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The Effects of Explicitly Teaching a Component of Self-regulated Strategy Development on Bilingual Kindergartners

Ashley K. Lobo

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The Effects of Explicitly Teaching a Component of Self-regulated Strategy Development on
Bilingual Kindergartners

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Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of a modified version of a self-regulated strategy development model on the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. This was an important study because kindergarten bilingual children are falling behind in writing as they try to master two languages. The procedures for this study involved choosing eight students to take part in the study. The eight students were separated into an intervention group and a non-intervention group. The intervention group received small group instruction using a modified version of the self-regulated strategy development model. Data was collected by giving the eight students a picture prompt one time per week and rating their writing based on a rubric.

Findings demonstrated that the intervention group made more progress using more story components and number of words in their writing than the non-intervention group. This study showed that the writing of bilingual kindergartners can be improved by explicit instruction, teacher modeling, and clear expectations. Recommendations for teachers of bilingual kindergarten children include explicit teaching of story elements, teacher modeling of language and writing, peer cooperation in writing, and providing clear expectations for students' writing (such as a rubric).

As a result of this study, the researcher hopes that bilingual kindergarten students are able to write more advanced stories and therefore be able to express themselves better. Self-regulation is important because it gives the students a foundation to start their writing. Students are taught strategies to make sure they are following the steps of a good writer. Being a stronger writer will help students in their future academic careers.

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CHAPTER ONE

The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of a modified version of a self-regulated strategy development model on the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. Self-regulated strategy development is defined by Saddler (2004) and Harris & Graham (1992) as a process where students are explicitly and systematically taught a task-specific strategy for accomplishing an academic task or problem, in this case it relates to writing.

The hypothesis is that the bilingual students involved in the small group interventions will increase their ability to become better writers by including more story components than the students that are not part of the intervention group. This is a study will compare the results of the intervention group receiving teacher led small group instruction on writing and a non-intervention group that will continue in the normal kindergarten writing curriculum. This will be measured by increasing the number of components of good story writing and the length of their writing as measured by number of words

This chapter will include information about the population of the study. It will also connect the study to the common core state standards and will provide a brief description of the design of the study.

Introduction to the Student Population

This study will be conducted using students from a dual language bilingual kindergarten classroom in a suburban city in the Midwest. According to the school report card on the Department of Public Instruction, 96.6% of the population of the school is Hispanic, 2.2% Black not Hispanic and 1.2% White not Hispanic, (DPI). Ninety-seven point three percent of the population is economically disadvantaged, 67.7% with limited English proficiency, and 17.3% are students with disabilities.

This study will take place over four weeks at the end of the school year. The study will be conducted using eight students. They will be chosen by the teacher who is also the researcher. According to teacher observation, the eight students are advanced writers who can consistently match sounds with letters to form words. Judged by the teacher (researcher), the students are ready to add context to their writing. The study will include three boys and five girls altogether. All eight of the students are Spanish dominant. Five of the eight students are Mexican, two students are Puerto Rican, and one student is Columbian. All students are six years old during the course of the study. The eight students will be randomly split into two groups. One group will receive small group interventions and the other group will continue with the normal kindergarten writing curriculum. The intervention group will be comprised of two boys and two girls. The other four students that will only take the tests will be three girls and one boy.

Connection to Common Core State Standards

This study is aligned with the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for kindergarteners. The study aligns with the standard for writing (Standard Two) which states that students should be able to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose texts that state what they are writing about and provide information about the topic. Students will be given a picture and will use what they know to write about the topic. Students are able to choose the picture they would like to describe so that lack of background knowledge will not be a problem. This study also aligns with Standard Three stating that students should be able to use drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate an event or events and the order in which they happened. Some of the picture prompts show action. The students should be able to write what is happening in the picture. Students will be taught components of a good story to increase their ability to write a good story.

Brief Overview of the Project

The researcher will give eight students a picture prompt to begin with as a pretest of their writing. Every test will be scored on the attached rubric. A picture prompt is a picture that the students will use to create a story. According to Lienemann, Graham, Leader-Janssen, & Reid (2006), the picture prompts should be interesting and easy for the students to write about. Picture prompts are useful when the students are judged to be familiar with the subject so their performance will not be due to a lack of vocabulary or background knowledge.

The researcher will choose eight writers to participate in this study. Half of the students will receive an intervention in a small group to learn about the components of a good story while the other students will continue to participate in the usual standard instructional activities. The four students who will partake in the small group intervention will be randomly chosen from the pool of eight students.

Instruction for the small teacher led intervention group will be focused on the seven components of a good story according to the self-regulated strategy development which focuses on the planning of the students' writing. The self-regulated strategy development includes teaching students story components, mnemonic devices for remembering questions to think of when planning for writing, and also self-statements.

The intervention group will meet with the teacher researcher three times per week to receive small group instruction using the intervention. The non-intervention group will continue with the normal kindergarten writing curriculum. Both of the groups take a writing test once per week for four weeks. The researcher will be teaching students the components of a good story over the period of four weeks. According to Lienemann et al. (2006), the seven components of a good story are main characters, locale, time, what the main characters want to do, what they did,

how they felt, and how it all ended. During the first week, the researcher will be teaching main characters. During the second week, the researcher will be teaching locale. During week three, the researcher will instruct about what the main character did. During the fourth week, the researcher will teach about a story ends. Each week will follow the same format.

The non-intervention group took part in the regular writing curriculum. They did various things such as responding to writing prompts in their journals and other classroom writing assignments. They did not receive any instruction regarding including story components into their writing.

A post test will consist of a picture prompt and a graded writing sample from each of the eight students. The post test will be compared to the pretest and also to the writing samples collected each week of instruction to see if students' writing has improved according to the components of a good story and length.

The researcher will score each writing sample using a rubric and also record the number of words used to write the story. The researcher will compare the results from the intervention group and non-intervention group to see which group improved their writing abilities more according to number of story components used and number of words used.

Conclusion

This study will investigate the effects of teaching a modified version of a self-regulated strategy development model on the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. This chapter detailed the student population, the connection to the common core state standards, and an overview of the project. Chapter Two will detail the research used to guide the design of this study.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Bilingual kindergarten students are ready to write stories. Kindergarten curriculum focuses on being able to pair the sound with the corresponding letter. Once the students can consistently pair the sounds with the letter, they need something to write about. I have seen in my own classroom students not knowing what to write about or where to begin. I want to give students a foundation to start their writing. My study will involve teaching students the components that make a good story to see if they can transfer those skills to writing.

The purpose of Chapter Two is to review the literature that is already available about the topic that I chose. I am conducting a study on the modified version of the Self-Regulated Strategy Development. I will be discussing the research about the Self-Regulated Strategy Development and what has been done so far. I am going to present the research on writing prompts on kindergarten writing, and also strategies for teaching writing to kindergarten students. I focused the writing strategies to ones that fit within my study such as teaching writing through the components of a good story and students' metacognition.

Section One will cover research about the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD). According to Tracy, Reid and Graham (2009), students are explicitly taught writing strategies using SRSD to accomplish certain writing tasks. They focused on planning, drafting, editing and the skills and knowledge to apply the strategies such as components of a good story. Since SRSD has proven to be effective with second and third graders, Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013), conducted research to show that SRSD would improve the components of a good story, story length and overall story quality with first graders. The self-regulated strategy development includes teaching students story components, mnemonic devices for remembering questions to

think of when planning for writing, and also self-statements. I am modifying the self-regulated strategy development design even more to be able to improve the writing of kindergarten students.

Section Two will cover research regarding writing prompts and why they are beneficial to kindergarten students. I found that picture prompts are a good way to start a student's writing. I will be giving students a choice of the picture they would like to write about so that they have some free choice. According to Lienemann, Graham, Leader-Janssen, and Reid (2006), the picture prompts should be interesting and easy for the students to write about. Picture prompts are useful when the students are judged to be familiar with the subject so their performance will not be due to a lack of vocabulary or background knowledge. According to Carroll and Feng (2010), prompted writing can give students more time to develop their writing because they do not have to come up with a topic to write about.

Section Three will cover research regarding best practice writing strategies to use with elementary students. The main focus is on using story components to establish a base to start writing. Students can learn by mentor texts, explicitly being taught the components to a story, or even teaching students to think about their own writing process to make their writing more complete and longer. According to Corden (2007), research in the United States has shown that children's literature, peer discussion, and explicit teacher instruction can provide a model of writing that allows for personal response and encourages students to use what they learn in their own writing.

Section One: Self-Regulated Strategy Development

Section One presents five studies regarding the effects of self-regulated strategy development on different groups of children. Article One by Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013)

examined SRSD with a group of first grade students. Article Two by Lienemann et al. (2006) focused on the effects of SRSD on at risk second graders to see if it would improve their quality of writing and recall of narratives to prevent future writing disabilities. Article Three by Tracy et al. (2009) examined the effects of SRSD on typically developing third graders. This study is important because it presents a study with a control group receiving normal curriculum writing instruction and a second variable group receiving SRSD instruction. Article Four by Harris, Graham, Mason (2006) also used a control group to investigate the effects of SRSD instruction on the writing, knowledge and motivation of second grade students. Article five by Saddler and Asaro (2007) examined the effects of Self-regulated strategy development on story writing of second grade writers with learning disabilities.

