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Natural and Necessary Language: A Newcomer Resource Manual

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NATURAL AND NECESSARY LANGUAGE:

A NEWCOMER RESOURCE MANUAL

A Project Report

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Master of Education

Master Teacher

by

Shelley Joy Henry

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ABSTRACT

NATURAL AND NECESSARY LANGUAGE:

A NEWCOMER RESOURCE MANUAL

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American public schools are experiencing a dramatic rise in immigrant students.

These "newcomer students" have unique needs. Providing "newcomer students" with a

specialized, short term program allows them the gift of time as they make major

adjustments to many new aspects of life in the United States. Public schools are

challenged to assess the needs and provide the most appropriate research based teaching

practices for this special group of students. The research shows layers of diversity among

"newcomer students" which requires careful implementation of instruction and

curriculum to create a safe environment for learning the English language, core content,

and school and community culture.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Project

According to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, every student must be given the necessary support to reach his/her full potential for academic success, including English Language Learners (ELL) (Zehler, et al, 2008). Many schools are experiencing an increased number of K-12 students enrolling with very limited or no English background. The number has grown by nearly 650,000 between 2005-2008. This brings the total to almost 4,985,000 students in the year 2008 (Office of English Language Acquisition, Language Enhancement, and Academic Achievement for Limited English Proficient Students, 2008). Some schools place the "newcomer students" in the age level appropriate grades regardless of the student's academic level or background (Friedlander, 1991). Other schools place these new students in ability level classes which creates a multiage level class. Some students are placed in the mainstream classrooms where they are expected to "sink or swim." Students who come from countries outside the United States have more to learn than just the English language. There are many cultural, regional and local dimensions that students need to know to aid in their academic progress. There are numerous school culture issues that students need to be taught and have opportunities to practice in a safe setting before they are expected to perform as students in the natural school setting.

A newcomer program or center in a district can provide the immigrant students with a safe setting and the gift of time to learn some essentials of the culture, the U.S.

school system expectations, and how to become contributing members of their new community (Friedlander, 1991).

Statement of the Problem

Newly arriving immigrant students entering the public school with low level English skills or only their home language, with varying levels and abilities of formal education in their background, face many challenges toward becoming successful (Zehler, et al., 2008).

Many schools have some programming in place for these ELL students. Many will provide language support in mainstream classrooms. Others will offer scaffolding and differentiated instruction (Echevarria, et al., 2000). These are good efforts according to the state and federal guidelines established for all students, including second language learners, but the "newcomer students" need more than the typical U.S. school day, classroom and teacher to mentor them onto a path of success.

"Newcomer students" need orientation in the local and school culture. Most students become very good at appearing to know how to do school and end up blending in, not making waves, but not making progress either (Zehler, et al., 2008). They need to be taught in a safe setting where they can practice new cultural expectations. They need information about testing expectations. Their families need to be included in some of this education (Zehler, et al., 2008). Cross cultural transition is traumatic. Children are very resilient and use incredible coping mechanisms to adapt or appear to be adapting. Teachers, often times because of language barriers, rely on appearances to judge whether a student is making progress in the classroom (Cummins, 1979). "Newcomer students"

who are given time and instruction in foundations of culture and language will be more successful academically and personally.

Purpose of the Project

The purpose of this project is to create a resource manual that will serve the teachers and "newcomer students." The plan will provide introductory natural and necessary language instruction such as survival English, information about school expectations, community resources and cultural introductions. The manual will have a suggested course of study which will aid the student's transition into the traditional classroom setting. Teachers who use the manual will aid the students by allowing them time in the program to practice newly acquired language and have exposure to varying aspects of the culture and community. The manual will be designed to be effective in the traditional quarter system of the school. The goal is to have the student attend a "newcomer program" half days for one quarter. During this time the overseeing teacher and the student will determine the exit date for the student. The teacher and the student will evaluate the student's readiness to leave the "newcomer program" and fulltime entry level into the school. This will depend on the student's academic background.

Significance of the Project

Students who are expected to adapt, understand, acquire and assimilate into a new culture and language without the support of a "newcomer center" are at a great disadvantage for achieving academic success. All students are expected to show academic progress throughout the school year. They are all expected to take the state standardized test in the state of Washington, The Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL), after completing one year of enrollment in the public school

regardless of their acquired language. Starting a student in a short intensive "newcomer program" using the suggested curriculum and strategies can provide the student with necessary learning, practice and support for his/her continued progress in school.

<p style="text-align:center">Limitations of the Project</p>

This project includes the research relating to "newcomer programs" for students enrolling in the public middle and high schools. The "newcomer programs" work best when students enter at similar English language ability regardless of their home language, and work on language acquisition using a variety of researched strategies. This project does not include information on how to test the language ability. It includes specific strategies to use for instruction. The teachers and program directors will use the district approved testing tools and instructional strategies.

<p style="text-align:center">Definition of Terms</p>

The following are definitions which will help the reader to understand many educational terms used throughout the project.

Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS): "Experts such as Jim Cummins differentiate between social and academic language acquisition. Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) are language skills needed in social situations. It is the day-to-day language needed to interact socially with other people. English language learners (ELLs) employ BIC skills when they are on the playground, in the lunch room, on the school bus, at parties, playing sports and talking on the telephone. Social interactions are usually context embedded. They occur in a meaningful social context. They are not very demanding cognitively. The language required is not specialized. These language skills usually develop within six months to two years after

arrival in the U.S. Problems arise when teachers and administrators think that a child is proficient in a language when they demonstrate good social English" (Haynes, 2009, p.1).

Bilingual Instruction: "Both English and a child's native language are used as a medium of instruction at different points throughout the program for different functions and purposes. The two languages hold a position of equal prestige and importance. Students' L1 learning is not seen as merely a means to an end, but rather a legitimate and important end in itself. Developing literacy skills in L1 reduces the risk of reading failure. Biliteracy is a positive and beneficial outcome of dual language instruction. Content-area knowledge is enhanced and accelerated by the use of students' L1" (Mora, 2006, p.1).

Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP): "CALP refers to formal academic learning. This includes listening, speaking, reading, and writing about subject area content material. This level of language learning is essential for students to succeed in school. Students need time and support to become proficient in academic areas. This usually takes from five to seven years. Recent research (Thomas & Collier, 1995) has shown that if a child has no prior schooling or has no support in native language development, it may take seven to ten years for ELLs to catch up to their peers" (Haynes, 2009, p.1).

Differentiated Instruction: "To differentiate instruction is to recognize students varying background knowledge, readiness, language, preferences in learning, interests, and to react responsively. Differentiated instruction is a process to approach teaching and learning for students of differing abilities in the same class. The intent of differentiating instruction is to maximize each student's growth and individual success by meeting each student where he or she is, and assisting in the learning process" (Hall, 2002, p.1).

English as a Second Language (ESL): "The goal of English as a Second Language education is to assist students to become proficient in English, to develop intellectually and as citizens, and to enable them to achieve the expected learning outcomes of the provincial curriculum. Support for ESL students requires attention to language proficiency, intellectual development, and citizenship. Such support should be provided in a school environment which values diversity, bridges cultures and works to eliminate racism" (BC Education, 2009, p.5).

