

Sheltered Instruction in English as a Second Language Programs:

A Review of the Literature

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Since the 1980s, one approach to teaching English Learners (ELs) has been through English as a second language (ESL) programs. However, in order to maintain a language development focus within these programs, sheltered instruction, also known as sheltered English, was formulated to target the development of English within content instruction. This literature review will examine the role of sheltered instruction and provide a summary of current research on best practices in ESL programming, particularly as it relates to serving ELs in Texas through ESL programming within Content-Based ESL and ESL Pull-Out (TAC Chapter 89, 2018).

Effective Programming

Models and Implementation

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE) describes English as a Second Language (ESL) programs to be “techniques, methodology and special curriculum designed to teach ELL students English language skills, which may include listening, speaking, reading, writing, study skills, content vocabulary, and cultural orientation” (Author, 2015). In Texas, the Texas Education Code Chapter 29, Subchapter B and the Commissioner’s Rules Concerning State Plan for Educating English Language Learners of the Texas Administrative Code Chapter 89, Subchapter BB allow for districts to select from two state-approved ESL program models: ESL content-based and ESL pull-out. While both program models provide targeted language instruction in English that is culturally and linguistically responsive, ESL content-based is designed to support ELs across all content areas, whereas ESL pull-out supports ELs exclusively in English/Language Arts.

Although limited nation-wide studies have been thoroughly conducted on the effectiveness of various types of ESL programs and while nation-wide studies may differ in their definitions or labels for ESL program types, the evidence is clear that content-based ESL programs that embed language support across disciplines in an inclusionary model is more beneficial to EL success than ESL programs that separate ELs from their peers with supplemental English language support alone (Collier & Thomas, 2009). Coleman & Goldenberg (2010) mention the beneficial contribution of an additional English Language Development or ESL course, but they also further highlight the importance of targeted support for ELs within content area instruction. The research of Collier and Thomas (2009) notes that in the long run, at reclassification as English proficient or placement in mainstream classes, the achievement gap among English learners and English proficient students is maintained and even widened for ELs who were initially placed in segregated or remedial, short-termed programs instead of in enrichment, grade-level appropriate content instruction. Enrichment ESL programs target the linguistic, academic, cognitive, emotional, social, and physical needs of ELs. In fact, high quality ESL content-based programs close about half of the achievement gap when provided in a non-segregated, well implemented, and sustained program that lasts at least 5-6 years (Collier & Thomas, 2009).

For full achievement gap closure and long-term success in English, Collier and Thomas (2009) found that effective enrichment models rather than isolated, remedial models are needed to accelerate the growth of English learners. Meaningful interaction with native-English-speaking peers is a crucial source for second language acquisition to occur, but it must be done in a supportive environment by teachers who are trained in facilitation of learning for both groups of students and when ELs engage with English-speaking peers in cooperative, equally shared

academic tasks. Another important aspect of integration of ELs into the mainstream for at least half of the school day is to maintain the cognitive challenge. When students are separated from their grade-level peers for most of the day, misalignment to the cognitive and academic expectations can occur, resulting in lower aspirations for academic achievement. Similarly, with positive motivations, teachers may unintentionally over-simplify the instruction to make it easier for ELs. These practices, along with various forms of segregation such as ability grouping and tracking, can lead to a social perception of inadequacy for students, which in turn can lead to lower achievement. Cognitive complexity of English taught through meaningful academic content, as in ESL content-based programs, accelerates EL growth more so than ESL pull-out services where this dimension is missing. The substantial hurdles in an ESL pull-out program is the lack of support in content area instruction (including at times the interruption of content instruction) and the time to invest in intensive, meaningful cognitive and academic support beyond English language acquisition. Consequently, the largest number of high school dropouts come from the pull-out model, along with little to no long-term achievement gap closure (Collier & Thomas, 2009).

