



REL Pacific Ask A REL Response

Literacy

December 2017

Question:

Does research support the development of a language arts curriculum in the native language being taught in Hawaiian immersion schools?

Response:

Following an established REL Pacific research protocol, we conducted a web-based search for resources related to language arts curriculum in native languages (see Methods section for search terms and resource selection criteria). We searched for information specific to the Pacific region, but also expanded the search to look for similar language issues around the world.

Descriptions of the resources are quoted directly from the publication abstracts. We have not evaluated the quality of references and the resources provided in this response. We offer them only for your reference. Also, our search included the most commonly used research resources, but they are not comprehensive and other relevant references and resources may exist.

Research References

Gonca, Altmisdort (May, 2016). Do L2 writing courses affect the improvement of L1 writing skills via skills transfer from L2 to L1? *Educational Research and Reviews*, 11(10), 987–997. Available from <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=EJ1103345>.

From the ERIC abstract: “This study investigates the relationship of second language (L2) writing skills proficiency with the first language (L1) writing skills, in light of the language transfer. The study aims to analyze the positive effects of L2 writing proficiency on L1 writing proficiency. Forty native Turkish-speaking university students participated in the study. While 20 of them attended a two-semester-L2 writing course, the other 20 students did not take any writing courses in L2. At the end of the course, all of the students took an essay writing exam in L1. They were asked to write an essay on education. The exam scores prove

that writing skill transfer from L2 to L1 is possible in adult English as a Second Language (ESL) learners. The study illustrates that L2 learning and acquisition enable L2 writing skills transfer from L2 to L1; and this can bring about a progress in their first language writing skills.”

McCarty, T. L. (2011). *State of the field: The role of native languages and cultures in American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian student achievement*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of Indian Education Programs. Available from <http://www.thenetworkwi.com/s/McCarty-2011-Role-and-Impact-of-Native-Languages-and-Cultural-Context.pdf>

From the abstract: “This policy brief and its accompanying review of the literature examine evidence from empirical research on the role and impact of Native languages and cultural content in the schooling of American Indian (AI), Alaska Native (AN), and Native Hawaiian (NH). students. The brief grows out of research undertaken in response to the 2004 Executive Order (EO) and as part of the Program Evaluation Group (PEG) commissioned under that EO and tasked with examining promising practices and partnerships in American Indian and Alaska Native education. As such promising practices on (1) programs for students who enter school with a primary language other than English, (2) programs designed to revitalize Native languages and cultures simultaneously with promoting students English proficiency and academic success, and (3) culturally based education (also called culturally compatible, culturally congruent, and culturally responsive education) are explored.”

Nakamura, P., & de Hoop, T. (2014). *Facilitating reading acquisition in multilingual environments in India (FRAME-India)*. Washington, DC: American Institutes for Research. Available from <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=ED557613>.

From the ERIC abstract: “Most of the world is multilingual—multilingual at the national level (policies), at the community and family level (practices), and at the individual level (cognitive)—and each of these has implications for teaching and learning. Yet, at present, most reading decisions are not based on empirical research of how children learn to read in multilingual contexts. Several large-scale assessments of reading at early grade levels have shed light on the extremely low reading scores that many countries in the developing world have across these multilingual contexts. The reasons for these low scores are multifaceted; however, the most central unanswered question is which languages should be taught--and how and when--in multilingual contexts? To begin addressing this need, the "Facilitating Reading Acquisition in Multilingual Environments in India (FRAME-India)" research study examined the process of acquiring literacy in multilingual environments. Findings from this study are converted into policy and practice guidelines for effectively and quickly improving reading outcomes. This is one of the first studies to focus on formative, pre-intervention research for developing a theory of change that is relevant for multilingual learners in the developing world. While continuing to conduct rigorous impact evaluations, technical assistance, and program design and implementation, the authors emphasize that there must be a focus on understanding the mechanisms of learning that underpin successful reading acquisition in contexts characterized by multilingualism and limited resources. This is

extremely important in order to construct successful programs that are likely to benefit millions of children who are learning in these multilingual environments every day. The following are appended: (1) Test Item Construction Details; (2) Sample Items from the Tests and Photos of Data Collection Activities; (3) Training Agenda for Data Collectors and Hub Monitors; (4) Flowchart of Test Eligibility Criteria; and (5) Means, Standard Deviations, and Summary Statistics for All Reading Subskills.”

Nassaji, H. (2014). The role and importance of lower-level processes in second language reading. *Language Teaching*, 47(1), 1–37. Available from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1020386>.

From the ERIC abstract: “This article examines current research on the role and importance of lower-level processes in second language (L2) reading. The focus is on word recognition and its subcomponent processes, including various phonological and orthographic processes. Issues related to syntactic and semantic processes and their relationship with word recognition are also discussed. When examining the role of these processes, an important focus is also on cross-linguistic variables and the various ways in which they facilitate or impede the development of L2 reading skills. The review concludes with a discussion of the implications of the issues addressed for L2 reading instruction and directions for future research.”

Nassaji, H. (2016). Research timeline: Form-focused instruction and second language acquisition. *Language Teaching*, 49(1), 35–62. Available from <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=EJ1085091>.