Article One: Effects of SRSD with First Graders

The study conducted by Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013) examined the effectiveness of implementing the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) with first grade students. The purpose of the experiment was to find out if SRSD increased writing abilities in first grade students. They hypothesized that Self-Regulated Strategy Development would increase the writing of these first grade students by length, number of essential writing components included, and by quality of the writing.

The sample consisted of six first grade students (4 males and 2 females) with typical writing skills. The study was conducted during spring semester at an elementary school in the Midwest. The six students were purposely selected based on teacher recommendation, report cards, and students who were judged to be able to write independently using punctuation and complete sentences.

The students wrote stories in response to picture prompts during a baseline assessment, instruction, post instruction and maintenance. There were interviews conducted during the baseline and post instruction assessments. The assessments were graded by research assistants to minimize scoring bias. The students were taught using the SRSD instructional model for story planning and writing. (POW + WWW What= 2 How=2 Mnemonic). In the POW, the P stands for Pick my idea, the O is for Organize my notes and the W is for Write and say more. For WWW, they stand for Who are the characters, When does the story take place, and Where does the story take place. The What = 2 stands for What do the characters want or do and What happens next. The How=2 stands for How does the story end and How do the characters feel. After students were comfortable with the story planning and writing mnemonic, they were taught strategies for using self-statements. The instructor modeled using these strategies while writing a story for the students. The next step was the students wrote a story collaboratively with the help of the instructor. Then students were required to write a story by themselves.

The author found that SRSD was an effective model for increasing the writing ability of first grade students. All students who participated showed improvement in their writing specifically in completeness (quality of writing) and the number of essential story elements present.

The next study used the same strategy to examine the effect on a diverse group of second graders. They looked at their writing completeness, essential story elements, and also their recall of narrative stories.

Article Two: SRSD with Struggling Writers in Second Grade

The study conducted by Lienemann, Graham, Leader Janssen, and Reid (2006) examined the effects of Self-regulated strategy development on a diverse group of second graders for

improving their writing abilities and their recall of narrative stories. The purpose of this experiment was to find out if SRSD would be effective with at risk second graders to prevent writing disabilities in the future. They hypothesized that SRSD would be an effective strategy for at-risk second graders because it was successful with older students including students with disabilities.

The sample consisted of six second graders who were struggling with writing. They were six students who were all identified with difficulty in reading also. Four of the six students had other challenges also such as learning disabilities, language difficulties, or ADHD. The study was conducted during fall semester at a rural elementary school in the Midwest with children who were not economically disadvantaged.

The students were randomly assigned to one of two cohorts which had different instructors. Students were first assessed responding to picture prompts to get a baseline of their writing. Then the instructors taught students individually starting with the seven story components. The instructor would only move onto the next part of the strategy when the students mastered five out of the seven elements of a story. The following parts of the strategy instruction included naming the story elements of a specific story, introducing self-monitoring strategies, the instructor modeling writing a story, collaboratively writing a story, then only being able to use a graphic organizer to guide writing, to finally writing independently with no support. They were assessed on a baseline writing sample, independent performance, maintenance, and finally a reading probe to assess their recall of a narrative. They were assessed based on number of story elements, number of words, quality rating, and story retells.

The author found that the SRSD strategy is effective with struggling second grade writers. The quality of work of all students improved. There was only one student who did not

write longer stories after instruction. Four of the six students improved their retelling of a story. The next study looks at a larger sample size to investigate if SRSD can be effective for all students.

Article Three: Teaching Young Students Strategies for Planning and Drafting Stories (SRSD)

The study conducted by Tracy, Reid, and Graham (2009) examined the effects of the self-regulated strategy development on a group of third graders. One group received strategy instruction and one group remained in the normal writing curriculum. The purpose of this study was to examine if students' writing ability would increase after SRSD instruction. They hypothesized that SRSD instruction would enhance the schematic structure, quality, and length of students' work. They also hypothesized that the progress in writing would remain consistent and the strategies of planning and drafting writing would transfer to other genres.

The sample consisted of 127 students (33 boys and 31 girls) from six different third grade classrooms. Seven students who did not complete the post-test were not included in the study. The students were in a rural elementary school in the Midwest. Three classrooms were randomly assigned to a control group who would teach normal writing curriculum such as spelling, grammar, and conventions. The other three classrooms were randomly assigned to the self-regulated strategy development (SRSD). Students were given the Story Construction Subtest from the Test of Written Languages to determine their initial writing level. The authors found that there was no significant difference between the writing level of the SRSD group and the control group.

There were different stages of instruction for the students in the SRSD group. The first stage was develop background knowledge. The students were taught a mnemonic device for

planning their writing (POW WWW). This strategy was explained in an earlier study. The students used these devices to discuss a story and pick out the important parts. The second phase was discuss it. The students looked at their own writing baseline writing and analyzed the parts of the stories that they included and also what they were missing. The third phase was model it, where the teacher showed students how he or she would plan for writing while using self-statements. The fourth phase was support it, where the students planned a story together and received support from the teacher, but ultimately wrote the story by themselves. The last stage was independent performance, where the students could independently write a story including all seven story elements without the help of the teacher.

The teachers of the control groups used a traditional basic skills approach to teaching writing. They taught spelling, grammar, punctuation, and sentence construction. Teachers rarely used text organization, planning, or revision. They rarely conferred with students about their writing, encouraged sharing writing, or even monitored students' writing progress.

All students were given a pre-test and post-test. Their writing was evaluated based on number of story parts, number of words, and overall quality. The author found that students that were instructed using the SRSD wrote qualitatively better stories, longer stories, and schematically stronger stories. The gains were maintained over a short period of time (2 weeks). Students in the SRSD group also wrote qualitatively better, longer and schematically stronger personal narrative stories than the control group which shows that they transferred the skills to another genre.

The following study examines the effects of SRSD on writing, knowledge, and motivation. These results are compared the results to a control group.

Article Four: Improving the writing knowledge and motivation of second grade students

The study conducted by Harris et al. (2006) examined the effects of the Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) on the writing, knowledge and motivation of struggling second grade writers from urban schools serving a high percentage of students from low-income families. One purpose of this study was to examine the effectiveness of an academic program in improving the writing of struggling writers from urban schools with a high percentage of students from low-income families. Another purpose of the study was to evaluate whether social support through peer assistance would increase the performance of the students being instructed on the SRSD. The authors hypothesized that SRSD would have a stronger impact on students' writing performance, knowledge of writing, and motivational attributes. They also hypothesized that the positive effects of SRSD would transfer to other genres of writing such as personal narratives and informational writing. A third prediction was that the students taking part in the peer support group would make greater gains than the students only receiving SRSD instruction.

The sample consisted of 66 second grade students who were identified as struggling writers. These students scored two thirds of a standard deviation or more below the mean for the normative sample according to the Story Construction Subtest from the Test of Written Language 3 (TOWL-3; Hammill & Larsen, 1996). Along with the score from the test, the classroom teacher had to also verify that the child was a struggling writer. The 66 students were randomly assigned to three groups: 22 students in SRSD instruction only, 22 students in SRSD plus peer support, and 22 in the comparison group. Thirty-seven of the students were boys and 26 were girls. Seventy-eight percent of the students were Black, 14% were white, and 8% were Hispanic. Fifty-seven percent of the students received free or reduced lunches.

Instructors were trained using the SRSD approach during a 2 to 3 week period of time. They were given checklists to ensure that all instructors were teaching the same components of the SRSD. Instructors worked with their assigned pair of students three times a week for 20 minutes. Each SRSD condition (with peer support and without) had 11 pairs of students. The whole study took place over a 6 month period with specific durations of time spent of different parts of the study such as writing a story and then transferring those skills to a persuasive writing. This study followed the same format as the other SRSD studies starting first with developing background knowledge, then discuss it, model it, support it, and independent performance. The difference between the SRSD group as opposed to the SRSD with peer support was that the students were encouraged to act as partners in the peer support group while activating background knowledge. They were encouraged to support each other and work as a team to work through the strategy phases. The students that were part of the comparison group remained in their regular classroom and received writing instruction through Writers' Workshop. The students were given a pretest and post test assessing four different genres: persuasive, personal narrative, story, and informative writing.

The author found that the SRSD only group wrote stories that were more complete than the students in the comparison study. There was no difference between the comparison group and the SRSD only students in length and quality of stories. Students in the SRSD only condition were more knowledgeable about planning a paper than the comparison students. The estimates of students' writing effort or motivation was not increased by the SRSD instruction. The students in the SRSD with peer support demonstrated the same gains as the students in the SRSD only group. They also wrote longer stories and qualitatively better stories than the comparison group.

The following study measures the effects of SRSD on a group of struggling second grade students with learning disabilities.

Article Five: SRSD with Students with Learning Disabilities

The study conducted by Saddler and Asaro (2007) examined the effects of Self-regulated strategy development on story writing of second grade writers with learning disabilities. They also wanted to find out to what degree modeling and verbal prompting affected behaviors regarding revision. The purpose of this experiment was to find out if SRSD did increase the students' story writing ability. They hypothesized that SRSD would be an effective strategy for revising and story writing.