English Language Learner (ELL): "The U.S. Department of Education defines ELLs as national-origin-minority students who are limited-English proficient. The ELL term is often preferred over Limited-English-Proficient (LEP) as it highlights accomplishments rather than deficits" (Francis, D.J., et al., 2006, p.3).

English-only Immersion Instruction: "English-only L2 Instructional Model English should be the only medium of instruction for second-language learners in public schools. It is only important to develop literacy and content-area knowledge in English. Bilingualism is a hindrance to learning English and therefore, detrimental to children's short-term and long-term academic advancement" (Mora, 2006, p.1).

Language Acquisition: "Language acquisition is the study of the processes through which learners acquire language. By itself, language acquisition refers to first language acquisition, which studies infants' acquisition of their native language, whereas second language acquisition deals with acquisition of additional languages in both children and adults" (Wikipedia, 2009, p.1).

Newcomer: "The term "newcomer student" refers to a combination of a student's level of language proficiency and/or academic skill, his of her length of stay in the United States, or even nationality" (Friedlander, 1991, p.2).

Scaffolding Instruction: "How teachers interact with students as they complete a task is important to the students' ability to perform the activity. Scaffolding is an instructional technique whereby the teacher models the desired learning strategy or task, then gradually shifts responsibility to the students" (North Central Regional Education Library, 2009, p.1).

Sheltered Instruction: "Sheltered Instruction, also referred to as SDAIE, is a teaching style founded on the concept of providing meaningful instruction in the content areas (social studies, math, science) for transitioning Limited English Proficient (LEP) students towards higher academic achievement while they reach English fluency. This method type is often used in mainstream secondary classrooms where the students have a foundation of English education. A variety of instruction is used including the theories of Vygotsky's proximal development and Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Instead of providing watered down curriculum for LEP student, sheltered instruction allows for the content to be equal to that of native English speakers while improving their grasp of the language" (Wikipedia, 2009, p.1).

Project Overview

Chapter One describes "newcomer students" as those who come into the United States' public schools with very little or no English language. The problem is that the students face many challenges in their new learning environments. The purpose of the project is to provide a resource manual which includes suggested topics, curriculum and

strategies that will benefit both the teachers and students. Chapter Two reviews the literature describing "newcomer students" and their needs. It also reviews some program models, program focus and staffing concerns. Chapter Three includes the projects' method, procedure and development. A description of the project is included in Chapter Four. Chapter Five contains a summary, conclusion and recommendation of the project.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

History of Immigrant Education

As early as the mid 18th century, in the history of the United States, there were

concerns for the education of the immigrants who were now calling this new land home

(Arellano-Houchin, Flamenco, Merlos, & Segura, 2001). In 1786 Benjamin Rush

published an essay that suggested that there be an establishment in Pennsylvania of

public schools that would arrange districts to teach children of national and religious

similarities together as much as possible (Glenn, 2008). Classes were taught in German,

Dutch, French and Swedish (Porter, 1998). Even until the 1830s most of the schooling

provided for students was through church efforts. Between the 1830s and 1840s the

immigrant population tripled. The increased number began to be seen as a threat to the

American society (Glenn, 2008).

Between 1837 and 1848 Horace Mann became a leader in education. He believed

that the way to reform society was through education. Through his influence the

"common" school became an accepted standard for education. The thought behind it was

that all children would receive a common education regardless of their religion or social

class, therefore erasing social class and political differences (Spring, 2002). At about this

time questions began to rise about the immigrants having different beliefs and

philosophies than those of the founders of the new country. The concerns were based on

the belief that if the immigrants were not educated in the American way they might bring

into society the beliefs and attitudes of their fathers which may be seen as prejudices.

Therefore, the ideas were set into play to make "real Americans" out of the immigrant's

children by having them attend the public schools. Some private schools offered education in the languages of the immigrants to help preserve their language and culture. Seeing the increase of private schools, by the late 1880s many states had authorized bilingual instruction in public school (Glenn, 2008). Until the early twentieth century, in the Midwest classes were taught in German, French in Louisiana and Greek in Pittsburgh.

In the 1890s, with the increase of immigrants from eastern and southern Europe, the public schools initiated the Americanization programs. These programs began the teaching of the patriotic songs, The Pledge of Allegiance and encouraged students to participate in school government. The purpose of the Americanization programs was to teach students loyalty and obedience to the school rules with the hope that the loyalty and obedience would transfer while being taught the laws, customs and language of the United States (Spring, 2002).

By 1911 there arose great concern about the immigrants developing into separate communities. After the First World War, 1914-918, opinions become more strongly in favor of teaching in English only (Porter, 1998).The focus became a language issue in the public school setting so that seventeen states required English be the language of instruction at the elementary level (Glenn, 2008). This created a snowball effect toward segregation which had become acceptable with the 1895 "equal but separate" ruling of *Plessy v. Ferguson*, with school boundaries being drawn and buildings built with a particular language group or ethnicity in mind (Spring, 2002). This issue was a part of making and passing laws for almost half a century. By 1946 a U.S. District court stated that the only reason for segregation was if a child had special needs in education (Spring, 2002). Finally in 1954 the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka's* decision to

desegregate began to stir education saying that "segregated education is inherently unequal" (Spring, 2002).

In the 1960s bilingual education became a front runner topic for preserving culture through language. According to John Ogbu "Cultural frames of reference refer to the manner in which people interpret their perceptions of the world" (Spring, 2002, p.156). A cultural frame of reference is a family's historical experience. This history is passed on through oral communication. When children do not retain their home language they lose some of their culture (Spring, 2002).

In 1974 the Supreme Court decided in *Lau v. Nichols* that language support was a right. Enfolded in this right was keeping the students in the public school without separating them for their educational needs. This kicked off the "Lau remedies" which supported using the home language as an instrument of instruction, now known as transitional bilingual education (Glenn, 2008). The Lau remedies provided the basic outline and guidance for the education of students with limited English (Arellano-Houchin, Flamenco, Merlos, & Segura, 2001).

Newcomer Students

According to the biennial, 2004-2006, report of Title III grant program the number of Title III K-12 students has grown in the United States to nearly 4,985,000. Almost 85% of the students labeled as limited English proficient received support from Title III funding. These students speak more than 400 world languages and almost 80% speak Spanish (Office of English Language Acquisition, 2008).

School officials have often been slow to respond to cultural and linguistic diversity, to recognize the unique needs of ELLs, and to adapt instructional

practices accordingly. They should be held accountable for providing equal opportunities for these students. But judgments about school performance should be broad-based and well informed. Indicators of progress, or lack thereof, should be not only accurate but also sensitive enough to assist in the process of school improvement. NCLB's simplistic approach fails ELLs on all of these counts (Crawford, 2004, p.7).

The "newcomer students" are the front runners in the battle for equal opportunities in instruction. "Newcomer students" are students who have recently arrived in the United States with limited English proficiency. Most of these students often have limited education and are below grade level in their home language. "Newcomer students" are at risk regardless of their age but the older the student the greater the concern for English acquisition (Francis, et al., 2006b).

Upon entering the public school system the student needs to be assessed in a number of different ways. Oral English language and comprehension should be the first but just the start. Each student should also be assessed in writing and reading in English. There needs to also be a home language test for reading, writing and oral skills, math and computation must be included. If possible, parents need to be interviewed regarding the educational background of their child. There needs to be sensitivity to the background of these students and their families (Friedlander, 1991).

