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Analysis of Linguistic Inclusion in TESOL Courses for Teacher Candidates

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Analysis of Linguistic Inclusion in TESOL Courses for Teacher Candidates

Abstract

According to TESOL Standard 1, teacher candidates are required to have knowledge about language including: having knowledge in foreign language grammar and how English develops in ELLs, Standard 1a, comprehension of language acquisition and how L1 influences learning, Standard 1b, and understanding of the language process where an interlanguage develops as ELLs become comfortable using English, Standard 1c (TESOL International Association, 2018). To identify whether teacher candidates in TESOL courses are prepared to meet TESOL Standards 1a, 1b, and 1c, a study was conducted to test one hundred teacher candidates' knowledge of basic linguistic features of English and the five most commonly spoken native world languages of ELLs. By the end of the TESOL course that the teacher candidates were enrolled in, nineteen out of the twenty-five survey questions about basic linguistic features of the world languages used in this study had less than 50% of the participants choose the correct response. Only three of the questions showed significant change in the number of correct responses by the end of the course ($p < 0.001$, $p = 0.030$, $p = 0.030$). Study data suggests that TESOL Standards 1a, 1b, and 1c are not adequately met through the TESOL course examined in this study, limiting the ability of teacher candidates to meet academic needs of ELLs. TESOL course instructors may want to reexamine if linguistic awareness is sufficiently covered in their curriculum and teacher candidates may want to question their current linguistic understanding. Further semesters of data collection, changes in curriculum, and improved surveys to limit variables can help elucidate if the trend found in this study is consistent over time. Future studies may be necessary to investigate how to incorporate linguistic awareness into TESOL courses for teacher candidates.

Keywords: TESOL standards, linguistic awareness, curriculum, English Language Learners, ELL, linguistic features, teacher training, ESOL, TESOL curriculum, English learners, linguistically inclusive

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Introduction

The number of English Language Learners (ELLs) in the United States has grown substantially and will continue to grow. Thirty-two states as well as D.C. had over five percent of their student population classified as ELLs in the 2007-2008 school year (Boyle et al, 2010). This trend continued in 2015, when the number of K-12 ELLs in the United States rose from 9.3% to 9.5% of the student population (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2016). Some states such as California have 21% of their student population classified as ELLs (NCES, 2016). With such a large increase in ELLs, intervention had to occur.

With the addition of laws such as No Child Left Behind and Title III, the U.S. government set forth a declaration that schools would be held responsible for providing an equal opportunity for all students, including ELLs (Tanenbaum et al., 2012). Recently, this has been modified to serve ELLs more effectively with the establishment of ESSA, Every Student Succeeds Act (US Department of Education, 2015). A list of standards was thus generated by TESOL International to meet the needs of ELLs, specifying the requirements for teacher training programs to effectively meet these laws (TESOL, 2018).

The first TESOL standard, knowledge about languages, acts as the main focus of this study, as knowing about language and linguistic features is integral to effectively teaching ELLs (TESOL, 2018). According to TESOL Standard 1, teacher candidates are required to have knowledge about language including: having knowledge in foreign language grammar and how English develops in ELLs, Standard 1a, comprehension of language acquisition and how L1 influences learning, Standard 1b, and understanding of the language process where an interlanguage develops as ELLs become comfortable using English, Standard 1c (TESOL, 2018). These standards outline the importance of understanding language and how it influences acquisition as a cornerstone to effectively educating ELLs.

Despite the efforts to achieve these standards, teacher candidates continue to report lack of preparation to teach ELLs (Durgunoglu & Hughes, 2010). Meeting TESOL standards has somewhat of a contentious history, with educators debating the place of linguistic instruction in teacher education (Celce-Murcia, 1991). More recently, this debate has shifted towards meeting the established standards, leaning more towards new pedagogical methods that focus on comprehension (Bunch, 2013). In one study, 160 out of 162 teacher participants preferred a combined approach versus teaching linguistic awareness as a separate subject without incorporating it into other lessons (Borg & Burns, 2008).

Arguably, teacher preparation programs have shied away from linguistic instruction as programs strive to avoid discouraging students from exploring language; mistakes are naturally part of the process of language learning and should instead be encouraged (Bunch, 2013). Regardless of where an educator stands on the debate, linguistic instruction is still pivotal, which is why Standard 1.a is dedicated to its understanding. The question therefore arises how to promote linguistic awareness without blocking language learning in the pursuit of perfect grammar.

