

Effective teaching strategies

Business



Abedi stated that in the year 2001 one out of seven children in the United States were fluent in a language other than English (Abedi, 2001). These students come to school with a unique set of challenges. The teacher's role is to help each student meet their full potential as a learner. This requires classroom teachers to prepare themselves to properly meet these students' needs.

Clemencia Cosentino De Cohen and Beatriz Chu Clewell wrote an article entitled Putting English Language Learners on the Educational Map: The No Child Left Behind Act Implemented.

This article focused on the differences between schools with a high population of English language learners (ELL) compared to schools with limited ELL students. It was determined that schools with higher populations of ELL students offered a variety of programs that were unavailable in other schools. One program offered in these schools was a variety of enrichment opportunities. In an effort to provide support for ELL students these schools offered before and after school programs to supplement the students' learning experience.

Programs to tutor students in the summer were also offered (De Cohen ; Clewell, 2007).

These schools were also noted to have a higher availability of foreign language immersion programs. This type of program encourages interaction between native English speakers and ELL students. It benefits both types of students by enabling them to learn from one another. Schools with a larger population of ELL students also have active parental involvement programs.

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Moreover, these schools offer pairings of OT teachers and parents, provide transportation to school events, offer child care services, and encourage parents to drop in and observe or volunteer in the classroom (De Cohen ; Clewell, 2007).

Programs such as these build relationships between the school and the parents. It allows parents to view the school in a positive light. When the parents realize the school wants to partner with them to provide the educational opportunities they may not have had, the students' achievement and motivation will increase. A final point that was made by De Cohen and Clewell was that through implementation of No Child Left Behind legislation many districts have found it necessary to develop ELL programs with state standards and assessments (2007). This has proved to apply positive pressure upon these schools.

English language learners are now required to take high stakes tests. Their testing results are required to meet a certain criteria. This has caused ELL teachers to educate their students on all subjects with fidelity. The teachers have provided creative programs to meet the needs of these students. An integrated approach is required to teach these students the language skills and other knowledge necessary to be successful.

English Language Learners: An Issue of Educational Equity describes several factors that can be used to create equal educational opportunities for ELL students.

Modifications are necessary to ensure that ELL students can be successful on standardized achievement tests. Allowing ELL students extra time to

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complete the test is an example of one such modification. This type of modification has proven to be successful to students who are already proficient in English (Montgomery, Roberts, & Growe, 2003). Students who are just beginning to acquire English skills do not seem to benefit from this modification. Additional time is not a positive benefit for a student who is unable to read or comprehend English (Montgomery, et al.

, 2003).

A second modification that can be helpful to ELL students is to allow them to test in an environment that they feel at ease in. This modification allows these students to test in a familiar room. It also allows the test proctor to be a teacher with whom the student is familiar. An additional component of this modification is that students can be allowed to complete their tests over the course of several days. This will prevent the students from becoming stressed or overwhelmed by testing materials.

A final component to this modification is that students are allowed to have the directions read aloud.

This prevents confusion about what the test is asking of the student. The simplification of testing language has proven to improve ELL students' test scores (Montgomery, et al. , 2003). A final modification would be to allow ELL students to take the achievement test in their native language.

This is not a modification that is widely embraced. This is due to the fact that it is expensive to create a test in various languages. It is also very difficult to

translate the content of the test from English to an assortment of languages. Translation in some languages is not always ideal or possible.

Another consideration is the availability of someone to score the test in the translated version.

A final consideration is how to determine which students are allowed to take a translated test. Based upon these concerns this modification is only offered in a few states (Montgomery, et al. , 2003). This article also discusses the importance of training teachers with the appropriate strategies to meet the diverse needs of ELL students. A teacher who works with ELL students must determine the appropriate amount of support the students need to receive an education that is equivalent to the content of native English speakers.

Gillet, Temple, and Crawford propose that the teacher implement scaffolding strategies to provide reading and language instruction (2008). The teacher must use the necessary strategies to provide the students with the tools needed to be successful. Differentiating skills for ELL students will also be required. All ELL students do not function on the same instructional level. The teacher must also allow interaction between ELL students and native English speakers.

This will allow the students opportunities to practice their English skills in a less stressful environment.

One of the instructional tools mentioned as useful strategies for aiding ELL students was activating students' prior knowledge. The students should be taught from the level that they are functioning at. The teacher should assess

what the students know and begin instruction at that point. The second strategy a teacher must use would be to give directions or instruction in simple steps. By doing this, it allows the students to grasp the basic meaning of what the teacher is asking the students to learn.

The students will understand the teacher's expectations and be able to work to achieve the desired goal.

The last strategy that can be helpful for ELL students is modeling. The teacher should model the behavior they wish the students to accomplish. Student work samples would also be appropriate and helpful. This allows the students to understand what the teacher expects and will give the students a better level of understanding.

The final portion of the article focused on standards that have been developed for ELL students, and the teaching materials that can be used to aid students in meeting these goals. The development of standards has provided teachers with guidelines to follow when planning lessons for ELL students. It has also set up requirements of content requirements for these students. Textbooks companies have been able to follow these standards to develop materials to assist in the instruction of these students (Montgomery, et al. , 2003). The development of these standards and teaching materials is a factor that can lead to ELL students being evaluated on an equal playing field.

Robert T. Jimenez wrote an article entitled Moving Beyond the Obvious: Examining our Thinking about linguistically Diverse Students.

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