Teachers as Researchers:

ELD Assessment and Practice in a

Mainstream Elementary Classroom

A Special Project

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ABSTRACT

While the precise definition of Academic Language continues to be debated in the research, schools are directing efforts to improve student achievement by strengthening the Academic Language skills of their English Language Learners (ELLs). Current research suggests that explicit instruction in English Language Development (ELD) will improve Academic Language, although there is little research from elementary classrooms to guide teachers in their efforts to deliver this instruction. In this study, the third grade mainstream teacher and her district ELL Facilitator collaborated to find a process to select appropriate oral language targets for explicit form focused instruction for the level 3 ELL students in her mainstream classroom. The teachers analyzed oral language assessments and conversational speech, consulted ELD continuums and chose 39 irregular past tense verbs as the target for instruction; the aim of her project was to improve the Academic Language of her third grade ELL students by delivering explicit oral language instruction of these selected verbs. Findings from the study revealed a surprising need for ELD instruction for the whole class, and the post test indicated a high degree of uptake for the level 3 ELL students as well as many native speakers. The positive results of this study point to the need for more teacher led research in the elementary classroom. A possible need for whole group ELD instruction was indicated; therefore implications for future pedagogy may be a reevaluation of the ELD needs by grade level in the mainstream classroom.

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

The ultimate goal for English Language Learners (ELLs) in our educational system is that they acquire native fluency in English so that they will be prepared, along with their peers, for college, career and citizenship. Current research suggests that lack of explicit and systematic instruction in oral language development that addresses complex uses of the English language is needed to achieve native fluency at this Academic level (Saunders and Goldenberg 2010, Dutro and Kinsella 2010, Bayley 2009, Saunders and O'Brien 2006). The current research also suggests that lack of native levels of Academic Language contributes to the achievement gap for English Language Learners (Welch-Ross, 2010).

Research recommends English Language Development (ELD) especially in oral language for ELL's, which is instruction specifically targeted at language development as opposed to sheltered instruction, where the goal is success in the content areas (Saunders and Goldenberg, 2010). Surprisingly, little research has been done in elementary school classrooms in the United States to provide insight into how to test and target individual language needs and there are few resources to guide teachers in providing this oral language instruction in the mainstream classroom. Most of the research in Second Language Acquisition in the United States has been done in the university setting. All literature reviews on the subject recommended more empirical research be done in US schools on the topic of oral language development and

instruction (Snow and Katz, 2010). In particular, studies which take literacy level into account are needed (Bayley 2009, Saunders and O'Brien 2006, Scarcella 2003).

The background for this project took place at the teacher researcher's elementary school. The prior spring, staff chose to target Academic Language instruction as an instructional improvement for ELL's in the coming year in their district mandated annual School Improvement Plan (SIP). In time it became clear that not only was this a lofty goal for a one year plan, but that the definition of Academic Language was not the same from teacher to teacher, which diffused the strength of a shared common goal. Along with the ambiguity of the precise meaning of Academic Language beyond teaching vocabulary, teachers were unclear about which aspects of Academic Language should be taught at each grade level and when to deliver this individualized instruction to their ELL students in the mainstream classroom.

The lack of information in regard to the practical nature of putting the theory into practice led me into this research collaboration with our district's ELL facilitator. My principal suggested the collaboration when I asked for ideas about a possible classroom research project in the area of oral language development.   I wanted to conduct research to follow-up on a comment made by my Applied Linguistics professor who suggested that teachers could target inflectional endings for Academic Language instruction of their primary aged students. The ELL facilitator was interested in doing classroom research on Academic Language and ELD which led to her research topic on how to assist classroom teachers in this work.

I am a third grade teacher with a Bachelor's degree in English; I hold Washington State endorsements in ELL along with endorsements in English and Spanish and I have 13 years of teaching experience. I did a qualitative study along with my district facilitator, in which we reviewed the literature and defined Academic Language, or Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP), English Language Development (ELD), and approaches to oral language instruction in the elementary classroom. These approaches included a focus on targeted grammatical forms and an approach to conversation with students in a linguistics centered environment which included recasts with feedback and metalinguistic reflection (Bayley, 2009), or "metatalk" (Snow and Katz, 2010, p. 94). The participants in the study were the 4 third grade students who received sheltered instruction in my mainstream classroom. All four students were assessed at Level 3 (Advanced) at the beginning of the school year by the Washington Language Proficiency Test (WLPT).

Oral language inventories, anecdotal language samples collected from classroom observations, and tape recorded language samples were analyzed to assess the student's oral language. We analyzed ELD continuums and standards in order to pinpoint targets for instruction and selected past tense verbs. With the help of a useful internet resource, we eventually narrowed the target to the first 30 most commonly used irregular past tense verbs. http://bogglesworldesl.com/irregularverbs.htm). I created the verbs pre/post test which was given to the entire class. The test consisted of 39 past tense verbs: the 30 most commonly used irregular past tense verbs along with 9 problem verbs that were collected in the anecdotal data. We researched strategies and then, due to the lack of research, created materials our own materials for instruction; I

then set up a "Language Buddy" group with older students acting as language models which met at afternoon recesses for 3 months. Work on this project helped to answer the questions: 1.)   What is an effective way to determine oral language targets for ELL students? 2.) What is an effective way to deliver explicit form focused instruction of oral language in the mainstream classroom?

The pretest data showed a surprising need for whole group instruction of irregular past tense verbs, although the instruction needed to be differentiated for language levels, and the post test data showed marked improvement over time. This qualitative study contributes to the understanding, from a teacher's point of view, of oral language pedagogy for primary age students. Implications for future research and curriculum include, further study of whole group grammatical needs for irregular verb instruction along with a high need for more teacher initiated classroom based research in the area of instruction and assessment of oral language and grammatical forms for ELL students.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

I looked to the research to provide a deeper understanding of the terms Academic Language, English Language Development, and Oral Language Development to guide my 3rd grade research project on improving Academic Language in the mainstream classroom. I explored the full scope of language required by ELLs to achieve native like language proficiency in Academic Language. Researchers agree that working with second language students on English Language Development with goals that target specific standards and stages of development will improve Academic Language but there is disagreement about exactly how and when that instruction should take place. They specifically disagree about designation of a separate block for ELD instruction and explicit instruction of grammatical forms. Researchers agree that more research is needed in the area of ELD in United States classrooms but there is clear agreement that an increase of daily oral language practice is needed in US classrooms.

The researchers called for explicit instruction of Academic Language; learners cannot function in a school without this instruction and they cannot achieve high levels of socioeconomic success after school without mastery of this language (Scarcella 2003). In their current research, William Saunders, from U.C.L.A. and Claude Goldenberg from Stanford University (2010, p. 23) state that, "Helping English learners succeed in academic contexts is no doubt the most challenging goal and most likely the

greatest need to emerge in recent English learner research. Goldenberg states that,

The growing number and the lack of adequate progress among English Language Learners is of crucial concern given that some estimates predict that by 2025, one in four public K-12 students will come from a home where a language other than English is spoken." The population of ELLs has grown from two million in 1990 to nearly five million. Of the total population of ELLs, 60 percent receive most of their daily instruction in the mainstream English classroom (2008, p. 10).

