing the meanings; i.e., contextualization. I believe that my area of interest will improve my students’ speaking skills. In this way I will add to their curriculum things that I am sure will make them feel excited, because it is a technique that they aren’t used to. I will have students share with their classmates as well as recognize their mistakes by listening to others. This enables the student to gain more confidence after seeing that each peer in the class, including the teacher, is respecting who they are and where they come from. No one judges them, or tells them their answers are wrong because there is not only one right answer. Most importantly, they will learn together in an environment that offers for them the encouragement of collaboration.

Appendix C shows two tables that I took from Antimoon’s website. Students learn these symbols first. I know that some people will say it will be difficult, but actually it’s easy as long as they practice it every day by communicating, and negotiating with their classmates.
I hope that my students will learn them without difficulties, so they can share their stories and thoughts without feeling shame from any mistake that they may make. I don’t want them to learn it exactly, but also be able to develop their own techniques, so they will not be shy anymore. As long as they understand it, there is no need to know the exact phonetic syllabus of a word. When students are comfortable with the phonetic alphabet and their invented spelling, they will be able to spell difficult words, and be able to use them in the proper context.

The first strategy, Appendix D, that I am going to explain is already mentioned and explained in my portfolio. According to Aldihnayn (2015), the lesson plan is a case study focused on the first grade level. This strategy was a result of the author’s thinking through years of how students’ reading, and speaking skills could be improved, for the Saudi Arabia country, which only focuses on grammar. My hope is that with time these skills will be as easy for my students as drinking a glass of water. This strategy is about writing a story about whatever students want. Students can draw pictures to supplement their invented writing in either the L1 or the L2. This example is a story of a Muslim girl, where she explains how she prays. The girl describes how she prays using the IPA, and not only English letters, but Arabic too. She skips some words that she doesn’t know; she left them for me to help her.

To evaluate the student’s work, teachers will focus on how students show they are able to use the words contextually with other students by sharing in small groups with peers and explain their works. Students can also write the way they pronounce the words by writing it phonetically in their native language as they hear it. Instead of having students only focus on the new language, they can use their L1 to develop the L2. It is not required for them to know the exact pronunciation of all words, because they will collaborate together and learn from each other.

Appendix E is another strategy that I designed, where I ask students to watch movies, any movie that they like, and pick up words that are repeated and used in different situations.
Also, it asks students to write the pronunciation symbols of these words in the different situations. Students use and recognize different variations of the word. As an evaluation of this strategy, students should imitate how they heard this word in the movie. Make a recording of themselves speaking these words, as well as, imitating the pronunciation of it in its different contexts, and in complete sentences. After hearing their practices, the teacher can identify where they need help, and give them more support. It is important to remember that sharing with their classmates is imperative.

**Standard 3.c. Using Resources and Technology Effectively in ESL and Content Instruction**

Candidates are familiar with a wide range of standards-based materials, resources, and technologies, and choose, adapt, and use them in effective ESL and content teaching. (TESOL, 2010, p.53)

The last strategy, Appendix F, will incur some financial cost. Nowadays, most children have his or her own smart phone and/or iPad. I searched for phonetic apps, and I found some useful ones, which were fun at the same time. These apps are easy to download, but they cost anywhere from two to five dollars. I thought it would be useful if I could use them in my class, since they teach students how to pronounce words, and how they can write symbols of words the way they hear and say.

These apps help students to learn English phonetics and know the difference between them. For example the different types of articulating such as, nasal, stop, bilabial, labiodental, voiced, and voiceless. Some apps offer an English IPA keyboard that students can add to their phones to help them write words using symbols through their phones. Some apps are games that teach letters and how they sound, as well as, give examples of different words in different situations. Others offer students an online service; it’s like a phonetic reading school, and students can sign up to enroll. Lastly, some ask students to either write the symbols after hearing it, or read it after it gives phonetic symbols, then there is an exam that students can take to evaluate their progress.
6.2 More Ways to Develop The Curriculum

Teaching students phonetic or grammar will not be adequate enough for their learning process. Goodman (1993) supports this idea,

“Teaching phonics is insufficient to make readers of non-readers. That leaves them with a dilemma: how can children learn the phonics they supposedly need in order to read and still get into reading early enough to keep interested in learning?” (p.107)

Educators should provide students with a curriculum that demonstrates the relationships between the four domains of language. To make the language understandable to students, teachers should create a curriculum that depends on these relationships. Not only building connections between the domains of language, but also building relationships between the teacher and students, and the relationship between peers. It’s not fair to only teach students exact way of saying the new language, because each student has different dialects, and different ways of pronouncing words. This is why a whole language approach is important.

