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The Effect Of Emphasizing Key Vocabulary On Student Achievement With English Learners

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THE EFFECT OF EMPHASIZING KEY VOCABULARY ON STUDENT
ACHIEVEMENT WITH ENGLISH LEARNERS

by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to some great people in my life. To my father, Fred Crellin, who never had the chance to complete his dissertation. He was a life-long learner, but always put his family first. “Mr. C” taught in the exact same classroom at Lunenburg High School for over 30 years, almost his entire professional life. He was an advocate for his profession and a leader to his colleagues. He exemplified what it means to be an educator.

To my supportive husband Lynn and my two children, Caitlyn and Colin, who understand my desire to continuously learn, often at the expense of family time.

To all the immigrant families that I have had the honor of meeting. So many of you have shown such bravery with the many challenges you have faced. I admire your strength and perseverance and hope that someday we will all be a little more tolerant of each other and recognize that we are more alike than different.

Lastly, to all the wonderful educators that I have had the opportunity to work with including my colleagues Dora, Chris, Bebe, Molly and Megan in “Cohort F.” I have been blessed to be among great, courageous, hardworking, and inspiring teachers that have worked to ensure that our children have the best opportunities for a successful future. Your passion is infectious and is what keeps me going each and every day.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

Nelson Mandela

ABSTRACT

This action research seeks to determine the impact of teacher training and the use of specific instructional strategies, per the research-based SIOP® teaching model, on English language arts achievement of formally identified first grade English Learners. The study aims to discover if using strategic techniques to teach vocabulary positively affects language acquisition and comprehension. English Learners have historically lagged behind grade level peers in all academic areas. English Learners tend to have many outside variables that can affect their ability to focus on school. Issues with immigration, class, culture, and race are all relevant topics with this population. This study discusses many of these issues present both in and outside of the classroom.

The action research involved a series of professional development sessions, organized and implemented by a certified SIOP® coach, in this case the action researcher, which included specific strategies on how to foster vocabulary acquisition. Through a series of non-evaluative observations and opportunities for reflection, teachers collaborated in order to refine their practices. Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered to determine the effectiveness this model, knowing that it is limited in scope due to the sample size and the time parameters involved with this study. However, this study provided insight into best practices in supporting language instruction and suggested opportunities for additional research.

The goal of this study was to determine if being strategic in how and what we teach English Learners fosters student engagement within their classroom community.

The ultimate goal was that this knowledge would help level the playing field in terms of understanding and accessing grade level and beyond content so that these diverse learners can achieve academically.

Keywords: English Learners, language acquisition, SIOP, vocabulary

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Each year, the United States becomes more ethnically and linguistically diverse, with more than 90 percent of recent immigrants coming from non-English speaking countries (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2010). Foreign-born individuals now account for 12 percent of the total population (Portnoy, Portnoy, & Riggs, 2012). More than 400 languages are spoken by English Learners nationwide, with approximately 75% of the language minority population speaking Spanish (Kindler, 2002).

In schools, the language minority population is growing at a significantly faster rate than is the overall student population (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2000). English Learners represented nearly 10 percent of the total K-12 student population during the 2012-2013 school year (Migration Policy Institute, 2015). This is a 40.7 percent increase over the reported 1993-94 public school EL enrollment (Migration Policy Institute, 2015). The English Learner population does not just consist of foreign born students. Over 70% of English Learners were born in the United States, making them second or third generation immigrants (Batalova, Fix, & Murray, 2005).

This population faces a lot of challenges. According to the latest statistics out of the Migration Policy Institute (2015), compared to the English-proficient population, the overall English Learner (EL) population (immigrant and U.S. born) was less educated and more likely to live in poverty in 2015. In schools, while the number of students with limited proficiency in English has grown exponentially, their level of academic success

has lagged significantly behind that of their language-majority peers. For example, the 2013 National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) found that 69 percent of ELs scored below basic proficiency in eighth grade mathematics, compared with just 25 percent of native English speakers. In reading, 70 percent of ELs scored below basic compared with 21 percent of non ELs. Scores at the fourth grade level was similar. These enormous gaps, especially in mathematics and high school graduation rate, double that of any other group (Callahan, 2013).

County School District has the second highest total number of English Learners in South Carolina, with approximately 4,500 English Learners and the highest percentage of English Learners in the state compared to the total student population. The large majority of these students reside in one geographical location of the county. The site for this action research, Island Elementary School, has a population of almost 50% identified English Learners. Most of the identified students speak Spanish as their “mother tongue” and represent a variety of countries and backgrounds. Academic gap issues mirror national statistics in almost every grade level. In both ELA and math, Caucasian students outperform Limited English Proficient (LEP) students by almost double (South Carolina Department of Education, 2017).

In order to try to address this achievement divide, professors Dr. Jana Echevarría, and Dr. Maryellen Vogt out of California State University, Long Beach, and Dr. Deborah Short, out of the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington, DC, developed the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol, SIOP®, teaching model. They concluded that if teachers did not teach language at the same time as teaching content standards, students would continue to lag behind same aged peers and would be at risk for dropping out.

Through intensive research and trial and error, they developed a coherent, specific, field-tested model of sheltered instruction that specifies the features of a high quality sheltered lesson that teaches content material to English Learners (Echevarría, et al., 2010). They developed this model based on intense professional development over the course of seven years which involved teachers observing each other, providing feedback and coming to consensus about what best practices support English Learners. The model was then tested for its effectiveness with English Learners through data analysis and reflection which will be further described in Chapter II.

One of the main features included and highlighted in the SIOP® model is emphasizing key vocabulary. Learning vocabulary at an early age has shown major importance in individual student's success academically and socially. Cunningham & Stanovich (1997) state, "This difference is crucial, as students' 1st grade vocabularies predict their reading comprehension 10 years later" (p. 934). Farley & Elmore (1992) have also shown that vocabulary has been found to be one of the greatest predictors of reading comprehension, an even stronger predictor than cognitive ability. The distinction between cognitively demanding, context-reduced academic language and cognitively undemanding, context-embedded conversational language is an important one. Many students who appear to speak and understand English may still struggle in reading academic texts or passing standardized test. This is because they have acquired conversational English but lack academic English. One difference between the two registers of English is in the vocabulary (Freeman & Freeman, 2004). According to Marzano and Pickering (2005) one of the key indicators of students' success in school, on standardized tests, and indeed, in life, is their vocabulary. The reason for this is simply

that the knowledge anyone has about a topic is based on the vocabulary of that information. The reality of school today is that students need to have academic language to do well. This includes knowing, understanding, and using content vocabulary.

Regardless of instructional strategies used to teach vocabulary to students, specifically those whose native language is not English, it is clear that knowing and understanding vocabulary can help set students up for academic success. “Gaps in word knowledge among children of different ethnicities and socioeconomic groups have been acknowledged many years and we know that these word gaps contribute significantly to achievement gaps” (Fisher & Frey, 2015). The top researchers in the field of language acquisition understand that it is essential that teachers make intentional, meaningful vocabulary instruction a priority in their classroom.

Problem of Practice Statement

Many teachers fail to teach vocabulary in isolation, as well as within context during an instructional unit or individual lesson. “Effective vocabulary instruction requires educators to intentionally provide many rich, robust opportunities for students to learn words, related concepts, and their meanings” (National Reading Technical Assistance Center, 2017, p. 7). English Learners, as well as other learners, need to have the background knowledge and understanding to not only comprehend the lesson, but also the verbiage needed to participate in the actual learning activities (Echevarría, et al., 2010).

In the context of English Learners, given the variability in these students’ backgrounds, it is clear that there is no simple one-size-all solution. “English Learners have difficulty in school when there is a mismatch among program design, instructional

goals, and student needs” (Echevarría, et al., 2010, p.10). The action researcher has observed first-hand that the selected action research participants (i.e. first grade English Learners) have had trouble with participating and staying engaged in class lessons at all times. The action researcher has received feedback formally through responses through an in-house professional development questionnaire and during Professional Learning Community (PLC) meetings that many teachers do not feel adequately trained or prepared to teach English Learners. In addition, both formative and summative assessments results have shown that the vocabulary strand is an academic area in which this group of students has historically struggled with at this school site. The action researcher recognizes that not knowing the academic language of a lesson can have negative effects on student engagement, active participation and concept understanding. Addressing the question about what strategies work the best for young English Learners, specifically with focusing on teaching key vocabulary through this action research, will provide valuable insight into what could produce the greatest results and thus, work towards addressing students’ individual linguistic and academic needs.

Research Question

What effect will an emphasis upon key vocabulary (per the SIOP® model) have on first grade English Learners’ academic achievement?

Sub Question: Is emphasizing key vocabulary (per the SIOP® model) implemented with fidelity within the classroom?

This action research is based on the research question which asks whether or not training teachers on using specific, research-based instructional strategies which support vocabulary instruction, per the SIOP® model, will have a positive effect on achievement

for first grade English Learners. In addition, the researcher will be exploring changes within classrooms that support understanding of content and indicate fidelity of implementation of a specific teaching model.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the action research study is to determine the effectiveness, in terms of academic achievement, of using one of the 30 features of the SIOP® model, emphasizing key vocabulary, with a group of formally identified first grade English Learners. The results provided through this action research will help to guide curriculum decisions as well as refine teachers' instructional practices at Island Elementary School. Based on results on the state mandated Home Language Survey and other documents required for school enrollment, the majority of these students were born in the United States, but many are not exposed to English on a regular basis until they begin school. Many of the parents of these students do not speak English at all and many have limited educational experiences in their native country. Through this action research professional development was provided, an opportunity to reflect and collaborate on best practices in the area of vocabulary development was scheduled, and ultimately the chance to make a long-lasting change to the class environment, to be one that better supports the vocabulary needs of English Learners, will take place.

Scholarly Literature

Cummins (1989) defines conversational language as the everyday language students use for basic communication and academic language as the language for the classroom, which is needed for more demanding learning tasks. Gibbons (1991) has made a similar distinction between what she calls playground language and classroom

language. English Learners typically struggle with the academic classroom language, which is what the majority of high stakes tests use to assess academic achievement. “Without explicit English language development, most English Learners stall at the intermediate level of English proficiency and become long-term English Learners (Olson, 2010).

Vocabulary is one large component of academic language. The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000) advocates direct vocabulary instruction as an effective instructional method for enhancing students’ reading comprehension. The most consistent finding related to good vocabulary instruction is that students need multiple exposures to a word to learn it well (Nagy, Herman, & Anderson, 1985). Although some students may come to a basic understanding of a word after one exposure, all students need additional encounters in different contexts to ensure that they develop rich orthographic, phonological, and semantic knowledge of word (Perfetti & Hart, 2002). If the purpose of vocabulary instruction is to improve long-term comprehension, the most effective method is to provide students with multiple exposures to words in meaningful contexts (Beck, Perfetti, & McKeown, 1982). Goodwin and Hein (2016) further state, “Vocabulary is key, but building it requires robust teaching strategies” (p.82). Even seemingly fluent second-language learners may still possess only 2,000 to 7,000 words in English compared to 10,000 to 100,000 words native speakers possess (Burt, Peyton, & Duzer, 2005).

In a synthesis of twenty years of research on vocabulary instruction, Blachowicz & Fisher (2000) determined four main principles that should guide vocabulary instruction including: that students should be active in developing their understanding of words and

ways to learn them, students should personalize word learning, students should be immersed in words, and students should build on multiple sources of information to learn words through repeated exposures. Within the SIOP® model a variety of meaningful ways to teach vocabulary have been recommended: word sorts, contextualizing key vocabulary, use of personal dictionaries, word wall, concept definition map, cloze sentences, list-group-label activity, vocabulary games and use of a self-assessment of knowledge of new words.

In a research synthesis conducted by the National Reading Technical Assistance Center (2010) on the current research on vocabulary instruction, eight findings were identified that provided a scientifically based foundation for the design of rich, multifaceted vocabulary instruction. These findings came after a computer search of PsycINFO and ERIC databases from 2002-2009 and included a total of 324 results.

Studies were selected through a two-step process and were restricted to rigorous selection criteria. The research findings included:

1. Provide direct instruction of vocabulary words for a specific text;
2. Allow for repetition and multiple exposures to vocabulary items;
3. Use vocabulary words that the learner will find useful in many contexts;
4. Use vocabulary tasks that are restructured as necessary;
5. Entail vocabulary learning that includes engagement that goes beyond definitional knowledge;
6. Include computer technology that can be used effectively to help teach vocabulary (p.1).

Although there is much research in the area of vocabulary and its impact on academic success with English Learners, the action researcher has found minimal research on how this specifically affects young learners. In addition, data on the vocabulary component of the SIOP ® model used for this action research is limited. Vocabulary development, critical for English Learners, is strongly related to academic achievement (Saville-Troike, 1984; Hart & Risley, 2003; Manzo, Manzo, & Thomas, 2005). According to Graves & Fitzgerald (2006) systemic and comprehensive vocabulary instruction is necessary for English Learners because

- Content area texts that students must read include very sophisticated vocabulary;
- Reading performance tests given to English Learners rely on wide-ranging vocabulary knowledge;
- English Learners' vocabulary instruction must be accelerated because English Learners are learning English later than their native-speaking peers;
- English Learners' acquisition of deep understanding of word meaning is very challenging. (p.122)

Key Words

There are many key concepts that will be referenced in this action research. Some are described as part of the Literature Review in Chapter II and some are outlined below.

Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skill (BICS): Conversational language that is cognitively undemanding and embedded in context. This is sometimes referred to as “playground language” (Cummins, 1981).

Cognitive Academic Language Skills (CALP): Language in school subject matter learning. This is sometimes called “academic language” (Cummins, 1981).

English Learners (ELs): the term used to identify students whose native language is not English. These students are typically identified using a language screener based on results from a questionnaire given to all parents per Title III law. These students have various levels of English proficiency and sometimes referred to as ESOL students, Limited English Proficient, English Language Learners, or Non-Native Speakers. For the purpose of this action research, we will refer to these learners as ELs (State Department of Education, 2017).

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP®): A research-based and validated instructional model that has proven effective in addressing the academic needs of English learners throughout the United States. The SIOP® Model consists of eight interrelated components: Lesson Preparation, Building Background, Comprehensible Input, Strategies, Interaction, Practice/Application, Lesson Delivery and Review & Assessment. This model focuses on teaching language and content skills simultaneously (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2010).

Title III: Federal policy that provides guidelines and procedures for the English Learner population for K-12th grade. This policy addresses the language instruction for Limited English Proficient and Immigrant Students. This law was part of *No Child Left Behind Act* of 2001 and now is under *Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)* of 2015 (State Department of Education, 2017).

Potential Weaknesses

This action research has limitations and challenges. One challenge is with teacher commitment. Short, Echevarría, and Richards Tutor (2011) state, “Teacher commitment can be a challenge or a benefit” (p. 376). They further stated that in three different studies involving the full SIOP® model, they found that teacher commitment correlated to fidelity of implementation. In general, “The more committed the teachers, the harder they tried, they more they sought out coaching guidance, and the more enthusiasm they had” (p. 377). The teacher participants come with a variety of levels of experiences and expertise. They also have various degrees of commitment with this model. They may state they are interested in learning about the strategies taught through professional development, but this may not be the case. These factors can affect the results.

Another challenge is with the students involved with this study. English Learners are not all the same as outlined further in Chapter II. They come to school with a variety of cognitive, academic, linguistic and social needs. “There are a variety of factors that influence a student’s ability to master challenging subject matter while acquiring another language” (Samway & McKeon, 1999, p. 24). These factors will affect not only how well students learn provided vocabulary, but also can affect how well they do on achievement tests. The largest limitation of the study is the use of a small sample size of first grade English Learners. Results from this study cannot be necessarily applied to other grade or age levels of students. The age of the students was chosen based on research about the importance of vocabulary with reading with first graders. This is referenced in Chapter II. Sample size of teacher participants was based on the number of potential volunteers, current staffing, and availability at the school site. Further suggestions for future research

would include using these strategies for teaching vocabulary with other grade levels. Also, additional research on using the same strategies for teaching vocabulary in the target language within the dual-language immersion classroom setting, which is housed on the same campus, would be very insightful. Giving the complexity of the SIOP® model and the time needed to truly see a significant change in vocabulary knowledge and academic success on reading achievement, additional time would be beneficial for further research. Using what researchers Thomas & Collier (1997) have supported, which states that it takes between 5-10 years to learn a language if a child is in school consistently with strong instruction, doing this action-research in a span of 8 weeks will not necessarily showcase the desired academic improvements. However, the intent of the practices taught and used through this action research can carry over into further investigations.

The Significance of the Study

Although student achievement is at the forefront of the action research, the additional benefit will be that teachers will better understand that students with diverse linguistic backgrounds may need specific individualized support to be able to access the grade level curriculum. Teachers need to understand that the English Learner population may have many outside contributing factors, outside of knowing the English language proficiently, that can and do affect academic success. The professional application of conducting this action research was an increased awareness of instructional strategies to foster vocabulary acquisition for English Learners. The strategies were taught during professional development sessions by the action researcher who is a trained SIOP® coach. These strategies were implemented and the action researcher used observation and

assessments to determine that the practices were done with fidelity. A key component of this research was the provided opportunity for participants to discuss and reflect on practices in order to foster student growth. The specific methodology that was used for this action research is discussed in detail in Chapter III.

Social justice issues that revolve around this population include, but are not limited to: education rights, immigration, race, and class, which make this action research not only multifaceted, but of extreme importance. Equity is another major social justice issue brought out by this study. Gorski and Swalwall (2015) state, “Schools can commit to a more robust multiculturalism by putting equity, rather than culture, at the center of the diversity conversation” (p.34). In order for many of the English Learners to have equal access to the grade level curriculum, different accommodations and/or modifications to both curriculum and instructional practices must be made. “Making the core curriculum comprehensible is central to preventing new English Learners from becoming long-term English Learners” (Echevarría, Frey, & Fisher, 2015). Possibly the most significant social justice issue raised by this research is with the concept of tolerance. “As a first step, teachers need to establish and maintain a classroom environment that affirms diversity and promotes civil dialogue” (Cruz, 2015). Part of affirming diversity is acknowledging that many students and their immediate and extended families come from other cultures and backgrounds. Instead of teachers being burdened by this reality, they can embrace it as an asset to the classroom. Modeling this mindset can even have significance globally. This thought transcends the idea that “educating for global competence is no longer a luxury, but a necessity” (Mansilla, 2017, p.12). The argument has even been made that “the failure to communicate effectively is

one of the chief causes of disagreement, conflict and intercultural violence. And, when considering how to best communicate ideas, students must also consider potential language and fluency barriers, nonverbal communication, and modes of communication and delivery” (Jackson, 2017, p.21). In conclusion, Tamer (2014) states, “The immigrant youth are best supported when schools foster bicultural identities, enabling them to navigate multiple cultural worlds effectively. All children in the 21st century need to learn to cross cultural boundaries, whether ethnic, racial, age, geographic, or other boundaries” (para. 5).

Conclusion

Chapter I of this Dissertation in Practice has introduced the reader to the identified Problem of Practice, purpose statement, research questions, related literature, ethical considerations, and the action research methodological design. Chapter II of this Dissertation in Practice details and reviews the related relevant literature on best practices on supporting language acquisition and vocabulary instruction. These theoretical constructs are related to the curriculum pedagogical practices embedded in the action research of the present study. Chapter II details the development of theories and strategies related to language acquisition. This chapter also identifies and describes the diversity of English Learners and provides important information to contextualize the study. The history of, and the research behind the development of the SIOP® model is discussed. Chapter III of this Dissertation in Practice details the action research methodology, both quantitative and qualitative methods that was used to collect, analyze, reflect, and report data findings. Chapter IV of this Dissertation in Practice reports the data findings and relates the findings to the identified Problem of Practice. Chapter V of this Dissertation in

Practice summarizes the major points and conclusions from this action research and provides suggestions for possible future research topics.

The action researcher has observed students being disconnected to the content, too embarrassed to showcase what they know and too limited in English language proficiency to communicate needs or wants. The action researcher has also witnessed students with little to no English excel in specific classroom settings, exceeding teachers, parents and classmates' expectations. There are a wide variety of variables that contribute to the success or lack of with these students. Many of those things are beyond the control of the teacher and thus often cannot be addressed directly. However, what can be addressed are the instructional practices that are used in the classroom to impact these students' lives. Researchers in the field of linguistics, education and beyond understand what many of the students and parents already know, that without specific, intentional teaching practices that are designed to meet the unique challenges this population face, these students will continue to lag behind. This is especially important now with Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) including a number of new requirements for the education of English Learners (ELs), including standardized criteria for identifying EL students and inclusion of English proficiency as a measurement of school quality (Department of Education, 2017).

Approximately 15 years ago, the action researcher attended a 5-day training on SIOP® provided by the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL), the organization that originally funded the research behind the model. After the intense training, and then with further training that was received as part of SIOP® coach credentials, the action researcher recognized that this model includes many research based best practices and

supports the language and academic needs of students. Part of the model focused on vocabulary development. This key feature, and the components behind this feature, is something that the action researcher felt could be implemented easily into any and every lesson, regardless of years of experience or expertise as a teacher. The ease of implementation, along with being able to concurrently support state and district existing initiatives, allowed for this action research to take place.

With this action research, the goal is to gain further understandings in the area of language acquisition and the effect vocabulary knowledge has with a selected population, to truly make an impact in the lives in all of the action research participants (teachers, parents, students, classmates) and to set up practices that can have a long lasting positive effect on academic achievement.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

English learners represented nearly 10 percent of the total K-12 student population in U.S. public schools during the 2012-2013 school year (Migration Policy Institute, 2015). While the number of students with limited proficiency in English has grown exponentially, their level of academic success has lagged significantly behind that of their language-majority peers.

In the 1999-2000 Schools and Staffing Survey, 41.2 percent of 2,9984,781 public school teachers reported teaching Limited English Proficient Students, but only 12.5 percent have had eight or more hours of training on strategies for supporting English Learners (ELs) in the past three years (US Department of Education, National Center for Educational Statistics, 2002). Unfortunately, most states do not require teachers to have English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) certification, and often teachers have not had exposure to effective instructional strategies to use with this population. At Island Elementary only ESOL teachers (5) and teachers transferring from the state of Florida (2) have ESOL certification and formal intense training as part of their credentials.

The reality of having a large number of English Learners nationally and locally with an achievement gap, coupled with the fact that many teachers have had very little training in the areas of language acquisition or best practices for working with these type of diverse learners, is the catalyst for identifying the Problem of Practice and instituting

the action research involving vocabulary development. According to Santibañez & Gándara, (2015) “It’s not enough to provide English learners with a generally good teacher. To close the achievement gaps and to build on EL’s strengths, we need to provide teachers for ELs who have additional skills and abilities” (p.33).

Problem of Practice Statement

An identified Problem of Practice (PoP) is the inconsistencies and variabilities of the strategies teachers use with ELs as well as the differences of effectiveness, as seen through classroom assessment data and observations, with this population (Parish, Merikel, Perez, Linqunti, & Socias, 2006; Perie & W.S.Grigg, 2005). Specifically, many teachers fail to intentionally teach vocabulary in isolation, as well as within context, during an instructional unit or individual lesson. ELs, as well and other learners, need to have the background knowledge and understanding to not only comprehend the lesson, but also the verbiage needed to participate in the actual learning activities (Echevarría, et al., 2010).

In the context of ELs, given the variability in these students’ backgrounds, it is clear that there is no simple one-size fits-all solution. “ELs have difficulty in school when there is a mismatch among program design, instructional goals, and student needs” (Echevarría, et al., 2010). The action researcher has observed that the selected participants (i.e. first grade ELs) have had trouble with participating and staying engaged in class compared to other first grade students. In addition, both formative and summative assessments have shown that the vocabulary strand is an academic area in which this group of students has historically struggled. The action researcher recognizes that not knowing the academic language of a lesson can have negative effects on student

engagement, active participation, and concept understanding. Addressing the question about what strategies work the best for young ELs, specifically with focusing on teaching key vocabulary through this action research, provides valuable insight into what could produce the greatest results and thus, work towards addressing students' individual linguistic and academic needs.

