Effects of Implementing Classroom Instructional Models on English Language Learners' Cognitive and Affective Outcomes

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Abstract

The purpose of the present study was to examine alternative instructional strategies for improving the education of English language learners (ELLs). More specifically, the present study provides descriptive and comparative information on the use of different instructional approaches that were implemented by 17 bilingual teachers and their 325 Hispanic ELLs from five elementary schools located in a medium-sized metropolitan school district in the south central region of the United States. The three instructional approaches examined in the study were (a) ESL in the Content Areas (Chamot & O'Malley, 1986), (b) Effective Use of Time (EUOT) (Stallings, 1980, 1986), and (c) a combination approach including both ESL in the Content Areas and EUOT. The fourth group included in the study did not receive any training and functioned as the control group. The analysis of covariance results revealed that the EUOT group had significantly higher posttest scores on reading and language arts achievement than all the other groups. The combined treatment group was also found to have significantly lower posttest scores in reading and language arts achievement than all the other groups. The multivariate analysis of variance results revealed that there were statistically significant differences among the four groups on students' perceptions of their classroom learning environment. Generally, students in the EUOT

group had more favorable attitudes than students in the other groups. The implications of these findings are discussed in the paper.

Introduction

Learners whose primary language is not English have often been described as language minority students or limited-English proficient students. This description, however, often has derogatory meanings in that it infers that students are deficient in language rather than the fact that they are mastering another language (La Celle-Peterson & Rivera, 1994). Consequently, the term "English language learner" has been recently used to describe those students whose first language is not English and they are either: (a) beginning to learn English, or have demonstrated some proficiency in English (La Celle-Peterson & Rivera, 1994). The construct of "English language learner" (ELLs) helps educators reframe the problem from one of "blaming" the learner because they have a language "deficiency" or their primary language is not the language of the dominant culture, to a perspective that focuses on the specific educational needs of ELLs because they are learning another language. The use of this construct also helps us reverse the deficit model of public policy that suggests that it is the individual child or his/her ethnic group that is deficient and therefore we need to focus on the individual, not on the circumstances that affect the child (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Waxman, 1992).

Although Hispanics constitute the largest group of English language learners, they have the lowest levels of education and the highest dropout rate than any other ethnic group (Kaufman & Frase, 1990). Among school-age Hispanics, for example, the dropout rate has increased from approximately 30% in 1974 to 48% in 1989 (Cárdenas, 1990). Sixteen to 24 year-old Hispanic students are almost three times (35.8%) as likely as Whites (12.7%) to drop out of school (U. S. National Center for Education Statistics, 1991). Furthermore, language minority students are 1.5 times less likely to have completed high school than their English-monolingual counterparts (U. S. National Center for Education Statistics, 1991). In addition, approximately 40% of Hispanic students are one grade or more below expected achievement levels by the eighth grade and only about 50% graduate "on time" (García, 1994). These facts and reports are especially problematic given that Hispanic children primarily reside in urban cities and are immersed in neighborhoods

of concentrated poverty where the most serious dropout problems exist (Carson, Hudskamp, & Woodall, 1993; Garcia, 1994).

Problems Associated with the Underachievement of ELLs

There are several critical problems that have been associated with the underachievement of ELLs. While some educators argue that the most serious concerns are basic funding for ELLs or political ideologies that influence decisions about programs for ELLs, there are some serious educational problems that are "alterable" and can lead to educational improvements for ELLs. One critical problem associated with the education of ELLs is that an increasing proportion of ELLs with limited proficiency in English (nearly 25%) are not being served by appropriate instructional programs (U.S. Department of Education, 1992). That is, many of the current instructional programs that ELLs are enrolled in have not been effective in meeting their educational needs (Faltis, 1993). One of the explanations why these programs have not been effective is that there have been many implicit assumptions that curricular or instructional innovations that improve the education of English monolingual students will work equally well for English language learners (La Celle-Peterson & Rivera, 1994).