The sample consisted of six second graders who were identified as having a learning disability and were also struggling with writing. Four of the six students were African American and two were Caucasian. Three students were girls and three students were boys. The study was conducted at an inner-city school in the northeast United States.

The six students were randomly paired with another student. Students were assessed to obtain a baseline for their writing. Students were instructed in their assigned groups of two. The groups met with the instructor three times per week for 30 minutes. The lessons were the same as taught during previous studies involving SRSD such as Saddler et al. (2004). The lessons are also described in the Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013) study above. There were six lessons for each group. Lesson one consisted of teaching the mnemonic device POW+WWW. Lesson two was a review and practice of the mnemonic devices and using them in stories. Lesson three taught self-statements and revision using ideas from the students. During lesson four, the students wrote independent stories using the plan they created together as a group. For lesson five, students planned and wrote their own story, but received some guidance from the instructor

for revision help if needed. Lesson six consisted of the students planning, writing, and revising their own story with no help from the instructor. For the writing samples, each student was able to choose a picture prompt to start their writing. Students were given 20 minutes to plan and write their story and then an addition 15 minutes to revise their story. The students were scored according to number of story elements, quality of draft, quality of revision, and number, quality, and type of revision.

The author found that the SRSD strategy is effective with students with learning disabilities in second grade. All students included more story elements after instruction. Quality improved for every student also. Students increased their time spent on planning and also the number of revisions made.

Synthesis of Section One: Self-Regulated Strategy Development

These research studies show the SRSD does improve the performance of many different ages and types of learners. The three studies followed the same format for their procedures, with a couple of slight differences. The procedures they followed are activating background knowledge, modeling, collaborative work, and independent work. They all showed that there was improvement in the writing of students who receive the SRSD instruction. Article One by Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013) showed that SRSD was an effective model for increasing the writing ability of first grade students. All students who participated showed improvement in their writing specifically in completeness (quality of writing) and the number of essential story elements present. Article Two by Lienemann et al. (2006) showed that the SRSD strategy is effective with struggling second grade writers. The quality of work of all students improved. There was only one student who did not write longer stories after instruction. Four of the six students improved their retelling of a story. Article Three by Tracy et al. (2009) was especially

helpful because it reported on the control group of students. The author found that students that were instructed using the SRSD wrote qualitatively better stories, longer stories, and schematically stronger stories. The gains were maintained over a short period of time (2 weeks). Article Four by Harris et al. (2006) showed that students in the SRSD with peer support demonstrated the same gains as the students in the SRSD only group. They also wrote longer stories and qualitatively better stories than the comparison group. Article Five by Saddler and Asaro (2007) showed that all students included more story elements after instruction, quality improved, and students increased their time spent on planning and also the number of revisions made. The five studies by Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013), Lienemann et al. (2006), Tracy et al. (2009), Harris et al. (2006), and Saddler and Asaro (2007) showed that SRSD is an effective strategy to use with students to improve their writing.

Section Two consists of two studies examining the effects of writing prompts of students. One of the studies will focus on picture prompts and the other study will focus on writing prompts vs Writer's Workshop.

Section Two: Writing Prompts

Section Two presents two studies regarding writing prompts. Article one by Joshua (2012) examines the effects of picture prompts on students' writing. The study aims to find out if picture prompts help students to express themselves or if picture prompts limit their writing. The study conducted by Carroll and Feng (2010) examines what is more effective in a classroom, Writer's Workshop or writing prompts on first grade students.

Article One: The Effects of Picture and Prompts on the Writing of Students

The study conducted by Joshua (2012) examined the effects of teacher chosen pictures on children's writing. The purpose of this study was to find out if visual aids helped students to

express themselves. Research cited in the study by Ehrenworth (2003) shows that children are assisted in writing when taught to observe and see art. This study seeks to find out if picture prompts aid in the writing of students or possibly limit their writing. Seven of the nine teachers hypothesized that the students would be able to write more with the picture prompts and two hypothesized that there would be no difference.

The sample consisted of 165 elementary students. There were 82 girls and 83 boys in kindergarten through second grade, ages 5 to 8. Ten students were absent for part of the study and therefore not included in the analysis. Two-thirds of the students were from a low socioeconomic level, and the others from middle to high socioeconomic level. Fifty-eight percent of the students were Latino, 20% were white, 14% were Asian and other, while 7% were African American.

There were nine teacher-researchers who conducted the study. There were three kindergarten teachers, four first grade teachers, and two second grade teachers. The teacher-researchers decided on many factors before starting the study such as the control and variable groups, the picture prompts given, the directions given to the study participants, and the evaluation criteria to assess the students' writing. They decided there would be two picture prompts given, a picture of a strawberry and a picture of a watermelon. There would also be an A group and a B group, one would receive the picture prompt first with an oral prompt and the other group would just receive the oral prompt. Then they would switch the groups for the second prompt. The teacher-researchers agreed that first and second grade teachers would count the number of words and kindergarten teachers would count words and letters. They would also look at the drawings to see if they gave meaning to the writing. Students writing was then examined to determine what writing stage they were at and it was also evaluated on a portion of

the six traits of writing. They evaluated the writing according to writing ideas, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions.

The author found that there was a slight improvement in the quality of writing, but there was no improvement in the quantity of writing using or not using the picture prompt except for kindergartners and English-language learners. The research showed that seven out of nine classrooms (groups A and B) wrote more during the first writing phase than the second. The author thought maybe it could be due to the novelty of the assignment. They found that pictures were an effective tool for kindergartners and English-language learners, but may be too constricting for older students. All picture prompts were not the same which is why the teacher-researchers spent a lot of time choosing the picture prompts that they would show.

The following study examines the effects of Writer's Workshop vs. writing prompts in a first grade classroom. The prompts are text instead of pictures, but the prompt still gives the student a place to start writing.

Article Two: The Effect of Writer's Workshop vs. Writing prompts on First Graders' Writing

The study conducted by Carroll and Feng (2010) examined if Writers Workshop or writing prompts have different effects on the writing ability and attitude of first grade students. Students in this particular county are taught writing using Writer's Workshop in the classroom, but are assessed every nine weeks with a writing prompt by the county. The purpose of this study was to find out if students performed better to prompt based writing assignments when taught writing using prompts in the classroom or when taught using Writer's Workshop in the classroom. Another purpose of the study is to find out if the students' attitude changed if they

used prompt based writing or Writer's Workshop. They hypothesized that writing from a prompt would have a more positive effect on the writing ability of first graders. They hypothesized that Writer's Workshop would have a more positive effect on the attitude of first graders.

The sample consisted of eighteen first grade students. There were eight girls and ten boys in the study. There were ten white students, five multiracial students, two black students, and one Hispanic student. Six of the eighteen students received free or reduced lunch. Seven of the students were part of a program called Early Intervention Program, two of the students were part of the Special Education Program, one student was diagnosed with Asperger's Syndrome, one student was part of the school's gifted program, and one student had Cerebral Palsy.

The study took place over two months. The author used the Elementary Writing Attitude Survey to collect the students' attitude towards writing before the study and after the study. The students were randomly split into two groups (A and B) and one group received instruction using writing prompts and the other group was taught using Writer's Workshop.

The author found that both groups of students had a decline in attitude towards writing. This could be due to the fact that the genre of persuasive writing was used which is the most difficult for first graders. The attitudes of the group that received free choice (Writer's Workshop) declined significantly less than the prompted group. This showed that students have a better attitude towards writing when they are able to choose their topic as opposed to being given the topic. Based on the overall writing score graded according to the Carroll County Schools Persuasive Writing Rubric, the prompted group was more successful than the group that used Writer's Workshop. The author synthesizes that the prompted group had more time to come up with their position on the topic while the free choice (Writer's Workshop) group had to decide on an arguable topic.

Synthesis of Section Two: Writing Prompts

Article One by Joshua (2012) showed that there was a slight improvement in the quality of writing using picture prompts. There was no improvement in the quantity of writing using or not using the picture prompt except for kindergartners and English-language learners. They found that pictures are an effective tool for kindergartners and English-language learners, but may be too constricting for older students. Article Two by Carroll and Feng (2010) showed that the students using writing prompts were more successful than the students learning to write using Writer's Workshop. The attitudes about writing of both groups declined over the length of the study. These studies showed that writing prompts are useful when used thoughtfully and with the right group of students.

Section Three consists of three research studies that promotes content writing examining the effects of writing strategies on elementary students.

Section Three: Writing Strategies

Section Three presents three studies regarding the writing strategies for elementary age students. Article One by Watanabe and Hall-Kenyon (2011) examined the effects of teaching story elements to kindergarten students to increase the complexity of their writing. Article Two by Jacobs (2004) examined the metacognition awareness and growth of kindergartners during the writing process in their classroom. Article Three by Corden (2007) examined if students' writing could be improved by teachers drawing attention to literary elements in mentor texts. Article Four by Roth and Guinee (2011) examined the effects of Interactive Writing on the independent writing of first graders. Article Five by Dunn (2013) examined the effects of two story-writing

mnemonic devices of fourth grade students. This section will focus on strategies that promote content writing among young students.