Research Question

This action research is based on the research question which asks whether or not training teachers on using specific, research-based instructional strategies which support vocabulary instruction, per the SIOP® model, has a positive effect on achievement as well as supports the understanding of content in the classroom for first grade ELs. The research question investigated during this action research is: What effect emphasizing key vocabulary (per the SIOP® model) has on academic achievement? And, are teachers implementing these strategies (per the SIOP® model) with fidelity?

Organization of Literature Review

The literature review is rooted in the founding research around language acquisition. Investigations and information from top linguists and psychologists describe the initial theories about the topic. Historical trends and perspectives of various methods for language learning showcases the diverse opinions about best practices. Further review helps compare identified factors that affect progress, or lack of, with learning to read, write, speak, or comprehend in another language. The literature review continues to describe the numerous challenges that teachers face with supporting ELs. This includes both curriculum and instructional practices. The literature not only describes issues within the classroom, but with current education policy and practice. The last portion of

the literature review focuses on the concept of vocabulary, specifically with pre-teaching vocabulary using best practice per the SIOP® model. This section provides an overview of literature about the effect teaching vocabulary has with academic achievement and with incorporating the SIOP® model itself within lessons. The overall purpose of the literature review is to provide the background knowledge and current research about the influence of knowing and understanding content vocabulary can have on overall academic achievement.

Purpose of the Review

The purpose of the literature review is to pinpoint key concepts around the theme of language acquisition. Language is a function of living in a society and predates any and all literature we have available today. “Although there is continued debate over just how much of language is built in and how much is learned, most researchers in first language acquisition agree that humans are uniquely adapted for language acquisition” (Freeman & Freeman, 2004, p. 20). Language is not just a means of communication but part of one’s culture. Language is rooted in culture and culture is reflected and passed on by language from one generation to the next (Emmitt & Pollock 1997). Because of this, and other factors, it is crucial that one has a true understanding about the latest research regarding how one acquires a “language,” and, more importantly, how he or she acquires it the most efficiently and effectively.

Examining the key literature and research in vocabulary is a way for the reader to dive deeply into just one of the facets of language. This is coupled with research on a specific methodology and model for teaching vocabulary to foster language acquisition, the SIOP® model. The SIOP® model was chosen because the model itself is vested in

current research and has been used with much documented success with ELs from different backgrounds and experiences (Echevarría, Short & Powers, 2006; Guarino, Echevarría, Short, Schick, Forbes, & Rueda, 2001).

The literature review resources were selected from a variety of venues. Historical theorists were investigated through reading their published works. Research on language acquisition was done by using a variety of resources including published books, articles through the Education Resources Information Center (ERIC) database and resources included on websites of professional organizations that support language acquisition research such as the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) and the Center for Advanced Research on Language Acquisition (CARLA). In addition, materials were reviewed through recent educational journals that highlight some of the key issues revolving around this topic. Additionally, the action researcher has first-hand knowledge and expertise through previous positions as the ESOL and World Language Coordinator, which gave insight into topics that need to be investigated further.

This literature review illuminates the need for the action research, as it supports the argument that teachers need to use very specific strategies to teach vocabulary with students with both academic and language needs. The literature review provides information to support how vocabulary can aide in comprehension of content and thus increase a student's achievement in all content areas.

Key Concepts

Many variables are present with the action research. A variety of factors that can influence English language acquisition including: age, cognitive factors, affective factors, and neurological factors (Freeman & Freeman, 2004). In addition, proficiency in native

language and the phonetic make-up of the first language all also can have an influence (Echevarria, et al., 2013). In regard to vocabulary development, ELs come to schools with a variety of knowledge with vocabulary in both their native language and English which influence academic achievement (Klinger, Hoover, & Baca, 2008). Factors that we are less able to quantify include a child's intrinsic motivation to learn the language and a specific teacher's effectiveness. However, research has shown that instructional strategies used by teachers all have a major influence in the vocabulary development, English proficiency, and overall academic achievement (Center for Public Education, 2017).

The concept of *language proficiency* is defined in various ways based on different criteria throughout the world. Educators use a number of terms when referring to English-language learners, including English Learners (ELs), Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, non-native English speakers, language-minority students, and either bilingual students or emerging bilingual students. Nonetheless, the federal government and many state governments have acknowledged that those terms refer to the same group of students—those with limited proficiency in English. Most states use some sort of language proficiency assessment to determine language proficiency status and identify those students based on that criterion. For the purpose of this action research, this type of learners of English will be referred to as ELs. The individual student's will be identified as ELs as determined by Title III legislation (U.S. Department of Education, 2017) and the state of South Carolina identification criteria (South Carolina Department of Education, 2017).

A student's language proficiency is a factor in how a child can understand content. The complexity of language, especially when one has to use it for learning complex academic subjects, has long been recognized by researchers concerned with the education of language minority students (Collier, 1995, Cummins, 1981). Of interest has been the ability to use language in school subject matter learning, Cognitive Academic Language Skills (CALP) contrasted with what Cummins called Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skill (BICS), characterizing more conversational language that is cognitively undemanding and embedded in context. Gibbons (1991) has made a similar distinction between what she calls playground language and classroom language. ELs typically struggle with the academic classroom language, which is what the majority of high stakes tests use to assess academic achievement. "Without explicit English language development, most ELs stall at the intermediate level of English proficiency and become long-term ELs" (Olson, 2010, p.34). This action research focuses primarily on a student's use of vocabulary with CALP.

Vocabulary is another key concept of this research. There are many different types of vocabulary words that are categorized based on how they are used. Echevarría, et al., (2010) described three categories of words within the SIOP® model:

- Content words: These are key vocabulary words, terms and concepts associated with a particular topic being taught;
- Process/Function Words: These are words that have to do with functional language (e.g., how to request information, justify opinions, etc.);

- Words and Word Parts that Teach English Structure: These are words that enable students to learn new vocabulary, primarily based upon English morphology.

(p.59)

Beck, McKeown, and Kucan (2002) also developed a source of words for teaching vocabulary. They describe three Tiers of words often taught in U.S. schools:

Tier One are common words, such as simple nouns, verbs, high-frequency words and sight words;

Tier Two words are commonly found in school texts but not in general conversation;

Tier Three words are uncommon words, found rarely in school texts except in particular contexts, such as a discussion of a specific content-related topic.

The vocabulary words that are the primary focus of this action research are *content words* and *Tier Two* words. These are words needed for students to fully comprehend the grade level content areas.

By focusing this action research on one group of same age and grade level peers, who are identified by the same set criteria for English proficiency, and instructed through use of the same set methodology promoted by a researched-based protocol, the intention is to decrease the influence of the variables that might affect the outcomes.

Theories of Language Acquisition

Many theorists that have described how a person bests learns language. Some theories are rooted in the foundation of child development and some have more context in the area of linguistics and how words are put together to create meaning. All theories have key concepts that are part of English proficiency and vocabulary development and should be discussed and reviewed in order to be more informed for this action research.

Theories have evolved overtime and most recently, a lot of research and theories specifically pertain to second language development. According to Lemetyinen (2012):

Language is a cognition that truly makes us human. Whereas other species do communicate with an innate ability to produce a limited number of meaningful vocalizations, there is no other species known to date that can express infinite ideas with a limited set of symbols. (para.1)

For the purpose of this literature review, a few key researchers and their work have been described. These researchers were chosen based on the fact that they were referenced the most during readings for the literature review, have many published works and studies and, in many cases, worked during consecutive periods of time. These key theorists helped to shape the current research that is cited much today.

Social Development Theory

Lev Vygotsky (Vygotsky, 1934), a Soviet psychologist, developed theories that have become the foundation of much research in cognitive development over the past several decades, especially with his Social Development Theory. Vygotsky's theory stresses the fundamental role of social interaction in the development of cognition (McLeod, 2014). Language to Vygotsky is a “tool of culture developed in context, and for tasks, specific to that culture” (Allan, 2011, para. 8). Although he is not a linguist, his theories became a central component of the development of new paradigms in developmental and educational psychology.

Theory of Cognitive Development

Piaget (1977), a biologist and psychologist, discovered, during his research when he was developing his Theory of Cognitive Development, that when children speak, a lot of the time they are not talking to anyone in particular. They are thinking aloud. He identified two types of speech, egocentric and socialized. Within the egocentric type were three patterns:

- Repetition: speech not directed to people, the saying of words for the simple pleasure of it;
- Monologue: whole commentaries which follow the child's actions or play;
- Collective monologue: when children are talking apparently together, yet are not really taking account of what the others are saying.

Jean Piaget (1936) based his theory on the idea that children do not think like adults. Piaget's theory describes the mental structures or “schemas” of children as they develop from infants to adults. He concluded that through their interactions with their environment, children actively construct their own understanding of the world. Piaget's theory supports that children’s language reflects the development of their logical thinking and reasoning skills in "periods" or stages, with each period having a specific name and age reference.

Both Piaget and Vygotsky believed that as children develop language, they actively build a symbol system, which helps them to understand the world. They differed in the way in which they viewed how language and thought interact with one another. Piaget believed that cognitive development led to the growth of language whereas Vygotsky viewed language as developing thought (Close, 2002).

Operant Conditioning

Skinner (1957), an American psychologist, accounted for language development by means of environmental influence. He argued that children learn language based on behaviorist reinforcement principles by associating words with meanings. Correct utterances are positively reinforced when the child realizes the communicative value of words and phrases.

Nativist Theory/Theory of Universal Grammar

Norm Chomsky (1965), an American linguist, argued that it was not environmental, but biological influences that bring about language development. Chomsky argues that human brains have a language acquisition device (LAD), an innate mechanism or process that allows children to develop language skills. According to this view (Nativist Theory), all children are born with a universal grammar, which makes them receptive to the common features of all languages. According to the supporters of the concept of Universal Grammar, the belief is that we are innately hard-wired to learn grammar.

Thus, children easily pick up a language when they are exposed to its particular grammar. Chomsky using the following key features to prove his claim:

- The stages of language development occur at about the same ages in most children, even though different children experience very different environments;
- Children's language development follows a similar pattern across cultures;
- Children generally acquire language skills quickly and effortlessly;

- Deaf children who have not been exposed to a language may make up their own language. These new languages resemble each other in sentence structure, even when they are created in different cultures.

Consequently, he proposed the Theory of Universal Grammar: an idea of innate, biological grammatical categories, such as a noun category and a verb category that facilitate the entire language development in children and overall language processing in adults. This Chomskian Approach (1965) to language acquisition has inspired hundreds of scholars to investigate the nature of these assumed grammatical categories and the research is still ongoing.

All these and other theorists have provided the foundation for present beliefs and practices today with language acquisition. These theorists have contributed not only to the field of linguistics, but also contributed to the discussion on how one best acquires another language.

Krashen's Theory of Second Language Acquisition

One of the most notable linguists in second language acquisition is Stephen Krashen out of the University of Southern California who specializes in theories of language acquisition and development. He supports the socio-psycho-linguistic view, which believes that “readers acquire literacy in the same way they acquire oral language, by focusing on meaning” (Freeman & Freeman, 2004, p. 24-25). In contrast, those who support the word recognition view believe that “that readers learn a set of skills that allows them to make a connection between the black marks on the page and words in their oral vocabulary” (Freeman & Freeman, 2004, p. 24). The goals for these teachers

would be to help students to learn to identify words. The goals for the teachers based on the sociopsycholinguistics's point of view would be to help students construct meaning,

Additionally, under this theory are two hypothesis, The Natural Order Hypothesis and the Monitor Hypothesis. The Natural Order Hypothesis states that both first language and second language is acquired in a natural order. The Monitor Hypothesis prefaces the fact that acquired language forms the basis for the ability to understand and produce language (Krashen, 1982). Much of Krashen's most recent research has involved the study of non-English and bilingual language acquisition. According to Krashen (1988):

There are two independent systems of second language performance: the acquired system and the learned system. The acquired system or acquisition is the product of a subconscious process very similar to the process children undergo when they acquire their first language. It requires meaningful interaction in the target language - natural communication - in which speakers are concentrated not in the form of their utterances, but in the communicative act. (para. 5)

Krashen regards communication as the main function of language. The focus is on teaching communicative abilities. The superiority of meaning is emphasized. Krashen believes that a language is essentially its lexicon. They stress the importance of vocabulary and view language as a vehicle for communicating meanings and messages. According to Krashen, acquisition can take place only when people comprehend messages in the target language. Krashen states (1982):

The best methods are therefore those that supply comprehensible input in low anxiety situations, containing messages that students really want to hear. These methods do not force early production in the second language, but allow students

to produce when they are ready, recognizing that improvement comes from supplying communicative and comprehensible input, and not from forcing and correcting production. (para.3)

Although Krashen's works are very popular in the field of ESOL, there have been some critics of his opinion on how students learn a second language best. For example, Kevin R. Gregg (1984) cited anecdotal evidence of his personal experience learning a second language as counterevidence to the clear division between acquisition and learning: He initially consciously learned the conjugations of Japanese verbs through rote memorization, which ultimately led to unconscious acquisition. In his case, learning became acquisition. Barry McLaughlin out of University of California Santa Cruz (1987) states that, "Krashen's theory fails at every juncture. Krashen has not defined his terms with enough precision, the empirical basis of the theory is weak, and the theory is not clear in its predictions" (p. 56). McLaughlin (1987) further points out that "Krashen never adequately defines acquisition, learning, conscious or subconscious; without such clarification, it is extremely difficult to independently determine whether subjects are "learning" or "acquiring" language" (p. 56).

Much of Krashen's work not only includes theories of language learning, but also best practice recommendations for teachers to use with both adults and children to foster language acquisition. He has been at the forefront of discussions and arguments for and against specific program models, instructional strategies and appropriate curriculum for this diverse population.

The practices that are being used for most of this action research are supported by much of the research and theory behind Krashen's work. Krashen's Theory of Second

Language Acquisition (1987) attempts to deal with the process of language acquisition, not its product. Despite these virtues, it should only be considered one of several possible sources of information in determining methods and materials for second language teaching. The action research involves teachers using strategies to teach content vocabulary as a basis for supporting reading comprehension. This intentional focus on teaching the meaning of vocabulary to aide in understanding, promotes the idea that acquisition requires “meaningful interaction in the target language, natural communication, in which speakers are concerned not with the form of their utterances but with the messages they are conveying and understanding” (Krashen, 1981, p.1).

History of English Language Teaching

Thanasoulas (2002) stated, “While the teaching of Math or Physics, that is, the methodology of teaching Math or Physics, has, to a greater or lesser extent, remained the same, this is hardly the case with English or language teaching in general” (para. 1).

Classic Method

In the Western world, back in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, foreign language learning was associated with the learning of Latin and Greek, both supposed to promote their speakers' intellectuality. This was called the Classic Method. At the time, it was of vital importance to focus on grammatical rules, syntactic structures, along with rote memorization of vocabulary and translation of literary texts. There was no provision for the oral use of the languages under this method (Thanasoulas, 2002).

In his *The Art of Learning and Studying Foreign Languages*, Francois Gouin (1880) described his "harrowing" experiences of learning German, which helped him gain insights into the intricacies of language teaching and learning. He discovered that

language learning is a matter of transforming perceptions into conceptions and then using language to represent these conceptions. Equipped with this knowledge, he devised a teaching method premised upon these insights. It was against this background that the Series Method was created, which taught learners directly a "series" of connected sentences that are easy to understand.

Direct Method

A generation later came the Direct Method, posited by Charles Berlitz (1878). The basic tenet of Berlitz's method was that second language learning is similar to first language learning. In this light, there should be lots of oral interaction, spontaneous use of the language, no translation, and little if any analysis of grammatical rules and syntactic structures. In short, the principles of the Direct Method were as follows:

- Classroom instruction was conducted in the target language;
- There was an inductive approach to grammar;
- Only everyday vocabulary was taught; and
- Concrete vocabulary was taught through pictures and objects, while abstract vocabulary was taught by association of ideas.

The outbreak of World War II heightened the need for Americans to become orally proficient in the languages of their allies and enemies alike. To this end, bits and pieces of the Direct Method were appropriated in order to form and support this new method, the "Army Method," which came to be known in the 1950s as the Audiolingual Method. The Audiolingual Method was based on linguistic and psychological theory and one of its main premises was the scientific descriptive analysis of a wide assortment of languages (Brooks, 1964).

Suggestopedia

Georgi Lozanov, a Bulgarian scientist, neurologist, psychiatrist, psychologist and educator, created the concept of Suggestology. Suggestopedia, an experimental branch of Suggestology, promised great results if we use our brainpower and inner capacities to learn language. Lozanov (1979) believed that we are capable of learning much more than we think. Drawing upon Soviet psychological research on yoga and extrasensory perception, he came up with a method for learning that used relaxation as a means of retaining new knowledge and material.

The Silent Way

Gattegno (1972) based his instructional method on his general theories of education rather than on existing language pedagogy. It is usually regarded as an "alternative" language-teaching method and referred to as the "Silent Way." This way rested on cognitive rather than affective arguments, and was characterized by a problem-solving approach to learning. Gattegno (1972) held that it is in learners' best interests to develop independence and autonomy and cooperate with each other in solving language problems. The teacher is supposed to be silent, hence the name of the method, and must disabuse himself of the tendency to explain everything to them.

Communicative Language Teaching

The work of O'Malley and Chamot (1990), and others before and after them, emphasized the importance of style awareness and strategy development in ensuring mastery of a foreign language. The need for communication has been relentless, leading to the emergence of the Communicative Language Teaching. The basis of this approach includes: Focus on all of the components of communicative competence, not only

grammatical or linguistic competence, engaging learners in the pragmatic, functional use of language for meaningful purpose, viewing fluency and accuracy as complementary principles underpinning communicative techniques and using the language in unrehearsed contexts.

Throughout history, English language teaching has had to adapt to the needs at the time and has evolved with current research. There are many common threads between all the theories, but each take a different stance on the approach the individual curriculum developers and researchers think is the best. Different practices are geared toward a different clientele of learner. Some practices are more geared for young language learners and some are focused on adults. Some teaching suggestions are geared toward the instructional strategies and some have more to do with the sequence of content delivered. However, what cannot be argued is that, “When policies and programs that complement the research on second acquisition are in place, we see more positive outcomes” (Echevarría, et al., 2013, p.8).

Instructional Challenges

All English Learners in schools are not alike. They enter U.S. schools with a wide range of language proficiencies (in English and in their native languages) and much divergence in their subject matter knowledge (Echevarria, et al., 2013). As stated earlier, ELs need to be able to communicate in English in social situations, which requires BICS and then know the vocabulary to be successful in academic situations, which requires CALP. “Mastering academic language is key for school success and, most important, closing the achievement gap” (Zacarian, 2013, p.1). In the United States, along with the 350 different languages spoken among the nation’s English Learners many dialects are

spoken (Garcia, Jese, & Scribner, 2009). Some English Learners are newcomers and some have lived in the United States for several years, and some are native born (Echevarría et al., 2013). A student's background should be considered when planning programs and instruction so English Learners can succeed in school. For the purpose of this literature review, and based on research from Cummins (1984) and Echevarría, Vogt, and Short (2000), these students will be grouped into four main categories: students literate in their native language, students with limited schooling, bilingual students, and Long-Term Lifers. Even within these groups, there is much variation.

Students Literate in Native Language

The first group of students are students who have strong academic backgrounds before coming to the United States, are literate in their native language, and may have studied a second language, including English. Much of what these learners need is English language development so that they can become more proficient in English, they can transfer the knowledge they learned in their native country's schools to the course they are taking in the United States. A few subjects that are specific to the culture or history of the United States, such as social studies, may require special attention. These students have strong likelihood of achieving educational success if they receive appropriate English language and content instruction in their U. S. schools (Echevarria, et al., 2013). The ability to transfer literacy skills from the native language is crucial. Bilingual educator Cummins (1979, 1984) developed the linguistic interdependence hypothesis in which he posited that proficiency in a second language is partially dependent on proficiency in the native language at the time of the exposure to the second language. Cummins speculated that if a student's competence in his/her native language is low,

his/her competence in the second language will also be low. Research in cognitive science suggest that because languages share core underlying structures, students who first acquire a strong foundation in one language are better equipped to learn a second language (Cummins, 2000). Thus, “ELs will develop English skills more effectively if they have the opportunity to develop literacy skills in their home language” (Umansky, Valentino, & Reardon, 2016, p. 12).

Students with Limited Schooling

The second group of students includes immigrant students that have very limited formal schooling, perhaps in part due to the economic or political situation in their home country. These students have little or no literacy in their native language and may have gaps in their educational backgrounds to include lack of knowledge in specific subject areas (Echevarria, et al., 2013). These students may not know how to do school ranging from the basics such as knowing how to handle notebooks to engaging in academic tasks (DeCapua & Marshall 2011; Miller, Mitchell, & Brown, 2005). Precise numbers of ELs who are students with limited or interrupted formal education are not readily available primarily due to lack of identification among schools and states and/or inconsistencies in how they are identified and tracked (Browder, 2014). “These English Learners with limited formal schooling and below-grade-level literacy are most at risk for educational failure” (Echevarría et al., 2013, p. 4). According to Fielding, Kerr, & Rosier (2007), students who move frequently and are English Learners have the greatest difficulty meeting high standards. These English Learners must “subtract the time it takes to learn English from time on task” (p. 231).

Bilingual Students

Another group of students are learners that have grown up in the United States but speak a language other than English at home. These students, “if they receive appropriate English language and content instruction, they too are likely to be academically successful” (Echevarría et al., 2013, p. 5). These students also might benefit from being in bilingual or dual-language classrooms as “by implementing one-way or two-way dual-language programs, schools can expect one-fifth to one-sixth of the achievement gap for English learners to close each year” (Thomas & Collier, 2002, p. 131). These students, if placed in the right environment with good instruction, have a high chance of success.

Long-term Lifers

Lastly, are the students that are native-born English Learners who do not speak English at home and have not mastered either English or their native language. These students are often referred to as long-term English Learners (Mendken & Kleyn, 2010). These students account for a large portion of secondary English learners—estimates range from 30 percent to 70 percent—and most have been in U.S. schools since kindergarten (Olsen, 2010). Characteristics of this population have been studied by various researchers (Callahan, 2006; Freeman, Freeman, & Mercuri, 2002; Menken, Kleyn, & Chae, 2007; Ruiz-de-Velasco & Fix, 2000) in which several common characteristics emerge that define this student population. Long-term English language learners:

- Are typically found in grades 6–12;
- Speak different languages and come from all over the world;

- Are often orally bilingual and sound like native English speakers. However, they typically have limited literacy skills in their native language, and their academic literacy skills in English are not as well-developed as their oral skills are;
- Fall into two main groups: (1) transnational students who have moved back and forth between the United States and their family's country of origin and have attended school in both countries; and (2) students who have received inconsistent schooling in the United States, moving in and out of bilingual education, English as a second language, and mainstream programs in which they received no language support services;
- Have often not resided in the United States continuously, despite the fact that they may have been born in this country. So, the U.S.-born label can be misleading;
- Experience inconsistent schooling because of frequent moves or incoherent language programming within and across the schools they have attended. Thus, many have significant gaps in their schooling; and
- Perform below grade level in reading and writing and, as a result, struggle in all content areas that require literacy. The overall school performance of long-term English language learners is low, with poor grades and grade retention commonplace, making this population at high risk for dropping out.

This group of students has different needs from those of newly arrived English language learners, yet language programming is typically intended for new arrivals. In addition, “most educators are unfamiliar with the specialized needs of this population, a

problem compounded by poor data about these students in their school records” (Menken & Kleyn, 2009, para. 10). This population is very challenging as its needs may not be obvious to the teachers that teach them.

Socioeconomic Factors of ELs

Besides language, this population tends to have other characteristics. Although a great deal of socioeconomic variation exists among ELs, in general they are more likely than Native-English-speaking students to come from low-income families (Garcia & Cuellar, 2006). Sociocultural, emotional, and economic factors also influence English learners’ educational attainment (Dianda, 2008). In 2000, 68 percent of ELs in grades preK-5 and 60 percent in grades 6-12 lived in low-income families (below 185 percent of the federal poverty level), compared with 36 percent and 32 percent respectively, of English proficient students in these age groups (Capps, et al., 2005). ELs are also more likely to have parents with limited formal education: 48 percent in grades preK-5 and 35 percent in the higher grades had a parent with less than a high school education, compared with 11 and 9 percent of English proficient students in the same grades (Capps, et al., 2005). Poorer students, in general, are less academically successful (Glick & White, 2004).

