



TRANSLATING OPPORTUNITY TEXAS



Local Professional Learning Modules for Educators Who Work with Multilingual Learners of English (MLE)

Facilitator Guide for Module 1 Incorporating Existing Resources into the MLE Context *Presented by Dr. Erin Doran, Dr. Darin Jensen, and Dr. Emily Suh*

Session overview:

For the most productive discussions, the modules in this series are designed to be used with groups of 3 or more people. We suggest that participants review the [Introduction to the Series](#) before using this module.

Estimated time for completion: 75 minutes (*Video run time 36:36 minutes + 30-40 minutes of breaks for discussion*)

Facilitator preparation:

- Request College Data: If facilitating discussions among participants from one campus, request data regarding student population from the Offices of Institutional Research and Effectiveness or access from publicly available resources (e.g., institutional fact book). Bring it to the session in a format for sharing, such as printed copies or digital projection. Such data may include student demographics, a list of campus resources, and student success data (e.g., outcomes data for translingual students).
 - Ask participants to bring similar types of data on their own students.
 - If facilitating discussions among participants from multiple campuses, ask participants to bring both their institutional data and their own student data.
- To prime participants for the session, ask participants to write a short reflection on who their translingual students are, their needs, and what they know about their students' goals and aspirations.
- Review the module video. You may also wish to review the slides, which can be found, which can be found [here](#). Share this link with participants after the session.
- Provide participants with the [Participant Handout](#) to take notes and follow along with the presentation.

Objectives: Participants will:

- Consider their own identities, the identities of their students, and how students' identities and linguistic backgrounds are assets to be leveraged in the classroom.
- Braid research and practice on literacy practices to design assignments that help students learn about their college context while building their academic literacies.
- Connect their classes to existing services on their campus to provide students with holistic support.

Snapshot agenda:

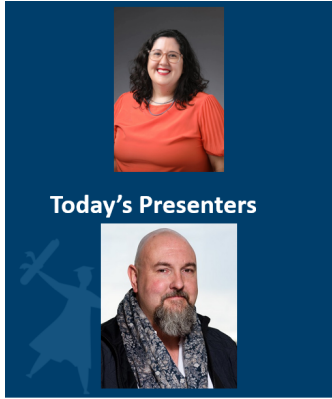
Section	Start Time	Content
Intro	0:00	Title, Welcome and norms
		Introduction to the module, acknowledgement of the partners, and introduction to the presenters
		Objectives & Agenda
Section 1	2:54	Framing Support and Pedagogy for Multilingual Learners
		Research Base for Literacy and Engagement
	11:18 (Pause 8-10 min)	Pause and Reflect
Section 2	12:24	Providing Validation and Support to Students
		Expounding on language differences
		Highly Contextualized Scaffolded Instruction
		Assignments that Work in this Context
	21:51 (Pause 8-10 min)	Pause and Reflect
Section 3	23:00	Braiding Research and Practice–Analyzing Student Literacy Practices
		Braiding Research and Practice–Moving Toward the Academic Essay
		Braiding Research and Practice–Institutional Literacies Prompt and Outcomes
		Braiding Research and Practice–Multimodal Possibilities for the Next Step
	35:00 (Pause 8-10 min)	Review Sample Scaffolded Assignment in handout Questions for Reflection
Closing	36:00	Thank You, Questions, Suggested Reading

Detailed suggestions for facilitation

Black Font = module content/summary

Red Font = facilitation notes

Blue Font = sample response

Section (Time)	Suggestions
Introduction (3 mins)	Facilitator: Welcome and thank participants for their interest. Remind the group of the departmental norms for professional learning. • Introduction to module and presenters • Objectives, framing, and research. Facilitation Notes: If participants do not have copies of the handout, consider posting the objectives in a prominent place.  • Dr. Erin Doran Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Foundations at University of Texas-El Paso; Research Associate, Diana Natalicio Institute for Hispanic Student Success • Dr. Darin Jensen Associate Dean of English and Director of Writing Across the College at Salt Lake Community College; Editor of <i>Teaching English in the Two-Year College</i>.      Agenda: • Literacy strategies to build institutional and personal literacies • Braiding literacy strategies and research • Envisioning praxis for student success
Section 1 (8-min)	Framing Support and Pedagogy for Multilingual Learners [Section Summary: This section offers some overview into the work that is already being done at community colleges (and validating that work) while also acknowledging its complexity—that is, that some instructors might be teaching students who have a variety of academic needs. They call for an integration of pedagogy and student support services.] Research Base (Literacy and Engagement) [Section Summary: The presenters provide an overview on some literacy education research bases salient to this work, including interrogating one's own identities and how they relate to the students in your classroom and incorporating asset-based pedagogies that honor and reflect students' identities and existing strengths.]



