Cross Center Regional Indian Education Collaborative

Improving Native American Student Outcomes: Addressing the Academic Language Gap Pilot
Tribal Reservations in the Region
Evolution of Pilot Project: Working with our SEAS

- Developed in collaboration with Indian Education directors and other SEA staff from our region

- Year 1 Pilot Schools - Middle School Focus (grades 5-8)
  - Wolf Creek Upper Elementary
    Shannon County School District, Mission, SD
  - Niobrara Public School, Niobrara, NE

Building human capacity
Focusing teacher practice with academic language instruction - specifically reciprocal teaching due to its strong research base documenting its effectiveness
Research Base - RT and Academic Language

- **Academic Language Network** ([http://aldnetwork.org](http://aldnetwork.org))
  Stanford University
  Jeffrey Zwiers; Susan O'Hara; Robert Pritchard

- **Classroom Instruction that Works with English Language Learners**
  McREL International
  Jane D. Hill; Kirsten B. Miller
Research Base - RT and Academic Language

- What Works Clearinghouse Intervention Report, Reciprocal Teaching, September 2010

- Teaching Academic Content and Literacy to English Learners in Elementary and Middle School, IES Practice Guide, April 2014
Reciprocal Teaching in Maths: a learning strategy that builds problem solving skills and improves mathematical literacy for students.

Yvonne Reilly, Jodie Parsons and Elizabeth Bortolot, Sunshine College, Victoria, Australia.

Making meaning in mathematics problem-solving using the Reciprocal Teaching approach.

Kylie Meyer, University of Southern Queensland & Queensland University of Technology in Literacy Learning: the Middle Years, Volume 22, Number 2, June 2014
Academic Language Learners - ALL: Goal of Pilot

Teachers provide multiple opportunities for students to engage in extended interactions using targeted academic language that directly supports content learning and are structured to encourage all students to participate.
Overview of ALL Pilot Elements

Professional Development

- 1.5 Day Initial Training - Sioux Falls, SD (July 2014)
- Virtual support - Reciprocal Teaching in Action Video Series (January 2014 and ongoing as needs to develop)

Implementation

August-September: Schools began implementing use of reciprocal teaching. This included:

- Introducing, modeling roles, and or providing supports (table tents) for reciprocal teaching
- Students using strategy on simple texts
- Student using strategy on more complex texts
Overview of ALL Pilot Elements

Evaluation 5\textsuperscript{th} - 8\textsuperscript{th} Grade

Designed to examine 5th-8th grade ways to understand:

- Program successes
- Needs for improvement
- Potential feasibility in other schools
Continuous Program Improvement: 
*Research Questions*

- **How confident** are teachers to implement academic language learning (ALL) using reciprocal teaching (RT) after the training?
- **To what extent** do teachers implement ALL using strategies and structures for academic talk in their classrooms?
- What are teachers’ **successes in implementing** ALL using RT?
- What are teachers’ **challenges in implementing** ALL using RT?
- To what extent do teachers demonstrate RT techniques in their classrooms?
- What other **supports do teachers need to implement** ALL using RT?
- Are **students engaged** during RT?
- What are **students’ perceptions of RT** to facilitate the use of AL?
14 5th-8th grade teachers from two public schools, one each in NE and SD.

57% were from SD; 64% were female; 93% were Caucasian/White.

Two teachers (5th grade) taught all subjects; language arts was taught by 50% and math by 36% of the teachers.

One teacher dropped from the evaluation, and one teacher did not report data in the implementation logs, leaving a core sample of 12 teachers.
Data Collection Methods

- Teachers complete a background survey, a post-training survey, and eight implementation logs (about every 5 weeks).
- Student surveys (student perceptions of learning in groups) and focus groups (perceptions related to RT and AL) will be conducted (May).

NCCC staff observed teachers implementing RT three times over the course of the academic year to provide constructive feedback and support (Oct, Feb, May).
Your Turn....

Reciprocal teaching is a strategy aimed at increasing comprehension and academic conversation.