Although EL support across all content disciplines is necessary for developing effective ESL programs, inclusion of ELs with their English proficient peers cannot be in name alone. Pointedly, research findings show that nominal inclusion in content area classes without targeted opportunities for ELs to interact with English-proficient students even becomes a hindrance to considerable academic comprehension (McGriff & Protacio, 2015). To put it plainly, if ELs are present within a content area class, such as science, but are grouped together without opportunities to interact with English-proficient students or, at a minimum, ELs with various proficiency levels, then the intention and benefit of content-based ESL is depleted. Content-

based instruction grounds language in academic content areas, changing the focus from teaching language in isolation to integrating language into all disciplines (Kaufman & Crandall, 2005). In fact, the USDE describes content-based ESL as an approach that “makes use of instructional materials, learning tasks, and classroom techniques from academic content areas as the vehicle for developing language, content, cognitive and study skills” (Author, 2015).

In a 1981 study by Jim Cummins, he found that English learners on average take five to seven years to approach grade-level academic language proficiency in English. The research of Collier and Thomas (2009) confirmed that even with certain advantages, such as affluence, highly-regarded ESL programs, low class sizes, and at or above grade level in native language upon arrival to the U.S., English learners needed five to seven years or more to attain academic language proficiency in English. In particular, those who took only five years to reach grade level in English were those who had arrived with two to five years of schooling in their native language. Those who arrived before age 8 with little to no formal schooling in their native language, on the other hand, took seven to ten or more years to reach grade level in English, some running out of school years before they could close the gap. Therefore, research shows that students who have emigrated to the U.S. with at least 4-5 years of grade-level schooling in their native language and are on grade-level in their native language when they arrive will benefit from content-based ESL programs, demonstrating grade-level equivalency after several years of this consistent programming (Collier & Thomas, 2009).

In review of the research on content-based ESL, the approach of sheltered instruction, also known as sheltered English, will be addressed due to its close alignment. Sheltered instruction is key to programs for English learners, providing content area instruction at grade level in English with comprehensible input methods. ELs make academic progress and develop

English proficiency particularly well when sheltered instruction is joined with English language development and native language instruction when appropriate and possible (Markos & Himmel, 2016). In fact, sheltered instruction is named in various contexts in conjunction with ESL through academic content and emphasized as an important factor in both ESL and bilingual programs. "...ESL content serves as an important model for teaching language through academic content. Any bilingual program consists of ESL content for the English portion of the academic year, and it informs the teaching style that is used in the primary language instructional time as well. Thus, an effective ESL content program is a major part of all bilingual programs..." (Collier & Thomas, 2009, p. 64-65). Furthermore, it is important to note that when determining appropriate programming for ELs, contextual factors such as a students' family, culture, and language background should be taken into consideration (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009), as will be discussed further in this review.

Specialized Support for Newcomers and Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE)

One contextual factor related to the background of English learners that should be taken into consideration when planning effective programming is whether the EL is a newcomer. Newcomers are usually defined as recent immigrant students, with a related subgroup including Students with Interrupted Formal Education (SIFE). SIFE means that these students may have had limited or no prior schooling and may lack literacy skills and basic subject-matter knowledge in their first language. This may also include students who have withdrawn from school in the U.S. for a period of time or multiple times, significantly affecting their English language development and grade-level subject-matter knowledge. Particular programming for newcomers, such as newcomer centers or programs, are typically intended for those in grades six through twelve. The specific need for newcomer programs at secondary levels is centered around the

academic English language demands at these levels that can result in greater gaps for newcomers if not provided with intensive, modified instruction to scaffold academic and language content. Additionally, at secondary levels, basic literacy skills are generally assumed to be completed, resulting in instruction that does not focus on developing literacy. Newcomer programs are designed to address English learners who may have instructional needs that go beyond English proficiency, including low literacy in their L1 (primary language) or lack of basic skills in content areas.