Without Academic Language, students fail to progress along with their peers in elementary school and never catch up. Research states that early progress through the first 3 levels of language proficiency is rapid for most second language learners until grade 4, when the students reach a "plateau"; their progress slows as they move beyond level 3 and they begin to fall behind their peers (Saunders and Goldenberg, 2010). Some suggested reasons for this are: less attention in the upper grades to oral language activities and the increasingly complex language at the academic level in the upper grades (Saunders and O'Brien 2006, Scarcella 2003). The achievement gap takes root at this early stage and widens with time. In "The 2007 National Assessment of Student Progress" Goldenberg (2008, pp. 10-11) states that that fourth-grade ELLs scored 36 points below non-ELLs in reading and 25 points below non-ELLs in math. The gaps among eighth graders were even larger." Error analysis of college writing shows that problems with academic language fluency persist when ELLs progress to the college levels and they are denied opportunities for advancement because of inadequate proficiency in academic writing. For example, one researcher identified 46 instances of correct verb tense use in an ELL student's college paper, with 30 instances

of incorrect verb tense use, 16 of which were errors with simple past tense (Lorimer, 2010, p. 2). Another researcher gave examples of emails written so poorly that college applicants to special programs and internships were denied based on poorly written emails where tense and syntax were incorrect throughout (Scarcella 2003, p. 1). Clearly, there is a need for improvement in Academic Language development for the ELL population.

The definition of Academic Language encompasses a broader spectrum of language than many teachers and other education professionals may realize (Snow and Katz, 2010). The terms Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency, known as CALP, or school talk, and Basic Interpersonal Communication, known as BICS, or social talk, were both coined by Jim Cummins in the 1980's to define the distinction between the two levels of language second language learners acquire. These terms have made their way into the mainstream teacher's vocabulary, but for many teachers, the term Academic Language remains vague and requires further definition beyond teaching content vocabulary.

Kate Kinsella states that lessons must include academic talk in order to narrow the verbal achievement gap. Kinsella defines academic language as "comprehensible verbal output" addressing focal lesson content, framed in complete sentences with appropriate register, vocabulary, syntax, and grammar (Kinsella, 2009, To Narrow the Verbal Achievement Gap). Susan Dutro and Carrol Moran further define academic language as "the language of texts, of academic discussion, and of formal writing. Academic language proficiency requires students to use linguistic skill to interpret and

infer meaning from oral and written language, discern precise meaning and information from text, relate ideas and information, recognize conventions of various genres, and use a variety of strategies for distinct purposes." (Dutro and Moran, 2003, p.4) Academic Language consists of: 1) all the content and conversational vocabulary that allows for academic subjects to be understood and for academic ideas to be exchanged, 2.) grammar, and 3.) language functions or purposes, which is the language we need to compare and contrast, infer, summarize, present cause and effect relationships, question and predict, draw conclusions, make connections and find main ideas and details (Dutro and Moran, 2003, p. 4). Kinsella's list of language functions also include: "expressing an opinion, asking for clarification, paraphrasing, soliciting a response, agreeing/disagreeing, affirming, holding the floor, justifying, reporting and citing, and offering a suggestion" (Kinsella, 2009, Language Functions).

Some researchers advocate for the explicit teaching of Academic Language throughout the school day because all students in the classroom are learning academic language. They say that native English speakers and second language learners are all in a lifelong process of learning academic uses of our language and that process never ends; it is ongoing and can keep changing as the language encountered in life experience changes (Dutro and Moran 2003, Kinsella 2009). Kate Kinsella says, "All students are AESL (Academic English as a Second Language) because Academic English isn't a natural language, it needs to be taught" (Kinsella 2009, All Students are AESL). Researchers agree that the best way to help ELL's keep pace with their peers is to teach academic language through explicit, targeted instruction in ELD (Snow and

Katz 2010, Saunders and Goldenberg 2010, Bayley 2009, Kinsella 2009, Dutro and Moran 2003).

The purpose of ELD instruction is to develop Academic Language. Saunders and Goldenberg define ELD as Instruction that is delivered to ELL students in a separate part of the day from English-language arts and other content areas, with a specific focus on helping English learners develop English language skills in increasingly sophisticated ways. ELD is designed to help ELLs reach a level of language that allows them to be successful with content and communication in their mainstream English classrooms (Saunders and Goldenberg, 2010). There is little research to guide ELD instruction, especially research in kindergarten through grade twelve (K-12) classrooms in the United States (Saunders and Goldenberg 2010, Saunders and O'Brien 2006, Bayley 2009). Most of the current classroom teaching practices are based on theory (Saunders and O'Brien 2006, Saunders and Goldenberg 2010). In their summary of ELL's instructional needs, Marguerite Snow and Anne Katz (2010, p. 83) provide another current definition of ELD. They explain that in order to be proficient academically, "students need proficiency in vocabulary, syntax (grammar), phonology (sounds and patterns) and morphology (or how prefixes and suffixes indicate word meaning and grammatical roles)."

Although there is agreement that targeted ELD instruction is an effective way to improve Academic English, Claude Goldenberg (2008, p. 13) states that agreement about the best way to teach ELD "is another area about which there is little agreement." There is agreement about the advantage of targeting instruction to

standards and the student's language proficiency levels, however, there is still some disagreement about the instruction of grammar (Saunders and O'Brien, 2006). Ron Ellis states that "the value of teaching explicit knowledge of grammar has been and remains today one of the most controversial issues in language pedagogy (Ellis, 2005, p. 214).

In the 1980's, Second Language theorist Steven Krashen coined the term "comprehensible input", which meant that when ELLs listened to language input that was slightly ahead of their knowledge, language acquisition would be facilitated. Shortly after, Swain coined the term "comprehensible output" arguing that input alone wasn't enough, and finally, Michael Long added his Interaction Hypothesis, in which he argued for the importance of meaningful interactions in the target language (Snow and Katz, 2010, p. 93). This three part model, called communicative instruction, is the instructional model in use today (Bayley, 2009). Snow and Katz add 3 more components which are: feedback about use of the language, rehearsal or any kind of deliberate repetition, and language understanding in terms of conscious attention to one's language learning. (Snow and Katz, 2010) The language understanding referred to by Snow and Katz is also called metalinguistic awareness and metatalk; these terms will be explained further in this section.

In his review of the current research, Robert Bayley examines the current shift from purely Communicative Instruction, in which the teaching of grammar is seen as ineffective, toward attempts to focus the teaching of grammatical form within a Communicative Instructional framework (2009, p. 1). An example of this thinking may

be the formula that Dutro and Moran have researched for instructional design of ELD lessons called "Functions, Forms, and Fluency." In this approach, teachers design lessons in which they: 1.) Analyze the skills and concepts that are required of lessons by determining the language task (function), 2.) Analyze the forms of language that are necessary to carry out the task (grammar), and 3.) Analyze ways for students to practice and apply the skills and concepts in order to develop fluency. (Dutro and Moran, 2003, pp. 5-16)

Although there is also disagreement about whether or not it is most advantageous to teach ELD as a second subject or to teach it throughout the day in an integrated approach, all research in ELD promotes an emphasis on oral language development through ELD instruction (Saunders and Goldenberg 2010, Snow and Katz 2010, Bayley 2009, Kinsella 2009, Goldenberg 2008, Scarcella 2003, Dutro and Moran 2003). The state of California leads the way in much of the current research and practice; their public school system has mandated a dedicated block of time for the teaching of ELD.   There is agreement in the research that ELD is helpful and necessary. In their Research to Guide ELD Instruction, Saunders and Goldenberg say that there is evidence to support that, "Providing ELD instruction is better than not providing it." (Saunders and Goldenberg, 2010, p.27). Regardless of timing and duration of the oral language instruction, there is consensus that there is a great need for more time spent on systematic instruction of oral language (Saunders and Goldberg 2010, Saunders and O'Brien 2006, Snow and Katz 2010, Bayley 2009).