From the ERIC abstract: “This article provides a timeline of research on form-focused instruction (FFI). Over the past 40 years, research on the role of instruction has undergone many changes. Much of the early research concentrated on determining whether formal instruction makes any difference in the development of learner language. This question was motivated in part by a theoretical discussion in the field of cognitive psychology over the role of explicit versus implicit learning, on the one hand, and a debate in the field of second language acquisition (SLA) over the role of naturalistic exposure versus formal instruction, on the other. In the early 1980s, for example, based on the notion that the processes involved in second language (L2) learning are similar to those in first language (L1) learning, Krashen (e.g., Krashen 1981, 1982, 1985) made a distinction between learning and acquisition and claimed that an L2 should be acquired through natural exposure not learned through formal instruction. Thus, he claimed that FFI has little beneficial effect on language acquisition. This position, which has also been known as a "zero position" on instruction, was also taken by a number of other researchers who argued that L1 and L2 learning follow similar processes and that what L2 learners need in order to acquire a second language is naturalistic exposure to meaning-focused communication rather than formal instruction (Dulay & Burt 1974; Felix 1981; Prabhu 1987; Schwartz 1993; Zobl 1995).”

Paulsen, R. L. (2003). Native literacy: A living language. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, 27(1), 23–28. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=EJ673669>.

From the EIRC abstract: “Aboriginal literacy encompasses oral tradition, culture, language, identity, and world view in addition to the written word, and is a process of lifelong learning, much of which occurs beyond school walls. When defining Native literacy, one must move away from measuring Aboriginal students by Euro-Western definitions and move toward a balanced, noncompetitive relationship between the cultures.”

Peter, L., & Hirata-Edds, T. (2009). Learning to read and write Cherokee: Toward a theory of literacy revitalization. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 32(2), 207–227. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=EJ861660>.

From the ERIC abstract: “In an effort to revitalize the Cherokee language, Cherokee Nation launched an immersion program for preschool and elementary children in Tahlequah, Oklahoma. Central to the curriculum is literacy in the Cherokee writing system known as syllabary. This study focuses on sociocultural and sociolinguistic evidence toward an understanding of the syllabary's role in Cherokee immersion, children's general literacy skills, and the micro- and macrolevel contexts of literacy in syllabary. We consider how an examination of Cherokee-literacy revitalization-as a feature of broader language revitalization-offers insight into the challenges and opportunities facing those who teach endangered languages through school-based immersion”

Slavin, R. E., & Cheung, A. (2005). A synthesis of research on language of reading instruction for English language learners. *Review of Educational Research*, 75(2), 247–284. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED483806>.

From the ERIC abstract: “This paper reviews experimental studies of reading programs for English language learners, focusing on comparisons of various bilingual and English-only programs. The review method is best-evidence synthesis, which uses a systematic literature search, quantification of outcomes as effect sizes, and extensive discussion of individual studies that meet inclusion standards. A total of 18 studies met the inclusion standards. Among 13 studies focusing on elementary reading for Spanish-dominant students, 9 favored bilingual approaches on English reading measures, and 4 found no differences, for a median effect size of +0.52 (based on 8 studies with sufficient data for computation of ES). Two of three studies of heritage languages (French, Choctaw, and Cherokee) and two secondary studies favored bilingual approaches. The review concludes that while the number of high-quality studies is small, existing evidence favors bilingual approaches, especially paired bilingual strategies that teach reading in the native language and English at different times each day. Research using longitudinal, randomized designs is needed to understand how best to ensure reading success for all English language learners.”

Methods

Keywords and Search Strings

The following keywords and search strings were used to search the reference databases and other sources:

- "native language" AND "curriculum" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "endangered language" AND "curriculum" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "heritage language" AND "curriculum" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "bilingual education" AND "curriculum" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "language awareness" AND "L2" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "language awareness" AND "immersion" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "immersion" AND "language arts" AND "curriculum" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "language arts" AND "native language" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "language arts" AND "second language" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "L2 writing" AND "effects" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "form focused instruction" AND "L2" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "form focused instruction" AND "immersion" AND "language" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "second language reading" AND "immersion" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"
- "Native Hawaiian Education" AND "immersion" AND "language" NOT "Dissertations & Theses"

Databases and Resources

ERIC, EBSCO Host, ProQuest Education Journals, Google/Google Scholar

Reference Search and Selection Criteria

REL Pacific searched ERIC and other academic journal databases for studies that were published in English-language peer-reviewed research journals within the last 20 years. REL Pacific prioritized documents that are accessible online and publicly available, and REL prioritized references that provide practical information based on peer-reviewed research for the teachers and leaders who requested this Ask A REL.¹ Resources included in this document—including URLs, descriptions, and content—were last accessed in December 2017.

¹ This memorandum is one in a series of quick-turnaround responses to specific questions posed by educational stakeholders in the Pacific Region (American Samoa, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, Hawai'i, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republic of Palau), which is served by the Regional Educational Laboratory (REL Pacific) at McREL International. This memorandum was prepared by REL Pacific under a contract with the U.S. Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences (IES), Contract ED-IES-17-C-0010, administered by McREL International. Its content does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of IES or the U.S. Department of Education, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.