

# A Genre-Based Approach to Writing Instruction for Multilingual Learners

1



Luciana C. de Oliveira, Ph.D.

*Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Graduate Studies*

*Professor*

School of Education

Virginia Commonwealth University

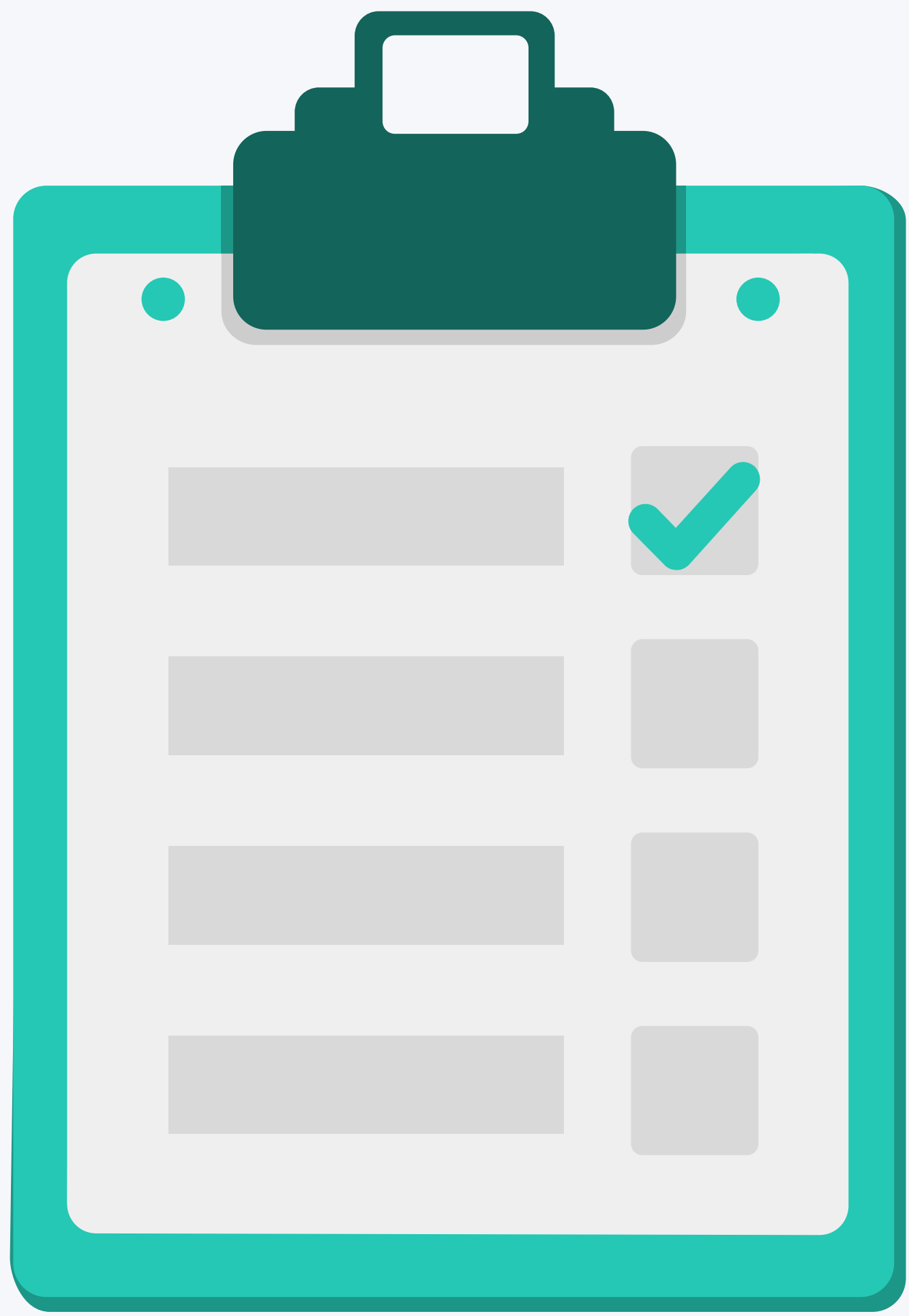
Richmond, Virginia, USA






**VCU** School of Education

Penn TESOL East 2022

# OVERVIEW



-  Describe a genre-based approach to writing instruction: the Teaching-Learning Cycle (TLC)
-  Demonstrate this apprenticeship model to help multilingual learners write in different genres
-  Share implementation in an elementary classroom