The placement of the "newcomer students" becomes an overwhelming task. The varying levels of students are diverse and complicated. The focus normally falls on oral English ability, but diversity only begins there. The student's age and years of schooling may not match any level in place in the existing school. The students' literacy in their

home language is a very strong factor to consider as well as the basic familiarity with the school setting and expectations. For these reasons a "newcomer center" or program would benefit these students who find themselves surrounded by unfamiliarity (Friedlander, 1991).

Newcomer Students Opinions and Concerns

Providing an informal survey to fifteen middle school and high school "newcomer students" revealed several points of concern they had with their new school and community environments. Most "newcomer students" stated they had little to no understanding of the U.S. and local culture where they were now living. They felt that they needed more information about community resources that were available. They find so much that is new and confusing to them for their school and family life.

Many said that after an orientation to the school building they felt comfortable in places like the library, cafeteria and hallways but the school's daily schedule and rules were still unclear and hard to keep straight. Many were uncertain about how to seek help from any office or counseling personnel.

A few "newcomer students" stated that they had some confidence about graduating from high school; most of them responded that they felt very little confidence about high school graduation. Many felt very uninformed about the required testing for students in public school or about when they would be required to test. The majority of "newcomer students" expressed the relief of being in a class with other "newcomer students." All of the students responded that the "newcomer program" was a great benefit to them.

Taking these "newcomer student" views and opinions into consideration, a teacher can begin to understand where some foundational teaching and learning needs to take place even before the academic rigor can begin.

Newcomer Programs

"Newcomer programs" have a multifaceted design. They are primarily focused on the students with low-level English proficiency skills and most often with limited or no schooling in their home language. The basic goals are to provide necessary and natural language skills, cultural awareness as well as some content area material (Zehler, et al., 2008). The goal of a "newcomer program" is to only keep the students long enough for them to develop some language skills and have practice in a safe classroom setting. For a secondary student this would be determined quarter by quarter, the least amount of time being one quarter, ten weeks. The instructional methods vary. Some programs use sheltered instruction of content based curriculum with a bilingual paraprofessional. Other programs use the student's home language for the instruction of content and include grammar-based or communication-based ESL to teach about the English language (Echevarria, et al., 2004; Zehler, et al., 2008). "Newcomer programs" provide the same access to a regular curriculum as the mainstream program (Friedlander, 1991). "Newcomer programs" can be the link for many students and their families to outside services such as social and health services, counseling, parent outreach programs, extracurricular activities and career education.

Newcomer Programs Focus on Student Academic Needs

The primary focus of a "newcomer program" is learning the English language and increasing academics skills. Language acquisition includes the four areas of reading,

writing, listening and speaking. Language acquisition at a basic conversational level often referred to as BICS (basic interpersonal communication skills) can be acquired in as little as 2-3 years but academic language or CALP (cognitive academic language proficiency) often takes up to 7 or more years to acquire (Cummins, 1979; Thomas & Collier, 1997).

The "newcomer program" is a way to introduce the English language learner to some basic language survival vocabulary and language learning strategies. It can also provide the necessary time for teaching the introduction of basic school skills that are required for learning in the public school system. Placing a "newcomer student" in the public school setting is a multifaceted project. Considering each "newcomer student" from the varying aspects of their past including years of schooling, literacy in their home language, the age to grade level match, familiarity with school and school culture and some with traumatic experiences or hardships (Friedlander, 1991). "Newcomer students" who arrive with limited literacy in their home language will require more support and direct instruction for learning whether it is the English language or any content area (DiCerbo, 2000).

Many classroom teachers are unprepared for the "newcomer students." They are uncertain about how to assess the students and how to help them overcome the academic difficulties they are up against. Regardless of where the "newcomer student" is academically, the teacher who is encouraging and helps build up the student's self-esteem will be advancing the overall progress and success for the student (Friedlander, 1991).

Newcomer Acculturation Needs

Another important facet of a "newcomer program" is the introduction of their new environment. Coming into the United States' culture is an overwhelming experience.

Providing an opportunity to learn and practice in a safe setting some of the new cultural expectations is an important aspect of a "newcomer program." Learning school culture with other multicultural peers and exploring the community by way of field trips welcomes the "newcomer students" and their families (Cummins, 1979; Friedlander, 1991). Connecting students with the new culture allows them to see themselves as members of the new community.

An organized orientation program is critical to creating a cultural bridge for the "newcomer students" and families. Well prepared "get acquainted activities" aid in the transitions these families face (Friedlander, 1991). Introducing the "newcomer student" to the building and district staff, such as a family advocate or liaison, is an important part of becoming a part of the new school and community. Inviting the parents to participate in special classes offered to them, for example, language or community resources, encourages the "newcomer students" and their families to make the cultural adjustments (Short & Boyson, 2000).

<div align="center">Program Duration</div>

The amount of time a student is enrolled in language support service varies from student to student and depends on the program that is place in a school district (Francis, et al., 2006a). Some "newcomer programs" are organized according to the quarter system, others are year long programs. The year long programs set a one-year limit of enrollment to prevent lengthy isolation from the mainstream program (Friedlander, 1991). The "newcomer program" focuses on being a stepping stone into the traditional school setting. A ten week or quarter program is a starting spot but the students need to be encouraged to look beyond the newcomer comforts.

The "newcomer students" arrive with such varied backgrounds academically, culturally and socially that trying to establish a fixed time frame for making intitial adjustments to the new environment are just rough estimates. The staff must evaluate individual student progress to determine duration in a "newcomer program" (DiCerbo, 2000). The students are not to be advanced or expected to be ready to move on quickly but neither do they have the opportunity to become permanent students in the program. Moving out of special language services permanently must be based on whether the student has made progress in language acquisition skills and grade appropriate content material (Garcia, 2000). The program teacher, staff and students will determine when the student leaves the program and is completely mainstreamed.

Newcomer Program Staffing

Developing the expertise and program to serve English language learners within a district takes time. Administrators and teachers can use their experience as a foundation for working with "newcomer students;" however, without specific and intentional professional development the challenges will be great (Zehler, et al., 2008). Teachers working with language learners need, like all teachers, to be highly qualified according to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001. Training needs to be extensive and complete. A few areas for training would be language and linguistics, cultural diversity, language development, second language learning and teaching, sheltered instruction and language of academic discourse (Fillmore & Snow, 2002; Short & Echevarria, 1999). The success of a "newcomer program" is two fold, dedicated and creative staff but more importantly the immigrant students who come motivated to learn in a new home environment (Friedlander, 1991).

Dissenting View

"Newcomer programs" are designed to orient students from outside of the United

States who are beginning their academic career as students within the public school

system. These students generally have little to no background information as to how the

school system functions. They have little to no English language to aid them in gathering

information. They may be at grade level in their home language but may also be

significantly behind their age level peers academically. One of the main purposes of the

"newcomer programs" is to welcome and help transition these students into their new

school and community. Offering support, explaining the expectations, and coming

alongside the students to encourage their success are goals that are folded into the

"newcomer program" (Zehler, et al., 2008).