This population is also transient in nature and can include students who are children of migrant workers or refugee camps. Students who had moved were twice as likely not to complete high school as those who had not faced such transitions (Glick & White, 2004). On average, hired farmworkers are young and predominantly Latino, have limited formal education, are foreign-born, and speak limited to no English (Kandel, 2008).

This population also can include students and parents who have undocumented status. This status can affect socio-economic and post-secondary educational opportunities. There are one million children under age 18 and 4.4 million under age 30 living in America out of the estimated total of 11.1 million undocumented immigrants living in America. There are an estimated 5.5 million children with at least one undocumented parent, 4.5 million of whom were born here making them U.S. citizens. (Passle & Cohn, 2011). The American Psychological Association (2012) states

Many undocumented immigrant children and youth are frequently subject to experiences like

- racial profiling;
- ongoing discrimination;
- exposure to gangs;
- immigration raids in their communities;
- arbitrary stopping of family members to check their documentation status;
- being forcibly taken or separated from their families;
- returning home to find their families have been taken away;
- placement in detention camps or the child welfare system; and
- deportation

These stressful experiences can lead to a number of negative emotional and behavioral outcomes including anxiety, fear, depression, anger, social isolation and lack of a sense of belonging. (para. 3-4)

Special Programs and ELs

Another key issue with this population is the tendency to be overidentified as having a learning disability. This is due to the fact that a “number of school districts struggle to distinguish between a delay in developing second language proficiency and a learning disability” (Echevarría et al., 2013, p. 6). Consequently, the opposite is true for identification for ELs in Gifted and Talented programs. In a report out of the Connie Belin and Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development (2008) it was reported, “Heavy reliance on standardized tests results in diverse groups of students being unequally represented, with greater concentrations in special education classes and fewer concentrations in gifted/talented classrooms” (p.15). In addition it was reported by another study that “when intelligence, achievement, and ability test scores are used as the criteria for admission to gifted/talented programs, African American, Hispanic, and Native American children are disproportionately underrepresented” (The Connie Belin and Jacqueline N. Blank International Center for Gifted Education and Talent Development, 2008, p. 16). This incorrect identification of students can have a devastating effect on a child’s academics as well as social-emotional well-being.

Teacher Training and Preparation

Many teachers that are teaching ELs have little or no preparation or professional development on how to meet their academic and social needs. One recent study looked at state requirements for teaching ELs. The research showed that only 14 states offered a specialist certification (such as English as a second language or bilingual certification): 15 states required all teachers to be exposed to some instruction relevant to educating

English Learners; and 12 states had certification processes that did not mention any skills for teaching ELs at all (Lopez, Scanlan, & Gundrum, 2013). Lopez, Scanlan and Gundrum (2013) findings point to two conclusions: states vary enormously in their teacher preparation and certification requirements for teachers of ELs, and state requirements for those who will teach ELs are not aligned with the abilities that the research suggests are important.

In another study, produced by the National Council of Teachers of English (2008) states:

Less than 13 percent of teachers have received professional development on teaching ELs, and despite the growing numbers of ELs, only three states have policies that require all teachers to have some expertise in teaching ELLs effectively. As a result, most ELs find themselves in mainstream classrooms taught by teachers with little or no formal preparation for working with a linguistically diverse student population. Well-meaning teachers with inadequate training can sabotage their own efforts to create positive learning environments through hypercriticism of errors; not seeing native language usage as an appropriate scaffold; ignoring language errors. (p. 6)

What is evident is that states and individual school districts have varied levels of requirements for teaching ELs and in many cases, teachers have very limited background on helping this population.

The SIOP® Model

The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP®) model is a lesson planning and delivery approach that is an empirically-tested, research-based model of

sheltered instruction developed by researchers at the Center for Applied Linguistics and California State University, Long Beach for the National Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2000; Echevarría and Short 2004; Short and Echevarría, 1999, 2004, 2008, 2013). It incorporates best practices for teaching academic English and provides teachers with a coherent approach for improving the achievement of their students. Teachers present curricular content concepts aligned to state standards through strategies and techniques that make academic content comprehensible to students. While doing so, teachers develop students' academic English skills across the four domains reading, writing, listening, and speaking. The SIOP® Model shares many features recommended for high quality instruction for all students, such as cooperative learning, reading comprehension strategies, and differentiated instruction. However, the model adds key features for the academic success of ELs, such as including language objectives in every content lesson, developing background knowledge and content-related vocabulary, and emphasizing academic literacy practice. It allows for some variation in classroom implementation while at the same time it provides teachers with specific lesson features that, when implemented consistently and to a high degree, lead to improved academic outcomes for English language learners (Echevarría, Short, & Powers, 2006). In addition, a sub study on the use of the SIOP®, model as a professional development tool was conducted. The SIOP® protocol was deemed to be a valid and reliable measure of the SIOP® Model (Guarino, et al., 2001). Because of that, SIOP® became more than an observation protocol, but a lesson planning and delivery system (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2008).

The SIOP® Model consists of eight interrelated components

- Lesson Preparation;
- Building Background;
- Comprehensible Input;
- Strategies;
- Interaction;
- Practice/Application;
- Lesson Delivery; and
- Review & Assessment.

When using instructional strategies connected to each of these components, teachers are able to design and deliver lessons that address the academic and linguistic needs of English learners (Echevarria, et al., 2013). This action research will use the SIOP® Model as the foundation of the strategies used, and will focus on the component of teaching key vocabulary.

Vocabulary

Under the key component of building background knowledge, vocabulary instruction is featured. Vocabulary development, critical for English Learners, is related strongly to academic achievement (Manzo, Manzo, & Thomas, 2005). Blachowicz and Fisher (2000) determined four main principles that should guide vocabulary instruction:

- Students should be active in developing their understanding of words and ways to learn them. Such ways include use of semantic mapping, words, sorts, Concept Definition Maps and developing strategies for independent word learning;

- Students should personalize word learning through such practices as mnemonic strategies and personal dictionaries;
- Students should be immersed in words by rich language environments that focus on words and draw students' attention to the learning of the words; and
- Students should build on multiple sources of information to learn words through repeated exposures. Letting students see and hear new words more than once and drawing on multiple sources of meaning are important for vocabulary development.

The SIOP® feature, emphasizing key vocabulary, includes examples and strategies based on this research. It suggests that vocabulary words need to be introduced, written repeatedly, and highlighted for students to see (Echevarria, et al., 2013).

In recent years, two major syntheses with meta-analyses have been conducted of empirical research on the education of English learners, examining language and literacy development as well as academic achievement. August and Shanahan (2006) present the findings of a 13-member expert panel that looked at the reading and writing skills needed for successful schooling in their report *Developing Literacy in Second-Language Learners: A Report of the National Literacy Panel on Language-Minority Children and Youth*. Parameters for the research synthesis were that the research had to include language minority children ages 3–18, that the subjects had to be in the process of acquiring literacy in their first language and/or the societal language, and that the research be empirical and published in peer-reviewed journals, dissertations, and technical reports between 1980 and 2002. The report discussed results of 107 research studies and addressed five major research questions:

- What are the differences and similarities in the development of literacy skills in the societal language between language minority students and native speakers?
- What are the profiles of those language minority students identified as having literacy difficulties?
- What factors have an impact on the literacy development of language minority students?
- What is the relationship between English oral proficiency and English word-level skills?
- What is the relationship between English oral proficiency and English text-level skills?

Another review was conducted by researchers from the National Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence (CREDE) who also examined best practices for developing English language skills in English Learners (Genesee, Lindholm-Leary, Saunders, & Christian, 2006). This included a systematic review of research literature that involved the student population of language learners from grade Pre-K thru 12th grade in the United States. This research involved reviewing published peer-reviewed journals and technical reports in the last 20 years. Four thousand articles were initially considered for the study, 500 were coded, and ultimately 200 were synthesized. Both syntheses reached similar conclusions and highlighted the importance of vocabulary development to foster student achievement.

Taboada and Rutherford (2011) stated that further research supported, “A program that is enriched, consistent, provides a challenging curriculum, incorporates language challenging curriculum, incorporates language development components,

appropriate development components and appropriate assessment approaches” (p. 377).

Vocabulary is one of the main components of language development. According to

Taboada & Rutherford (2011)

ELs need much more exposure to new vocabulary than their Native-English-speaking peers. They need to learn cognates, prefixes, suffixes, and root words to enhance their ability to make sense of new vocabulary. Understanding context clues such as embedded definitions, pictures, and charts builds schema that helps ELs’ reading comprehension. They should actively engage in holistic activities to practice new vocabulary because learning words out of context is difficult for these students. (para. 2)

It is crucial that students, specifically ELs, not only know words but can use the words within context. Even more important is knowing how to use specific academic vocabulary for students to understand content taught. Pikulski and Templeton (2004) state

It seems almost impossible to overstate the power of words; they literally have changed and will continue to change the course of world history. Perhaps the greatest tools we can give students for succeeding, not only in their education but more generally in life, is a large, rich vocabulary and the skills for using those words. Our ability to function in today’s complex social and economic worlds is mightily affected by our language skills and word knowledge. (p.1)

Conclusion

Although learning a language, or even a second or third language, is something that has been a reality since the beginning of human kind, researchers, theorists, and

practitioners still have not concluded how one best acquires a language as well as how one helps foster language acquisition in others. Language is something that not only fosters understanding, but is encapsulated in one's culture and being. To know a specific language, is to identify with a group of people and have a commonality. Language is essential to who we are as human beings.

The identified and stated Problem of Practice (PoP) is the inconsistencies and variabilities of the strategies teachers use with ELs, as well the differences of effectiveness. ELs represent a group of people who come to various learning environments with a variety of needs. Not only do they have linguistic needs, but social and emotional needs as well. Four large group of students with identifiable characteristics were discussed: students who are literate in native language, students with limited schooling, bilingual students and Long-Term Lifers. All were described to showcase that even under the one identifier of EL, differences exist. Additional variables such as age of student, socio-economic status, citizenship status, native language spoken at home and educational experience and exposure were also described as factors that can affect academic success in school. Not only were students' deficits explained, but teachers' as well. There has been historically limited training and support to help foster academic skills of this population. Many teachers have had almost no training nor had to adhere to any mandates for appropriate certification. This in turn, can affect students' performance. In addition, methods for teaching language have changed over time based on the current political, environmental, or economic situations. Also, some of the theorists or scientists behind many of the specific language ideologies or methodologies have conflicted with each other. The more recent research in this field has included more guidance on which

instructional strategies to use with students, in lieu of just describing the theories behind language acquisition.

Reasons for needing to know vocabulary were outlined. Various types and categories of vocabulary words are more necessary to know in order to be successful in school. Without knowing the academic language, CALP, students will continue to lag behind their native language peers. Academic vocabulary is crucial to reading and comprehension, and a necessary component of academic success. The argument was made to use specific strategies to foster vocabulary development. Through the researched based program model, the SIOP® model, teachers are given very specific strategies to use with students. The implementation of strategies and techniques will address the research question of: whether or not training teachers on using specific, research-based instructional strategies which support vocabulary instruction, per the SIOP® model, has a positive effect on achievement as well as support the understanding of content in the classroom for first grade ELs. The research will also look at the implementation of strategies as the key to any program or practice will be the fidelity in which it is done.

This literature review is meant to lay the groundwork for the reasons behind the need for this action research and it is also meant to guide the study itself. It is important to understand the foundational theories, struggles and variables students encounter with learning the English language, and what the most recent best practice recommendations are with instructional strategies. The subjects of English Learners, and the need to foster vocabulary development, are very relevant and important topics in today's time regardless of where you live. This unique population needs to have access to teachers who have the expertise and knowledge on how to best help them achieve academic

success. “In order to make significant progress in improving the outcomes for ELs, sweeping changes are needed in the way that teachers are prepared and supported to better serve this growing population” (Samson & Collins, 2012, p.20). By reviewing the literature and focusing on one crucial component of language, vocabulary, the hope is that some important insight into how to help support our English Learners will be gained.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter details the research design and methodology used to answer the research question and further explains and supports the focus for this action research. This is the last step in the initial stage, the planning stage, of conducting action research (Mertler, 2014).

Currently, the school district of study mandates all certified teachers to complete SIOP® training. This requirement is to be completed within four years of initial employment in the district. The training usually is offered on-site and often is done as part of the agenda of a faculty meeting or other staff development sessions. The original SIOP® training was primarily conducted through the Center for Applied Linguistics (CAL) located in Washington, D.C. This non-profit agency not only conducted the training, but has been involved with the research behind the model. SIOP® was initially “used exclusively as a research and supervisory tool to determine if observed teachers incorporated key sheltered techniques consistently in their lessons” (Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2010, p.15).

With funding from the National Center for Research on Education, Diversity and Excellence (CREDE) through the U.S. Department of Education, a study of this model was further developed and studied for over three years. A sub study confirmed the SIOP® protocol to be a valid and reliable measure of the SIOP® Model (Guarino, et al.,

2001). From 1999-2002 researchers field tested and refined the SIOP® Model's professional development program which incorporates key features of effective teacher development as recommended by Darling-Hammond (1998). It includes over 40-hours of course work with additional time to observe teachers using this protocol. The schedule of training spanned the course of a year and allowed for teachers to not only learn strategies, but also allowed teachers to use them in a realistic time frame to see its effect. The intent of the original training was to teach a few components of the SIOP® model, practice, reflect and share with colleagues, and then learn about other components. This model also included a coaching component, which promoted collaboration and coordination amongst other teachers. Training continued the following year as part of completing the coaching component of the model.

The school district of this study has acknowledged the need for training to meet the needs of ELs due to the demographic change being a fairly new phenomenon in the area. However, because of funding and different priorities, the district has amended its previous requirement of hours. Now instead of at least 40 hours, training has been cut by more than half with the requirement now only 15 hours. Training is facilitated by certified ESOL teachers, not necessarily certified SIOP® coaches, and is done during a shorter calendar time-frame. This does not adhere to the minimal hours and training expectations recommended by the original developers and researchers behind the model. This action research study builds on the training required and explores the impact of providing additional training and support that are more aligned to the requirements suggested by the developers in one specific area, vocabulary acquisition.

Action Research Intervention

While the SIOP® model has components and key features, this action research focuses on teachers' learning and integration of one of the key features of the SIOP® model, emphasizing key vocabulary, which is under the Building Background Knowledge component. By focusing on one key feature, the hope was that this would have a positive effect on student achievement and student engagement. It also is best practice not to focus on lecture style only, but to be able to use the information in meaningful ways. Guskey (2002) states:

Workshops and seminars, especially when paired with collaborative planning and structured opportunities for practice with feedback, action research projects, organized study groups, and a wide range of other activities can all be effective, depending on the specified purpose of the professional development. (p.50)

The intention was not only to provide teachers valuable information on research-based instructional strategies and practices, but also to include multiple opportunities for collaborative planning and discussion. The plan included conducting the training so that teachers could implement one of the features of this model with fidelity. In more recent research on using this model, fidelity was a key component to its success with student achievement. According to Echevarría, Richards-Tovar, Chinn, & Ratleff (2011), “Overall the teachers who implemented the model with the greatest degree of fidelity (i.e., had the highest scores) also had students who made the greatest gains” (p. 431-432). In addition, it was further noted that “the difference between high implementers and lower implementers was not a matter of whether they implemented a specific feature but

rather the frequency and degree to which they implemented that feature” (Echevarría et al., 2011, p.432).

Vocabulary is one of the main academic areas where English Learners typically struggle. Regardless of educational background in another country or in the United States, many English Learners do not have the vocabulary needed for academic English. Chapter I and II outlined some of the various types of words needed to be successful in school. Vocabulary knowledge and comprehension has a positive relationship (Manzo, Manzo & Thomas, 2005). The action research focused on the one concept of vocabulary and giving teachers practice strategies to use with students to foster results.

The purpose of this action research was to determine the effect of a research-based instructional model on a subpopulation of learners, in this case, first grade English Learners. The two research questions that guide this study are: (1) What effect will be emphasizing key vocabulary (per the SIOP® model) have on academic achievement? and (2) Is emphasizing key vocabulary (per the SIOP® model) implemented with fidelity within the classroom?

These research questions were addressed during an eight-week window of data collection and included both qualitative and quantitative results. Data was collected, analyzed and shared so that instructional practices could be refined and improved upon from this information.

The intervention included the action researcher teaching one or two strategies a week for fostering vocabulary acquisition. The taught strategies were the focus of implementation for the following week. Strategies included use of CLOZE activities, word walls, chunking words, Total Physical Response and various other methods and

activities for making learning vocabulary engaging and meaningful. Training included basic general information through lecture format or through reviews of research-based resources, as well as some opportunities for hands-on learning. Examples of taught strategies were highlighted through video or actual real life examples and artifacts. The action researcher supported the training using specific supplemental information sent to teacher participants through email and in-person conversations. Both informal and formal “check-ins” were used to monitor understanding of content taught. The action researcher then conducted non-evaluative observations which checked for implementation of strategies. Post-observation debriefs were scheduled and used as a way to professionally dialogue about the lesson and the strategies used to foster vocabulary acquisition. Focus on the debriefs were on taught strategies, and not on the overall lesson itself. Anecdotal notes were taken during observations and during debriefs as a way to document progress.

This action research was designed to fit the assessment schedule that is currently followed at the school and within district guidelines. “Any research project should be integrated within the context of what you typically do in your classroom” (Mertler, 2014, p.113). The MAP® assessment, which is the main source of the quantitative data, is given fall, winter and spring and the other described assessments are given during the time period allowed in this study

Action Research Design

The design method that was used is a mixed methods case study with first grade teachers and EL students within their classrooms. The mixed methods approach allowed the action researcher to “equally combine the strengths of each form of data” (Mertler, 2014, p.105). Quantitative data was correlational in nature. “In a correlational study, the

action researcher examines whether and to what degree a statistical relationship exists between two or more variables” (Mertler, 2014, p.97). The effect on academic achievement, from teaching vocabulary using methods directly from the SIOP® model, was gathered and analyzed. Data came from various sources throughout the study including student achievement data, model implementation scores and descriptive data regarding teachers’ understanding on specific methodology to support English Learners.

Researcher’s Role

The action researcher was ultimately in charge of gathering all permission forms for all formally involved in this study. Required permission from the district was requested by proving the parameters of the study including the timeline involved. As with any action research, ethical considerations needed to be addressed and was a primary responsibility of the action researcher. This includes ethical treatment of students and colleagues-as well as their respective data (Mertler, 2014). County School District has a procedure and protocol for obtaining permission for conducting research, which includes adherence to high ethical standards. Permission for studies was granted by the Chief Instructional Service Officer and a team of district officials after reviewing and discussing a summary of the research proposal.

The action researcher informed parents and staff members of the purpose of the study. The action researcher addressed staff members during a faculty meeting and communicated with parents through a letter. The action researcher ensured that the communication was done in a language of preference based on responses on an initial questionnaire. For those parents who are not literate in English, assistance was provided by qualified bilingual staff members. Information shared included the purpose and nature

of the action research, what data gathered, analyzed, and used, what will be done with the information gained through this study, and what information will be shared with potential stakeholders. The fact that participation in this research study is voluntary was communicated clearly. Formal permission was granted by participants via an Informed Consent Form that included a Principle of Accurate Disclosure. Because of the age of the student-participants involved, parents were asked to sign a parental consent form. In addition, teacher-participants signed a form that outlined the agreed upon required trainings.

Teacher-participants understood that the action researcher conducted non-evaluative observations using the SIOP® lesson plan template, throughout the study to ensure fidelity of the implementation of the teaching model. Teachers agreed to meet in order to review feedback on their teaching methods in a timely manner. This time of reflection and feedback was a very crucial component as a goal of this action research was to improve practices during the study.

The action researcher ensured participants that data would be described using generic names (i.e. Teacher A, Student 1). The purpose of this research adheres to the Principle of Beneficence which states “that research should be done in order to acquire knowledge about human beings and the educational process” (Mertler, 2014, p.112).

Because the action researcher is the principal of the school where the study is being conducted, there was no need to obtain permission to conduct the action research at the campus. After the initial presentation at a faculty meeting, the action researcher met in a small group with all first-grade teachers and asked for volunteers. The action researcher then worked with the ESOL team and the school-based data specialist to

generate a query of formally identified first grade English Learners in the teacher participants' classes. Those students received a Parent Consent Form to give to their parents in order to receive permission to participate. All professional development was conducted by the action researcher and the district and school-based instructional coaches that supported the goals of the study. The SIOP® checklist was used when going into the rooms for weekly observations on the implementation of the taught instructional techniques (See Appendix A). This data helped to determine if the teachers were using the model with fidelity. Ultimately, the action researcher was the one who analyzed the post-assessment data, both quantitative and qualitative, and made conclusions and any correlations based on this information. A key role was to communicate results to all stakeholders in the study. Information will be shared with a larger audience to include district and state leaders. The action researcher plans to present findings as part of a session at a TESOL International Association conference in the spring 2019 or 2020 whose members and conference participants include language acquisition advocates and experts from all over the world. Results will be shared online with members of the language forum at the Center for Applied Linguistics. This is a venue where different educators in the field of linguistics and beyond share best practices.

As the researcher, there were some biases and subjectivity regarding the study. The majority of the action researcher's background in education primarily includes working with students that do not speak English fluently. It has been shared that many teachers do not seem adequately prepared to meet the needs of these students. As mentioned previously in Chapter II, most teacher certification programs do not include classes in programs of study that specifically address this topic. In addition, the action

researcher has worked with families that not only have struggles assimilating into the American culture, but also have extreme difficulty navigating through the American school system. It has been noted that many parents do not feel comfortable speaking up on some key educational issues. This could be due to language proficiency restraints or with the political and legal climate that exists today. Regardless of reason, often educators need to be the voice for these children. It is also recognized that as the primary evaluator of all teachers, there are preconceived notions about the effectiveness of each teacher and their ability to work with English Learners. There are procedures in place to try to eliminate any judgement that could be made based on biases including that the research has no evaluative component to it, either with teacher or student performance. The data collected and evaluated during the study will be used strictly for the sole purpose of improving practices.

Site and Participants

The data collected from this action research came from students and teachers in selected first grade classrooms. The site for this study is Island Elementary School. This Title I campus is very diverse including 30% Caucasian, 50% Hispanic, 15% Black and 5% Other students. Island Elementary School is an Authorized International Baccalaureate Programme School that has language acquisition for all students as one of its Essential Agreements. “Acquisition of more than one language enriches personal development and helps facilitate international-mindedness” (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2009, para. 6).

Professional development sessions took place in the Professional Learner Community room, “Coaches Corner.” Observations took place in first grade classrooms.

The overall presentation of the study took place during a faculty meeting in a multipurpose room at the same school site. Additional meetings regarding the proposed study transpired at the district office.

The population for the sample came from all first grade formally identified English Learners, whose parents agreed for them to be part of this study and who are currently enrolled in first grade teachers' classrooms that agreed to be part of this action research. Teacher participation included all teachers who were eligible to participate based on teaching assignment and who volunteered to do so. Currently, there are nine first grade classrooms which are taught by 10 teachers of various experiences and abilities. Eight teachers agreed to be part of this study. The only teachers who did not agree to participate couldn't due to the fact that they teach content in another language besides English within the dual-language Chinese and Spanish dual-immersion programs. One participating teacher has a sub group of two classes and thus had double the amount of sample size due to her current teaching assignment. Out of the participating teachers, there is one teacher going through Induction II (year two of teaching), two teachers going through formal SAFE-T (veteran certified teachers in another state prior to current assignment), and the rest are veteran educators each having over five plus years' experience with teaching first grade. Level of experience was not considered an eliminating factor in participating in the study, as the methodology taught should be helpful for all teachers and students regardless of background. This includes teachers that have not gone through the formal 15 hours of SIOP® training. The goal of the study originally was to have at least five teachers participate in this study.

Part of the International Baccalaureate philosophy is to have classes that are heterogeneously grouped. Demographics of every class should mirror the demographics of the school. Variables such as gender, ethnicity, or whether students are struggling academically or socially are all factored in during original placement decisions. Because of that, most classes have close to the same number of English Learners. The only exceptions are with two classes. Teacher D teaches in a sheltered class setting. All students in her class are identified as an English Learner and have a low level of English proficiency. This class benefits from a co-teaching model with regular push-in support by an ESOL certified teacher. Teacher C teaches English in a Spanish two-way dual-language immersion class where at least 40% of the students speak Spanish prior to participating in this program. Many of these students are also identified as English Learners. Regardless of class, the action researcher felt confident that the sample in each class was representative of the English Learners in the school.