Although some would add to the definition of newcomers as those with limited English proficiency and little formal education in their home country, it is important to note that not all newcomers are at beginning levels of English language proficiency and may not need the extent of support from such newcomer programs (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Hence, individualized decisions should be made on appropriate programming for newcomers. Even though not all newcomers need intensive newcomer programs that support literacy and basic content knowledge development, most newcomers do need general orientation to American culture as it relates to the American school system in particular (U.S. Department of Education, 2012). Newcomer programs vary in the breadth of courses provided, program length, location and daily duration; however, English learners typically transition from these programs based on individual factors as various researchers would agree that it is beneficial for students to integrate with their peers as quickly as possible to minimize isolation (U.S. Department of Education, 2012; Collier and Thomas, 2009). Additionally, while family and community support is vital in all programs for English learners, this involvement is particularly critical for the success of newcomer programs. In fact, the most effective newcomer programs are those which receive

substantial support from their school district, including funding (U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

When newcomers with limited proficiency in English and those with little, no, or interrupted formal education are integrated within ESL programs without the support of a newcomer program, particular attention to their needs, along with targeted training for teachers, is essential for student success. However, schools must also recognize the benefits newcomers bring with their cultural and linguistic backgrounds, prior experiences and knowledge, and unique perspectives. With intentional and targeted support for academic and social emotional development, the door opens for newcomers to perform at high levels of achievement (U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Mansilla and Jackson (2011) add that the diverse perspectives of newcomers can benefit all students to better understand global issues and to apply those perspectives to their knowledge of ideas related to all content areas, current events and 21st century skills (as cited in U.S. Department of Education, 2016).

Misconceptions about educating newcomers can impede the accelerated progress needed for their content and language development. One prevalent misconception is that newcomers must have strong language proficiency before they are able to engage in subject matter content lessons. However, language should be taught through content by providing multiple authentic opportunities for newcomers to participate in meaningful academic activities. Furthermore, van Lier and Walqui (2010) advised that simplified content and language decreases understanding of textual meaning, calling for amplified rather than simplified texts that provide opportunities to build metacognitive strategies and contain valuable contextual supports (as cited in U.S. Department of Education, 2016). Overall, high expectations, integrated content and language development, and social emotional support are the baseline for successful newcomer services.

The Role of the ESL Teacher

When thinking of the qualities of an ESL teacher, the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) standards provide a framework for teacher preparation in meeting the diverse needs of ELs (Kaufman & Crandall, 2005). These qualities include knowledge of first and second language acquisition and culture as well as targeted abilities in planning and implementing instruction and assessments that address ELs, while maintaining a strong, professional status (Téllez & Waxman 2006).

Likewise, ESL teachers should engage in proactive advocacy of the academic, linguistic, and social development of ELs. For instance, ESL teachers should lead the way in monitoring the progress of ELs' academic performance as well as their attendance and other affective factors, bringing together the students' teachers and families as needed to support their longitudinal growth. However, studies have shown a pattern of ESL teachers placed in a subordinate role within their schools (McGriff & Protacio, 2015). Therefore, it is vital for ESL teachers and their leadership to provide strategic positioning in order for ESL teachers to be seen as knowledgeable practitioners among their peers, recognized as a valuable resource and equal to content teachers, rather than simply a support role. ESL teachers must maintain a strong hold on their position as language teachers, utilizing a curriculum-planning model that ensures the intentional and meaningful instruction of language through content (Bigelow, Dahlman, & Ranney, 2006).

While the attributes of an ESL teacher as mentioned above may seem idealistic or lofty, these qualities are imperative in delivery of effective ESL instruction. Unfortunately, ESL exam-only certifications do not guarantee teacher effectiveness. Although holding an ESL certification

provides a foundation for serving the needs of ELs effectively, further training, guided practice, and monitoring with feedback are needed to increase the likelihood that a teacher is implementing second language methods to fidelity. At the same rate, a teacher who is instructing ELs without passing a certification exam may be proactively seeking training in that regard and may be providing a high level of linguistic and cultural support. The hard truth, then, is that simply making sure teachers pass exams and obtain ESL certification is not enough; reliance on ESL certification alone is associated in the research with inconsistency in programming and low investment on the part of content-based ESL teachers (Téllez & Waxman 2006). Therefore, developing a school-wide initiative in programming is key.

