

**FOCUS: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE DISTANCE LEARNING FOR
DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN**

CEEL is pleased to publish a fourth Communication focused on **Education and Research Supports for ELs during COVID-19** based on our research-based Equitable Distance Learning for English Learners Design Principles.

Voices from the Field - highlighting educators' commendable and courageous efforts to serve English Learners and Dual Language Learners in virtual and real-time spaces during these challenging times;

Resources and Research - addressing a variety of topics, including resources for ELs/DLLs such as social and emotional learning, highlights of best practices for distance learning, instructional materials, and professional learning in virtual spaces.

Voices from the Field– Tina Renzullo and Maria Lourdes Salazar

Serving diverse communities in Northern and Southern California, Tina Renzullo and Maria Lourdes Salazar are both Transitional Kindergarten teachers dedicated to ensuring their four and five year old students and DLLs receive equitable and developmentally appropriate distance learning during these unprecedented times. With 34 years of experience, Tina teaches at George C Marshall Elementary School in the Monterey Peninsula Unified School District. The DLLs in her classroom represent three language groups: Spanish, French, and a Polynesian language. Given this diversity, parents expressed a preference for written communication in English, although communication apps and school resources are available for oral or written translation of materials when needed.

Maria Lourdes, a National Board Certified teacher of 22 years, serves a high percentage of DLLs at Willow Elementary School, located in a predominately Latino neighborhood in the Los Angeles Unified School District. Maria Lourdes emphasizes “building relationships and communication with families” to address the digital divide by empowering parents and students. Tina is grateful to be part of a community of educators who are resilient and creative. She contends that “contexts have changed dramatically, formats have changed dramatically, but our knowledge hasn’t changed.” She plans Integrated English Language Development (I-ELD) by identifying content and language goals, focusing on key understandings and selecting vocabulary and language structures that support students’ oral and visual (written, drawn) representations of concept learning.



Both TK educators describe implementation of best practices for DLLs and share how they prioritize social and emotional learning and oral language development during distance learning.

**Distance Learning for DLLs in Transitional Kindergarten
Resources and Research**

In the state of California, Transitional Kindergarten for four and five year old Dual Language Learners affords students the opportunity to develop cognitive, linguistic, social-emotional, and physical and other skills to prepare them for success in school. This Communication focuses on Developmentally Appropriate Practices for DLLs as TK teachers, students, and families engage collaboratively in virtual teaching and learning contexts. An equity and assets-based approach employs research-based practices and contributes to the quality of an effective early childhood system that capitalizes on linguistic and cultural diversity. We have curated research and resources to inform and support TK educators as they provide DLLs access to the high-quality early education that all children need to thrive.

In each of our communications we will continue to highlight voices from the field and education and research resources as we walk this journey in partnership with our colleagues, fellow educators, advocates, and friends.

Visit our **CEEL Website** to learn more about our research, professional development, policy work, and programs. Contact us at ceel@lmu.edu with comments, additional resources, or to share your story.



FOCUS: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE DISTANCE LEARNING FOR DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN

VOICES FROM THE FIELD — Insights on Developmentally Appropriate Distance Learning for Dual Language Learners in Transitional Kindergarten (TK): A Tale of Two TK Teachers

Tina Renzullo and Maria Lourdes Salazar are the protagonists in our tale of two Transitional Kindergarten teachers dedicated to ensuring their four and five year old students and Dual Language Learners (DLLs) receive equitable and developmentally appropriate distance learning. They describe implementation of best practices for DLLs as they prioritize what Tina terms “the hallmarks of Transitional Kindergarten – social and emotional learning and oral language development.” Maria Lourdes and Tina use intentional teaching strategies to create flexible learning experiences that promote creativity, oral language development, critical thinking, and joyful learning! Having served in leadership roles at the district, county, and state levels, both Maria Lourdes and Tina strive to maintain powerful interactions to support DLLs and their families during this difficult time. “Building relationships and communication with the families will allow us to be transparent and work through this,” says Lourdes. Tina embraces “this dynamically evolving timeframe” and is inspired to, “carry some of these learnings back with me when we return to the classroom.”

