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Title: An African American Document

About the

Author:

Keywords:

Abstract:

Initial Assignment 1

Exercises:

The document that I focused on was almost a notebook, a lecture or an assignment's notebook. The whole box that included this document, in a folder with other folders, was named after President John M. Gregory Papers, 1839–1898. The box included a number of folders that enclosed some stuff, for example, recommendations for diplomatic post, articles, lectures, addresses, manuscripts, manuscripts on Negro education, and manuscripts on Socialism. The whole folder where it was found dated 1881 till 1890 and it was named “articles, lectures, speeches, and manuscripts.” In fact, the notebook itself did not include any dates to determine its exact time; however, it is clear that it is an original manuscript as it is in handwriting but it is not a complete document as there are some missing pages.

Inside the notebook there were also some other papers that almost talked about the same topics written in the notebook itself. There was only one paper that was typed that contained some of the discussed topics in the notebook. The notebook was in handwriting as I mentioned earlier and the notebook seems to be about writing or reading class. The topics written were mainly concerned with “reading and writing;” this was clear from the discussed topics through the whole notebook. Although there are some missing pages from the notebook and sometimes it was difficult to follow and read the handwriting, all the topics were related to books and reading strategies.

For example, the first page, or assuming it to be, started by these sentences “This is the age of books. The world has had its ages of stone, of Bronze and of Iron. This is its age of paper and print of newspapers and books.” These were the first sentences of this page which reflects the awareness and reflection of the new technology or new concepts of education during this time which was the importance of print and how it facilitated the reading process and the access of books. Moreover, the awareness of the value of print can also have its positive effect on the education

development and a magnificent source of literacy education. In fact, I stopped for a while at those sentences where I thought that may be after one more decade or so our current transcripts will reflect the importance of computers in learning and in overcoming literacy affairs as well. Then the writer proceeded to include “Rules for reading, 1 Read and think. 2 Think and read. 3 Re-read and re-think” and then the writer commented in more detail about those reading rules and their features. In some other instances in the document, the writer mentioned “the essential characteristics of a good book” which are, “clearness and purity, good style, and truthfulness.” The topics discussed in this document also reflect the focus on the importance of books for learning and for literacy in general; however, it did not talk frankly about the literacy process or development in this time, it can be inferred from the writer’s thinking way.

Moreover, there were some other occasions in the lectures where the writer of the document integrated “an old saying” as he or she mentioned, “Be aware of the man of one book” where he/she elaborated on this “old saying” by saying, “he who reads the most books, knows the best about any one.” It is clear from the writer’s words here that reading has its positive effect on readers and they can build their own knowledge from reading. It is also clear that education reached a good level among African Americans where they were able to join the university at a time there were still some endeavors by people to create special societies for literacy affairs or self-education as mentioned by Logan (2008), where she also mentioned that there was a great attention to the importance of literacy and how people can change their lives and can gain a lot from education.

In some other cases, I was also thinking that the document might be considered a writing assignment. It is not very clear whether the document was a gathering of some lectures given by a teacher in a regular class because the discussed topics seemed to be organized as well as ordered, or it was about a number of assignments and then the teacher graded them and gave them back to the student. In fact, there are some phrases that were supposed to be corrections for the existed sentences using a different pen kind and were inserted in the sentences. For example, “... and dismiss them >without ceremony< when he is tired.” However, it might just be the corrections of the writer or the student himself/herself as a second reading for the essay after writing it because both handwritings seem to be the same to a reasonable extent. Therefore, it is important to know how lectures

or classes took place in this time period whether in lecturing, grading or even teachers' feedback to know the exact interpretation about this document.

The document did not tell about the African Americans lives in general during this period; however, we might anticipate the focus on reading development in this time but we should also be cautious and not to generalize because this document was from university records and not from any other social organization. In other words, it is essential to know the existence of "literary societies" as mentioned by Logan (2008) in Illinois during this time period. Finally, the document did not include anything about political or social affairs during this time to know more about the surrounding circumstances.

However, there was another lecture which presented many statistics about the number of published books, novels, and volumes in literature in USA and Europe which might reflect how this kind of information would be helpful to have somehow a comprehensive view about the publications during this time.