In their reviews of the current literature, Robert Bayley (2009) and Saunders and O'Brien (2010, p. 15) state that oral language development is especially beneficial for ELLs, and that more oral language is needed in order to advance students to native like fluency in writing and speaking. Snow and Katz (2010, p. 93) write about the new approach to second language learning, referring to it as a combination of meaning and form. In this model, the students make meaningful conversations, that is, comprehensible input and output, and they are provided with opportunities for meaningful interactions, but there is now an added emphasis on teaching grammatical forms. This combined approach was referred to in research by Robert Bayley (2009) earlier in this chapter as well. Ron Ellis states that, "There is now a widespread acceptance that acquisition also requires that learners attend to form." (2005, p. 212)

Many of the researchers support oral language as an effective scaffold for writing and reading.   Snow and Katz state that work on oral language supports the ELL's writing skills and that process writing in particular, is effective because in process writing, "… output is pushed from semantic to syntactic." (Snow and Katz, 2010,p. 109) In their materials for the program "Frames for Fluency," Williams and Roberts highlight the quote, "They won't write what they can't say" to illustrate their point that oral language is an essential scaffold to writing for ELLs. According to Williams and Roberts (2011, p. 1):

> The current surge in popularity of oral language instruction
> emphasizes academic oral language, sometimes referred to
> as "oracy" according to Dr. Aida Walqui. This language is

more structured and oriented towards grammatical correctness than informal oral language, and therefore it forms a perfect bridge between oracy and literacy.

At the 2009 Central Valley Dual Language Teacher Conference, Kate Kinsella stated that the National Literacy Panel called for explicit oral language instruction because well developed oral language proficiency in English is associated with improved reading comprehension, writing skills and test scores. (cited: August and Shanahan (2006) Summary Report of the National Literacy Panel.)

Researchers also note the surprising lack of empirical research, especially in the area of oral language instruction. Saunders and O'Brien describe this research gap in the following quote:

One might have expected to find a fairly large body of research that examined the effects of different types of programs and instructional models on ELL's oral language development. In fact, no such body of research exists. For the most part, research on the effects of programs and instructional models ignores oral language outcomes in favor of literacy outcomes or academic achievement outcomes. (2006, p.23)

Susana Dutro has developed a toolkit for systematic ELD instruction called E.L. Achieve. She and other researchers say that oral language lessons need to be

designed to target skills or grammatical forms, provide activity or direct instruction,

provide time for interaction and verbal practice, create a language environment where

language learning and language are discussed and thought about and give corrective

feedback. (Saunders and Goldenberg 2010, Snow and Katz 2010, Dutro and Moran

2003)   Dutro and Moran also note that, "teachable moments" related to the use of

language can be optimized throughout the day by the classroom teacher; they also

suggest that language that will be used in the upcoming lesson needs to be "front

loaded" prior to content instruction (Dutro and Moran, 2003, pp. 30-31). Dutro, Moran

and Kinsella say that academic language can be taught while teaching conversation

skills and that academic language can be taught all day through the oral language

component of any lesson. The point that strategies for ELL learning need to be

matched with the student's stages of language proficiency is also emphasized in the

literature (Saunders and Goldberg 2010). In their article, "*Rethinking English Language*

Instruction, An Architectural Approach" Susana Dutro and Carrol Moran provide this

comprehensive list of the elements that combine to further oral language development

during ELD lessons:

> 1) build on student's prior knowledge of both language and
> content;

> 2) create meaningful contexts for functional use of language;

> 3) provide comprehensible input and modeling forms of
> language in a variety of ways connected to meaning;

4) provide a range of opportunities for practice and

application to develop fluency;

5) establish a positive and supportive environment for

practice with clear goals and immediate corrective feedback;

and

6) reflect on the forms of language and the process of

learning. (2003, p. 17)

Although there is still some disagreement in the research about the

teaching of grammatical forms to increase oral language proficiency, it is evident that,

as Robert Bayley says, there is a swing back to explicit grammar instruction, he also

states that there is a shift toward recasts or prompts with feedback and discussions

about language usage (Bayley, 2009, p. 11). Until recently it was believed that,

according to the research of Cummins and Krashen, ELL's would learn language in

conversation. Current research says that isn't enough to meet the intended goal of

native like fluency. Most researchers agree that teacher feedback is a key component

to grammar instruction and that the rules of grammar are not emphasized but rather,

tasks and activities that allow the students to work with and practice the form are

effective, especially for younger students (Saunders and Goldenberg 2010, Ellis 2004).

"Tasks that require use of particular target language forms have been shown to be more

effective in promoting acquisition of the forms." (Snow and Katz, 2010, p. 94). The

importance of formative and ongoing assessments was noted to inform instruction as

well as identifying instructional gaps (Snow and Katz, 2010, p. 104). Researchers

mentioned the value of activities and tasks but few were mentioned. Snow and Katz (2010, p. 94) suggested games, songs, chants, poems, drama, role play and storytelling. Sentence frames were suggested by many and detailed examples of sentence frames with explanations about how to best use them were given by Dutro and Helman (2009, pp. 53-58). Saunders and Goldenberg (2010, p. 34) suggested sing alongs, sharing stories, and picture cards to support oral language activities.

In new approaches that combine meaning and form, researchers agree that teachers need to help their ELL's by giving recasts or prompts of their speech, along with corrective feedback and a metalinguistic approach to language usage. To "recast" means to restate the sentence correctly for the student and prompting calls for the teacher to try to elicit the correct response from the student by asking questions or giving reminders. In the past, teachers hesitated to correct the spoken language of their ELLs for fear of shutting down what Krashen calls the affective filter, or the open emotional mindset that allows the learning of language to take place; there is now a clear shift toward acceptance of corrective feedback. Saunders and Goldenberg (2010, p. 46) advice to instructors is: "Don't hesitate to do corrective feedback." Dutro and Moran (2003, p. 20) say that, "Teachers have the responsibility to provide feedback to students." They give the reasoning that students can't improve their usage if they never hear the correct usage, and they are never given opportunities to think about the way they are using language. Saunders and Goldenberg (2010) assert that perhaps prompts are more effective for younger students, and recasts are more effective for older students. Bayley states that results from research show that prompts lead to more

"uptake" or deep learning than recasts because prompts require the student to formulate language rather than repeat the model (2009, p. 16). Snow and Katz say that prompts and recasts provide necessary opportunities to extend input and output and they advise that a variety of grouping strategies are necessary for the interactive work on oral language development (2010, p. 95). Kinsella suggests that teachers not just call on the volunteers, she says that ELLs need structured accountable responses in addition to accountable talk sentence frames and she suggests practice with white boards, structured note taking, fill in the blank, graphic organizers and using sentence starters (2009, Structured Accountable Responses).

Researchers also suggest that teachers create a linguistic environment in which all students in the mainstream classroom discuss language and see themselves as language learners (Kinsella 2009, Snow and Katz 2010, Saunders and Goldenberg 2010). This type of environment is said to lower the affective filters of the ELL students and provides them with an atmosphere where learning language is encouraged and discussed openly. In this environment, native speakers in class can help ELLs, because students can also be effective language models (Snow and Katz, 2010) , but Saunders and O'Brien (2006, p.22) point out, "Strong (1982) argued that mere exposure to English speakers is probably not as important as the nature of the interactions that ensue between ELLs and native English speakers." Current researchers also note that the modeling of language must be explicit in order to be effective (Saunders and Goldenberg 2010, Snow and Katz 2010, Bayley 2009, Kinsella 2009,).