As mentioned earlier, the action researcher had an open dialogue with parents about the study and its requirements. The action researcher understands the importance of establishing a reciprocal relationship with all involved students, teachers and parents. The action researcher is committed to fostering an open-door policy as it pertains to communication about this action research. This communication could be in person, phone, or through written correspondence and is essential to the success of this study.

Student Assessments

The primary source of data that was gathered for this action research study is from a formative assessment called Primary MAP® (Measure for Academic Progress). This assessment is mandated district-wide, K-8, and is used to help measure and longitudinally

track student achievement, growth, and progress, as well as inform decisions pertaining to grouping and program enrollment criteria.

Measures of Academic Progress® (MAP®) computer adaptive interim assessments provide a personalized assessment experience by adapting to each student's learning level. If a student answers a question correctly, the test follows up with a more challenging question. If a student answers incorrectly, the test follows up with an easier question. By adjusting the difficulty of items up or down, MAP® precisely measures every student's achievement as well as growth over time. (NWEA, 2016)

This assessment is given three times each year and upon concluding the test, student results are available instantaneously. Results compare each student's performance to grade level peers both locally and nationally. Scores are displayed graphically and include both a Rasch Unit Scale (RIT) score as well as a percentile rank. According to the developers of MAP®:

These RIT scales are stable, equal interval scales that use individual item difficulty values to measure student achievement independent of grade level (that is, across grades). "Equal interval" means that the difference between scores is the same regardless of whether a student is at the top, bottom, or middle of the RIT scale. "Stable" means that the scores on the same scale from different students, or from the same students at different times, can be directly compared, even though different sets of test items are administered. A RIT score also has the same meaning regardless of the grade or age of the student. (NWEA, 2017)

The theory governing scale construction is called Item Response Theory (IRT). NWEA uses a specific IRT model conceived by Danish mathematician, Georg Rasch, (1901-1980). A RIT score measures a student's level of achievement in a particular subject. If a student has a particular RIT score (See Appendix B and C), the student is about 50% likely to correctly answer an item calibrated at that RIT level, therefore topics at this RIT level are likely to be topics the student is ready to learn, or are in the student's zone of proximal development (NWEA, 2017). The specific targeted area which was closely studied during the action research is the vocabulary strand which is part of the reading assessment. By looking at percentage and RIT score, progress or lack of can be noted.

Other quantitative data was used to note vocabulary acquisition progress within the classroom and used to guide instructional practices. Fountas and Pinnell (F& P) Reading levels, a research based reading assessment protocol includes vocabulary in the scoring criteria for reading level. According to the creators of the model, Irene Fountas and Gay Su Pinnell (2017), vocabulary refers to the meaning of words and is part of our oral language. An individual's reading and writing vocabularies are words that they understand and can also read or write. The ACCESS language proficiency assessment is used to determine which students qualify as an English Learner and what their initial English proficiency level is. ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 is a secure large-scale English language proficiency assessment administered to Kindergarten through 12th grade students who have been identified as English Learners (See Appendix D). It is given annually in WIDA Consortium member states to monitor students' progress in acquiring academic English (Wisconsin Center for Education Research, 2016). However, the

primary data source that was used for this study is MAP® because it is an individualized, non-biased assessment which is given in a very secure and controlled testing environment.

Fidelity of Implementation Measure

The action researcher conducted a minimum of three non-evaluative observations for the sole purpose of ensuring strategy implementation. Lessons observed were approximately 30 minutes in length due to the grade level of students. The SIOP® model checklist was used to document model and feature implementation and antidotal notes in my research journal were used to further describe observations. The checklist includes 30 key components under the eight features of the model and allows for a possibility of 120 points, four possible points for each component that can be converted to a percentage score. Indicators for fidelity of model implementation was calculated using a point rating system four to zero, with “4” indicating full implementation and “0” indicating not implemented or not observed. Because the main focus of this study was on just one of the components, key vocabulary, discussion on results will be targeted on this, and not the entire model implementation. Antidotal notes included notations about the specific observed strategies and activities that were taught and implemented as part of the professional development to support vocabulary instruction. Since there are various options that are acceptable under the component of emphasizing vocabulary, the narrative is a key part of the documentation to further detail implementation.

Teacher Surveys

Participating teachers were given both a pre-and post-survey to complete during the action research. Surveys included both open and closed-ended response questions

regarding a variety of things including level of experience, comfort level with working with English Learners, and some general knowledge questions pertaining to the SIOP® model. The action researcher based on past observations and informal feedback from previous educators developed these questions. The survey was anonymous and was used to note changes, or lack of, between the beginning and at the conclusion of the research study. The survey also provided teachers an opportunity to describe any specific concerns or questions they have about working with English Learners, the model, or the research study itself. Because of the age and grade level of participating students, no survey will be given to them to complete. However, the action researcher asked students individual questions during observations that was used as part of the study findings.

Data Collection

Both quantitative and qualitative data was collected, described, and analyzed. Below is a timeline of data collection.

Student Assessment Data

MAP® Assessment-Computerized Student Achievement Assessment

1. Reading RIT score (overall and Vocabulary Strand) fall 2017-
historical data
2. Reading RIT score (overall and Vocabulary Strand) winter 2017/2018-
Pre-Data
3. Reading RIT score (overall and Vocabulary Strand) spring 2018-Post-
Data

Fidelity of Implementation Data

SIOP® Checklist

1. Strategy implementation checklist (Key Vocabulary)- total points and percent implemented per class (teacher) weekly
2. Antidotal notes taken during each observation and summarized

Survey Data

Teacher Survey- Open and closed response questionnaire of implementation of specific instructional practices that are focused on the initial objective of the study which is given via an online format (Survey Monkey). This included 10 questions, given prior to study and at the conclusion of data window.

1. Pre-Survey (online)
2. Post-Survey (online)

Time Line

Week 0

1. Obtain permission for study from district staff
2. Present study at faculty meeting to entire certified staff
3. Obtain teacher participants; obtain signatures of requirements of the study
4. Provide memo about the study to identified ELs in teacher participant classrooms (translated)
5. Collect all required permission from all stakeholders (students, parents, district officials)
6. Baseline data gathered: MAP®, Pre-Survey/questionnaires
7. Conduct 3-hour professional development session on SIOP®

Week 1

1. Conduct 1-hour professional development session on SIOP®

Week 2

1. SIOP® protocol implementation observation of teacher-participants
2. Engage in individual post-observation discussion regarding SIOP® implementation

Week 3

1. Conduct professional development session on SIOP®

Week 4

1. SIOP® protocol implementation observation of teacher-participants
2. Engage in individual post-observation discussion regarding SIOP® implementation

Week 5

1. Conduct professional development session on SIOP®

Week 6

1. SIOP® protocol implementation observation of teacher-participants
2. Engage in individual post-observation discussion regarding SIOP® implementation

Week 7

1. Conduct 1-hour professional development session on SIOP®
2. Engage in post-observation discussion regarding SIOP® implementation

Week 8

1. SIOP® protocol implementation observation of teacher-participants

2. Engage in individual post-observation discussion regarding SIOP® implementation

Week 9-10

1. Engage in a group collaborative discussion with all teacher-participants regarding model implementation
2. Gather post-assessment data (spring MAP™, Post-Surveys)

Week 10+

1. Data Analysis
2. Data Reporting out to all stakeholders
3. Conference presentation proposals
4. Communication to all stakeholders (Thank you) for participating
5. Action researcher reflection, items of refinement, discussions on future investigations

Data collection protocols allowed for this research to be replicated for future studies. The MAP® assessments are given district wide for grades K-8. In addition, the district is committed to continue to use other sources of data described in this study. These consistent data sources will allow the action researcher to continue to study the effect specific strategies for teaching vocabulary have with English Learners in other schools, with other grade levels or with other teachers.

The research design used is a triangulation mixed-methods one in which both qualitative and quantitative data were used and given equal emphasis. The results of the two analyses will be treated in a convergent manner-almost being informally “compared” in order to indicate or verify similar sets of results” (Mertler, 2014). The design was set

up to assess where teachers are with instructional practices and where students are with vocabulary knowledge and understanding. As professional development was provided, and conversations regarding observed instructional practices were evaluated and discussed, data were reviewed to note progress or lack of. This short eight-week window of data collection provided only a snapshot of the effect of strategies to help foster vocabulary understanding.

Data Analysis

All data was collected and reported to protect the confidentiality of the individual students and teachers by using generic names (ex. Teacher A, Student 1). However, when the action researcher met with individual teachers regarding implementation of the SIOP® protocol, specific reference to individual students sometimes were made. All data collection was done with the intention of improving instructional practices and was not used in anyway as any form of evaluation or documentation on individuals.

For quantitative data, student assessment results and fidelity of implementation scores by teacher (n=8) and students (n=96) were collected and graphed visually. Measures of central tendency and relationships were used to showcase progress. Data was summarized by vocabulary strand on the Reading MAP® assessment based on the mean of the individual student RIT score, percentage and then an overall progression rate per class. Data was collected and then summarized on the individual teacher's ability to implement the emphasizing key vocabulary component of SIOP® model with fidelity using SIOP® checklist and total point calculation. These data points were compared to implementation scores of all participating teachers and calculated into a percentage.

Descriptive statistics were used and will “serve to simplify, summarize, and organize relatively large amounts of numerical data” (Mertler, 2014, p.169).

Teachers surveys were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative analysis approaches. Information gathered through the Likert-scale items (closed-response items) were calculated and summarized. Open-response items were qualitatively coded and were reported out by themes.

A paired samples t-test was calculated and used to determine the difference between the class achievement means (n=8 classrooms, with 96 students), per MAP® of identified English Learners. A t-test analysis of the populations, using statistical examination, determined whether or not the difference was statistically significant. The purpose of this calculation was to look at the correlation between the two variables, not to make conclusions about the causes as “simply because two variables are related, a researcher cannot conclude that one causes the other” (Mertler, 2014, p.98). Discrepant cases and outliers were clearly articulated in the results. Explanations for these cases were fully described. Key words or phrases were noted during the teacher surveys. In addition, observational notes were reviewed to note additional themes, both which were used as part of the data interpretation.

Conclusion

Chapter III serves as the summary of the design and methodology that was used for this action research. The estimated time-line and information gathered was provided. Data analysis and reflection opportunities were discussed. The action research was based on the present situation at the district, school and with the current student population and its time frame of implementation was February-May 2018. As information or protocols

changed, the study was adjusted in order to gain the information needed, under the framework of the new reality. The identified Problem of Practice, Research Question, and Purpose Statement were supported by the described action research. By reviewing achievement data through various data sources, observing first-hand the implementation of the research-based instructional practices and reflecting on feedback through teacher questionnaires and discussion, the action researcher was able to justify, or not, a specific teaching methodology with a group of learners. The small sample of this study (n=8 teachers, with a total of 96 students) helped to ensure that the protocol could be implemented with fidelity and that all stakeholders understood expectations. This study provides some information about strategies that help increase student achievement in the area of vocabulary, and at the very least, foster some in-depth conversations regarding instructional practices to help support the needs of English Learners. In addition, this research will help set up procedures that can be replicated in the future for further research and investigation. This action research is relevant nationally and locally and addresses a very important need.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS AND RESULTS

This chapter provides an overview of the findings from the action research and offers implications based on the results. In addition, outliers are explained as well as other variables that may have impacted the study itself. Issues with study implementation, along with consequences, were discussed. Data analysis was reported in detail to aid in conclusions.

Overview of Study

This action research was conducted in order to determine the effect of using a specific strategy for fostering language acquisition and understanding had on student achievement with a group of formally identified first grade English Learners. The action research investigated a defined Problem of Practice, which is supported by research and first-hand observation that acknowledges that many teachers fail to teach vocabulary in isolation, as well as within context, during an instructional unit or individual lesson. The action researcher recognizes that teaching a subgroup of learners, in this case, formally identified first grade English Learners, requires additional support in order to stay engaged and comprehend meaning. As outlined in Chapter II, most college educational preparation programs include a very limited amount of coursework on best practices for English Learners as part of their Program of Study and thus, teachers come into the profession with limited knowledge and expertise in this area.

The site where this research was conducted has a population of over 50% of its almost 1,000 students not having English as their first language. Knowing how to support these diverse learners is crucial for their progress. The findings of this action research can be used to help support teacher development and student achievement in house at the study site, but its implications can also be used for further study. The small time-frame of the study, eight weeks, can be used as a starting point for discussions of best practices, but cannot be used in total isolation to generalize. As discussed in Chapter III, there are many variables that can affect the outcome of the study such as implementation of model, student's individual learning differences, and a teacher's understanding of the promoted strategies, all of which can impact the results. In saying that, the goal of this study is to further investigate how focusing on one key strategy, emphasizing key vocabulary per the SIOP® model, can have on student achievement and how effective teachers are with its implementation.

The study involved two main parts: a series of professional development sessions conducted by the action researcher and the teachers' actual implementation of strategies taught during the sessions within their own classroom setting. The study used survey data for comparison. Teachers took a pre-survey, which included both open and closed ended questions, that explored preliminary knowledge base and comfort level with teaching English Learners, as well as their opinion on the overall importance of fostering vocabulary acquisition. Teachers then took a comparable post-survey at the conclusion of the study. Questions selected and used were based on the action researcher's first-hand knowledge of the model used in the study, as well as feedback from teachers regarding teaching English Learners. Quantitative data came primarily from MAP® scores,

specifically looking at the vocabulary strand under the English language arts component. Analysis was done between the winter and spring assessment administrations with both the sample group of eight teachers and with the 96 student participants. The action researcher also documented the fidelity of implementation of model by conducting three 30 minute non-evaluative observations in each of the participating teacher's classroom. The SIOP® protocol rubric was used to note implementation score which was ultimately compared to a total mean score. Lastly, antidotal notes were collected during observations and during conversations at post-observation reflection meetings. These notes were used to aide in understanding of the model implementation.

The study sample included 96 first grade identified English Learners in eight classrooms. One classroom (Teacher C) has a sample of two groups of students. All of the classes are composed of a heterogeneous group of students whose demographics are fairly commensurate with the school population (50% Hispanic, 37% Caucasian, 10% African American, 3% Other). One classroom (Teacher D) has a sheltered class which means that 100% of her class is comprised of English Learners. All of the identified English Learners speak Spanish as their native language, but represent many countries including the United States. Out of the identified English Learners, 72% were born in the United States, with the majority of their parents not. As noted in detail in Chapter III, English Learners vary in linguistic, cognitive, and academic ability. Many of the students have limited educational experiences and exposure to English, while others have been involved with early intervention programs such as full day Pre-Kindergarten. Regardless of the individual students' background, all of these students were assessed with the same language proficiency assessment, ACCESS (see Appendix D), which notes proficiency

levels in the areas of listening, speaking, reading and writing which all contribute to an overall proficiency rating. This rating scale used spans from Level 1 (Emerging) to Level 6 (Reaching). Currently, per state and federal regulations at the time of the conclusion of this study, a student is considered an English Learner until they reach a composite Level 4.4, with a Level 4.0 in all areas, then they are formally monitored for four school years. Thus, the sample population for the study includes 96 first graders who according to spring 2016 ACCESS scores were not fully English language proficient.

Teachers involved in the study vary in background and experience. Some teachers were veteran teachers who had been involved with comprehensive training on the SIOP® protocol at some point with the district and some were new to the district or teaching itself. Table 4.1 outlines the participating teachers’ background that pertains to this action research.

Table 4.1 Summary of Teacher Background Information

Teacher n=8	Teaching Experience	SIOP® trained (yes/no)
A	40 years	Yes
B	15 years	Yes
C	4 years	No, but some ESOL methodology coursework in another state
D	8 years	Yes, plus some trainings on ESOL methodology
E	2 years	Yes, currently finishing ESOL cohort graduate program with ESOL certification
F	7 years	Yes
G	16 years	No
H	25 years	Yes

Out of the eligible teachers, 100% of the teachers that were eligible to participate in the study chose to do so. Based on conversations and observations, all teachers seemed open minded to learning new strategies to foster achievement and participated in almost all of the requirements of the study. The requirements included attending professional development sessions, taking pre-and post-surveys, allowing for non-evaluating observations, and scheduling time to debrief about the observations. As a follow up, another conversation will be scheduled to discuss the results of the study in general, as well as within their individual classroom setting.

Data Collection Strategy

The main intervention in this action research was to support the Problem of Practice by providing professional development to a group of eight first grade teachers. The timeline for the professional development sessions was outlined in Chapter III. The sessions were conducted weekly during the weekly Professional Learning Community meetings, which were held on site during the teacher's planning time. Professional development sessions were developed by the action researcher (see Table 4.2). Each participant received a three-ring spiral notebook which included information about the weekly training sessions. The first session included an overview of the SIOP® model as not everyone involved with the study was familiar with the model. After that, during each subsequent training session, one or two specific strategies and/or activities to engage learners with vocabulary, per the SIOP® model, was showcased and taught. During these sessions, the action researcher provided information in a variety of ways. Teachers were provided multiple articles that supported their understanding of the specific strategies, watched videos that model teachers using best practice for vocabulary acquisition, and

participated in hands-on activities that could be replicated with the students in their own classroom. In addition, all teachers were provided word wall cards with visuals that corresponded with grade level and beyond word lists, per Fountas and Pinnell. Additional sessions were conducted alongside the district ESOL Instructional Coach who discussed strategies such as using sentence frames to aide in understanding. The school Literacy Coach provided training on how to focus on vocabulary words within context as part of small reading group instruction. The district Data Support Coordinator supported training on using a software program aligned with individual student’s MAP® scores for the vocabulary strand to offer supplemental practice in this area. All sessions were ultimately scheduled, planned, and facilitated by the action researcher.

Table 4.2 Summary of Professional Development Sessions

Session	Focus	Assessment of Implementation
1	Overview of SIOP® model Overview of Key Feature: Emphasizing vocabulary	Watch videos, read and discuss articles, read Chapter 3 in <i>Making Content Comprehensible for English Learners</i>
2	Academic Vocabulary (pre-teach) Word Walls (Interactive) Use of visuals	Implementation of word walls Incorporating visuals with words
3	Concept Definition Maps CLOZE sentences Sentence Frames	Use of concept definition maps or CLOZE sentence activity
4	The vocabulary of the Learning Continuum of MAP® Software to support vocabulary practice	Lessons and activities fostering practice with vocabulary per the Learning Continuum
5	Overview of results	Discussion, reflection

Note. General themes of focus are noted, but are not all encompassing.

As a follow up and support, weekly emails that summarized the previous week's learning, information setting the foundation for the following week's training, and reminders for teachers about expectations in regards to strategy implementation were provided (See Appendix E).

During the eight-week phase of the study, three non-evaluative observations were conducted. During this 30-minute time, the action researcher used the SIOP® checklist to note strategy implementation using a rubric scale of one to four (full implementation). During the observations, the action researcher observed the teacher, observed the students engaged in learning and noted classroom environment. Focus of the observations were on the recently taught strategies, but also included factors that support language acquisition such as use of word walls, concept definition maps, and vocabulary books. The action researcher used antidotal notes and photographs to document progress. Post-observation conversations were conducted with the action researcher on strategy implementation and concerns they had on the teaching model. Teachers ultimately took a post-study survey regarding understanding of components highlighted during the trainings and overall feeling about taught practices.

General Findings and Results

Quantitative and qualitative results all were analyzed and summarized. Results are organized to help answer the question of whether or not focusing on key vocabulary impacts reading achievement with a sub group of English Learners and whether or not teachers are able to implement taught strategies with fidelity. Quantitative findings include results from pre and post teacher surveys, calculated scores on teacher

implementation of model and assessment data. Qualitative findings include antidotal notes on observations and feedback from teachers regarding strategy implementation.

Pre/Post-Teacher Surveys

In order to note teachers overall understanding of working with English Learners and specifics regarding the SIOP® model and vocabulary acquisition, all teachers were asked to take an anonymous pre-and post-research study survey (see Appendix F and G). Because the action researcher is the supervisor of the participating teachers, the fact that it was anonymous was imperative to ensure that all participants were honest with their answers. All but one teacher took the pre-and post-survey, but due to the anonymous nature of the survey, the action researcher was unable to note who did not take the surveys.

A sampling of responses is indicated below in the form of percentages. For open-ended responses, coding is used in lieu of conducting inter-rater reliability procedures. The action researcher noted possible codes as a group and identified emergent themes of each case.

Pre-survey results indicated that all teachers have had some experience working with English Learners, but the majority (57.14%) has had more than 10 years' experience teaching this population. The majority of teachers (75%) have had the condensed district offered and mandated 15-hour SIOP® training which addresses the English Language population, in contrast to the two teachers that have taken graduate coursework on ESOL methodology. All but one teacher stated the need to use specific strategies for English Learners during instruction. Building background, which is the component of SIOP® that includes emphasizing key vocabulary, was the component that the teachers felt least

knowledgeable about. The majority of teachers stated that do not address Tier III words in their teaching. Vocabulary activities used on a regular basis varied, but word walls and word sorts were the most common use of teaching vocabulary overall. Figure 4.1 below shows pre-survey results about teachers' use of specific activities to teach vocabulary.

Q8 Click any of the activities you have done with your students to teach vocabulary.

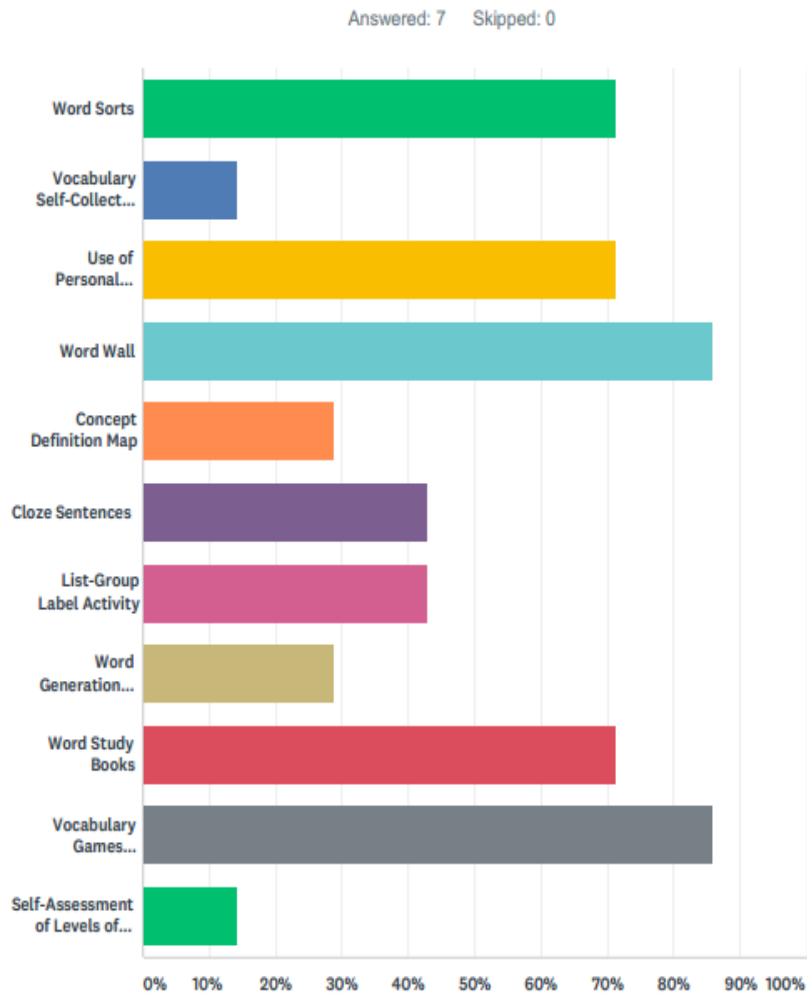


Figure 4.1 Question 8 from Teacher Pre-Survey

When asked the open-ended question about how prepared the individuals feel about meeting the language and academic needs of the English Learners, four responded as summarized below in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Summary of Pre-Survey Results

Sample Codes and Themes	Partial Quotes
Lack of confidence level regarding supporting English Learners	“Not at this time”
Want to learn more	“I am open to learning new strategies”
Strategies that work based on experience	“I feel that small group and one-on-one work best”
Lack of a continuum of resources affects ability	“I feel that access to Kindergarten curriculum would be helpful for our ELs”

Based on responses, the action researcher noted that understanding and comfort level of working with English Learners is very individualized and most likely dependent on experience. Responses from open ended questions were minimal and did not provide much specific feedback for the action researcher to use with professional development sessions.

