

Fieldwork

Touro University

Graduate School of Education

EDPN 673: Methods & Materials for Teaching English as a Second Language

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ICT Kindergarten Classroom (02/11-02/12)

Introduce the Setting: Provide context about the classrooms observed:

I observed an ICT Kindergarten Classroom with ELLs/ML students. After observing a reading class, I noticed the aim ahead of the graphic organizer was stated in the paper chart. The use of the graphic organizer offered visual support to reinforce the purpose of the lesson goal which was the aim. According to the Center for Teaching and Learning (n.d.), graphic organizers help students organize and connect new vocabulary related to the current topic and concepts visually. Labels of many objects in the classroom were translated in Spanish as well. The classroom was very organized and visually rich. The teacher created a very welcoming environment for ELL/ML students to feel comfortable learning English while still reading and speaking in their native language.

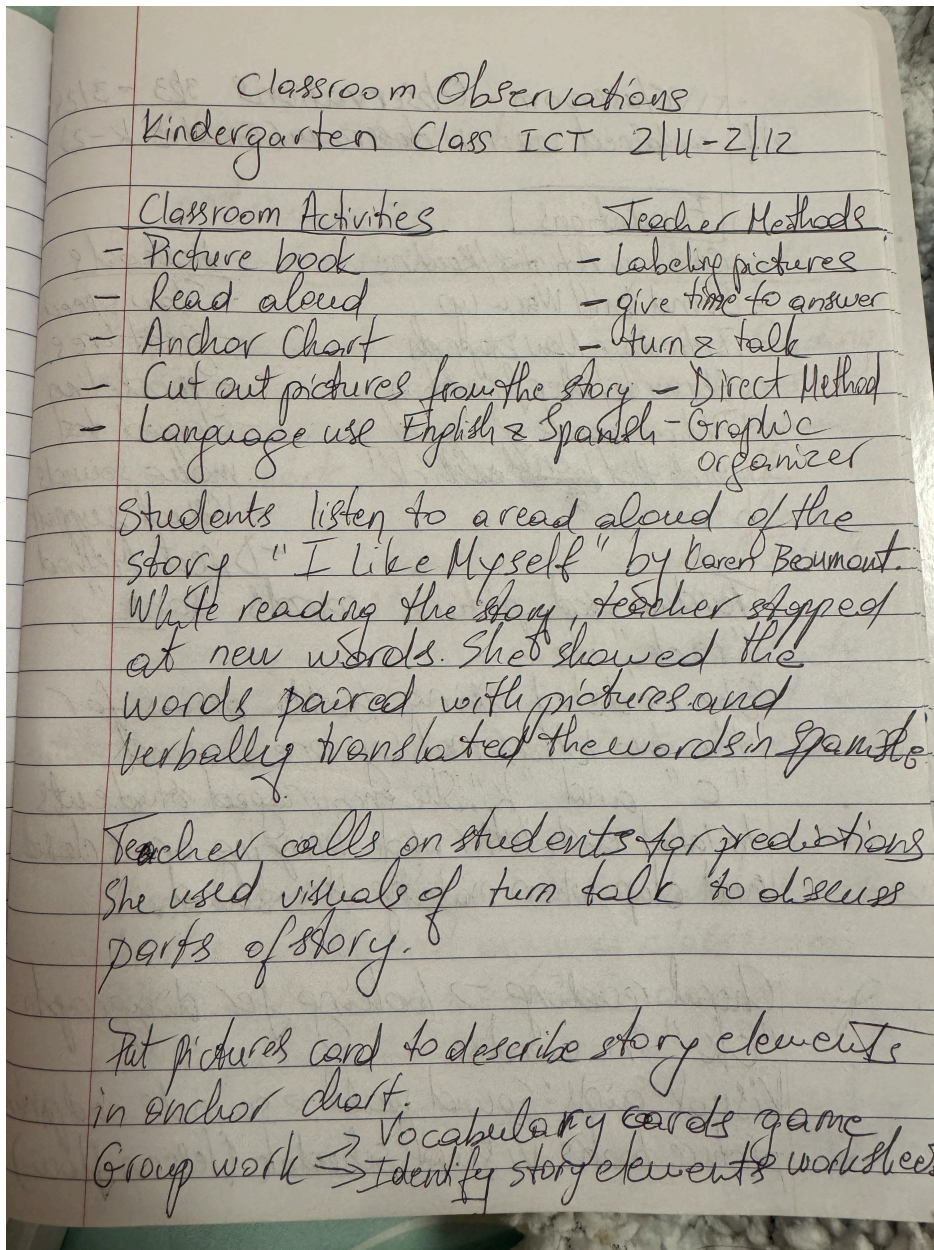
Present Findings: Discuss the pedagogical approaches, strategies, materials, and assessment methods observed and their effectiveness.