The Role of the Family and Community

Cognitive development in a child's L1 (primary language) through age 11-12 is crucial in their L2 (second language) development. Particularly, when ELs are in ESL programs that do not directly support the development of L1 cognition through native language instruction, support of L1 cognitive development at home is vital. Cognitive development at home is a natural process that can be stimulated through consistent interactive problem-solving (e.g. asking questions, setting goals, making decisions), providing household responsibilities (e.g. shopping, family budgeting, cooking), and engaging in family activities (e.g. sharing heritage stories, reading books together, celebrating together). It is possible for parents to provide some of the first language cognitive and academic support at home to coordinate the efforts of L1 cognitive development at school (Collier & Thomas, 2009).

Additionally, the cognitive skills of reading and writing in a child's first language transfer to English, so the mechanics of reading do not need to be re-taught if a child has learned to read

in one language (Markos & Himmel, 2016). Therefore, parents of English learners can support their child’s English development by continuing to support their reading and writing skills in their native language. Also, community programs that engage families of English learners can target resources and services that build native language development in addition to English language services. Schools can maximize the support of English learners by connecting families with community programs that support literacy in their native language and English, such as community library literacy activities, after-school enrichment programs, and community mentorship programs.

A School-Wide Initiative

Robust Support

Most certainly, an ESL program, particularly content-based ESL, along with the implementation of sheltered instruction in all content areas for ELs must be supported as a school-wide initiative (Collier & Thomas, 2009; Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010; McGriff & Protacio, 2015; Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009; Duguay, 2012). Administrators, ESL coordinators, teachers, and specialists can be advocates for school-wide implementation of sheltered instruction by demonstrating examples of how teachers are currently using sheltered techniques with success, providing explicit examples in sheltered techniques not yet in use at the school that can benefit ELs at various proficiency levels, and by monitoring the implementation of school-wide usage of sheltered instruction across the content areas (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). As with most school-wide initiatives, teacher input and investment are key. When teachers can see the benefit to the initiative in increasing student performance and when teachers are able to provide feedback and creative input into an initiative, the overall effectiveness is exponential.

Moreover, access to rigorous academic expectations can be blocked when ESL teachers are not provided with frequent opportunities to engage in school-wide curriculum policies. Furthermore, school administration support is paramount in the effectiveness of school-wide initiatives, especially to position an ESL teacher as an influential language specialist (McGriff & Protacio, 2015). It is crucial for administrators to have knowledge on research pertaining to increasing EL achievement.

A school- or district-wide vision for effective practices for ELs is needed in order to inform classroom practices. Specifically, higher EL achievement levels are a product of a consistent implementation of a clearly-focused plan by a school or district that is committed to high expectations for EL success. Schools with effective EL programs have clear academic goals that are consistently monitored for student growth and supported by highly invested and involved leadership. Also, availability of resources, parent and community involvement, and a culture of high expectations are other factors that contribute to EL success (Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010).

Specifically, the 7-year Center for Research on the Educational Achievement and Teaching of English Language Learners (CREATE) program concluded that school-wide implementation of research-based language curriculum along with targeted professional development and coaching is effective and benefits ELs and English proficient students alike. Furthermore, the CREATE program highlighted the benefits of the systematic use of instructional models for language across the content areas with evidence of success from grade-wide planning that generates concurrent teaching of general academic terms and the use of common instructional routines and interactive learning activities. The study showed that planning time and clear communication between administrators and teachers are key in the realization of operative systematic implementation of effective language programs across content

areas (Duguay, 2012). Goldenberg (2013) concurs by noting that settings for effective programs for ELs create methodical opportunities for collaboration on curriculum standards and how these standards can be accommodated for ELs and then thoroughly reviewed by practitioners with task-based evidence of student progress. These systematic approaches to scaffolding language must be coupled with student support and intervention as needed (McGriff & Protacio, 2015). Student academic achievement is at its peak when the ESL staff feel positively about the school environment, such as the level of administrative support and contextual factors for increased bicultural knowledge. Linguistically diverse students are supported best when they are respected and valued for their experiences and cultural contexts in the classroom (Collier & Thomas, 2009).

