Strategies for Promoting Academics for English Language Learners in Secondary

Classrooms

by

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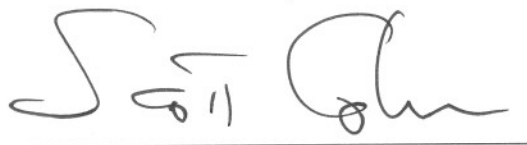
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ABSTRACT

Due to increasing numbers of English Language Learners present in mainstream secondary classrooms, all teachers must prepare themselves to work with learners from diverse linguistic backgrounds. A brief synopsis of the history of education for ELLs in the United States is included to provide background information on school policies and national politics since the mid 1960s. The literature review provides critiques of recent research about tutoring programs, study skills, testing accommodations, reading, and instructional conversations as they apply to classrooms with ELLs. From the research it can be concluded that small group conversation or acting out texts increase engagement for ELLs. However, it was also shown that ELLs must be helped to understand cultural references during classroom conversations. The research findings all demonstrated that no instructional strategy is universally helpful for ELLs and that more research is needed on the subject.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

In 2003, over 19% of school age children in the United States spoke languages other than English in their home, and legislation is regularly proposed in various states that restrict the forms of English teaching programs implemented in schools. Due to the number of students entering the mainstream classroom with limited English skills, mainstream content area teachers at the secondary level must familiarize themselves with ways to help all students succeed in their classrooms. This paper is an analysis of current research on strategies for promoting the academic success of English Language Learners in the mainstream classroom.

Rationale

The educational community is faced with the challenge of helping all children succeed academically, however many students face obstacles in the monolingual educational system of the United States. According to a National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) study, in 2003 there were 9.9 million students in the United States educational system who spoke a language other than English in the home. This number represents 19% of the school age (5-17 years old) children in the US at that time (NCES, 2004). This population was comprised both of students who were academically bilingual and students who "speak English with difficulty," with the latter group representing 5% of the total school aged population in 2003. Given the uneven distribution of these students around the country, many schools had student populations that were much higher than these national representations while other schools had no students who spoke a language other than English in the home. Regionally, Washington State reported 6.9% of their student population as "Transitional Bilingual" for the 2003-2004 school year

(Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction [OSPI], 2006), a classification much akin to the previous "speak English with difficulty" category. This average of 6.9% was unevenly distributed through the state, with transitional bilingual students constituting 29.5% of the Yakima School District and a mere 0.3% of the Spokane West Valley School District (OSPI, 2006).

These statistics show that teachers need to be aware of how to effectively teach with a language barrier present. While in some school districts, like the Spokane West Valley School District listed above, there are few students in need of considerations due to their language status, these may be the districts in which the students are receiving the least specialized support. Due to increasing pressures for early exit ESL programs and the disappearance of bilingual education programs in many states, a large number of students without age level appropriate academic understanding of English are being placed into the mainstream classroom. English Language Learners (ELLs) have been found to achieve oral proficiency in English after three to five years of study, while proficiency in academic English takes four to seven years depending upon the individual learner (Butler, Hakuta, & Witt, 2000). Thus, there can be a distinct gap in the time between an Ell's placement in a mainstream classroom and their attainment of academic English. This makes it the responsibility of every classroom teacher who has the possibility of working with ELLs to educate themselves on the various teaching methods currently advocated for helping students achieve in a content centered classroom while still working on their English skills. Of course, this is where controversy arises, because few agree as to which methods of instruction work best for mainstreamed ELLs.

Controversy

Many aspects of the education of ELLs are contentious; including the choice of what kind of program will be implemented. Programs that are currently implemented in the United States include bilingual education programs, late exit English as a Second Language (ESL) programs, early exit ESL programs, and supplying a pullout ESL specialist. Individual schools, school districts, and states have differing policies as to which of these programs will or can be implemented. There is a vast quantity of research demonstrating the positive and negative aspects of each type of program and active debate as to which type of ELL program best serves the students who are involved in it. This controversy affects the role of the mainstream classroom teacher, as each type of program results in a different level of academic proficiency that ELLs entering the mainstream classroom will possess. ELLs coming from bilingual education programs may have strong academic skills in both their home language and English, while early exit ESL students (depending upon previous educational attainment in their home language) may have academic skills in English that are well below their grade level with other academic skills at or above grade level. The methods that a mainstream classroom teacher uses in these extremely different situations need to respond to the needs of individual students and the educational background they possess. Thus, the strategies reviewed in chapter three cover a wide range of expected student ability levels.

A second issue is the disagreement over pedagogical methods, with one side claiming that the only way to include ELLs in the classroom is to create special learning experiences for them (such as hands on experiences) and the other side claiming that making changes to the way that lectures, testing, and reading are administered will

adequately include all students. Research supporting both sides of this issue will be reviewed in chapter three.

Terminology

There are numerous terms applied to the students discussed herein. The most common are Minority-Language Student, Limited English Proficient (LEP), English as a Second Language (ESL), and English Language Learner (ELL). ESL will be used to describe programs that hold this title but will not be used in this work to describe the students themselves. The terms Minority-Language Student, LEP, and ELL all refer to students in the process of learning English but have different connotations. LEP infers that the student has low skills in the English language while ELL can indicate a student who is anywhere from beginning the process of learning English to a student who is working on mastering academically advanced English skills. The term Minority-Language Student implies both a belief in the superiority of the English language as well as a single-language status for a student who may be well on their way to multilingualism. For these reasons, the term ELL will be the sole term used herein to describe the students themselves.

As the students involved in some of the included studies come from a wide variety of linguistic backgrounds, for simplicity the students' primary language will be referred to in discussion of the studies as L1 with English as their L2. Students' specific linguistic backgrounds will be included in the description of the samples used.

Statement of Limitations

The review of literature that follows was intended to include only studies on the effectiveness of secondary content area instructional methods for ELLs. However, there

is currently a dearth of research dealing specifically with the secondary classroom. Therefore studies set in primary school classrooms and in introductory undergraduate programs have been included where necessary, though these have been limited to those with findings applicable to the secondary environment. Case studies on making the learning environment more inclusive for ELLs have been included as well due to the assumption that manipulation of the classroom environment is a strategy teachers use to help their students succeed academically. Studies of bilingual teaching methods are excluded from this paper as such methods would be difficult to implement in a mainstream classroom without significant institutional changes.

Conclusion

Because of the changes in the makeup of the classroom in the United States, teachers of mainstream content area classes need to have an understanding of how to help the ELLs in their classroom succeed academically. Though rapidity of changes in the makeup of the American classroom are often blamed for the difficulty that educators face in dealing with ELLs, this is a rather misleading sentiment. As will be addressed in the next chapter, the school system in the United States has been trying to find ways to work with ELLs in public schools since the Colonial Era.