Article One: The Influence of Story Structure on Kindergartners' Writing Complexity

The study conducted by Watanabe and Hall-Kenyon (2011) examined the effects of teaching kindergarten students story elements to increase their writing ability. The purpose of this study was to investigate the changes in the complexity of kindergarten students' writing after receiving instruction on four story elements. The four story elements used were character, setting, problem, and solution. They were examined by looking at students' written text, pictures, and oral language.

The sample was six kindergarten students of varying writing ability (beginning, intermediate, and advanced). There were three males and three females. The students were from a morning half-day kindergarten class in a middle class suburban elementary school.

The study took place over six weeks. The writing instruction started the second day of school and continued twice per week from August to February. From August to September, the teacher modeled writing with a class journal. From September to October, the teacher instructed students about the writing process. From October to December, the students received writing instruction based on story elements. From January to February, there was review instruction about the story elements. This study took place during the review weeks from January to February. The authors felt that the students should have knowledge of the story elements before being evaluated on the inclusion of story elements.

The teacher collected a pre-test writing sample before the instruction, weekly work samples, and a post-test writing sample after the study. The teacher also tape recorded partner conferences, teacher/student conferences, and whole group/small group sharing time. Each work

sample was evaluated using two rubrics: Writing Development Rubric and Story Element Rubric. The Writing Development Rubric was used to evaluate the writing characteristics of the written text. The Story Element Rubric was used to evaluate the use of the four story elements in the written text, pictures, and oral language.

The author found that all of the kindergarten students made progress in writing complexity during the study focused on teaching story elements. The author used oral language, pictures, and written text to understand what the student was conveying. This study shows that teachers need to focus on more than just the written product or find other ways of evaluating the written product such as oral language and pictures.

The next study measures the increase of writing by kindergartners when taught to monitor their metacognition or thinking about their thinking and the writing process.

Article Two: Metacognition Awareness and Writing Growth Related to Kindergarten Children

The study conducted by Jacobs (2004) examined the metacognition awareness and growth of kindergartners during the writing process in their classroom. He also examined the growth of their writing in a classroom that encouraged these students to think about their thinking and writing strategies. The purpose of this study was to measure the growth of metacognition of kindergarten students through the writing process.

The sample consisted of 15 students initially, and then another student joined the class in January. There were six boys and 10 girls in the class. The students were from a kindergarten classroom in a small school with children from preschool through fifth grade. The students were Caucasian coming from low and middle socio-economic backgrounds. One child in the study had

behavioral problems, one child was diagnosed with learning disabilities, and three children were receiving speech and language services.

The study took place over the course of a year. The teacher started instruction with a 30 minute writers' workshop. Students gave ideas for writing and the teacher would encourage students to participate in the writing and the teacher modeled think alouds for the students. After the workshop, students would go to separate places in the room to write independently. At the end of the hour, students would come together and two or three students would share what they wrote. The other students would give feedback to the author such as what they liked or could ask questions. Data was collected by audio and video tapes of interviews with students and the teacher. Two times per month the teacher asked students to reflect on their writing and thinking by asking certain questions about their thinking strategies. The teacher also kept written text from the children along with anecdotal notes.

The author found that kindergarten students were thinking about their thinking which means they were showing metacognition. This was mostly seen by the interview questions asked by the teacher. The students used the words "thinking" or "thought" at least one time in their answers. The quality of their responses to the interview questions also appeared to have increased over time. Students' writing also increased with time. They went from pictures and some words to eventually writing words and some short sentences. The study also helped students become more aware of the strategies they use for writing so that they could use them more consciously when writing.

The next study discusses the use of mentor texts by drawing attention to literary elements to increase the writing of students. They want to find out if students can use the knowledge of literary elements to improve their own writing.

Article Three: Explicit Instruction of Literary Devices on Children's Narrative Writing

The study conducted by Corden (2007) examined if students' writing could be improved by teachers drawing attention to literary elements in mentor texts. The purpose of this study was to find out if students could develop knowledge of how texts were written by explicit instruction and discussion of mentor texts. They also wanted to know if students would then use that knowledge during Writer's Workshop to improve their independent writing.

The sample consisted of 18 teachers who worked as research partners. They were from nine different schools and the children were ages seven to eleven. The schools represented a variety of socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. This study took place in the UK.

The teachers were mandated in the school system to allot one hour per day to literacy instruction. The teachers used their mentor texts to teach narratives to the students during these one year times. Teachers started with a read aloud from the mentor text. They called specific attention to the structure of the text. The class then worked together to write together using text features. After this whole group time, students worked in small groups to investigate the texts further. They would meet one day per week with the teacher to discuss their findings. They then shared their information with the rest of the class. After the group work, students were given a chance to transfer their knowledge into their author's notebook. Students were also given an opportunity to share what they knew during a one hour per week Writer's Workshop where students worked on an independent composition. Students were audio-recorded and also video recorded so that their interactions were being recorded. Teachers also kept samples of students' written work. The students' work was evaluated based on a rubric. The students' work was leveled according to the rubric.

The author found that of the 96 students, 77 students advanced one level and 19 students advanced two levels during the study. The expectation in the UK is that students will progress one level every two years. In this study, the students' progress much faster than the expectation. The author's findings supported the use of mentor texts and explicit instruction about the literary elements to improve writing. The author tracked the students' progress the following semester and found that they continued to make progress if the next teacher continued to use mentor texts. The teachers who chose not to use the strategy of mentor texts saw deterioration in the quality of writing in their students. The author hypothesizes that for this approach to be extremely effective, there would need to be a consistent teaching approach to see the progress maintained throughout the years with students.

The next study discusses the effectiveness of Interactive Writing on first graders' independent writing. The approach shows a purposeful, collaborative effort to teaching writing with students and the teacher.

Article Four: The Impact of Interactive Writing on First Graders

The study conducted by Roth and Guinee (2011) examined the effects of Interactive Writing on the independent writing of first graders. The purpose of this study was to find out if Interactive Writing instruction had an impact on several aspects of writing skill. Interactive Writing is an approach designed to provide demonstration of writing to help children make progress as writers. According to McCarrier et al, (2000), as cited in this study, Interactive Writing is defined as a collaborative literacy event. Students and teachers actively compose together at points selected by the teacher.

The sample consisted of 101 first graders. The students were from five urban schools in the Northeast of the United States. There were 49 students who took part in the Interactive

Writing and 52 students were part of the comparison condition. Forty-five percent of the students were boys and 55% were girls. The students were from low-income families with 72% of the students receiving free or reduced lunch and 29% of the students spoke a language in addition to English.

The teachers involved in the study were six female first grade teachers. All of the teachers used a Writing Workshop model in their classrooms. Three of the six teachers also incorporated the Interactive Writing into their literacy program. To determine the writing ability of the students, two writing assessments were given, a writing prompt and the standardized Woodcock Johnson Writing Sample. The same tests were given in the fall and the spring and the students were graded according to a rubric.

The author found that overall all first grade students made gains as writers, but the students who participated in the Interactive Writing made greater gains. The writing prompt test showed that students who participated in Interactive Writing did better in their independent writing and made greater gains on the nine out of 10 subcomponents of writing that were measured according to a rubric. The results of the Woodcock Johnson standardized test also supported the effectiveness of the Interactive Writing.

The next study compares the effectiveness of two Story-Writing Mnemonic devices against a control group using struggling fourth grade students.

Article Five: Comparing Two Story-Writing Mnemonic Devices

The study conducted by Dunn (2013) examined the effects of two story-writing mnemonic devices of fourth grade students. The purpose of this study was to analyze the content, quality, and number of words written by twelve fourth grade students whom were part of three

groups (ART, T3, and control.) ART strategy is Ask, Reflect, Text. Students ask themselves cue questions, they reflect on their answers and illustrate their ideas, then they use their story plan to write sentences through text. The T3 strategy is Think, Talk, Text. Students think about their story, talk to others about their story and then write it.

The sample consisted of 12 fourth grade students who were identified as struggling writers by a universal screening assessment and based on input from classroom teachers. The 12 students consisted of 11 White students and one Hispanic students. The control group students remained in their regular classrooms and took part in the writing curriculum offered by the classroom teacher. The experimental groups (ART, T3) completed baseline sessions, mnemonic strategy instruction, and application for the strategy. The students in the experimental groups met with interventional specialist in groups of two for 45 minutes daily for a total of 17 sessions.

The author found that the ART students made more gains according to story content and number of words written. The T3 students made the most gains according to story quality. The author attributes the increase in story content with the ART students to the structured cue questions talk to this groups in the Ask portion of the strategy. The author also suggests the combination of the ART strategy with the T3 to produce even better results with struggling writers.