Simultaneously, this does not mean training prescriptivist teachers. Prescriptivism is the linguistic idea that there is only one grammatically correct version of a language, and that deviations from it are inherently incorrect (Straaijer, 2019). While using correct English grammar is important for ELLs, there is a danger in this thought process. It may lead a teacher to believe dialects of English are not equal to the prospective English dialect spoken by the ELL teacher. Therefore, allowing for grammar mistakes in English is important; what is perfect English is relative to the speaker's upbringing.

Teachers also may not have positive attitudes towards world languages, possibly due to a lack of foreign language exposure during their K-12 schooling. With English becoming more and more important globally, teacher candidates in the United States may not have a background in learning other languages; some may even expect others to know English by default (Carpenter et al., 2015). The idea of English superiority has continued as a monolingual-only teaching process in the United States despite the country's incredible linguistic diversity (Lamus, 2008). Some research, such as Adger et al. (2003), argues that educators keep this attitude of English superiority due to a failure of professional preparation of teacher candidates to adequately cover the conflict of linguistic power in teaching. Monolingual microaggressions have a detrimental effect on English learning in U.S. schools; exposure to world languages may help mitigate this problem (Shim, 2017).

A move towards teacher candidates' proficiency in both English and the linguistic features of the most commonly spoken world languages is necessary. Several proposals have been put forth probing the role of linguistic awareness in teacher preparation programs (Bunch, 2013). Overall, one of the goals of teacher preparation programs should be to graduate linguistically responsive educators who have background knowledge of the linguistic features of world languages, English, and the interaction between different languages and cultures (Lucas & Villegas, 2013). This rests on the fact that educators often do not have a background in world languages.

Undergraduate teacher candidates are required to take courses which prepare them to better serve the growing ELL population. This article will refer to one of these courses as a TESOL course. In this TESOL course, teacher candidates learn to use the strategies appropriate for the specific levels of English proficiency as defined by Nutta et al. (2014): beginner, intermediate, and advanced. While understanding and meeting academic needs of ELLs at various levels of English proficiency is important, individualized education specific to the linguistic challenges posed by the native languages of ELLs should be equally considered. Challenges of an ELL whose native language (L1) is Spanish are different from those of Arabic. It is therefore key to have knowledge of basic linguistic features of both English and ELLs' native languages in order to structure a teacher candidate's education addressing individual challenges beyond an ELL's English proficiency.

The current most commonly spoken languages in ELL homes in the United States are Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, and Arabic (Soto et. al., 2015). Undergraduate students in teacher preparation programs will be naturally exposed to these languages, yet they may not have a basic knowledge of the linguistic features of these languages. Even minimal awareness of the linguistic features such as direction of writing and sentence

structure allows teacher candidates to better understand and predict challenges in ELLs' acquisition of the English language. A combination of language proficiency level understanding, pedagogical knowledge of teaching ELLs, and a basic knowledge of the linguistic features of the most commonly spoken languages should be required. Currently, teacher candidates have not been able to adequately implement some of these elements or they may be using ineffective methods in teaching ELLs (Graus & Coppen, 2018).

Research Questions

- Are teacher candidates enrolled in TESOL courses prepared to meet TESOL Standards 1a, 1b, and 1c?
- Do teacher candidates have sufficient knowledge of linguistic features of English as well as the most commonly spoken world languages to meet academic needs of ELLs?

Materials and Methods

Answering the above questions in the context of this study means that teacher candidates should successfully demonstrate their knowledge of the linguistic features of the most commonly spoken world languages encountered in TESOL. In this study, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, and Arabic were selected as the most commonly spoken languages. Beyond this, knowledge of basic English grammar was tested to gather data to determine how well teacher candidates understand English grammar. This provided a glimpse into teacher candidates' awareness of specific features of English without resorting to prescriptivism, encouraging teacher candidates to take a critical look at the language being taught to ELLs.

Using a survey at the start and end of the semester, this study planned on bringing awareness to how much undergraduate teacher candidates know about world languages. Through comparison of pre- and post-survey results, the study participants demonstrated the gains they made in language awareness. Analyzing the course instructor's perception of linguistic instruction in teacher preparation courses was an important component; it provided an idea as to whether a linguistically inclusive curriculum is supported by faculty. Without faculty support of this curriculum style, it is challenging to implement updated standards.