The teacher used strategies such as “direct method” and “wait time” by giving students actual pictures from the book and time for repetition and answer questions. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2014, p. 347), wait time gives students time to process and respond during the learning. New vocabulary words were shown with pictures and labeled in English and Spanish. Vocabulary plays an important role in fluency and comprehension. It has been suggested that reading skills can be improved by the development of the vocabulary (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014, p. 290). The teacher assessed students by encouraging predictions, identifying story elements through the use of pictures as well in the graphic organizer.

Analyze Student & Teacher Feedback: Offer insights into the experiences and perspectives of both groups, making connections between the two when relevant.

Students appeared to be engaged throughout the lesson. They participated by raising their hands to answer questions. The teacher gave students wait time to answer questions where student had time to process and respond. Often she encouraged students to answer when she saw there was difficulty answering questions by showing picture cards labeled in Spanish. The use of graphic organizer offered students the visual support they needed. The teacher aligned her instruction methods with Kindergarten WIDA ELD Standard 2 language expectations for multilingual learners. ELD-LA.K. Interpret language arts narrative such as identifying characters and settings (World-Class Instructional Design and Assessment, 2020).

Kindergarten Observation Notes:



Second Grade ICT Classroom (3/17-3/18)

Introduce the Setting: Provide context about the classrooms observed:

I observed an ICT second grade classroom. I noticed that the classroom was well organized. I noticed multiple learning spaces such as small group tables, a library with leveled books, and centers for independent work. Materials were labeled with visuals to support all ELL/ML learners. Students had recently a cultural event and all their work of describing their cultural backgrounds was displayed in the classroom making the environment very welcoming and respectful.

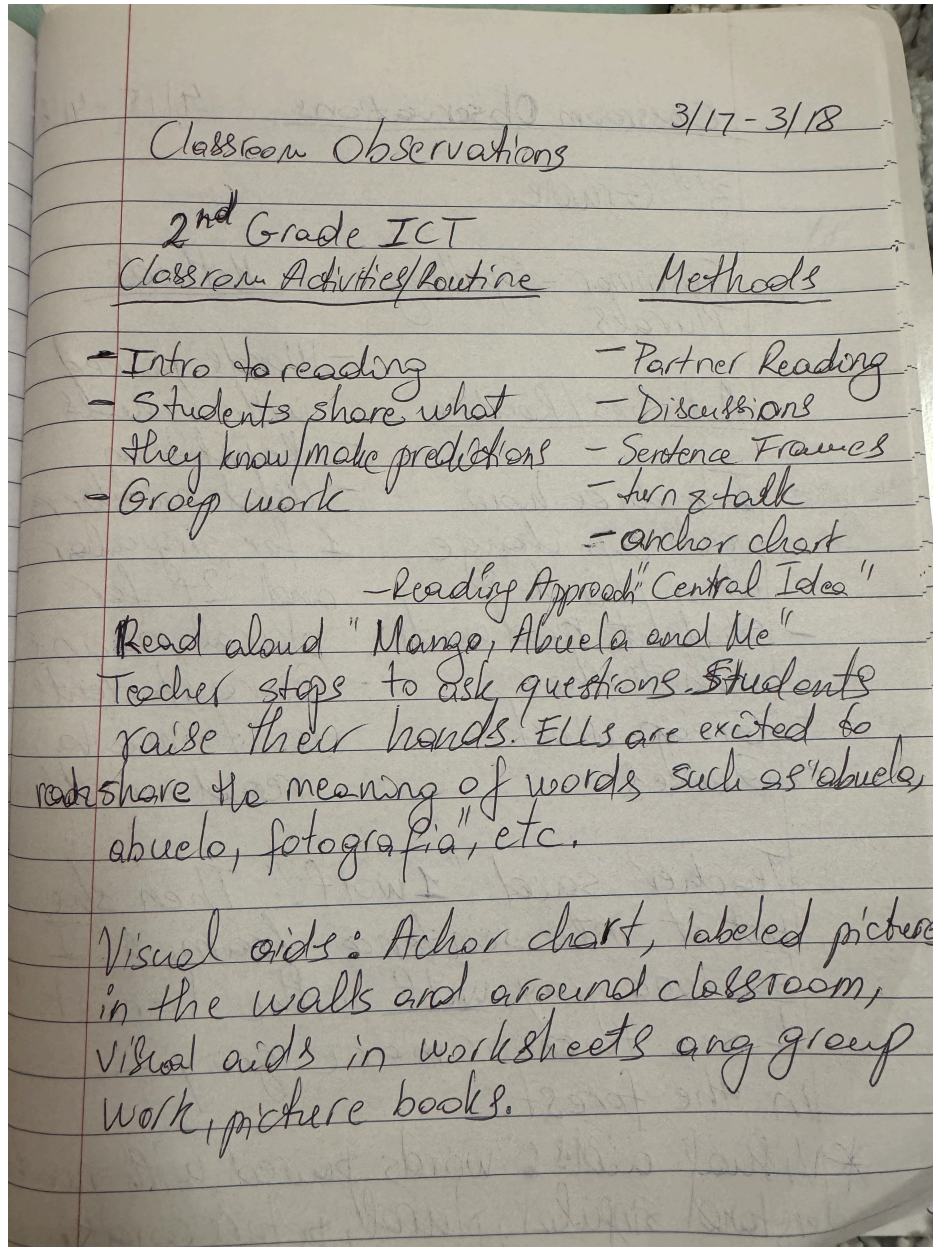
Present Findings: Discuss the pedagogical approaches, strategies, materials, and assessment methods observed and their effectiveness.