A second serious problem associated with the failure of ELLs is the shortage of adequately qualified teachers of ELLs and the preparation of credentialed teachers for ELLs (Garcia, 1994). Estimates indicate that nearly half of the teachers assigned to teach ELLs have not received any preparation in methods to teach ELLs (Garcia, 1994). The number of teachers prepared to teach ELLs falls short of the tremendous need for teachers of ELLs. In addition, the majority of classroom teachers and school administrators are white, while the proportion of nonwhite and Hispanic students has increased rapidly (U. S. National Center for Education Statistics, 1991). Alternative forms of teacher preparation and teacher staff development are being developed by local school districts to meet the needs of their ELLs. These alternative forms, however, have not generally been effective in training qualified teachers of ELLs. Burnout, for example, is very prevalent for teachers of ELLs (García, 1994).

Finally, a third critical problem has to do with the current instructional approaches that are prevalent in most of the classrooms serving ELLs. Several studies have found that schools serving

disadvantaged or lower-achieving students often devote less time and emphasis to higher-order thinking skills than do students serving more advantaged students (Coley & Hoffman, 1990; Padrón & Knight, 1989; Padrón & Waxman, 1993). Lower-achieving students such as ELLs have often been denied the opportunity to learn higher-level thinking skills because it has been believed that they must demonstrate the ability to learn the basics or lower levels of knowledge before they can be taught higher-level skills (Waxman, Padrón, & Knight, 1991). Furthermore, there is generally an emphasis on remediation for low achievers, which has resulted in teachers' lower expectations for these students and an overemphasis on repetition of content through drill-and-practice (Knapp & Shields, 1990; Lehr & Harris, 1988). The result of these practices may lead to students adopting behaviors of "learned helplessness" and developing a passive orientation to schooling (Coley & Hoffman, 1990).

Haberman (1991) argues that this basic skills, mastery orientation that is prevalent in most urban schools constitutes a "pedagogy of poverty." He maintains that the teacher-directed instructional style leads to student compliance and passive resentment as well as teacher burn out. Furthermore, he criticizes this orientation because teachers are generally held accountable for "making" students learn, while students usually assume a passive role with low engagement in tasks or activities that are generally not authentic. Several recent studies have examined classroom instruction for ELLs and found that this "pedagogy of poverty" orientation exists in most classrooms with ELLs (Padrón & Waxman, 1993; Waxman & Huang, 1994). Consequently, the classroom instruction provided to ELLs may be one of the most serious problems educators need to address.

In summary, the increasing number of students from culturally and linguistically different backgrounds, the high number of minority students dropping out, the lower achievement levels of culturally and linguistically different students, and ineffective instructional programs and classroom instruction constitute a critical educational problem. Educators need to focus on new instructional approaches for improving the education of ELLs. Although there have been many programs and school-based interventions that have been found to be effective for some types of students at risk of failure, these programs and interventions will not necessarily be effective for ELLs. Instructional programs need to specifically

address many of the concerns of these Hispanic students who are trying to learn a new language. The next section specifically focuses on three instructional approaches for ELLs that were developed, implemented, and evaluated in the present study. These instructional interventions were targeted for improving students' literacy in English and attitudes toward school. The present study was designed to document the effectiveness of three instructional models for ELLs: (a) ESL in the Content Areas (ESLCA), (b) Effective Use of Time (EUOT), and (c) a combined approach of both ESLCA and EUOT. The following sections describe each of these instructional models and explains why they may be effective for ELLs.

ESL in the Content Areas

The first instructional model, ESL in the Content Areas (Chamot & O'malley, 1986; 1987), was designed to provide English language development through context-embedded problem solving (Cummins, 1981). This instructional model consists of (a) establishing native language literacy skills to build metalinguistic awareness based on prior knowledge, (b) explaining the concept to be learned in the content areas in Spanish with diminishing reliance on the mother tongue or among students with stronger Spanish metalinguistic awareness, and (c) graphic mapping and problem solving in science, mathematics, and reading in English and Spanish.

The framework for developing a consistent and theoretically strong methodology for ESL in the Content Areas included research on effective teaching and learning. Reviews of current theories of learning applied to the content areas have found that the teaching of problem solving (i.e., the application of previously acquired knowledge to new, unfamiliar situations), and metacognition (i.e., the awareness of the processes one undergoes during learning) are effective in producing exceptional results among native English speakers (Waxman, Padrón, & Knight, 1991).