Therefore, it is important for us, in order to have a comprehensive image about this document, to know the exact course or class for this document. We need to know more about the level of the class, also we need to be aware of the reading or writing classes offered during this time of period in the university to know the methodology and the focus of those classes. Moreover, we need to know the teaching methods as well as techniques adopted in those classes to be acquainted with both, organization and approach of literacy, languages, or even literature classes. It is also important to know the performance of students in class and their reading and writing skills; their way of thinking to determine how far they can think of literacy or education affairs and how it might shape their lives. Moreover, we want to know the approximate number of students in those kinds of classes to have a general view about the teaching process and its effectiveness on students. It is also helpful to have a general background about the instructors, their education, approaches, and their attitudes in those classes. We must also know about slavery in Illinois at this time and how it affected the African American education system. Finally, we need to know, if possible, some of the background about the author or the writer of this document to be aware of his/her education in general.

Assignment 2

After contacting the Archives in the main library as well as the one at Orchard, the stuff at the beginning were puzzled

because they thought that they included all the African American documents in the “African American Guide.” However, they also advised me to use other related terms for the period that I am looking for or the most common terms that were used in this period, in case I might find some other related sources. Finally, we found this document that was found in the “Index of the Minutes of the Council of Administration from September, 1894 to October, 1914, volumes I to XII.” The index was ordered alphabetically, and the document was titled “Negro student, personal difficulty with, IV 79, 105.” As far as they are concerned, it is the only document in this index to be related to African–American issues or even searching using any other used terms in this time such as “negro” or “colored.”

The document was a report to the Council of Administration Meeting, dated May 29th, 1906 where the president and several deans were present in this meeting. The document reported a “personal fight” between two Civil Engineering students, Smith and Mowder in this time period. The document cited, “... when Mr. Smith, a colored student, attempted to remove some of the materials belonging to Mr. Mowder from the table at which students were working. During this discussion as to whether this should be permitted Mr. Mowder applied a offensive epithet to Mr. Smith involving an allusion to his race. This was objected to by Mr. Smith ...” In another incident of this same day, Smith attacked Mowder in the street due to the previous incident.

The most interesting issue about this document, when I was reading it and looking at the Guide to try to make any inferences for the reasons that this document was not included in the Guide, I recognized that the only picture that was placed on the website for the first African–American to receive a degree is for the same person of this event. “William Walter Smith, first African–American to receive a degree from the University of Illinois, 1900. From University of Illinois Archives, Alumni File, Record Series 26/4/1.” Following this important information and as I was also trying to search for other related issues about this person using the University Archives, I found that, “He was from the Broadlands, IL area and graduated with a A.B. in 1900 and a B.S. in civil engineering in 1907.” This means that this incident took place before his graduation by only one year. As indicated by the University of Illinois Archives, Smith was from Broadlands. According to Wikipedia, Broadlands is a village in the Champaign County which also indicates that the population is 312. I can infer from this information that there were people in small villages who

cared about education and who were keen to send their children to learn away from the place that they live in.

I think the reaction of the white student might indicate that part of the society was still affected by the slavery issues and some people could not accept African people in their lives. In other words, this incident indicates that there were still some senses or feelings of dislike from some members of the society towards African-Americans due to the slavery period and they cannot realize that those people are part of the society by all the ways. Although, it is an educated and well cultured community due to the existence of the university and those students should be educated people who can be neutral to a huge number of issues and to deal with things maturely. Though, it would be difficult to generalize the case, this document can give us some view about the lives of African-American in the society during those days and slavery and racism issues that might had been existed in this time.

I think this document was not included in the “Guide” because it was placed in the Minutes of the Council of Administration as any other event reported to the Council of the university affairs as a separate unit in the Archives and not according to its issues or topics. On the other hand, perhaps, this incident was among the rest of the issues discussed during this meeting that only talked about an African-American issue; although, it was titled by “Negro student...”

Although it is important to include any African-American document in the Guide to make it accessible by researchers, it is very important to look for any other documents that are related to the first African-American graduate from University of Illinois.