CHAPTER 2: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

Disagreement over the proper methodology for working with ELLs in the United States has been occurring since the Colonial Era and well through westward expansion (Spring, 2006). However, the developments in this discourse that have occurred over the last half century are the most applicable to the controversy today. Below are the major turning points in the road to America's current educational policy in regards to ELLs.

ELL Education in the 1960s and 1970s

Along with the turmoil of the American Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s came a focus upon the plight of language minority students in American schools. One scholar, A.H. Leibowitz began writing papers in the late 1960s explaining that the levels of language exclusion and restriction policies of many US schools "corresponded to the general level of hostility of the dominant group toward various language minority groups" (cited in Wiley, 2002, p. 46). This meant that English-only programs were more likely to be used as tools of social control over populations such as Native Americans and Mexican Americans, while recently arrived European Americans or highly educated Asian Americans were more likely to be given additional resources to ease into English-only programs.

Research of this kind led to a push for bilingual education programs, where ELLs would gain academic skills in both their home language as well as English. This was the background for the Bilingual Education Act of 1968. However, bilingual education programs of this time period focused primarily on students whose home language was Spanish. In 1974, the Supreme Court ruled in the favor of the plaintiff in the case of Lau

vs. Nichols, a case in which suit was brought on behalf of 1,800 students of Chinese ancestry who were being given no instruction in the English language in their California classrooms. According to the official opinion of the court, with mandatory attendance and non-discrimination laws in consideration, "There is no equality of treatment merely by providing students with the same facilities, textbooks, teachers, and curriculum; for students who do not understand the English language are effectively foreclosed from any meaningful education" (Lau v Nichols, 1974). However, while this was a victory for the education of ELLs it was far from a victory for the proponents of bilingual education as the ruling specified, "This is a public school system of California and 71 of the California Education Code states that 'English shall be the basic language of instruction in all schools.' That section permits a school district to determine 'when and under what circumstances instruction may be given bilingually'" (Lau v Nichols, 1974). Thus the legislation passed in 1855 to establish English as the only language of instruction was upheld.

National English Only Movement

In the 97th Congress (1981-82) Senator Alan K. Simpson of Wyoming sponsored S.2222, which aimed to revise the immigration and naturalization laws of the United States. The final provision "Expresses the sense of the Congress that English is the sole official language of the United States" (House Bill S2222, 1981). S2222 was diverted to the Subcommittee on Immigration, Refugees, and International Law. This was the first modern attempt to gain formal recognition of English as the official language of the United States, and the idea did not die with S2222. Congresses 98-109 have followed suit and in each session at least one piece of legislation has been proposed for the national

recognition of English as the only legitimate language of the United States. The most recent attempt, H.R. 4408 (National Language Act of 2005), strives to "(1) conduct its official business in English, including publications, income tax forms, and informational materials; and (2) preserve and enhance the role of English as the official language of the United States of America" (HR4408, 2005).

This movement is currently striving to overturn Executive Order 13166 (2000), which President William Clinton signed in August 2000. This order required that all federal and federally funded agencies provide proper accommodations for ELLs, whether that include translation of documents, the provision of translators, or other supplemental assistance. The essential argument between the two sides is over interpretation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and whether language discrimination constitutes discrimination based upon nationality.

Recent Developments in ELL Education

In 2001 the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was passed, proposing sweeping changes for the education system of the United States. One of the most important changes for ELLs was the movement away from bilingual education, best represented by the change in the name of the former Office of Bilingual Education to the much longer Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient (Spring, 2006, p. 141). However, a good deal of grey area is left for interpretation by the states as the act clearly states in SEC. 3129 of the NCLB act, "the Secretary shall neither mandate nor preclude the use of a particular curricular or pedagogical approach to educating limited English proficient children".

Various states have stepped up and created their own legislation to fill the gap in regulating pedagogical approaches. Yet again, California led the trend in setting a mandate for English only education. Proposition 227, passed in 1998, stated, "It is resolved that: all children in California public schools shall be taught English as rapidly and effectively as possible" (Prop 277). This legislation was followed by similar legislation in Arizona and Colorado.

Conclusion

Controversy over the best way to help ELLs in the United States public school system is far from settled. Though this debate has been occurring for over two centuries there is still not consensus on what the best way to help these students is. As becomes evident in chapter three, researchers looking into the issue disagree as to what strategies work best in the classroom.

CHAPTER 3: CRITICAL REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

There are many diverse strategies for helping ELLs in the mainstream secondary classroom succeed. Below are reviews of studies in which strategies for working with ELLs have been investigated by researchers. The studies included have been grouped into five categories: tutoring programs, study skills and testing accommodations, reading in the classroom, instructional conversations, and structuring the classroom. Though not all of the studies herein occurred in the secondary classroom, they all have implications that extend into that environment.

Tutoring Programs

Introduction

Tutoring programs take many forms in schools. At the classroom level it can be as simple as assigning a more capable peer to help a struggling classmate with an assignment or having students peer edit papers before handing them in to the teacher. Tutoring can also be provided by teachers, hired professionals, and volunteers before or after school hours. Teachers at many schools have the ability to either set up their own tutoring programs for students or recommend students to existing ones they view as effective. Therefore it is important for teachers to know what kinds of help ELL students find the most useful. The following are two studies conducted on formal tutoring programs with findings that are of significance to a classroom teacher who would like to use tutoring as a resource for their ELL students.

Peer Tutoring

After observing that ELLs tend to be reluctant to use campus resources more than once or twice, Moser (1993) sought to find out why her students were not utilizing the

available help and how those resources could be changed to prove more appealing. To do this she filmed five one-on-one tutoring sessions revolving around a written essay, then she showed these films to both tutor and tutee individually and audio recorded their responses to various questions about the session. There were five tutees involved, all Haitian students at Brooklyn College. The three tutors used were designated as American with no linguistic or cultural background specified. The tutors were also students at Brooklyn College.

The tutors reported and the video tapes showed that the peer conversations were one sided, with the tutor providing answers to their own questions after awkward pauses. The tutors saw the sessions to be unproductive as judged against the two sided tutoring they reported to have with non-ELL students. The wait times were considered by the reviewer to be brief. The tutees were observed to have expressed discomfort in their body language. Though only one claimed to think that a need for tutoring marked a lack of intelligence, all five stated beliefs that tutoring should be given by family members. The tutees were frustrated that the tutors could fix their grammar correctly but could not explain the grammar rules that governed the changes. All five stated the belief that they would prefer to seek help from a teacher or book rather than regularly attend peer tutoring sessions. Moser, upon analyzing the data collected, called for the creation of group peer tutoring programs where ELL students would be able to assist one another before asking for help from a tutor. Moser also stated that tutors need to be trained in common writing errors generated by ELLs.