One teacher lead the read aloud while the other supported students by showing visuals related to text. The teaching strategies used by the teachers were anchor charts, sentence frames, and turn and talk. The reading was very linked to culture and identify and students appeared to be engaged by raising their hands to participate. The teachers assessed students by asking questions and giving them time to discuss with their peers through the turn and talk strategy. The use of partner discussions aligns with communicative language teaching strategy referred by Celce-Murcia et al (2014). Students discussed and then shared with class. The students also referred to anchor chart for comprehension. This source also aligns with Common Core Kindergarten ELA standards such as RL.K.2, which focuses on retelling stories with key details from the text, and RL.K.3, which supports identifying characters, setting and events in a story (NYSED, 2017, p.21). The approaches seemed to be effective because the lesson had a good flow and ELL/MLs students seemed comfortable learning in their environment and looked for visual cues when needed help.

Analyze Student & Teacher Feedback: Offer insights into the experiences and perspectives of both groups, making connections between the two when relevant.

It was clear that both teachers had a clear plan to support all students including ELL/MLs. The students were able to make personal connections to the story, “Mango, Abuela and Me.” The story was about a girl, Mia, whose grandmother comes from her native country to live with her but she cannot speak English. I noticed that during the read aloud, one student shared that his grandmother speaks Spanish too. This connection to the story is a clear of text to self connection. Students can relate to text and their own personal experiences. This encourages comprehension and engagement in the reading. Teacher also aligned her instruction to language expectation standards such as ELD-SI.K-3. Narrate by sharing ideas about one’s own and others’ lived experiences and previous learning (NYSED, 2017, p. 46).

2nd Grade Observation Notes:



Self Contained (12:1:1) Classroom Observation: (03/23 & 03/24)

Introduce the Setting: Provide context about the classrooms observed:

I observed a 12:1:1 self-contained classroom setting that included English Language Learners/Multilingual Learners (ELLs/MLs). The classroom was organized and visually rich environment with individual student schedules, some of them color coded with picture symbols and labels. The classroom was a highly differentiated environment reflecting each individual student needs. Some differentiated details were noted even in the sign in sheets, some students had tracing practice of their names, and some had lines to write the name and last name independently. The classroom schedule included visuals. For example, the morning meeting time label was paired with a picture of the morning meeting circle. All learning centers were labeled and paired with visuals. The writing center had a flow of the writing process giving students the guidance on the steps they need to follow to complete their writing pieces. Each table was labeled as station 1, 2 and 3 and color coded. Students were given visual cues to sign in at each center when they transitioned from one activity to another. This helped support independence and made the routine easy and clear for all the learners. Overall, the classroom environment was structured and very supportive to meet the needs of all the learners.

Present Findings: Discuss the pedagogical approaches, strategies, materials, and assessment methods observed and their effectiveness.

The propose of my visitation was to understand how ELLs/MLs experience large and small group instruction. The teacher was fully involved for delivering both instruction and language support, often adapting the lesson to meet the individual needs based on the individualize education plans while supporting English language development. What really impressed me was how intentional the teacher was with differentiation. The instruction was delivered using visual support, simple

language, gestures, and hands on activities. According to Celce-Murcia et al. (2014, p. 348), use of visuals is a great tool for language learning. The lesson was very hands on and visually rich. For example during a math lesson about identifying the features of two dimensional shapes, the teacher used popsicle stick to build shapes and have students count the sides/sticks of the shapes. One of the ELL student had difficulty labeling one of the shapes, the teacher showed the picture of the shape and the label by giving a verbal and visual prompt for the student to label the shape. Direct method (Celce Murcia et al., 2014, p. 5) was used with actions by the teacher with hands to make a shape and pictures. Then, after introducing the lesson, she checked students' understanding by asking questions and by giving clues at the same time and having student name the shape. For example she said, " I am a flat shape and I have three sides and three corners, what am I ?" Teacher questions serve as a great tool to check comprehension (Celce Murcia et al., 2014, p. 354). Intentional scaffolds were given here to help students who had difficulties naming shapes. This was especially helpful for ELLs/MLs who are still developing their language skills. Meaningful scaffolds can make the text accessible to ELLs/MLs (Celce-Murcia et al.,2014; WIDA, 2014).

The instructional approaches and supports observed during this lesson align with several key standards related to mathematics and language development. The lesson focused on identifying the properties/characteristics of two dimensional shapes, which aligns with the NYS Next Generation Learning Standards for Mathematics especially those related to geometry. Students are expected to recognize, describe, and compare attributes of different shapes such as their sides and vertices. The use of visual support and hands on materials supported students in developing these important math concepts in an understandable way.