It is obvious now that we should focus more on the lives of African-Americans in Illinois and know for example, the social and environmental circumstances that existed in this community. I think the search in this area would give us a clearer picture of African-Americans lives in this community. There is also another point that I want to investigate; if Smith is the first African-American graduate, does this mean that the other African-American students did not complete their education levels in the university to obtain a degree. Therefore, we should have another look for the African-American students’ number in the university at this time and their completion of other degrees. Although, this passage was after a period from slavery issues, it can still be the case with some people either whites or blacks that were not satisfied with a lot of issues about this critical issue. It will be interesting to trace the life of Smith which I was not able to do here to know more

about him as being the first African–American graduate; it is important to know the social as well as any other circumstances that directed him to University of Illinois to be in this position. Moreover, it is also interesting to know how he treated his other colleagues and how they treated him to have a reasonable picture about his relationships with other people; his attitude towards them and their attitudes towards him. I would also search more about the families' attitudes towards education and their insights about their children's education. Finally, it will be very helpful to search for the education facilities in Champaign County villages such as Broadlands, or any other small villages to know the accessibility of schools, colleges, or even universities during this time.

Question: In my proposal I want to investigate the use of storytelling in ESL classrooms in teaching American English idioms to Arab adult students. In the study, I will ask the teachers to use storytelling in teaching the most common American idioms that I think, from my Arabic background, will be difficult for Arab learners to understand and use them. After that, I will construct a list of interview questions that will be conducted with the teacher to have his/her comments on the teaching and learning of those idioms to Arab students. I will also construct a questionnaire to the students to ask them about their reactions towards learning those idioms. I tried in searching for the sources to search from two perspectives: storytelling in ESL classes and teaching English idioms to ESL students. Therefore, I want to combine the use of storytelling and the teaching of idioms in ESL classrooms.

Plan: [Interview Protocol](#)

From my archival research at the beginning of the semester, I was able to obtain a document for the first African American graduate from University of Illinois, William Walter Smith. With more research I knew that he was from Broadlands, which is a village in Illinois. I wanted to do more research and know how African American people tended to teach their children literacy affairs before they join kindergartens or elementary schools in villages or towns in Champaign County. In light of this question, I will contact Champaign County Historical Archives to know more about the education facilities in those towns and what techniques African American people tended to use with their children about education. For example, the number of schools existed in those villages, or any other educational facilities, such as libraries, or literacy programs offered within those villages from one side.

Moreover, the procedures those families adopted in teaching their children at home before going to school from the other side. Finally, from the collected data, I will try to draw lines between parents' practices with their children before school and the positive effect of those practices on their children's performance at schools.

I tried to look for an insider, a person that lived in such towns or villages to talk from his/her own experience and perspective about this issue. The person that I will interview is a woman who was born in 1944 and was raised on a farm near Fisher, a village in Champaign County in Illinois. She has lived with her African American children in this village where they used to go to a nearby school in early 1980. She also used to work as a teacher in a nearby school. I think she will be able to give me some information about how her children went over literacy issues at home before going to school and how they accessed any educational facilities in one of Champaign County villages. I contacted her through one of her daughters to ask for her permission about the interview and it will take place at her home where she preferred. The interview will be audio recorded.

The teaching as well as the learning process might be the same in reading and writing; however, from my readings to *Ways with Words*, there might be different techniques to achieve this process. Heath, for example, presented different techniques adopted by these two small communities in helping their children learn talking and reading while they are still young. This was amazing because as an ethnographer, she was able to break down the data she collected and to categorize it to reach the research results. Knowing parent's procedures about this issue will help in understanding how much they cared about teaching their children at home before going to school. For example, there are some people that might not focus much on teaching their children reading and writing before school and leave this task totally to be handled on its time. Moreover, Trainor in *Rethinking Racism* presented well structured questions where she was able to start with general questions and to move to particular ones to obtain a comprehensive picture about her study. Revising those questions gave me the sense of how to structure my interview questions. I structured the questions as follows: I will ask about the beginning of offering literacy practices for her children, the procedures she used to structure those practices, and the effect of those practices on her children's improvement. I designed the questions using simple and direct language words mainly because the

targeted data is her own experiences and practices with her children and to facilitate the interview process itself. I will also use some helping questions to help in obtaining a full picture of this teaching task. For example, asking for help from other parents, the kinds of books she used in this task, and her children's responses to this kind of teaching and so on.