The "newcomer programs" try to use the student's first language to insure

understanding. They also use the bilingual model to transition into the beginning steps of

acquiring the English language (Eschevarria, et al., 2004).

The dissenting point of view would stem from the opinion that the bilingual

format for educating the English Language Learners is not an effective model and needs

to be removed legally from the educational system. This opinion is stated in California's

Proposition 227 which was passed in 1998 and Arizona's Proposition 203 which was

passed in 2000. Proposition 227 states that "all children in California's public schools

shall be taught English by being taught in English" (Moses, 2000). Proposition 203 states

that "it restricts instruction to English only" (Moses, 2000).

The debate has been how to educate non-English speaking students in the public

schools. The discussion goes back and forth between English-only immersion instruction

and bilingual instruction with many points of view on variations and styles of each (Padilla, 1991).

In June of 1998 Proposition 227 was making the news. This initiative in California states that students who are learning English as a second language need to be in English-only immersion classes for one year and then mainstreamed into the regular classrooms. It states that bilingual education does not advance the language and academic skills in the students (Moses, 2000). The English-only philosophy promotes the belief that bilingual education's only benefit is to maintain special interest groups and delay the assimilation of immigrant students into the U.S. society. They argue that there are no advantages in bilingual education over the students in English immersion (Padilla, 1991). The passing of Proposition 227 has been credited with the increase in standardized-test scores for the English language learners in California (Zehr, 2001).

In November 2000, Arizona took California's lead and passed a very similar Proposition 203 using much of the same wording. The Arizona Proposition also included statements that the parents of the immigrant children prefer that their children learn English by being taught in English only. It states that immersion is the best way to learn English quickly and efficiently (Wright, 2005).

In 1998 Porter wrote an article including the opinions of Latino parents on bilingual education. The article states that "When Mexican parents were asked if they wanted the school to teach reading and writing in Spanish and English, 70 percent answered yes. But when they were asked if they wanted Spanish taught if it meant less time for teaching English, only 12 percent were in favor" (Porter, 1998, p.38). The parents were concerned that their children who spoke only Spanish at home and in the

neighborhood needed the school day speaking English to be able to succeed and be competitive in the English environment outside of the school setting (Porter, 1998). Bilingual education was seen as weak model or crutch for the students learning English (Moses, 2000).

<div align="center">Bilingual Education</div>

The other side of the argument is for bilingual education. Though there are many models of bilingual education, the theory is using the student's home language as a foundation. It is considered an effective tool for developing and transferring academic knowledge into English while learning English at the same time. Bilingual education encourages more than just the acquisition of the English language (Glenn, 2008). It also aids the students in maintaining their home language and culture by allowing their language for instruction. This helps build their self-determination (Moses, 2000). Studies state that when comparing English-only immersion and bilingual programs the results support the bilingual education (Padilla, 1991). The data show that when the students are enrolled in these programs they are more likely to catch up with their English speaking classmates in academic achievement (Padilla, 1991). The bilingual formats do not limit the students to only one year of additional help which is the focus stated in both Proposition 203 and 227. In the bilingual programs the students are supported over a period of five to seven years. The purpose of bilingual education is to support the student's first language and use it as the bridge to learning to read and write in English (Arellano-Houchin, Flamenco, Merlos, & Segura, 2001).

Summary

The goal of educators should be to foster in "newcomer students" the desire and ability to become competent in the English language and contributing members of society. "Newcomer students" from non-English speaking homes should be given the opportunities and support to strive for the highest possible levels of academic achievement without having to give up their home language (Padilla, 1991; Glenn, 2008). These "newcomer students" have incredible barriers to overcome. These barriers take many shapes which include previous academic background, socioeconomic level, and home environment besides the wall of learning a new language (Friedlander, 1991). They deserve the right to education at their level and high standards to work toward with the support of teachers and districts that are committed to them.

Providing the "newcomer students" with "newcomer programs" focusing on their multifaceted needs helps bridge the gaps so many of these students would not be able to overcome on their own. Allowing the students the gift of time in a carefully designed "newcomer program" makes it possible to encourage them, at whatever level they enter, to make progress knowing they have support in place.

CHAPTER III

BACKGROUND OF THE PROJECT

According to the Supreme Court's *Lau v. Nichols* decision in 1974 "newcomer students" need to be provided with the same educational opportunities as any English speaking student. There is no standard methodology for this education. Public schools are challenged to assess the academic needs and provide the most appropriate research based teaching practices for this special group of students. The intention of a "Newcomer Resource Manual" is to offer teachers a "hands on" tool which includes topics, curriculum and teaching strategies that focus on the middle and high school "newcomer students."

PROJECT PROCEDURE

After studying the results of an informal survey that was given to fifteen middle and high school "newcomer students," it became apparent that have they many concerns about their adjustments and successes in the public school setting. The most immediate concern is learning English. Branching off from that are the concerns ranging from school and community orientation and resources to how to pass the state test and graduate from high school. According to research the "newcomer students" of middle and high school age struggle to gain enough academic English and content area instruction to successfully pass the state and local tests (DiCerbo, 2000). It also shows layers of diversity among "newcomer students" which require careful implementation of instruction and curriculum to create a safe environment for learning the English language, core content, and school and community culture (Friedlander, 1991). A limited period of

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time in a specialized "newcomer program" can build the "newcomer students'"

confidence and encourage their success (Short & Boyson, 1999).

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

The Newcomer Resource Manual is designed to provide an understanding of a

"newcomer student" who is entering the public middle or high school setting in the

United States. There are seven chapters in the manual. Each begins with a short

introduction of a concern related to the "newcomer student" in the public school. After

the introduction of the concern, the chapter describes best practice strategies, research

based curriculum and websites for teachers.

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

The focus is directed to a classroom teacher or "newcomer program" teacher. The

teacher is encouraged to create a non-threatening and safe environment where the

"newcomer student" is allowed to learn without being ridiculed. Many teachers feel

unprepared to accommodate and teach "newcomer students." They have very little

training or focused instruction on how to incorporate and guide the "newcomer students"

in their classroom instruction. Providing teachers with training and a resource manual

will benefit both the teacher and the "newcomer students." Most "newcomer students"

arrive eager and motivated to learn. They require teachers who are prepared to create an

environment that guides them to success.

CHAPTER IV

The Newcomer Resource Manual is designed to supply a basic understanding of some of the needs a "newcomer student" encounters arriving in the United States and entering the public middle or high school. The general age range of these students is twelve to eighteen years old. The focus is directed to a classroom teacher or "newcomer program" teacher.

The purpose of the manual is to present suggested topics, curriculum and strategies to best meet the needs of the "newcomer students." The manual begins with a general introduction to who a "newcomer student" is and an overview of some of the gaps they experience.

Each of the seven chapters begins with a short introduction of a research based topic related to the "newcomer student" in the public school setting. After the introduction of the topic, the chapter continues with suggestions of best practice strategies, research based curriculum and many websites that are available both for teachers and "newcomer students" who are learning the English language for the first time.

The manual begins with a chapter about listening, speaking, reading and writing. There is a brief description of how language is acquired and how these four areas become the foundation for further learning in content areas. The teacher's objective is to create a safe, non-threatening environment where the "newcomer student" is free to learn without judgment. Chapter one includes many resources for teaching these four essential areas.