Whole language teachers] understand that in learning to read and write in an alphabetic language, hearing pupils will come to understand the alphabetic system and will invent ways of relating their own speech to print, whatever the dialects. (Goodman, 1993, p.108)

My initial idea when starting this paper was that students need to learn only phonetics to help them acquire the L2, but then I soon realized that this mindset still fragments the language instead of teaching the language as a whole. I kept questioning my original strategies, and if they would truly help students who have different ways of pronouncing the words. What about those students who are able to create their own phonetics and spellings? They are able to self-correct their mistakes, recognizing what’s right and what’s wrong because of this practice. How can I create strategies where the four domains of language are included? These questions made me go in a different direction, where I provide students with
strategies that not only care about right or wrong answers, but they care about how students use the knowledge to connect the new language to their interests, values, and virtues in a communicative environment. An environment where students all have the equal right to share, and participate. If I hadn’t changed my mind, and kept with the old plan, focusing only on teaching students phonetics, I wouldn’t be able to identify their weakness and help them to strengthen their skills. Providing students a safe class environment, where they can discuss what they want and get help from others, will help teachers give them the support they need.

**Standard 3.b. Implementing and Managing Standards-Based ESL and Content Instruction**

**Candidates know, manage, and implement a variety of standards-based teaching strategies and techniques for developing and integrating English listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Candidates support ELLs’ access to the core curriculum by teaching language through academic content.** (TESOL, 2010, p.47)

There is something wrong in the ESL classes, what we can do to change it? Who decides what's worth knowing in these classes? Educators should build an entire curriculum around the issues that matter to students. By encouraging communication, students may feel more comfortable sharing the issues that are important to them, and really matter. This will motivate students to become more engaged. These issues will be brought up from the communication, where sharing makes students feel more humans, and being able to connect to their lives, and the others. By honoring the student’s humanity, they will feel safe to share their stories and use their voice. These strategies encourage students to seek out knowledge without forcing them to focus on one issue.

Freire (1998) extends these ideas by providing a strategy about what will help students not only speak the language, but also help them understand it in a way that it matters to them.

“It would be an excellent weekend task to propose to a group of students that each one single out the most striking curiosity he or she has
experienced, connected with TV news propaganda, a video game, a gesture of someone they know—any circumstance at all. It does not matter. What type of response did they make to their curiosity? Was it easily forgotten, or did it lead to other curiosities? Did this process involve a consultation of sources, the using of dictionaries, computers, books, or other people?

…What did one person feel when she/he discovered someone else working on the same curiosity?” (p.81)

Teachers should understand that teaching a second language doesn’t mean that they need to teach what they think is most important. What really matters is what students are interested in and can connect to their lives. These strategies will make students go beyond only learning language; they will learn it to satisfy their curiosity’s hunger.

**Standard 5.b. Professional Development, Partnerships, and Advocacy:**

Candidates take advantage of professional growth opportunities and demonstrate the ability to build partnerships with colleagues and students’ families, serve as community resources, and advocate for ELLs. (TESOL, 2010, p.71)

Interviewing and meetings with parents also could be another alternative strategy for teachers, where they can build relationships with parents in order to know their students better. Knowing student’s cultural heritage, what they like, and what they don’t like will help teachers know the topics that their students are interested in, and that will help students seek the knowledge for themselves. Also, using strategies that ask students to go and ask their parents about something they never negotiated together before can be beneficial. Interacting with parents will help students to gain the confidence they need to participate in class.