In addition, the instruction aligns with the WIDA English Language Development (ELD) Standards, in particular standard 3 (Language of Mathematics). This standard highlights the language needed to engage in mathematical thinking, including describing the characteristics and comparing objects. Throughout the

lesson, students used pictures and sentence frames to describe shapes. For example, “A triangle has _____ sides.” This strategy helped connect mathematical understanding with academic language development.

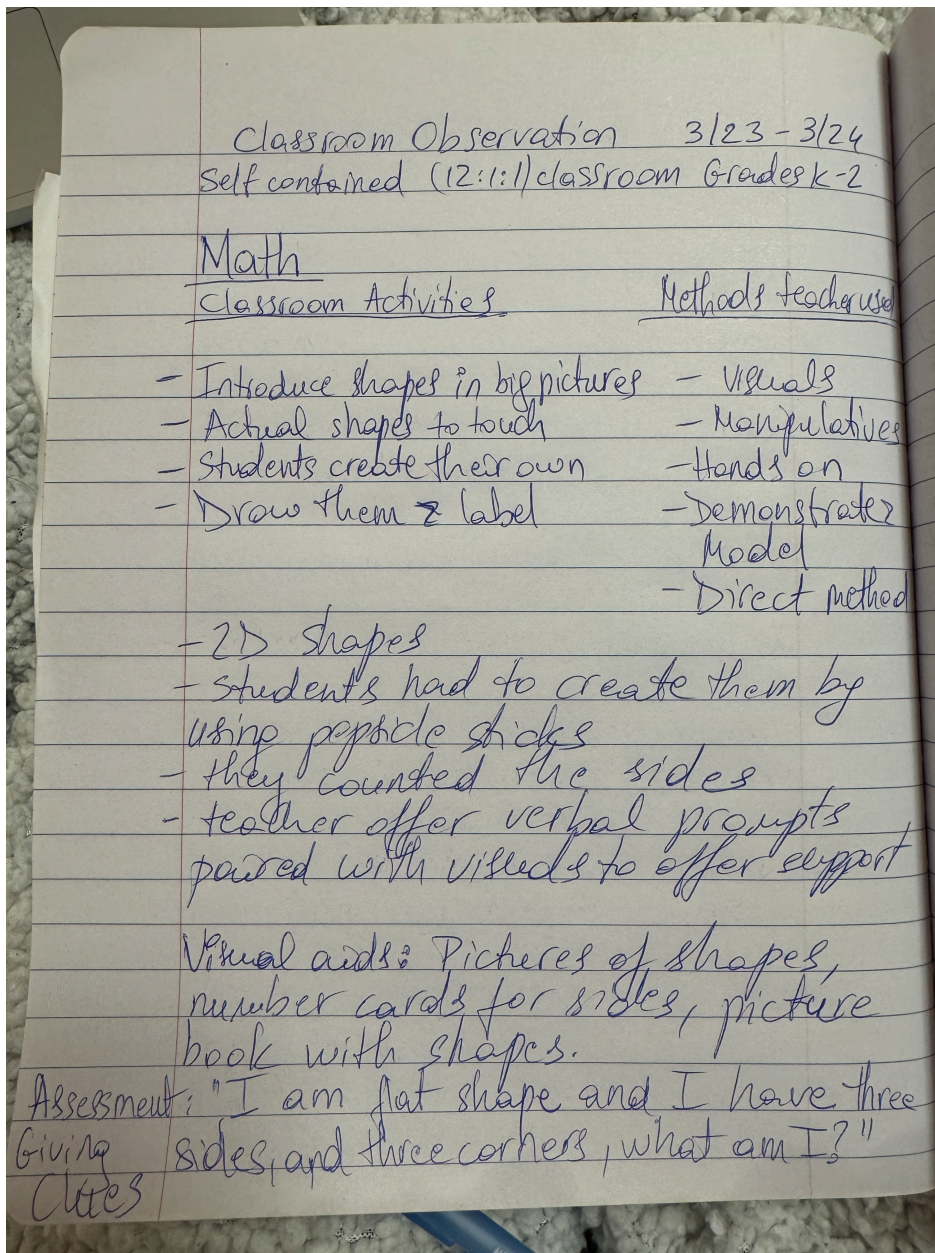
Analyze Student & Teacher Feedback: Offer insights into the experiences and perspectives of both groups, making connections between the two when relevant.