This study was conducted on a narrow population of students, the sample consisting of only five tutees from one cultural background who all attend the same

school. The genders of tutor and tutees were also not provided. In addition, no numerical date was provided to show that the tutors were not providing enough wait time after asking their questions for an ELL student to be able to respond. Therefore, it may be likely that training the tutors on how to work with an ELL population (including proper wait times and common errors) may have alleviated some of the concerns of the tutees.

Community Tutors

Another option for helping ELL students is the creation of culturally centered community tutoring programs, an idea that was documented in an ethnographic study of the St. Paul's High School aged Hmong community (Dufresne, 1992). The author sought to document the effectiveness of the programs put in place by both Highland Park Secondary Complex staff and the school's surrounding Hmong community. To do this the author found out how tutoring programs were being implemented by the school and the outside community members. Then, to determine the effectiveness of the programs, he compared the 10th grader's Science Research Associates (SRA) test scores in the subjects of reading, language arts, and math from the Fall of 1991 and the Spring of 1992.

Dufresne (1992) found that the school had allowed Hmong community groups to create an ethnically isolated alternative to the school's required study hall period. This allowed Hmong community members to come in for one period a day and help Hmong students with their homework as well as allowing Hmong students operating at a high level of English proficiency to tutor their peers. The result of was that the struggling ELL students who enrolled in the class were able to get bilingual help in trouble subjects. In addition to this in-school program, Hmong community members set up a culturally

centered youth group that provided cultural events, more one-on-one homework help after school hours, and a telephone homework resource. The author claims that the 10th grade Hmong students made statistically significant gains in their SRA test scores from the beginning to the end of the school year, making this the only school in the district to make gains. No numerical data for the test scores is provided in the study.

As this study does not supply data to support its claim that the students made significant academic improvement through the course of this school year it is difficult to establish just how effective these tutoring programs were in comparison to schools without them. In addition, it is not made evident what differences there might be between the Hmong population at Highland Park Secondary Complex and the Hmong populations at other schools in the same district. The author does mention that Highland Park's administration is allowed greater leniency in creating specialized classes for ELLs at the school, thus allowing the school to offer bilingual and sheltered content area classes when other schools in the district are not. All of this makes it impossible to prove the effectiveness of the tutoring program through the examination of test scores alone. However, if the author's interpretation of the test scores can be believed, it is obvious that Highland Park is helping its Hmong students to improve academically, so their experiences should not be dismissed lightly.

Conclusion

The use of tutoring programs to help ELLs improve their academic skills has not been proven either effective or ineffective by Moser (1993) or Dufresne (1992). However, both authors implied in their work that tutoring implemented primarily by more capable peers from within an ethnic or ability level group is preferable to other

forms of informal (non-teacher directed) assistance. Moser (1993) also found that ELL students claimed to prefer extra academic help to come from a teacher. Dufresne (1992) found that a combination of bilingual classes, sheltered content classes, linguistically isolated study halls, and the creation of a culturally based youth group contributed to a rising of test scores from beginning to end of year for Hmong students at one school.

<div align="center">Study Skills and Testing Accommodations</div>

Introduction

Testing is one way for teachers to establish how much their students have learned about a subject. However, it is obvious that an ELL without advanced English language skills is going to be at a disadvantage when taking a test written in English. Thus, the question arises, how can a teacher modify the test taking experience to accommodate ELLs in the class? The following studies examine the effectiveness of using English language dictionaries as a test taking aid as well as for self-correction of writing. Another examines the usefulness of teaching study strategies to ELLs before taking a test.

Dictionary Use

A group of researchers sought to establish how effective allowing ELLs to use an English language dictionary as a testing aid really was for raising their performance level on a reading test (Albus, Bielinski, Liu, & Thurlow, 2005). They also wanted to know what population of ELL students would be most affected by the use of a dictionary. To answer this question, the researchers found a group of eighth grade Hmong ELL students as well as creating a randomized group of non-ELL students from the same schools. Students in both groups came from comparable socio-economic backgrounds. Using information provided by their teachers, the ELL group was divided by the researchers

into five categories of English language proficiency with 44.6% of the participants in the lowest three levels (1-3) and 55.4% in the highest two (4-5). All of the students involved in the study took the same three reading tests, half of each testing group allowed to use a dictionary as a test taking aid and the other half were tested without any accommodation.

The results found that the ELL students as a whole performed slightly better with the use of dictionary as a testing aid that they did without. When looking into how much the use of the dictionary helped each level of ELL students, the researchers found that the use of the dictionary was more helpful to the ELLs with higher English language proficiency (they performed an average of 1.2 points higher on the test with the dictionary). The ELLs with lower English language proficiency did not seem to have different test results with or without the dictionary use. Non-ELL students' scores were found to be unaffected by the availability of the dictionary.

As the ELL students involved in this study were all from one linguistic background the results are far from universally applicable. In addition, the students all came from different educational backgrounds at many different schools. This means that they all had completely different previous experience levels with dictionary use. Had the authors controlled this variable by teaching the students how to use a dictionary as a testing resource it might have helped to make the results more easily applicable. This study does show that ELL students can benefit from the use of a dictionary as a reference tool on tests. Further study would be necessary to prove just how effective the method is with a more diverse sample of ELLs and control established over students' dictionary skills.

On a related topic, a study by Meara and English (1987) looked into the kinds of errors that ELLs who are self correcting their writing using a dictionary tend to make. The primary goals of their study were to establish what the most common types of lexical errors were and to establish if the dictionary used had led the student to believe their error was correct. The data was compiled from the lexical errors made by ELLs when taking the Cambridge First Certificate Examination, a gate keeper examination for entrance into many British professions or universities where English skills are necessary. 14 language groups were represented in the errors that were coded, with half of the errors having come from native Spanish speaking test takers.

The results were surprising to the researchers, who found that 80% of the errors that the ELLs made were those that the dictionary was supposed to be able to prevent: semantically related errors, usage errors, and formal errors. When the researchers examined the dictionary used by the test takers, they found that in many cases the dictionary entries contained information which could reasonably lead to the errors evidenced by the ELLs. Only 33% of the entries were coded as being satisfactory, with the rest falling on a scale from "easily improved" to "misleading". The researchers also found that the effectiveness of the dictionary used varied for ELLs from different linguistic backgrounds, though they speculated that different dictionaries might be better suited for different people.