Pause and Reflect 1 (8-10 minutes)

Facilitation Notes: Allow a couple of minutes for participants to review demographic data or go to their college website/google demographics. If you need to spark conversation, you may pose the sample prompts (in red), share a sample response (in blue) or share your own experience.

1. What do you know about your students? What has surprised you about the linguistic diversity of your students?

Sample prompts:

What cultural or linguistic backgrounds do your students have? Are they first-generation? What are their work and care giving responsibilities? What is their prior experience with school?

Sample Response:

"Having taught in Texas, for many years, I've worked with students from a variety of linguistic and cultural backgrounds, including Spanish, Karen, Swahili, Vietnamese, and many more. What surprised me is how many are heritage speakers who are fluent orally but still have limitations in academic literacy in both their native language and the target language, English. It has shaped how I support their writing and pushed me to be more intentional and student-centered in my teaching."

2. Has your institution provided you with disaggregated data to understand where they're coming from? (Bensimon et al., 2019)

Sample prompts:

What data do you have on student persistence, and completion? How is it disaggregated? Is there qualitative data to help understand students' material realities and contexts? Is there clear data on students' educational preparation?

Sample Response:

"My college collects general data but does not break it down to identify specific ESL (MLE) students in college courses. The Adult Education Program tracks ESL data more closely, but those don't transition into credit college courses. In my English Comp 1 course, I rely on my ESL and bilingual teaching experience to support my students."

3. What linguistic strengths do your students bring to the classroom?

Sample prompts:

How can you create moments to validate the advantage or asset of being bilingual as a communicator?

Sample Response:

"My students bring many strengths, like code-switching (switching between languages depending on the situation) and translanguaging (using all your language repertoire to create meaning and learn). They help with translation for their families, communities, and workplaces, and through real-life experiences, build powerful communication and problem-solving skills. I make it a point to help all my students recognize these strengths as tools to grow and navigate multiple worlds. Their linguistic repertoire is an asset -- not a gap or deficit."

4. How do you create moments in the classroom for students to see their heritage language as an asset while they are strengthening their English skills?

Sample prompts:

How might you center translingual practice or code switching for example? How do we make linguistic diversity a strength in the classroom?

Sample Response:

"I get my students to use their home language when brainstorming or drafting for a narrative or reflective work. We also make space for bilingual texts, and if I don't have it in their language, we search for it online together. This creates conversations about language and identity. It also creates a space where students can develop their linguistic strengths and achieve academic success."

Section 2
(10 minutes)

Providing support from faculty and through assignments

Some example texts for use in class are:

- *Lives on the Boundary*, Michael Rose
- *A Different Mirror for Young People (A History of Multicultural America)*, Ronald Takaki & Rebecca Stefoff
- *Savage Inequalities: Children in America's Schools*, Jonathan Kozol
- *Between the World and Me*, Ta-Nehisi Coates
- *Tell Me How it Ends*, Valeria Luiselli
- *Wounded by School*, Kristen Olson
- *Absolutely True Diary of A Part-Time Indian*, Sherman Alexie
- *Autobiography of Malcolm X*, Malcolm X, Alex Haley & Attallah Shabazz
- *Borderlands/La Frontera*, Gloria Anzaldúa

(included in the participant handout)



Pause and reflect 2: Meaning of education; leveraging resources
(8-10 minutes)

5. Knowing your students, what kind of responses would you expect from your students?

Sample prompts:

If participants are struggling with these prompts, you might ask further probing questions like "What would you like to do when you are done with this class? What brought you to this class?" And then use that as a starting point for a conversation. Some students might say that they are hoping to strengthen their writing and other communication skills to better prepare for the workforce or for college

Sample Response:

"I would expect my students to share personal experiences about school, work, and family, and how those responsibilities shape their lives. Many take pride in being multilingual. Some may be quiet at first, but they usually open up once they feel comfortable and see others sharing too."