# What do you write?

We just don't write.

We write something to  
someone for a purpose.

We write in genres.



# Some Common Topics

- Describe what you did over summer vacation.
- Describe an important person in your life and why they are important to you.
- Write about a major event in your life that made you feel more grown-up.
- What do you want to be when you grow up? Choose and describe at least three jobs that you think you would enjoy.

# Problematic Topics!

Why?

- ❑ There is no shared experience!!
- ❑ Students need a shared experience to be prepared for writing

# Genre Definition

---



- a staged goal-oriented social process
- **staged**: because it usually takes us more than one phase of meaning to work through a genre
- **goal-oriented**: because unfolding phases are designed to accomplish something and we feel a sense of frustration if we are stopped
- **social**: because we undertake genres interactively with others

(de Oliveira & Westerlund, 2021, p. 5)



| <b>Text Type</b>                 | <b>Example Genre</b> | <b>Purpose</b>                             | <b>Common Stages or Moves</b>                                   | <b>Examples</b>   |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|--|---|---|
| <b>Narrative</b>                 | Stories              | to entertain or engage                     | Orientation<br>Complication<br>Resolution                       | Narrative<br>Anecdotes<br>Fables  |
|                                  | Recounts             | to tell what happened                      | Orientation/background<br>Record/account of stages              | Recounting a historical event<br>Recounting solving math problems                                 |
| <b>Informational/Explanatory</b> | Procedures           | to instruct how to do something            | Purpose<br>Equipment<br>Method/steps<br>Results                 | How to do a craft<br>How to play a game<br>How to go somewhere<br>How to make candy               |
|                                  | Reports              | to provide information about a topic       | Classification or Positioning<br>Description                    | Types of sharks<br>A description of Antarctica<br>Greek and Roman cultures                        |
|                                  | Explanations         | to explain how things work/why they happen | Phenomenon<br>Explanation                                       | How a life cycle works<br>What causes hurricanes  |
| <b>Opinion/Argument</b>          | Arguments            | to persuade                                | Issue/thesis<br>Arguments/sides<br>Reiteration/resolution       | Essay taking a stance<br>Discussion exploring various sides<br>Formal Debate                      |
|                                  | Text Responses       | to critique                                | Context<br>Description<br>Evaluation<br>Reaffirmation/challenge | Product review<br>Interpreting a book message<br>Challenging a book message<br>Opinion of a movie |