Little is known of the sample population used as the data for this study was provided by the testing corporation that administered the test. All that is known of the ELLs involved were their language background and that they were applying for jobs or university attendance in the United Kingdom. In addition, the authors specify that these

results are specific to the particular dictionary used in the study. They can not be generalized to all dictionaries. This stated it is important to note that the majority of mistakes made by this group of ELLs theoretically should have been prevented by their use of a dictionary. This would infer that self correction using a dictionary is not a particularly effective way for an ELL to improve the quality of their writing.

Study Skills

Another study was conducted on the use of study skills by ELLs (O'Malley, Chamot, Stewner-Manzanares, Russo, & Kupper, 1985). The researchers looked into how frequently ELLs in the study group used study skills and which ones they preferred. They also examined how this data changed when the students were specifically taught strategies for studying and learning. The sample included 70 High School ELLs from three different suburban schools. 65 came from Spanish speaking backgrounds and 5 came from Vietnamese speaking backgrounds. All were judged by their teachers to be high academic achievers, these students being preferred for the study due to the assumption that they would have some successful study skills already in place. The data was collected using a combination of classroom observations and small group interviews. After establishing what the students' previous knowledge of study skills was, the researchers split the students into three roughly equal groups in relation to gender and English ability level. One group received training in a metacognitive strategy, two cognitive strategies, and a socioaffective strategy. Another group received only the cognitive and socioaffective strategies while the last group received no strategy training at all. They were then shown pre-recorded video lectures on various content area materials and given listening comprehension tests.

The results from the self-report and observation showed that the students did not use any metacognitive learning strategies without training. The cognitive strategies used most often included note taking, repetition, translation into L1, and transfer (these accounted for 72.5% of the strategies observed). Cooperation and asking clarifying questions were the only socioaffective strategies observed. In the second part of the study, the researchers found that while there were not significant differences between the three groups on the listening and speaking skills pre-test administered, the treatment groups performed significantly better on the post-test than the control group did. On the listening test the mean score for the control group was 7.30 while the group that received metacognitive learning strategies scored 8.25. The cognitive learning strategy group fell in the middle with a mean score of 8.18. On the listening post test the mean scores were closer together with the control getting 2.88, metacognition getting 3.60, and cognitive receiving 3.04. The researchers found this change to be a significant improvement, especially after just eight days of study strategy training.

The fact that the sample for this study was created by the teachers involved rather than by randomization is troubling. Due to the fact that the sample involved was picked for their high achievement indicates that the results for the study may have changed had students without set study skills been used. This was also a short term study with the students being pre-tested, instructed, and post-tested in the span of about two weeks. It is unknown whether the students will retain their knowledge of study skills and use them in the school environment after this brief exposure. Despite this, the construction of the study was reliable enough that the researchers' claim for the importance of teaching study skills is substantiated by the results.

Conclusion

It has been indicated that there is a significant difference between how ELLs perform on written tests when they have the opportunity to use a dictionary than when they do not (Albus et al., 2005). However, the increase is primarily evidenced by ELLs who have a relatively strong background in English. It must also be considered that the lexical errors ELLs make when self correcting their writing indicate that dictionary use alone is not particularly effective for helping ELLs to improve their writing (Meara & English, 1987). For teachers, this means that providing a dictionary alone as a testing accommodation or teaching tool would not be advisable. Other possibilities should be investigated and used simultaneously or as replacements for this strategy. It was also found that the teaching of study skills increased ELL students' performance on listening and speaking tests (O'Malley et al., 1985). This would indicate that ELL students could benefit academically from specific instruction in study skills for use in school. Because the group instructed in and socioaffective study skills performed best of all of the participants it seems advisable that all three levels of study skills be instructed. More research on the effects of study skill instruction would be useful as all of this information comes from only one study.

Reading in the Classroom

Introduction

Books are an important aspect of many classrooms, making reading skills vital for the success of students. Unfortunately, only one study was found on strategies for helping ELLs to read a text book. The research available dealt primarily with vocabulary acquisition from literature. But because vocabulary acquisition is an important part of the

reading process in all subjects, this research is also an important tool in understanding ways to improve this skill for ELLs when reading for information. In addition, it provides useful information for how content area teachers might aid ELLs in continuing their transition towards English language proficiency.

Collaborative Strategic Reading (CSR)

The only study found that dealt with the use of a text decoding strategy with ELLs was about the CSR method (Klingner & Vaughn, 2000). This study looked into both how well the CSR strategy worked for the sample group and how well the students in the classroom helped one another. The students were a group of 37 fifth grade ELL students encompassing a spectrum of English skills ranging from emerging to fully bilingual. All of the students worked with one teacher who had been trained in the teaching strategy by the researchers. The strategy was used to teach two chapters from a science text book and included previewing the reading, picking out and defining vocabulary, restating the important parts, and summarization. All of this was performed in mixed English ability small groups where reading was also completed. Conversation occurred in both English and Spanish, with more capable peers expected by the teacher to help their struggling classmates understand the text.

The results found that the students voluntarily spent between 43% and 56% of their conversational time on identifying and defining vocabulary words with another 15% to 25% of their time used to "get the gist" of the reading. The transcripts showed that almost all of the time was spent discussing academic material with little off task conversation. The students were found to be diligent at helping their peers understand the reading with some groups spending as much as 21% of their time helping each other. The

results from vocabulary pre-tests and post-tests showed that every category of students made gains in vocabulary knowledge; however the results were extremely stratified. Out of a total possible score of 50, students listed as struggling with their English skills increased their mean score from 2.33 correct to 5.62. In contrast, students ranked by their teacher as high achieving increased their mean score from 5.80 to 33.20. The teacher reported greater involvement in classroom activities by the struggling ELLs and an increased willingness to speak after the use of CSR.

As all of the students involved in this study were primary Spanish speakers or fully bilingual, these results would not readily translate into the average mainstream classroom. Also, it is impossible to know if content knowledge apart from vocabulary was improved upon since the study only specified vocabulary. If vocabulary gains can be used as a reliable indication of content knowledge, it can be seen from the data presented that all of the students learned something from the lessons. Without a control group it is impossible to tell if these gains are greater or smaller than they might have been with a different strategy in use.