Chapter two focuses on the importance of introducing survival English as a first step. The first exposure to the English language needs to be connected to something

concrete, visual and functional. This chapter provides a number of activities, websites and resources for exposing "newcomer students" to survival English vocabulary and how to put it to use practically and immediately.

Math is the focus of chapter three. The "newcomer students" need to be assessed in math computation and skill by using their home language. The home language should be used for clarifying concepts and understanding. The resources available in chapter three stress that math is experienced with manipulatives whenever possible, focusing on contextual situations and relevancy to daily life.

From the beginning it is essential that "newcomer students" have an in depth orientation to the school and community. Chapter four provides many practical suggestions for how to create an orientation that covers both school and community resources.

"Newcomer students" should be informed about state and local testing and be supported as they face those challenges. Chapter five lists the tests and how a teacher can begin introducing them to the "newcomer students" and begin teaching test taking strategies and preparation.

Chapter six explains that one of the best ways to encourage "newcomer students" to graduate from high school is to keep them aware of the requirements and foster their goal setting. Teachers should be aware of the English Language Development Content Standards (ELDs) which align the state standards with language proficiency levels to ensure that the language learners are making progress toward clear benchmarks.

The final chapter emphasizes the teaching of study skills, keeping a homework planner, understanding teachers' expectations and being responsible for learning. It

includes using a month by month calendar for teaching national and cultural holidays in the United States.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

As a result of the Lau v. Nichols decision the English language learners must have

access to the same educational opportunities as the native English speaking students. In

many cases the public school teacher is not prepared or confident about how to address

the academic challenges for the "newcomer students." There is no standard program or

curriculum. The Newcomer Resource Manual is a tool designed to be used by classroom

and "newcomer program" teachers. The purpose of the manual is to introduce topics

which concern the "newcomer students" such as survival English, high school graduation

requirements and being prepared for state testing. The manual suggests curriculum and

strategies to best orient the "newcomer students." It describes the challenges and gives a

basic understanding of a "newcomer student" who is entering a public middle or high

school in the United States. The age range of the "newcomer student" is twelve to

eighteen years old. The manual provides a general introduction for teachers about who

"newcomer students" are and focuses on their specific concerns. Placing the "newcomer

students" with teachers prepared to meet their specialized needs can encourage the

students and build their confidence.

CONCLUSIONS

Newly arriving immigrant students entering the public school with low level

English skills or only their home language, with varying levels and abilities of formal

education in their background, face many challenges toward becoming successful

students (Zehler, et al., 2008).. The great diversity among "newcomer students" creates

curriculum and planning difficulties for the classroom teacher. The "newcomer students"

arrive with complicated and varying levels of educational background. Some schools place the "newcomer student" in an age level appropriate grade rather than at the "newcomer student's" academic level (Friedlander, 1991). Often the "newcomer students" try to blend in and adapt rather than draw attention to themselves when they do not understand or make progress. When teachers make judgments based on appearances, the "newcomer students" appear to be adapting just fine. "Newcomer students" require more than a typical U. S. school day, classroom and teacher to mentor them onto the path of success.

IMPLICATIONS

A "newcomer student" placed in a well designed "newcomer program" will benefit from the purposeful planning and attention to their language, academic and cultural adaptation needs (Friedlander, 1991). Focusing on natural and necessary language the "newcomer students" are given a small gift of time, a non-threatening environment and a teacher who is prepared to meet and plan for their diverse needs. A "newcomer program" is designed to assist the "newcomer student" with acquiring beginning English skills: providing some instruction in content areas and giving an introduction to the public school setting and the local culture (Short & Boyson, 2000). By design it relies on student-centered strategies and cooperative learning that is relevant to daily life. A limited period of time in a specialized "newcomer program" can build the "newcomer students'" confidence and promote their success (Short & Boyson, 1999). All students learn best in an environment that accesses their background knowledge and builds onto it the new learning.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Many teachers feel unprepared to meet the many challenges of "newcomer students." They have very little training or focused instruction on how to incorporate and guide the "newcomer students" in their classroom instruction. Providing teachers with training and a resource manual will benefit both the teacher and the "newcomer students." When "newcomer students" arrive they are eager and motivated to learn. They desire teachers who have been equipped to welcome them into an environment that is expectant of their success. With the continued increase of immigrant students, it is recommended that every school district focus attention on preparing teachers to address the needs and concerns of the "newcomer students" and begin to meet their academic needs.

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Complete database

Natural and Necessary Language:

A Resource Manual for a Newcomer Program

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Introduction to the Resource Manual

The purpose of this manual is to provide suggested topics, curriculum and strategies to best meet the needs of intermediate and secondary "newcomer students". The "newcomer student" is generally a student entering the U.S. public school setting with limited or no English language proficiency. According to federal law, these students need to be offered the same educational opportunities as any native English speaking student. However there is no standard methodology for this education. The goal of a "newcomer program" is to help students acquire beginning English skills; provide some instruction in content areas and give an introduction to the local culture and public school system (Short & Boyson, 2000).

Most "newcomer programs" focus on innovative student-centered teaching strategies. These include integration of language introduction and content instruction, whole language instruction, use of learning language through natural experiences and cooperative learning (Friedlander, 1991). A natural approach for language acquisition is favored. This approach takes the student through the stages of listening comprehension which gradually move toward speaking. The focus is on communicative competence. Later the reading and writing are added intentionally to the learning requirements. Language skills are learned most effectively embedded in context in an environment that is free from the threat of ridicule. Many "newcomer students" come from varied academic backgrounds and levels of accomplishment. They may even be illiterate in their home language or lacking the basic academic foundations for learning (Friedlander, 1991). Most "newcomer students" arrive in the public school eager and motivated to learn. They need an environment that is prepared and expectant of their success.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction

CHAPTER I

LISTENING, SPEAKING, READING, WRITING

The primary focus and foundation for a "newcomer program" is English language development. In the beginning the emphasis must be on listening skills and oral development, from there the reading and writing is introduced (Friedlander, 1991).

When possible the student's native language is used for introduction of basic information and for purposes of clarification (DiCerbo, 2000).

Just as children learn their first language through listening, a "newcomer student" is first introduced to the English language with listening exercises. Listening exercises that include a visual demonstration, written word and action allow all learners access to the meaning (Asher, 2009).

After listening, one word attempts and two word phrases will begin to be produced by the student who is feeling safe and supported. Oral production of English is rewarded with praise and not corrected but modeled with corrections.

Reading and writing language skills may begin very shortly following the introduction to English; often this depends on the student's academic background in his/her native language (DiCerbo, 2000).

Creating a safe and non-threatening environment for the "newcomer student" provides an atmosphere of learning without judgment. Taking language steps will look different for each learner. The teacher's primary responsibility is opening up the pathway toward language development which leads to academic progress.

Listening, Speaking, Reading, Writing Strategies

Language learning begins with listening and observing in a non-threatening environment. By beginning with some fun and active exercises, the teacher puts the students at ease and lowers the feelings of stress.