Based on the information obtained from the interview and the information from Champaign County Historical Archives, I will be more focused in knowing the ways, procedures, or techniques that were used by those people in educating their own children depending on their own skills in doing so. Moreover, I will connect between those practices and the available literacy or educational facilities, such as libraries or any literacy programs in this village that helped in this mission.

Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself, your family, your children and your society.
2. Tell me about the educational or literacy facilities in your society. Did you depend on them at any time for yourself and later for your children?
3. When and how did you start with your children reading and writing?
4. What are the techniques that you adopted or used in teaching your children reading and writing?

5. Did you set a regular schedule and times for this process all over the day and the week or you just make it whenever you have the time to do so?

6. Were there any access to nearby libraries to borrow books to help your children in this process? Were there any literacy programs offered during this time and at this place that helped in this process?
7. How and when did you notice improvement on your children?
8. As a parent, to what extent did you feel or notice that these practices helped your kids later when they joined kindergartens or elementary schools?

Works Cited

- Trainor, Jennifer S. (2008). Rethinking Racism.
Heath, Shirley B. (1983). Ways with Words.

Data: [Interview Transcript](#)

NE: Tell me about yourself, your family, your children and your society.

AW: uhm I was raised on a farm and in central Illinois. and uhm then I went to Chicago and I met my husband and uhm we got married and uhm we moved back here because we wanted to be in a small area to raise our family. So we had four children and we also lived in a very small community, a rural community and they went to a very small school initially, and uhm, so it was not a typical multi-cultural area, it was very rural community, farming community this where my children were raised where most of the people were people, farmers, working people and uhm that were their childhood, I think we were there about eighteen years.

NE: Eighteen years

AW: Aha

NE: And when was that exactly?

AW: It was from about 1982 to 2000 probably about 20 years, about 05, about 22 years. That's 22 years.

NE: Tell me about the educational or literacy facilities in your society. Did you depend on them at any time for yourself and later for your children?

AW: Well, yes, the schools were quiet, the classrooms sizes were small. So, I felt like the children were getting good attention with their learning and uhm we did have homework. They did have homework and I remember in kindergarten times how I helped them forming the letters uhm working with them on that and handwriting. I remember showing' em how to hold the pencil but the schools were following you know were doing a lot too and initiated most of it and we just we followed through what they were doing.

NE: When did you start with your children reading and writing? In what age were they when you started teaching them reading and writing and in what basis?

AW: Well, I always read to my children bed time stories, they will tell you that, I always had bedtime stories, in fact the joke is I would fall asleep in the bed time stories and say some nonsense [laugh from both of us] they will wake mom mom, you know, this was just a very important ritual, they had had bedtime stories, probably prolonged the bedtime.. they..they we always had bed time stories with a variety of stories. And uhm so I think that was their first introduction to reading and I love to read I still read at night, and uhm, so I think I wanted to develop that interest for them as well, that the love of reading, and uhm. So that I think for the first introduction to reading was. Primarily, the schools I would

say taught the skills, uhm I know we had the letter people back then and from sesame street they don't have that anymore now, that was wonderful because they loved that and I think they learned well from that technique that was used. I don't know why they don't use it anymore. So there were the letter people, and uhm, I am sure there was some other thing, I am trying to think uhm, that we just also also we facilitated at home then the school was calling we were do that but it was kindergarten was the formal.. I don't think I taught them I guess a couple of children went to preschool so, they would have been initiated.. I actually, in the home I was not doing much before they got the formal education other than actually reading and just developing um they all drew, and colored, and entered the motor skills a lot at a young age. You know, that was just something they wanted to do.

NE: How did you start this process, did you start with reading, or writing?

AW: Reading, is for teaching it you mean.. teaching reading you mean,

NE: Yeah

AW: um I don't think like I said, I don't think I really formally taught them, I don't remember that I did, I think I was working at that time, and so the reading oral to them was what I did, I don't remember teaching them to read other than when they bring home from school, then we would have reading their books, you know many times they had to read a book or something at night and I would listen to them read. uhm, I remember when they went to kindergarten or preschool that they started, I did not do it before.

