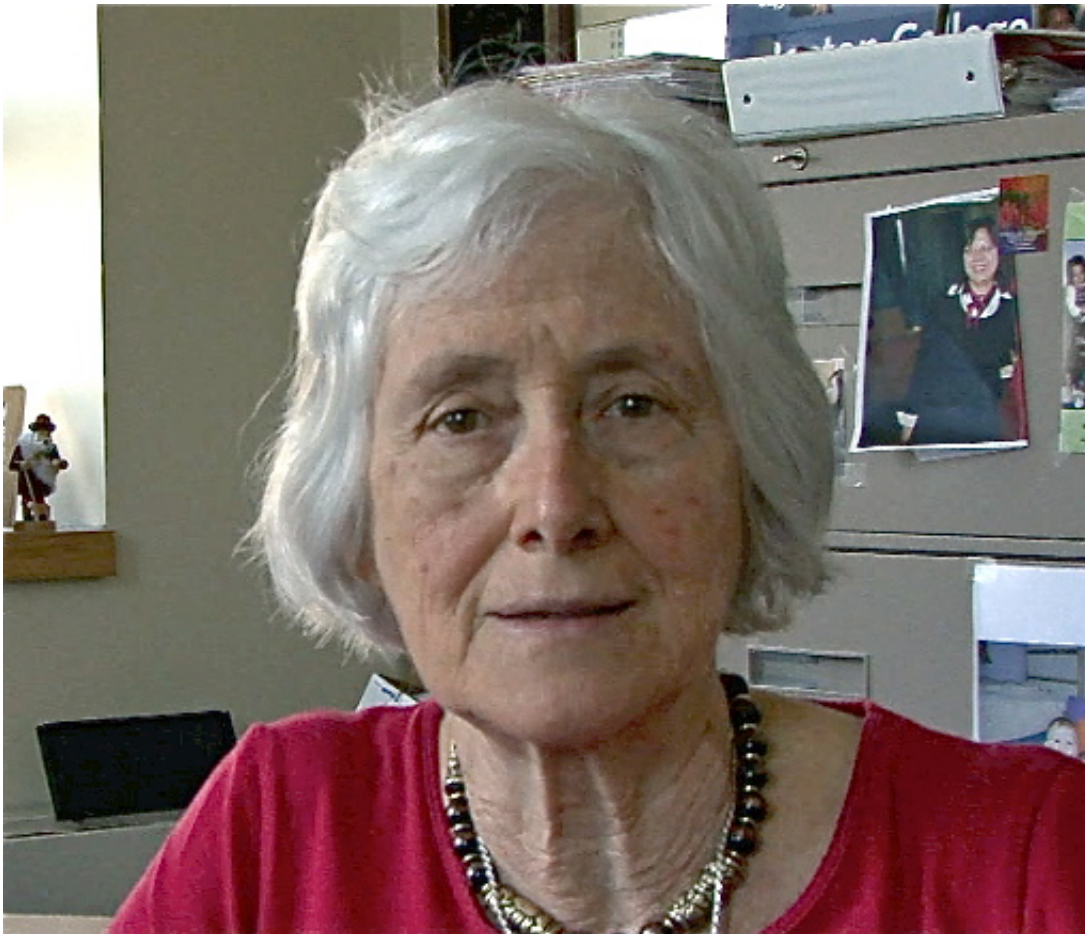


Genres in writing: A new path to English language learning

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Boston College Lynch School of Education Professor Maria Brisk has spent seven years developing her Genres in Writing curriculum. Her latest research shows the new approach boosts literacy and language learning for elementary school students. Credit: Boston College

Migration and globalization are placing thousands of second language learners in the classrooms of teachers who lack training in language instruction. As a result, schools face the challenge of preparing educators to foster inclusive, effective language learning.

In a 7-year study at a Boston elementary school where half the students are English Language Learners (ELL), setting a school-wide goal of improved writing skills and using a genres-based instructional method improved the performance of ELL students on state and internal assessments, according to Boston College Lynch School of Education Professor Maria E. Brisk, who presents her findings today at the American Educational Research Association annual meeting.

"Schools need to set a clear goal to improve writing instruction so that all teachers and all students are engaged," said Brisk, who details her Genres in Writing approach in her book *Educating Students in Academic Literacies* (2015, Routledge). "To support that, genre-based [writing instruction](#) provides teachers with very specific content they need to reach students with different degrees of English proficiency."

The most recent U.S. Department of Education data show the nation's public schools enroll nearly 4.4 million English learners, or nine percent of total enrollment. In urban schools, ELL students constitute 14.2 percent of enrollment.

Developed with classroom teachers, Genres in Writing breaks from the traditional use of the personal essay and teaches children how to approach, prepare and execute writing across multiple genres, such as the persuasive, expository and historical.

More information: The AERA 2015 session "International Perspectives on Teacher Preparation for Second Language Learners" takes place Monday, April 20, 10:35 AM at the Chicago Marriott, Sixth

Level, Great America Room.

Provided by Boston College

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