The ESL in the Content Area Model included training sessions that focused on verbalization, problem solving, imagery, and other cognitive heuristics. The training sessions also discussed several other powerful learning strategies (e.g., cognitive and metacognitive strategies) that were designed to enhance the conceptual development of the target children. Throughout the training, teachers were encouraged to use inquiry-based instructional

approaches as well as other more student-centered instructional strategies like cooperative grouping. The training also tried to empower teachers by having teachers working together in transforming the conditions of teaching through the exchange of ideas.

Effective Use of Time

The Effective Use of Time staff development model was initially developed and certified by the National Joint Dissemination Review Panel for use with secondary reading teachers. It has been modified for use with teachers at all grade levels and in most subjects and it focuses on how to effectively use time in the classroom in order to improve student outcomes (Stallings, 1980; 1986). It is based on four steps: (a) pretesting, (b) informing, (c) organizing instruction through guided practice, and (d) posttesting. Pretesting involves the use of a systematic classroom observation instrument that examines a teacher's classroom instruction and then develops a personal profile of the instruction that indicates the strengths and weaknesses of the instruction. These profiles are used to inform teachers of specific instructional areas where improvements are needed. The profiles also serve as a starting point for teachers to develop their self-improvement programs. After examining their own profiles in small groups of teachers, the teachers share ideas on how to become more efficient managers of time and how to provide more effective interactive instruction.

Organizing instruction through guided practice is conducted by providing teachers with conceptual units of behaviors to change, arranging peer observations, providing coaching as requested, providing useful feedback, and helping teachers integrate ideas into their own teaching. Each teacher also has the opportunity to observe another teacher and provide feedback to the teacher. The last step of this model includes observing teachers again near the end of the staff development program and providing feedback to the teacher of the change which occurred during the program as well as assessing teacher improvement.

The training sessions provided to teachers in this program focused on a variety of topics. The first session familiarized teachers with the overall findings of the effective use of time in the classroom as it relates to student achievement. Teachers also received their individual profiles at this time and began to discuss how they could improve their instruction. The second training

session introduced teachers to research on classroom organization and management with information on cooperative grouping. Other workshops focused on methods of motivating specific students, discussing control systems, dealing with behavioral problems, effective interactive instruction, cognitive learning strategies, and reading for understanding. Each session also included feedback from teachers on how successful their attempts were in improving their instruction.

Combined Intervention

At the request of a school district administrator, a combined intervention including both ESL in the Content Areas and Effective Use of Time was developed and implemented in one of the schools. This instructional program combined essential aspects of both instructional models, but since it had the same amount of allocated training time as the other two models, it did not have as much time to spend on each of the specific interventions. It also did not go into depth on all the issues addressed in each model. Teachers were provided with the pre- and postobservations from the EUOT model and the instructional strategies discussed in the ESL in the Content Area model, but there was not enough time to focus on the intensive practice of each of these approaches.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the present study was to examine alternative instructional strategies for improving the education of language minority students. More specifically, this study reports the findings from a Title VII project that was designed to improve the English language achievement and attitudes of LEP students. The grant which was awarded to the school district provided resources to hire trained consultants (i.e., college of education professors from a nearby major, comprehensive research university) as well as provide a full-time district coordinator for the project. The grant also provided resources for the district to hire substitutes for the teachers in the project so that they could receive the training on the instructional models during the school day.

The present study provides descriptive and comparative information on the use of three different instructional approaches with district-identified, low-achieving Hispanic LEP students. As previously described, the three instructional approaches examined in the study were (a) ESL in the Content Areas (Chamot & O'malley,

1986, 1987), (b) Effective Use of Time (EUOT) (Stallings, 1980, 1986), and (c) a combination approach including both ESL in the Content Areas and EUOT. The fourth group included in the study did not receive any training and functioned as the control group. The three specific research questions addressed in the study were: (a) Are there significant differences among the four groups on students' reading achievement, after statistically controlling for students' initial reading achievement? (b) Are there significant differences among the four groups on students language arts achievement, after statistically controlling for students' initial language arts achievement? and (c) Are there significant differences among the four groups on students' perceptions of their classroom learning environment?