NE: What are the techniques that you adopted or used in teaching your children reading and writing?

AW: The oral reading, ahha, I think we had flash cards with the abc's and cite words like that we used it was for more like a game or fun type of things that we did.

NE: Did you use any reading or writing books or you just depended on your own knowledge?

AW: uhm, actually, honestly, I am doing more with my granddaughter now than I did with my own children. They are so much more available. I feel like twenty years ago you know you just could not go to the store and get you know these, I don't think you could. I don't remember seeing so much from work books and things you can just pick up at Wal-mart or the store, they are quite a variety for her, but for my own kids I think like I said, I think I would make the letters I would do it myself and then let them trace em or dot the letters and then let them trace them.

NE: Did you also help them at the very beginning, mainly in writing, for example, did you hold their hands or did you use dotted letters for them to go over? How did you handle this task?

AW: Yes, I remember that and trying to let them hold the pencil right NE: Wow.. yeah, because you know some kids just don't and then when you start doing it in a certain way it is hard to change and I remember when I was taught to hold it in a certain way.. the teacher was very strict about it. so I remember trying to get my children to do that in a pattern certain pattern but I don't think they all did it seems like now today they hold it differently, so, it seems like they were supposed to hold it in a certain way.

NE: Did you set a regular schedule and times for this process all over the day and the week or you just leave it, whenever you have the time to do so?

AW: It wasn't a certain time, it wasn't a certain time when I did it, any evenings when I had time.

NE: Did you ask for help from professional people on the education field or you just depended on your own knowledge? Did you ask for friends or neighbors' advice that had children on how to go over this process with your children?

AW: No, no, I am a certified teacher myself so, during this time I was substituting in schools when I was raising my children so, I pretty much just read on my own, previous learning and what I learned in the school system myself, my training, so I did not really consult with anybody else other than the teachers they had at this time.

NE: Was there any access to nearby libraries to borrow books to help your children in this process? Were there any literacy programs offered during this time and at this place that helped in this process?

AW: I think we did come in to town to check out books from the library at times, but there wasn't anything out where we lived other than not a public library other than the school libraries. So, we did have access to Champaign library.. we did check out books. Like may be once every couple of months we come in and get books.

NE: Did you feel that your children were enjoying this process, or it was a burden on them? Did they ask for more or less?

AW: I am the type of person that I did not force, I don't force the learning because I feel like they get the regimented structured formal learning in schools, so whatever I did I wanted to be more relaxed not, um something more fun, and it wasn't anything that I insisted that they do and forced if they did not want to do it because I know they will learn in the schools.. this is just

supplemental, or just something we could do or just accent what they already learned.

NE: How and when did you notice improvement on your children?

AW: Improvement, you mean like uhm..

NE: They were able to write, I mean, recognize the letters, write well, and able to read

AW: Well, they didn't read before they entered the kindergarten , or first grade, so, whenever they would enter the formal school, public schools then they would, that when I first started like the first semester probably, they were picking up things, but it was not necess, I gotya I didn't teach the reading in the home, so I didn't noticed it initially myself in the home unless from the school when they started to read.

NE: Did they go to any kindergarten or daycare?

AW: Only two of them did but just temporarily, it wasn't consistent when I was working and my husband was working and it was a sort like a baby sitting. So there wasn't even then the emphasis on the learning in preschool than there is now, there is more , they did not do as much twenty years ago, they are doing a lot more now, I mean, right now they're doing what in preschool at four , they know the abc's when they go to kindergarten but back then they didn't did, it was more just colors and playing games and some learning structure times and schedules but they didn't they didn't know the abc before they go to kindergarten.

NE: The last question, as a parent, to what extent did you feel or notice that these practices helped your kids later when they joined kindergarten or elementary school?

AW: Uh well, I can say, I don't think they had a lot of the skills implemented before, so, I think you know if they had like children do now, they would just had and feel more confident and but back if twenty years ago, some children did, but like I said I didn't push my children to learn that so, they didn't go to kindergarten prepared in that way for having all the things placed as they do now so, yea, what was the questions again,

NE: As a parent, to what extent did you feel or notice that these practices helped your kids later when they joined kindergarten or elementary school?