Three spring semester sections of a TESOL course consisting of a total of 100 teacher candidates from one major U.S. university were included in this study. This group of 100 teacher candidates consisted of two sections of 35 teacher candidates and one section of 30 teacher candidates. Out of this group, 76 participated in the survey at the beginning of the course and 57 participated in the survey at the end of the course. One instructor taught all three sections and participated in the study as well. Data were gathered through an anonymous online survey.

This survey was conducted twice during the semester when the teacher candidates were enrolled in the TESOL course. The pre-survey was performed during the first two weeks of the course and the post-survey was implemented during the last two weeks of the course. Between the pre- and post-survey, the teacher candidates continued their TESOL course. Pre and post surveys were administered in order to assess the knowledge of the participants at the beginning of the course versus their knowledge at the end of the course. This was done in order to assess whether the TESOL course made a substantial impact in participants' knowledge of linguistic features of English as well as most commonly spoken languages of ELLs. Comparing these

results generates values which can be tested for significance of change as well as the percentage of participants correctly answering questions about linguistic features of English and most commonly spoken world languages.

The course instructor was given additional questions in order to analyze the instructor's perspective on linguistic awareness and its place in a TESOL course. The survey questions for the course instructor were designed to analyze how the instructor feels about the current state of the TESOL course, the instructor's knowledge of linguistic features of English, and the most frequently spoken native languages of ELLs. Gathering this data also allows future research a chance to see what the instructor for TESOL courses believes is important or necessary to be included in the course curriculum.

No personally identifiable information was collected. Participants were provided a summary of the study and they reserved the right to refuse participation. One of the survey questions asked if participants would allow their responses to be used for research purposes. The survey was used as a part of two different course assignments; an alternative assignment was provided for all enrolled students if they chose not to take the survey.

For the first section regarding the most commonly spoken world languages, the questions were designed to cover the basic linguistic features that affect how ELLs acquire English. Linguistic feature questions were designed to include basic characteristics that define languages; these characteristics include the direction of writing and word order. The questions were also designed to not go beyond the context of the TESOL course.

The languages used in the survey included Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, Vietnamese, Haitian Creole, and Arabic (Soto et. al., 2015). The first section of the survey was designed to examine the study participants' knowledge of the writing system, direction of writing, standard word order, and other linguistic features of the five most commonly spoken native languages of ELLs. Each of the languages used in the survey had five questions with each question focusing on one of these areas. The second section of the survey was designed to examine the study participants' knowledge of English grammar. All of these questions had four answer choices with one correct answer. Survey questions in this section were designed based on grammar books and resources for each language (Abu-Chacra, 2007; Bradley & Mackenzie, 2004; Ross & Ma, 2006; Thompson, 1987; Valdman, 1988).

The questions regarding the writing system of the most commonly spoken world languages asked the survey participants to choose the best match for the writing sample of the language. Direction of writing questions asked which way text is written in the language (e.g., right-to-left horizontally, left-to-right vertically), and standard word order questions asked about the typical order of subjects, verbs, and objects in a typical sentence. The linguistic features and L1 interference details questions were more complex. Linguistic features questions focused on grammar, such as if the language conjugates or if its phonetics is different from English. The L1 interference details questions targeted specific challenges ELLs may experience with learning English.

The second section of the survey focused on English grammar. It included a total of fourteen fill-in-the-blank multiple-choice questions where the participants chose the correct answer from two answers provided. The questions were designed to gauge the survey participants' knowledge of English grammar. By using the same survey questions at the start and the end of the course, results could be directly compared to see if any statistically significant change occurred after successful completion of the course. To compare these results, a Welch's *t*-test was performed as it eliminates typical problems occurring with variance. This is important because the number of responses at the beginning and end of the semester is different. This test is preferred to a Student's *t*-test and it is shown to be the better option in regard to comparing student perception for populations above thirty (Delacre et al., 2017).

The instructor of the course took the same survey, though there was an additional section asking about the instructor's understanding and preparedness for teaching linguistically inclusive curriculum. The question type used in this additional section was a Likert scale, with answers consisting of strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree (Likert, 1932). This method has been used to gather opinions of participants in a simple system which marks responses with values 1-5, allowing the perception at the start and end of the study to be compared (Sullivan & Artino, 2013).