Another key element in the linguistic environment created by the classroom teacher, is metalinguistic awareness, which is the ability to think about language use. This awareness plays a role in everyday use of English; when students write and speak they fall back on conscious knowledge of the language in order to edit (Scarcella 2003). This awareness of language and "metatalk" as Snow and Katz call it, allow students to use their second language as a point of reference for talking about language. (Snow and Katz, 2010). Because all students are seen as language learners in a metalinguistic environment, ELL's have an increased willingness to communicate about language as a subject (Dutro and Moran 2003, Scarcella 2003, Snow and Katz, 2010).

This research provided information to guide my classroom research study. The research provided details about academic language, ELD and Oral Language development, both in terms of their deeper definitions, but also in terms of instructional strategies and ideas for instructional implementation of ELD in the mainstream classroom. The ELL facilitator and I used the information from the literature review to set a course of action in the classroom. I created the linguistic environment that would be most conducive by setting in place the conditions described in the literature. The instructional methods as well as the design of materials and activities were determined by the research.

The research also informed us about current issues related to classroom practice in the area ELD for ELLs. The research gave evidence to disagreement in the field of linguistics about the teaching of grammatical forms and the delivery of ELD instruction.

There was agreement in the research that more oral language instructional time is needed and that ELD is beneficial instruction for ELLs; if a small block of time was all that was available, that would be better than no ELD time (Saunders/Goldenberg, 2010). Some researchers strongly assert that oral language doesn't just have to happen during ELD instruction, that it can also be embedded in classroom instruction throughout the day (Dutro and Moran 2003, Scarcella 2003, Kinsella 2009).

Kinsella states that academic language is a language all children in school must learn in order to become successful and all students need more time to learn and practice this language: "To make strides in their literacy, communicative competence and content knowledge for school success, ALL students need to log increased spoken and written classroom language miles!" (2009, A Linguistic Odometer). Once we were informed by the current research, the ELL facilitator and I set about a course of action for a study designed to answer the questions: 1.) What is an effective way to determine oral language targets for ELL students? 2.) What is an effective way to deliver explicit form focused instruction of oral language in the mainstream classroom?

CHAPTER 3

Methodology

I used a qualitative research approach paired with a case study for this project. I used the case study method because I wanted to answer explanatory questions relating to a specific group of ELL students at my school. Case study research is also an appropriate choice because I was studying the teaching and learning process as it applies to ELD instruction. Case studies are meant to extend the understanding of the subject under study beyond the reader's and the researcher's original knowledge; I learned about current research by studying Second Language Acquisition Theory and Practice in order to apply the knowledge to improved teaching practices for the improvement of academic language for ELL's in my classroom.

The ELL facilitator and I reviewed the related literature and gathered the resources available; we then developed a plan to assess the language needs of the 4 ELL participants in order to implement form focused ELD instruction in the mainstream classroom. The ultimate purpose of the study was to learn more about how to improve ELL's academic language through ELD instructional strategies in order to fulfill the school's improvement plan goal, which was to improve academic language instruction for ELL's. Multiple data sources were used to answer the question, "What is an effective way to determine oral language targets for ELL students?" The data was triangulated to help us find an appropriate oral language target for all four participants. Due to the lack of research and information, we created materials and activities to answer the question, "What is an effective way to deliver explicit form focused

instruction of oral language in the mainstream classroom?" A pre and post test on verbs was given to the entire class, the pretest was given to help focus the instruction and the post test assessed the effectiveness of the form focused instruction.

A qualitative sampling of 4 ELL students from my classroom was used to learn about how to better serve the advanced level ELL's who hit the "plateau" (Saunders and O'Brien, 2006, p. 25) in the 4th grade when the achievement gap begins to widen. The students were all between the ages of 7 and 8, 3 males and one female, they were in ELL since Kindergarten and all but Edward received pull out ELL services since Kindergarten. All students received pull out ELL services at the time of the study. All students speak English fluently in conversation but struggle in school; they read and write below grade level and scored far below grade level on computerized Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) assessments on reading and math at the beginning of the school year and their DIBELS tests in previous school years.

Table 1.1 Participants

Name	Age	L1	WLPT Level	Notes
Andy	8	Hungarian	Level 3 Advanced	
Edward	7	Spanish - Mexico	Level 3 Advanced	1st year out of self contained ELL
Carl	8	Spanish - Honduras	Level 3 Advanced	
Faye	8	Spanish – Costa Rica	Level 3 Advanced	

Informed by the research, I started the project with a heightened understanding of academic language and transferred that new understanding into instructional strategies; at the forefront of that new understanding were the three parts of academic

language: 1.) vocabulary 2.) grammar (forms) and 3.) functions (the language purpose). Before we started collecting data I had already begun to use ELD strategies in my whole group instruction which set the stage for the linguistic environment that would be necessary for facilitating the language development of the ELL's in my mainstream classroom. I began to call attention to language forms, I used more sentence stems during instruction, I intentionally modeled language, and I emphasized the importance of speaking correctly in full sentences at all times.

There were two separate data collections taken in order to address the two questions so the project went in two consecutive phases. In the first phase, we collected data to assess and analyze language in order to pinpoint the language target for the study. The second phase included the pretest, the treatment which consisted of language activities that targeted the grammar form, and then the post test was given. The entire project, including research and planning lasted 6 and a half months, it began in late September and concluded in April. The treatment lasted three months, from the end of January to mid April. It began as whole group instruction and gradually became a small group of the four ELL participants in the sample.

In Phase One of the data collections, we worked to answer the question, "What is an effective way to determine oral language targets for ELL students?" We began with the Rigby Oral Language Inventory which the ELL facilitator provided and administered. This Retelling Assessment requires the facilitator to read a short story to the student and point the picture as they read. Afterward, the student is asked to retell the story by using the pictures. The retelling is recorded and scored according to a

rubric that comes with the Rigby materials. Each of the 4 ELL student's retellings were recorded and scored, they landed in the advanced category. Since we needed more information, the recordings were then transcribed so that we could further analyze the language for errors (See Appendix A).

In an effort to gain more information, 3 more types of data were collected. The ELL facilitator taped interviews that she had with the students during the reading block. These interviews were transcribed and the language was analyzed (See Appendix B). At the suggestion of the ELL facilitator, I collected anecdotal notes on the four participant's speech and these phrases were added to the evidence (See Appendix C). The ELL facilitator gave a second Oral Language Inventory called, *Express Placement ELD Assessment* which she got from the E.L. Achieve materials created by Susanna Dutro. This inventory was administered in the same way as the Rigby assessment but the scoring rubric was much more detailed and we were able to collect more specific data from it than the Rigby inventory.

After sufficient language data was collected, triangulated and discussed all of the data (See Appendices A, B and C) and conducted a grammatical error analysis for each student using their language samples. We used the *ELD Matrix of Grammatical Forms* from Susanna Dutro's E.L. Achieve materials to pinpoint specific grammatical forms that the students used consistently and inconsistently, or didn't use yet in the classroom. We also consulted the ELD Standards and two helpful tables from Topping and Hoffman (2006): "Grades at Which Grammatical Concepts are Taught" and "Differences Among Languages in Sentence Construction." We considered my linguistics professor's

information about common grammatical errors ELL students make and professional literature about grammar development in order to determine that the students had needs in the areas of: past tense verbs, especially irregular verbs, question formation, and prepositions.