# IMPLEMENTING THE TLC

**Role of the teacher is instrumental**



Focus on what students need

Content knowledge development



Explicit and guided instruction by the teacher



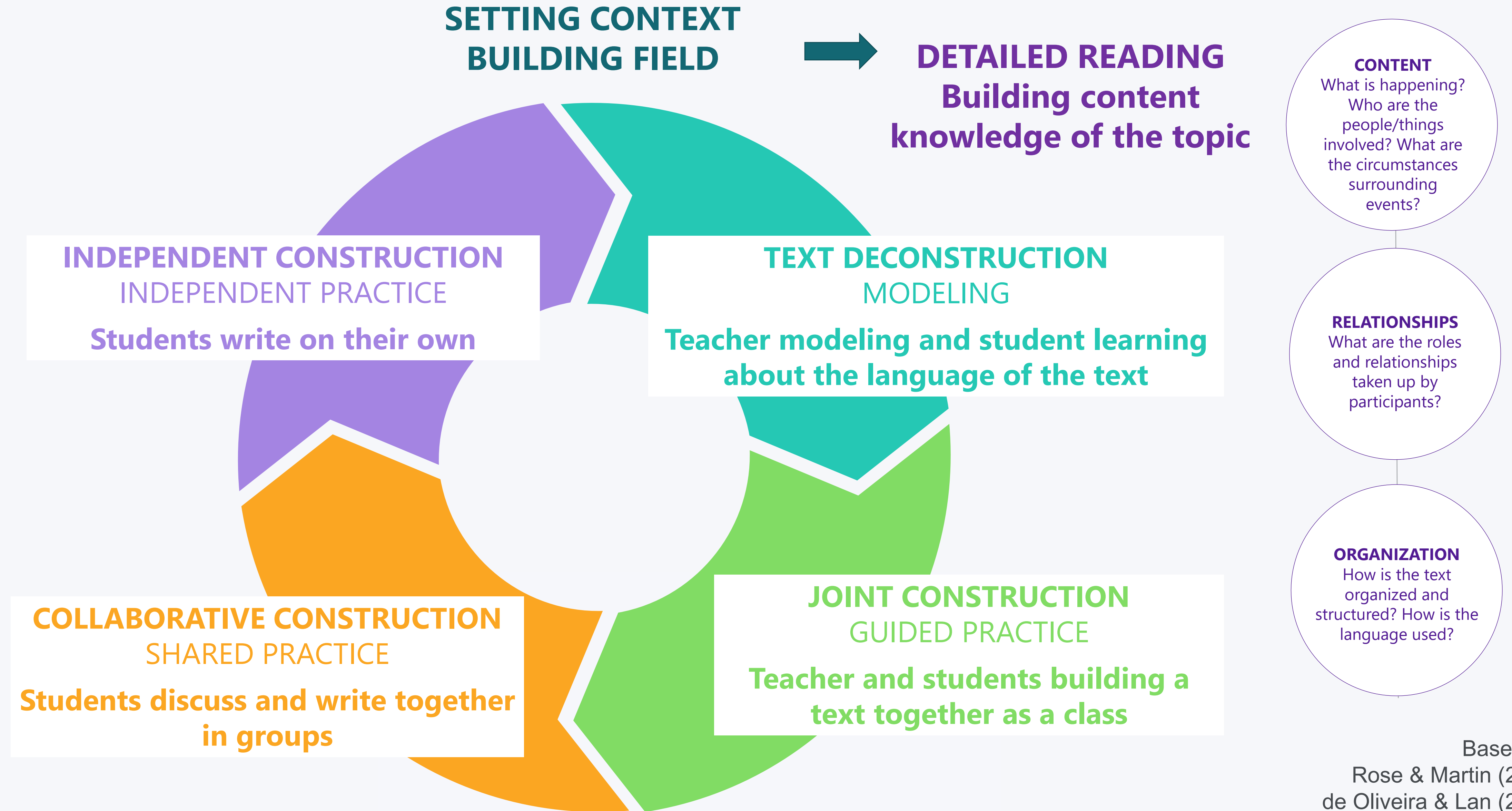
*Teaching writing not assessing writing*



## PRINCIPLE

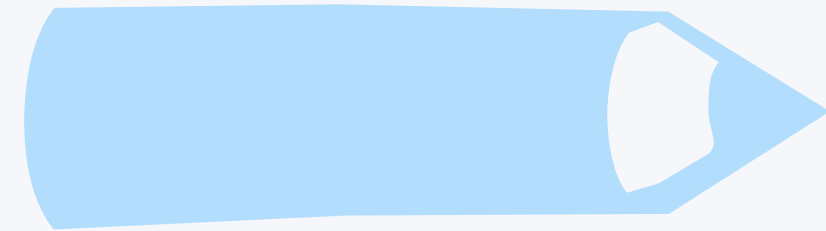
***“guidance through interaction in the context of shared experiences”***

