

Blogging and Digital Storytelling along with Exploratory Practice and Problem-posing to Improve Language Classroom Learning

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Abstract

Thailand has been using English-only curriculums at International colleges in an effort to prepare for the country's role in ASEAN, but prominent language and learning theories (Vygotsky, 1986; Cummins, 1981; Halliday, 1993) suggest that monolingual programs in English for second language learners may not be adequate for higher level cognitive activities. To better understand the issues that limited English Proficient (LEP) learners face, and to improve classroom instruction, this teacher conducted study chronicles the researcher's quest to improve the delivery of Academic content for English Language Learners at a Thai International College using Blogging and Digital Storytelling. Viewing the classroom contextually, a qualitative Design-Based study was constructed merging Allwright's si Practice and Freire's Problem-posing approach to instruction in an introductory Political Science course at Burapha International College. The instructor chose a Political Science course which in previous terms proved difficult for the limited-English proficient students who had struggled to understand and relate to the political concepts. Twenty two students of mixed gender and level from Thailand, China and Indonesia, along with their instructor participated as co-researchers generating and analyzing data during classroom activities. To collect, record and analyze the data, students uploaded written and spoken interviews via the internet which could be accessed by the classroom participants. During the research, the LEP learners focused on improving their relationships with their teacher, a native English instructor, and their relationship to English through participation. Dynamic assessment, based on Vygotsky's learning and development theories, was used which required the students to participate in English dialogue with their instructor. The outcome of the sixteen week study resulted in better contextual understanding, and the creation of an Instructional Design Model (Praxis Instructional Design Model) suitable for language classroom instruction.