

Techniques of an ESL Master Teacher

By Horace Andrews

Introduction

Every field in education responds and adjusts to changes in pedagogical challenges. In ESL (English as a Second Language) emphasis is shifting from issues related to bilingual education to the large numbers of long-term ELLs (English Language Learners). Long-term ELLs are finally getting the attention they deserve. California is considering legislation to break out and report those English language learners in the public school system that are making little progress in learning English [Education Week, September 19, 2012]. Calderón and Minaya-Rowe (2011) have authored a widely-read book, *Preventing long-term ELLs*, offering plans of instruction to address the problem. A model Common Core unit specifically for ELLs for the Language arts will be pilot-tested in specific urban schools in 2013, Charlotte, North Carolina being one of them (Education Week, January 16, 2013). Calderón and Minaya-Rowe emphasize repeatedly that there is no substitute for good teachers, and to examine the techniques of good teachers and to learn from them will offer guidance in changes that are required in the ESL classroom to meet this problem. Thus, the time is right to look for innovative teaching techniques.

This paper studies the techniques of one exceptional ESL teacher in a middle school. Five years of continuous instruction in one school with one principal is unusual for an ESL professional as teaching techniques can be developed and refined in an uninterrupted fashion. Slavica Urbas is in her sixth year at the Robert F. Kennedy Middle School in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School System. When she began teaching at Kennedy in the 2007-08 school year, only 58% of her students were successful in attaining the prescribed annual progress in reading, measured by growth in the performance on the EOGs (End of Grade) reading test. Last year her success rate was 100%.

Slavica Urbas was born in Slovenia, the northern most province in the former Yugoslavia. She was the first of her family to earn a college degree. She had a natural inclination to teach and was good at languages. Her uncle was a teacher, providing support for her natural talents and aspirations. Her teaching career in the U.S. began in Vancouver, Washington where she taught young adults working toward their GED for four years and later middle school ESL students for further nine years. Ms Urbas earned her BA at the University of Slovenia in Ljubljana and her M. Ed at the City University in Seattle, Washington. She willingly shares with her students her experience as an immigrant and her problems learning English. Goals for her students reach beyond the function/feature strategies, such as ‘cause and effect,’ the main point ,” introduction and conclusion,” striving to help students to determine, “what is the text all about,” and what techniques the author is using to indicate purpose and intended effect on the reading audience. She is married with two daughters and a granddaughter and grandson. This is her sixth year teaching at the Kennedy Middle School.

I had the opportunity of observing and studying her classroom techniques for my PhD dissertation at UNC Charlotte in 2009-10. I have been tutoring her students since then. We trade ideas on ESL instruction, with my observations from the academic side and with hers concerning student problems and classroom dynamics. My academic interests lie in exploring Cummins’ Interdependence Hypothesis and his Threshold Hypothesis (Cummins, J, 2000) wherein he proposes that benefits from the L1(first language) will pass to the learner of the L2 (language to be acquired) if knowledge in the L1 and in the L2 are sufficiently well-developed. I have authored Spanish language reading tests with the assistance of faculty at the University of Guadalajara as part of my dissertation to test these hypotheses.

I have chosen Bloom’s *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook II: Affective Domain* as a reference for values, interests and attitudes that one needs to address for success with ESL students. Early introduction and immersion in the demands and rhythms of the classroom, if linked to acceptance and inclusion, precede and are essential to “reception,” the first stage in the Affective taxonomy. The

principle of complexity, meaning that the more difficult to learn skills depend on and follow the lesser skills, underlies both Blooms Taxonomy in the cognitive domain as well as the affective domain.

Exploring whether Ms Urbas' pattern of instruction follows this principle of complexity and hierarchy of skills is the lens through which we are looking.

Success in ESL is both a cognitive and affective process. Ms Urbas blends the two continuously throughout the school year. The North Carolina Language Arts Program for Middle School, now superseded by the Language Arts Common Core Standards, sets the structure and the pace for cognitive development. The Affective side of instruction has little or no definition. In addition, how to teach the lexical and grammatical elements is left largely to the teacher.