# THE TEACHING AND LEARNING CYCLE



Based on:  
Rose & Martin (2012)  
de Oliveira & Lan (2014)  
de Oliveira & Schleppegrell (2015)

**BUILDING OF SHARED KNOWLEDGE**



| CONTENT KNOWLEDGE DEVELOPMENT |                            |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Discussions                   | Brainstorming              |
| Think-pair-share              | Field trips                |
| Guest speakers                | Research activities        |
| Supported reading             | Skimming/scanning material |

**Classroom Application**

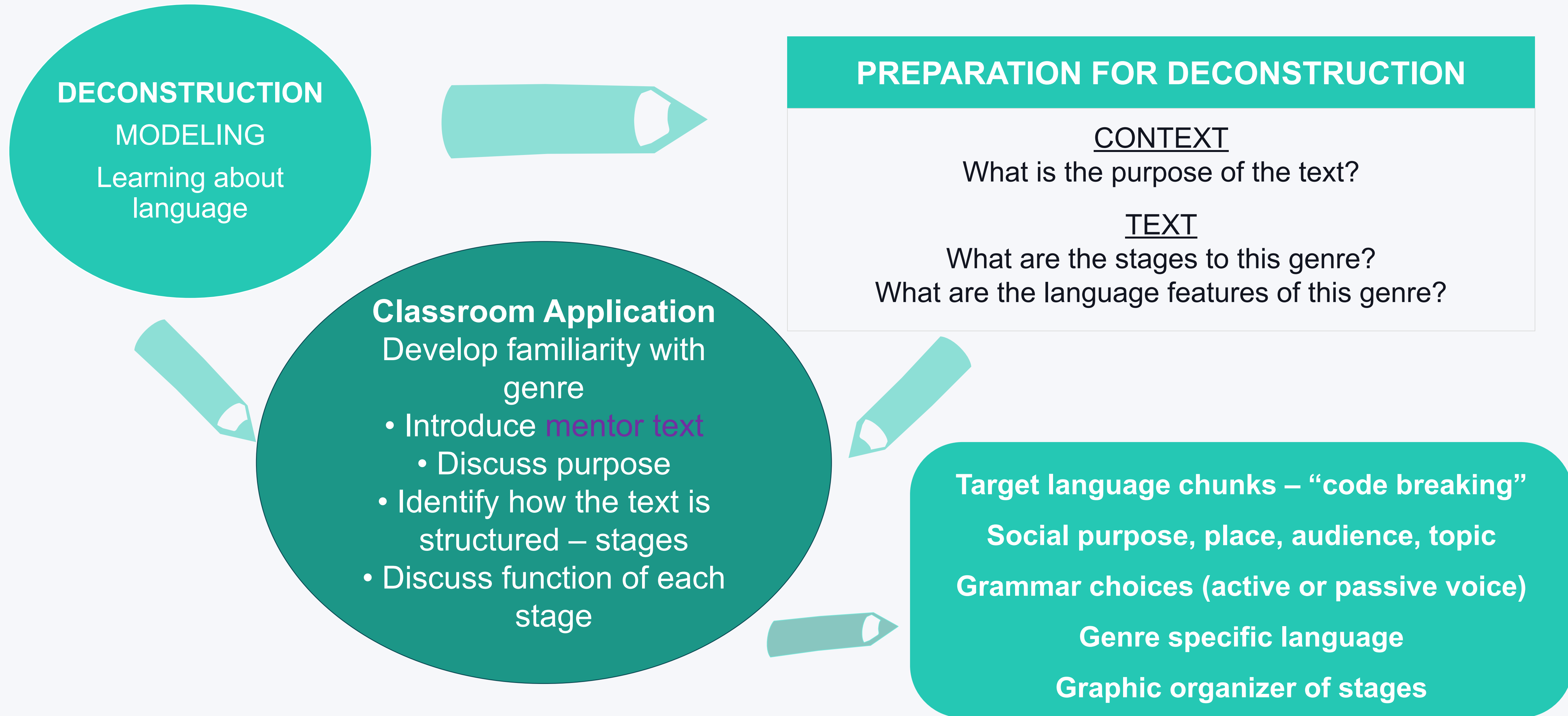
- What you already do in your classroom to introduce students to content