Synthesis of Section Three: Writing Strategies

The five studies show different ways to introduce and support students in learning how to be good writers. Article one by Watanabe and Hall-Kenyon (2011) showed that kindergarten students' writing does increase when they are taught the story elements involved in good writing. The author used oral language, pictures, and written text to understand what the student was conveying. This study showed that teachers need to focus on more than just the written product

or find other ways of evaluating the written product such as oral language and pictures. Article Two by Jacobs (2004) showed the positive impact of students thinking about their writing. Jacobs presented a study that students' writing increased when they were asked questions that helped them to think about their thinking and their writing process. Article Three by Corden (2007) showed that students' writing does improve when being taught using mentor texts and explicit instruction about the structure of the texts. Article Four by Roth and Guinee (2011) discussed the importance of collaborative teacher-student writing. The study demonstrated greater gains in student's writing when being taught by teachers using Interactive Writing. Article Five by Dunn (2013) examined the benefits of mnemonic devices used to help students improve their writing according to story content, quality, and number of words written. Students in the ART strategy and T3 strategy made more gains in their writing than the students in the control group. The five studies showed different strategies for conducting writing interventions to improve student's writing. It also showed that kindergarten students are ready to learn writing strategies based on content and focusing on the writing process.

The Conclusion will highlight the important points of Section One, Section Two and Section Three. It will also discuss how the sections connect to form the basis for my research.

Conclusion

Section One outlines the success of the SRSD on students of different ages and ability levels. The studies show that SRSD is a good method to teach students the writing process. Article One by Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013) showed that SRSD was an effective model for increasing the writing ability of first grade students. Article Two by Lienemann et al. (2006) showed that the SRSD strategy is effective with struggling second grade writers. Article Three

by Tracy et al. (2009) showed that third grade students that were instructed using the SRSD wrote qualitatively better stories, longer stories, and schematically stronger stories. There was a variable and control group in this study showing that the SRSD group made more gains. Article Four by Harris et al. (2006) showed that students in the SRSD with peer support demonstrated the same gains as the students in the SRSD only group. They also wrote longer stories and qualitatively better stories than the comparison group. Article Five by Saddler and Asaro (2007) showed that all students included more story elements after instruction, quality improved, and students increased their time spent on planning and also the number of revisions made. The five studies by Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013), Lienemann et al. (2006) and Tracy et al. (2009) showed that SRSD is an effective strategy to use with students to improve their writing.

Section Two outlines reasons for using writing prompts with kindergarten students. Article One by Joshua (2012) found that pictures are an effective tool for kindergartners and English-language learners, but may be too constricting for older students. Article Two by Carroll and Feng (2010) shows that the students using writing prompts were more successful than the students learning to write using Writer's Workshop. These studies show that writing prompts are useful when used thoughtfully and with the right group of students.

Section Three outlines specific writing strategies to use with students to increase their writing ability. Article One by Watanabe and Hall-Kenyon (2011) shows that kindergarten students' writing does increase when they are taught the story elements involved in good writing. Article Two by Jacobs (2004) shows the positive impact of students thinking about their writing. Jacobs presents a study that students' writing increased when they were asked questions that helped them to think about their thinking and their writing process. Article Three by Corden (2007) shows that students' writing does improve when being taught using mentor texts and

explicit instruction about the structure of the texts. Article Four by Roth and Guinee (2011) demonstrated greater gains in student's writing when being taught by teachers using Interactive Writing. Article Five by Dunn (2013) examined the benefits of mnemonic devices used to help students improve their writing according to story content, quality, and number of words written. Students in the ART strategy and T3 strategy made more gains in their writing than the students in the control group. The five studies show specific writing interventions and the success that is proven with students of all ages.

These studies have provided a starting point for the research that I will be conducting. There is evidence showing that writing prompts are beneficial for kindergarten students. According to Carroll and Feng (2010) students have more time to come up with their argument when they are given a prompt than to have to spend the time to think of a topic. The procedures that I will be using have come from the articles about SRSD. They followed the pattern of activating background knowledge, modeling, collaborative work, and independent work. The work by Corden (2007) shows that students can improve their writing when being explicitly taught story structure by using mentor texts. I will be combining the knowledge from these studies to create my own research taking the format of the SRSD approach, students will be responding to picture prompts, and I will be explicitly teaching story structure as a means to improve the quality and length of their writing. I will also be using part of the Interactive Writing by writing stories with students and gradually releases the responsibility to them to write independently.

In Chapter Three: Procedures for the Study, I will be describing the sample population which are the individuals who took part in my study. I will also describe the procedure used and the data collection.

CHAPTER THREE

PROCEDURES

Self-regulated strategy development is defined by Saddler (2004) and Harris & Graham (1992) as a process where students are explicitly and systematically taught a task-specific strategy for accomplishing an academic task or problem, in this case it relates to writing. The purpose of this study is to find out if a modified version of a self-regulated strategy development model will increase the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. The hypothesis is that the students involved in the small group interventions will increase their writing more by including more story components than the students that are not part of the intervention group.

This chapter details the procedures used with a group of bilingual kindergarten students to improve their writing ability using a component of the Self-Regulated Strategy Development. The chapter is divided into three sections. The first section is the methodology. The second section is the procedures. The third section is data collection.

Methodology

The methodology will include the setting and sample population of the students involved in the study. First, the setting of the study will be described.

Setting

This study took place in a dual language bilingual kindergarten classroom in an urban city in the Midwest at the end of the school year. According to the school report card on the Department of Public Instruction, 96.6% of the population is Hispanic, 2.2% Black not Hispanic and 1.2% White not Hispanic, (DPI). Ninety-seven point three percent of the population is economically disadvantaged, 67.7% with limited English proficiency, and 17.3% are students with disabilities. Four of the eight students participated in a teacher led 15 minute group lesson

three times per week and a writing task once per week. The other four students participated in the regular curriculum and took part in the writing task once per week. The small group lessons took place in the normal classroom. The study took place over four weeks.

Sample Population

The study was conducted using eight students in a kindergarten classroom. They were chosen based on their ability to write words to form sentences. The students were chosen by the researcher who is also the classroom teacher based on classroom observation. The eight students were all six years old. The eight students were divided randomly into two groups. To make it completely unbiased, four names were chosen at random to partake in the intervention group, receiving explicit instruction on the four story components chosen. The remaining four students were not part of the intervention group receiving explicit instruction. The intervention group and other group of students both took the post tests each week. The intervention group was comprised of two boys and two girls. The other four that only took the tests were three girls and one boy. The study included three boys and five girls altogether.

Procedures

All eight students were given a picture prompt to use as a pretest of their writing. The pretest measured the students' ability to use components of a good story within their writing. The pretest was also used to count the number of words students used in their writing. A picture prompt is a picture that the students used to create a story. According to Lienemann, Graham, Leader-Janssen, & Reid (2006), the picture prompts should be interesting and easy for the students to write about. Picture prompts are useful when the students are judged to be familiar with the subject so their performance will not be due to a lack of vocabulary or background knowledge. The other four children continued to receive the approved curriculum. The way in

which data was collected is described in Description of data collection. Every test was scored using the rubric in Appendix A.

Instruction was focused on the seven components of a good story according to the self-regulated strategy development which focuses on the planning of the students' writing. According to Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013), literature proves that the self-regulated strategy development shows improvements with second and third graders regarding the components of a good story, story length and overall story quality, but they wanted to adapt the study so it would be relevant for first graders. The self-regulated strategy development includes teaching students story components, mnemonic devices for remembering questions to think of when planning for writing, and also self-statements. The self-regulated strategy development design was modified even more to be able to improve the writing of kindergarten students. The study was changed by teaching students the components that make a good story. According to Lienemann et al. (2006), the seven components of a good story are main characters, locale, time, what the main characters want to do, what they did, how they felt, and how it all ended.

During the first week, main character was taught. The second week was focused on locale. The third week was focused on what the main character did. The final week, the fourth, the students learned about how the story ended. Each week followed the same format.

Pre test

During the first session, students were told they were going to participate in a study. All the students would write a story describing a picture once per week. Some of the students would come to a small teacher led group a couple of times per week. All students were given a choice of three pictures to choose from to write their first story. The students picked a picture and were instructed to write a story describing the picture.

Interventions

Interventions followed the same format each week. The intervention group received small group instruction. On Monday of each week, the researcher and students started with a definition of the component being studied. The students and researcher read a story together and then identified the chosen component. The following session (Wednesday) the students and researcher wrote a story together as a group using the component of the week. On Thursday, students wrote their own story with guidance from the researcher. This was repeated for four weeks until the end of the study.

The non-intervention group took part in the regular writing curriculum. They did various things such as responding to writing prompts in their journals and other classroom writing assignments. They did not receive any instruction regarding including story components into their writing. They did take each post test to assess their writing ability each week although they did not receive any instruction regarding story components.

Post test

The last day of each week, Friday, all students wrote their own story using a picture prompt and incorporated the component taught during the week. After the first week, students were encouraged to use all of the components taught up until that point. The post test consisted of a picture prompt and a graded writing sample. All eight students took the post test each week. This was done to be able to compare the group receiving the intervention against the students that were not receiving the intervention.

Description of Data Collection

Data was collected about the elements of good story writing by scoring student writing samples. These elements were main character, locale, what main character did, and how it all

ended. The number of words written by each student was also counted to determine the length of each story. A baseline and final writing response to picture prompts were collected from eight students using a pretest and a post test (see Appendix A). In order to assess progress throughout the study, the rubric was used to assess three additional writing responses from all students. Because practicing writing can produce a better end product, data was collected every week from both the intervention group and the non-intervention group.