Discuss how academic conversation can positively impact student achievement and, if possible, include examples of similar work or experiences from your school, state, or community.
Frequency of Academic Talk in Year 1

Number of days per week students used academic talk

Log #

NE
SD
Student Perceptions of Group Work

Group work this year vs. last year

- **I like collaborating more this year than last year:**
  - NE: 33%
  - SD: 45%

- **I like collaborating less this year than last year:**
  - NE: 19%
  - SD: 14%

- **I like collaborating about the same as last year:**
  - NE: 25%
  - SD: 21%

- **I didn't do any collaborating in groups this year:**
  - NE: 0%
  - SD: 3%

- **I'm not sure:**
  - NE: 22%
  - SD: 17%
Focus Groups... and the students said...

7th graders in one language arts classroom who had consistent exposure to RT reported positive reactions to these statements:

- Sharing ideas
- Improved grades
- More confidence
- More engaged classwork

“This year, we learned way more probably with reciprocal teaching because our language arts teacher taught us a lot about it. We used it pretty much every day, and she helped us.”
Focus Groups...and the students said...

5th and 6th grade math students in one classroom who had exposure to RT for “two weeks” reported positive reactions to these statements:

- working **together** and not alone
- work faster
- work is **easier**
- understood more
- grades improved
Summary of Evaluation Results

- Student perceptions of group work improved when compared to the previous year.
- Student perceptions of RT groups depends on perceptions of the teacher, group selection, and time exposed to RT.
- Teachers tend to use RT in reading and math and less in writing.
- One school implemented RT and AL more.
Challenges: Anecdotal Evidence from Implementation Logs

- **Non-verbal students struggle** with these activities due to the fact the activities are verbal oriented.

- **Taking the time** needed to implement it correctly due to testing and other obligations of students.

- It has been a challenge to have students **apply knowledge** let alone in a process that takes so many steps.

- Trying yet to **distinguish the difference of the clarifier and questioner**. They seem to have the same thoughts or roles.
Successes: Anecdotal Evidence from Implementation Logs

- It has made me more aware to at least give the students opportunity to share with a partner before sharing out loud...that way they have more confidence in their answer.

- Team, pair, share is something my students can do. I have many who, traditionally, do not speak up. In small groups, with people they are comfortable, they open up a bit.

- The highlight moment was a lower level student encouraging the advanced student to find a different solution.
Support Needed: Anecdotal Evidence from Implementation Logs

- It [videos] seemed almost too scripted and **my students don’t think about those kinds of questions**.

- “Modeling, modeling, modeling”

- “More training and possibly more collaboration during the school year among teachers implementing AL instruction.”
Reciprocal Teaching in Action Videos

Video Tools for Supporting Change in Teacher Practice

RT in Action: Tips for Teachers - Reading

Example of students using RT in Mathematics
Your Turn....

What role does effective implementation play in the education system today?

Think about your experiences, both positive and negative, with implementing a new idea or strategy and discuss what elements contributed to the success or lack of success.
Perspectives from the Field - Year 1 - Niobrara Public School

Emily Janak
7th Grade Language Arts
Perspectives from the Field - Year 1 - Niobrara Public School

Angie Guenther
7-12 Principal
Teachers matter
The teacher’s comfort and engagement with strategy directly influences the students.

Students matter
Students can and will ask good questions and facilitate each other in learning when provided the support to do so.
Lesson Learned

**Context matters**
School culture and happenings impact implementation

**Collaboration matters**
For teachers implementing a new strategy and for students to engage in deeper, more meaningful learning and conversations

**Practice matters**
For teachers, for students and for effective implementation.
Your Turn....

Changing instruction and teacher practice is a cornerstone of successful school improvement efforts.

Discuss the factors that are most critical to successful efforts to bring about changes in teacher practice.
Check out our publications on Academic Language!


Purposeful Partner Talk to Close the Academic Language Gap, Jane Hill and Kirsten Miller, ASCD Express

Q&A Are achievement gaps really gaps in *academic language levels?* Changing Schools vol. 73, Spring 2015 Focus on diverse learners - http://www.mcrel.org/products-and-services/changing-schools-magazine#sthash.2KyOGgE2.dpuf
Thank you very much!

Please feel free to contact us!

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