- Detailed Reading: Building of shared knowledge about the topic
  - Content
  - Relationships
  - Organization

**❖ Use Interactional Scaffolding!**

# TEACHING-LEARNING CYCLE: DECONSTRUCTION





# TEACHING-LEARNING CYCLE: JOINT CONSTRUCTION



## JOINT CONSTRUCTION GUIDED PRACTICE

Writing a new text in the same genre as a class (T & Ss)

## Classroom Application

- Develop genre knowledge  
Whole class activity
- Students brainstorm ideas in groups
    - Organize ideas
  - Teacher is in front of class guiding writing
    - Writing together

## PREPARATION FOR JOINT CONSTRUCTION: SHARED EXPERIENCE!

(movie, reading)

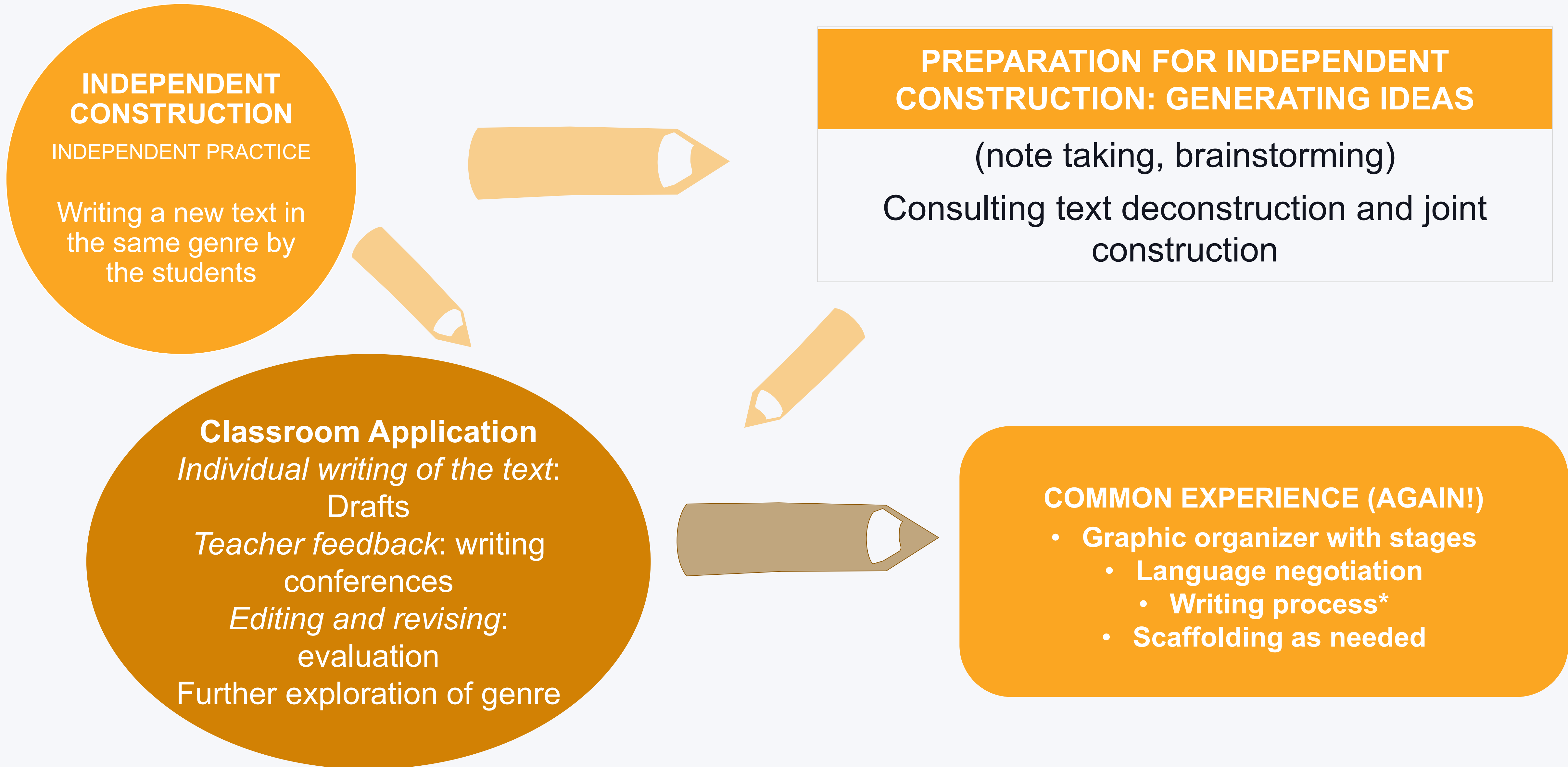
Building students' knowledge about topic of text through discussion, group work, research, or other class activities.