Overall, fidelity to program implementation and dedication to teacher quality influence the effectiveness of the ESL program, and in addition to teacher skills and training, full and effective implementation in regard to administrative support and careful monitoring and evaluation is crucial (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009; Thomas & Collier, 2002). Norms are needed for accountability of content teachers on EL academic achievement, and regular evaluation for effectiveness of inclusion of ELs in content areas needs to occur (McGriff & Protacio, 2015).

Collaboration Between ESL and Content Teachers

The shift towards content in language instruction prepares ELs for mainstream academic settings (Bigelow, Dahlman, & Ranney, 2006). Therefore, a team approach is needed for sustained growth of language programs that meet the diverse needs of ELs. Effective content-based ESL programs provide the teaming of mainstream content teachers to ensure the

incorporation of grade-level content in conjunction with English language development (Collier & Thomas, 2009; Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010; Kaufman & Crandall, 2005). In fact, research documents the benefits for meeting needs of ELs through collaboration of ESL teachers with content-area teachers, demonstrating a connection between ESL teacher and content teacher collaboration with the closing of EL achievement gap to native-English peers and increasing ELs' academic language proficiency (McGriff & Protacio, 2015). Collaboration between content area teachers and ESL teachers provided through a common planning time is a vital element in a coherent overall content-based program. ESL content programs can be taught by teachers who have certifications in both ESL and the content areas or by a co-teaching method in which the content teacher is responsible for the depth of content knowledge in the subject and the ESL teacher is responsible for ensuring that the content material is meaningful through second language techniques (Collier & Thomas, 2009). However, when content area teachers see the responsibility of language development for ELs only on the role of the ESL teacher, the ESL teacher can be underutilized. Furthermore, mainstream teachers often feel ill-prepared to meet the needs of ELs (McGriff & Protacio, 2015). Therefore, increasing awareness of content area teachers to support academic language for ELs enhances the need for pedagogical guidance, preservice training, and in-service professional development (Duguay, 2012). When carefully planned and implemented by well-trained staff, ESL programs that have grade-level classes that are integrated into the mainstream instructional program can be highly effective. This, however, does not equate to submersion in the mainstream. Mainstream teachers of ELs need to provide significant support to their ELs based on their training in second language acquisition and through a perspective that values biculturalism.

Practically, there are many ways that the collaboration of ESL and content area teachers will be needed as both types of Texas ESL programs are carried out. For instance, in an ESL pull-out model, the ESL teacher who is providing support in the English Language Arts and Reading (ELAR) classroom will need to coordinate with the mainstream content teachers that have ELs to ensure that those students are receiving sheltered instruction within their content courses. Additionally, if the ESL pull-out program consists of an ESL teacher who provides inclusionary support within the ELAR class, the collaboration between the ESL and ELAR teacher will be crucial. Within a content-based program, there might be various collaboration needs. In particular, if a content-based ESL program has an ESL teacher that provides inclusionary support within various content classrooms, the collaboration between the ESL teacher and the content teachers of ELs will be imperative. Otherwise, if the content teachers are nominally certified in ESL without comprehensive training, collaboration with an ESL teacher will be paramount in providing content-based language instruction.

When it comes to collaboration of ESL and content teachers in an inclusionary model, agreement on roles and responsibilities should be made that include lesson planning, decision-making, student expectations, and assessment as well as an agreement on how to integrate content and language. ESL teachers can plan for potential difficulties with words or concepts within the lesson and provide support during the lesson delivery with co-teaching, pre-teach these terms before whole group instruction, or reinforcement support after the lesson to address gaps in prior knowledge (McGriff & Protacio, 2015). Essentially, the bottom line is that ELs require sheltered instruction support in all content areas, which points to the overwhelming need for ESL teachers and content teachers to coordinate efforts in reaching the affective, linguistic, and cognitive needs of ELs.