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a great way to start the teaching of high frequency words. Total Physical Response is a language learning method built on speech and action. Using TPR the students do not need to speak. The first expectation on the student is to observe the teacher while the teacher says a word accompanied by the action that corresponds to the word. For example, sit or stand. It uses action based drills and repletion in the imperative form. TPR is best when introducing action words, classroom furniture, body parts, clothing and food. The Total Physical Response strategy is based on the model of how children acquire their first language (Asher, 2009). A great resource is 50 Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners, found online at hhtp://coe.edsu.edu/people/jmora/pages/50strategies.htm.

Students begin to use the words that they have been exposed to and understand. One and two word responses are the first speaking attempts. While students are experimenting with the spoken language the teacher's response should be praise and acceptance of the effort. The students' first spoken efforts should not be met with direct correction but with the response modeled in correct English. Vocabulary development for "newcomer students" seems like an overwhelming task but some "newcomer students" come with well developed academic concepts they just need the new English words to attach to their background knowledge. Others need the in-depth instruction for the new academic concepts. Teaching vocabulary must be intentional and explicit. It needs to go

deep as well as broad. Vocabulary can be taught with cognates, for example more than 30% of English and Spanish words are cognates and many of them are academic words (Francis, et al., 2006). The words "different" and "general" in English are "diferente" and "general" in Spanish, they share the same meanings. When teaching vocabulary it benefits the language learner to have the word broken down into parts so that they become familiar with root words and word families. This expands the student's vocabulary base.

The Rosetta Stone is a language learning software that incorporates visual, auditory, oral and written presentation of vocabulary intentional for beginners and moving them on to higher levels. Information can be found online at http://www.rosettastone.com.

Some good strategies are:

- Model language by saying aloud and writing the ideas and concepts you're teaching.

- Model what a fluent reader sounds like through focused read-alouds.

- Be explicit. Give each activity you do a name, the simplest and most accurate name that you can, and then repeat the activity, so students can learn the verbal and written cues and procedures.

- Tell students what they are learning about each day and whether they will be reading, writing, listening, or speaking (Scholastic, 2009).

Teaching reading and comprehension effectively, relies on teaching explicitly and purposefully. It engages the students actively and promotes their understanding. When teaching reading, it is necessary to teach systematic and clear skills for decoding. Letter

sounds, phonemic and phonological awareness needs to be taught and built upon each day and incorporated across content areas. Reading comprehension needs to be defined, discussed, reinforced, explained and modeled.

Some good approaches for improving comprehension:

- Comprehension strategies instruction where various strategies are taught and used, as well as modeled and reinforced

- Comprehension monitoring where students are taught to monitor their own understanding of text and identify where their understanding breaks down

- Teacher modeling where the teacher thinks aloud while reading to demonstrate the process of understanding and questioning text

- Scaffolded instruction where the teacher provides high levels of support while the student is exposed to and is learning new skills, the support even out and tapers off as the student gain understanding and independence (Francis, et al., 2006).

A curriculum that works well for intermediate language learners is Corrective Reading by SRA. It is a research based comprehensive reading intervention program. It provides two strands for learning, comprehension and decoding. The research and program details can be found online at www.sraonline.com.

Teaching reading and writing together benefits the language learner by building on the newly acquired vocabulary, decoding skills and comprehension. The grammar of writing is taught in context to what is being read. Writing instruction that is incorporated with instruction of content area provides the student with engaging language learning. It provides the students with low stress opportunities to practice academic language without

the inhibitions of speaking. Encouraging students to write purposefully about content aids

them in their ability to communicate meaning and practice sentence structure (Francis, et

al., 2006). A standards based writing program that is clear and teachable to the

"newcomer students" is Step Up to Writing. It outlines several of writing strategies

including the cross over to content areas such as math. It provides hands-on and multi-

sensory instruction. This resource can be found online at

http://www.readwriteconnect.com.

CHAPTER II

SURVIVAL ENGLISH

Students at the beginning of language acquisition are communicating nonverbally or using one or two word English responses. They are using common social greetings and simple repetitive phrases.

Vocabulary learning is one of the main keys for beginning English language learners. Students who can not construct even simple sentences can communicate with some key high-frequency words. A basic list of the first 2,000 most common English words is a place to begin for English language learners. These 2,000 words are 80% of what people regularly hear, see and use (Croydon, 2007). One online resource for a list of over 2,284 words is called the General Service List.

The first words taught should be survival vocabulary. Since many of these words may be abstract and uninteresting without some context, they need to be introduced within a topic area. For example, numbers can be immediately reinforced by learning addresses and phone numbers. Many of the first 2,000 words need to be taught in phrases of survival conversations of personal information.

First exposure to the English language needs to be connected to something concrete, visual and functional.

Survival English Strategies

Total Physical Response (TPR) is a great way to start the teaching of high frequency words (Asher, 2009). Total Physical Response is a language learning method built on speech and action. Using TPR the students do not need to speak. The first expectation on the student is to observe the teacher while the teacher says a word accompanied by the action that corresponds to the word. For example, sit or stand. It uses action based drills and repletion in the imperative form.

TPR is best when introducing action words, classroom furniture, body parts, clothing and food. The Total Physical Response strategy is based on the model of how children acquire their first language (Asher, 2009).

The General Service List (GLS) is a list of over 2,000 words. It provides a way to rank the words in order of importance for students. This site also describes how to organize the word list onto a computer spreadsheet to manipulate the list a number of different ways including alphabetically. The list can be found at http://www.jbauman.com/aboutgls.html.

Survival vocabulary includes:

Classroom: book, pen, paper, board, open, close, write, read, speak, repeat, listen

Personal information: first name, last name, address, phone number, birth date

Identify relationships: mother, father, son, daughter, brother, sister, neighbor, friend, teacher

Time and calendar: days of the week, months of the year, hour and minute on the clock

Spatial orientation and prepositions: in, on, under, behind, between, next to, near, far

Cardinal and ordinal numbers: 1-100

Action verb for daily activities: come, go, write, read, sit, stand, listen, eat, and wash

Common school locations: classroom, bathroom, office, bus stop, library, gym, cafeteria,

nurses' office, hallway

Common vocabulary groups: colors, classroom supplies, classroom furniture, parts of the

body, clothing

Word sets are vocabulary builders. Once a student has some basic vocabulary

words can be extended by teaching other forms of the word, for example, after teaching

the "bake" teach bakery, bakes, baking and baker as well.

Labeling the classroom with the students provides them with the action of moving

about the room identify a classroom abject with a word card in their hand.

Word and picture matching games as well as Concentration or Go Fish are simple

vocabulary builders. New words can be added regularly.

The Internet Picture Dictionary is an available online resource that provides

words, pictures and sound for the students see and hear. It can be found at

http//www.pdictionary.com.

There are many internet sites available as resources that include teaching tips,

lessons and worksheets which can be downloaded for free.

English Club.com is complete website for teachers and students at

www.englishclub.com. This site has a learning center with lessons for students; an ESL

clubhouse for forums, chats, games, and quizzes for teachers and students; a teachers'

lounge with lesson plans; a resource center; and an ESL world with information from

around the world.

English-as-a-Second Language Tutor Training Kit is designed to give teachers and volunteers some basic tools for tutoring English language learners in a short period of time. This toolkit provides ready-to-use overheads and handouts. It is available at www.nald.ca/clr/ttk/ttm/TTKTTM.pdf.