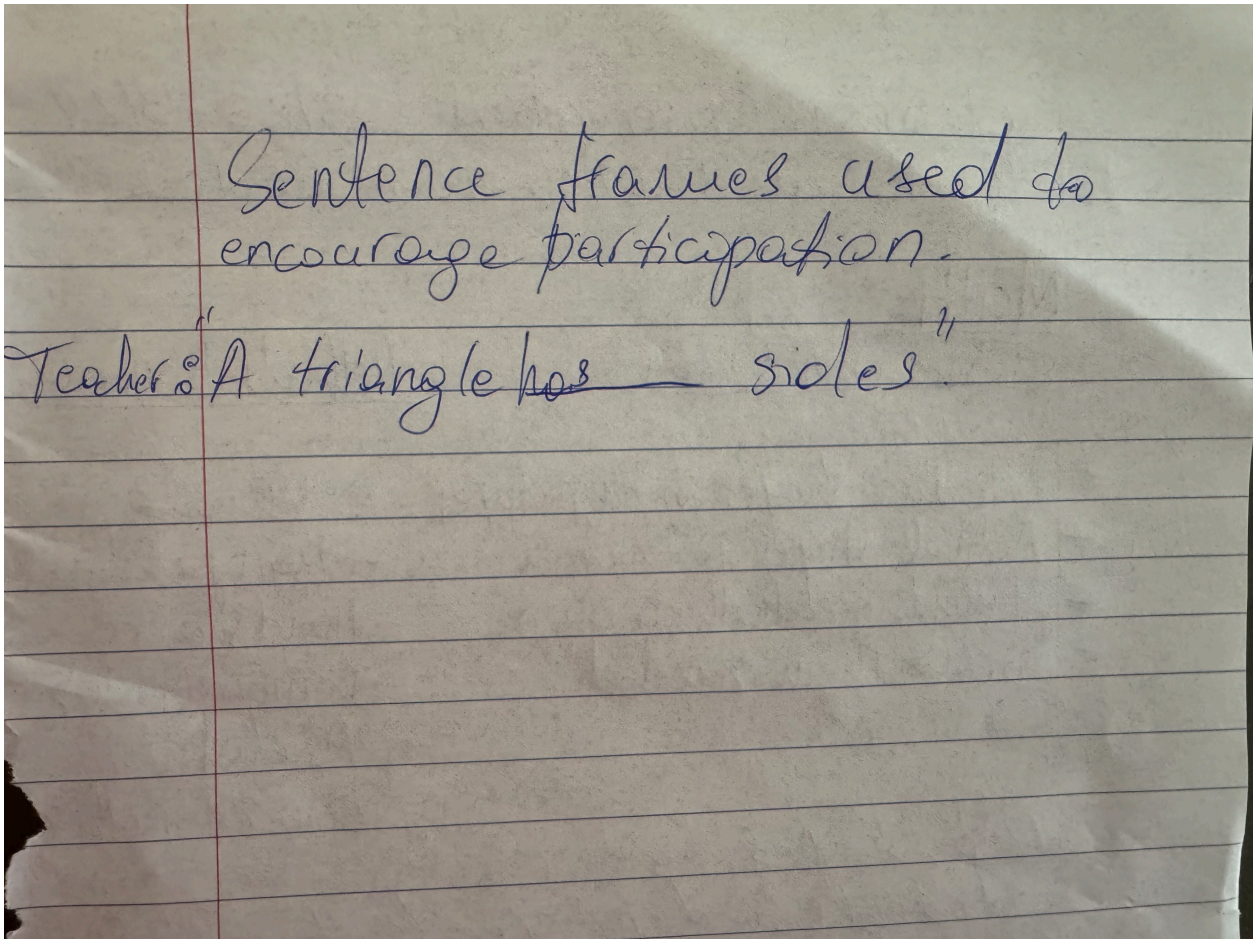
From my interview with the teacher, it was clear that the teacher had a great focus on balancing language development with content instruction. The teacher utilized the “direct method” (Celce-Murcia et al., 2014 p. 5) by using actions and pictures to make the learning clear. The teacher shared, “I try to introduce the concept step by step using pictures, videos, gestures and actions.” This reflects the importance of differentiation and aligns with what I observed during the instruction. While the teacher is thoughtfully providing supports, students are actively benefiting from them. It clearly shows that strategies like visuals, gestures, verbal prompts, hands on activities, self assessment games are not just instructional choices, they are important tools that make the learning more accessible to all the learners.

One of the most surprising aspects of this observation was how well language development was embedded into the math lesson. In the beginning, I expected the lesson to be centered on naming the shapes and counting the sides. However, I noticed that a significant part of the instruction focused on helping students talk about math and use academic language such as sides, vertices/corners to describe the shapes. This was supported by visuals and sentence frames. I also learned how much support ELLs/MLs need even in math concepts. While identifying shapes may seem just labeling with one word, explaining their attributes requires a strong understanding and use of content vocabulary. Overall this observation reinforced the importance of planning that includes both content and language needs. It

helped me understand that even in a subject like math, language plays a critical role in student success. Learning from this experience, I want to be more intentional and thoughtful on embedding vocabulary supports in all subject areas.