6. How could you use this knowledge to build community and leverage institutional resources?

Sample prompts:

How might leveraging student goals and understanding improve student engagement and retention? How might it help instructors develop assignments?

Sample Response:

"This knowledge can be used to create assignments that reflect students' realities. When students define a purpose for education, it is easier to scaffold culturally-responsive instruction for them. Connect them to resources based on their goals and invite the community and staff to visit our class to help make the support attainable."

7. Consider the list of sources in the discussion guide and what authors have said about education and/or their lived experience.

Sample Response 1:

*"Mike Rose's books (particularly *Lives on the Boundaries*) talks about his own experience in remedial education, feeling like he wasn't treated as a capable student, only to realize that he was mis-placed in this class and moved accordingly. The experience taught him about dignity, and his corpus of work focuses on highlighting different types of work and learning aside from traditional book learning as meaningful and rigorous in its own way."*

Sample Response 2:

*"Texts like *Borderlands/La Frontera* and *Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* help my students create meaningful connections and discussions. I use open-ended questions to encourage connections between the self and the text, the text and the text, and the text and the world."*

**Section 3
(13 minutes)**

Braiding research and practice

[Section Summary: Combining research and practice to create lesson plans, curricula, and learning outcomes means that we embrace evidence-based practices in learning design, that instructors integrate culturally responsive instruction (which has a strong research base, and provides a foundation for professional development for faculty.)]



Questions for Reflection

(8-10 minutes)

Integrating resources and students' experiences (personal literacies)

8. In what ways are campus services already integrated into your classes? How could those be better utilized?

Sample prompts:

Do you have embedded tutors in your classrooms? How does that work for team teaching? Do students have required skills labs they are required to go to? If not, how do you encourage students to take advantage of such resources?

What about other services? How do you take an expansive view of student support and bring it to the classroom? Is it possible to bring in guest speakers who are college employees from various offices so that students can once again be exposed to the full spectrum of services the campus offers? Examples include financial aid, the transfer center, health services, counseling services, academic support, ability services, and so on.

9. What are texts and writing prompts that can draw on students' lived experiences?

Sample prompts:

*Can you think of texts that draw on students' lived experiences to choose with local context and knowledge in mind? Some texts we have chosen in the past are *Hole in My Life* by Jack Gantos, *A House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, and *An Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian* by Sherman Alexie. These also have the advantage of centering education.*

Sample Response:

*"I use bilingual texts and student writing from *The Ranger*, Amarillo College's newspaper, to help students see that their own stories belong in academic spaces. For narrative writing, I invite students to create their own "I Am From..." A poem is a creative way to explore and express one's cultural, linguistic, and personal backgrounds. It's a powerful activity that honors their voices and emphasizes that identity is not just about where they come from, but also where they're going."*

Sample Scaffolded Assignment

Facilitation Notes: Ask participants to go to the last page of their handout and view the sample assignment.

Depending on timing:

- Give participants time to design and share a similar prompt for their students. OR
- Encourage participants to work on this and come back together (synchronously or asynchronously) to share ideas. Writing assignments and prompts that build a literacy narrative, connect identity to culture, or that analyze and reflect on current beliefs and educational choices are all effective.
- You may want to have a shared folder for participants to upload their sample assignments to share with each other beyond the session.

Alternative or follow-up collaboration:

The Facilitator could invite participants to reflect on or share an assignment they currently use that draws on students' lived experiences. Then, using what they've learned in the session, they can revise or reframe that assignment to better align with the module's goals.

The facilitator can use guiding questions such as: "What do I want my students to learn?" "How can I connect this to their real-life experiences?" "How might students share this knowledge with their classmates?" Participants can work in pairs or small breakout rooms to create a rough draft of the revised assignment, prompt, or even an outline. This can be a great outcome, where participants leave with a practical, lesson-ready deliverable.

The facilitator can create a shared file or folder where participants upload their revised assignments, making it a valuable resource that fosters interactivity and a practice-based approach, which is learner-centered.

Closing (3 min)	Facilitators: Wrap-up and charge: • Thank participants for their contributions during the module. • Point out the follow-up reading recommended by the presenters Gloria Ladson-Billings(1995), Ngo and Lee (2025) (Full citation information available in the references). • Remind participants of the next meeting. • Remind the group of the process for receiving documentation of their participation in the professional learning session.
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