Narrow Reading

In a study on vocabulary acquisition, the researchers wanted to find out if adult ELLs' free reading would increase if they were given "the right texts" (Cho & Krashen, 1994). They were operating under the assumption that increased amount of time spent free reading would increase the overall vocabulary understanding of the study participants. The sample group consisted of four women between the ages of 21 and 35 from Korean and Spanish speaking backgrounds. They had been in the United States for between five months and seven year, though all had studies English for at least three

years. The women were asked to free read books from the Sweet Valley book series (written for grade levels 2-6). No minimum or maximum reading requirements were set and the researchers occasionally met informally with the subjects to discuss the books. They were asked to underline words that they found confusing. The subjects were then given a personalized post-test based upon the words they had underlined in their books. The women all correctly defined in English over 55% of the words they had underlined in their books. One of the women also attributed the increase in her English speaking ability to her reading of the Sweet Valley books. All of the participants claimed to be more interested in reading English language books after completing the study.

The tiny sample size of this group leaves no room for generalizability. In addition, the study took place over a number of months, a time period over which these women might have increased their vocabulary in any number of ways. However, one of the study participants reported that she often found herself recognizing words used on television after having underlined them in her book. So while the repetition of the word in various sources helped her to understand the word fully, the primary exposure was attributed to the books.

In a related study, the researchers sought to increase students' interest in reading by introducing them to the Clifford the Big Red Dog series (Ahn, Cho, & Krashen, 2005). Operating under the assumption that narrow reading of one series provides repeated exposure to the same words as well as a plot line that is easier to follow, they theorized that the students in the study would both increase their vocabulary and become more interested in reading English language books. The 37 Korean students involved were all learning English as a foreign language in their fourth grade class. All were in

their second year of English study and nearly half had never read in English before. The students were read the Clifford books while they had the option of following along in their own copy. Pre-reading and post-reading activities were conducted for each story and the students were allowed to play an accompanying computer game. All of this took place once a week for 16 weeks in addition to their traditional English instruction. A test was administered both before and after instruction to determine vocabulary level and interest in reading.

Students showed an increased interest in reading English language books on their post-test, with the mean increased from 3.03 to 4.04 (on a 5 point scale). The students also increased from 2.76 to 4.54 when asked if reading was fun. Results for the vocabulary tests were mentioned to have improved, but no numerical data was provided.

As this study was done in Korea with the primary language of instruction being Korean, the results would be more easily applicable to a bilingual education program in the United States. In addition, the vocabulary gains that are claimed by this study could very well have come from the students' normal English instruction. It seems safe to assume, however, that the reading material and teaching methods involved in this study had an impact upon the students' interest level in reading English language books.

Book Based Programs

Elly (1991) sought to discover whether the reading of culturally relevant books in a social context would improve students' English language skills more than using a more traditional system. The students in question were two successive cohorts of third grade students at a primary school on the island of Niue. At this grade level the students' primary language of instruction is switched from the local dialect to English. The cohort

of 1978 was instructed entirely using the traditional instructional tools and book. Then, the cohort of 1979 was instructed using a new book program that was based upon the work of a local author. These books included local dialect and customs that the students were expected to find familiar. Socially centered activities were used both before and after the readings and repetition of texts was permissible. Both cohorts were tested before and after their school year to determine their knowledge of written and oral English. The differences between the post tests for the two groups showed that the 1979 cohort had performed much better than the 1978 cohort in all of the categories tested: reading comprehension, word recognition, and oral language.

This study did include both a control group and a treatment group, which the authors stated were reasonably well matched based upon demographic data and their performance on the beginning of year pre-test. As this study did not take place in the United States and the pupils were operating on a daily basis in their L1, it is difficult for these results to be generalizable to the United States. However, they may be applicable to schools operating in a strong ethnically identified community where a majority of students come from a common cultural background.

Another study explored the subject of incidental vocabulary acquisition (Cobb, Horst, & Meara, 1998). The researchers wanted to know whether the reading of a simplified novel would result in the incidental acquisition of vocabulary. They also wanted to know if students who started with larger vocabularies would learn more new words than those who had smaller vocabularies at the beginning of the experiment. The sample group used included 34 students in Oman in an intensive English language class. For the duration of the experiment the students were handed their copy of the novel upon

entering the room, the teacher would read the book aloud for the duration of the period while the students followed along, and then the books were collected before the students left. The students were given tests of their vocabulary knowledge both before and after the reading of the text.

Gains in vocabulary were made between the pre and post-assessments, with the mean score moving from 21.64 correct answers to 26.26 on the multiple-choice section with a standard deviation of 4.08 on the mean gain of 4.62. Mean scores on the word-association section increased from 5.53 to 6.71 with a standard deviation of 2.33 on the mean gain of 1.28. The standard deviation indicates that in many cases no increase in scores occurred for readers, while others increased their vocabulary dramatically through the course of the study. No demographic information was given about the students who increased in their vocabulary retention the most drastically, though the authors of the study infer that these were the intermediate level ELLs in the class.

The demographic information for the participants in this study is not provided, which makes it difficult to know exactly how generalizable the results are. These results infer that it is unrealistic to expect incidental acquisition of vocabulary from reading.

Conclusion

Two studies found that vocabulary increases result from reading numerous books from the same series as well as increasing overall interest in reading (Cho & Krashen, 1994) and (Ahn, Cho, & Krashen, 2005). However, another study found that incidental acquisition of vocabulary from reading alone does is not statistically significant (Cobb, Horst, & Meara, 1998). These results, when considered together, would indicate that pre- and post-reading activities (which were present in the first two studies) may be an

important aid in vocabulary acquisition. This was supported by a study on the effects of using the CSR strategy for reading a science text (Klingner & Vaughn, 2000).

Another study demonstrated that increasing the cultural responsiveness of reading material can also increase the achievement level of ELLs in the classroom (Elley, 1991). As this study took place in a culturally isolated environment, it may be best suited for schools where only a few linguistic groups are represented.

Instructional Conversation

Introduction

Instructional conversation and discussion in the classroom, as is evidenced in the research below, is not just time filler. In these examples conversation (both oral and written) are used to establish ties with family, further educational goals, augment understanding of literature, and share understanding of current events. However, conversation in the classroom requires planning and understanding of student needs, as will be discussed below.

Sharing Literature with Family

One teacher chose to write a case study on her experience of getting families involved in the literary process in her classroom (Ciotti 2001). Her hypothesis was that students who engaged in literary dialogue with their families would have better grades in her language arts class. The class that she chose to try this project with consisted of 19 ninth grade students in her sheltered language arts class, all of the students speaking a language other than English in their homes. The activities included writing essays back and forth from student to guardian and a longer co-journaling activity. Parent, teacher, and student all met at the beginning and end of the class to discuss goals for the year.