Student perception of their linguistic knowledge was evaluated using an online discussion assignment where the participants reflected on how the survey made them feel as well as on their linguistic skills required to teach ELL students. This assignment was optional, with an alternative assignment provided for those who did not wish to take part in the research. Student responses were kept de-identified for the purpose of the research. They were analyzed to see if students believed the pre- and post-surveys brought awareness of how much or how little they knew about the linguistic features of English and other most commonly spoken world languages. Due to the nature of student perception being biased and not qualitative, it is difficult to interpret it. These remarks are only briefly discussed due to their lack of a qualitative nature.

As this study was conducted over one semester with three classes of students, there was some level of variance. Regardless of what was taught in the course used in this study, students experienced learner fatigue toward the end of the semester. A specific question was added to the survey which asked participants to provide a specific answer. Participant data with a different answer for that question was not included in data analysis; any other answer would indicate a lack of reading the question and therefore a lack of legitimacy of their responses.

Results

The percentage of students with the correct answer on basic and complex linguistic knowledge questions in this survey was seldom above 50%. Table 1 and Table 2 show that less than 50% of the participants responded with the correct answer in nineteen out of the twenty-five questions asked in the survey. To further investigate if the classroom instruction had significantly changed student knowledge of linguistic features of the most commonly spoken world languages, a Welch's *t*-test was performed using $\alpha=0.05$ to find whether data collected from the survey were significant and the results are in Table 1 and Table 2. The results indicate that student knowledge increased by a statistically significant amount in the following topics: Arabic direction of writing ($p<0.001$), Arabic linguistic details ($p=0.030$), and Haitian Creole linguistic

details ($p=0.030$). No other questions had a significantly increased number of correct responses by the end of the TESOL course, even if the percentage of correct answers seemed to have decreased or increased comparing the start and end of the TESOL course in Table 1 and 2.

Students' knowledge of Mandarin Chinese L1 interference also increased by a marginally significant amount ($p=0.051$). Student knowledge did not statistically increase or decrease in any other topic, though the number of correct responses concerning Spanish linguistic details decreased by a marginally significant amount ($p=0.066$). No significant values were found for the questions asked about Vietnamese language.

The instructor's survey responses were 96% correct at the start and end of the course, with only one incorrect answer at both times surveyed. Due to having the same results at the start and end of the semester, it is not seen as a significant change.

Table 1*Student Correct Responses and Significance on Linguistic Questions Part One*

Question	Percentage Correct at Start	Percentage Correct at End	<i>t</i> -value	<i>p</i> -value
Spanish				
Word Order	48.65	37.50	1.272	0.206
Writing	91.89	92.73	-0.018	0.861
Direction of Written Language	89.19	92.86	-0.730	0.467
Linguistic Features	57.33	41.07	1.852	0.066**
L1 Interference Details	26.67	19.64	0.946	0.346
Mandarin Chinese				
Word Order	30.67	36.36	-0.673	0.502
Writing	49.33	58.93	-1.086	0.279
Direction of Written Language	28.00	32.14	-0.507	0.613
Linguistic Features	24.00	23.21	0.104	0.917
L1 Interference Details	16.00	30.36	-1.972	0.051**
Vietnamese				
Word Order	38.67	48.21	-1.085	0.280
Writing	33.33	42.86	-1.103	0.272
Direction of Written Language	42.67	42.86	-0.022	0.983
Linguistic Features	32.43	37.50	-0.595	0.553
L1 Interference Details	34.67	25.00	1.202	0.232

p* < 0.05*p* < 0.1

Table 2*Student Correct Responses and Significance on Linguistic Questions Part Two*

Question	Percentage Correct at Start	Percentage Correct at End	<i>p</i> -value	<i>t</i> -value
Haitian Creole				
Word Order	48.65	32.14	0.049	0.961
Writing	28.38	30.36	-0.243	0.808
Direction of Written Language	75.68	80.36	-0.638	0.525
Linguistic Features	20.27	37.50	-2.197	0.030*
L1 Interference Details	27.40	32.14	-0.579	0.564
Arabic				
Word Order	43.24	37.50	0.658	0.512
Writing	76.00	73.21	0.359	0.720
Direction of Written Language	48.00	62.50	-5.742	<0.001*
Linguistic Features	28.00	46.43	-2.199	0.030*
L1 Interference Details	36.00	26.79	1.127	0.267

p* < 0.05*p* < 0.1

Table 3 shows that most participants were able to identify the correct response for each English proficiency questions. Two questions were found to have less than 50% of participants with correct answers: I/me when saying “between you and ____.” with 44.64% correct responses by the end of the semester and lay/lie, with 23.21% correct responses by the end of the semester. The instructor scored 100% on all English grammar questions. One answer in the English grammar section significantly changed by the end of the semester (*p*=0.019): choosing between I/me when saying “between you and ____.” This information was included in the classroom instruction as the examples of most common mistakes in English.

