

Discussion of Massachusetts ESOL Standards

Heide Spruck Wrigley

Taskforce Meeting on Standards

Austin, Texas

July 2004

The Foundation

- Internal and external teams working together
- Grounded SLA and “lived experience”
- Essential skills across levels (deal with police)
- Saw language and literacy as developmental – a series of approximations
- Cognitive model (includes “habits of mind” or language awareness)
- Acknowledge that ESL is not just “ABE with an accent”

ABE and ESL – Differences

- ESL classes make up close to half the system – most learners at the beginning levels
- Learning to speak another language is different from learning to read and write or solve problems in one's own language
- Cross-cultural competence needed
- Learning goals may differ significantly
- Educational backgrounds are much more varied

ESL- ABE

- Language learning grows largely through social interaction (not primarily through reading and writing)
- Learners must develop communicative competence (includes tone)
- Errors are a natural part of language learning (interlanguage) – “mastery” becomes problematic

...The Process

- Discussion of what counts
 - No outside stakeholders initially
- Review of other frameworks (pp)
 - Canada, ACTFL; TESOL; California
- Final draft created through
 - Face to face discussions
 - On-line review of drafts
 - “Collaborative” writing

Organization

Guiding Principles

Strands (Broad Language Domains)

Standards (more specific)

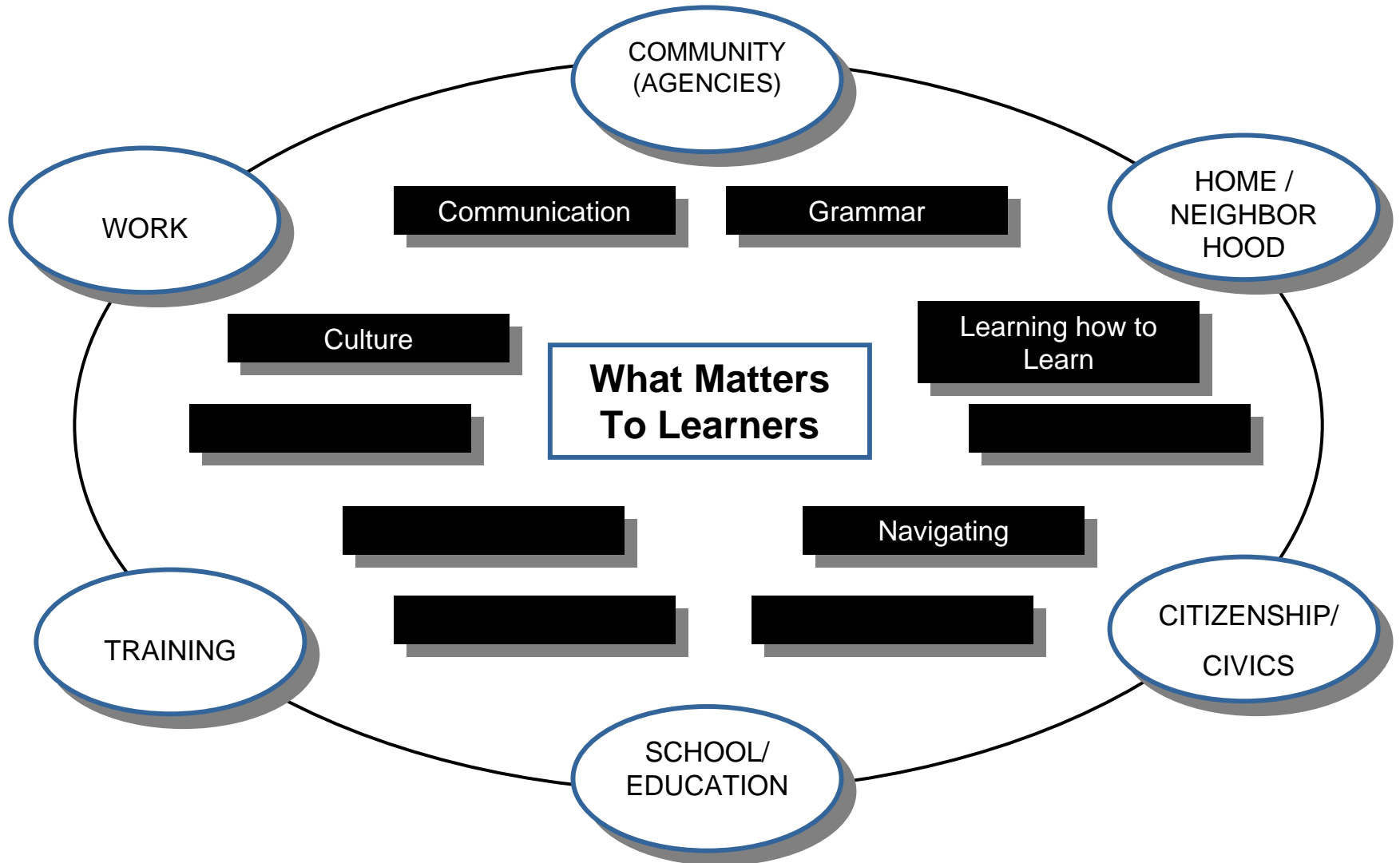
Examples

Student quotes and

Vignettes

throughout

Language Contexts and Domains



Learning Strands (Domains)

- Oral and Written Communication –
 - focused on fluency
- Language Structure and Mechanics
 - focused on accuracy
- Intercultural Knowledge
- Navigating Systems
- Developing Strategies and Resources for Learning
 - learning how to learn on your own

Oral & Written Communication Standards

ELL will increasingly be able to

- Express themselves for social, functional and expressive purposes
- Understand English used by a variety of English speakers in diverse settings
- Get meaning from a variety of texts
- Develop a repertoire of strategies to facilitate understanding and meaning-making

Oral and Written Communication ...

ELL will increasingly be

- Aware of communication as a process of negotiation between listener and speaker
- Willing to take risks with English in real life situations, no matter what their level
- Able to identify what they don't understand in oral and written communication

Go to Folder for Examples

P. 33 ff.

- General description of why the standards are important to student learning
- Specification for the standard
 - Examples
 - Guidance for teaching the standard at different levels.
- P. 24
- P. 64

Overall Framework Components

- Guiding Principles (ESOL)
- ABE/ESL Common Principles
- Strands (areas) and Standards
 - What students should know etc
- Applying the Standards to Students' Lives