Periodic checks on goals were made by the student and teacher. The measure of success was considered to be a passing final grade for the year, improvement in grammar and writing mechanics, and passing a standardized test.

The results of the project were mixed. Though some of the students and parents thoroughly enjoyed the project and wrote lengthy correspondences others were not successful in getting parent responses to writing. 80% of the class passed the class, but only 60% passed the standardized test and 33% showed improvement in grammar and mechanics. The researcher admits that none of these are truly reliable standards for measuring the success or failure of the program.

Because the sample size used in this case study was extremely small it is difficult to generalize from the results. There is also no known demographic information about the participants. Also, as this was an experimental curriculum there were sure to be mistakes made in implementation. It does indicate that parental engagement can, in some circumstances, improve student achievement.

Conversation as Text

Perez (1996) wrote a case study to document the use of content and concept relevant instructional conversation. The author wanted to show that contextualized organic conversations can work just as well to help ELLs gain communication skills as would conversational drills. The students involved were second and third grade students in a classroom of only ELLs, all were ranked at low to intermediate levels of English language skill. The researcher conducted weekly observations of the classroom to obtain data about the class.

Students were grouped into threes and fours for their conversation time. The topics for conversation were generated by the students and everyone in the classroom discussed the same topic at the same time. For some conversations vocabulary was supplied before hand, which the students were encouraged to use. Other conversations were accompanied by activities.

The researcher provided many instances where the students would build on one another's thoughts as well as asking clarifying questions. It was also noted that the longer the students stayed in small groups dominant and quiet students emerged. This was solved by regularly mixing up the groups. In addition, the small group sizes allowed otherwise shy students to speak more often. The author proposes that instructional conversation, in this instance, was successful for improving the English speaking abilities of the students involved.

No data other than observation is used to substantiate the claims of this researcher. Thus it is impossible for the reader to know just how reliable her claim of improved speaking abilities might be. More research would be needed to know precisely how useful instructional conversation is for English language development.

Classroom Literature Conversations and Interpretation

Two researchers set out to demonstrate the effectiveness of using drama to help a heterogeneous classroom understand a culturally oriented text (Medina & Richards 2004). A case study was performed on the drama exercises performed around a reading of a book dealing with themes of Latino/a culture. The fifth grade classroom consisted of equal numbers of European American and African American students as well as a single Asian American. There was only one ELL in the classroom, who was Latina. Before

beginning the lessons, the researchers conducted interviews to find out what the students thought about Latino/a culture. The class participated in drama exercises revolving around their reading and the general concept of culture once or twice a week for a few weeks.

The students were found to actively engage in all of the classroom activities and reading which took place. In addition, upon completing the series of lessons, the students evidenced an increased awareness of the complex nature of Latino/a culture and moved beyond relying upon stereotypes. This was measured by a shift in their comments during classroom discussions.

As this is a case study that is only aiming to report a single experience, the author makes no claim to generalizability for this study. However, the idea of using drama in the secondary classroom is easily transferable. Further research would have to be done to establish the benefits and proper methods for implementing such a program at the secondary level.

Martinez-Rold (2003) sought to establish what role narratives played in small group literature circle conversations. In addition, the researcher wanted to know how this might change based upon the make-up of the small group (primarily in terms of participants' linguistic backgrounds). A case study was performed on one seven year old Hispanic girl who regularly used personal narratives in response to literature during classroom small group discussions. The classroom was almost evenly split between native English speakers and native Spanish speakers, so every book chosen for the literature conversations was available in both languages. Transcripts were made of all of

the literature conversations the subject took part in, after which they were analyzed for content.

It was found that the subject chose stories to read for the literature circles that she felt she could connect to. This was reported by both the child and her mother, who was also found to mix a large number of personal stories into conversation. Therefore it was viewed that her family's penchant for telling stories was their way of transferring information about the past, family values, and traditions. The subject was found to prefer telling stories while in Spanish dominant small groups and tended not to tell stories when in an English dominant small group. It was observed that the subject regularly explained why her stories were connected to the literary work under discussion without being prompted. The story telling was never a monologue but an active dialogue with the rest of the group, who would contribute to the story or ask clarifying questions as it progressed.

As this study was done in a second grade classroom and only addressed the experience of one ELL out of a large number in the classroom, it is problematic to generalize these results. In addition, the teaching in this classroom was fully bilingual, so though the primary language of instruction was English the teacher also regularly addressed all of the students in Spanish. This makes the learning environment studied markedly different from that found in most mainstream secondary classrooms. This study is note worthy for the introduction of the idea of personal narratives as an acceptable form of response to reading, an idea that may well transfer into the secondary environment. More research would be needed to establish the validity of this assumption.

The above researcher also looked into the possibility of using literature conversations as a way for students to engage in conversations on discrimination and

racism (Martinez-Roldan & Lopez-Robertson 1999). The case study they performed looked into the idea that students at any level of English language acquisition can engage in meaningful literary conversations about racism in the United States. The study followed the same group of students through their time in both first and second grade, documenting the kinds of responses they gave to the reading material. The group consisted of almost equal numbers of Spanish and English dominant students who were placed in heterogeneous small groups for all of their conversations.

The researchers found a few strands of recurring conversation among the students. One was the use of personal narrative to relate to the book that was under discussion. Another, which happened in most conversations, was the students' verbalized horror that anyone should be treated in a discriminatory way. The final response of interest was the creation of literary connections between the themes addressed in the various books discussed. Students often referenced other books they had read while discussing a new book, some references being made to books read over a year before the conversation. The researchers viewed all of this to be evidence of high level thinking about discrimination and racism on the part of the students involved.

This case study provides little information about the students other that their L1. It is not established what skill level in English the students possessed; therefore it is difficult to establish whether or not this was affecting their ability to participate in conversation. Therefore, this study is much like the previous one cited. It is note worthy for the idea behind it but is not readily generalizable.

Translating Pop Culture

Another case study revealed that often conversations in mainstream classrooms can completely alienate ELLs who are present (Duff, 2001). While observing two grade 10 social studies classes in Canada, the researcher looked for whether ELLs were able to participate in current events conversations. Both teachers observed were known to have concern for issues of equity in the classroom and wanted to better serve their ELLs. The classes had 24 to 28 students, up to half of which were ELLs from five different Asian L1s. Classes were observed and audio recorded or videotaped. In addition, most students as well as the teachers were interviewed individually or in small groups. The text book was not used and hand outs or classroom conversations took its place. Current events conversations were estimated to take up one third of all instructional time for the class.