Based on all of the factors and information, we decided to work on past tense irregular verbs since these were errors that were most common in the data and in daily work. We found a list of the 90 most frequently used past tense verbs on (http://bogglesworldesl.com/irregular verbs.htm) and narrowed the focus to the first 30 most frequently used past tense verbs along with 9 verbs that I collect from anecdotal notes for the classroom data collection. Information presented in an article by Steven Pinker from MIT helped us to see the importance of our choice. Pinker (2000) says that irregular verbs are very important to teach because 70 percent of the time we use a verb it is an irregular. He states, "The 10 most common verbs in English (be, have, do, say, make, go, take, come, see, and get) are all irregular…80 irregulars are common enough that children will use them before they learn to read." (Pinker, 2000, p. 2)

After the first data collection we used our research to create the parameters of our study in terms of the environment and the instructional materials we would create. The linguistic environment would include the understanding that we are all language learners especially when it comes to academic language, recasts and prompts with feedback are accepted as a way of furthering our learning, and we freely discuss our thinking about our use of language with each other. The following is a list of activities used to deliver form focused instruction of past tense irregular verbs which were all

created to elicit talk and provide structure and scaffolding for precise and accurate academic language:

Picture verb cards with present and past tense verbs listed at the bottom each photo, picture cards without the verbs, sentence frames, sentence starters, sentence patterning chart (the ELL facilitator modeled this GLAD strategy), pictures of scenes from Rigby/we developed questions to elicit use of targeted verbs and wrote them on the back of the pictures, sentence combining activities in which the students had to choose the strip with the correct verb form and make a sentence, flashcards with present tense on one side and past tense on the reverse side, sequence picture puzzles to be assembled and then the students tell the story from the pictures using past tense verbs, and white boards for using the verbs in writing.

The second data collection consisted of the pretest and the post test which were identical; I made this test for lack of any existing assessment. It consisted of the 39 irregular verbs; it was delivered orally and required the students to write the correct past tense verb. It was delivered as follows: "Today I bring you flowers….yesterday I _____ you flowers." (See appendix D). The data showed the surprising result that the whole third grade class needed work on irregular past tense verbs. Four students in my class receive ELL services but many others are at advanced or transitional stages and come from homes where English is not the first language, however many of the native speakers misused the irregular verbs as well. Based on the unexpected test results, I adapted my approach to begin the project with whole group oral language activities using all of the verbs and each child made cards with the present and past tense verbs

that they needed to work on individually and activities were designed for individuals to create past tense sentences or stories using their verbs. This work was taken on enthusiastically by the students and I found that the ELL students were very comfortable engaging in these whole group activities and engaging in corrective feedback about language throughout the day and across subjects.

Work with the large group concluded after 5 sessions over a short period of time; I revisited the past tense verbs occasionally, especially with the sentence patterning chart which was now posted in the room as a reference, however the ELLs needed more practice and several more structured activities. I enlisted the help of older students; I gave them the name "Language Buddies" and I trained them to work on the created activities with the ELL students during afternoon recess. This work too, was embraced enthusiastically by the ELL students and the older language models as well. I trained the older students by demonstrating the activities with the students over the course of 2 weeks and gradually released them to become the teacher language models. I explained a version of "affective filter" to the language models so that they would understand how important a respectful learning environment would be to the ELL student's learning of the verbs and I trained them on how to give recasts or prompts with feedback. I explained the importance of the quality of the speech they modeled. The students became mentors and friends and one day, I heard one of the ELL students exclaim, "I love language buddies!" I was very pleased with the quality of the speech that was exchanged in the Language Buddy group.

The activities started with the picture cards and questions that would elicit past tense responses and eventually progressed to the more difficult oral activities and by the end of the study, the students were writing in past tense on the white boards with the help of their language models. When the study ended, the older students wanted to keep coming to class at recess and two of the ELLs stayed in at recess until the end of the year to be with their language buddies. They helped the ELL students with class work, made conversation, or listened to them read. The ELL facilitator and I were delighted with the positive results of the irregular verbs post test and with the relationships that developed in the language group.

CHAPTER 4

Results

In Phase One of the data collections, we worked to answer the question, "What is an effective way to determine oral language targets for ELL students?" Error analysis of our triangulated data led us to the decision to select irregular past tense verbs as the targeted form (See appendices A, B, and C). The use of multiple data sources was necessary in determining oral language targets; multiple sources also give a more comprehensive picture of each student's language usage.

The pre and post-test was administered to create a baseline comparison of the 4 participant's language development (see appendix D). The results of the test help to determine whether this treatment was an effective way to deliver explicit form focused instruction of oral language in the mainstream classroom. Pre and post test scores for each individual in the class show the measured growth (see Appendix E). Data was taken from the verb pre-test and broken down by each student's response for each verb. Variations on the use of the irregular past tense verbs were documented (see Appendix F) and the information was used to create individualized lists for verb work for each student in the class.

Figure 1 shows the comparison of the pre and post-test raw scores for ELL students in the treatment group. The post scores show each participant's baseline score and growth after the 3 month study of the targeted irregular verbs. The pre-test mean score for the participants was 7.25 and the post-test mean score for the group of

4 was 32.75 which results in an average gain per student of 25.50 irregular verbs. The

T-score for the two means was -4.05.

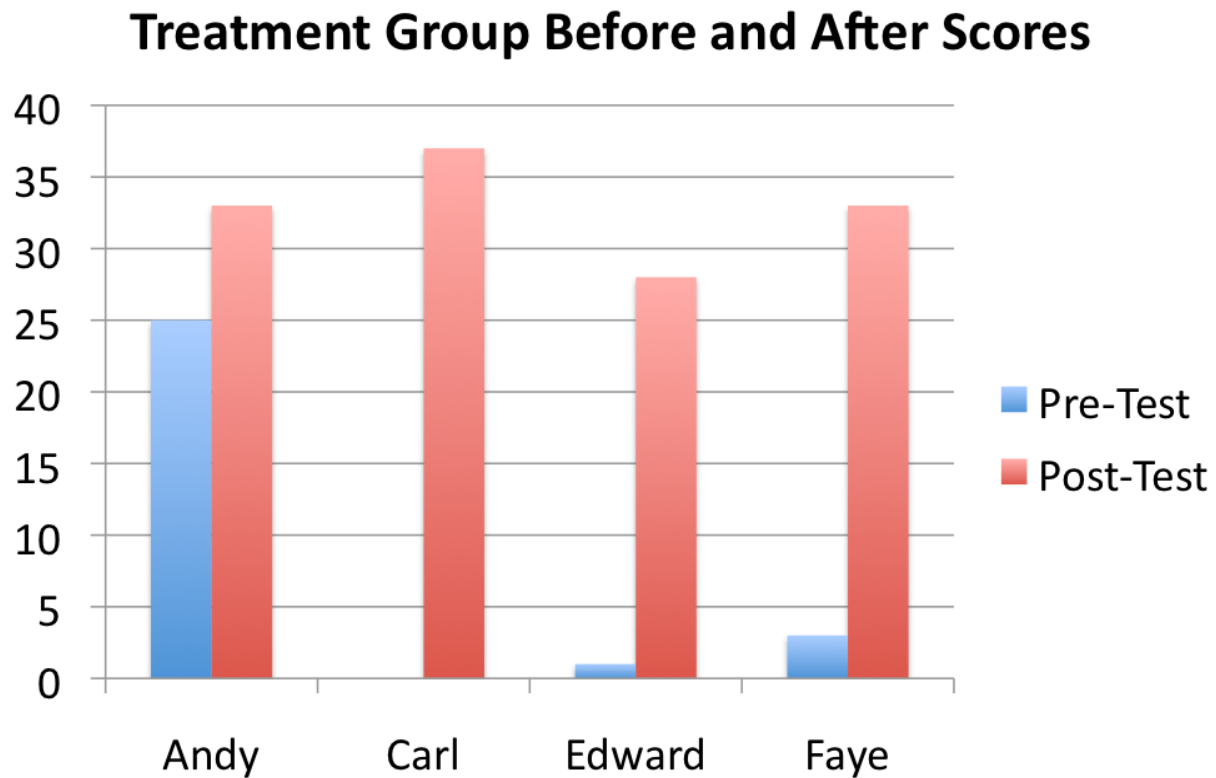## Treatment Group Before and After Scores