Methods for Success

More Than Good Teaching

Sheltered instruction coincides with content-based instruction whereas ESL teachers focus on language through content (Short, 2013). The goal of sheltered instruction is to provide English language development alongside the academic content and skills needed in all disciplines (Goldenberg, 2013). The USDE defines sheltered instruction to be “an instructional approach used to make academic instruction in English understandable to ELL students” in which teachers “use physical activities, visual aids, and the environment to teach vocabulary for concept development in mathematics, science, social studies, and other subjects” (Author, 2015). To many, this may sound like “good teaching”. It may resemble the best teaching practices that have been common in research-based pedagogy across the education spectrum. However, although generally effective practices can be effective for ELs, they need additional instructional supports, including the value brought by their home language. General best practices are a foundational base for quality instruction for ELs, but they are insufficient in providing accelerated learning for ELs (Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009). Best teaching practices must be combined with an explicit language focus in sheltered instruction to support ELs' comprehension and use of academic language (Hansen-Thomas, 2008).

When it comes to implementing sheltered instruction within content-based instruction, teachers must have a comprehensive framework for selecting, sequencing, and implementing instructional methods, rather than a list of strategies or activities to choose from when planning lessons (Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010; Téllez & Waxman 2006; Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Sheltered instruction should be part of an overall methodology, rather than fragmented use of

strategies. Sheltered instruction is more than a bag of tricks. Training of sheltered instruction should be grounded in theory, demonstrating theory into practice in order for teachers to be equipped to make appropriate decisions when creating lessons designed for enhancing language acquisition (Short, 2013). One challenge of content-based instruction through sheltered instruction is the lack of teacher preparation for the discipline-specific pedagogy in which language teaching should be embedded. Additionally, within subject area training, there is little to no formal support on how to address the specific linguistic and cultural needs of ELs other than general differentiated instruction components (Kaufman & Crandall, 2005). Therefore, teacher training that focuses on methodology in sheltered instruction, rather than a list of strategies, combined with adequate planning time will assist in implementing effective, carefully structured ESL content-based programs (Thomas & Collier, 2002).

Authentic and Meaningful Use of Language

Another aspect that is essential in the success of sheltered instruction within content-based ESL programs is the understanding of the need for a communicative approach to language instruction. This means making the shift from teaching *about* language to instead teaching language *through content* (Téllez & Waxman 2006). Second language acquisition requires explicit language instruction in conjunction with meaningful and authentic communication. Having students understand the elements of language is important, but without repeated practice generated from authentic ideas, students have difficulty in gaining high levels of oral language proficiency (Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010). Likewise, sheltered instruction models such as Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) and Specially Designed Academic Instruction in English (SDAIE) emphasize the use of a communicative approach that values communicative functions over grammar and form (Hansen-Thomas, 2008).

Academic language proficiency is built upon students knowing and being able to use a lexicon of school-based words and phrases that are utilized across all content areas (McGriff & Protacio, 2015). Many teachers oversimplify language teaching by creating language objectives that are vocabulary-based, rather than focusing on academic discourse communities or partnerships. Language objectives should coincide with comprehensible input methods to provide a full scope of sheltered instruction in any content area (Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010). Particularly, the need is for content-area literacy over disciplinary-literacy, which entails teaching learning strategies to be used across all subject areas instead of disciplinary-specific strategies taught in isolation. Furthermore, repeated exposure to content-compatible terms, such as vocabulary that is needed across disciplines, in multiple contexts can deepen comprehension for ELs in the long run and provide necessary repetition for acquisition (Lindahl & Watkins, 2014).

When considering programming, a highly-effective practice is to join ELs work with English proficient students to acquire the content together without being segregated or pulled out for ESL as a separate, remedial class. This maximizes the ELs' comprehensible instructional time by limiting isolation (Collier & Thomas, 2009). Additionally, incorporation of primary language support can be crucial for ELs' academic growth and literacy development (Goldenberg, 2013; Collier & Thomas, 2009). This includes the use of cognates, brief explanations (not translations), lesson previews or reviews, and general learning strategies supported in primary language. In totality, the focus of content-based instruction should be on developing both receptive and expressive language skills through a mixture of explicit instruction and opportunities for authentic generation of ideas for meaningful communication in

both spontaneous and structured settings with support of contextual over prescriptive grammar (Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010; Lindahl & Watkins, 2014; Duguay, 2012).