Method

Subjects. Seventeen bilingual teachers and their 325 students from five different elementary schools in a medium-sized, metropolitan school district participated in the study. The district, located in a major metropolitan area in the south central region of the United States has a total of 30 elementary schools (grades 1-5), nine middle schools (grades 6-8), and four high schools (grades 9-12). There are 48 self-contained bilingual classes in the district. The five schools selected to participate in the present study were the schools in the district with the largest percentages of Hispanic ELLs. These schools were all located in low income areas near the major industrial center within the city. Hispanic ELLs in this school district score significantly lower than all other students in the district. There is, however, a great deal of heterogeneity in the academic and linguistic ability of the students in most of these classes. Based upon the state-wide language assessment test, a large number of ELLs in this district have been identified as limited-English proficient (LEP) students. In many of these classes, there are nearly all LEP students, while in some classes only about half of the students have been identified as LEP students.

There were approximately three teachers from each of the five grade levels (grades 1-5). All of the teachers volunteered to participate in the staff development program, but due to the limited resource provided by the grant, only 12 teachers from three of the schools were selected to be part of the staff development instructional program. Five teachers from the two schools not chosen to be included in the program agreed to be part of the control

group. Each of the three experimental schools was randomly assigned to one of the three treatments previously described.

Instruments. An adapted version of the *My Class Inventory* (Fraser, Anderson, & Walberg, 1982) was used to collect data on students' attitudes near the end of the school year. The inventory is a 50-item questionnaire read to students in Spanish or English by interviewers. Students circle either "Yes" or "No" in response to statements about their class. The questionnaire contains eight scales that assess students' perceptions in the following areas: (a) Higher-Thought Processes, (b) Lower-Thought Processes, (c) Satisfaction, (d) Friction, (e) Competition, (f) Difficulty, (g) Cohesiveness, and (h) Cooperation. The instrument has been found to be reliable and valid in many different settings (Fraser, Anderson, & Walberg, 1982), including settings with predominantly ELLs (Padrón, 1992). A description of each of the scales follows:

Higher-Thought Processes--extent to which students are asked higher-level questions and are assigned work that engages them in higher-thought processes

Lower-Thought Processes--extent to which students are asked low-level questions and are assigned work that focuses on recall and other lower-thought processes

Satisfaction--extent to which students enjoy their classwork and going to class

Friction-- extent to which there is tension and quarreling among students

Competition--extent to which students compete with each other in class

Difficulty--extent to which students have trouble doing and completing their work

Cohesiveness--extent to which students know and are friendly toward each other

Cooperation--extent to which students engage in cooperative work and activities in class.

Procedures. In this quasi-experimental study, three schools were randomly assigned to one of the treatments and the remaining two schools served as the control group. Experimental Group 1 received training in both ESL in the Content Areas and EUOT, Experimental Group 2 received just the EUOT, Experimental Group

3 received just ESL training in the content areas, and the Control Group received no training. Each of the three experimental treatments consisted of approximately 15 three-hour sessions with university professors who served as the program trainers. The classroom teachers were released from their instructional duties once a week to participate in these workshops during the school day. The classroom teachers also received graduate credit from the university for participating in the program. The overall length of time for each of the treatments was about six months.

The research design allowed for a comparison among all four groups on students' postreading and postlanguage arts achievement, after statistically controlling for students' initial achievement. Scaled scores (NCE's) from the Iowa Test of Basic Skills were used in these analyses. Students who did not have both pre- and postreading and language arts achievement scores were eliminated from the data analyses. The My Class Inventory was administered to all third, fourth, and fifth grade students in the program near the end of the school year.