Social and Emotional Learning and Family Engagement



Maria Lourdes Salazar

Maria Lourdes asserts that social and emotional learning and family engagement are interrelated and critical to maximizing distance learning experiences for her students. She believes that the “biggest thing with early age students is that they know we are still connected. We are still the TK family.” Maria Lourdes uses multiple modes of communication to ascertain how students and their families are doing, socially and emotionally. For families that don’t respond to the bilingual messages she sends via ClassDojo, Seesaw, email, or text messages, she makes personal phone calls to ensure that they are safe and healthy and offers support to connect children to learning activities. She also provides mini-training sessions for parents to address the digital divide by empowering them to feel confident with devices, applications, and other distance learning tools. “The families have become so comfortable with the technology that they’ll set them up and trust the students are becoming more independent in their work. Parents are just a step away.”

Similarly, Tina’s virtual classroom is shaped by the logistical and social and emotional needs of families and students. She uses tools such as Screencast and Screencastify to create tutorials anytime she introduces a new platform. These include explicit instructions on how to access platforms, click on items, find lessons, view videos, and upload videos or photos. Although her district provides “how to” videos, she finds that this personal touch creates additional family and student ownership of their shared virtual classroom environment. Additionally, Tina values family and student assets. Flexibility has been really important for families and her responsiveness has been the biggest shift for her during this time. She reflects on the deepening of her relationship with families and students, and shares, “parents are my proxy for teaching at home.” When she prepares video lessons for students she considers the physical environment and invites families to highlight aspects of their environment with comments such as, “Welcome to my kitchen, what’s in your kitchen?” She invites students to describe items in their own kitchen to a family member prior to presenting a mini-lesson to develop language and mathematical skills while cutting up fruits and vegetables.



Tina Renzullo

Designing Oral Language Development and Integrated ELD for DLLs

To accomplish creating flexible learning experiences in a virtual environment Tina “needs to understand that not all of my students may be able to access that [digital platforms or tools]. Whatever I’m using for the high tech element, I also need to find a low tech option.” She plans thematic units and employs constructivist approaches, “with a constructivist view point children have their schema, pulling in what they can from the general circle right outside of them.” Tina provides a weekly planner and encourages opportunities for families to leverage the gift of language and emphasizes the importance of reciprocal conversations with students. When she records video lessons or read-alouds for students, she uses realia, visuals, wait time, repetition, and questioning scaffolds. She encourages repeated readings to facilitate active engagement, deeper learning, and comprehension. Parents report, “You’ve read this story TEN times today, and my children have laughed and laughed each time.”

Maria Lourdes employs similar strategies when she plans I-ELD for her students, 40% of whom are Spanish speaking DLLs. In addition to focusing on early literacy skills, she implements Cognitively Guided Instruction (CGI) for Mathematics. This engages students in productive problem solving while explaining their thinking. Maria Lourdes models Think Alouds and uses images to support understanding of problems. She does this through both synchronous (zoom sessions) and pre-recorded lessons. She previews lesson content in Spanish and reviews learning by asking students to reflect on their problem-solving process. This also provides opportunities for differentiated assessment processes. She has taught families how to record student’s oral responses and upload video files to Seesaw or text messages. Maria Lourdes also schedules one-on-one FaceTime or zoom sessions to provide feedback.

**FOCUS: DEVELOPMENTALLY APPROPRIATE DISTANCE LEARNING FOR
DUAL LANGUAGE LEARNERS IN TRANSITIONAL KINDERGARTEN****RESOURCES AND RESEARCH**

CEEL curates resources to support young Dual Language Learners, engage their families, and assist educators during these challenging times as they provide developmentally appropriate synchronous and asynchronous instruction to develop oral language development and early literacy. The resources present useful guidelines and activities for distance learning that address concerns about equity and the unique social and emotional needs of our multilingual communities. CEEL also provided links to documents and websites that offer a wealth of general information on best practices for instruction of DLLs.

Title: **Balancing Online/Remote and In-Person Learning for Young Children**

Link: http://sites.edb.utexas.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/157/2020/03/English-ECE-Guidance_compressed.pdf

Summary: Based on principles of how young children learn, this resource, developed by the Agency and Young Children Research Collective at the University of Texas, Austin, provides ideas that support parents and caretakers as they try to balance their children's emotional health, learning activities, and their adult responsibilities. It also includes suggestions for schools and districts to implement on a daily/weekly basis to guide parents through an instructional day and sustain the home-school connection.