The Literacy Connection is a website at www.literacyconnections.com. Literacy Connections provides a wealth of information on reading, teaching and tutoring techniques, ESL literacy and adult literacy. Aimed at teachers, volunteers and directors of literacy programs, topics include the language experience approach, phonics, word study and the best in children's literature.

Lesson Plans and Resources for ESL, Bilingual and Foreign Language Teachers at www.csun.edu/~hcedu013/eslindex.html is designed to prepare teachers to work in ESL and bilingual classrooms. Professor Levine of California State University, Northridge offers this expansive site. Click on ESL Lesson Plans and Resources.

The IDEA Oral Language program (or "IDEA Kit") is a classic ESL curriculum focusing on oral language development. It is published by Ballard & Tighe, Publishers Brea, CA and can be ordered on line at www.ballard-tighe.com.

CHAPTER III

MATH VOCABULARY AND SKILLS

Teaching Math to "newcomer students" is complicated from the start. The student's background knowledge must be assessed. This process needs to start in the student's native language. The teacher's dual task is to keep the student improving academically in his/her native language while increasing the content specific math vocabulary as well. The continuation of math development needs to focus on the student's meaning and reasoning and not only on the English language ability he/she has. There needs to be flexibility in using the student's native language for clarifying concepts and understanding. Much of today's math in the elementary and intermediate grades is prefect for the "newcomer students" because the focus is on hands on manipulatives, group work and thinking out loud. The math is focused on contextual situations and relevant to daily living (Ministry of Education, 2008).

Math Vocabulary and Skills Strategies

Current best practices for the general education students in math work well as crossovers for the ELLs. Key terms and vocabulary should be on display in the classroom. The use of drawings, diagrams, graphs and charts and other visual prompt will help the student while transitioning to English. Using models and manipulatives to demonstrate ideas and working in small groups with those manipulatives allows the student to listen while others verbalize their thinking. This keeps the affective filters low and non-threatening.

FAST Math is a curriculum designed for the "newcomer student". Its specific focus is for students in grades 6-12 whose math skills maybe two grade levels below that of their age level peers. The program begins with elementary math and moves into pre-algebra. This program combines developing the English content vocabulary and math skills. Fast Math: Volume I, II, and III and free mathematics curriculum materials are available online with in PDF format by logging onto, www.ncela.gwu.edu/resabout/curriculum/fastmath/.

Lessons designed according to the Sheltered Instruction Observational Protocol (SIOP) will aid the teacher's planning and presentation as well as the student's understanding, focus and grasp of a math lesson. The foundation of SIOP rests on the two stated and visual objectives for each lesson: one objective is the content learning and the second is the language objective (Echevarria, J., et al., 2000).

SRA Reading labs offers an incremental online math program for independent student work time. It provides basic math facts, numeration, operations, number concepts,

measurements, algebra and many more necessary math concepts. It can be found at

http://srareadinglabs.com/math_lab.

A valuable resource which provides teacher tips and lesson plans is found in Tips

for English Language Learners in Mathematics which is an online book available at

http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/studentsuccess/lms/files/ELLMath4All.pdf. The intent is

to help teachers of mathematics:

• develop instructional practices that allow multiple entry points and multiple pathways to

mastering content knowledge while promoting academic language development;

• explicitly teach the academic language for learning mathematics to all students and

reinforce connections repeatedly for English language learners;

• identify English language learners' prior mathematics and language knowledge/skills;

• plan and deliver classroom instruction and assessments that incorporate the

understanding key messages for learning mathematics.

- Value mathematics.

- Incorporate cooperative learning.

- Implement appropriate classroom management strategies.

- Attend to the whole student.

- Use flexible groupings of students.

- Make explicit links to literacy.

- Focus on important mathematics.

- Make learning active.

- Make available a rich array of manipulatives and technologies.

- Focus on assessment for learning as well as assessment of learning.

- Provide enough time for students to learn.

- Differentiate curriculum factors during instruction and assessment based on student

(Ministry of Education, 2008).

CHAPTER IV

SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

For "newcomer students" it is essential that they have an in depth orientation to the school and community. In the school the students need introductions to the office staff, administration, nurse and other support personnel in the building. It is important that they have a walking tour of the school building, included in that tour should be a definition of the school boundary lines. The students must be introduced to the translators available to them. There are many resources at the school that a student may not realize are available to him/her until they have been formally presented.

In the community there are many resources that the school can introduce to the students and their families. The public library, Department of Motor Vehicles Spanish materials and many resources available through the City of Wenatchee can be added to the valuable list of community services. Students can visit these community resources on field trips or learn about them by bringing guest speakers into class (Friedlander, 1991).

School and Community Resources Strategies

When the "newcomer students" start in the public school there needs to be an intentional effort to familiarize the students with the school resources available to them. Many students may come from countries or schools where there is very little offered and only the very basic academic needs are addressed. Students need formal introductions to the teachers and staff that will be in direct contact with them including translators that are available for their needs. The school counselor should be introduced face to face and given an opportunity to explain his/her services to the students. Students need to be informed about the tutoring programs that are in place and be encouraged to attend (these need to be staffed with translators as well). The school nurse's office, and what services the nurse provides, needs to be familiar to the students. Some of the sports' programs coaching staff can be brought in as guest speakers to explain the athletic program available to the students. Representatives from the fine arts departments should be invited in as well to make presentations about the student opportunities in music, drama and art.

On the Wenatchee School District webpage the Migrant Assistance Program introduces in Spanish the programs that are available to students and families. It lists the names and titles, for example "home visitor" and "family and community specialist", of the staff in charge of the programs. The program list is online at http://home.wsd.wednet.edu/WSD/Instructional/special_prog/programas.html.

In the community tours, field trips and guest speakers can be arranged to provide the students with a vast amount of information about the services that are accessible to them and their families. The public library is one place that should be visited by the

"newcomer students" with the classroom teacher. The library gives students access to many resources including the use of a computer.

The City of Wenatchee has a website that lists many services that are available to students, for example housing for agricultural works, rental assistance and legal assistance. There is a section in Spanish that lists topics such as museums, fire department, police and community development. http://www.wenatcheewa.gov/Index.aspx?page=8. This same site offers information about the Parks and Recreation programs for youth and their families. Through Parks and Recreation the students can become involved in low cost sports and activities available throughout the school year and summer seasons. A guest speaker from the Parks and Recreation Department would provide the students with a great orientation to the programs they offer.

The Link Transit public transportation offers student discount for the school year, a special after school hours schedule and fare called After School Activities Pass (ASAP) and a special fare for a summer unlimited use pass. This information is available online at http://www.linktransit.coml/fares-passes/youth-passes.html. The Link Transit provides no charge transportation to Wenatchee Valley College students who are registered for six or more credits. The students must show their student ID.

A guest speaker from the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) would provide information to the students that would benefit them as well as their families. The DSHS representative would have specific information about programs such as youth mentoring, translators available for medical appointments and childcare options

for families. The online address lists a variety of services with information available in

Spanish and five other languages. The website address is http://www1.dshs.wa.gov.

CHAPTER V

STATE AND LOCAL TESTS

Students in Washington State are tested regularly by the state to evaluate if they are learning the skills necessary to graduate from high school. It is important to educate the "newcomer students" and their parents about these tests. It is also important to teach the students how to take these tests as each of them is very different from the other in format. Teaching the students about test format and teaching some common test taking skills can lower the affective filter and the test anxiety the students may feel.