Post-survey responses demonstrated a change overall in many areas based on both open and closed item questions. One hundred percent of teachers who respond stated that they now used word sorts, word walls, concept definition maps, cloze sentences and vocabulary games to support vocabulary instruction compared to 60-80% on the pre-assessment (Figure 4.2). An optional notation from one teacher included her new use of Total Physical Response (TPR) as strategy implemented within her classroom during the study.

Q4 Click any of the activities you have done with your students to teach vocabulary.

Answered: 7 Skipped: 0

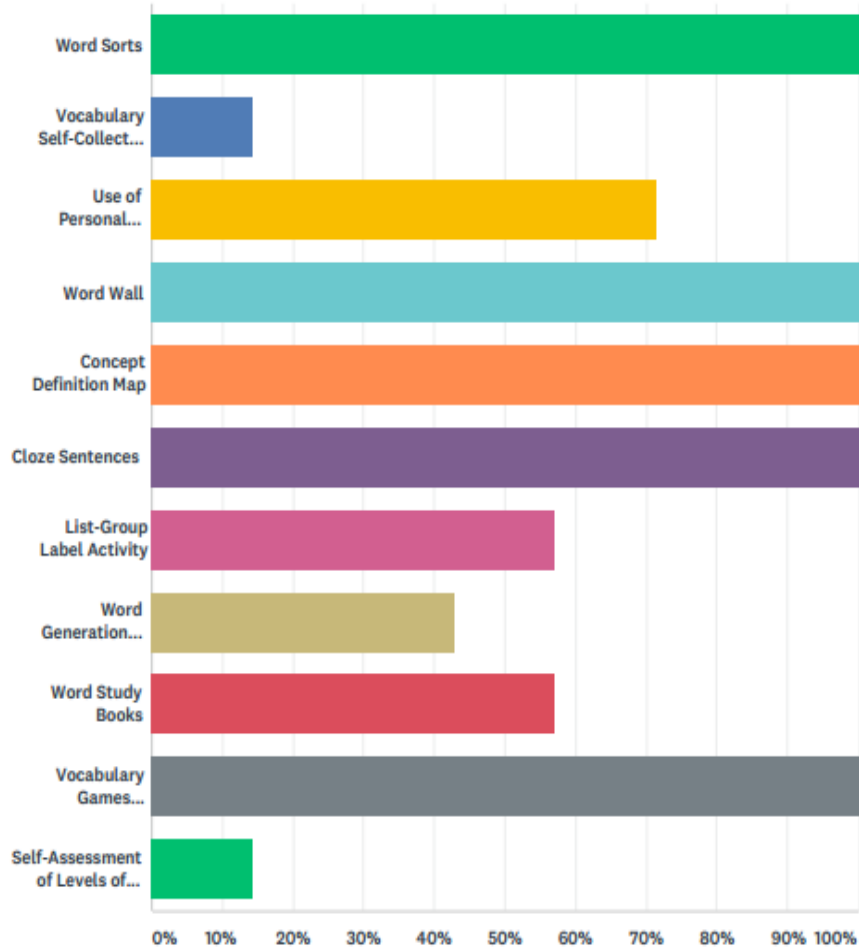


Figure 4.2 Question 4 from Teacher Post-Survey

When the participating teachers were asked for feedback regarding emphasizing vocabulary or working with English Learners in general, many themes were noted and are highlighted in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4 Summary of Post-Survey Results

Sample Codes and Themes	Partial Quotes
Student engagement	“Definitely a difference with understanding when vocabulary is emphasized”
Role of professional development	This refresher reminded me about the importance....” “This has helped me to focus on vocabulary and strategies I use”
Content understanding	“ELs have a better chance of understanding the content material when vocabulary activities are frontloaded in an engaging way”
Refining practices	“Before participating in this project, I thought I was doing well with key vocabulary. I realize I was just doing fair. Now I have a whole set of new activities and have a better understanding of ways to present these new words.”
Importance of emphasizing vocabulary	“Yes” “Empowers ELs with more understanding and confidence” “Building background knowledge is very important as a class starts a new unit of study.” “Students can make connections and assimilate more information.”
Lessons learned from study participation	“Understanding concepts when vocabulary is emphasized: “Helpful and eye opening” “Encourages best practices”
Future implementation	“Would like to change my SLO to including vocabulary” “I feel entire staff could benefit from this information” “I think it is imperative that teachers of all realize the importance of building background and offering time for vocabulary building.”

Post-survey results indicate an overall appreciation for the professional development provided to the participants in the study. In addition, teachers had articulated that they had acquired additional strategies to foster vocabulary comprehension and that student engagement was also fostered through these activities. Lastly, teachers noted how important understanding vocabulary, specifically by frontloading that knowledge prior to a unit, has on student understanding.

Teacher Implementation of Model

Teachers were asked to implement the strategies that were presented during the professional development sessions sometime during the week after the professional development sessions. The action researcher wanted to ensure the requirements that were asked were reasonable and practical within the parameters of the teachers' daily responsibilities. To help support this, the action researcher often provided the materials, supplies and resources needed for implementation and focused on only one or two strategies to use each time. During this entire study, there was only one teacher (Teacher F) who was not able to fully implement all strategies during the timeline proposed. However, that teacher was able to follow up and complete the activity within the time frame of the study. In that respect, all eight teachers scored a four on the SIOP® Lesson Plan Checklist in the component of emphasizing key vocabulary under the feature of building background knowledge by the conclusion of the study. Thus, out of the 24 observations conducted by the action researcher, 96% of the time strategies were implemented fully during the expected time line. In addition, each teacher took the strategy taught and made it their own within the context of what they were teaching. Although individual lessons and activities in each observation were different, the teachers were able to implement the taught strategies within the context of what they were teaching.

In a follow-up conversation with a novice teacher regarding an observation of her lesson on plants and the life cycle, she was able to articulate very clearly the methods and strategies used to support vocabulary acquisition and overall comprehension of the content. She conducted a lesson which focused on pre-teaching vocabulary that was

needed prior to reading a book on the plant life cycle. The teacher used small group instruction to reinforce concepts, vocabulary cards with visuals which allowed for an engaging matching game, use actions through Total Physical Response (TPR) strategies and demonstration to clarify key concepts, along with student independent practice in their own *word books*. Follow up lessons including using hands on science lab activities using seed germination to help foster further understanding.

At the conclusion of the lesson, students were able to state using “their own words” the meaning of the taught vocabulary. It was noted by the teacher that all students, including the English Learners, did well with understanding the unit as well as with the difficult content vocabulary. The teacher expressed that the activities were planned along with another colleague and that they both shared ideas for the unit. It was also mentioned that student engagement was high.

During each classroom observation, antidotal notes were taken by the action researcher about what was observed. Table 4.5 represents a sampling of what was observed in each classroom during the timeframe for this study.

Table 4.5 Summary of Observed Strategies Implemented in the Classroom

Teacher	Strategies Implemented
A	Journal writing with vocabulary support, science words
B	Anchor charts with vocabulary words, concept maps, graphic organizer (KWL), Content word walls, Interactive board on unit with labels
C	Labels in classroom, science vocabulary with pictures, graphic organizers, flash cards with MAP®, pocket chart vocabulary words
D	Anchor charts, TPR activities, labels in English and Spanish, posters with vocabulary words, interactive vocabulary games,
E	Word wall with visuals, CLOZE sentences, ABC chart, Science words with pictures

F	Chinese vocabulary cards, concept map, color coded vocabulary words, flash cards,
G	Individual word books for students, content words with visuals, Reading A-Z with vocabulary support, labels around classroom
H	Songs using vocabulary words in repetition

Student Achievement Data

As noted earlier, the MAP® assessment is the primary data being used to explore the research question of whether implementation of the strategies learned through the professional sessions impacted student achievement, specifically the vocabulary strand of the Reading MAP® assessment. The Table 4.6, 4.7, 4.8, and 4.9 and Figures 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, and 4.6 summarize key data points.

Table 4.6 2018 Winter to Spring MAP Reading Percentile

Teacher	Number of Students (n)	2018 Winter MAP Reading > Percentile	2018 Spring MAP Reading > Percentile	Difference Reading > Percentile
All	96	38.79	41.44	2.65
A	12	32.33	35.17	2.83
B	11	61.36	64.27	2.91
C	19	51.95	51.11	-0.84
D	15	6.47	10.47	4.00
E	11	34.45	38.73	4.27
F	5	61.00	48.80	-12.20
G	13	39.62	48.92	9.31
H	10	37.80	41.50	3.70

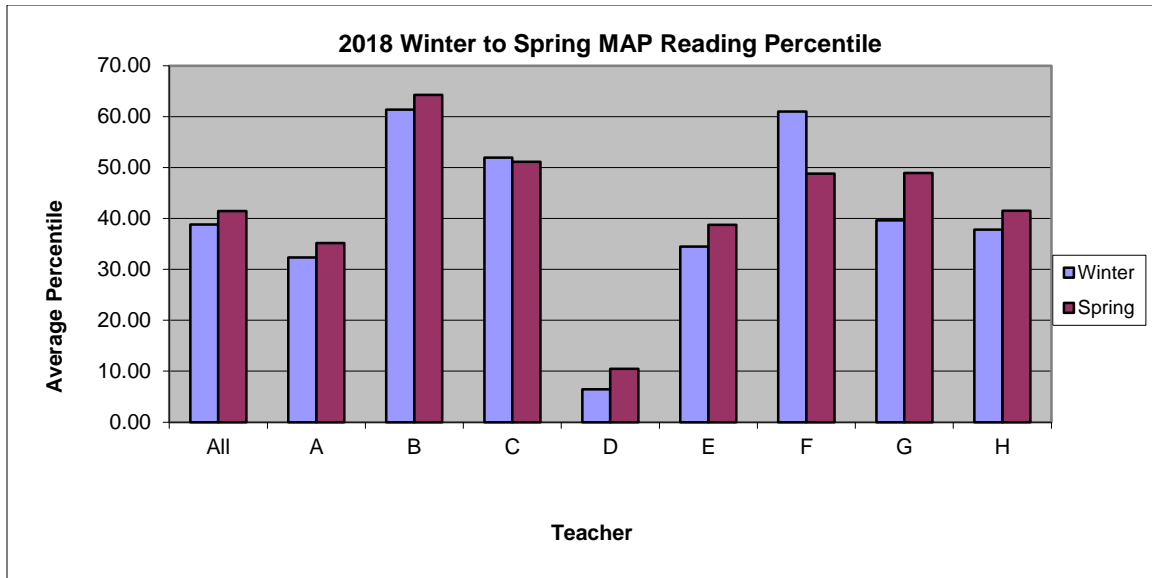


Figure 4.3 2018 Winter to Spring MAP Reading Percentile

Table 4.7 2018 Winter to Spring MAP Reading RIT

Teacher	Number of Students	2018 Winter MAP Reading > RIT	2018 Spring MAP Reading > RIT	Difference Reading > RIT
All	96	164.86	172.67	7.80
A	12	162.50	167.17	4.67
B	11	175.91	183.73	7.82
C	19	171.11	178.16	7.05
D	15	145.40	155.87	10.47
E	11	163.82	172.73	8.91
F	5	175.40	177.60	2.20
G	13	167.62	177.38	9.77
H	10	165.20	173.20	8.00

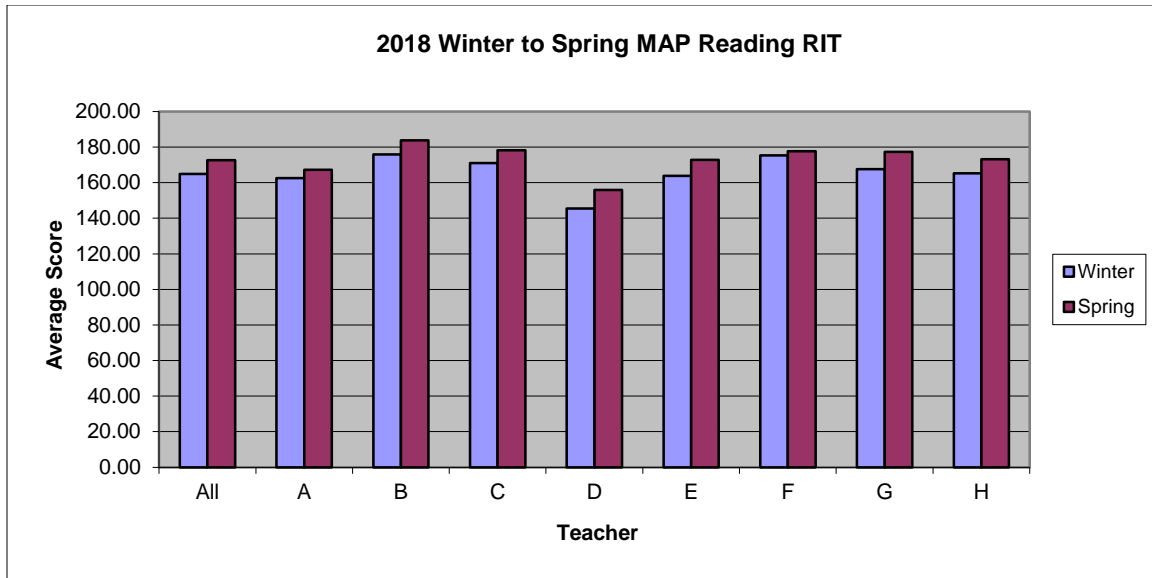


Figure 4.4 2018 Winter to Spring MAP Reading RIT

Table 4.8 2018 Winter to Spring MAP Vocabulary Level Score

Teacher	Number of Students	2018 Winter MAP Reading > Vocabulary > Level Score	2018 Spring MAP Reading > Vocabulary > Level Score	Difference Reading > Vocabulary > Level Score
All	96	2.42	2.52	0.10
A	12	2.25	2.08	-0.17
B	11	3.09	3.27	0.18
C	19	2.79	2.63	-0.16
D	15	1.40	1.47	0.07
E	11	2.27	2.73	0.45
F	5	3.40	3.20	-0.20
G	13	2.15	2.85	0.69
H	10	2.70	2.60	-0.10

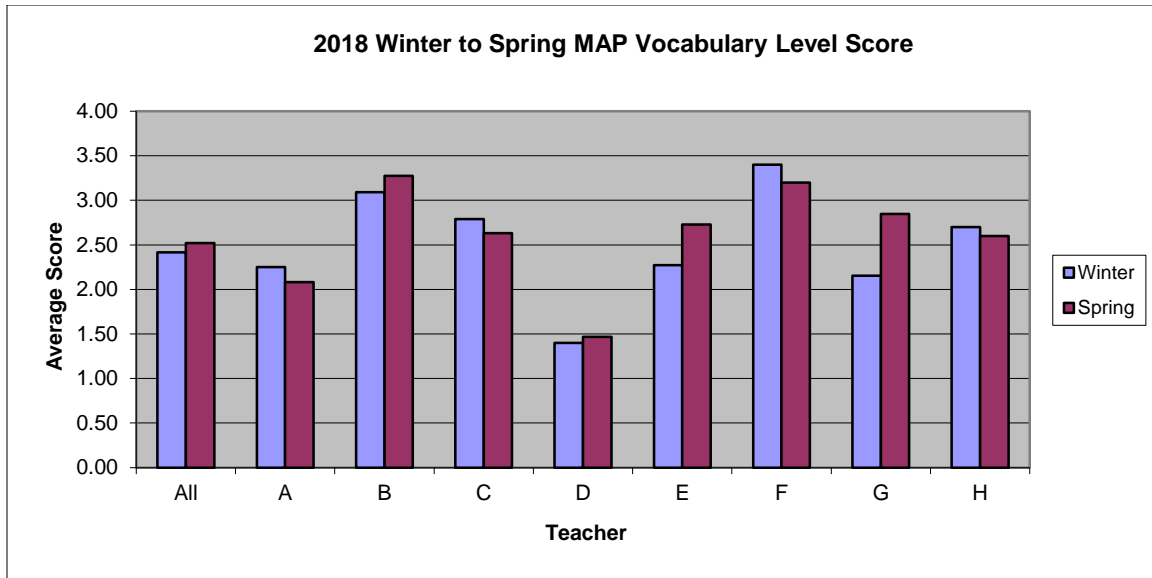


Figure 4.5 2018 Winter to Spring MAP Vocabulary Level Score

Table 4.9 2018 Winter to Spring MAP Vocabulary RIT

Teacher	Number of Students (n)	2018 Winter MAP Reading > Vocabulary > RIT Score	2018 Spring MAP Reading > Vocabulary > RIT Score	Difference Vocabulary > RIT
All	96	164.06	172.22	8.16
A	12	164.75	167.67	2.92
B	11	172.55	181.27	8.73
C	19	170.68	176.74	6.05
D	15	144.13	155.33	11.20
E	11	161.82	174.45	12.64
F	5	174.80	178.40	3.60
G	13	165.23	176.69	11.46
H	10	166.80	173.10	6.30

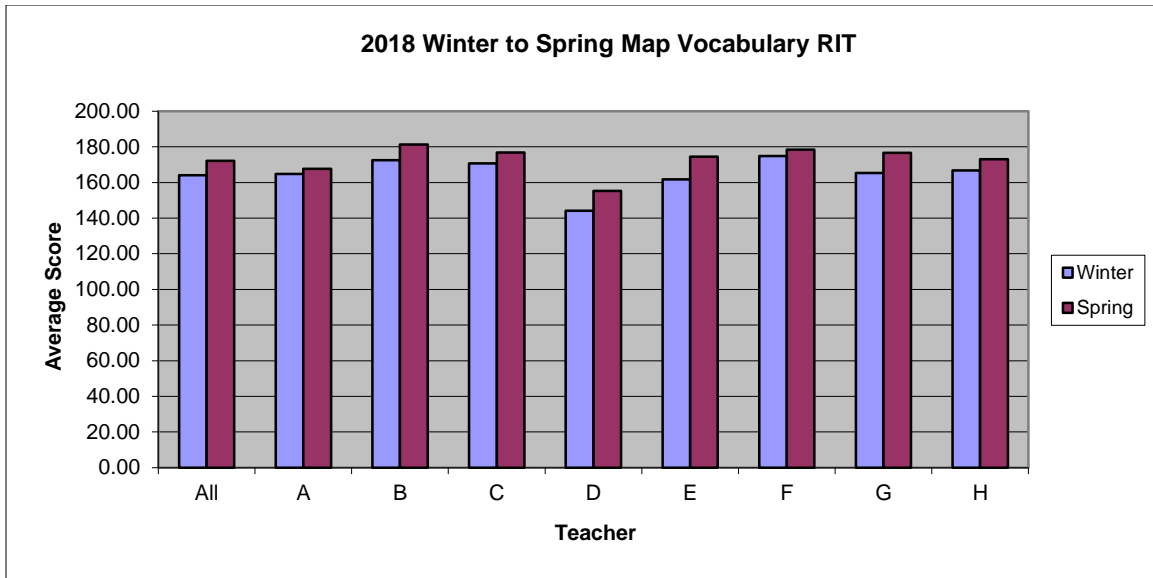


Figure 4.6 2018 Winter to Spring MAP Vocabulary RIT

Part of the data analysis was conducted using mean comparison scores from eight classrooms on the English language arts assessment from winter 2018 to spring 2018 with the overall reading RIT and Percentage score and the overall Level and RIT vocabulary strand scores. Level strand scores were calculated using a numeric value, one thru six, corresponding to each level (ex. Low (1), Low Average (2)). Findings included the following:

- 8 out of 8 teachers had positive gains in overall English language arts RIT scores;
- 6 out of 8 teachers had positive gains in overall English language arts percentage scores;
- 8 out of 8 teachers had positive gains in overall RIT score on vocabulary strand; and
- 4 out of 8 teachers had positive gains in overall Level score (going from one level to another) on vocabulary strand.

In looking at data closely, along with information regarding individual teachers and notes taken during observations and conversations, the following has been noted:

- Two of the three teachers that had the highest gains with vocabulary are teachers that have taken more than one class on ESOL methodology.
- One of the teachers that had the highest gains, had the most observed and noted implementation of vocabulary strategies and communicated that this new learning has greatly impacted her practices.
- Two teachers that had some of the lowest gains teach in the dual-language class setting (Chinese and Spanish).
- The teacher that had the lowest gains in vocabulary has the most experience out of all participating teachers.
- The teachers progress, or lack of, with the vocabulary strand did not necessarily have the same results with overall reading progress.
- The teacher with the lowest gains in reading and the second lowest gains with vocabulary has the smallest sample size (n=5) and the second highest mean score in winter.
- The teacher with the highest overall gains in both reading and with vocabulary is a teacher with less than 3 years' experience, was taking SIOP® during study implementation and is participating in the ESOL graduate cohort towards ESOL certification.

Data analysis was also conducted using paired samples statistics, looking at the 96 individual students' scores and comparing them from winter to spring (See Tables 4.10-

4.12). The analysis was conducted to see if the intervention had not only an effect with the overall mean scores of the eight classrooms, but with the 96 individual students.

Table 4.10 Paired Samples Statistics

	Mean	N	Standard Deviation	Standard Error Mean
2018 Winter MAP Reading > Percentile	38.79	96	28.12	2.87
2018 Spring MAP Reading > Percentile	41.44	96	26.26	2.68
2018 Winter MAP Reading > RIT	164.86	96	15.30	1.56
2018 Spring MAP Reading > RIT	172.67	96	13.59	1.39
2018 Winter MAP Reading > Vocabulary > Level Score	2.42	96	1.32	0.13
2018 Spring MAP Reading > Vocabulary > Level Score	2.52	96	1.22	0.12
2018 Winter MAP Reading > Vocabulary > RIT Score	164.06	96	16.26	1.66
2018 Spring MAP Reading > Vocabulary > RIT Score	172.22	96	12.80	1.31

Table 4.11 Paired Samples Correlations

	N	Correlation	Significance
2018 Winter MAP Reading > Percentile & 2018 Spring Map Reading > Percentile	96	0.873	0.000
2018 Winter MAP Reading > RIT & 2018 Spring Map Reading > RIT	96	0.870	0.000
2018 Winter MAP Reading > Vocabulary > Level Score & 2018 Spring Map Reading > Vocabulary > Level Score	96	0.608	0.000
2018 Winter MAP Reading > Vocabulary > RIT Score & 2018 Spring Map Reading > Vocabulary > RIT Score	96	0.709	0.000

Table 4.12 95% Confidence Interval of the Differences

	Mean	Lower Limit	Upper Limit	Significance (2-Tailed)
2018 Winter MAP Reading > Percentile - 2018 Spring Map Reading > Percentile	2.65	-0.16	5.45	0.06
2018 Winter MAP Reading > RIT - 2018 Spring Map Reading > RIT	7.80	6.27	9.33	0.00
2018 Winter MAP Reading > Vocabulary > Level Score - 2018 Spring Map Reading > Vocabulary > Level Score	0.10	-0.12	0.33	0.37
2018 Winter MAP Reading > Vocabulary > RIT Score - 2018 Spring Map Reading > Vocabulary > RIT Score	8.16	5.82	10.49	0.00

Data showed that a 95% confidence interval for the mean change in Reading RIT score from winter to spring produced (6.27, 9.33). This means, in general, that these students had an average improvement of 7.8 points with a margin of error of 1.53 RIT points. District records show an on-grade level expected change during the same time frame of only 6 RIT points. It is encouraging that the 95% confidence interval is greater than the expected change. This suggests that the strategies implemented in this study show promise for improving achievement in Reading with English Learners.