The post test was compared to the pretest and also to the writing samples collected each week of instruction to see if students' writing had improved according to the components of a good story and the length of their writing. This data was collected to find out if students improve their writing abilities when learning to incorporate story elements into their writing.

Conclusion

This chapter detailed the setting and the sample population, the procedures, and data collection. It described in detail how the intervention was organized and how the information was obtained. In the next chapter, the results of the two groups will be discussed, intervention and normal curriculum, during this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of a modified version of a self-regulated strategy development model on the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. The hypothesis was that the students involved in the small group interventions will increase their writing more by including more story components than the students that are not part of the intervention group. The previous chapter detailed the procedures for the comparison study. This chapter will present the data collected to measure the effectiveness of the intervention on the students. The data presented was collected during a four week intervention using eight students from the same kindergarten classroom.

This chapter contains three sections. The first section presents the data according to the students' personal growth based on the score of the rubric. The second section shows each student's progression of word count. The third section compares the overall intervention group progress to that of the non-intervention group according to the score based on the rubric and word count.

Rubric Data: Intervention and Non-Intervention Data

This section provides an overview of the data collected during the study. The pretest and subsequent weekly tests were administered to all eight students. The eight students were chosen based on their ability to write words to form sentences. The students were chosen by the researcher who is also the classroom teacher based on classroom observation. The eight students were divided randomly into two groups. To make it completely unbiased, four names were chosen at random to partake in the intervention group, receiving explicit instruction on the four story components chosen. The remaining four students were not part of the intervention group

receiving explicit instruction. Data was collected from all eight students before and after the intervention.

Table 1 and Table 2 both report information about the elements of good story writing according to a number score based on a rubric. These elements measured by the rubric were main character, locale, what main character did, and how it all ended. The instructor taught one story element per week placing importance on using the story element studied the week before in the independent writing collected on the last day of each week. The total possible points according to the rubric are eight (see Appendix A). For each story element, a possible two points were given. Zero points were awarded if the element wasn't mentioned. One point was given if the student somewhat described the element. Two points were given if the student identified the element and described the element in detail. Five writing samples in response to a picture prompt were collected from all eight students during the study. The rubric was used to assess these five samples (pretest, three weekly tests, and a post test) in order to assess progress throughout the study.

The purpose of the pre-test and post test was to assess the knowledge gained throughout the study. The pretest showed the researcher where each student was starting in their knowledge of story elements, and the post test revealed what was learned throughout the study. For the pretest, data was collected the first day of the study. Writing samples including the post test were collected on the last day of each week, Friday. The researcher scored each sample according to the rubric for good story elements present and counted the words to record number of words written. The rubric allowed for two possible points for each element of a good story included depending on the depth of the writing. Net gain was determined by finding the difference between the pretest and post test scores.

Table 1 contains information from the four intervention students: the score on the writing sample according to the rubric and the difference of points from pre-test to post test are reported. The rubric has a total of eight possible points. There are four categories according to the four elements of a good story taught. Those elements are main character, locale, what main character did, and how it all ended. The student could receive from zero to two points on each element. All of the students show an increase in their score from pretest to post test. The gains show that the intervention was successful in that none of the students stayed the same or decreased in their writing ability. All of the students from the intervention group show that their knowledge of story elements in good writing increased during the intervention.

Table 1

Intervention Students: Rubric Results

Student	Pre Test	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Post test	Gain
1	3	3	4	4	5	2
2	3	3	5	5	6	3
3	2	3	3	3	4	2
4	3	4	4	4	4	1

Note: Gain is the difference between the post test score minus the pretest score for the students that received the intervention.

Table 2
 Non- *intervention Students: Rubric Results*

Student	Pre Test	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Post test	Gain
5	3	4	3	4	4	1
6	3	3	2	3	3	0
7	4	4	3	3	3	-1
8	3	4	3	4	3	0

Note: Gain is the difference between the post test score minus the pretest score for the students that did not receive the intervention.

Table 2 contains the same information as Table 1, but presents the data from the four non-intervention students. In Table 2, two students made no progress and one student scored lower on the post test than on the pre-test. This data indicates that the intervention students improved more than the students who were not receiving the intervention. This information can be found in the Table 1 and Table 2 under Gain. Table 1 which shows the intervention students gained a total of eight points from pre-test to post test. Table 2 which shows the non-intervention students showed no gain at all when adding the gain total from pre-test to post test.

The next section will present the data of each students' progress according to word count presented in a table.

Word Count Data: Intervention and Non-Intervention Groups

This section presents data about each student's progress according to word count. Table 3 contains information from the four intervention students: The word count from each writing sample and the difference of word count from pretest to post test. Table 4 contains the same information as Table 3, but presents the data from the four non-intervention students. Three of

the four students in the intervention group made significant gains in the amount of words written from pre-test to post test. Only one student in from Table 4 made progress in word count. Three students wrote less words during the post test than the pretest. These tables show that the intervention group made more gains in word count than the non-intervention group.

Table 3

Intervention Students: Word Count

Student	Pre Test	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Post test	Gain
1	34	46	87	54	99	65
2	38	111	79	56	74	36
3	19	29	22	31	35	16
4	65	76	51	62	51	-14

Note: Gain is the difference between the word count on the post test score minus the word count on the pretest for the students that received the intervention.

Table 4

Non-intervention Students: Word Count

Student	Pre Test	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Post test	Gain
5	60	71	29	68	53	-7
6	20	19	27	28	17	-3
7	46	81	48	46	37	-9
8	42	74	68	70	51	9

Note: Gain is the difference between the word count on the post test score minus the word count on the pretest for the students that did not receive the intervention.

The next section will compare the intervention group and the non-intervention group using averages according to the score on the rubric and word count.

Intervention Students vs Non-intervention Students

This section will compare the intervention group and the non-intervention group according to the score on the rubric and also word count. Figure 1 shows the data from the score earned on the rubric. The figure compares the intervention students and the non-intervention students. The scores from each week were averaged and put in the graph to more easily compare the difference. Figure 2 shows that the non-intervention group started with a higher average pre-test score. The intervention group continued to increase their average score while the non-intervention group increases and decreases along the weeks to end at the same average that they started. Figure 2 shows that the intervention group made more progress on average according to the rubric than the non-intervention group.

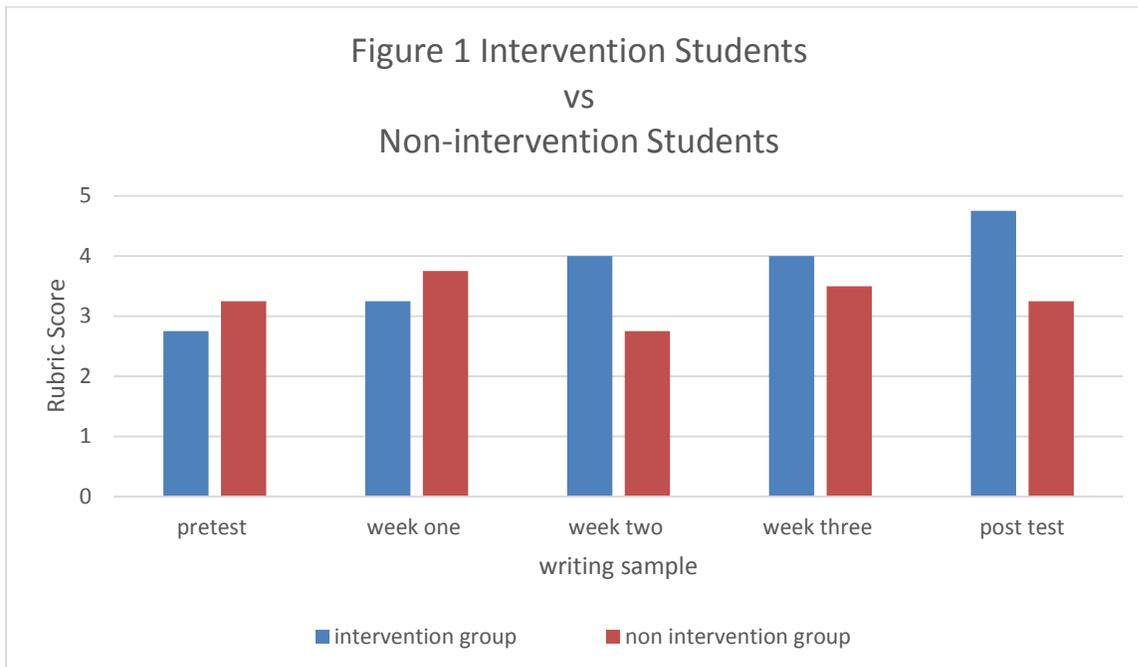
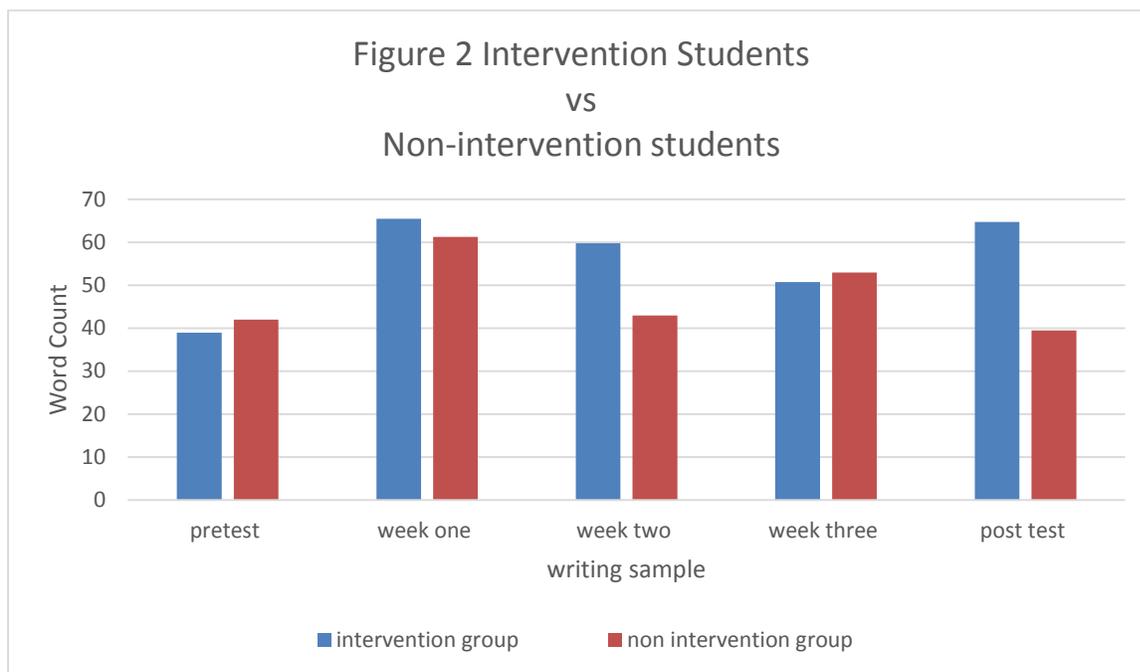