**Teacher *scribes*, everyone *writes*.**

## Teacher provides structure and support

- Full sentences
- Vocabulary
- Academic language
- Transitions
- Register – formal/informal

# TEACHING-LEARNING CYCLE: INDEPENDENT CONSTRUCTION



# Planned and Interactional Scaffolding

(de Oliveira, Klassen, & Gilmetdinova, 2014)

**MACRO: Planned**

- ▶ Students' Prior Knowledge and Experience
- ▶ Selection and Sequencing of Tasks
- ▶ Participant Structures
- ▶ Semiotic Systems and Message Abundance
- ▶ Mediational Texts
- ▶ Metalinguistic and Metacognitive Awareness

Connecting to what students already know

Providing a logical sequence in which in-depth understanding of challenging concepts occurs within the appropriate context

Changing the organizational structure within a unit of instruction: choice of individual, pair work, or group work is a decision that is dependent on the learning purposes of the task or activity

Using various visual, aural, and tactile supports: wall charts, graphs, maps, photographs, diagrams, pictures, and artifacts, creating "message abundance" and ensuring students' access to information by both language-bound and nonlinguistic means

Selecting and integrating any instrumental texts around which significant talk occurs and which serve as ways to link prior or future learning

Metalinguistic awareness: Developing a metalanguage - a language for talking about language

Metacognition: Reflecting on what helps students learn

# Scaffolding

## MICRO: Interactional

- **Linking to Prior Experience, Pointing to New Experiences, and Recapping**
- Appropriating and Recasting Students' Contribution
- Initiation, Response, Feedback Sequence

- Referencing students' out-of-school, home and school experiences to link to broader conceptual frameworks
- Connecting to students' prior experiences and signaling what will follow is particularly important

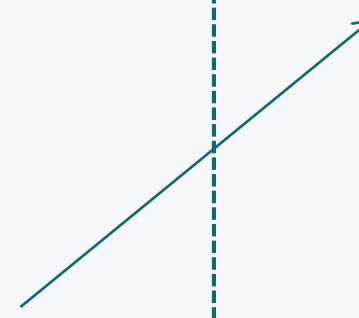


# Scaffolding

## MICRO: Interactional

- Linking to Prior Experience, Pointing to New Experiences, and Recapping
- **Appropriating and Recasting Students' Contribution**
- Initiation, Response, Feedback Sequence