Self Contained (12:1:1) K-2nd Grade Observation Notes:





3rd Grade Classroom Observation: (4/15-4/16)

Introduce the Setting: Provide context about the classrooms observed:

The 3rd grade classroom was arranged with desks in pairs, so four students could sit together. This arrangement of desks supported cooperative work and discussion. There was a classroom library with leveled books, and each bin was labeled by subject. This seemed to increase independence where students had the chance to easily choose the books they wanted from the library. Walls were covered with anchor charts, subject related vocabulary, student work, and other visual supports that reinforce current topics in each academic subject. The environment seemed to be designed in a way that was inclusive and supportive. The classroom was

organized with visuals, sentence starters charts to support writing, and other scaffolds to meet the needs of diverse learners, including ELL/MLs. At the beginning of the lesson, the teacher had to go over a behavior chart to remind students the classroom rules throughout the activities. This set the classroom expectations and helped establish a good flow for the lesson.

Present Findings: Discuss the pedagogical approaches, strategies, materials, and assessment methods observed and their effectiveness.

The teacher used some strategies during instruction such as the use of visuals for each word presented. For example, to understand how words change in structure when forming plurals, the teacher presented the picture of one wolf along with the number one. She then modeled the correct pronunciation by encouraging students to repeat the word after her. She also showed a picture of three wolves and made it clear that now the word changes. Instead of “wolf”, we say “wolves” for more than one and here we have three. The use of visuals seemed to be very helpful especially for ELL/MLs as they seemed to rely on visuals to read the words correctly. Another effective strategy observed during the lesson was “repetition.” I could see that with reception, the struggling readers were benefiting by using the current pronunciation. The teacher encouraged the students to repeat the words when she introduced them, but also included words in sentences and encouraged students to read the sentences. Then, students had to come up with the word “wolf” in singular and plural on their own sentences and share with class.

Analyze Student & Teacher Feedback: Offer insights into the experiences and perspectives of both groups, making connections between the two when relevant.

I noticed that the teacher picked the effective strategies for this lesson. Students seemed to benefit from these strategies and the lesson had a good flow. According to the Center for Teaching and Learning (n.d.), the Frayer Model and Four-Square adaptations, students benefit from scaffolds such as the use of visuals to support comprehension. This model also states that the use of sentence frames, language

Fieldwork Paper

modeling and repetition help build speaking skills and overall language skills. I could observe the benefits of the use of these strategies. Students were using the words and spelling them while coming up with sentence. The teacher observed students throughout the lesson. She modeled language for those who were having some difficulty. She encouraged them to repeat after her as she demonstrated. Students were also practicing expressive language in groups while sharing their work with peers. Overall, I enjoyed the lessons and all the activities during this class as it included all the ways of offering language support to all students and especially to ELL/MLs.

3rd Grade Observation Notes:

Classroom Observations 4/15 - 4/16

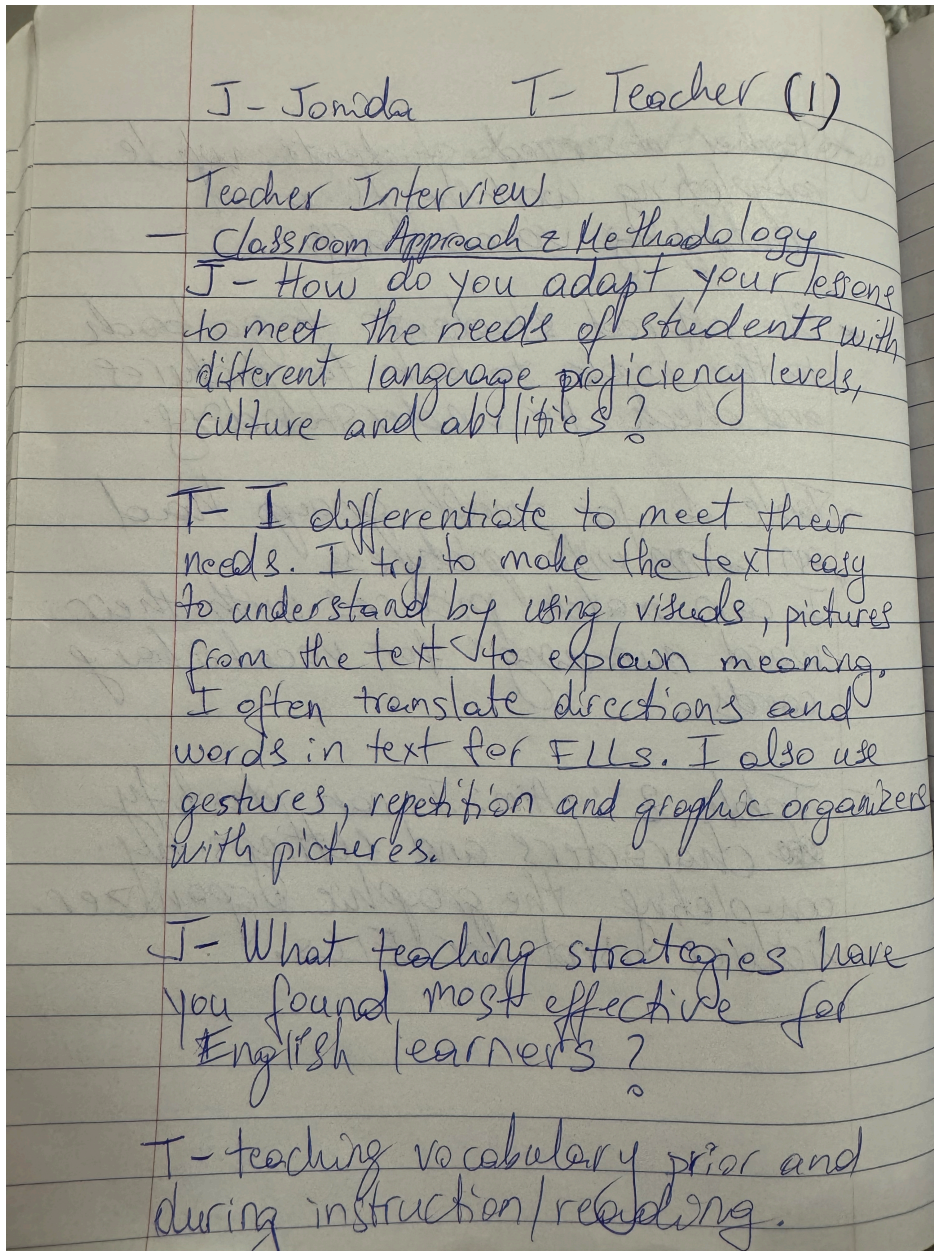
3rd Grade

<u>Grammar - Spelling</u> Plurals	<u>Methods</u>
<u>Activities/Routine</u>	- Words paired with visuals
- Introduce how words can change when plural	- Repetition
- Students read words with teacher	- Used numbers 1 for singular and 2+ for plural nouns
- Group work	- Gave students wait time to read words
- Games.	

Teacher said "1 wolf." Then she put it into sentence frame: "I see one gray wolf in the forest."
I see two or more gray _____ in the forest.

*Visual aids: words paired with number to understand singular, plural, picture cards, "Wolves"

Teacher (1) Interview Notes:



J- How do you incorporate state standards into your lessons?

T- I create my lesson objectives based on standards. I also differentiate based on students' language levels.

J- What materials do you use most often and why do you find them effective?

T- Graphic organizers (Visual maps)
Picture cards (Visual cues)

J- How do you assess student progress?

T- Observations, questions, worksheets.
Challenges & Solutions

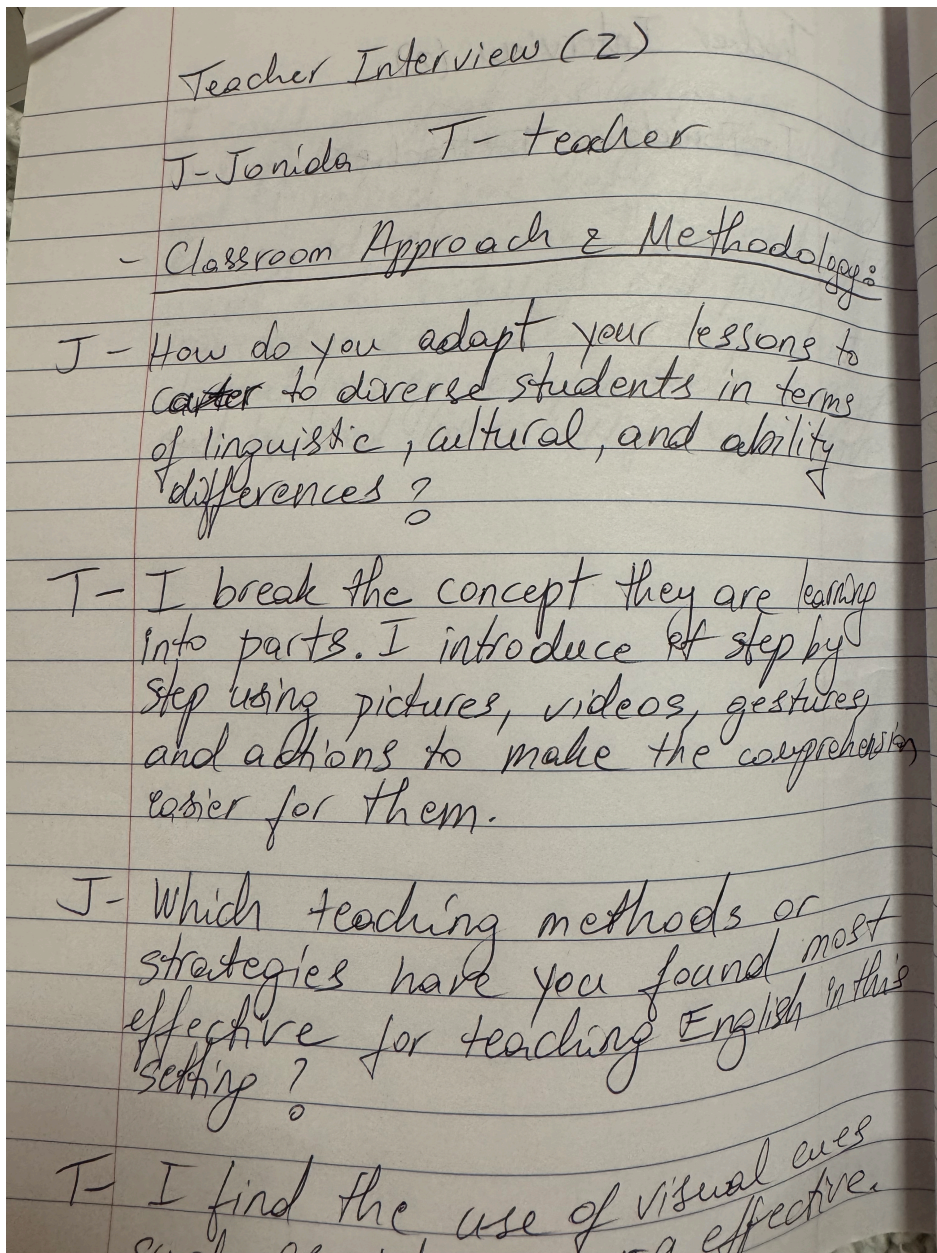
J- Can you share an example of how you supported a struggling student? Any specific challenge? How did you overcome that?