Teachers should choose strategies built in a pedagogy and philosophy of teaching that welcomes critical thinking, which lead to democratic assignments that empower students instead of disabling them (Bahruth, personal communication, October 11, 2015). This spirit of
critical thinking will put students into democratic circles where they can discuss topics like literature, where they choose one particular chapter from their book to discuss with their own groups. These circles will enhance “cooperative learning” where they all complete the task by collaborative conversations with each other (Reyes et al., 2010, p.92).

Teachers using these strategies will make students “grow their own plants” instead of reading about them in their textbooks (Reyes et al., 2010, p.94). Teachers will give students more opportunity to discuss the findings with them instead of accepting the facts without negotiation. Teachers should utilize “a pedagogy where they can make a difference in people’s life” (Bahurth, personal communication, October 11, 2015). A pedagogy that will be unforgettable to students, because it makes them see the damage that is done to them by the dying education. A pedagogy that inspires students to be the creators and inventors of their own thoughts and ideas, where they feel respectful, and valued by being individuals.
Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.1 Conclusion

Children are smarter than we think. They know that the old system of education no longer works for them. Children start to search for more and more things to learn about outside of the school. For this reason, we need to change the curriculum and try our best to help them communicate with people in the real world. Students, especially those studying a second language, do not only need the meaning of new words, but how they can use them in the real life. Students don’t need exams or reviews that ask them to repeat what they already learned. They need more activities and strategies that can touch their sense of wonder, and encourage them to know more and more. Strategies that can teach them in a way they will not forget after the end of the semester. Strategies that help them to be with the real world, instead of just write and read only by themselves. Strategies that wake up their awareness, and develop their way of learning. As I mentioned many times in this paper, strategies are only to add, develop, and make their learning better. I have no intention of erasing the current curriculum, but I will use it in a way that is more effective, and relevant to students.

Why do I think my study is important? Because “Helping others to become successful educators is a much more rewarding endeavor for me” (Bahruth, 1990, p.224). Developing a curriculum to ESL students in Saudi Arabia will make educators shift from teaching only grammar to teach the skills that are more useful to students’ daily life. This shift is different in the way teachers can’t take students for granted, and only ask them to learn the language through sterile textbooks. A shift where educators can provide students with valuable sources that make their educational process enjoyable. A shift where students can learn the L2 by combining all skills together, and not just receiving one at a time.

Shifting from fragmented way of teaching, to whole language is “the easy way to language development” (Goodman, 2005, p.3). Babies can learn how to speak the language fast, but when they go to school they will find difficulty learning how to write. In other
words, “children learn oral language without having it broken into simple little bits and pieces” (Goodman, 2005, p.3). To develop a curriculum for ESL learners, we need to keep everything natural, and normal. Teaching students only parts doesn’t mean that they can put them all together by themselves. We as educators need to be the guide for them that allow them to keep their own individuality while they learn English or any other language.

This study can continue in different ways. Since I didn’t have the chance to practice these theories in real life, I want to teach in an institution that accepts and allows these changes to happen in their classrooms, so I can have real results, and see if I feel these teaching theories have been successful in practice. This will allow me to evaluate what really works and what doesn’t. Making students think and communicate is not hard, and it allows them to develop their literacy skills in meaningful and interactive ways.

Reading this study may make educators stop asking themselves the following question, “how can the brain do four things at once?” (Smith, 1990, p.43). How can we create a curriculum that includes all the four domains of language without corrupting the student’s brain? It’s simple and easy. Just view the skills as one interactive puzzle. You as an educator will not find it difficult to make your students “remember, understand, learn, and think. It’s doing one” (Smith, 1990, p.44). It may seem difficult to teach the skills of language together because grammar, speaking, reading, and writing are different components. However, instead of looking at them separately, look at them as pieces that make up the whole language.
References:

(Original published on 2014)


Mitchell, H. Q., & Malkogianni, M. (2013). Get The Message; Unit 1 education unit 2 communication. In *KSA-Edition Traveler 6; English language; Secondary stage; Credits system; Annual system; Elective program; Third secondary grade; Level six; Second semester; Student’s book* (pp.7-30). Greece, Europe: MM Publications. (Pilot edition)


Phonics in writing

The story below was written at home by eight-year-old Shoshana for her great-aunt who was terminally ill from cancer. She wrote it spontaneously and without adult input, choosing a folktale form to solve the problem of mortality for herself and her loved one.