Figure 2 compares the average number of words written from the intervention group and non-intervention group over the course of the study. The two groups started at around the same number of average words during the pretest. The intervention group started with an average of 39

words and the non intervention group started with an average of 42 words. There is a significant difference where the two groups ended. During the post test, the intervention group used an average of 65 words and the non-intervention group used an average of 40 words. The intervention group started with an average of 39 words written and ended with 65 words written. The non intervention group started with an average of 42 words written and ended with 40 words written. According to these numbers, the intervention group made more progress in their word count than the non-intervention group.



Conclusions

This chapter presented the results of the modified version of a self-regulated strategy development model on the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. Tables 1-4 and Figures 1 and 2 show that the pre-test to post test gain is higher with students in the intervention group according to the rubric and word count than the students in the non-intervention group. Because

of the intervention, students were able to write longer stories and include more elements of a good story. Those elements were main character, locale, what main character did, and how it all ended. The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of a modified version of a self-regulated strategy development model on the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. The data shows that it explicit instruction about story elements does make a difference in the writing of kindergarten students.

The following chapter, Chapter Five: Conclusions, presents a connection to existing research and explanation of the results. It will also include strengths and limitations of the study and recommendations for teachers and future research.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to explore if a modified version of a self-regulated strategy development model would increase the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. The data presented in Chapter Four: Results was collected during a four week intervention. The data was collected using a pretest, weekly tests, and a post test that were graded based on a rubric designed by the researcher. The study involved eight students, four students were part of the intervention and four students were used as a control only taking the tests each week. The tables and figures presented in the previous chapter show the positive effect of the writing instruction on the students who received the four week intervention.

The focus of this final chapter is to explain the study findings and consider why these results were achieved. Connections will be made between this study and the Common Core State Standards. Connections will also be made to the existing research that was presented in Chapter Two: Review of Literature. This chapter will offer strengths and limitations to the study and give recommendations for classroom teachers and for future research.

Connection to Research

The writing intervention was based on the existing research that was summarized in Chapter Two: Review of Literature and the Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts for kindergarten students. The study was aligned with the standard for writing (Standard Two) which states that students should be able to use a combination of drawing, dictating, and writing to compose texts that state what they are writing about and provide information about the topic. Students were given a picture prompt and were to use what they knew to write about the topic. Students were able to choose the picture they wanted to describe so that lack of

background knowledge would not be a problem. The researcher also guided the students each week through identifying the parts of a good story, writing using the component of the week, guiding the students' writing, and then finally letting the student write on their own. This study was also aligned with Standard Three stating that students should be able to use drawing, dictating, and writing to narrate an event or events and the order in which they happened. Some of the picture prompts showed action. The students were able to write what was happening in the picture. Students were taught components of a good story to increase their ability to write a good story. For this specific standard, students had to concentrate on what the main character did and also how the story ended.

Along with the Common Core State Standards, the researcher used information from prior research to support the methodology used in this study. Self-regulated strategy development is (SRSD) defined by Saddler (2004) and Harris & Graham (1992) as a process where students are explicitly and systematically taught a task-specific strategy for accomplishing an academic task or problem, in this case it relates to writing. According to Tracy, Reid and Graham (2009), students are explicitly taught writing strategies using SRSD to accomplish certain writing tasks. They focused on planning, drafting, editing and the skills and knowledge to apply the strategies such as components of a good story. Since SRSD has proven to be effective with second and third graders, Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013), conducted research to show that SRSD would improve the components of a good story, story length and overall story quality with first graders. The researcher modified this experiment even more to include kindergarten students in the writing process. Kindergarten students were taught components of a good story and were judged on their ability to include the components and length of their writing. The researcher used the study by Lienemann, Graham, Leader-Janssen, and Reid (2006), which stated that the picture

prompts should be interesting and easy for the students to write about. Picture prompts are useful when the students are judged to be familiar with the subject so their performance will not be due to a lack of vocabulary or background knowledge. Therefore all kindergarten students were given picture prompts when asked to give a writing sample.

Explanation of Results

This study has shown that bilingual kindergarten students can learn to incorporate story elements into their writing based upon data that shows that students were taught to use more story elements when writing and to use more words in their writing when taking part in an intervention that explicitly taught the use of story elements. This section will offer explanations for data findings in the areas of story elements and word count, and propose possible reasons for the results of this study.

Story Elements

The three students who made the greatest gains in total points according to the rubric of good story elements were students 1, 2, and 3. The rubric measured the inclusion of main character, locale, what the main character did, and how the story ended. Each student improved on including more story elements or more detail to the story elements which was reflected in the rubric. The three students who made the greatest gains in story elements were part of the intervention group. Student 1 went from three points to five points for a total gain of two. This means that out of eight possible points for including the parts of a good story, the student improved to a total of five out of eight points. Student 2 went from three to six points for a total gain of three points. Student 3 went from two points to four points for a total gain of two points. Student 4 who was also part of the intervention group made a one point gain from pretest to post test. Student 4 showed little interest in writing. He did not pay attention well in the small group

and finished quickly when writing his own stories. The researcher could have tried to find a picture prompt that would particularly interest student number 4 to possibly gain better results in his writing.

Although the gain of one point with student 4 is not as significant as the other students, it still shows that the student made improvement while taking part in the intervention. This data shows that the intervention was successful because the students were using more story elements in their writing from the pretest to the post test. The students who took part in the intervention group were successful because they were given the tools to become good writers. According to Corden (2007), research in the United States has shown that children's literature, peer discussion, and explicit teacher instruction can provide a model of writing that allows for personal response and encourages students to use what they learn in their own writing. The researcher designed an intervention which was focused on explicit instruction of good story components, shared writing which included peer discussion, and teaching modeling of good writing. These students were given a base to begin crafting their own writing based upon what they learned during the time in the small group.

The three students (6,7, and 8) who made the least amount of gain in total points according to rubric were all part of the non-intervention group. Student 6 went from scoring three points on the rubric to a post test of three points for a total gain of zero points. Student 7 went from scoring four points to three points for a loss of one point on the rubric. Student 8 went from three points to three points for a total gain of zero point. These were the students who were not part of the explicit intervention group. There are several possible reasons as to why the students made no gains or regressed. One reason could be that the students were bored of writing. They were not part of learning about the story elements, nor did they get any feedback

about their writing. They did not know if they were doing things right in their writing or if they were not. The students in the non-intervention group were not part of any teaching modeling nor were they taking part in group writing as were the students in the intervention group. There was no gradual release for the students in the non-intervention group, they were expected to write using what they knew and were not able to improve upon their writing.

This data shows that although the non-intervention group was practicing writing, these students did not improve the story elements used in their writing from pretest to post test. This could be contributed to the fact that students were not seeing good modeling, taking part in shared writing, or receiving any feedback related to their writing. The students would not know to change their writing style or components if they were not being told therefore they kept making the same mistakes and were not improving their writing skills. There was one student in the non-intervention group that did improve their use of story elements from pretest to post test. That student was number 5 who went from three points on the rubric to four points for a total gain of one point.

The intervention group and non-intervention group started at similar levels of story elements included in their writing. The intervention group had a slightly lower average score of 2.75 during the pretest compared to the non-intervention group of 3.25 scored on the rubric. During the post test, the intervention group scored an average of 4.75 according to the rubric and the non-intervention group scored 3.25. This data also shows that the intervention group made a 2 point average gain on their writing and the non-intervention group had no change.

