

ELL Report

1. Description

- a. The setting of the field experience (e.g., in a classroom, at a community organization location, etc.).

Buford Elementary School is a Title 1 School comprised of 51% free-and reduced-lunch students that is located 35 miles northeast of Atlanta in the city of Buford, GA. The setting for the field experience was located within the computer lab and closed circuit television production studio used for morning announcements.

- b. The student(s)—use a pseudonym to maintain confidentiality—with whom you are working (e.g. age, grade level, level of English Proficiency, personal characteristics based on observations/interactions, other information that may give the reader a more in-depth description of the student)

The pseudonym of R.R. will be used to refer to the student targeted in the field experience. R.R. is a six-year-old first grade ELL student at Buford Elementary. He is part of the self-contained ELL homeroom that was implemented in BES three years ago. The classroom is funded with Title money and is taught by Mrs. R. who is a bilingual. The classroom setting utilizes both English and Spanish for daily instruction. R.R.'s country of origin is Guatemala and Spanish is the only language spoken at home. The parents are supportive and the mother comes to various school events and always provides necessary paperwork and documents promptly. However, R.R. receives little academic support at home because both parents have zero proficiency with the English language and R.R.'s mother is illiterate. R.R.'s level of English proficiency is stage three: speech emergence and his vocabulary usage and reading comprehension is in the beginning stages.

- c. The days and times that you met with the student.

For the field experience one thirty-minute session was devoted to coordinating developmentally appropriate activities for R.R. with the partnering homeroom teacher. Six forty-five minute instructional sessions occurred over a two and a half week period of time.

- d. Ways in which you interacted/engaged with the student (including pedagogical strategies).

The field experience primarily focused on two different activities designed to bolster confidence and proficiency with the English language. Mrs. R., the partnering homeroom teacher, suggested working with R.R. through our Wolf Pal Mentoring program. A series of morning sessions occurred that utilized sheltered instructional strategies. The first area of focus was practicing developmentally appropriate Dolch sight word lists with the student to reinforce R.R.'s Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency. An [interactive sight words game](#) was used with R.R. to model correct word pronunciation and reinforce memorization of the targeted Dolch

word lists. The second area of focus was to increase R.R.'s confidence level when speaking English to peers. R.R. participated in the behind the scenes production involved with broadcasting the morning video announcements. In addition to building R.R.'s confidence when interacting with peers, R.R. also learned some new skills with PowerPoint and audiovisual equipment.

The first half of our morning sessions were spent practicing the corresponding Dolch Word lists that were assigned by the partnering homeroom teacher. R.R. used a student computer to access an [interactive sight words game](#) on the Internet. After practicing the skill of remembering the Dolch word on sight, R.R. would then click the word to hear the correct pronunciation. Immediately, following the pronunciation cue, R.R. would practice pronunciation and I would challenge R.R. to use the given Dolch word in a sentence. When R.R. was unable to produce a sentence with given Dolch word, I would model a sentence and try to use the word's secondary meaning as the example. R.R.'s speech was closely monitored and all directions were modeled accordingly.

The second half of our morning sessions were spent building R.R.'s confidence with speaking English and building his technology skills through interactions in the broadcast of the morning video announcements. R.R. directed his peers to stand in the appropriate location on the set of the broadcast area. In addition to directing peers, R.R. was able to perform basic operations of audiovisual equipment, monitor the camera, set microphone audio levels, and cue sound effects through a PowerPoint presentation. Tasks were modeled accordingly and verbal directions were spoken slowly and clearly. During broadcast multimodal techniques like hand gestures were used to quietly indicate transitions and cues for sound effects. Throughout the course of the sessions R.R. no longer needed hand gestures to trigger sound effects for the broadcast. The student began to effectively listen to the announcer's dialogue and assess appropriate cue times for applause and other sound effects.

2. Objectives and Assessments

Write 2-3 learning objectives and state how you will assess each. Provide evidence for meeting the objectives.

| Objective | Assessment | Was the objective met? Evidence of student learning. |
|--|---|---|
| <i>(Content) The student will correctly recall developmentally appropriate Dolch word lists approved by the partnering homeroom teacher.</i> | <i>(Formative) The student is monitored for correct Dolch word recall and correct pronunciation of the given Dolch word within the online activity.</i> | <i>R.R. progressed nicely through the course of the sessions. R.R. began on the blue level Dolch words and was able to begin previewing the next Dolch word list.</i> |
| <i>(Content) The student will correctly use the given Dolch word in a sentence.</i> | <i>(Formative) The student is monitored for correct Dolch word usage in a sentence providing the primary meaning of the given Dolch word.</i> | <i>R.R. was able to successfully use most of the Dolch words in a sentence. His sentence examples utilized the primary meaning of the word. In some instances I provided an additional example sentence utilizing the given Dolch word's secondary meaning.</i> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| <p><i>(Content) The student will correctly identify subtle conversational cues throughout the course of morning video announcements.</i></p> | <p><i>(Summative) (Teacher Observation) The student will successfully trigger sound effects by identifying subtle conversation cues of the announcer without the aid of hand gestures and visual cues.</i></p> | <p><i>R.R. was able to successfully operate the PowerPoint presentation that triggers various sounds such as applause, drum roll, and "happy birthday". R.R. got to the point of no longer needing visual cues from me to trigger sound effects. He relied solely on auditory and conversational cues, which was exciting to see given his level of proficiency with the English language.</i></p> |
|--|--|--|

3. Resources

You are required to use 2-3 ELL-specific resources to help inform your understanding of ELLs and increase your pedagogical strategies to assist students who are English Language Learners (ELLs). You may use the resources listed within the module or other resources available to you. Briefly describe how the resources were used to assist in your experience.