Data also showed that we are 95% sure that the mean difference between winter and spring RIT Vocabulary score is between 5.82 and 10.49 points with a margin of error of 2.33 points. Although NWEA does not have available expectations for vocabulary growth specifically, the fact that many students showed great growth is encouraging.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Looking at all the data there are some trends that have been noted and some further areas for discussions and investigations. When analyzing pre-and post-teacher survey data, many positive things were noted. Teachers were able to show that they had not only understood the meaning of specific strategies, but also implemented them in the classroom setting. In addition, in general, teachers were able to comment with very specific feedback about vocabulary acquisition and how important it was for lesson comprehension as compared to the minimal feedback received on the pre-survey. Overall, comments showed that teachers enjoyed the professional development sessions and wanted to further their knowledge set in that area. Teachers noted that they were still unfamiliar with some of the specific activities listed to foster vocabulary acquisition such as word generation books and word self-selection strategies that were not able to be covered during the professional development sessions.

Teacher implementation of the model with fidelity was very positive. As mentioned, the teachers' implementation was observed 96% of the time. Teachers were able to learn a strategy and implement it into their class lessons and activities within the provided time line in the study. Regardless of content and standards covered, teachers were able to use the strategies and transfer it into an activity for student learning. Teachers were only able to use the software of the vocabulary practice minimally as the training for this transpired towards the end of the study. Full implementation was not possible because of that. However, all teachers were trained and attempted to use this model and the learned strategies with their students.

Student achievement data showed some positive results. Overall, the majority of teachers showed a gain in the area of reading from winter to spring assessments. All eight teachers had an increase in overall mean RIT score for the group of English Learners, which is to be expected due to the almost 10 weeks of instruction between winter and spring test administration. Additionally, six out of eight teachers had an increase in the mean percentage on the Reading MAP®. If students' percentage score increases, this means that they are outperforming what is anticipated based on national norms for this assessment. Out of the two teachers that did not make positive trends in percentages, one almost stayed at the same percentage, which means they made expected growth and one decreased significantly by 12.2% (Teacher F). Teacher F has an incredibly small number of English Learners in the classroom, with a total of five. The mean scores in that class started overall strong and had mean pre-scores in some instances 30 points higher than other classes. In the area of vocabulary specifically, all teachers showed an increase with mean RIT score with 50% of teachers making enough increase to go up one Level. Levels include categories of Low, Low Average, Average, High Average and High. In order to move from one level to the next there has to be an increase in achievement that surpasses expected national expected norms.

Supplemental Analysis of Data

During the study, there were many things that may have impacted the results of the study. First, one teacher had a documented testing violation during the spring assessment session. Teacher C, who had a subgroup of two classes, administered the wrong level assessment to all of her students. The teacher gave the Grades 2-5 assessment in lieu of Primary, Grades 1-2 assessment. Because of that, the teacher had to

retest the entire class right before the conclusion of the school year. Overall mean scores in English language arts and math showed a major decrease from the original scores from the first spring test administration (which should have been more difficult). Data that was specifically part of this study was most likely was also impacted by the testing issue. In addition, one teacher had a significant number of absences (Teacher H) due to a family illness. Although the teacher did not miss any professional development sessions, the teacher missed a significant number of instructional days close to the post-testing session. This too, most likely impacted student achievement scores. In addition, due to the timing of this study, spring and end of year, conditions were not ideal for full implementation of the study. Last minute mandatory trainings and meetings, as well as end of year happenings, all contributed to the implementation, or lack of, with taught strategies. Conversations regarding observations by action researcher were somewhat rushed and didn't allow for as much specific feedback as warranted by the action researcher.

During the study, it was discovered that additional analysis would have been warranted based on questions that arose during findings. Due to the nature of the different academic and linguistic levels of English Learners, additional analysis comparing students of like linguistic ability, per the language proficiency ACCESS assessment, would have provided additional insight into the impact of strategies with similar learners. It also would have been insightful to look at students with similar beginning RIT scores and note the progress, or lack of, from the provided intervention. In addition, limited analysis was done on individual students. This issue was highlighted through analysis of individual classroom data. The classroom teacher (Teacher F) that had the lowest progress (mean) had by far the smallest subgroup, with only five students. The fact that

those five students actually had a much higher winter mean MAP® score than the majority of peers to being with, more than likely impacted overall comparative results. In addition, Teacher A, the most veteran teacher who showed minimal gains in vocabulary, may have been impacted by the number of very high achieving students in that class. Out of the total of 23 students, eight were at the 99% range in Reading. Focus of instruction may have been different than others due to the high ability class make up. Although the major focus of the action research was to look at the overall achievement of the eight classes, based on the professional development intervention, further analysis on individual students would have provided a more accurate picture of implications of the taught strategies. Due to the nature of the participating classes, with achievement, linguistic and cognitive levels being so diverse, and the fact that classes composed on different sample sizes, true determination on the effect of the intervention using the eight classes of data is not plausible. However, the data does shows promise as there was some statistically significant data that showcased progress as well as an overall achievement increase, especially in the area of vocabulary. Continuing this study with other grades levels, with certain programs or even looking at the impact this intervention had with students who are not identified as an English Learner, could give information to support further understanding on instructional strategies that work with students. To truly note if this intervention has a positive impact on vocabulary acquisition, comparing like students who had the intervention with like students who did not, would help support the further use of the strategies described in this action research.

Using primarily MAP® data to show the effect of any intervention, specifically with a group of teachers, has its challenges. Although the number of students involved

with the study was an ample sample size (n=96), the fact that the intervention was directly tied to teacher effectiveness with only eight teachers, limited the ability to show statistical significance in this study. Mean achievement data from the participating teachers showed statistical significance with RIT scores in reading and vocabulary, not with percentages. However, enough change from individual student's scores and a positive trend in overall mean percentage scores and vocabulary strand levels, does show enough change to justify further study in this area. This trend, supported by teacher feedback, provides a foundation for further research.

Conclusion

Chapter IV provided an overview of the action research including background information about the participants, both students and teachers, involved with the study. Data collection strategies were reviewed and methodology used for collection was discussed. Results from both qualitative and quantitative data were described and displayed in multiple formats. Issues with study implementation and outliers were described. Consequences from these issues were brought out. Implications for the study were highlighted along with ideas for further research. Overall, the study showed a positive impact with the overall reading achievement and with the specific vocabulary strand data per MAP® scores with formally identified first grade English Learners between the winter and spring 2018 test administration. The focus of professional development on researched based strategies to foster vocabulary acquisition, when done with fidelity, appeared to support overall understanding. Based on comparing pre-and post-surveys from participating teachers, the information gathered indicated that the strategy implementation was successful, meaningful, and benefited student engagement

and comprehension. This information, which cannot be used in isolation, supports the need for further investigation on the impact of using strategies to foster vocabulary acquisition in order to support overall student achievement.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND ACTION PLAN

Chapter V provides an overview of the action research, summarizes key components of data that resulted during study implementation and highlights some of the key conclusions developed as a result of the study. In addition, the role of the action researcher is described and an action plan is provided based on short and long-term goals. Discussions about the role of research in facilitating educational change is made as a catalyst of the need for future research. Insight from the action researcher regarding the study and the process itself is mentioned, along with suggestions for future study.

Key Questions

The purpose of this action research was to determine the effect of a research-based instructional model on a subpopulation of learners, first grade English Learners. The two research questions that guided this study were (1) What effect did emphasizing key vocabulary (per the SIOP® model) have on academic achievement? and (2) Is emphasizing key vocabulary (per the SIOP® model) implemented with fidelity within the classroom? Based on the data gathered, emphasizing key vocabulary showed promise in supporting academic achievement. Overall, progress was noted in the classrooms that implemented these strategies. Seventy-five percent of the participating classes had positive gains in overall reading scores (percentage) which means those classes exceeded anticipated national norms. In addition, fifty percent of classes increased overall level of

vocabulary enough to warrant progressing into the next level of vocabulary achievement, per MAP® strand levels. In addition, the historical records show an expected change of RIT score of 6, but post-study results showed an average improvement of 7.8 RIT points. Data on fidelity of implementation was at almost 100%, which means teachers took the learned strategies and implemented them to some degree within their classroom setting and within their individual lesson plans.

Role of Action Researcher

The role of the action researcher in this study was multifaceted. As the principal of the school building, I am the curriculum leader. Being in dual roles as the action researcher, as well as school administrator, means taking extra measures to ensure proper protocols with this study. In addition, I have the unique perspective as an “insider”, working in the building where the study takes place, but also have had the perspective of an “outsider” working at the district level in the field of language acquisition, which this study addresses. Both experiences have given me insight into current instructional challenges in which has led to true reflection. This reflection, ultimately helped to foster the ideas which led to the proposed study, and eventually, to the action research itself.

There were many challenges I had faced in this role. Level of commitment was not the same with every teacher. Skill level of individual teachers and students are varied. The largest challenge that I found was the time component this study entails. Fortunately, I was able to embed the components of the study in a framework that was within the parameters of what teachers do on a regular basis in terms of professional development. Ensuring that all of the observations were conducted and deep conversations transpired,

proved difficult. The timeline of the study was adhered to, but the quality of what the original intent was, at times, was somewhat compromised.

Action Plan

The results from the study showed a lot of promise and showed enough information to warrant further investigation and study. Based on both qualitative and quantitative data gathered through pre-and post-surveys, observations and achievement data, there is enough documentation to support continued work in this area. The information learned through this investigation was evident not only to the action researcher, but with the eight teacher participants in the study. All eight teachers commented both formally and informally ideas and thoughts brought about by this study. All were encouraged to continue their work in the field of supporting vocabulary understanding to ultimately foster student achievement.

Many things were learned from this investigation. First and foremost, professional development done right can make a difference. A “one and done” mentality with professional development is not effective. The fact that this study was implemented during a timeframe that included minimally bi-monthly trainings, followed up with observations and feedback, made this support continuous and manageable. The supplemental support, in the form of email reminders, easy to read articles, quick videos only added to the success behind this research study. In addition, the fact that this study targeted just one or two things at a time and then allowed for teacher to use and practice without the pressure of any formal evaluation was appreciated. Lastly, the fact that this research was implemented in the framework of already existing programs and practices gave teachers the freedom of not worrying about one more thing. These concise, strategic

and easy to implement practices allowed teachers to use these strategies without ignoring the great things they are already using and doing within their classrooms settings.

Since the conclusion of the data collecting period for the study, participating teachers have worked with the action researcher to develop some next steps. First, all teachers requested an interactive magnetic white board to use to support a word wall. These walls have been purchased and are being installed. In addition, the first-grade team has requested and has received word cards based on the reading curriculum. These cards are constructed to allow for pictures or native language support per the suggested strategies taught during this study. What may be the most exciting outcome from participating in this study is that some teachers themselves, as a small group, worked on Student Learning Objectives (SLOs), that uses vocabulary as the main target goal. SLOs are required per state law and are used as part of individual teacher's annual evaluation. Teachers commented that they wanted to continue with the work that was done in the spring on vocabulary because they believed it made a difference in their classroom instruction and student comprehension.

As the action researcher and the principal in the school where the study took place, the intended action plan will take a larger prospective. It was noted in Chapter IV that to truly understand if the strategies implemented worked, a larger time-frame would be needed to note difference. In addition, a different population needs to be studied, specifically like students that did not receive the intervention in order to truly note if the strategies worked. I intend to commit to further my work in this area, but adjust it to meet the individual needs of the students and the teachers that would be impacted by this process.

First and foremost, I plan on continuing professional development in the area of vocabulary for all grade levels and with all teachers. In an elementary campus, where over 50% of the student population are identified as English Learners, where 33% of students are involved with dual-language immersion classes, where half of the grade level content is delivered in the target language of Chinese or Spanish, and where 10% of students are in self-contained sheltered classes for our new to country students, language, specifically vocabulary, needs to be a focus. In addition, with a large special education and very high poverty population, the need for supporting language instruction is crucial. During weekly PLC meetings and with trainings, vocabulary will be a continued area that is addressed. The individuals that will be responsible for this will be our literacy, math and PYP coaches, district ESOL trainers, as well as other key personnel that can support this work. District data services team will help to dive into the data to note baseline information and help to understand components of the Learning Continuum of MAP™. State ESOL personnel and SIOP® trainers may be consulted if there is a question or concern brought up during this work that can not be addressed locally. However, the person that will foster this action plan and all the pieces involved will be me as the lead action researcher and the curriculum leader in the building.

Resources for the action plan will come from school, district, and state funds. In addition, Federal Title I and Title III funds will be used to supplement general budget. The money needed is dependent on the number of teachers and students involved, but can be addressed out of the annual allocated budgets.

Time Line

The specific timeline for this action plan will include:

Fall 2018

- Review action research findings with participating stakeholders
- Finish and defend Dissertation
- Work with participating first grade teachers to develop SLOs focused on vocabulary
- Help to support strategies taught during action research during first grade PLCs
- Help to provide resources to help implement best practices
- Gather baseline data on reading comprehension and vocabulary strand on teachers not SIOP® trained and first grade teachers that participated in study
- Conduct non-evaluative observations, minimal monthly to first grade teachers and provide feedback

Winter 2018/2019

- Review action research findings with all staff
- Conduct mid-year SLO conference with first grade teachers
- Gather midyear data on reading comprehension and vocabulary strand on teachers not SIOP® trained and first grade teachers that participated in study
- Continue to conduct non-evaluative observations, minimal monthly to first grade teachers and provide feedback

Spring 2019

- Conduct end of year SLO conference with first grade teachers

- Gather end of year data on reading comprehension and vocabulary strand on teachers not SIOP® trained and first grade teachers that participated in study
- Continue to conduct non-evaluative observations, minimal monthly to first grade teachers and provide feedback
- Apply to present at local conference regarding study (SCASA)
- Analyze data. Reflect on results. Report out to entire staff.

Summer 2019

- Present findings at SCASA or other local conferences
- Report findings to district leadership team

Fall 2019 and beyond

- Promote best practices for vocabulary acquisition school wide
- Conduct workshops for parents so they can support vocabulary acquisition beyond the school day
- Support programs and initiatives that support vocabulary for students
- Report findings at state and national conferences (TESOL, SCTESOL)
- Continue to foster professional development that is strategic, manageable and comprehensive
- Continue to use action research as a means of supporting academic achievement and best practices for all teacher and students

Facilitating Educational Change

Students today come to school with a lot of challenges. Many are coming from families of poverty where basic needs are not being met. Many come from broken homes where day-to-day life is not stable. Many come from households where education may or

may not be a priority. These realities, coupled by the additional stresses that many English Learners may face such as linguistic and academic issues, racism, fear of family members being deported and political strife, all make learning in a traditional school setting very difficult. Educators need to assess reality in order to effect educational change. This means that “one size does not fit all” and that “fair does not mean equal.” Educators need to facilitate relationships, enforce high expectations for all, and know how and when to differentiate for various learners. The goal is for every student to be successful and well rounded, but how each individual gets there, may be through a different path. As the instructional leader in the school, status quo is not acceptable. I need to ensure that we are use best practices, take advantage of appropriate resources and provide the time to truly reflect on and refine practices continuously so that every student can meet his or her potential. In order to achieve greatness, an environment of scholarly practitioners and a culture of conductive to change need to be at the forefront of priorities in every school. Challenges faced are great when truly working towards effecting educational change but with commitment, and most of all passion, all things are possible.

Summary of Research Findings

The study, although small score in nature, brought out some promise with key ideas and provided documentation to promote further research. The study showed some positive ideas in terms of *professional development*. The action research included presenting ideas and strategies within the weekly PLCS meetings and included follow up component which allowed for accountability and reflection. The implementation of researched based *instructional strategies* within the classroom setting to foster language acquisition, vocabulary development and overall achievement showed promise in terms

of achievement data in reading and the vocabulary strand of MAP™. Some of the ideas presented in the professional development can be addressed concretely as part of future *curriculum development*. This can be part of any content's scope and sequence, curriculum map, units of study and lesson plans. Future work in this area can also foster *classroom management strategies* as well as foster *community involvement*. Most of the strategies used during this action research can easily be replicated in the home to help provide continuing learning opportunities for the students.

Suggestions for Further Research

Future research can be conducted not only in areas related to vocabulary acquisition and reading achievement, but overall strategies, programs and methodology to help English Learners access the grade level curriculum. SIOP® includes 29 other features under eight components. There are many other researched based features that can be looked at closely, just like in this action research, implemented and then refined to help support these diverse learners. Using this very specific protocol can help guide this work and ensure that all educational areas are addressed.

Research which ultimately led to the SIOP® model protocol began over 20 years ago by Jana Echevarría, MaryEllen Vogt, and Deborah J. Short, leaders in the field of language acquisition. This protocol was used and shown to work in multiple studies highlighted in Chapter II. Its foundation lies in centuries of work in the areas of language theory, professional development, curriculum and instruction and with English Learners themselves. This comprehensive protocol supports the idea that these diverse learners have very specific needs that should be addressed in the classroom setting. Continued

research in this field is crucial as the needs of these students are so complex and continue to change.

Conclusion

The purpose of action research is to attempt to solve a problem through a reflective process of progressive problem solving. In the case of this research, a very current issue in education today is deciding what strategies help English Learners access grade level content most effectively. In addition to knowing what strategies to use, is how to best help support teachers so they can effectively implement the strategies with fidelity. As this paper explains, the barriers that this subgroup of learners face are immense and very much specific to each individual. Knowing how to navigate and understand their unique needs, both academic and social, is complex.

I choose this action research with the hope that making small changes to what teachers do in the classroom can make a difference. Using researched based teaching methodology, supported by a comprehensive plan for implementation, and using a very scientifically based way of assessing progress, did show good results. Again, this study with a very small sample cannot be used to justify any concrete conclusions. However, this information can be used as key discussion points as we continue to look at what works best for all of our learners.

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APPENDIX A

SIOP® LESSON PLAN CHECKLIST

Lesson Plan Checklist for The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)

Permission to include in this dissertation granted on 10/2/18 by Tatyana Vdovina (Pearson)

Preparation

- _____ Write content objectives clearly for students.
- _____ Write language objectives clearly for students.
- _____ Choose content concepts appropriate for age and educational background level of students.
- _____ Identify supplementary materials to use (graphs, models, visuals).
- _____ Adapt content (e.g., text, assignment) to all levels of student proficiency.
- _____ Plan meaningful activities that integrate lesson concepts (e.g., surveys, letter writing, simulations) with language practice opportunities for the four skills.

Building Background

- _____ Explicitly link concepts to students' backgrounds and experiences.
- _____ Explicitly link past learning and new concepts.
- _____ Emphasize key vocabulary (e.g., introduce, write, repeat, and highlight) for students.

Comprehensible Input

- _____ Use speech appropriate for students' proficiency level (e.g., slower rate, enunciation, simple sentence structure for beginners)._____ Explain academic tasks clearly.
- _____ Use a variety of techniques to make content concepts clear (e.g., modeling, visuals, hands-on activities, demonstrations, gestures, body language).

Strategies

- _____ Provide ample opportunities for students to use strategies (e.g., problem solving, predicting, organizing, summarizing, categorizing, evaluating, self-monitoring).
- _____ Use scaffolding techniques consistently (providing the right amount of support to move students from one level of understanding to a higher level) throughout lesson.
- _____ Use a variety of question types including those that promote higher-order thinking skills throughout the lesson (e.g., literal, analytical, and interpretive questions).

Interaction

- _____ Provide frequent opportunities for interactions and discussion between teacher/student and among students, and encourage elaborated responses.
- _____ Use group configurations that support language and content objectives of the lesson. Provide sufficient wait time for student response consistently.
- _____ Give ample opportunities for students to clarify key concepts in LI as needed with aide, peer, or LI text.

Practice/Application

- _____ Provide hands-on materials and/or manipulatives for students to practice using

new content knowledge.

_____ Provide activities for students to apply content and language knowledge in the classroom. Provide activities that integrate all language skills (i.e., reading, writing, listening, speaking).

Lesson Delivery

_____ Support content objectives clearly.

_____ Support language objectives clearly.

_____ Engage students approximately 90-100% of the time (most students taking part/on task). Pace the lesson appropriately to the students' ability level.

Review/Assessment

_____ Give a comprehensive review of key vocabulary.

_____ Give a comprehensive review of key content concepts.

_____ Provide feedback to students regularly on their output (e.g., language, content, work). Conduct assessments of student comprehension and leaning throughout lesson on all lesson objectives (e.g., spot checking, group response).


Reprinted from Echevarria, J., Vogt, M.E., & Short, D. (2000). *Making content comprehensible to English language learners*

APPENDIX B

ROWE'S MAP® AND RIT GUIDE

The following page is from Rowe's MAP® and RIT Guide

Permission to use include this in this dissertation was granted by Brooke Rowe on 8/3/18.



MAP & RTI

Fall MAP Math RIT Score

Grade	NSI	NAI	OGL Range	Advanced
K	<132	132-138	139-149	>156
1	<149	149-156	157-169	>177
2	<165	165-172	173-183	>191
3	<179	179-186	187-197	>205
4	<191	191-197	198-210	>217
5	<199	199-205	206-219	>227
6	<205	205-212	213-227	>235
7	<209	209-218	219-233	>243
8	<213	213-221	222-238	>247
9	<216	216-225	226-242	>252
10	<215	215-225	226-242	>253

Winter MAP Math RIT Score

Grade	NSI	NAI	OGL Range	Advanced
K	<138	138-144	145-155	>162
1	<159	159-166	167-177	>185
2	<173	173-179	180-190	>197
3	<185	185-192	193-203	>211
4	<196	196-202	203-215	>222
5	<204	204-211	212-224	>232
6	<207	207-215	216-230	>239
7	<211	211-219	220-236	>245
8	<216	216-224	225-241	>250
9	<217	217-226	227-243	>253
10	<216	216-226	227-243	>254

Spring MAP Math RIT Score

Grade	NSI	NAI	OGL Range	Advanced
K	<146	146-152	153-165	>172
1	<166	166-173	174-184	>192
2	<178	178-185	186-196	>204
3	<190	190-197	198-208	>216
4	<198	198-205	206-218	>226
5	<206	206-214	215-227	>236
6	<210	210-218	219-233	>242
7	<212	212-221	222-238	>248
8	<216	216-225	226-242	>252
9	<217	217-227	228-244	>255
10	<218	218-228	229-245	>256

Fall MAP Reading RIT Score

Grade	NSI	NAI	OGL Range	Advanced
K	<131	131-137	138-146	>153
1	<147	147-154	155-165	>173
2	<161	161-168	169-183	>191
3	<175	175-183	184-196	>205
4	<185	185-192	193-205	>213
5	<193	193-200	201-213	>221
6	<198	198-205	206-218	>226
7	<202	202-209	210-222	>230
8	<204	204-212	213-225	>234
9	<206	206-213	214-228	>236
10	<208	208-215	216-230	>238


Winter MAP Reading RIT Score

Grade	NSI	NAI	OGL Range	Advanced
K	<140	140-146	147-155	>162
1	<158	158-164	165-177	>184
2	<169	169-177	178-190	>199
3	<181	181-188	189-201	>210
4	<189	189-196	197-209	>217
5	<196	196-203	204-216	>224
6	<200	200-207	208-220	>228
7	<204	204-211	212-224	>232
8	<206	206-214	215-227	>236
9	<207	207-214	215-229	>237
10	<207	207-215	216-230	>239

Spring MAP Reading RIT Score

Grade	NSI	NAI	OGL Range	Advanced
K	<145	145-151	152-162	>169
1	<162	163-170	171-183	>192
2	<175	175-183	184-196	>205
3	<185	185-192	193-205	>213
4	<193	193-200	201-213	>221
5	<198	198-205	206-218	>226
6	<201	201-209	210-222	>231
7	<206	206-213	214-226	>234
8	<207	207-215	216-228	>237
9	<207	207-215	216-230	>239
10	<207	207-216	217-231	>241

NSI → Needs Significant Intervention More than 1 year below the NWEA On Grade Level Range.
NAI → Needs Additional Intervention Between .5 and 1 year below the NWEA On Grade Level Range.
Advanced= 1 year above the NWEA On Grade Level Range.



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 Teacher on Special Assignment
 Data Services
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APPENDIX C

MAP® RIT REFERENCE CHARTS

The following are pages 3 and 4 from MAP RIT Reference Charts Vocabulary

Permission to include in this dissertation granted on 9/1/2018 by Ms. Sue Madagan, NWEA

MAP tests produce scores that make it possible to monitor student growth from year to year along developmental curriculum scales or continua. The chart inside shows examples of the kinds of work students can do at various points along the MAP RIT scale, assuming they have been exposed to content. This type of information is helpful in supporting appropriate instruction.

Please note that each subject area has a unique alignment to the RIT scale. As a result, scores between subjects are not equivalent.