Word count

The same three students who made the most progress according to the rubric score in story elements also made the most progress in number of words used to write their story from

pretest to post test. Student 1, 2, and 3 made considerable gains in word count. Student 1 went from writing 34 words during the pretest to 99 words during the post test for a gain of 65 words. Student 2 wrote 38 words during the pretest and 74 words during the post test for a gain of 36 words. Student 3 wrote 19 words pretest and 35 words during the post test for a gain of 16 words. These three students show an increase in their word count when given a picture prompt to guide their writing and also a goal of including story elements.

The researcher did not specifically focus on the length of the students' work. The hypothesis was made that the students would write longer and higher quality work when given specific story components to focus writing on. The researcher also used the study by Corden (2007) which showed that students' writing does improve when being taught using mentor texts and explicit instruction about the structure of the texts. Roth and Guinee (2011) demonstrated greater gains in student's writing when being taught by teachers using Interactive Writing therefore the researcher also used collaborative writing during the small group intervention time.

Student number 4 is the only student in the intervention group that decreased the number of words written from pretest to post test. Student 4 went from writing 65 words during the pretest to 51 words during the post test for a decrease of 14 words. Although student 4 did not increase the number of words written, the student started by including more words than student 1, 2, and 3 during the pretest. As mentioned above, student 4 showed low levels of interest in writing. The student often finished quickly. He seemed bored and did not want to have to complete the writing tasks. The researcher could have tried a picture prompt that student 4 was more interested in writing about. The researcher could have also tried to introduce an incentive to all students who finished their writing and were working hard the whole time. Student 4 was

present during the small group interventions, but showed minimal interest in participating and improving the writing skills.

The three students who made no positive gain and actually wrote less words during the post test than the pretest were students 5, 6, and 7. Student 5 wrote 60 words during the pretest and 53 words during the post test for a decline of 7 words. Student 5 is similar to student 4 who wrote more words than average during the pretest therefore it was harder to show growth for more words written. Student 6 wrote 20 words during the pretest and 17 during the post test for a decline of 3 words. Student 7 wrote 46 words during the pretest and 37 during the post test for a decline of 9 words. Unlike students 5, 6, and 7, student 8 wrote more words during the post test and showed an increase of 9 words. The researcher noticed the non-intervention group's apathy towards the writing tasks. The students did not have any knowledge of the rubric and did not know how they were being awarded points. The students did not have a purpose for writing other than being part of a study and practicing their writing.

Strength and Limitations

A strength of this study is that the rationale for the study was deeply rooted in research. The choice to use the Self-regulated strategy development was based on the work by Zunbrumm and Bruning (2013), Lienemann et al. (2006) and Tracy et al. (2009) who showed that SRSD is an effective strategy to use with students to improve their writing. The decision to use picture writing prompts was based on the work by Joshua (2012) and Feng (2010) who showed that writing prompts are useful when used thoughtfully and with the right group of students. The modifications made by the researcher made learning story elements an attainable goal for the students. The students that took part in the intervention wrote using more words and scored higher according to the rubric because the study was at their instructional level.

Another strength of this study is the presence of a control group (the non-intervention students). The intervention group shows that the students made progress by including more story elements in their writing scored based on a rubric and by using more words in their stories. It's important to compare the data to a group of students receiving the regular kindergarten curriculum. The researcher wanted to prove that the students would increase their writing abilities because of the small group intervention and not solely by practicing. The non-intervention group shows that students do not increase their writing skills when not receiving specific instruction and repetition does not help them to write a better story. The students need guided instruction and the repetition and ability to practice their writing to improve.

A limitation of this study was that the students that were part of the non-intervention group became bored with simply writing. They were not receiving feedback from the researcher and three of the four students actually included less story components over time and wrote using less words. The students that were part of the non-intervention group took part in the normal kindergarten writing curriculum which did not emphasize elements of a good story. The emphasis during writing class was on matching correct letters with sounds to make words and to put those words into sentences.

Another limitation of the study is the duration of the study. The study took place over four weeks because it was near the end of the school year. The end of the school year was an ideal time for the writing intervention because students were able to write more and had more confidence in their writing. The timeframe was a limitation because the students could have learned more and in more depth about story elements or more facets of the Self-regulated strategy development if time were not an issue.

The small sample size of 8 students was a limitation to be considered. The researcher chose students who were ready to incorporate story elements into their writing. The data would be more reliable with a larger sample size.

These strengths and limitations should be taken into account when reviewing this manuscript. Although there were limitations, the students from the intervention group made significant progress over the students that were in the non-intervention group.

Recommendations

This section offers recommendations for teachers and for future research. The first part of this section is a recommendation for teachers who want to teach components of a good story in early elementary classrooms. The second part is a recommendation for future research in the Self-regulated strategy development and early elementary students.

This section is written to offer suggestions to educators. There are four specific recommendations for educators who want to increase the writing ability of his or her bilingual kindergarten students: 1) explicit teaching of story elements, 2) teacher modeling of language and writing, 3) peer cooperation in writing, and 4) providing clear expectations for students' writing (such as a rubric).

To improve the writing ability of bilingual kindergarten, teachers should explicitly teach the components of a good story. According to Lienemann et al. (2006), the seven components of a good story are main characters, locale, time, what the main characters want to do, what they did, how they felt, and how it all ended. The researcher decided to teach only four of the seven elements of a good story because of the time constraint. The researcher taught the inclusion of main character, locale, what the main character did, and how the story ended. Students will be able to include more quality in their work if they understand the parts that make a story a well

written story. Teachers can use mentor texts to show students how these components are used in some of their favorite stories. Students then need to practice using one specific component at a time. Then students should be allowed to use their knowledge of components of a good story to craft their writing.

Another recommendation is teaching modeling of language and writing. Students should use the mentor texts as an example of good writing, but also experience good writing in person. Teachers need to take students through the writing process. They should produce think alouds where the student is listening to everything the teacher would be thinking before putting the words onto the paper. They should be aware of the time it takes to think of an idea, organize thoughts, sound out words, and then put all of those elements together to write a story.

Another way to improve student writing is to write collaboratively with the class. After students have experienced teacher modeling, they should work together (with teacher guidance) to write a story. This could even be turned into a class writing project where students contribute to a class book before they are ready to write their own story.

One last recommendation for teachers is to give students clear expectations on what the teacher is looking for when he or she says good writing. A rubric awarding points for specific areas is a great way to show students what needs to be included. Teachers could even distribute the rubric ahead of time and talk through what is supposed to be included. The students should know what they are working towards to be able to accomplish what is asked of them.

This paragraph explores the opportunities for future research on improving the writing ability of bilingual kindergarten students. The purpose of this study was to explore the effects of a modified version of the self-regulated strategy development model on the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. One recommendation would be a study to explore the short-term and long-

term effects of teaching story components. The current study took place over four weeks. The researcher was able to find out the short-term effects of the intervention, but was not able to assess long-term effects. The long-term effects would be interesting to find out if there is a lasting effects with the students and their ability to write.

Another recommendation for future research would include a conferencing component to this current study. The researcher found that some of the students that were not involved in the small group teacher led instruction became bored and lost interest in writing the stories each week. Adding a conferencing component with differentiated feedback could keep the students' attention even in the non-intervention group. The results of the study could vary significantly when giving students input about what they were writing. This could encourage the students to continue what they are doing well and to change what they are consistently doing incorrectly.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the effects of a modified version of a self-regulated strategy development model on the writing of bilingual kindergarten students. This was an important study because kindergarten bilingual children are falling behind in writing as they try to master two languages. The procedures for this study involved choosing eight students to take part in the study. The eight students were separated into an intervention group and a non-intervention group. The intervention group received small group instruction using a modified version of the self-regulated strategy development model. Data was collected by giving the eight students a picture prompt one time per week and rating their writing based on a rubric.

Findings demonstrated that the intervention group made more progress using more story components and number of words in their writing than the non-intervention group. This study showed that the writing of bilingual kindergartners can be improved by explicit instruction,

teacher modeling, and clear expectations. Recommendations for teachers of bilingual kindergarten children include explicit teaching of story elements, teacher modeling of language and writing, peer cooperation in writing, and providing clear expectations for students' writing (such as a rubric).

As a result of this study, the researcher hopes that bilingual kindergarten students are able to write more advanced stories and therefore be able to express themselves better. Self-regulation is important because it gives the students a foundation to start their writing. Students are taught strategies to make sure they are following the steps of a good writer. Being a stronger writer will help students in their future academic careers.

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Appendix A: Rubric

Name _____ Date _____

- () Pretest
 () Intervention 1
 () Intervention 2
 () Intervention 3
 () Post test

Rubric for scoring writing: Total possible points 8

Component	Most : 2	Some : 1	None : 0
Main character	Named the main character and described him/her.	Either named the main character or described the main character.	Did not name the main character or describe him/her.
Locale	Described the setting, when and where the story took place.	Described part of the setting: when or where the story took place.	Did not describe the setting.
What main character did	Stated what the main character did.	Stated part of what the main character did.	Did not state what the main character did.
How it all ended	Ending clearly stated.	Ending not clear or only half finished.	No ending present.
Length (record total number of words)			