

The Bilingual Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition Instructional Model

There is one Dual Language study reviewed by the What Works Clearinghouse that investigated the effects on the reading achievement and English language development of English language learners in Spanish and English instruction. The 5-year study was funded by USDOE. The study was a quasi-experimental design that met WWC evidence standards. All students in the experimental schools (n = 3) and comparison schools (n = 4) were enrolled in bilingual programs. Students in the experimental group participated in *Bilingual Cooperative Integrated Reading and Composition (BCIRC)*. Students in the comparison group participated in traditional round-robin oral reading and exercises from a textbook.

By 4th grade, *BCIRC* students scored significantly higher on the Texas assessments than nonparticipants. Four times as many *BCIRC* students met the district's third-grade criterion in reading in English as comparison students. Twice as many students met this criterion on the district's language exams in Spanish and English.

BCIRC continued to improve students' oral, reading and writing skills in both languages through elementary school. Hence, the Carnegie Corporation of New York funded another 5-year study to adapt the instruction of academic language, reading comprehension and writing strategies for 6th to 12th science, math, social studies, and language arts teachers. The study was called Expediting Comprehension for English Language Learners (*ExC-ELL*) and *Acelerando la Comprensión en Español: Lectura, Escritura y Razonamiento Académico (ACE-LERA)*.

This research study focused on the design and testing of (a) a professional development model with strategic teacher support systems; (b) the implementation of the *ExC-ELL* pedagogical components for integrating vocabulary, reading comprehension, and writing skills into core content instruction; (c) a coaching and observation protocol to determine the extent and quality of implementation of the components, and the impact on students.

Data from the three substudies were triangulated to measure student academic achievement and the transfer from training into a teachers' instructional daily repertoire. For two years, experimental and comparison students were pre- and post-tested with the Gates MacGinitie vocabulary and reading comprehension subtests. Student content area report cards, school report cards were analyzed for AYP, and overall district ratings each year. The two initially identified as the lowest performing middle and high schools outperformed all equivalent schools and became exemplary after two years.

The schools that made the greatest gains had three things in common (1) whole school participation in the *ExC-ELL* professional development; (2) site-administrators, counselors, instructional coaches creating support systems for teachers; and (3) teachers and administrators using the *ExC-ELL* observation protocol for teacher reflection, peer coaching, and tracking student performance.

Currently, the *ExC-ELL Whole-School Approach* is being replicated and studied further through a 5-year Title III National Professional Development grant.

For more information contact Dr. Margarita Calderón, mecalde@gmail.com.

Some references:

1. Calderón, M. E. (2011). *Teaching Reading and Comprehension to English Learners, K-5*. Indianapolis, IN: Solution Tree.

2. Calderón M.E. & Minaya-Rowe, L. (2011). *Preventing Long-Term English Language Learners: Transforming schools to meet core standards*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
3. Calderón, M. E. & S. Slakk (2018). *Teaching Reading to ELs in 6th -12th*, Second Edition. Thousand Oaks, CA: CORWIN press.
4. Calderón, M. E., S. S. Slakk & H. Montenegro (2017). *Promises Fulfilled: A Leader's Guide for Supporting English Learners*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.

A couple months ago, Dr. Virginia Vinuesa Benítez, Co-editor of the NABE Journal of Research and Practice, and VP of the NABE/Spain Bilingual Education Affiliate, was also featured for her new scholarly publication on CLIL. NABE encourages all of its authors, researchers and instructional leaders such as Drs. Calderon and Benítez to continue to submit their work on behalf of the bilingual/multilingual community to make NABE an effective and responsive organization that is always partnering for cultural and linguistic equity, excellence and diversity. Without your commitment, creativity, and high standards, NABE would not be a thriving and effective national and international organization, always willing to promote, embrace and to value our students as wonderful, talented, global assets and to recognize the great teacher leaders who are making a tremendous difference in our classrooms across this nation in meeting the academic, cultural, linguistic, social and emotional needs of our global student body and making every single day count.