Title: **Distance Learning Resources for Dual Language Learners**

Link: <https://earlyedgecalifornia.org/coronavirus-resources-for-dual-language-learners/>

Summary: Early Edge California curates a variety of resources for parents/families and educators of Dual Language Learners. Some examples include videos, screen-free activities (Spanish), links to sites for bilingual stories and songs, television programs, and LMU/CEEL Dialogic Reading modules for teachers.

Title: **Emergencies and Disasters: Helping Children and Families Cope**

Link: <https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/emergency/index.html>

Summary: This National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations (NCPMI) offers an extensive compilation of resources in English and Spanish for parents, caregivers, and children that explain Covid 19 and the pandemic, why we need to stay at home, how to cope with stress and challenging behavior in children, and ways for adults to manage stress and practice self-care.

Title: **English Language Learners and the Five Essential Components of Reading Instruction**

Link: <https://www.readingrockets.org/article/english-language-learners-and-five-essential-components-reading-instruction>

Summary: This article from the Reading Rockets website presents recommendations and considerations for English learners for teaching each of the five components of early reading instruction delineated by Reading First.

Title: **Family Reading Time/La Hora de Lectura en Familia**

Link: <https://www.easternct.edu/center-for-early-childhood-education/family-reading-time/index.html>

Summary: Developed by Eastern Connecticut State University, this series presents videos of multi-lingual families reading to their children using the questioning techniques of Dialogic Reading to extend conversations around a book. Videos are available in English and Spanish.

Title: **Helping Children Regulate Emotions During Challenging Times**

Link: <https://sharemylesson.com/teaching-resource/helping-children-regulate-emotions#>

Summary: In this Webinar, Marc Brackett, the Director of the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, shares a multi-step process to help adults become emotionally intelligent role models for children and teach them strategies that support healthy self-regulation.

Title: **School Responses to COVID-19: ELL/Immigrant Considerations**

Link: <https://www.colorincolorado.org/coronavirus-ell>

Summary: In addition to an extensive list of resources for distance learning with ELLs and their families and COVID 19 information, this website provides recommendations and discussion of the perspective and concerns unique to immigrants/families of ELLs, potential worries about food security, health care, finances, e-learning, and staying connected.

Title: **Storybook Reading for Young Dual Language Learners**

Link: <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Storybook-Reading-for-Young-Dual-Language-Learners-Gillanders-Castro/7cb1940a5129696cd60cf14bad1f51b3dd89545f>

Summary: Authors Gillanders and Castro describe teaching strategies that have proven successful in engaging dual language learners during Read-Alouds and that support oral language and early literacy development. Included is an example of a Storybook Reading lesson plan and Daily Learning Experiences.

Title: **Teaching Young Learners in a Pandemic: Supporting Children Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 3 and Their Learning Partners at Home**

Link: <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/edlabs/regions/midatlantic/app/Events#EventId:2260,EventType:archived,Page:1>

Summary: This Webinar from one of the U.S. Department of Education Regional Education Laboratories, offers suggestions and strategies for meeting the substantial challenge of remote early learning aligned with principles of child development and best practices for engaging children's learning partners. The presenters suggest ideas for synchronous and asynchronous instruction and activities, as well as approaches to coaching parents and other learning partners.

Title: **The Early Years: Assets-Based, Language-Focused Family Engagement for Dual Language Learners**

Link: <https://wida.wisc.edu/sites/default/files/resource/FocusOn-EY-Family-Engagement-DLLs.pdf>

Summary: This Focus Bulletin from the WIDA Consortium looks at how teachers can maximize family engagement by adopting an assets-based perspective and identifying language goals when working with DLLs and their parents. It also provides suggestions for supporting and how to advocate for families' efforts to achieve language and cultural goals they desire for their children.

Title: **Tips for Video Chatting with Young Children – Staying Connected While Far Apart**

Link: <https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/tips-video-chatting-young-children>

Summary: From the NAEYC's collection of articles for parents on using Digital Media, this short piece is helpful for educators who want to make video sessions more interactive for young children. There are tips for supporting children as well as the adults with whom they are "chatting".

Title: **Using Video for Flipped Learning Environments**

Link: <https://betterlesson.com/strategy/292>

Summary: The Flipped-Learning strategy has potential for remote learning experiences. This article discusses some of the "how-to's" for teachers who want to implement the strategy, and addresses modifications for English Learners and Special Education.