How to use the charts:

1. Find the column containing the student's score for a particular subject. For example, if the student's score in "Word Meaning and Vocabulary Knowledge" is 188, refer to the column labeled 181-190.
2. Read down the column to locate a sample test question for a given reporting area, such as "Word Meaning and Vocabulary Knowledge." A student's score suggests that, currently, he or she is likely to get about half of the questions of this difficulty correct.
3. Now look at the questions in the column(s) to the left. The student is likely to get most of these correct, assuming he or she has been instructed in these skills and concepts.
4. The questions in the column(s) to the right will probably require new learning on the student's part.

Please note:

Test items in this booklet are sample items, and many are not calibrated or field-tested. For purposes of this document, RIT scale alignment is an approximation.

Some passages have been truncated due to space considerations.



READING | WORD RECOGNITION, STRUCTURE, AND VOCABULARY

Word Recognition, Structure, and Vocabulary

Students can decode words, recognize common words, understand word relationships and structures, and can use context clues to decipher word meaning.

below **161**

Choose the word that matches the picture.



The dog has a _____ in his mouth.

1. bat
2. bone
- ✓ 3. flower
4. shoe

161-170

Which word has the same beginning sounds as crunch?

- ✓ 1. creep
2. ratt e
3. truck
4. sent

171-180

Read the sentences.

Jackie couldn't believe how much fun she had on the field trip. She kept replaying the day's events in her mind on the bus ride back to school.

In the word "replaying," what does the prefix re- mean?

1. not
2. two
- ✓ 3. again
4. after

181-190

Read the sentences.

My friend Chris always does what he promises to do. If he says he'll meet me after school, he is always there waiting for me. Chris is a reliable friend.

What does reliable mean?

1. friendly
2. bright
- ✓ 3. dependable
4. capable

191-200

Read the sentences.

Lightning struck the _____ of the tree.
Please put the _____ of old costumes in the attic.

Which word will fit in both spaces?

- ✓ 1. trunk
2. branch
3. limb
4. root

201-210

Which set of words all have the same root word?

1. extra, relax, index
2. contain, restrain, gain
3. here, everywhere, there
- ✓ 4. knowledge, unknown, knowing

211-220

What is the correct way to divide the word responsibility into syllables?

1. responsib|lity
2. respons|lity
3. respons|b|lity
- ✓ 4. respons|b|lity

221-230

Read the sentence and dictionary entry.

The investor who threw the can exploded vindicated the expensive early warning system.

vindicate (vin-di-kei-tay)
1 to clear from an accusation

- 2 to justify by evidence or argument
- 3 to defend against opposition
- 4 to claim for oneself or another

Which definition of vindicate is used in the sentence above?

1. definition 1
- ✓ 2. definition 2
3. definition 3
4. definition 4

above **230**

Based on your knowledge of Latin roots, what is the meaning of "ambidextrous"?

1. lives on land and in water
2. wets quickly
3. before the flood
- ✓ 4. can use both hands equally

4

APPENDIX D

STUDENT SCORE REPORT



Kindergarten Individual Student Report 2016

This report provides information about the student's scores on the ACCESS for ELLs 2.0 English language proficiency test. This test is based on the WIDA English Language Development Standards and is used to measure students' progress in learning English. Scores are reported as Language Proficiency Levels and as Scale Scores. Proficiency Level scores are interpreted and reported in two ways: (1) for Accountability Purposes and (2) for Instructional Purposes (see columns below). The Accountability Proficiency Level score is used to monitor student performance from year-to-year. The Instructional Proficiency Level is used to describe how the student is able to use the English language in Kindergarten, where students are developing skills in listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

Language Domain	Proficiency Level		Scale Score (Possible 100-600) and Confidence Band <small>See Interpretive Guide for Score Reports for definitions</small>
	Accountability (Possible 1.0 - 6.0)	Instructional (Possible 1.0 - 6.0)	
Listening	6.0	6.0	363
Speaking	5.5	6.0	375
Reading	5.8	6.0	290
Writing	2.9	4.6	258
Oral Language <small>50% Listening + 50% Speaking</small>	6.0	6.0	369
Literacy <small>50% Reading + 50% Writing</small>	3.9	5.6	274
Comprehension <small>70% Reading + 30% Listening</small>	6.0	6.0	312
Overall* <small>35% Reading + 35% Writing + 15% Listening + 15% Speaking</small>	4.8	5.9	308

*Overall score is calculated only when all four domains have been assessed. NA: Not available

Proficiency Level	Description of English Language Proficiency Levels
1 - Entering	Knows and uses minimal social language and minimal academic language with visual and graphic support
2 - Emerging	Knows and uses some social English and general academic language with visual and graphic support
3 - Developing	Knows and uses social English and some specific academic language with visual and graphic support
4 - Expanding	Knows and uses social English and some technical academic language
5 - Bridging	Knows and uses social and academic language working with grade level material
6 - Reaching	Knows and uses social and academic language at the highest level measured by this test

For details regarding the scores on this report, refer to the Interpretive Guide for Score Reports at www.wida.us/scorereport

K-1SR
05/12/2016

APPENDIX E

EMAIL EXAMPLE

Hello-

Again, thank you for helping me with this research. My goal is to make this meaningful, yet practical.

I wanted to let you know that Anjie and I are going to work together to not only give you credit on MLP (recertification hours), but also incorporate this training into one of the mandatory Read2Succeed courses. Some of this is very timely as many of the PD sessions Anjie is doing right now focuses a lot on vocabulary. This will supplement/complement that-possible restate some of the lessons learned through Anjie but with more of a focus on English Learners.

Because all of you come to the table with a variety of experiences with teaching English Learners-I first want to make sure all of you have an understanding of two basic things:

1. The SIOP Model (which is mandated training for BCSD-but some of you have not taken it yet and some took it a long time ago) SEE ATTACHED
2. Background Knowledge-one of the eight key features of SIOP in which Key Vocabulary is part of.

To ensure we have some general understanding, I am asking you to watch the overview of SIOP (*if* you have not taken the course or want/need a refresher) and the highlighted video on Building Background knowledge. Do this at your leisure this week.

Overview of SIOP: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZA3_PXs4CsQ

(Lesson Preparation and overview) https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=05xK5gP_Tbw&list=PLwcO4UxPYJq3m-HCBEMQGnYVbs10kM5GD

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5TAiRVmOPCY>

Building Background Knowledge: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vtXeEFCTMbg>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dQzZZ_bCYZQ

When you watch the video *think* about:

1. **Do I intentionally make meaningful connections to student's backgrounds and experiences to support understanding-specifically with new immigrants/English Learners (ex. ask about specific customs at home, things about their native country if not US born)**
2. **Do I intentionally connect past learning to current to future learning?**
3. **Do I intentionally use a variety of activities to foster vocabulary understanding in a way that is comprehensible to English Learners specifically? (use of native language, pictures, actions)**
4. **Do I know to teach a variety of vocabulary words through context, but also pre-teach prior to lesson?**
5. **Do I recognize a variety of different types of vocabulary words (process words, content words, word parts, etc..)**

In your box today will be a copy of the SIOP Chapter on Building Background. We will reference some of this pages in future discussions.

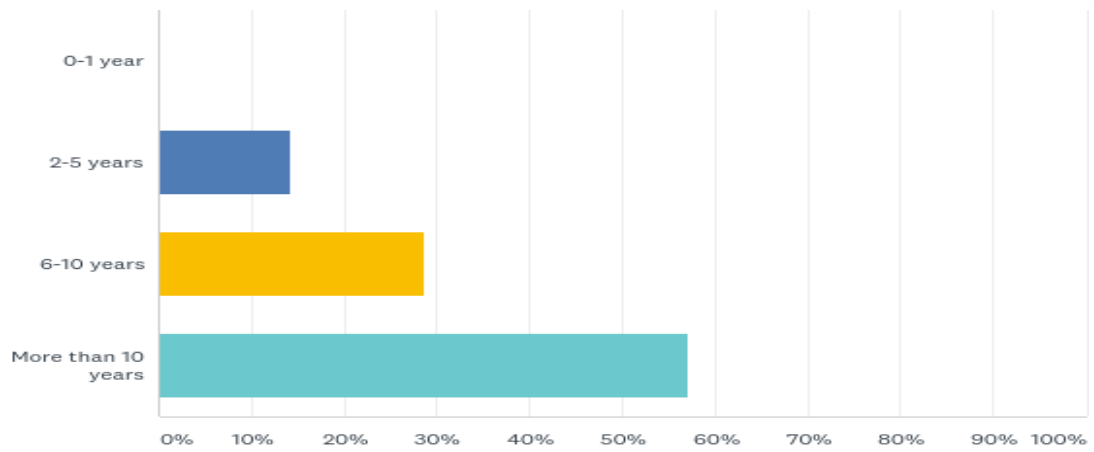
Again, thank you.

Sarah

APPENDIX F

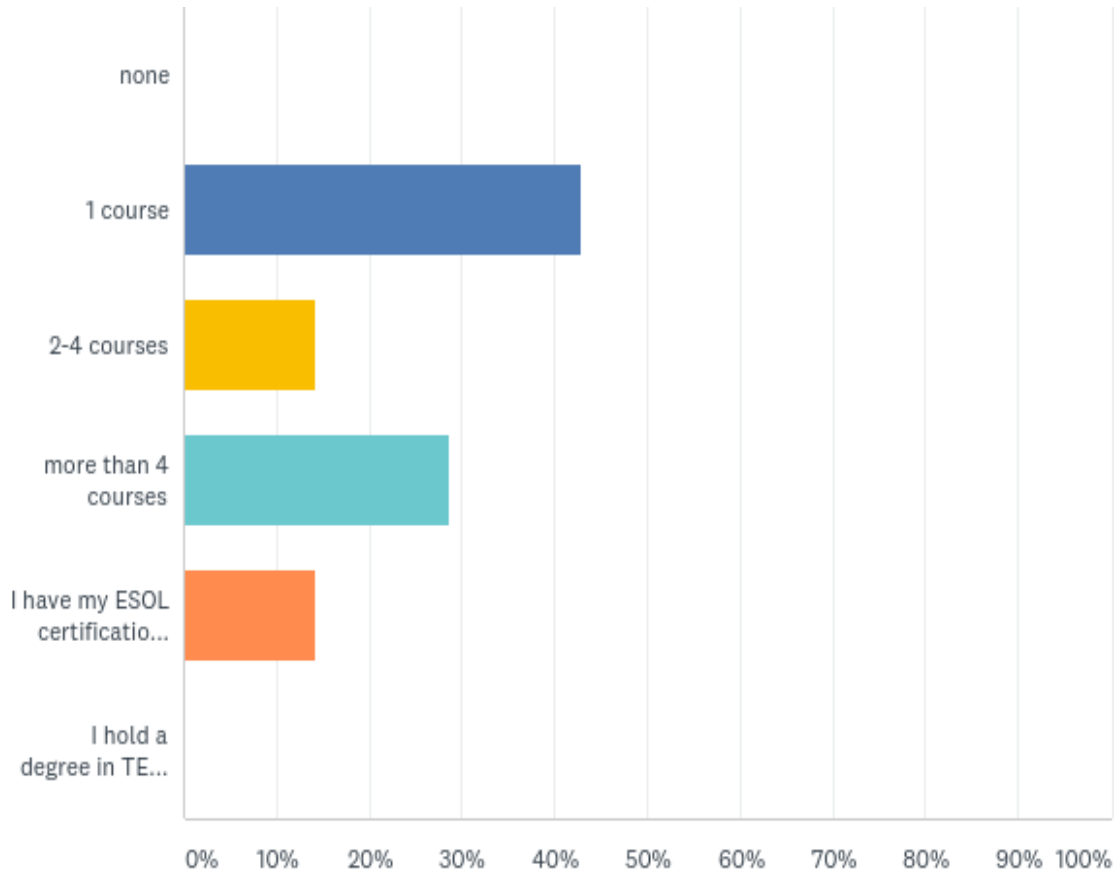
HELPING ENGLISH LEARNERS: PRE-SELF ASSESSMENT

Q1: How long have you been working with students that are formally identified as English Learners?



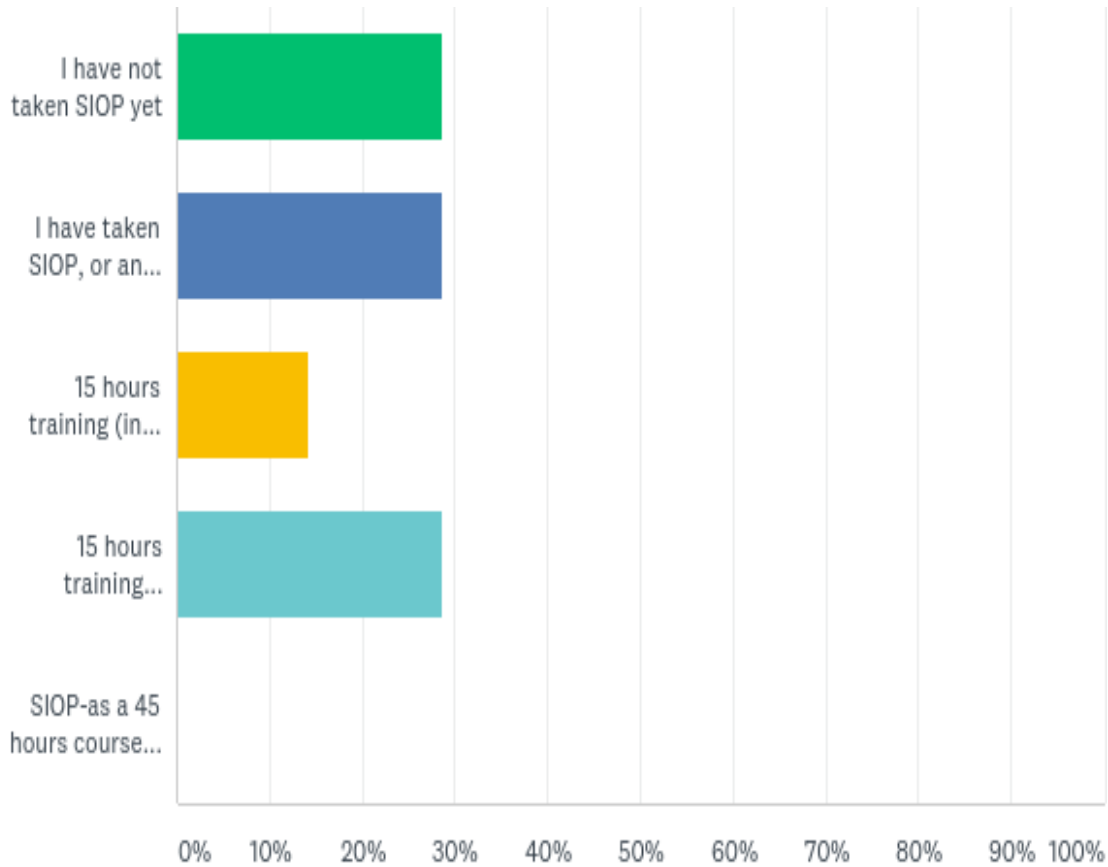
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
0-1 year	0.00% 0
2-5 years	14.29% 1
6-10 years	28.57% 2
More than 10 years	57.14% 4
TOTAL	7

Q2: In terms of formal undergraduate and graduate level classes, how many courses have you taken specifically addressing the instructional needs of English Learners in the classroom?



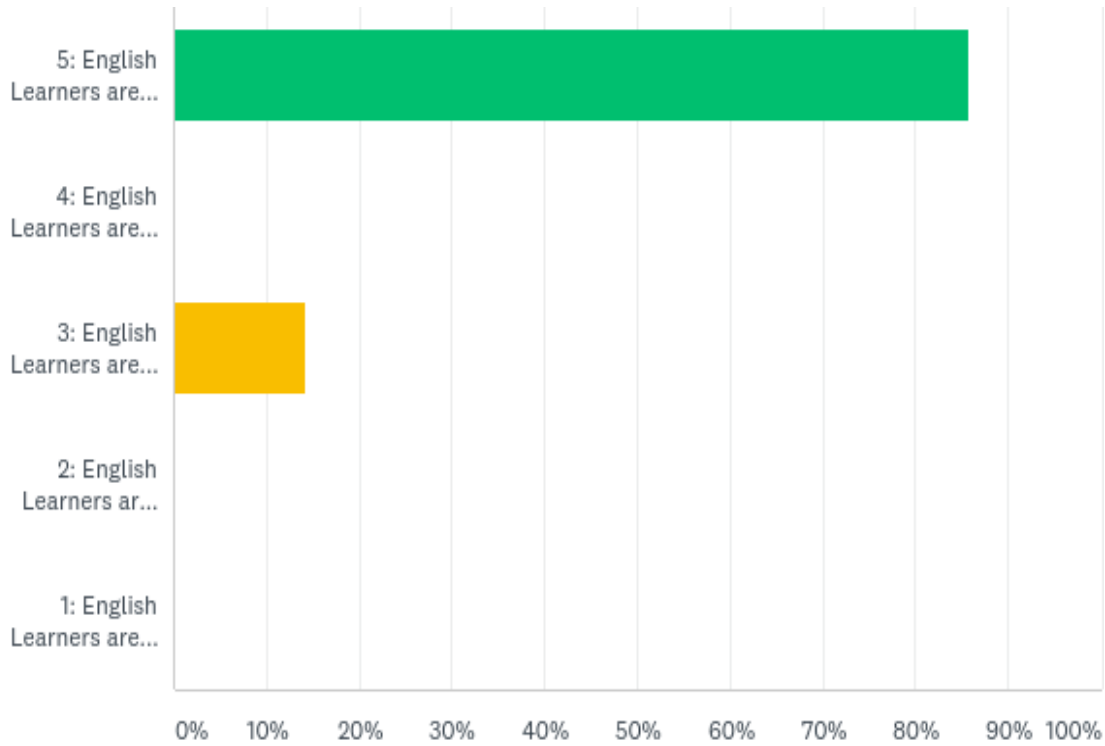
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
none	0.00% 0
1 course	42.86% 3
2-4 courses	14.29% 1
more than 4 courses	28.57% 2
I have my ESOL certification per state requirements	14.29% 1
I hold a degree in TESOL or ESL methodology	0.00% 0
TOTAL	7

Q3: SIOP, a research based method for sheltering instruction for English Learners, is a mandated course in BCSD for all certified teachers. State which course option you have taken to fulfill this requirement.



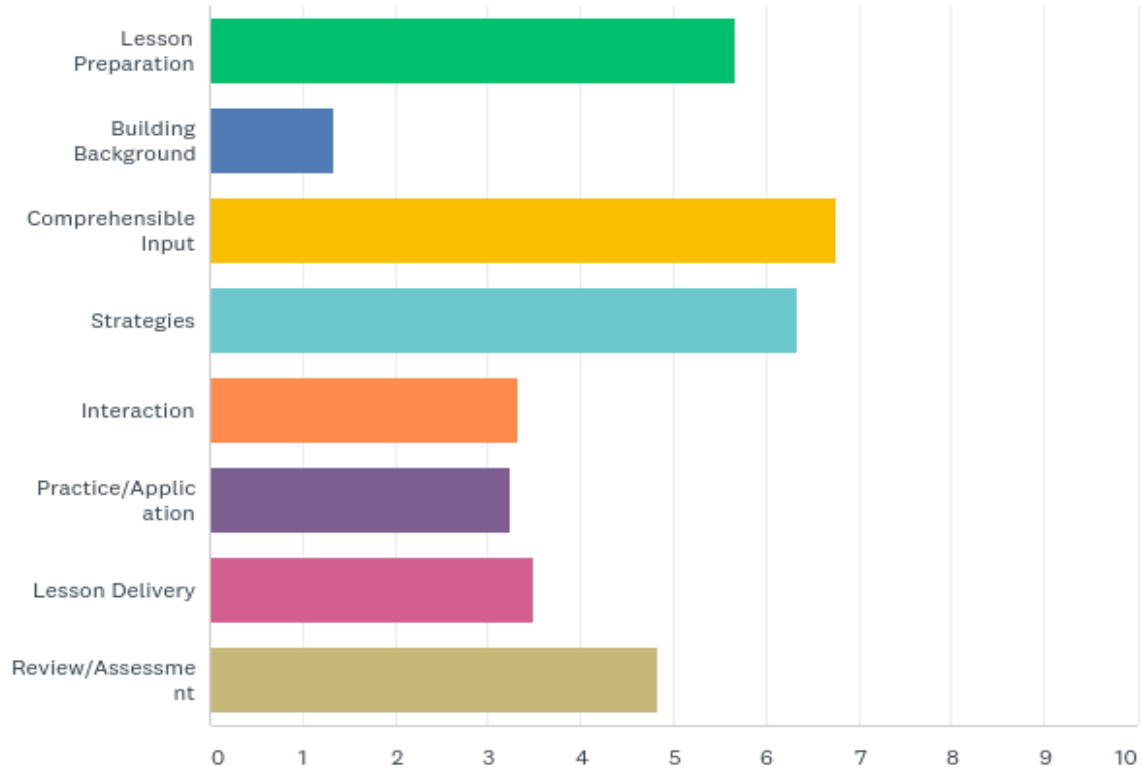
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I have not taken SIOP yet	28.57%	2
I have taken SIOP, or an approved equivalent of, as part of my ESOL certification	28.57%	2
15 hours training (in person)	14.29%	1
15 hours training (virtual)	28.57%	2
SIOP-as a 45 hours course (graduate level-Winthrop University)	0.00%	0
TOTAL		7

Q4: On a scale from 1 (not at all relevant) to 5 (extremely relevant), please rate how relevant using specific strategies for English Learners are.



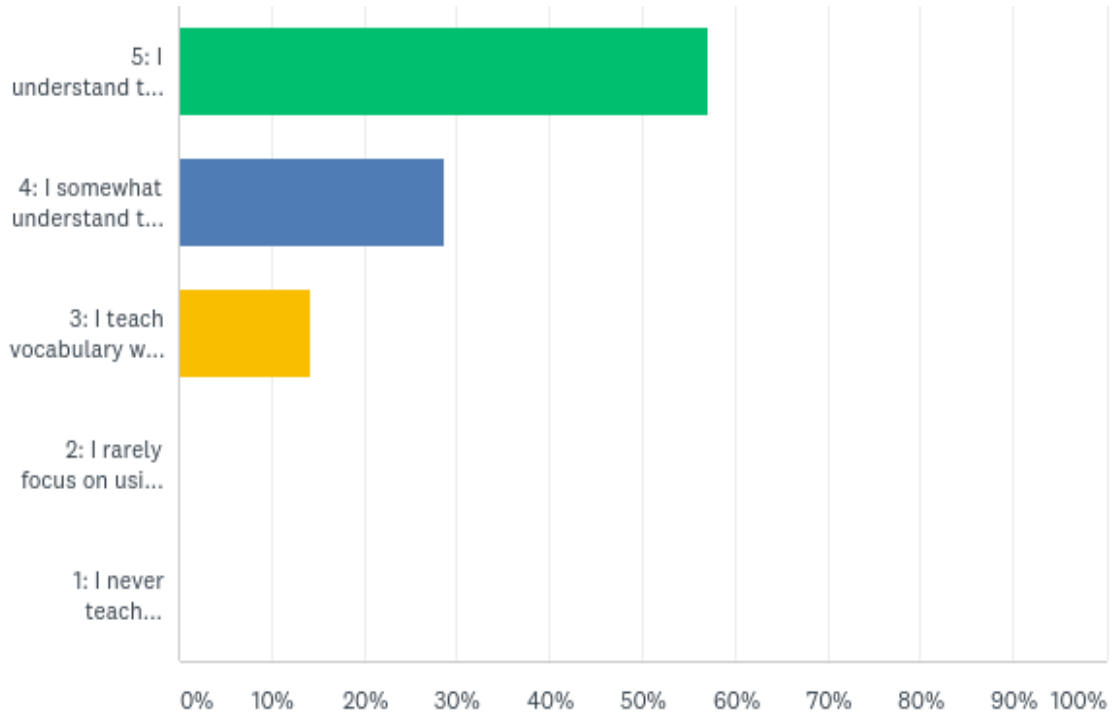
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
5: English Learners are a unique population which need specific instructional strategies to foster achievement.	85.71%	6
4: English Learners are a unique population which need some specific instructional strategies to foster achievement.	0.00%	0
3: English Learners are somewhat unique and thus need some specific instructional strategies to foster achievement.	14.29%	1
2: English Learners are somewhat unique yet can benefit from the same instructional strategies as English speakers.	0.00%	0
1: English Learners are not unique and do not need specific instructional strategies to foster achievement.	0.00%	0
TOTAL		7

Q5: In terms of the 8 components of SIOP, please rank in order of how knowledgeable you feel you are with using the components with 1 being least knowledgeable and 8 being most knowledgeable. If you have not taken SIOP, or do not remember the below components, please answer N/A.