- Cross-cutting Themes

Themes to Grapple With

- Assessment issues
- Native language literacy and use
- Learning disabilities
- Technology
- Identity and Diversity

The Seven Guiding Principles

1. Adults come to ESOL classes with a diversity of native language skills, formal education, learning styles, cultural backgrounds, and life experiences which impact their learning.



The Seven Guiding Principles

2. Adult learners come to ESOL programs with a variety of motivations for learning English, a range of personal educational and career goals, and differing expectations about the learning process.



The Seven Guiding Principles

3. Adult ESOL learners need to develop English language skills that will allow them to understand and be understood in both oral and written English.

My Wonderful Home



Martina Vazquez

My home is made of love, tears, and sacrifice. That is why we love it and take care of it.

Each corner has something special. For example, the flower pot means happiness. My happiness is there because my husband and children are there.

The Seven Guiding Principles

4. Language learners move through a series of predictable stages; however, teachers and learners need to understand that progress may be inconsistent from day to day and across the four skill areas.



The Seven Guiding Principles

5. Language learning requires risk taking.



The Seven Guiding Principles

6. Learning about cultural norms and U.S. American institutions is an integral aspect of learning American English.



The Seven Guiding Principles

7. Second language acquisition for adults is a process that typically takes more time than most learners spend in an ESOL classroom.



Capturing Learner Voices

- The document includes a needs assessment or focus group guide to be administered both on the program and on the classroom level.
- It is designed to capture
 - when and where students need English,
 - what students' goals and interests are, and
 - what their dreams are.



What's Different?

- It is a guiding document, **not a curriculum outline**, and as such allows for a great deal of flexibility
- Focuses on **underlying skills** and is not organized by topic and skills
- Focuses on what's **important to learn and teach**, not necessarily on what's measurable
- Recognizes **realities** (life is short)



What's Missing

- **Not** a great deal of attention to **literacy development** and reading
- May be **too broad** and may not provide sufficient guidance to **new teachers**
- **No stated in measurable outcomes** for specific levels



What's Next?

About to Be Revisited
as Part of a Consortium



Teaching-Learning Continuum

	<i>From</i>	▶	<i>To</i>
Context	<i>Familiar</i>	▶	<i>New</i>
Task	<i>Simple</i>	▶	<i>Complex</i>
Process	<i>Facilitated</i>	▶	<i>Not Facilitated</i>
Content	<i>Concrete</i>	▶	<i>Abstract</i>
Prompts	<i>Visual</i>	▶	<i>Print-Based</i>
Training	<i>Hands-on</i>	▶	<i>Theoretical</i>