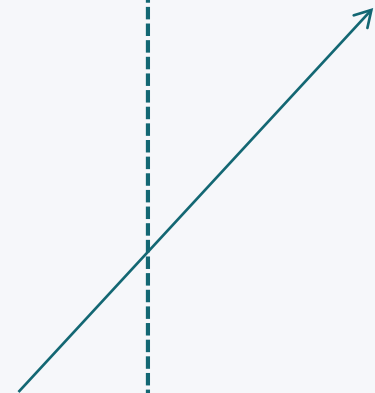
- Picking up what students are saying
- Recasting students' language into more content, language, context appropriate discourse



# Scaffolding

## MICRO: Interactional

- Linking to Prior Experience, Pointing to New Experiences, and Recapping
- Appropriating and Recasting Students' Contribution
- **Initiation, Response, Feedback Sequence**



- Providing opportunities for students to say more and reflect aloud on their thinking and understanding
- Asking for clarifications, probe a student's response, ask to explain a particular point in detail.
- Contrasts to **IRE** – **I**nitiation, **R**esponse, **E**valuation typical of classroom discourse

# IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTICE

## TEACHING AND LEARNING CYCLE

- The TLC provides a scaffolded, apprenticeship model of writing instruction that actually *teaches* writing
- The joint construction phase is critical for L2 writers!
- The role of the teacher is instrumental!
- Teachers can adapt and incorporate the TLC into their daily instructional practices to support L2 writers
- Teachers can implement selected phases in a non-linear manner, based on the needs of their students
- This model does not constrain the voices of L2 writers! It expands the *what* and *how* of writing! Their **repertoires**



## A Language-based Approach to Content Instruction (LACI)

de Oliveira, L. C., Jones, L., & Smith, S. (2021). A language-based approach to content instruction (LACI) for multilingual learners: Six Cs of scaffolding in first grade. *Journal of Language, Identity, and Education*. DOI: 10.1080/15348458.2021.1885409

de Oliveira, L. C., Braxton, D., & Gui, J. (2021). Planning for instruction using a language-based approach to content instruction for multilingual learners. *Journal of English Learner Education*, 13(1), 12-29.

de Oliveira, L. C. (2020). Planning and application using a language-based approach to content instruction (LACI) in multilingual classrooms. *MinneTESOL Journal*, 36(2), 1-8.



## Scaffolding

de Oliveira, L. C., Jones, L., & Smith, S. L. (2020). Interactional scaffolding in a first-grade classroom through the teaching/learning cycle. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*. DOI: 10.1080/13670050.2020.1798867.

de Oliveira, L. C., & Ma, A. (2018). Planned and interactional scaffolding in kindergarten. In F. Copland and S. Garton (Eds.), *TESOL Voices: Young learner education* (pp. 101-109). Alexandria, VA: TESOL Press.

de Oliveira, L. C., Gilmetdinova, A., & Klassen, M. (2014). Effective practices for English language learners in kindergarten and implications for policy. In L. Minaya-Rowe (Ed.). *Effective educational programs, practices, and policies for English learners* (pp. 139-156). Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishing.

de Oliveira, L. C., Klassen, M., & Gilmetdinova, A. (2014). Scaffolding to support English language learners in a kindergarten classroom. In G. Onchwari & J. Keengwe (Eds.), *Cross-cultural considerations in the education of young immigrant learners* (pp. 1-16). Hershey, PA: IGI Global.



# Publications



de Oliveira, L. C. (under contract). *Supporting multilingual learners' academic language development: A language-based approach to content instruction*. Routledge.



de Oliveira, L. C. (2017). A language-based approach to content instruction (LACI) in science for English language learners. In A. Oliveira & M. Weinburgh (Eds), *Science teacher preparation in content-based second language acquisition* (pp. 41-58). New York: Association of Science Teacher Education and Springer.