The old man by Shoshana

Ons upon a time

ther was an old man

and his doddre. They

lived in a little hase

in the woods. The

man was so old that

he couldn’t wee. So

his doddre had to give

him braacite lunch

and dinre in bed. One

day wen the doddre was

working three the tory

she found a magic leef.

She took it home and-

put it in the old manste ye.

The old man dranc

the ye. He became

much yungrer and lived

happy Burr after.

This yungrer man yasp

be old man.

Invented Spellings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Invented Spelling</th>
<th>Conventional Spelling</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ons (once)</td>
<td>thar (there)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doddre (daughter)</td>
<td>oods (woods)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hase (house)</td>
<td>wods (woods)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>codint (couldnt)</td>
<td>warking (walking)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wocke (walk)</td>
<td>wen (when)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>braacite (breakfast)</td>
<td>forist (forest)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dinre (dinner)</td>
<td>leef (leaf)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thoe (through)</td>
<td>man (man's)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fawnd (found)</td>
<td>have (bename)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teye (tea)</td>
<td>yunge (young)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teye (tea) 2</td>
<td>yunge (young)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teye (tea) 2</td>
<td>yunge (young)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yungre (younger)</td>
<td>yungre (younger)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>happyule (happily)</td>
<td>aft (after)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>avre (ever)</td>
<td>aft (after)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yost (used)</td>
<td>aft (after)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total different words: 25
Total running words: 28
Total different words in text: 57
Total running words in text: 94

It may surprise you that Shoshana has spelled 70% of all the words and 56% of the different words conventionally. Our culture places so much emphasis on conventional spelling that we automatically focus on deviations.

Avoid using the term “correct” for spelling.
APPENDIX C. ANTIMOON, N.D., THE INTERNATIONAL PHONETIC ALPHABET.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Phoneme</th>
<th>Example Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ʌ</td>
<td>cup, luck</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɑ:</td>
<td>arm, father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>æ</td>
<td>cat, black</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɛ</td>
<td>met, bed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə</td>
<td>away, cinema</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>əːt</td>
<td>turn, learn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɪ</td>
<td>hit, sitting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iː</td>
<td>see, heat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɒ</td>
<td>hot, rock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɔː</td>
<td>call, four</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʊ</td>
<td>put, could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uː</td>
<td>blue, food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʌɪ</td>
<td>five, eye</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aʊ</td>
<td>now, out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɔɪ</td>
<td>say, eight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ʊə</td>
<td>go, home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ɔɪ</td>
<td>boy, join</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b</td>
<td>bad, lab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d</td>
<td>did, lady</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>find, if</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g</td>
<td>give, flag</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h</td>
<td>how, hello</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j</td>
<td>yes, yellow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k</td>
<td>cat, back</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>leg, little</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>man, lemon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>n</td>
<td>no, ten</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p</td>
<td>sing, finger</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>q</td>
<td>pet, map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r</td>
<td>red, try</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s</td>
<td>sun, miss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
<td>she, crash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>tea, getting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f</td>
<td>check, church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə̆̊</td>
<td>think, both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ə̆̈̊</td>
<td>this, mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Column 1</td>
<td>Column 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>voice, five</td>
<td>wet, window</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zoo, lazy</td>
<td>pleasure, vision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>just, large</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D. ALDIHNAYN, 2015, STRATEGY 1

prepare for prayer and ensure the area is clean.

Insha’allah

Face the Qibla toward kabah.

Raise my hands up to my ears and say:

Allah is the greatest.
Follow it with the opening chapter of the Quran, "Surah Al-Fatihah", and then another short surah of my choice.

This position called "ruku". Bend, and say three times, "Glorified is my Lord, the Most Great." "O our Lord, and all praise is to you."
Go down, and say three times

"Glory be to my lord, the most supreme"

Raise my head and sit for a moment

Then move back to the same position to perform the second

Sai

Say ta shahhuda

I am done
APPENDIX F. A SCREEN SHOT FROM MY PHONE SHOWS THE APPS