Figure 1 contains the comparative raw scores on the pre and post-test for the
ELL treatment group

Figure 2 shows the comparison between the pre and post test mean scores for

three groups of academic language learners in my classroom. There were twelve

native English speakers, there were 4 students who speak a second language but no

longer receive services; 2 were Spanish speakers, 1 spoke Chinese and spoke

Vietnamese. Of the 4 ELL students in the treatment group, 3 spoke Spanish and 1

spoke Hungarian. The figure shows growth for these three groups of learners.
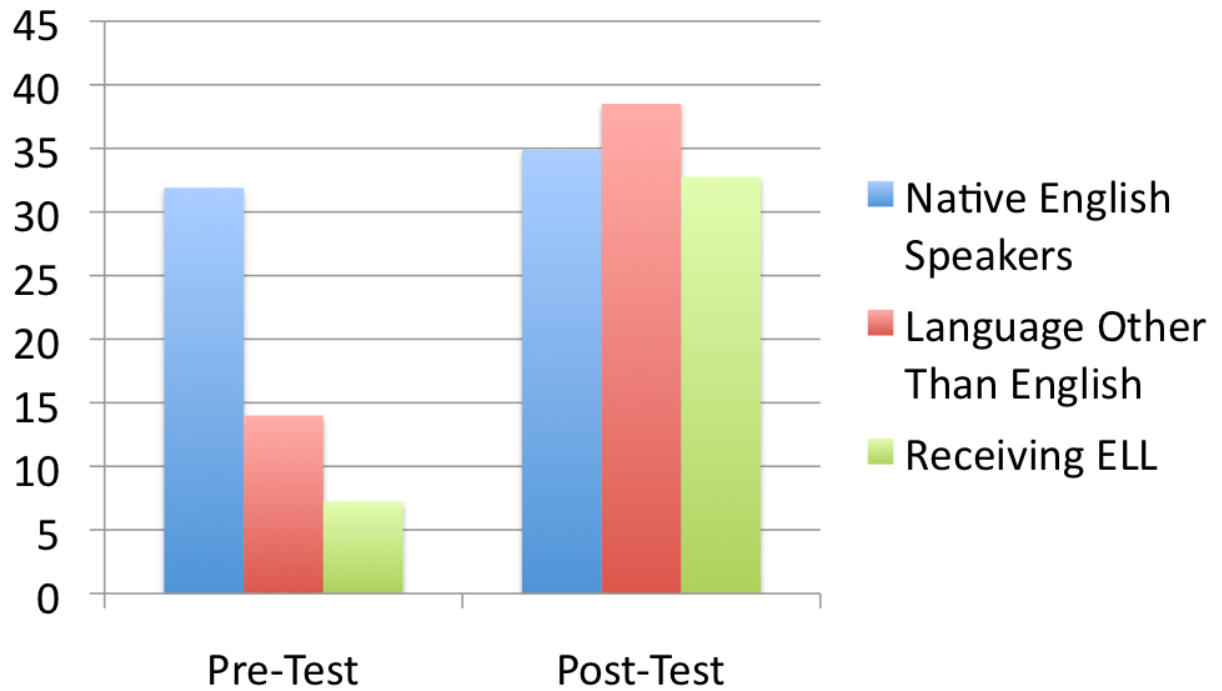
Averages of Pre and Post-Test Scores

Legend:
- Native English Speakers
- Language Other Than English
- Receiving ELL

Figure 2 contains the comparative mean scores for the three groups of students in the researcher's classroom.

CHAPTER 5

Analysis of the Results

In Phase One we analyzed speech errors from many sources of oral language data which resulted in three possible targets for instruction: question formation, past tense verb usage with an emphasis on irregular verbs, and surprisingly, prepositions. While using multiple sources is an effective way for a teacher to get a comprehensive view of ELL student's language usage, teachers would not have the time record and transcribe the assessments and interviews so if this were to take place in another study or in classroom practice, teachers would need assistance. The E.L. Achieve Oral Language Assessment was quick and gave more information than the Rigby assessment because rather than just listening to the student retell, it came with a checklist that gave detailed information about the student's use of forms in the assessment. The anecdotal notes from student's daily speech were extremely informative and having an "ear for language" helped me to pick up on possible targets and gaps in language. The question, "What is an effective way to determine oral language targets for ELL students?" was answered but more effective assessments and procedures are necessary.

Phase Two of the data collection began with the development of the pre-test that was given to the whole class. The results of the pre-test were surprising in that many of the students were unable to write the correct past tense form of the irregular verbs. The results showed that 5 out of 12 native English speakers were not proficient at writing past tense forms of the verbs; these 5 student's missed 6, 14, 15, 31, and 39 of the

possible 39 possible on the test. Two of these students were very high ability readers who scored beyond grade level on the MAPs test in the fall. Of the 4 students who were ELL but no longer qualified for services, half gave 0 correct responses on the test; they received a score of zero which shows they needed intervention.   As expected, all of the level 3 ELL students needed intervention, however one of the students received a score of 25 correct verbs which was higher than 9 of the students in class. These pretest results led us to redesign our instruction to include the whole group for the initial delivery phase. We also discussed the limits of the test I designed; many of the students could use irregular verbs in their oral speech but weren't able to write them. It was difficult to know exactly how to design an oral language assessment of irregular verb usage that would be administered to a whole class; the test did not elicit oral responses, it required a written response. I modeled the test after studies I had read about in the literature review but a recommendation would be that more tests of this type be developed and made available to teachers.

The pre and post test results address the question, "What is an effective way to deliver explicit form focused instruction of oral language in the mainstream classroom."

The results indicate that the treatment was effective for the participants in the study as well as many others in the mainstream classroom. It is possible that some of the pretest scores were low due to a lack of understanding of the way the test was given, however, it is clear except for one student, that after explicit teaching and discussion of verb tense, the student's usage improved.