Table 3*English Grammar: Percentage of Correct Responses Part One*

Questions	Answer Choices	Percent Correct	t-value	p-value
When you get to the stadium, park in the A section, ---- meet us at the south entrance.	Then or than	94.64	1.99	0.44
How many times did you get sent to the ---- office last year?	Principal's or principle's	87.50	1.99	0.17
Their youngest daughter has been ---- into a graduate school.	Accepted or excepted	98.21	2.00	0.32
Her uncles sold ---- farm in Missouri.	There or their	100	No change	No change
When Bill and ---- were selected for the panel, we started working right away.	I or me	96.43	2.00	0.16
---- phone is that?	Who's or whose	78.57	1.98	0.67
The dogs like to go outside and ---- in the grass.	Lay or lie	23.21	1.98	0.98
Don't judge the book by ---- cover.	It's or its	82.14	1.98	0.30
Which is the most commonly accepted adjective word order?	big, round, lovely, wooden	51.79	1.98	0.72
The ---- spoon				

* $p < 0.05$

The course instructor's perception of the importance of linguistically-inclusive curriculum was measured on a scale from one to five where 1 was strongly agree, 2 was agree, 3 was neither agree nor disagree, 4 was disagree, and 5 was strongly disagree. The course instructor strongly agreed that students benefit from a linguistically-inclusive curriculum and that more teaching experience with using linguistically-inclusive methods is necessary before creating a curriculum containing it. Table 4 lists data of the instructor's perception of linguistically-inclusive curriculum.

Table 4*Course Instructor Perception of Linguistically-Inclusive Curriculum Part One*

Questions	Start	End
I do not have access to linguistically-inclusive curriculum materials.	4	4
I feel supported by my peers/the department when applying a new linguistically-inclusive curriculum.	3	3
Training in linguistic awareness would help me with implementation of linguistically-inclusive curriculum.	2	2
Prior teaching experience prevents linguistically-inclusive curriculum from being easily implemented.	4	3
My students are benefiting from linguistically-inclusive curriculum.	1	1
I need more experience using linguistically-inclusive methods in order to judge the curriculum appropriately.	1	1
Linguistically-inclusive curriculum requires significant effort outside of class in order to apply it.	2	3
I do not have enough class time to create a linguistically-inclusive curriculum.	4	3
Current methods of teaching this TESOL course need to be reviewed, whether they include linguistically-inclusive curriculum or not.	2	2

Table 4 reveals that the instructor disagreed that prior teaching prevents faculty from adopting a linguistically-inclusive curriculum and that it requires significant time outside of class to apply it. These values changed to neutral by the end of the study. The instructor also agreed that training in linguistic awareness would help and new methods are necessary to teach a TESOL course. A neutral opinion about faculty support for adopting linguistically-inclusive curriculum stayed neutral throughout the semester tested. The instructor disagreed that there was a lack of linguistically-inclusive curriculum material available.

Discussion

The post-survey conducted at the end of the semester demonstrates that student correct responses increased by a statistically significant amount in the questions about Arabic direction of writing ($p < 0.001$), Arabic linguistic features ($p = 0.030$), as well as Haitian Creole linguistic features ($p = 0.030$). There is no evidence to suggest a significant increase or decrease of correct responses occurred in almost every question. To some degree, this change shows that the course is providing some awareness regarding the linguistic features of the most commonly spoken world languages used in this study. However, only three out of twenty-five questions surveyed were significant with an $\alpha = 0.05$. This supports the notion that the course curriculum does not

provide effective linguistics awareness. More of the questions should have shown significant changes if topics covering basic linguistic information about these languages were provided.