Results

Reading Achievement. Analysis of covariance was used to examine if there were any significant reading achievement differences among the experimental and control groups after statistically controlling for any initial preachievement differences in the groups which might have been present and served to confound the differences. The general linear model approach was used because of the unbalanced design (i.e., unequal number of subjects per group). The results indicate that there are significant differences among the groups on students' postreading achievement after statistically controlling for prereading achievement. The subsequent post hoc tests and adjusted posttest scores reveal that the EUOT group (i.e., Experimental Group 2) had significantly higher posttest scores than all the other groups. The findings also reveal that the combined group (i.e., Experimental Group 1) had significantly lower posttest scores than all the other groups. (Refer to Table 1a)

It should be pointed out that the standard deviations for the pretest and posttests for all the groups are quite large suggesting a great deal of variability among students' scores. (Refer to Table 1b) The variance decreased slightly between pretest and posttest scores for Experimental Groups 2 and 3 and increased slightly for Experimental Group 1 and the Control Group. Finally, it should be

noted that although there was random assignment to groups, Experimental Groups 2 and 3 had higher initial achievement scores than Experimental Group 1 and the Control Group.

Table 1a
Analysis of Covariance Results of Students' Postreading Achievement by Group

Source	df	SS	F
Prereading	1	8330.26	51.95***
Group	3	4428.84	9.21***
Within	320	51316.78	
Total	324		

***p < .001

Table 1b
Mean Prereading, Postreading, and Adjusted Postreading Achievement by Group

		Pretest		Posttest		Adjusted Posttest
Group	n	M	SD	M	SD	M
Combined Group	79	25.77	12.14	21.70	13.15	22.97
EUOT Group	88	35.82	14.46	36.14	13.85	33.64
ESL Group	52	32.92	13.25	29.96	12.66	28.55
Control Group	106	24.33	13.93	26.57	14.24	28.38

Language Arts Achievement. Analysis of covariance was used to examine if there were any significant language arts achievement differences among the experimental and control groups after statistically controlling for any initial preachievement differences in the groups which might have been present and served to confound the differences. The results indicate that there are significant differences among the groups on students' postlanguage arts achievement after statistically controlling for prelanguage arts achievement. The subsequent post hoc tests and adjusted posttest

scores reveal that the EUOT group (Experimental Group 2) had significantly higher posttest means than all the other groups. The combined treatment group (Experimental Group 1) had significantly lower adjusted posttest scores than all the other groups. (Refer to Table 2a)

Table 2a
Analysis of Covariance Results of Students' Postlanguage Achievement by Group

Source	df	SS	F
Prereading	1	8065.45	34.33***
Group	3	2219.46	3.29*
Within	320	75187.91	
Total	324		

***p < .001 *p < .05

It should be pointed out again that the standard deviations for the pretest and posttests for all the groups are quite large suggesting a great deal of variability among students' scores. The variance decreased somewhat between the pretest and posttest scores for Experimental Group 2 and increased somewhat for Experimental Group 1 and Experimental Group 3. It should be noted again that Experimental Groups 2 and 3 had higher initial achievement scores than Experimental Group 1 and the Control Group. (Refer to Table 2b)

Student Attitudinal Results. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was used to examine if there were significant differences among the groups on the eight *My-Class* scales. The MANOVA results revealed an overall significant difference among groups (multivariate $F(24,876) = p < .001$). Follow up univariate tests (ANOVA's) and Duncan post hoc tests revealed where the significant differences occurred. The results indicate that there were significant differences among the groups on the following five scales: (a) Higher-Thought Processes, (b) Lower-Thought Processes, (c) Competition, (d) Difficulty, and (e) Cohesiveness. The Duncan post hoc tests revealed that students from Experimental Group 2 reported significantly more higher-level thought processes

than Experimental Group 1 and the Control Group. The only significant post hoc result for low-thought processes was that students from Experimental Group 3 reported using significantly less low-thought processes than Experimental Group 2. For the scale of Competition, students from Experimental Group 3 reported significantly more competition than all the other groups. For the scale of Difficulty, students from Experimental Group 3 and the Control Group reported significantly more difficulty in doing their classwork than the other groups. Finally, for the scale of Cohesiveness, students in Experimental Group 2 had significantly higher perceptions of their class being cohesive than the Control Group and Experimental Group 1.