It was found that the current events conversations were difficult for many of the ELLs. They claimed to have difficulty putting words together in English quickly enough to add to the conversation. Often there would be references to television shows they did not know or local events that had occurred before they moved to the area. The researcher noticed that many of the ELLs had sociocultural background divergent from the mainstream youth culture. Thus the ELLs did not have the pop-culture literacy of their Canadian born peers. It was also found that many ELL students who refrained from joining current events conversations were regular contributors to conversations in their ESL classes where the conversations were about more familiar topics held in a different style. The researcher concluded that assumptions about pop-culture knowledge should not be made during current events conversations. She goes on to suggest that major topics of conversation be written on the board as the conversations progresses with synopses

and explanations given for subjects that have not been brought up before (including television, movie, and sports references).

Though this study was done in a Canadian school, the school systems and curriculum are not so dissimilar as to make these results inapplicable. The suggestions for practice are relatively simple and grounded in the research compiled. It seems that the findings may also apply to other content areas where teachers use free ranging conversation as an educational tool.

Conclusion

It has neither been proved nor disproved that including parents in written literary discourse can improve the grades of the ELLs involved (Ciotti, 2001). In addition it is also still unclear if student directed small group conversation actually helps students to increase their English language skills or academic achievement (Perez, 1996).

Interpretation of literature using the mediums of drama and small group conversation were shown to improve student engagement with their reading material (Medina & Meyers, 2004) (Martinez-Rold, 2003) (Lopez-Robertson & Martinez-Rold, 1999). As this information all comes from case studies it is not easily generalizable, but indicates that student engagement with literature at the secondary level may also be increased by the use of drama, conversation, and the encouragement of personal narratives.

Finally, ELL students are at risk of slipping through the cracks during free form classroom conversations (Duff, 2001). Because of their trouble following quickly moving conversation, the researcher suggests that assumptions about pop-culture knowledge should not be made during current events conversations. She goes on to suggest that

major topics of conversation be written on the board as the conversations progresses with synopses and explanations given for subjects that have not been brought up before (including television, movie, and sports references).

<div align="center">Structuring the Classroom</div>

Introduction

   Though not all teachers have control over the types of classes they teach (sheltered instruction, mainstreamed, having the help of a paraprofessional, etc.), most teachers do have control over how they set up their room and what they say. As is addressed below, just what or how a teacher says something could affect the students in their classes. Students are also affected by their environment, so simple projects to make them feel more welcome can go a long way towards making school enjoyable for ELLs.

Class Pairing

   Carro (1999) created a case study of her unique pairing of a sheltered World Civilizations class with an advanced ESL class. The author wanted to see if pairing the classes would allow the ELLs involved to receive high marks in World Civilizations, a credit bearing class. Without the program, these students were not allowed to take any credited classes until finishing their ESL program. The World Civilizations instructor was not an ESL teacher and the class was run just like any normal freshman level college. The professor was instructed in minor strategies for helping the students to succeed. These included speaking more slowly, the use of historical themes, defining vocabulary, writing clear test questions, and reading papers for meaning instead of English skill. The ESL teacher helped to build upon the historical themes by referencing them during English instructional time.

The results of the study showed that 62% of the participants passed the course with a "C" or above, which can be compared to the 54% of non-ESL students who passed the parallel World Civilizations course. In addition, 74% of the students in the paired course a few semesters later passed while only 69% passed who had completed the full ESL program before taking World Civilizations.

There is no demographic information given for the students involved in this study apart from the fact that they all had an L1 that was not English. Therefore, since there are no numbers of students provided it is impossible to tell if the percentages given are statistically significant.

Classroom Culture

In a case study of three ELLs in their senior year of high school, conducted to investigate teacher stereotyping of ELL students, Harklau (2000) concluded that teachers have very distinct stereotypes that they attribute to ELLs in their mainstream content area classrooms. Harklau conducted regular interviews of students and teachers and reviewed the students' coursework. The respondents were three female ELLs from Turkey and Vietnam. All were interviewed for 30-50 minutes approximately every two weeks during their senior year of high school. Their teachers were interviewed about the students' classroom participation and the teachers' previous experience with ELLs. Based on the data collected the author concluded that the girls were perceived by their teachers as hard working and motivated. They lavishly praised the girls for their perseverance over harsh early childhoods and their ideal classroom behavior. However, the author noted that the teachers often added qualifiers about how they needed to work hard because they were perceived to have little innate ability in academics. One teacher commented that while

ELLs are motivated to learn mathematics they often struggle to understand concepts. This teacher made no comment upon the fact that language barriers could be a factor in the students' struggles with concepts.

The small sample size used in this study as well as it's inclusion of only female students makes it difficult to generalize to a wide population of ELLs. In addition, because only self report was used by both the students and their teachers, this study does not show what affects this stereotyping might have on the classroom culture. The demographic information for the teachers was not provided, so it is unknown as to what cultural ideas might have been informing the teachers' stereotyping of the girls.

The same author performed another case study to investigate how tracking affects ELLs (Harklau, 1994). The study spanned three and a half school years and followed four students at their northern California school. Data was collected through observations and interviews with students. Two of the students were women and two men, two were high track students, and two low track students, and three students were from Taiwan, and one student was from Hong Kong. The students were observed, interviewed, and their homework was collected for analysis. By analyzing this data, the author determined that there is a distinct qualitative difference between the educative experiences dependant upon tracking levels. In the lower track the activities the teachers' questions were based upon recall level understanding of textbook materials read while in the upper track the work usually involved interpreting and synthesizing authentic sources. The researcher also found that the time on-task in the two tracks was significantly different, and that teachers failed to encourage ELL students in the lower tracks to participate, whereas high track teachers regularly encouraged increased participation by ELLs. It was noted that all

of the ELLs in the study began their high school careers in the lower track, but two chose to move up. This was a difficult undertaking as many teachers and administrators did not believe they would be able to meet the academic challenges of the upper track. The author draws the broad conclusion that teacher attitudes towards student abilities dictate student placement and student expectations within the tracking system.

Yet again, the small sample size in this group makes generalizability difficult, but the breadth of methods of research compensate for that to an extent. It would be useful to know if teacher experience may have been a confounding factor in this study, as it is generally more experienced teachers who are allowed to teach upper level course work.