My goal is to determine how to develop better practices in the ESL classroom by contrasting her non-hierarchical approach to language acquisition against Bloom's Taxonomy, which adheres to progressive steps. Her classroom pedagogy is unique because she implements reading and writing activities that are at assumed higher levels than many of the students' ability, which then leads to the development of higher order skills such as analysis and critical thinking. She also works to promote a strong classroom dynamic where students from diverse backgrounds can connect, as well as to help students address and overcome the difficulties of language acquisition and cultural assimilation. This practice emphasizes the affective domain in the ESL classroom by promoting higher motivation and helping students engage with the learning process.

The School and Performance over the Past Five Years

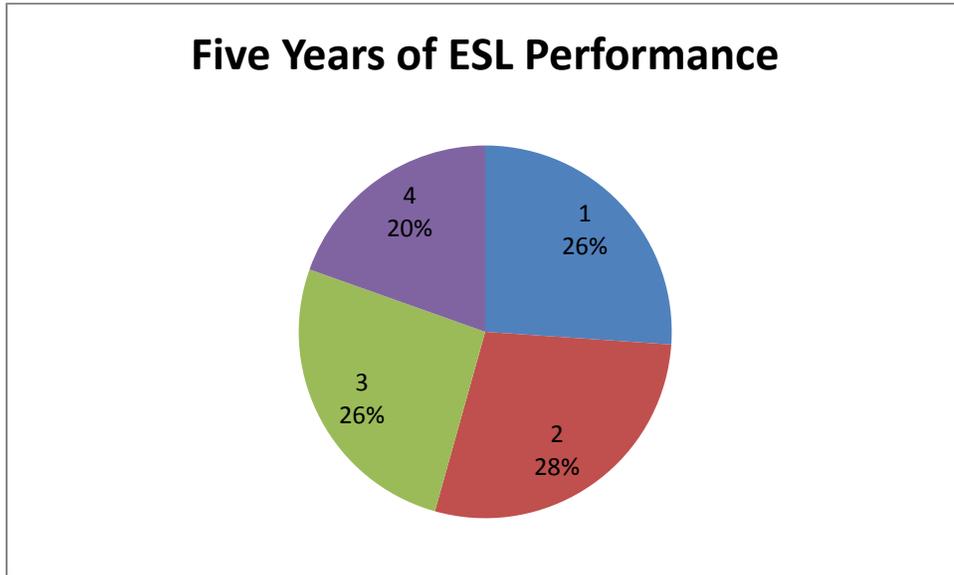
Kennedy is a medium-sized middle school of approximately 700 students in three grades: sixth, seventh and eighth. Roughly 35% of the students are Hispanic, 60% African American and the remaining 5%, white and Asian American. The larger frame of reference is the Charlotte Mecklenburg School system (CMS), a large school district in a metropolitan area in the South Eastern United States. This

school district contains both urban and rural schools. There are more than 100,000 students in all grades. Middle school accounts for approximately one third of the total. Hispanic students comprise roughly one third of total school enrollment. Kennedy is one of the smallest middle schools in the district that serves urban, suburban and rural communities. Most middle schools here are 1,000 students or more. From its location, far from the central city core, one would consider Kennedy a suburban school. Yet from its ethnic composition it is more typical of an urban school in the district.

The English Language Learners (ELLs) are largely Hispanic/Latino students between the ages of 11 and 14 years. There are between 30 and 40 students in the ESL four classes in any given year. ESL is a subset of the LEP (Limited English Proficiency) designation in CMS. For example, in the 2009-10 year the number of LEP students at Kennedy was 61, with nine of these students in a “monitored status,” meaning that their performance in content courses is being checked, but they are not in ESL. Sixteen other LEP students are not enrolled in ESL for a variety of reasons since attendance in ESL classes is optional, regardless of the scores on the English language Access tests. This leaves 36, the number of active ESL students.