Figure 1 shows significant growth for the treatment group. Each of the students made significant gains in usage of the targeted form. While none of the target group reached a score of 39, post scores were: 33, 33, 28, and 37. Edward, the student who was in his first year in a mainstream classroom went from 0 to 28. At the beginning of the study past tense usage was very new to him; by the end of the treatment, his usage was not always fluent and automatic but when he was prompted in conversation to use the past tense, he would think for a while and then he often could use the correct form of the irregular verb. Carl went from a score of 0 to a near perfect score of 37. Edward and Carl were the students who spent the most time volunteering to stay in for the recess language buddy group. I observed that although Carl could identify and use the correct past tense verbs in responses, often in conversation he would fall back on his old ways of saying things, almost as if out of habit. Faye made significant gains, her score went from 3 to 33 and although she spent most of her recesses in the Language Buddy group, she was often absent at this time of the day. Although Andy made gains, he showed the least amount of gains and he spent the least amount of time in the group but his post-test score at 33 was a fairly high score.

Figure Two shows that there was growth for all three groups of students: the native English speakers, the ELL students who no longer receive services, and the ELL participants in the study who receive services. The bar referring to the native English speakers is misleading because the mean scores don't show the individual growth of struggling native English speaking readers. One of the native English speakers pre test score was 0 and post test score was 2 so that affected the overall mean so the figure doesn't accurately show the large gains that some native English speakers made. One

native English speaker's score went from 8 to 33, another's from 21 to 36, and another's 25 to 38 which shows the intervention was very effective for all but one native speaker who scored low on the pre-test. The bar referring to the ELL students who no longer receive services is significant. Along with the ELLs receiving services, this is the group that has been referred to in the research, as the "plateau" group, who in 4th grade slow down and never catch up to their peers. There was significant growth for 3 out of 4 students in this group. Their pre and post-test scores are as follows: 0 to 30, 0 to 38, 21 to 38, and 35 to 39. The bars representing the three groups are significant because these figures indicate that launching the form focused instruction in the whole group setting and later extending the instruction to ELLs was an effective strategy for ELD instruction and supports the research by Dutro and Moran, and Kinsella, which suggests academic language instruction should be done in content areas as well as ELD.

While there are visible differences in the results of the pre and post test mean scores, we can also prove statistically that the difference between the means of the two tests is significant. The t-score of the 2 means for the whole group lies in the rejection region based on a test where $\alpha = .05$. Therefore, because the t-score is -4.05 we reject the null hypothesis concluding there is a significant difference between the 2 means.

The pre and post-test provide insight into the question, "What is an effective way to deliver explicit form focused instruction of oral language in the mainstream classroom?" The quantitative data from the results and the t score offer scientific evidence that the ELL students showed significant gains in the targeted form and indicate that this project gives an example of an effective way to deliver form focused

instruction in a mainstream classroom. A variety of oral language activities using picture verb cards, sentence combining, sentence frames and starts, sequencing story puzzles, scene pictures with questions to elicit use of the target verbs, and writing on white boards combined to be an effective approach to learning this set of irregular past tense verbs. This work is relevant to the larger body of research because it contributes information and evidence to an area where so little classroom research exists.

CHAPTER 6

Conclusion

This study answered the two research questions.   We found an effective way to determine oral language targets for ELL students by using a number of different forms of assessment and then consulting the continuums and standards to pinpoint the greatest language need or gaps in language development. We found one effective way to deliver explicit form focused instruction of oral language in the mainstream classroom is to select language targets, create a language environment and specific language activities for interventions; begin with whole group instruction and follow- up with small group activities using informal formative assessments to monitor progress and a pre and post test to assess at the beginning and the end.

The study also answered the overarching question that was the impetus for the project, "How can mainstream classroom teachers improve instruction of Academic Language for their ELL students?" The review of the literature and the results of the classroom research illuminate a number of possible strategies that teachers can use in order to improve their student's Academic Language through ELD in the mainstream classroom.   Teachers can:

1. Emphasize the importance of the quality of the daily oral language; have an ongoing expectation that students will speak in complete, correct sentences.

2. Communicate language teaching points for lessons; students always know why they are doing what they are doing.

3. Explicitly teach verb tense and the appropriate inflectional endings for words.

4. Create a linguistic environment in the classroom where language is approached as a subject and all students are AESL (Academic English as a Second Language) learners.

5. Encourage metalinguistic awareness and metatalk.

6. Use picture supports for content vocabulary and language development.

7. Use sentence frames and prompts for academic language and post them.

8. Understand that academic language is a combination of 3 things: vocabulary, forms (grammar) and functions (language purpose).

9. Explicitly model and practice academic language throughout the day.

10. Remember that oral interactions before written work are helpful for all students' Academic Language, but are especially supportive for ELLs.

11. Integrate ELD into turn and talk times, guided reading, and conferring and capitalize on "teachable moments" when they occur.

12. When possible, target individual instruction for ELLs to the forms needed at their language development levels.

13. Pay attention to language that ELL's use in conversation and take anecdotal notes.

14. Give recasts or prompts with feedback.

15. Use ELD continuums to pinpoint language needs of ELLs and refer to the ELD standards.

16.) Most of all increase the amount of time spent on oral language activities.

As a result of this research project, there have been some changes in my school regarding academic language. The district ELL facilitator and I presented a professional development on ELD resulting in some teachers asking to try the materials I used in the project with their students. Some teachers also visited the Bogglesworldesl.com website for additional support and information.   For next year's School Improvement Plan, our staff will continue with the goal of improving academic language instruction; we redesigned the goal whereby grade level teams will choose a language target on which to focus instruction and to do work similar to the work done in this research project. As a result of the research, there is a better understanding of the range of language that the term academic language covers and there is a growing understanding of what mainstream teachers can do to deliver form focused instruction in oral language lessons.

The study had limitations that could be changed for future work. The sample size in this project was a very small number of ELL students and so the results are limited. There were few formative assessments and no formal checkpoints in the study which could have informed us about the correct duration of the work and the effectiveness of the learning activities. Future studies of this kind could include formal tracking and monitoring of progress with student involvement in this process; students could track their own progress possibly using the ELD standards. In the future, further collaboration

with the ELL tutor would also benefit a study of this type and offer an alternative to the l Language Buddy group. There were also limitations due to inadequate tools and instruments for the study; I made the pre and post assessment myself for lack of a better one, there were very few tools available for the activities, and there were inadequate assessments for oral language.

We hope that this project shows a need for further research, more collaboration, and better instruments and tools.   My research in the classroom has been extremely beneficial and informative; there is a need for more of this kind of research. A possible collaboration between master's students and Linguistics Departments of universities would appear to be a fitting and fruitful collaboration as it is clear that both parties have a mutual need for information that only they can mutually deliver. Engaging in work with the ELL facilitator resulted stronger project because of her added expertise and because of her involvement, information spread to more teachers in the district. The collaboration with Loren Schmidt, my Linguistics professor from Heritage University, provided us with answers to our questions and a depth of understanding that guided our work when the instruments and tools were inadequate. This type of scholarly and collegial collaboration would surely benefit Second Language Acquisition Theory and Practice. We will all need to work together in order to meet the imminent needs of our ELL students and address the ever growing issue of the achievement gap for these students.

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Transcriptions of Rigby Oral Language Assessment

<u>Edward</u>
What happened, there was a girl that was running into the school in the hallway, and the book fall down from her backpack. Then that she was packing all her stuff, and she say, "something is missing." Then the librarian saw the book the name "Stars", and she pointed and she look at it. Then the last one, it was that the four childrens was sitting in a table and the teacher say, "come in my desk" and she saw the book and she was smiling and the teacher too.

<u>Carl</u>
Kam lost her backpack and then she lost her book. And she knew that she put her book inside the backpack and the backpack was empty. And um, Mrs. Lopez found it, and she, and um, Kam went to her, the teacher say to Kam, 'come to my desk' and she was really nervous and she got really happy because she found her book.