Table 2b
Mean Prelanguage, Postlanguage, and Adjusted Postlanguage Achievement by Group

		Pretest		Posttest		Adjusted Posttest
Group	n	M	SD	M	SD	M
Combined Group	79	25.10	12.49	29.99	16.94	30.98
EUOT Group	88	35.05	16.86	40.53	14.28	38.42
ESL Group	52	28.01	14.80	36.46	16.88	36.54
Control Group	106	25.17	17.07	34.41	16.51	35.38

The mean values for most of the scales are close to two (on a three-point, Likert-type scale with three being the highest possible value and one being the lowest possible value), with the exceptions of Lower-Thought Process and Difficulty. The scales with the highest means were Lower-Thought Processes, Friction, and Higher-Thought Processes. The scale with the lowest mean values was Difficulty. The standard deviations indicated that there was adequate variance on all the scales and that there were no scales that had a large number of extreme scores with the possible exception of Satisfaction which had the largest standard deviation for all the groups. (Refer to Table 3)

Table 3
ANOVA Results of My Class Scales By Group

	Combined Group (n = 92)		EUOT Group (n = 92)		ESL Group (n=43)		Control Group (n =74)		
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	F
Higher-Thought Processes	2.22	.45	2.42	.38	2.36	.45	2.24	.45	4.22**
Lower-Thought Processes	2.64	.50	2.78	.34	2.55	.50	2.63	.47	3.11*
Satisfaction	1.97	.61	2.04	.61	1.97	.65	1.91	.62	.69
Friction	2.37	.46	2.49	.55	2.43	.54	2.29	.58	2.12
Competition	2.07	.52	2.02	.51	2.24	.45	1.95	.49	3.38*
Difficulty	1.52	.47	1.52	.51	1.72	.48	1.70	.49	3•57*
Cohesiveness	2.15	.50	2.39	.50	2.31	.49	2.19	.50	4.02**
Cooperation	2.05	.59	1.93	.48	2.01	.49	1.92	.61	1.15

Note: Maximum Score = 3.
*p < 05
**p < .01;

Discussion

Although there have been several studies on how effective teaching strategies benefit students in English-monolingual classrooms, there has been little research conducted regarding how effective teaching might be best implemented or the benefits that might be possible with ELLs. Similarly, while there has been some theoretical and conceptual work related to providing English language development through context-embedded problem solving (Cummins, 1981), there have not been many field-based studies examining the implementation and evaluation of such instructional models. The results from the present report suggest that the Effective Use of Time Program significantly increased students' academic achievement in English. The results also suggest that ESL Instruction in the Content Areas did not hinder students' achievement in reading and language arts. The finding, however, that students in the combined treatment group (Experimental Group 1) scored significantly lower than all the other groups in reading and language arts achievement is troublesome. It appears that the training approach of combining both treatments (ESL instruction & EUOT) is not effective. There are at least three plausible explanations for this finding. First, the fidelity of each of the treatments may have been lost as a result of shortening the training period for each of them. Instead of a 45-hour treatment for each approach, the amount of time for training was limited to about 22.5 hours. Second, teachers may have found it too difficult to change their instruction in all the desired ways suggested by the two different models. Rather than making incremental changes in instruction, the combined training asked the teachers to make more pronounced changes as soon as possible. Third, since the training was administered to the school as a whole, it is possible that there are school-level variables such as school climate, leadership, or collegial relations that affected teachers' commitment to the program as well as their level of implementation.

The findings from the *My Class* analyses suggest some explanations for the achievement differences. Students from the Effective Use of Time group reported using significantly more higher-thought processes, having a significantly more cohesive class, and having significantly less difficulty in their class than students from most of the other groups. This successful profile may suggest why students in EUOT group scored significantly higher on academic achievement than all the other groups. On the other hand,

the profile for the combined profile group indicates that they had a greater emphasis on lower-thought process and a lower emphasis on higher-though processes than most of the other groups. Furthermore, students in the combined treatment group perceived less cohesiveness than the other experimental groups.