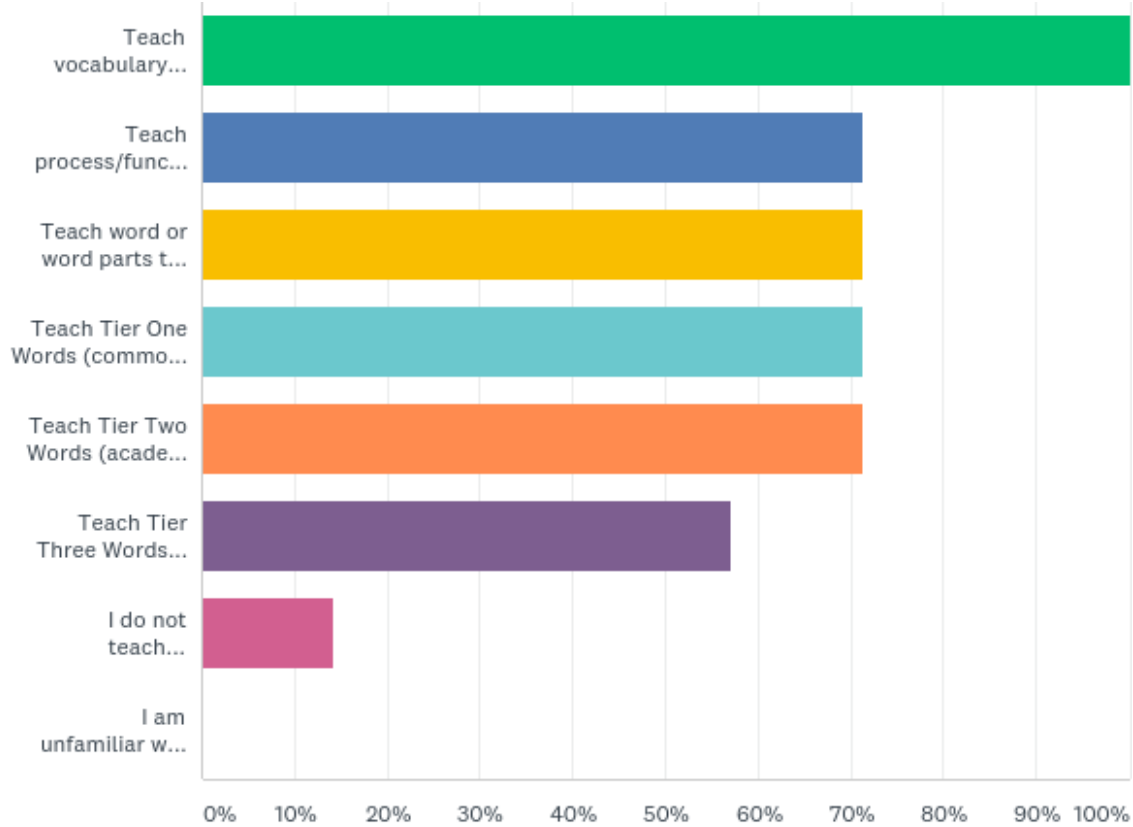
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	N/A	TOTAL	SCORE
Lesson Preparation	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	50.00% 2	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	4	5.67
Building Background	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	50.00% 2	25.00% 1	4	1.33
Comprehensible Input	60.00% 3	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	5	6.75
Strategies	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	4	6.33
Interaction	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	50.00% 2	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	0.00% 0	25.00% 1	4	3.33
Practice/Application	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	5	3.25
Lesson Delivery	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	40.00% 2	0.00% 0	20.00% 1	20.00% 1	5	3.50
Review/Assessment	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	14.29% 1	7	4.83

Q6: Emphasizing key vocabulary, part of the Building Background SIOP component, is a key feature of this model. In regard to this feature, how knowledgeable/comfortable do you feel about this in your classroom? Using the descriptions as part of the Likert scale, please choose which below answer best describes vocabulary usage in your classroom (1-5-with 5 being the most knowledgeable).



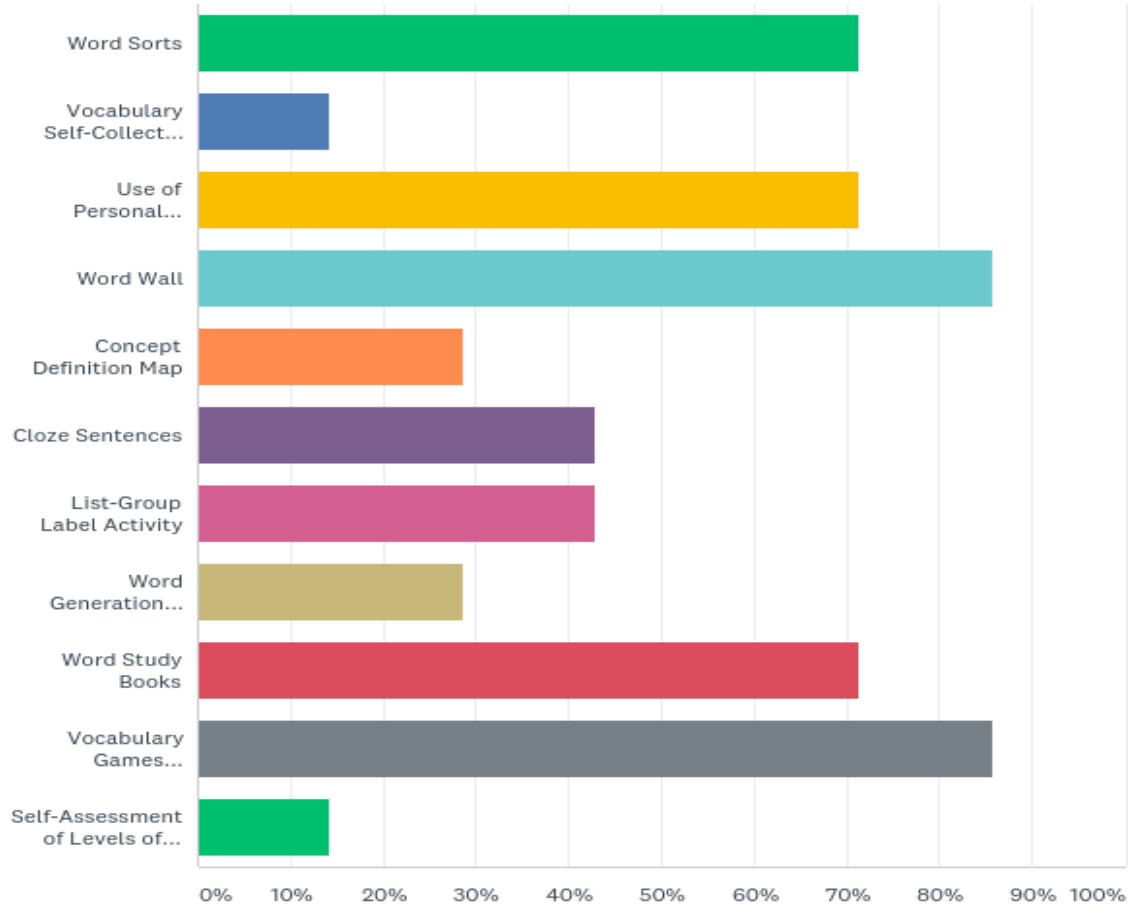
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
5: I understand the importance of providing background knowledge through emphasizing key vocabulary and make this a focus during all lessons	57.14%	4
4: I somewhat understand the importance of providing background knowledge through emphasizing key vocabulary and use it sometimes during lessons	28.57%	2
3: I teach vocabulary when it is embedded as part of the curriculum or resources that I use but rarely teach it in isolation	14.29%	1
2: I rarely focus on using vocabulary and assume students will learn it through context and as they learn the English language	0.00%	0
1: I never teach vocabulary in my lessons.	0.00%	0
TOTAL		7

Q7: Click all the things you do when teaching vocabulary in your classroom



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Teach vocabulary content words (ELA, Math, SS, Science, etc..)	100.00%	7
Teach process/function words (skim, question, classify etc..)	71.43%	5
Teach word or word parts that teach English Structure (root words, stems, etc..)	71.43%	5
Teach Tier One Words (common words)	71.43%	5
Teach Tier Two Words (academic words-content related)	71.43%	5
Teach Tier Three Words (uncommon words)	57.14%	4
I do not teach vocabulary words in a specific way	14.29%	1
I am unfamiliar with many of these terms	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 7		

Q8: Click any of the activities you have done with your students to teach vocabulary.

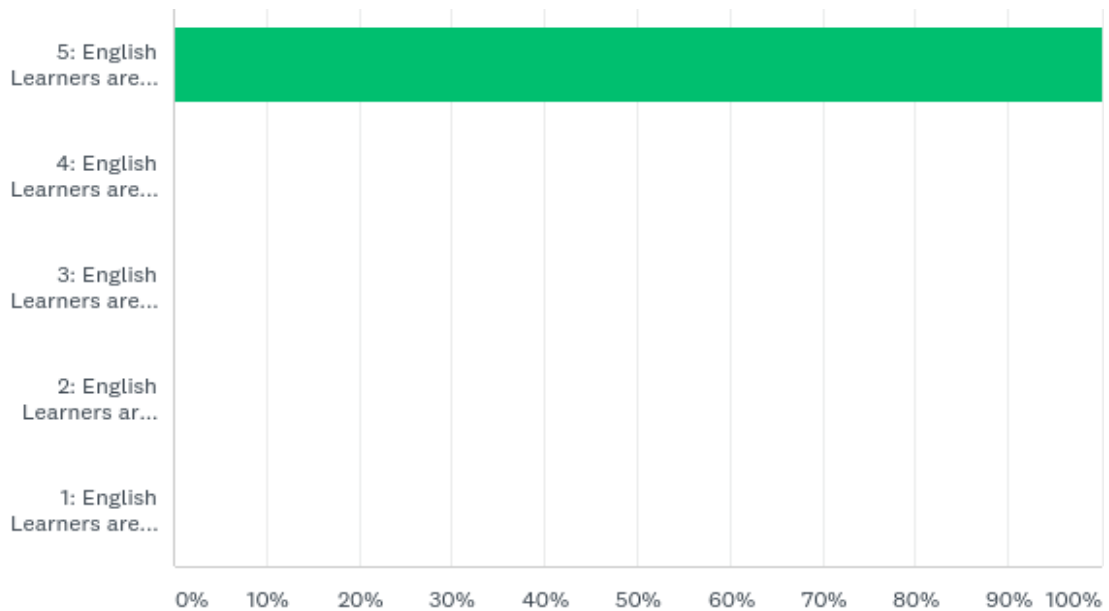


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Word Sorts	71.43%	5
Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS)	14.29%	1
Use of Personal Dictionaries	71.43%	5
Word Wall	85.71%	6
Concept Definition Map	28.57%	2
Cloze Sentences	42.86%	3
List-Group Label Activity	42.86%	3
Word Generation Activity	28.57%	2
Word Study Books	71.43%	5
Vocabulary Games (including Software)	85.71%	6
Self-Assessment of Levels of Word Knowledge	14.29%	1
Total Respondents: 7		

APPENDIX G

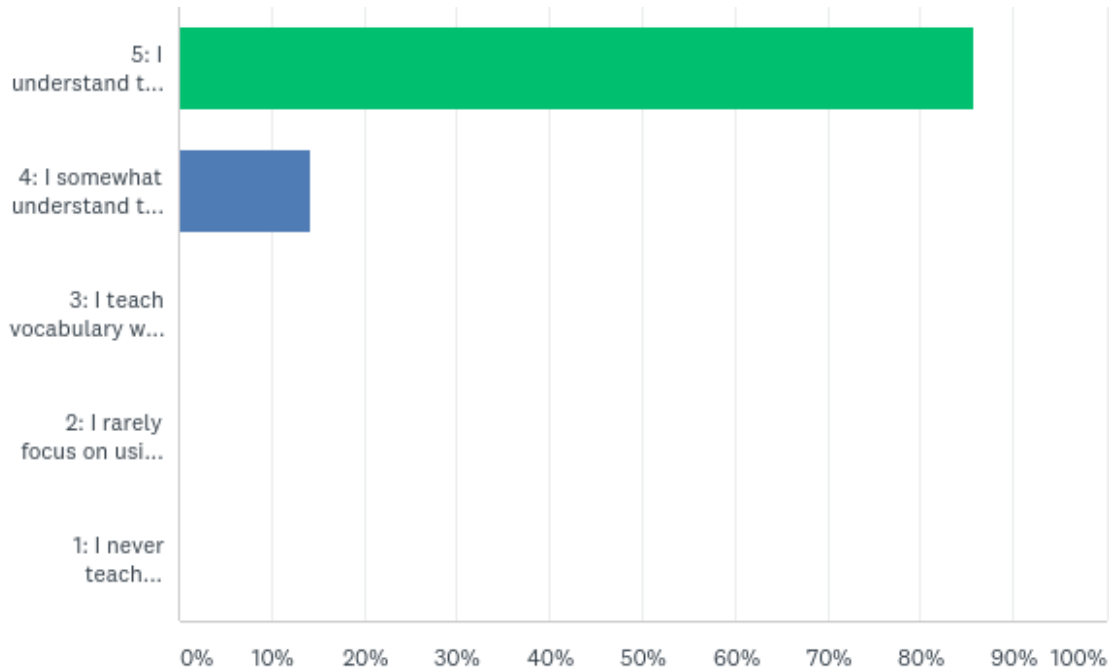
HELPING ENGLISH LEARNERS POST-SELF ASSESSMENT

Q1: On a scale from 1 (not at all relevant) to 5 (extremely relevant), please rate how relevant using specific strategies for English Learners are.



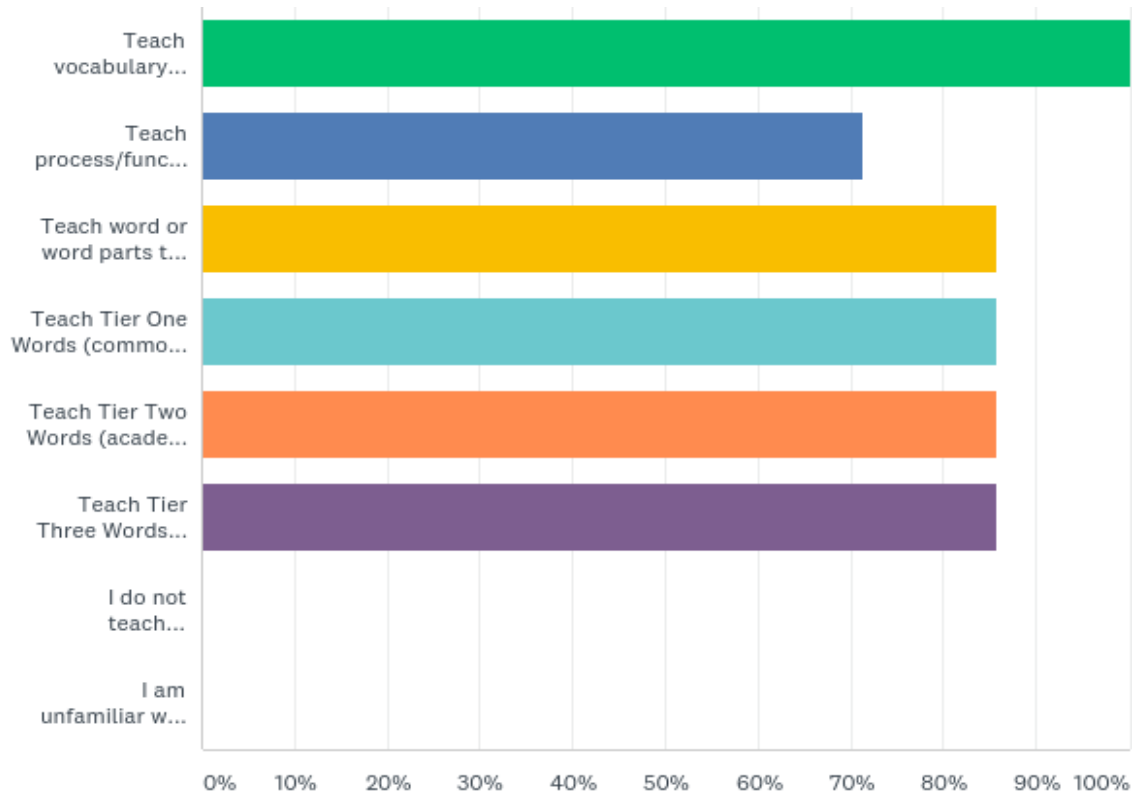
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
5: English Learners are a unique population which need specific instructional strategies to foster achievement.	100.00% 7
4: English Learners are a unique population which need some specific instructional strategies to foster achievement.	0.00% 0
3: English Learners are somewhat unique and thus need some specific instructional strategies to foster achievement.	0.00% 0
2: English Learners are somewhat unique yet can benefit from the same instructional strategies as English speakers.	0.00% 0
1: English Learners are not unique and do not need specific instructional strategies to foster achievement.	0.00% 0
TOTAL	7

Q2: Emphasizing key vocabulary, part of the Building Background SIOP component, is a key feature of this model. In regard to this feature, how knowledgeable/comfortable do you feel about this in your classroom? Using the descriptions as part of the Likert scale, please choose which below answer best describes vocabulary usage in your classroom (1-5-with 5 being the most knowledgeable).



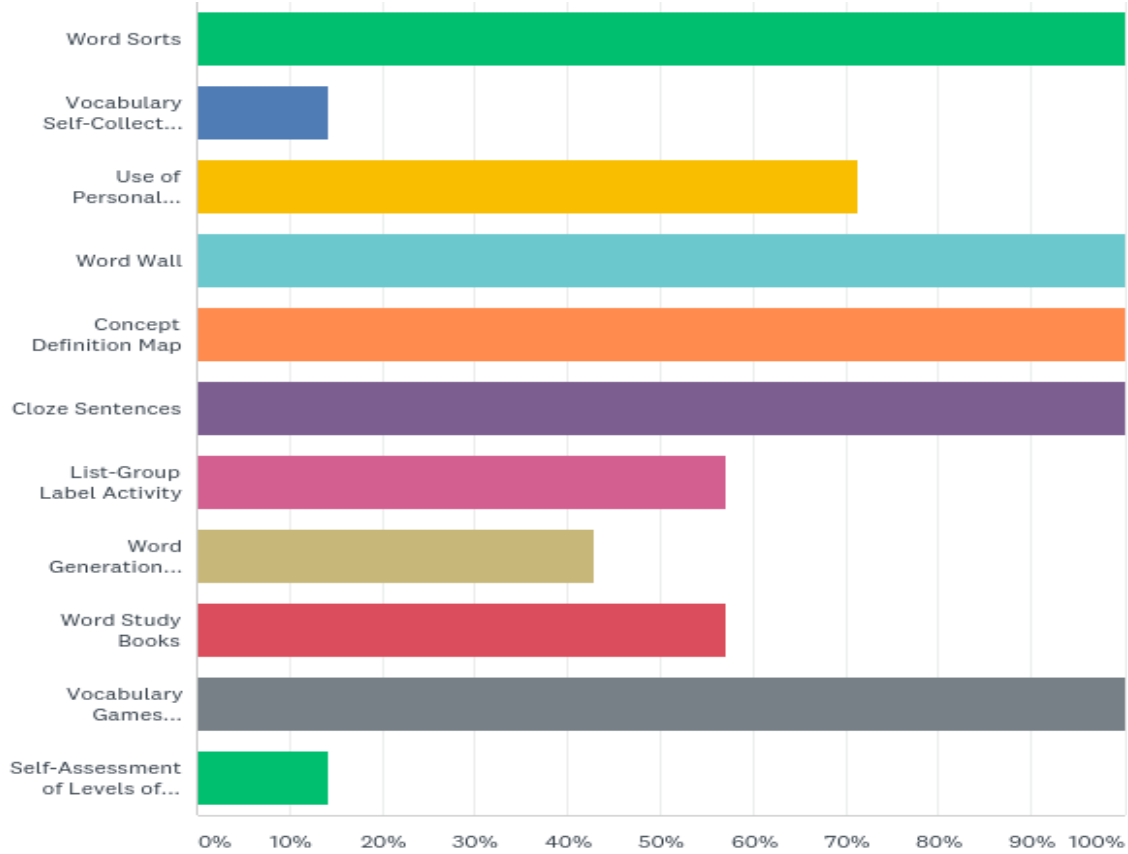
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
5: I understand the importance of providing background knowledge through emphasizing key vocabulary and make this a focus during all lessons	85.71%	6
4: I somewhat understand the importance of providing background knowledge through emphasizing key vocabulary and use it sometimes during lessons	14.29%	1
3: I teach vocabulary when it is embedded as part of the curriculum or resources that I use but rarely teach it in isolation	0.00%	0
2: I rarely focus on using vocabulary and assume students will learn it through context and as they learn the English language	0.00%	0
1: I never teach vocabulary in my lessons.	0.00%	0
TOTAL		7

Q3: Click all the things you do when teaching vocabulary in your classroom (including during this Action Research.)



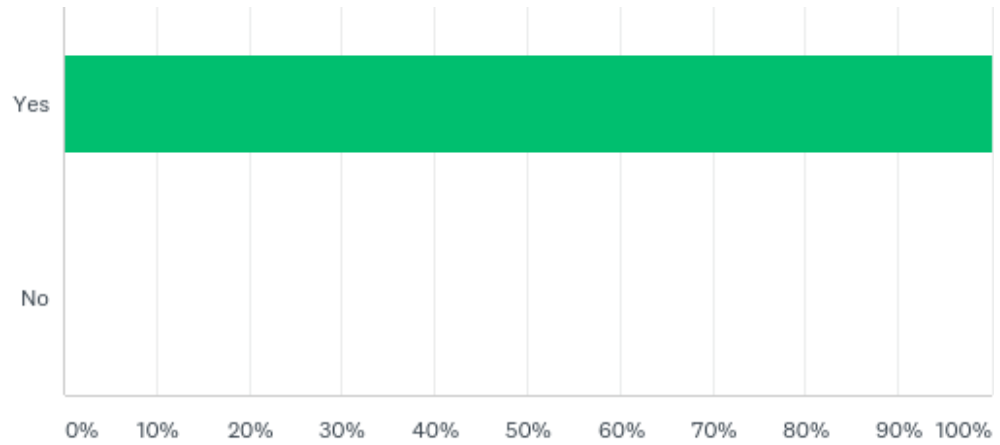
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Teach vocabulary content words (ELA, Math, SS, Science, etc..)	100.00% 7
Teach process/function words (skim, question, classify etc..)	71.43% 5
Teach word or word parts that teach English Structure (root words, stems, etc..)	85.71% 6
Teach Tier One Words (common words)	85.71% 6
Teach Tier Two Words (academic words-content related)	85.71% 6
Teach Tier Three Words (uncommon words)	85.71% 6
I do not teach vocabulary words in a specific way	0.00% 0
I am unfamiliar with many of these terms	0.00% 0
Total Respondents: 7	

Q4: Click any of the activities you have done with your students to teach vocabulary.



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Word Sorts	100.00%	7
Vocabulary Self-Collection Strategy (VSS)	14.29%	1
Use of Personal Dictionaries	71.43%	5
Word Wall	100.00%	7
Concept Definition Map	100.00%	7
Cloze Sentences	100.00%	7
List-Group Label Activity	57.14%	4
Word Generation Activity	42.86%	3
Word Study Books	57.14%	4
Vocabulary Games (Including Software)	100.00%	7
Self-Assessment of Levels of Word Knowledge	14.29%	1
Total Respondents: 7		

Q7: Based on your participating in this Action Research, will you incorporate any new practices in your teaching which include emphasizing key vocabulary?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	100.00%	7
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		7