For analytical purposes, I have only included as ESL students those students who have had Ms. Urbas as a teacher for at least two years; it is not unusual for the families of these students to move often and to interrupt their children’s education. The total of her included students over the five years is 46. I have divided them into four categories and my designation is arbitrary: Category 1 represents those that have passed the EOGs in Reading. The number is 12. Category 2 are those who have substantially increased their Access reading scores, at least are in the B level of difficulty at 3.5 or above, but, as yet, have not received at least a three on the EOGs in reading. This number is 13. Category 3 represents those who have made good, steady progress in reading but are still struggling. The number is 12. Category 4 represents no substantial improvement. The number is 9. Therefore, more than one half of Ms. Urbas’ students over the past five years have done well enough to meet the demands of high

school. The pie chart below illustrates this graphically. As a matter of demographic interest, of the 46, 38 are Hispanic and 8 are a variety of other language groups.



Bloom's Taxonomy

Two of the most often repeated terms in a teacher's ESL lexicon are Cognition and Motivation. Bloom's two taxonomies are valuable reference works that explore these two concepts. Bloom's Taxonomy is the common name for Bloom's *Taxonomy of the Cognitive Domain* (Bloom and Krathwohl, 1956). Many educators have been influenced by Bloom's hierarchy of cognitive skills. They were designed to assist teachers in classifying and measuring learning objectives by naming and defining levels where student thinking was taking place. One of Bloom's students, Lorin Anderson, with Krathwohl, updated the Taxonomy in *a Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching and Assessing* (Anderson, L., David R. and Krathwohl, D. et al, 2001), and this is the more modern version most often referred to. Anderson turned Bloom's nouns into active verbs as an example a noun (comprehension) became a verb (understanding) and turned knowledge into categories ranging from lower order to higher order, namely

factual, conceptual, procedural and meta-cognitive, in order to allow the teacher to assign activities that more closely match the level of the students. Thus, a new matrix was created to enable the teacher to more accurately target the lesson plan to the cognition of the student and the degree of complexity of the subject.

The focus in this paper is on the lesser-known *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives, Handbook II: Affective domain* that appeared eight years after the first Handbook. The term “affective filter” has worked its way into the ESL lexicon and deserves to be cited, specifically, due to that. This hypothesis was propounded by Krashen in 1983 as part of his theory of second language acquisition, called the Monitor hypothesis, (Krashen, S., 2003). Simply put, the affective filter acts to keep out language input of all sorts for LEP students and adults, particularly in the classroom context. The term can be taken to mean, interference of all sorts, but it tends to need more precise definition since the filter stifles motivation and thus learning for a variety of reasons, such as cultural values, interests, and adjustment phenomena just to name a few. As Bloom’s Taxonomies point out, constructing meaning is a process of knowledge acquisition and cognitive development, plus the hard to define affective domain. For Bloom and Krathwohl, the two domains are a fundamental unity but can be separated for analytical purposes as a series of parallel building blocks of increasing complexity as shown below (Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 1964, 49-50):

	<u>Cognitive Domain</u>	<u>Affective Domain</u>
Step 1.	Knowledge	Receiving
Step 2.	Comprehension	Responding
Step 3.	Application	Valuing
Step 4.	Analysis /Synthesis	Conceptualization
Step 5.	Evaluation	Organization

My interest lies primarily with the first two stages of the Affective domain: Receiving and Responding. According to the Taxonomy, Receiving, the first stage, begins as a passive function and extends into a more active one at the second stage. Responding is response to stimuli and taking satisfaction in it. Krathwohl, Bloom and Masia go deeper into the level of responding and differentiate between response based on desire to avoid punishment of some sort, and the voluntary nature of the response and satisfaction in participation: "... the concept "internalization" describes well the major process of the affective domain. As internalization progresses, the learner comes to attend to phenomena, to respond to them and to conceptualize them (Krathwohl, Bloom & Masia, 44.)