Towards the end of September I met with my partnering homeroom teacher to discuss a potential plan of action for my field experience. My partnering homeroom teacher was a great resource and offered a lot of insight into how to approach instruction of my student. The Iris Center's module on [Teaching English Language Learners](#) quickly became my point of reference for any concerns. The Iris module has an abundance of really smart and effective strategies for instructing ELLs and I repeatedly would come back to it as a reference and resource. For the technology aspects, I first utilized the morning video announcements production studio. I am the director of the daily morning video announcements and utilized my proximity to expose my student to different pieces of audiovisual equipment and also PowerPoint. The online and more software side of the field experience utilized PowerPoint and also a web-based [interactive sight words game](#). I utilized an old project of mine for the Dolch word portions of my instruction and field experience. Over the course of the last few years, I designed various interactive flash-based content for my faculty on everything from math facts to sight words. I was able to use <http://meadorgames.weebly.com/> to help R.R. reinforce his mastery of the Dolch words list assigned by the partnering homeroom teacher. [My website](#) was an invaluable resource and I was excited to utilize some of my past hard and put it to use in this field experience.

The IRIS Center for Training Enhancements. (2011). *Teaching English Language Learners: Effective Instructional Practices* Retrieved on [October, 19, 2014] from <http://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/ell>

ELL Module – Initial Thoughts

What do teachers need to know about students who are learning to speak English?

Teachers need to know the English language learner's country of origin and first language. It is also beneficial to know how much schooling the child has received thus far. Also, it is helpful to know if the child has any pre-assessed learning, physical, or mental disabilities.

What are some general instructional practices that can be beneficial to students who are learning to speak English?

For teachers of English language learners, it is always helpful to know some basic phrases of praise and phrases of inquiry into the child's health in the child's native language. It is also beneficial to the child to make sure correspondence with parents is in the family's native language.

What should teachers consider when testing students who are learning to speak English?

When teachers are assessing English language learners, they should be consistent in their delivery of verbal directions. If at all possible, the teacher could deliver the instructions in the native language as well as English.

Post-Field Experience Reflection/Revisiting Initial Thoughts

What do teachers need to know about students who are learning to speak English?

(Initial Response) Teachers need to know the English language learner's country of origin and first language. It is also beneficial to know how much schooling the child has received thus far. Also, it is helpful to know if the child has any pre-assessed learning, physical, or mental disabilities.

(Reflective Response) In retrospect, I would have come to this field experience without any preconceived notions about my ELL student's abilities. A common mistake that teachers make is to over generalize about the abilities of their ELL learners. These students are resilient and quite smart. Teachers also need to know that using the native language in the classroom is a good thing and bilingual programs produce better results. I think teachers forget this. In addition teachers should know these things: first languages support acquisition of second languages, ELL learners understand more than they can convey, their student's stage of English Proficiency, and that language instruction should be integrated into all content areas. The IRIS module broadened my understanding of ELLs and was my key resource during the field experience.

What are some general instructional practices that can be beneficial to students who are learning to speak English?

(Initial Response) For teachers of English language learners, it is always helpful to know some basic phrases of praise and phrases of inquiry into the child's health in the child's native language. It is also beneficial to the child to make sure correspondence with parents is in the family's native language.

(Reflective Response) I was lucky because instinct kind of kicked in and some good ELL instructional strategies fell into place early on. I now know for a fact that with ELL learners, that you need to do the following: speak slowly and clearly, use concise sentences and explain unfamiliar words, use high frequency words and word's secondary meanings. One should also use hand gestures, pictures in instruction and allowable student responses, incorporate reading comprehension strategies into instruction, differentiate instruction and provide a range of content choices. Initially, I relied heavily on speaking slowly and hand gestures. After completing this field experience and module, I feel like I have a broader palette and more diverse tool belt for instructional strategies both with ELLs and regular learners.

What should teachers consider when testing students who are learning to speak English?

(Initial Response) When teachers are assessing English language learners, they should be consistent in their delivery of verbal directions. If at all possible, the teacher could deliver the instructions in the native language as well as English.

(Reflective Response) Revisiting this makes me have a greater sympathy for my ESOL colleagues and the difficulties they and ELL learners must face during standardized tests and testing. Teachers need to know that ELLs typically score lower on academic achievement tests and math is exceedingly more difficult for ELLs. When testing ELLs, allow students to preview the test and test terminology, use a bilingual dictionary, and also have access to a bilingual educator during testing. I now know that great care and considerations are necessary for ELLs to succeed at tests and also yield accurate reflections of their content understanding.