Over the course of the semester, only one marginally significant change ($p=0.051$) occurred in teacher candidate responses to the survey questions about the linguistic features of Mandarin Chinese and Vietnamese languages. This marginally significant value should be cautiously assessed as legitimate, as it is above the $\alpha=0.05$ value used in this study. Mandarin Chinese and Vietnamese are linguistically distant from English. This may explain the lowest number of correct responses in the survey questions about the linguistic features of Mandarin Chinese and Vietnamese. On the other hand, correct answers in the responses to the questions about Arabic linguistic features improved despite Arabic not being linguistically related to English. Perhaps this was due to the fact that Arabic linguistic features were highly emphasized by the instructor of the courses in this study. The number of correct responses to the questions about linguistic features and L1 interference was consistently low in this study. The survey questions about Spanish linguistic features had the highest number of correct responses. This was not surprising considering the exposure to Spanish language both in the United States and the state where this study took place. Written language and the direction of writing in Spanish were identified correctly approximately 90% of the time. The survey responses to the questions about the linguistic features of Spanish do not show significant change over the course of the semester. There was one marginally significant value concerning Spanish: the number of the correct responses was marginally lower at the end of the course (linguistic details, $p=0.066$). The number of the correct responses to the more complex questions (linguistic features and L1 interference details) regarding Spanish did not improve.

Problematically, by the end of the semester fewer than 50% of the survey participants provided the correct response to most of the questions about languages other than Spanish. These questions exclude Arabic writing identification (73.21%), Arabic direction of writing (62.50%), Mandarin Chinese writing identification (58.93%), and Haitian Creole direction of writing (80.36%). This means that fewer than 50% of the participants chose the correct response in nineteen out of the twenty-five questions surveyed. Participant awareness of English linguistic features was consistently high both at the start and end of the course with only one significant value showing otherwise. Besides the question regarding the correct use of lay/lie showing a low number of correct responses, all other questions showed that teacher candidates enrolled in the TESOL course had a functional knowledge of English.

Based on this study's data, the course instructor's perspective for the most part is favorable towards a linguistically-inclusive curriculum. One problematic detail identified involves the neutral perception responses found in the questions about time in and outside of the classroom to change the curriculum as well as the support of peers and the department towards changing the TESOL course curriculum. Only one instructor participated in this data analysis; therefore, this opinion may not necessarily match with others.

Conclusion

By the end of the TESOL course, nineteen of the twenty-five survey questions about basic linguistic features of the world languages used in this study had less than 50% of the participants choose the correct answer. Only the questions about Arabic direction of writing

($p < 0.001$), Arabic linguistic features ($p = 0.030$), and Haitian Creole linguistic features ($p = 0.030$) showed significant change in responses by the end of the course. Only three out of twenty-five questions changing by the end of the course is problematic, as it shows that the TESOL course makes little impact on teacher candidates' understanding of the features of the world languages surveyed. Many study participants reported that the survey made them more aware of how little they knew about the most commonly spoken world languages. Though it can be debated how much linguistic knowledge is required for teachers of ELLs, factoring these ideas into instruction can only be beneficial. Overall, this study's data suggest that teacher candidates are not meeting TESOL Standards 1a, 1b, and 1c, as teacher candidates were unable to correctly identify linguistic features the majority of the time (TESOL, 2018). Instructors may want to reevaluate current TESOL course curriculum to see if teacher candidates are adequately prepared to teach ELLs.

As is the case with survey data and questioning of study participants, confounding variables are always possible due to the way questions are written. This study was performed over the course of one semester. Further semesters of data collection, improved surveys to limit variables, and changes in curriculum can help elucidate if the trend found in this study is consistent over time and whether this trend can be changed.

A few recommendations for educators can be gathered from the results of this study. Instructors who teach TESOL courses can assess teacher candidates' linguistic awareness by creating surveys exploring the knowledge of the linguistic features of most commonly spoken world languages. Opening up conversation about world languages can help increase awareness of how L1 affects learning of English. Creating activities to practice linguistic awareness can help shed light on linguistics and its role in meeting academic needs of ELLs. TESOL course instructors should test the claims made in this study to see if the problem presented in this study exists in their courses as well.

Active learning has been shown effective by current research in undergraduate education. Exploring its potential to connect teacher candidates with scenarios involving linguistic features of the most commonly spoken world languages may just help to solve the problem exposed in this study (Thibaut, 2019). Instructors who teach TESOL courses can incorporate active learning scenarios into their classes. These scenarios help future educators connect what is learned in the course and what occurs in schools. They also expose future educators to linguistically specific challenges that arise while teaching ELLs.

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