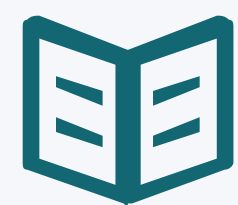


de Oliveira, L. C. (2016). A language-based approach to content instruction (LACI) for English language learners: Examples from two elementary teachers. *International Multilingual Research Journal*, 10(3), 217-231.






de Oliveira, L. C. (2015). A language-based approach to content instruction (LACI) for English language learners. *Journal of Language and Literacy Education*. Retrieved from [http://jolle.coe.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/SSOODEcember\\_FINAL.pdf](http://jolle.coe.uga.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/SSOODEcember_FINAL.pdf)

## Culturally Sustaining Practices





de Oliveira, L. C. (2021). The intersections of culturally sustaining pedagogies and systemic functional linguistics: Affordances for the education of multilingual learners. *Language and Education*, 35(2), 180-185, DOI: [10.1080/09500782.2021.1893743](https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2021.1893743)


## More on Scaffolding

-  de Oliveira, L. C., & Westerlund, R. (Eds.) (under contract). *Scaffolding for multilingual learners in elementary and secondary schools*. Routledge.
-  de Oliveira, L.C., & Athanases, S.Z. (2017). A framework to re-envision instructional scaffolding for linguistically diverse learners. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 61(2), 123-129. doi:10.1002/jaal.663
-  Athanases, S. Z., & de Oliveira, L. C. (2014). Scaffolding versus structured assistance for Latina/o youth in an urban school: Tensions in building toward disciplinary literacy. *Journal of Literacy Research*, 46(2), 263-299.

## More on 1<sup>st</sup> Grade Classroom

-  de Oliveira, L. C., Jones, L., & Smith, S. (2018). Discourse about illustrated book dust jackets in a first-grade classroom. In S. Witte, D. Latham, & M. Gross (Eds.), *Promoting media literacy through peritextual analysis in the classroom* (pp. 97-110). Chicago, IL: American Library Association and National Council of Teachers of English.
-  de Oliveira, L. C., Jones, L., & Arana, J. (2018). Scaffolding instruction for ELLs in first grade: The power of joint construction. In J. Sharkey (Ed.), *Putting research into practice: Elementary settings* (pp. 23-36). Alexandria, VA: TESOL Press.

## More on Genre and TLC

-  de Oliveira, L. C. (2020). The potential of second language writing in higher education: Expectations for graduate students. *NYS TESOL Journal*, 7(2), 3-6.
- de Oliveira, L. C., & Schleppegrell, M. J. (2015). *Focus on grammar and meaning*. Oxford, U.K.: Oxford University Press.
- de Oliveira, L. C., & Iddings, J. (2014). (Eds). *Genre pedagogy across the curriculum: Theory and application in U.S. classrooms and contexts*. London: Equinox Publishing.
- de Oliveira, L. C., & Smith, S. L. (2019). Systemic functional linguistics in teacher education. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Education*. Retrieved from <https://oxfordre.com/education/view/10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.001.0001/acrefore9780190264093-e-494>. DOI:10.1093/acrefore/9780190264093.013.494
- Ramírez, A., Sembiente, S., & de Oliveira, L. C. (2018). Translated science textbooks in dual language programs: A comparative English-Spanish functional linguistic analysis. *Bilingual Research Journal*. DOI: [10.1080/15235882.2018.1494061](https://doi.org/10.1080/15235882.2018.1494061)
- de Oliveira, L. C., & Smith, S. L. (2019). Interactions with and around texts: Writing in elementary schools. In N. Caplan, & A. Johns (Eds.), *Changing practices for the L2 writing classroom: Moving beyond the five-paragraph essay* (pp. 65-88). Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.



# CONTACT INFORMATION

*Dr. Luciana C. de Oliveira*

✉ [deoliveiral@vcu.edu](mailto:deoliveiral@vcu.edu)  
[drdedu2006@gmail.com](mailto:drdedu2006@gmail.com)

★ <https://soe.vcu.edu/about-us/deans-office/luciana-c-de-oliveira-phd/>

[www.lucianadeoliveira.com](http://www.lucianadeoliveira.com)