AW: like I said I don't think that is applied to me because as I said I don't feel they had that knowledge so much before.. so when kindergarten when they entered kindergarten twenty years ago that was when they started the learning process more at least formally even they had some background to like I said some letters and the reading but it wasn't a formal thing where they expected so much

to know these things like they do now.

NE: Thank you so much

AW: You're welcome

Discuss: After transcribing the interview, I read it again to have a comprehensive picture about it to decide whether I will make any changes about the language or not. I did not change the language of the interviewee to Standard English because I think her speech was clear and intelligible. She did not say words which will not be understood by the readers to correct them just to be comprehended by readers later. Moreover, I wanted to transcribe the exact words that she used to have a whole picture of transcribed data. I also transcribed or wrote that there was a laugh from both of us in one of the questions because I wanted to convey that the data was a natural one and I wanted to be as natural as possible in transcribing it to let me feel that I am listening to it again. However, I did not exaggerate in transcribing other non-verbal cues or pauses to make it easier for us as readers in understanding the transcribed data.

In fact, it was the first time for me to do an interview either in my native language Arabic or in English; therefore, it is different when you listen to your voice after recording it. Moreover, although the flow of the conversation was good but it was somehow difficult at the beginning of it because I had to listen to her answers and then move to the next question by saying OK, or just have a look at my questions to be prepared to ask the next question. I mean the transition between looking at the interviewee, listening to her, and trying to get the end of her answer to the question to ask the next one. It is just the case, because it is different from any other common or natural conversations between people that take place naturally in asking questions, answering them and sharing other experiences. However, in one or two incidents from the conversation I found myself asking a question that was not included in the "interview questions" that was based on or inferred from the issues of the data itself which gave me some feeling of a turn-taking sequence. Generally, I enjoyed this task because it gave the chance to get into this type of field to know how to be able to conduct an interview with more confident skills. For example, at the very beginning of the interview I did not mark the questions that I asked which might let me for a second or two to reread a question that I already asked.

EUI Links: 1 – ASS 199 07 –5“Chinese American students at UIUC: Acquiring a Second Language” 2008, EUI

This article presents Asian–American students’ acquisition of a second language at the University of Illinois Campus. This article depended on personal interviews that asked the interviewees about the places where they first learned their second language and in what ages, and how code switching affects their communication skills. The data gathered presented different opinions about the students’ exposure to their second languages whether it is from their parents or grandparents. The data also presented that those people who are able to speak two languages and communicate in them are proud of being able to use these two languages. This second language also helped them in communicating with speakers of the same language and understanding parts of their cultures.

Although this article does not deal with the topic of my project because it dealt with Asian–American students’ acquisition of a second language, especially Chinese, I found it interesting because it reflected somehow on the focus of my study which is how people can use and interact in their second languages. I stopped at the interview questions designed by the author that were focusing on the first exposure of the second language whether when the participants were children or adults. In my proposal, I want to focus on Arab adult learners learning English through participating in English classes to show how they can be best learners of the language.

2 – Garcia, Noreida; BTW 250–D2_06–02; Roeder, Graham; Saleh, Farah Josephine. “Language Barriers in the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign” 2006–05–15, EUI

This article focused on the difficulties that face international students in using the English language where they called “language barriers.” The authors are presenting a number of solutions that can help those students in improving their English communication skills. They first presented the causes of this problem that they summarized in the difference in accents, phrases and idioms, structure of the English language, culture, slang, and language style. They surveyed a number of different international students to know their perceptions about the problem of language barriers; however, none of these nationalities was from an Arabic country. The data was gathered through a questionnaire to know the learners reactions towards the difficulty they face in interacting with Americans using the English language. Another questionnaire took place with undergraduate native speakers to know the difficulties they have with international teaching assistants. There were also two interviews conducted

with an international and a domestic teaching assistant. They also interviewed an advisor at the international Student and Scholar Services Office to talk about the facilities made to the students in the campus. Finally, they presented some suggestions concerning learning English by international students and teaching assistants to be better users of the language. They also recommended that the university should offer a class that teaches the American English language differences.