In a case study of ways to improve school culture, five graduate student projects were examined for their ability to make a high school environment more culturally responsive to the student body (Brown & Howard, 2005). The projects covered a number of areas, mostly dealing with making the ELL population of the school feel more welcome. One student created a survey to find out what cultural backgrounds all of the students came from and then created flags for the entry way that said "Welcome" in all of those languages. Another student, to increase communication between school and home, personally translated all of the major school forms into Spanish. Then the student found translators to do the same for all of the other languages that the student body spoke. A final project sought to help the student body understand the backgrounds that ELLs at the school came from. To do this they created a web site with an individual page for every participating ELL. Each page described their country of origin, memories of home, and links to more information about the country. ELLs at the school were found to be eager

participants in these graduate projects and expressed joy at being better recognized in the school community.

This is a case study with no claims to generalizability, though there are factors involved that make it relatively generalizable. The school at which this case study occurred is typical of many urban schools or suburban schools with bussing programs, which makes the results more easily transferable. In addition, the researchers made no claims that these projects drastically changed the school. But these ideas for improving school environment are relatively simple and could be implemented by a classroom with the help of a teacher.

Conclusion

The pairing of a sheltered World Civilizations class with an ESL class was inconclusively demonstrated (Carro, 1999). However, the author suggests the use of strategies such as speaking more slowly, the use of historical themes, defining vocabulary, writing clear test questions, and reading papers for meaning instead of English skill. These cannot be unquestioningly applied due to the lack of conclusive results, but they are provided as suggestions.

Teacher bias has been shown to hurt the academic success of ELLs (Harklau, 2000) (Harklau, 1994). These studies contend that because teachers are reluctant to place ELLs in upper level tracks as well as holding assumptions about their educational difficulty, ELLs are often allowed to go through mainstream classes without being challenged. The research shows that ELLs in the mainstream need to be held to high expectations. In addition, a driven student should not be counseled away from more difficult course work just because of a language barrier.

Finally, it was demonstrated that service learning projects centered on making ELLs feel more welcome in the school environment can succeed (Brown & Howard, 2005). As these can be either small or large projects, it would be advisable to attempt such a project at the classroom level.

CHAPTER 4: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

As was addressed in the first chapter of this paper, the demographics of the public

school system are shifting. In 2003, over 19% of students in the United States spoke a

language other than English in their home. And since current educational policy has

shifted towards mainstreaming education, classroom teachers need to know how to work

with students from linguistic backgrounds divergent from their own. This was the

impetus for the creation of this paper on methods for working with English Language

Learners in the mainstream classroom. The research critiqued above, though not all

directly performed in the secondary environment, has a number of implications for

practice applicable for secondary teachers, which are described in the following pages.

Tutoring Programs

The use of tutoring programs to help ELLs improve their academic skills has not

been proven either effective or ineffective by Moser (1993) or Dufresne (1992).

However, both authors implied in their work that tutoring implemented primarily by

more capable peers from within an ethnic or ability level group is preferable to other

forms of informal (non-teacher directed) assistance. Moser (1993) also found that ELL

students claimed to prefer extra academic help to come from a teacher. Dufresne (1992)

found that a combination of bilingual classes, sheltered content classes, linguistically

isolated study halls, and the creation of a culturally based youth group contributed to a

raising of test scores from beginning to end of year for Hmong students at one school.

All of this would indicate that any tutoring program created for the benefit of

ELLs would need to take into consideration the specific cultures that would be using the

program. The L1 students that participated in these studies seemed to prefer that help come from individuals that are perceived as having authority over the student (i.e. teachers) or from other members of their specific cultural group. Though the research cited here dealt specifically with tutoring groups, these findings may also apply to in-class work. Moser (1993) found that tutees became frustrated with their tutors when they were unable to provide explanations of grammatical changes needed in a written work. This would seem to apply to peer editing situations in which students are expected to help one another. A solution might be to help all students in the classroom better understand the rules of English grammar and common mistakes students make.

<div align="center">Study Skills and Testing Accommodations</div>

It has been indicated that there is a significant difference between how ELLs perform on written tests when they have the opportunity to use a dictionary than when they do not (Albus et al., 2005). However, the increase is primarily evidenced by ELLs who have a relatively strong background in English. It must also be considered that the lexical errors ELLs make when self correcting their writing indicate that dictionary use alone is not particularly effective for helping ELLs to improve their writing (Meara & English, 1987). For teachers, this means that providing a dictionary alone as a testing accommodation or classroom aid would not be advisable. Other possibilities should be investigated and used simultaneously or as replacements for this strategy.

It was also found that the teaching of study skills increased ELL students' performance on listening and speaking tests (O'Malley et al., 1985). This would indicate that ELL students could benefit academically from specific instruction in study skills for use in school. Because the group instructed in metacognitive, cognitive, and

socioaffective study skills performed best of all of the participants it seems advisable that all three levels of study skills be instructed. More research on the effects of study skill instruction would be useful as all of this information comes from only one study.

Reading in the Classroom

Two studies found that vocabulary increases result from reading numerous books from the same series as well as increasing overall interest in reading (Cho & Krashen, 1994) and (Ahn, Cho, & Krashen, 2005). However, another study found that incidental acquisition of vocabulary from reading alone does is not statistically significant (Cobb, Horst, & Meara, 1998). These results, when considered together, would indicate that pre- and post-reading activities (which were present in the first two studies) may be an important aid in vocabulary acquisition. This was supported by a study on the effects of using the CSR strategy for reading a science text (Klingner & Vaughn, 2000).

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It has neither been proved nor disproved that including parents in written literary discourse can improve the grades of the ELLs involved (Ciotti, 2001). In addition it is also still unclear if student directed small group conversation actually helps students to increase their English language skills or academic achievement (Perez, 1996).

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Finally, ELL students are at risk of slipping through the cracks during free form classroom conversations (Duff, 2001). Because of their trouble following quickly moving conversation, the researcher suggests that assumptions about pop-culture knowledge should not be made during current events conversations. She goes on to suggest that major topics of conversation be written on the board as the conversations progresses with synopses and explanations given for subjects that have not been brought up before (including television, movie, and sports references).

<div align="center">Structuring the Classroom</div>

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Finally, it was demonstrated that service learning projects centered on making ELLs feel more welcome in the school environment can succeed (Brown & Howard, 2005). As these can be either small or large projects, it would be advisable to attempt such a project at the classroom level.

<div align="center">Suggestions for Further Research</div>

There is a dearth of research focused on mainstreamed secondary ELL students. More specifically, little research has been conducted upon the methods currently being used to help ELLs succeed in their mainstream content area classrooms. As the No Child Left Behind Act is asking that teaching methods be scientifically proven and mainstreaming is being recommended for ELL students, the educational community would benefit if this research was to be done as soon as possible (No Child Left Behind, 2003). In addition, as a majority of the research on teaching ELLs is qualitative in nature, quantitative research on the same subjects is also suggested.

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