The Opening Weeks

The opening weeks are crucial to establishing the inclusive nature of her classroom dynamic. Each year is a mixture of returning sixth and seventh grade students, and newcomers. Before the newcomers arrive, there will be an opportunity to review the Educational Profile for Prospective Students, the scores on the Access English language tests in speaking, listening, reading and writing, and, when possible, a talk with the previous teacher. Newcomers are put in the front of the class and are paired with another student with a similar level and by perceived willingness to cooperate.

Warming up activities include introductions, as it is very important that they know one another. Low achievers are encouraged to speak as best they can and as a new subject is introduced, say what they know about the subject. Poorer readers are introduced right away to assistance from the Internet and exercises with Achieve 3000, Castle Learning, and Rosetta Stone, as most students understand this process of language learning right away. Photographs of all the students are on the back wall of the classroom. They are encouraged to bring maps, flags, and items of their personal interest from their native countries and to make a short presentation to the class.

While the order of the acquisition of language skills, first listening, speaking, then reading and writing is recognized, there is no delay with the introduction to reading and writing. She is strict on proper classroom conduct and obeying instructions, however, there are no formal consequences, such as In School Suspension for failure to meet standards since it means that the student misses class.

Roughly 80% of her students speak Spanish as their first language. Over her career she has found that it is preferable to have a “no Spanish in the classroom policy.” This focuses attention on the acquisition of English, and it is fairer to the non-Spanish speakers who would, quite naturally, feel discriminated against.

Students love authentic texts and respond to questions about them. Duke, Purcell-Gates, et al, 2006, have defined authentic literacy as containing the following elements: 1) true communicative purpose, that is, imparts real information, 2) texts that are used outside the school environment by readers and writers, and 3) forming the basis for doing creative things and thinking about values. Such texts form a platform for instructing in the techniques of reading and writing while students are enjoying reading and interested in writing about what they have found to be meaningful.

In 2001, she used *The Watson’s Go to Birmingham-1963* by Christopher Paul Curtis. The year before, two texts, Theodore Taylor, *The Cay* and Gary Paulson, *Hatchet* were the class texts. This year, sixth and seventh grade students are using Paulson’s *NightJohn* and the eighth grade is reading Nikki Grimes *Bronx Masquerade*, an extensive collection of poetry “slams”. All are coming of age stories relating to authority figures and overcoming fear and prejudice. As they read, students are prompted with strategies to employ to gain comprehension, such as questioning, predicting, clarifying, visualizing and evaluating. For example, a “Gist exercise” is used to identify “who, why, what, where, when and how” in a text and students must compose their own sentences to identify each. This promotes searching techniques to help students understand texts that are often categorized at a much higher reading level.

The Personal Journal

Personal journals were intended for the individual student's reflection and something of their own creation in a school world where they were constantly required to respond to the demands of others. Intending them as an opportunity for self-discovery, she prompted students with small homework exercises with themes like, "my ten most favorite things," "I am a poem," "a letter to my teacher," "What I would like to be."

I have given all the students pseudonyms to protect their privacy both in the Personal Journal and the Eight Grade Exit Project. Ms Urbas first created the student personal journal in the 2009-10 school year and has used variations on it in each year since; this year, journals of four of her seventh and eighth grade students are presently on display in media center of the school. She gave me free access to these personal journals. Although I have changed all of the names of the students, their words and the way they wrote them have not been altered. Even though she made it clear that there was no grade involved, and maybe because of that, many did not respond, or only responded once or twice. I saw quite a few empty portfolios. Thirteen students had some entries in their personal journals. Four of the thirteen wrote so little that they provided little and fragmentary information for the journals. Many of the thoughts in the nine journals under consideration are typical of any school children of middle school age, such as, "the day my little dog died," or "my first visit to Carowinds" (a local amusement park with roller coasters and other daredevil rides), or "I will try to get to class on time and not talk to my neighbor." What I set out to find were frequently-mentioned themes. There were two. "Family and the evening meal" (5 out of 9 possible mentions) were combined as one and "arriving in the US and moving" (8 out of 9 possible mentions) as another. Students that I knew well in the Seventh and Eighth grades, who had comments in both categories, are presented. Even though misspelled words and grammar problems were corrected, these excerpts are presented as they were written, with some missing periods supplied for easier reading. I have chosen four students out of the group to quote. They are very

different young persons, yet, surprisingly, their choice of examples and expression of feelings are very similar.