This article is also an interesting one which presented some of the problems that international students in general face when they communicate in the English language. Therefore, it is important in the case of Arab students to be familiar with the meaning as well as the usage of English or American idioms to be better users of the language to be able to communicate successfully in this new language and culture environment through using storytelling as to be a simple way in presenting the ideas to the learners.

3 – Carroll, Sheila Dailey. “Storytelling for Literacy” 1999

This article is a study that focuses on the connection between storytelling and literacy with ESL students to make their learning much easier. From the study, the author tried to address the gap due to less communication tasks in the learning process. She wanted to rebuild the connection between spoken language and written one. She stressed the importance of storytelling that gives children the chance to listen to the language mainly when it is not their first language. At the beginning she defines storytelling, as “use of voice and gesture to narrate a story.” She discussed the different kinds of stories that were used in the study, for example, family stories or personal experience stories. The study took place with ESL students and adults for three months each. They had to work in their own to write the story, then they narrate it together. The results showed that both groups were much more confident and increased their understanding of the language as well as using it. The researcher also presented suitable techniques for including storytelling in literature through using different kinds of stories, devote more time for oral tasks, and be a good listener for students.

I found this study to be a good base for the use of storytelling in ESL classrooms that will enhance literacy development to ESL students. Although the study focused on Chinese learners only, it was able to answer the research questions concerning their English language learning.

4 – Leong, Daniel. “Once Upon a Time: Using Storytelling Activities in the ESL/EFL Classroom” TESOL Conference, May, 2008.

The article started by defining storytelling and how it takes place through the interaction between the storyteller and the listener through eye contact, gestures, etc. then it discusses the various benefits for using storytelling in language classes. Moreover, it presented the different kinds of stories that can be used in language classes, such as, folk tales, fables, etc. Then it presented several tips, suggested games, jokes, and picture books for including storytelling in language classes. I think this article presents a general view about storytelling and how it can be used in ESL classrooms.

5 – Mohammad, Awwad. “Equivalence and Translatability of English and Arabic Idioms” 1990

This paper talks about the difficulty that can be faced in translating English and Arabic idioms. It presented how the idioms cannot be translated literally because of the difference of usage and culture. The author went over several examples of Arabic and English idioms and tried to find a word-for-word translation and in some other cases find an equivalent idiom in the other language. I will use this paper because it points out the difficulty in understanding and translating English and Arabic idioms.

6 – Adkins, Patricia G. “Teaching Idioms and Figures of Speech to Non-Native Speakers of English” 2003

In this paper, the author talked about the problems for non-native English speakers in understanding and using idioms. She reflected on how people in the south states who are Mexican American or Spanish American whose first language is Spanish are not aware of the meanings of idioms and figurative language that are considered to be important in learning the English language. The study took place in six weeks and the students were examined previously on their idioms comprehension and then they were supposed to read a story and understand the meanings of the idioms presented in it. A post test was conducted to result in the students understanding of the idioms.

This paper presented the importance of knowing and learning English idioms that are part of the language learning process to be able to understand and communicate in this second language.

7 – Teacher at Intensive English Institute, Personal Interview, April 14, 2009

I interviewed a teacher at Intensive English Institute at University of

Illinois at Urbana–Champaign and I asked him about his class and the storytelling technique that he uses in his class. He teaches a reading class, the intermediate level, where he teaches academic reading and reading skill development. His students are from different nationalities, Spain, Korea, Taiwan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Kazakhstan. He teaches them using storytelling where he teaches them reading skills. They are supposed to know the main ideas of the story, to infer the meaning, and getting the message behind the story. He uses folk tales to help students in understanding the message from the story and try to apply this to a reading text. After that they write what they understood and also relating these techniques to academic writing. He also thinks that teaching a second language through storytelling is an effective way in learning vocabulary, reading skills, and communicative skills. He also mentioned that his students are more engaged with storytelling because it is something real than the academic writing for them. He also mentions that some of those students are not applying for universities to focus only academic skills; therefore, they want to relate what they study to their real world. He also did a survey to ask for the students' feedback about storytelling technique, and the result was positive, as every student prefers this technique than reading.

From this personal interview, the teacher and the students seemed to enjoy storytelling as an effective technique in learning their second language.