Sheltered Methods: Communicated, Sequenced, Scaffolded

The English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPS), TAC 74.4 (b)(2), exhort that all English learners in Texas shall receive “instruction in the knowledge and skills of the foundation and enrichment curriculum in a manner that is linguistically accommodated (communicated, sequenced, and scaffolded) commensurate with the student's levels of English language proficiency to ensure that the student learns the knowledge and skills in the required curriculum” (TAC Chapter 74.4, 2007). These three areas of linguistic accommodations provide a framework for the essential elements of sheltered instruction methods.

Sheltered instruction methods that are communicated provide the necessary comprehensible input needed for ELs to engage fully in accessing the content material. Comprehensible input methods are a medium for ensuring that whatever the receiver is receiving is understandable, meaning that ELs have visual and auditory supports that explain and enhance key ideas and concepts. Naturally, communicated sheltered methods align with implementing a communicative language teaching approach as described in the previous section. Additional examples of communicated sheltered methods include

- repeated exposure and meaningful practice with content material;
- speech commensurate with ELs’ language level;
- context-embedded resources such as visuals, gestures, realia, symbols, manipulatives; and

- explicitly-expressed instructions for tasks (U.S. Department of Education, 2012; Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010; Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Markos & Himmel, 2016).

Sequenced sheltered methods organize content material in a way that follows a logical order for building upon prior knowledge and experiences. Sequencing ensures that ELs at various English language proficiency levels obtain targeted instruction in content and language.

Additional examples of sequenced sheltered methods include

- explicit academic language instruction, such as pre-teaching of language needed for academic discourse across disciplines;
- exposure to authentic language usage;
- connections to previous learning and ELs' background knowledge;
- instructional supports, such as primary language resources that leverage L1 literacy without over-use of direct translation; and
- alternative assessments targeting content area knowledge instead of English proficiency level (McGriff & Protacio, 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2012; Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Moughamian, Rivera, & Francis, 2009; Markos & Himmel, 2016).

Sheltered methods that are scaffolded provide structures that encourage discovery of learning through engaging actively with content material in supportive learning environments. Meaningful and authentic cooperative learning opportunities are essential to delivering scaffolds that boost development of academic language in addition to conversational English necessary for comprehensive English language development. Additional examples of scaffolded sheltered methods include

- structured oral language development, such as sentence frames and appropriate wait time;

- instructional modeling, including structural outlines, graphic organizers, paragraph frames;
- amplified texts involving contextual supports; and
- task-based or inquiry approach (Markos & Himmel, 2016; U.S. Department of Education, 2012).

Overall, sheltered instruction should provide ELs the same rigorous, quality content material that English proficient students receive, including the use of higher-order thinking skills while focusing strategically on academic language development (Hansen-Thomas, 2008).

Assessment of English Learners

Classroom assessments for English learners must distinguish the evaluation of English proficiency and content area knowledge to ensure that English proficiency does not prohibit ELs from displaying their content knowledge to the extent possible. By obtaining accurate assessments that differentiate between language and content needs, teachers can provide appropriately address specific language or content needs through instructional interventions as necessary. Providing linguistic accommodations to classroom assessments may be appropriate for ELs so that the goal of the assessment is achieved. Such linguistic accommodations may include the use of a word walls and glossaries in English and/or the students' primary language(s) as well as alternative evaluation methods, such as demonstration of mastery through non-verbal response, hands-on activities, models/visual displays, or sorting. Ongoing, formative content and language assessments are necessary throughout each lesson, along with review of language objectives at the end of each lesson to determine effectiveness of the incorporation of the ELPS in conjunction with the TEKS (Markos & Himmel, 2016).

In addition to classroom assessments, the Language Proficiency Assessment Committee (LPAC), including teachers of ELs, is required to monitor the progress of academic success of current and former ELs (for two years after reclassification) and to determine appropriate assessment options for the state criterion-referenced test (State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness--STAAR), including consideration of designated support options that provide necessary accommodations or that might exclude ELs from reclassification eligibility. Furthermore, facilitation between the LPAC, testing coordinators, and classroom teachers of ELs is necessary to ensure designated supports provided by the LPAC for state assessment are commensurate with students' linguistic needs and are utilized within classroom instruction and assessment. Effective implementation measures include the development and administration of a plan for timely and periodic evaluation of EL academic and linguistic progress.