<u>Andy</u>
Well Kam was like running, and like, if you run and your backpack's not tied then the book's gonna fall out. That happened to me once.
Ms. Salinas: So what happened when Mrs. Lopez was walking down the hallway?

Andy: Um, she saw the book and she knew it ws Kam's because she saw that she checked it out.

Ms. Salinas: Why was Kam worried?   Andy: Kam was worried because she lost her book.

Ms. Salinas: What did Mrs. Lopez do?

Andy: Mrs. Lopez was like, had lika a frown, and like walking around with a frown.

Ms. Salinas: What happened when Kam saw Mrs. Lopez at her desk?

Andy: Well, she went to the librarian, and said, "um,do you have a star book?" and then she gave it to her because she found it.

<u>Faye</u>
She was going to school and she was late and she pulled her backpack and the book fell out cuz see, she was in a rush. When he got to school she knew that something was missing, and then she got scared because the book wasn't there. So when she went to the library, I mean, when she went, when the librarian was going inside the library, she found the book and she picked it up and took it to the library and give it to her. And she was scared, but when she saw the book, she was happy.

APPENDIX B

Excerpts of Transcriptions of Conferring During Reading Block

Interview #1 Carl

What were you reading about?

Albert 'instin'

His name was"Einstein" Albert Einsteir. This e and I together make an "I"sound. First tell me what you were supposed to do while you were reading your…

I was telling about text features.

What's a text feature?

A text feature is like a title, a table of contents, a caption …

Why do you need text features? What do you do with text features?

Like if there wasn't page numbers, you wouldn't know what page to start on, like here's page 4 and there's no page 1-2-3 only 4 because it starts there.

…

When did your family com from Honduras?

I came from here when I was 2 years old.

What do you think would've happened if you didn't come here?

I won't know English.

What else?

I wouldn't learn English.

….

Yeah, my Mom espeaks um her speaks Spanish but I'm her traducer, like I'm her English speaker. She knows a little bit. I say what is cat and she says gato.

My friend, he's from Honduras and he only speaks English. Every time when her mom is like, seery time when her mom says you can't go there to that party or to that one or to that one, you have to come with me, he say, he says (pronounced say-s), oh my gosh and the mom is all like what did you said to me? And then nothing.   She speaks Spanish though.

Interview #2 Edward

What are you supposed to be doing with your book?

Reading.

Do you have your teacher's notebook?

Uh, yea.

Do you remember what your teacher said to do while you read?

Look at the pictures and…look at the pictures and read?

Ok. Why don't you get your reader's notebook and come back?

You will see how quickly I am back!

….

What questions did you have about China?

Oh question is that more than 1billion people live in China. They speak and write in Chinese. This language is made of symmombubles.

Is that a question?

No.

That's some more information you learned. What question did that answer?

It's of 1 billion. I think 1 billion people live in China?

Do you have some text evidence for that?

I don't know what's text evidence.

Text evidence is here it says, right her, in the text…So what is this right here? What's text? Do you know what text is?

Oh you know what?

Like this (teacher pointing) is a text.

Yea? But you know what, you know what. This is some words of Chinese. Ni how. And that's …but the goodbye is so hard I can not do it.

….

Is your family from Mexico?

My Mom yes but my Dad no. He lives in here.

Where does your Mom live?

Mexico.

Does she live in Mexico now or did she used to live in Mexico?

She was living in Mexico first but when she grow up and she was having a baby she move to United States of America. If she comes again to Mexico and visit her Mom she will never come back here.

What about you. Where were you born?

California.

So if your Mom went back to Mexico, she wouldn't be able to …

No, but if I was coming with my Mom, she can come back but my Mom don't wants me to go because if I go, my Grandmother will not let me go away.

Do you talk to your Grandma on the phone?

Yes,a lota days. She say, "Where's my baby," that calls me. I have a little brother, and that his name is Omar, and you know how…

How old is he?

Um..4,I'm 7.

Ok we're almost done. Did you make some questions out of the headings? Hm, look at this page, what's this page about?

It's about money, this photo was some money.

So what question could you ask about money?

How? Which picture is the money?

You could make a question that says what kind of money does China have.

And which quarter or what penny or nickel or dime or dollar? Because there's a coin of one dollar.

So you could ask, "What kind of coins do they have in China?"…

APPENDIX C

Listing of Anecdotal Language Data

"I didn't touch no one."

"I didn't brought…"

"My Mom says…" (long A on says)

"I didn't got no ones."

"That's how they feeled."

"What did I did?"

"I didn't got it."

"The 911's are the super heroes. You know, the polices and the firefighters."

What did you do this weekend? "Me and my little brother make a snowman. My brother didn't got…"

"He hitted right here."

"He cutted me."

Teacher notes:

Leaving out prepositions

Work on do and does

Work on did and didn't/ doesn't and don't (he does / he don't)

Work on know and now

Work on are and our

Work on don't got no / don't have any

The verb "to do" is a hard one

APPENDIX D

Irregular Verb Pre and Post-Test

Given to whole class 1/26/12 and 4/17/12   (not irregular: turn/love)

Example: "Today I bring a flower to my friend. Yesterday I _____ a flower to my friend."

brought	heard
got	knew
did	made
felt	met
hit	read
cut	ran
loved	said
began	saw
blew	sent
turned	sang
bought	sat
caught	slept
came	swam
drew	took
drank	threw
ate	wrote
gave	was
went	were
grew	had
found	

APPENDIX E

Pre/Post Verb test results

correct out of 39   *Language other than English spoken at home **Student in ELL

	Pre test 1/12	Post test results 4/17/12
ZT	0	2
Carl**	0	37
HV*	0	39
JCR *	0	38
Edward**	1	28
Faye **	3	33
JT	8	33
DA	21	36
KL *	21	38
NB	25	38
Andy **	25	33
AP	33	39
LO *	35	39
GR	35	38
GC	37	39
AC	37	39
J H	37	39
K K	38	38
MC	38	39
W L	39	39

20 3rd grade students tested:

4   ELL participants in the treatment group

4   ELL's who no longer receive services

12 Native English Speakers

(2 students absent)

APPENDIX F

Excerpt of Data Taken on Verbs From Pre-Test

Results of Verbs PreTest 1/26/12

1. brought 7	brought (7)	bringed (8) Edward, Faye, Carl brong (1) brang (3) brung (1) Adam brote (1)
2. got 13	got (13) Adam	getted (8) Carl, Edward, Faye
3. did 12	did (12) Adam	doed (9) Adam, Carl, Edward dided (2) Faye
4. felt 12	felt (12) Adam	feeled (8) Carl, Edward, Faye felted (1)
5. hit 8	hit (8) Faye	hitted (13) Adam, Carl, Edward
6. cut 6	cut (6)	cutted (13) Adam, Faye, Carl, Edward
7. loved 20	Loved (20) all but Faye	Love (1) Faye
8. began 6	began (6)	beginned (9) Faye, Adam, Edward, Carl begoned (2) begin (1)
9. blew 11	blew (11) Adam	blowed (10) Faye, Edward, Carl
10. turned 21	turned (21) all	
11. bought 11	bought (14) Adam	boghted (1) buy (2) Faye, Carl buyed (4) Edward
12. caught 9	caught (9)	catched (8) Adam, Edward cotch (1) Nat catch (3) Carl, Faye