Carmen: “Why my Dad left Honduras. Because he was in a lot of problems with people everywhere when he was really young. He got a job in a bakery that they just pay 5 dollars an hour. That’s how he brings all of us. First his uncle, then his brother. Then they bring my older brother. Then in 1998 my mother and me when I was just 4 years. Next was my second brother. I get more problems than any other member of my family, because I wasn’t that strong like my brother or my parents. I didn’t run that fast and immigration caught me, but later let me go.”

“When I was in Honduras all my family eat together. Here, we never eat together except on weekends. I really love when we all eat together. Used to eat dinner at 10 pm, but I eat at 7 pm. All the family have to eat together at the same time.” *My life was so good in my beautiful country, Honduras. Very happy with my great-grand-parents and my grandmother. But one day I got the baddest news of all my life. Have to separate from my family in Honduras and move to the USA.*

Claudia: My experience and my family’s experience. I remember the most that we moved a lot. I lived in the house on Mango Streets (here the reference is to an autobiography by Sandra Cisneros entitled, *The House on Mango Street*. All the girls in the class had read this book either in Spanish or in English, although it was not required reading. The first chapter of the book is about moving from place to place in Chicago in the author’s youth and finally settling into a memorably-described, dilapidated house on Mango Street). We didn’t have to pay the rent.”

“Dinner in my house. Family eats together on the weekend but on the weekdays we can eat anytime. Sometimes I eat by myself because sense I’m the last one to get home from school

when my Mom is finished cooking the food we eat. And we don't really call it dinner because for me dinner is when you have dinner together with your family." I am a happy Mexican girl. I dream that someday my brother would come alive and I could be with him. My brother calling me far away up in the sky to come with him. I see myself in the mirror being prittier than others. I want to be the only perfect girl that gets boy's attention. My reflections on school- I would pay attention more. I will also read more books. I would bring all my materials to class and don't forget my class work. And I will also follow the rules. And not try to talk to much with my friends in class.

Ramon: Coming to America. I flew with my Mom from Ecuador. Then my father met us rented a van in Miami. We stayed at my uncle's for a week. Another uncle called and said Charlotte was great. It was cheap. Move into an apartment save money for a house. After 3 years-bought a house. And my dad started to buy everything knew for the house. Then my dad brought my sister and my mothers grandparents from Ecuador. Now there are 8 people in my family." Dinner. The process. Brothers and sisters set the table. My Dad serves. Main dish is ceviche. Call the family-grandmother, grandfather, Dad, Mom, little brother. Children take turns doing the dishes. Were supposed to eat together and the same thing, but we don't Mom eats milk and bread. Dad eats meat. Me and my brother eat ceviche."

Silvia: one year ago, I moved from Rhode Island. For me it was sad because I was moving from my hometown. I couldn't let go to everything because I knew everything was gonna change on that time. I couldn't imagine the last day in Rhode Island I cryed and everybody did. I only remembered when my new neighboor move into the old apartment were we lived for 11 years. I remembered that he gave me a flower for a good bye. That was sad, but in that moment I

grabe a book and say, “this flower will go with me were-ever and when we get to NC I will put it here inside this book to remembered you as my friend.” Every weekend old friends from RI (Rhode Island) visit us + other friends. My dad and the rest of the mens are cooking. The women are talking about the good old times in RI. When my mom is cooking I like to help her do a traditional soup for Honduras-Sopa de Caracol.”

Ms Urbas wants her students to express themselves without thinking whether the spelling or grammar are perfect: “The purpose of it is to encourage the students to write freely from their heart, and not think about spelling and grammar. This is an excellent way for my students to think in English and improve writing fluency at the same time.” Furthermore, as explained in my dissertation regarding the significance of the Personal Journal in the ESL classroom:

The *Personal Journal* is a glimpse of a private world with an influence on behavior in the ESL classroom. Here is an important example of discourse, a discourse taking place inside the classroom, as a class assignment, illuminating the student’s life outside of the classroom. What these students have written are stories giving expression to first-hand experience, about past events, wherein the storyteller seeks to order and to make sense of their experiences (Andrews, 2010).