The first test the students face is the Washington Language Proficiency Test II (WLPT-II) which is the language assessment. This will determine the student's language level for listening, speaking, reading and writing. They will take this test again every year in February.

The students will be required to take the Classroom-Based Assessments (CBAs). These are grade level tests based on the state's learning standards.

If the students have been in the public school system for more than one school year they are required to take the Washington Assessment of Student Learning (WASL). This measures the student learning according to state standards (OSPI, 2008)

As the students prepare for college they will need to be prepared to take the SAT or ACT college entrance exams.

State and Local Test Strategies

One of the best ways to prepare "newcomer students" for the required tests is to have a parent meeting which includes the parents, students, teachers and school counselor. The purpose of the meeting is to explain the value of the tests, the time frames, sample test questions and scoring. It is important to bring the parents into the testing conversation with the students.

"Newcomer students" to the public schools are required to take a WLPT-II placement test to determine their proficiency level of listening, speaking, reading and writing in English. There is no practice test available for "newcomer students" to take before being placed. They will be required to take the WLPT-II every year they are in school until they pass with a Reading level 4 and Writing level 4. The Speaking portion of the test is administered individually by a trained proctor.

The CBA is administered by the classroom teacher. The best preparation for the CBA is attending class and participating in the day to day activities and assignments given by the teachers. These tests are based on the state's learning standards which the classroom teachers use to guide their teaching.

The WASL test includes four subject areas, reading, writing, math and science. These are given according to the grade level. The best way to prepare "newcomer students" is to inform them that these tests will soon be in their future. There are several good resources available online through the OSPI website, http://www.k12.wa.us, for using released test items and tests that have been scored as examples to share with the students. Exposing the "newcomer students" to the format of the test and doing practice

questions throughout the year will provide them with background knowledge that will benefit them when they are expected to take their first WASL test (OSPI, 2009).

For "newcomer students", the best preparation for the SAT and ACT college entrance exams is to inform them early on that these tests are required for most college admissions. When they are more advanced in their language development it should be suggested that they access SAT and ACT test preparation.

CHAPTER VI

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

Whether "newcomer students" in middle school or high school, it is important to teach them and their parents about the state and local high school graduation requirements. The students need an understanding of the state standards and how the high school designs its courses to allow students to make class selections which meet those requirements. The students can also be made aware of alternatives to the traditional high school education.

All teachers need to be aware of the English Language Development (ELD) Content Standards which align the state standards with language proficiency levels to ensure that the language learners are making progress toward clear benchmarks (OSPI, 2009).

Graduation Requirements Strategies

One of the best ways to prepare "newcomer students" for high school graduation

is to inform them and their parents and then keep reminding them of the requirements. It

is important to teach them how to keep track and plan forward for their graduation.

The Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) website provides a

great deal of information about graduation requirements in Washington State for teachers,

parents and students. Specifically for teachers, the English Language Development

(ELD) Content Standards for reading, writing, and communication are available online at

OSPI website, www.k12.wa.us/MigrantBilingual/ELD.aspx. These standards are

essential guidelines for monitoring progress made by the language learners. The ELDs

align with the state's EALRs/GLEs.   As the "newcomer student" makes English

language progress the benchmarks in content also progress (OSPI, 2009).

The OSPI also provides for teachers and parents The Class of 2009 Graduation

Toolkit (PDF). This is a resource that helps explain the graduation requirements. In the

toolkit some of the materials that are available to download are:

- Options for Students Not Graduating After Four Years of High School-Available in nine languages

- State Testing 2009 (Spanish) Updated February 2009

- Earning a Diploma: The Class of 2009 and Beyond - Available in nine languages

The website for the toolkit is http://www.k12.wa.us/Resources.

Parents and students can also access the states learning standards that are specific

for each grade level K-10. "Your Child's Progress" is a printable handout that clearly

explains the grade level expectations. These handouts also include state testing

information for grades 3-10. The handouts are translated into ten languages. The website is http://www.k12.wa.us/Resources.

The Wenatchee High School website provides, in Spanish, a page that explains the English language learner program titled B.E.S.T. (Bilingual, E.S.L., Sheltered, Transitional) http://whs.wsd.wednet.edu/whsinfo.php. It states that using these four methods the students can complete and receive a graduation diploma. Through the counseling office a Wenatchee School District Migrant Graduation Specialist is available whose job it is "to assist students and parents in finding solutions and options available for the students, the issues cover by her include but are not limited to: planning of career and post secondary goals, self-esteem, leadership, financial aid, employment, improving study skills, college admission preparation, scholarship assistance, communication, problem-solving and referral to outside agencies and resources when necessary."(Wenatchee High School, 2009). http://whs.wsd.wednet.edu/Faculty/Counseling/Student%20Services/WHSmigrantgradsp ec.html.

Wenatchee High School counselors can provide the students with information on non-traditional forms of education such as Running Start, NC Skill Center, and Tech Prep.

CHAPTER VII

STUDY SKILLS AND CALENDAR

The "newcomer students" coming into the U.S. public school system often arrive with culturally different study habits and skills. Teachers need to provide focused time and direction to teaching students study skills common to their new school. It is important to develop routines and practice them.

It is possible that the new students will need to be taught how to manage their time at school as well as at home. They will need to be taught how to work independently and in cooperative groups.

They need to have a clear understanding of the school expectations of arriving on time, having materials and supplies ready, and how to understand a classroom teacher's syllabus.

Exposure to the month by month calendar and teaching the national and cultural holidays of the United States is an interactive way for "newcomer students" to become familiar with their new surroundings.

Students need to learn basic keyboarding, how to use day planners or homework journals and set goals for using English.

Study Skills and Calendar Strategies

A good skill to teach the new students is how to keep a homework log or planner. This can include important information for class, daily work, and communication with home and upcoming events in the school. The students need to become familiar with the school calendar and determine which events pertain to them.

ESL: Teacher's Activities Holiday Kit by Elizabeth Claire is a complete resource for teaching the holidays and seasonal days each month. It provides reproducible pages for each month. Included with the monthly calendar are all of the national holidays with simple text history. Seasonal and cultural days are also provided with clear background information. The format is perfect for the "newcomer student" because all of the written information is supported with pictures. This book is available through Elizabeth Claire's website http://www.elizabethclaire.com/books/holactivitieskit.html.

Another skill for students to work on is the use of the computer keyboard. The students can be enrolled in the beginning keyboarding class. Without the need for much translation the student can become an integrated part of the school right away in a keyboarding class.

A good website to use for setting language learning goals is found at http://esl.about.com/od/intermediateenglish/a/i-studyskills.htm. This site includes many great study skills suggestions. It includes tips for making good study habits by setting aside a time and place to practice. It recommends focusing on listening and reading each fifteen minutes a day; it includes several great links for listening and simple reading selections. Improving vocabulary is a daily task. Students begin by keeping a notebook for writing down words that come up throughout the day. The definition and translation

in the native language can be added to the word list and then practiced and reviewed.

Students need to be encouraged to start speaking even a single word response to start the

speaking process.

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