T- I remember, I had a student who could not say a word in English, except "hi."

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I could not speak his language which was Polish. I used google translate and it helped me very much to find the way to help him. I paired English words with pictures and Polish translation as well. The student started feeling comfortable knowing and started becoming expressive.

Teacher (2) Interview Notes:



J- How do you incorporate state and professional standards into your lessons?

T- I always include standards into my teaching objective, but I also make sure they match my students ELL/ML levels.

Materials & Assessment:

J- What materials do you use most frequently, and why?

T- Anchor Charts, pictures, manipulatives, posters and worksheets. Manipulatives offer hands on learning. Other materials offer visual support.

J- How do you evaluate or assess the progress of your English learners? Can you provide an example?

T- I ask questions during instruction,

I use exit ticket after the lesson,
I also use games in small groups
to assess their learning.

Challenges & Solutions?

J- Have you encountered any specific
challenges while teaching this
demographic of students? How did
you overcome them?

T- Every year, I encounter
challenges because students come
in different language backgrounds
and levels. I do not speak many
languages myself beside Spanish
and English. When a student
comes with a language that
I do not speak, I usually use
the online tools to translate and
offer the student the help he
needs.

Reflection of Observations and Interviews:

After the observations, I realized that all teachers have a common objective which is to support all the learners no matter where they come from, their learning abilities and language challenges. The most common strategy used was implementing visual aids such as anchor charts, graphic organizers and picture cards. Anchor charts were posted in walls and next to the learning objective in every lesson. They also organized their classrooms in a way that was very welcoming and comfortable for all the learners by labeling materials in the classroom and offering visual schedules of the lesson flow. The communicative language strategy Celce-Murcia et al (2014) was also effectively being implemented where there was room for partner talk and discussions in each lesson. All teacher had a “natural approach” as introduced by S. Krashen (Cowin n.d.) in their teaching methods. There was no correction of mistakes. Students were exposed to language that was made comprehensible to them. Students felt comfortable in their learning and wanted to learn. I learned that differentiation was the goal of each lesson. In order to support students effectively, teachers need to modify and adapt instruction based on learners’ needs.

After interviewing the two teachers and asking a series of questions, I realized that now I have a better understanding that we educators need to spend some time to plan and implement lessons. Referring back to the interview with teacher (1), she shared that she differentiates instruction to meet students’ needs inclusive ELL/ MLs. Teacher (2) shared that she breaks the concept into simple parts by using pictures, videos, and gestures. This approach reduces linguistic load of new concepts (*Echevarría, Vogt, & Short, 2017*) and making content comprehensible for English learners: *The SIOP Model (5th ed.)*. Pearson. This shows that they have taken some time to implement the lesson because it requires adjustments to make the learning accessible to all the learners. I also noticed that book selection was also another important teaching factor in supporting students’ learning. Multilingual learners’ languages and cultures are important resources to be used for learning and classroom life (WIDA Guiding Principles of Language Development 2019). The books, “ I Like myself” and “Mango, Abuela and Me” were focused on identity and culture. They were culturally relevant to students’ own experiences by making the lesson very engaging. Students shared their own experiences during the reading. According to the Office of Head Start, National Center on Cultural and

Linguistic Responsiveness (n.d.), books selection for ELL/MLs is encouraged about cultures, languages and ethnicities. Teacher (1) also shared that she finds it very important to teach new vocabulary prior to reading by making students familiar with words. Last, both teachers shared that teaching students with different linguistic challenges can be difficult, however they both found sources to help and make the teaching accessible to ELL/MLs. I find these interviews very motivating for me as an educator to always take time on my planning and use different resources and strategies by making sure that every student feels welcomed, comfortable and confident in the English Language skills.

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