The Eighth Grade Exit Project (project-based learning)

“Research is driven by the demands of the high school,” emphasizes Ms Urbas, “and the need for rigor. ELLs always fear such an exit project, but they can do it.” In spite of the initial resistance, her students put a lot of energy into their projects. Until the writing stage they had to do a lot of work in the media center with books, encyclopedias and even reference works. Each student picked an adult in school to evaluate the work and to guide their efforts. This outside help was given very generously. They did research on the internet and asked their parents for private time at home. The really weak

moment was pre-delivery practice. “They wanted to memorize the whole presentation, commented Ms Urbas, “ I noticed that in their “reflections” that time management had been a big problem. They have trouble setting dates. But, for example, Carmen blossomed as a serious student from the process, while Luis is a natural presenting on his feet. I would love to do it again. How else will they develop these skills?”

An additional difficult time was getting started, and choosing a topic. The difference between a biography and an autobiography had to be understood. In the beginning, they simply picked up the books and left through looking at the pictures. Whose voice was speaking in what they read presented difficulties; whose attitude did they want to address and express? Since each presentation involved a poster presentation to display the research, another issue was how to create a poster. These posters are tri-fold display boards, 36 inches by 48 inches, with the main and central panel 24 inches wide. In addition to gathering some representative pictures and some pertinent quotes, the teacher drilled each student on how to identify the issue or problem, the background, a graph to emphasize the extent of the problem, what the critics say, and whether there is a solution, or a conclusion. They needed to do this on their poster which would be put on the wall in the library for the whole school to see and in their short speech presenting their work to a jury of faculty members. Following are the choices of each student and what they produced as the central topic sentence for their poster in their own voices:

Carmen: *Muhammad Ali*. “After being called “the greatest” in boxing Muhammad Ali is now fighting for his life against Parkinson’s disease. Ali has also become one of the best-know athletes in the world.”

Miguel: *Wildfires*. “Wildfires are driven by variable environmental conditions fuel load, wind, weather, topography.

Verónica: *Alcoholism*. "Alcohol abuse causes extensive damage to your health, your loved ones and society"

Claudia: *AIDS*. "Aids is a virus caused by a virus called HIV"

Luis: *Illegal immigration*. "Many illegal immigrants come to the United States to get a better life for themselves, and their families. I chose this topic because I am interested in learning about illegal immigration."

Silvia: *Obesity of Young People*. "Obesity causes heart disease, type II diabetes and different types of cancer."

Andrés: *UFOs*. "Unidentified flying objects have been seen all over the world."

Teachers could learn a great deal from the variety of topics and the value placed on, and meaning behind, those choices. For example, Miguel and Claudia chose definitions. Silvia and Verónica chose cautionary or warning messages. Others voiced their observations and conclusions. Luis wants to find out more about his subject.

Each presentation poster had six or seven pictures, one graph, the thesis statement and perhaps a cartoon or other visual aid. After the presentations, each student was asked to write their "Reflections," on the project and the process and what they thought they got out of it. Only three of the seven responded, which is undoubtedly significant, yet is difficult to interpret. Of the three, Claudia who had chosen AIDS was the most forthcoming. "It was a learning experience," she wrote, "because I got to look back and remember some parts. I believe that I did well when I was showing the pictures."

To the question, "What would you do differently?" she answered, "I would of tried to look at the people [the jury] more often and tell them more details and be more into my project." Carmen, who had chosen Muhammad Ali, responded, "This project was really valuable for me because I learn a lot of things and will be prepare. I think I really got into the topic. I learned how to pronounce new words and

their meanings.” Finally, Silvia wrote, “I learned that you need to be active and don’t eat junk food, so you won’t become obese.”