There are several limitations of the study that require that the overall findings be viewed cautiously. First of all, it should be pointed out again, that the four groups did have significantly different initial levels of achievement. Consequently, the adjustments made with the analysis of covariance tests may still not be quite appropriate, especially since the groups were randomly assigned to instruments. Furthermore, the great variance among all the pre- and posttest achievement scores suggests that teachers in all the groups had to work with students in their classes who differ greatly in ability. This variability within classes appears to be much greater than typically found in most school settings. Consequently, one should be concerned about generalizing to other settings where there will be more homogeneity within classes. Another concern is that only reading and language arts achievement in English was used in the present study. Although the goal of the project was to improve ELLs literacy achievement in English, the use of only reading and language arts achievement may have seriously disadvantaged the ESL in the Content Area approach because one of the important aspects of that model is to help teachers integrate important instructional and learning aspects in all of the content areas, not just reading and language arts. A final limitation focuses on the exclusive use of academic achievement in English which was used to evaluate the effectiveness of this program. This issue will be discussed in the following sections.

Educators concerned with the schooling of Hispanic students have generally focused on the development of language skills (Orfield, 1986; Padilla, 1990). Recently, however, researchers have begun to investigate other critical issues such as improving the classroom instruction in schools with predominantly Hispanic students (Garcia, 1988, 1992; Padrón & Knight, 1989). Effective teaching in classrooms of ELLs is of paramount importance because of the increased workload of these students. One of the major problems was that the school district in which these students were enrolled discouraged teachers from instructing in the students' native language. In fact, at the time this study was conducted, the district

was cited by the State Education Agency as not complying with the State's policy for teaching students in their primary language.

Although there have been concerns pertaining to the effectiveness of bilingual education programs (Willig & Ramírez, 1993), several studies have found that programs incorporating the students' language and culture are beneficial (Casanova & Arias, 1993; Garcia, 1994; Ramírez, 1985). It is possible that the project described in the present study was only somewhat successful in helping ELLs learn English and improve their English literacy skills because it did not use the ELLs' first language. While the project trainers encouraged teachers to provide instruction in the students' first language and provided them with research support for doing so, most teachers continued to follow the school district's preference and primarily taught in English. Consequently, the actual degree of implementation for each of the instructional approaches probably differed dramatically, especially since the ESL in the Content Area models stressed the use of instruction in Spanish.

The results of the present study are important since there has been little research conducted in classrooms with predominantly ELLs (Walker de Felix, 1989). Although Chamot and O'malley (1986; 1987) have developed an appropriate program for ELLs who are being prepared for mainstream content-area instruction, this type of program may not have been appropriate for elementary schools students. The language proficiency and ability levels varied greatly among the ELLs in the present study. Therefore, the implementation of this instructional approach may not be appropriate until students have a better foundation in their native language.

Thirdly, research studies must also consider the amount of instruction that the student has received in Spanish and English. Instruction in reading in the native language (i.e., Spanish) may contribute to the development of higher-level strategies by allowing students to establish a well-defined understanding of the learning process which is not hindered by a lack of language proficiency. The student's understanding of the demands of the learning process may contribute to more effective learning in English.

Finally, other existing variables should be addressed in future studies. Teachers' self-fulfilling expectations, for example, may be contributing to the lack of learning for ELLs. Individuals who speak a language other than English are sometimes perceived as having learning difficulties. This type of perception may result in teaching practices that are typical of low-ability groups where

teachers concentrate more on decoding skills and less on teaching comprehension. Therefore, instruction in classrooms with ELLs must be examined in order to determine terms the type of instruction that is taking place.

Cummins' (1986) notion of "empowerment" suggests that students can either be "empowered" or "disabled" by providing instruction that adds a second language and culture or subtracting the students' language and culture. Cummins (1986) argues that empowerment is necessary for successful learning to occur. While the project trainers encouraged teachers to provide instruction in the students' first language and provided them with research support for doing so, most teachers continued to primarily teach in English. Future studies may need to consider the district-level or school-level conditions that are necessary in order for a project like this to become successful. In conclusion, these considerations must be addressed so that programs can be developed that address the cognitive and linguistic needs of the Hispanic English language learners.

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