Teacher Preparation and Ongoing Training

Culturally Responsive Teaching

One aspect that cannot go without mentioning in regard to teacher training for supporting English learners is culture. In order to meet the unique needs of ELs in meaningful ways, teachers should be knowledgeable about the students' culture, language, and community (Markos & Himmel, 2016). A socioculturally supportive environment that allows for natural language, academic, and cognitive development to grow is crucial for ELs to succeed. Providing a sociocultural supportive environment may mean ESL staff coordinate with grade-level content teachers. When doing so, however, extensive planning time and ongoing professional development of all teachers on meeting the needs of ELs must be provided, particularly when team teaching is an expectation (Collier & Thomas, 2009). Some ways to support an additive

language-learning environment with culturally consistent teaching are to provide teachers who represent the culture of the ELs and/or to recruit well-prepared and motivated teachers, providing professional development that increases knowledge of the culture of the ELs and how to link culture to instructional activities. Language and culture are interwoven, and it would be negligent for educators to undervalue the interdependence of first and second language and culture (Téllez & Waxman 2006). In fact, research shows that linguistic diversity in classroom instruction is important for teachers to emphasize (McGriff & Protacio, 2015). When supporting ELs within the ESL program, it is beneficial to allow students to use their primary language as needed. However, direct translation is not shown as beneficial (Thomas & Collier, 2002; Hansen-Thomas, 2008).

Academic language places cultural and experiential demands on students, so ELs benefit when they are able to make relevant connections to the content (Lindahl & Watkins, 2014). Use of students' background knowledge is a critical component of sheltered instruction (Hansen-Thomas, 2008). Therefore, teachers of ELs must be equipped to prepare and implement culturally responsive teaching that recognizes and values a student's primary language and culture and assists in making connections to content material in culturally-relevant ways. In order to teach ESL through content-based instruction, an emphasis on the overall nature of educators toward culturally and linguistically responsive teaching is needed in addition to continual reflection of effective teaching practices (Santana-Williamson, 2013; McGriff & Protacio, 2015).

Comprehensive Professional Development

Short (2013) indicates that one-shot workshops are not effective in adjusting teacher practices. A professional development program for sheltered instruction should be clearly

outlined and structured to provide evidence-based practices that improve language and content proficiency, and the professional development program should be monitored with clear measurement tools of EL progress. Additionally, professional development should be chunked and guided over time, allowing teachers to learn innovative approaches and to be reflective practitioners. This type of professional development is not about learning new techniques, but instead it is about developing overall sheltered instruction practices and second language methods that look at language and content in new ways. Furthermore, professional development is most effective when it is job-embedded, grounded in teachers' instructional environment. Support is needed before, during, and after professional development sessions for teachers to implement effectively. Administrators play an essential role in maintaining the outcomes from professional development. Measurement of implementation from professional development should be developed and the results shared with teachers (Short, 2013).

Overall, successful professional development consists of contextual and ongoing support by teaching peers, administrators, and instructional specialists more so than one or more events such as workshops or presentations (Coleman & Goldenberg, 2010). Effective professional development structures involve teacher interests, long-term commitment from all stakeholders, and clear evaluation of goals and teacher targets (Téllez & Waxman 2006). Professional development must directly address the challenges of implementation teachers face daily in practical and tangible ways. Successful approaches to providing professional development include use of simulations or similar opportunities in which educators can put themselves in the shoes of their ELs to identify instructional techniques that promote comprehension of content delivered in another language and from a different cultural perspective (Hansen-Thomas, 2008; Téllez & Waxman 2006).

Conclusion

Finally, what it comes down to is not the number of teachers who have passed a certification test; the real effectiveness of ESL programs comes when all content-area teachers of ELs are trained in culturally and linguistically responsive teaching and are supported with targeted, school-wide implementation of sheltered instruction that supports application of second language methods with frequent reflection on measurable outcomes for EL success.

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