There is no substitute for authentic voices to evidence progress and learning. In theory, these students should not be able to accomplish what they have in the Eighth Grade Reading Project. There are many basic areas in which they are still weak, yet if school has become a fun and engaging place to be, it can be argued that great progress has been made. Time is short before they enter high school, and there will always be differences of opinion on where to spend this precious resource.

Ms. Urbas’ Teaching Style

Older comprehensive second language texts, such as Celce-Murcia & McIntosh’s *Teaching English as a second or foreign language* (1979), treat speaking and listening, the first two of the four domains of language, the second two being reading and writing, as the building blocks and prerequisites for reading. Likewise, in “Reading and language learning: Cross linguistic constraints on second language development,” Koda (2007) views speaking and listening as necessary sub skills to be taught first.

However, Ms Urbas aligns herself with the more recent standard texts, such as Herrera, Perez & Escamilla (2010) in favoring an interactive reading process model suggested in *Teaching reading to English language learners*. This style is what Cook (2008) refers to as an eclectic style combining direct instruction with role-play and numerous student presentations. Such a style could be described as an intermediate ESL reading program (Gaskill, 1979). Such a program has two major components: reading skills and reading comprehension. Reading skills involve reading for the main idea, vocabulary building and syntactic structures. Reading comprehension requires a wide variety of reading materials. Class presentations are important and students are encouraged to find their own meaning in text. While reading skills are required to pass the North Carolina EOGs, reading comprehension is necessary to prepare for the demands of high school. Mickulesky (1990), in *A short Course in Teaching Reading Skills*,

uses the term, “patterns of textual organization” to encompass both domains. Underlying the accent on patterns lies the understanding that acquisition of the English language code and patterns of discourse are as significant a barrier to academic English proficiency as cognitive development. For the reader in his or her L1 the language of a passage is its meaning but rather a code of signals, yet for the L2 reader, not yet ready to internalize these signals, the structure itself conveys meaning and needs to be analyzed.

To summarize, Ms Urbas pushes her students at an intermediate level. This plan does not include lesson time for listening and speaking instruction, per se; students get pushed and often struggle. For instance, she assigns similar writing activities to all her students, activities involving both higher-order question and also lower-order questions, rather than assigning different activities to match different skill levels. However, she anticipates varying levels of responses based student ability. In this manner, her pedagogy differs from Bloom’s Taxonomy. Operating on the belief that her students get a great deal of language input in their content classes, as well as in ESL, her building blocks for reading comprehension do not include speaking and listening. In this way, also, her approach differs from Bloom’s Taxonomy. The key characteristics of her teaching style are listed below, not in order of importance:

- 1) Vocabulary building through reading
- 2) Text structure and comprehension strategies
- 3) Writing to build spelling and syntax
- 4) Motivation and teacher attention to the student

While on one hand, in Bloom’s Cognitive Domain, *The Eight Grade Reading Project* adheres to stage 3, “Application”, the hierarchical building block approach of Bloom’s Taxonomy does not fit other key aspects of her pedagogy, yet it adds value by the contrast. A welcome to join in the class routine in the first days of the semester is her way of beginning to challenge and penetrate the Affective filter. It

precedes Bloom's Receiving and Responding and yet runs parallel to them throughout the school year. Also, the process of acclimation to the classroom for ESL students involves coming to terms with the sadness and alienation we see clearly here in the Personal Journal and then overcoming it.

Her approach implants islands of knowledge and understanding in the minds of students that they will have to connect and sort out for themselves over time. She demonstrates the conviction that learning is based on the repetitive input of patterns but not rules, and that a positive attitude toward the classroom, school and instruction that must be initiated early and cultivated continuously is a prerequisite for progress is a prerequisite for progress.

Master teachers are sensitive to the parallel worlds of motivation and cognition. It is born out of love for their students and nurturing them throughout the middle school years and the demands of the school system for test results to measure progress. To be a facilitator of the learning process, a teacher's role which is supported by many educators is not the model that emerges here, rather we find a traditional leader with innovative technique.

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