Intructional strategies for ell classrooms

Profession, Teacher

There are many different strategies that an instructor can use in ELL classrooms or in classrooms in which ELL students have been mainstreamed. As always, instructors are called upon to constantly modify their curriculum and instruction in order to meet the needs of each individual learner. This is made more possible if the instructor has more knowledge of different teaching methods and strategies. There are many possible research sources that offer ideas, methods and strategies foreveryday usein an ELL classroom. Several of the more common or functional strategies will be discussed here. Comprehensible Input

There are six prominent areas to consider when creating lesson plans that will help to present the subject material in an organized, understandable manner. These are " modelling (sic), bridging, contextualisation (sic), building schema, re-presenting text and developing metacognition" (Walqui, 2003). Modeling is simply showing, demonstrating, or asking the student to perform an action or do a project. This hands-on approach is useful for all students but it is particularly helpful with those students who have a language barrier. Bridging, a common constructivist method, involves building on a learner's previous experience (Gabler, 2003).

When dealing with ELL learners, theteachermay have to delve deeper than with average students, into the student's previous experiences because their country of origin may not have offered the experiences that the educator is accustomed to building on. If they are able to find an experience that the student can relate the new information to, then the student will much better be able to understand the instruction (Gabler, 2003). Contextualization is useful because it presents the same information that one would find in a

textbook in a completely different format that can reach the student's visual, tactile, or auditory modalities.

If the student is able to see the information rather than a list of linear facts but instead in a picture, video, demonstration or activity, then the student make learn the concepts or information more quickly and sometimes effortlessly. Building schema gives the students an understanding of the big picture of the new subject or concept before giving them more details. This gives the student a structure that they can build on and relate to. This may help the new information seem less daunting to them and may help develop an anticipation in the student to explore further into the subject.

Re-presenting text, is when the teacher asks the students to revisit a text with the intention of presenting it in an alternative way in which the students actively participate (Walqui, 2003). " This kind of language learning often engages students in the accomplishment of tasks that are interesting and meaningful for them, where the emphasis is placed on thecommunicationthat is being carried out rather than on its formal aspects, and where the resulting learning is powerful" (Walqui, 2003). The sixth area for the educator to keep in mind when laying out lesson plans is developing the student's metacognition.

This is defined as the " understanding of the strategies available for learning a task and the regulatory mechanisms needed to complete the task" (Hallahan, 1997). This particular aspect of ELL instruction can give these students the tools needed to deal with new difficulties, remedy old problems and identify specific needs or problems that they have in their own learning

process. The student can even continue to use this knowledge and awareness in their educational endevours after they have achieved English language proficiency. This can also assist average students in their own educational efforts.

Ongoing, Specific, and Immediate Feedback Effective teachers often engage in multiple methods of feedback. Ongoing feedback can be in the form of charts, or lists that the teacher, class, or each student creates as they continue learning about a subject. This can show vocabulary words that they have learned, concepts they have mastered, or subjects that they have studied. The teacher can refer back to these lists regularly to reinforce new concepts and build on old ideas. Specific feedback can be integrated into classroom discussions or on student papers, explaining problems or elaborating further on an idea that the student has learned.

Immediate feedback can be critical because it can alter the course of the student's thinking before they become more confused. The teacher who is observant can correct misinformation or misconceptions quickly to avoid further problems in the student's learning process. This can be a result of classroom discussions, question and answer sessions, and call and response methods. All forms of feedback have benefits and when used together can create a cohesive picture of the student's abilities and success.

Instructional feedback for students can have several benefits ranging from motivating the student to achieve more to helping them develop more refined metacognition and also possibly giving the student a sense of control over their own educational success (Malley, 1994).

Grouping structures and techniques Grouping ELL students with " peer-buddies" or students appointed to assist the ELL student can give the ELL student more opportunities for using conversational English, allow them to receive minor assistance without interrupting the teacher, and give them the opportunity to have " teacher talk" re-explained to them (Wisconsin, n. .) Building background and vocabulary development In most subjects, the teacher could develop a list of vocabulary words to help the students complete their understanding of the subjects. An ongoing list of vocabulary words could be a constant resource for students. The definitions would be written in their own words and more understandable to them. When teachers encourage vocabulary development in their students, they may produce better English improvement in the ELL student as a result (Fisher, 2007).

Continuous vocabulary expression can encourage the students to learn to enjoy vocabulary expansion. The more comfortable a student is with a word the more frequently they may use it so it stands to reason that the more opportunities that the student has to learn and use new words, the more ingrained into their personal vocabulary the words will become. Presenting an ELL student new words to learn as well as providing opportunities to use the words are likely keys to helping an ELL student become more English language proficient.

Classroom discussions, questions and answer sessions, and call and response are three commonly used methods for engaging students in language usage. Student engagement Nearly all of the learning strategies for assisting ELLs in the effort to learn the English language require student

involvement. No matter which modality is being tapped into, the student who is involved or engaged will learn any subject more thoroughly and quickly. " Students usually agree that learning requires work" (Newman, 1992). This work, requires that the students become involved and engaged in their learning.

Likely, if a student is willing to work and if the teacher encourages the engagement, then the student will find much betteracademicsuccess in the end. Conclusion In the end, most instructional strategies that are used are most effective when tailored to each student's needs. While time restraints may be problematic when attempting to meet individual needs, they may be very helpful for the student who is blessed to be under their tutelage. If teachers are capable of using these strategies to assist their students to help them achieve success in both their to attempt to learn English as well as their academic endeavors.

Reference

http://eric. ed. gov/PDFS/ED371047. pdf