

ABSTRACT

Exploring Student-Approved Instructional Strategies to Strengthen Speaking Skills: A Descriptive Multiple-Case Study of Three Emergent Bilingual Students

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Emergent Bilingual students represent the fastest growing portion of the student population today. This descriptive multiple-case study examines the perspectives of three high school Emergent Bilingual students to determine what types of instructional strategies are most effective in promoting opportunities for speaking, thus strengthening these students' speaking abilities. In today's public high school classrooms, the main problem facing Emergent Bilingual students is the lack of speaking opportunities. Speaking is a critical, foundational skill for these students, so this study seeks to identify best practice instructional strategies to promote Emergent Bilingual students' speaking abilities. This study's findings collected through student interviews, questionnaires, and observations reveal that students must feel comfortable in class before speaking aloud, should sit near others to maximize speaking opportunity, should have access to collaborative spaces, and work in partners rather than groups. This study reveals future implications for regular subject teacher's instructional practices and gives a voice to the rising Emergent Bilingual population.

Exploring Student-Approved Instructional Strategies to Strengthen Speaking Skills: A
Descriptive Multiple-Case Study of Three Emergent Bilingual Students

by

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A Thesis

Approved by the Department of Curriculum and Instruction

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Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of
Baylor University in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
of
Master of Arts

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May 2022

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am most grateful for the mentorship, encouragement, and wisdom from my committee chair, Dr. Tony Talbert. To the pro of qualitative research himself, thank you for guiding me through the world and maze of qualitative research. Thank you for your interest in my project, your wealth of positivity, and your contagious zeal for learning.

I also want to thank my committee members, Dr. Melisa Dracos, Dr. Kelly Johnston, and Dr. Jessica Meehan. Thank you all for your advice, attention to detail, positive feedback, and resource help. I hope to be half as brilliant as each of you someday.

My thanks would not be complete without mentioning my gratitude for Dr. Sandra Talbert. Thank you for always being one of the best and brightest parts of my Baylor Experience. Finally, I would like to thank the students and teachers at the high school that helped inform my research. Students, thank you/gracias/merci/cảm ơn for your time, willingness, and honest answers. Teachers, thank you for letting me share a space in your classroom. I am continually grateful for your flexibility and dedication to this life-changing profession.

DEDICATION

To the most important threads in my life:

my husband, my parents, my grandparents, my new family.

You make me who I am today, and I love each of you so much!

Thank you for your inspiration, strength, support, hugs, and love.

This is for you.

To my future students:

You are the reason I am in this profession.

May God always bless you.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Introduction to the Study

As a classroom intern during my senior year at Baylor University, I loved working closely with Emergent Bilingual students in my English 10 class. However, I began to notice a pattern of problems. All the assignments we would give to these students required them to read a passage, write a response, or listen to a short text read aloud. The only words we exchanged in a dialogue occurred minutes before the bell. We said hello, talked briefly about their day so far, and sometimes we talked about what we had brought for lunch. During class time, I found myself sharing instructions with these students, but our conversation was much too one-sided. Emergent Bilingual students desperately need pedagogy within the regular classroom that promotes their speaking skills. My research will include the perspectives of Emergent Bilingual students' in considering the most effective types of instruction in the public high school classroom. By analyzing the data collected through semi-structured interviews and classroom observations, I will determine which instructional strategies provide Emergent Bilingual students with the most speaking opportunities in their high school classroom.

Emergent Bilingual, abbreviated as EB throughout this paper, is a term I use to replace English Learner, English Language Learner, and Limited English Proficient – terms previously used to label students in a way that does not promote their bilingualism (Garcia, 2009). This term, “Emergent Bilingual” emphasizes each student’s “potential in

developing their bilingualism; it does not suggest a limitation or a problem in comparison to those who speak English” (Garcia, 2009). Furthermore, the Intercultural Development Research Association (IRDA) encourages the use of this term today so that policymakers and educators can rightfully view these students as a diverse group of students and assets (Garcia, 2021).

In Texas, 94% of public schools have identified Emergent Bilinguals in their district (Texas Education Agency, 2019). According to a recent report from the U.S. Department of Education, Emergent Bilingual enrollment has increased by more than one million students since 2000. It is estimated that a total of 4.9 million children in U.S. public schools are learning English (Mitchell, 2020). Emergent Bilinguals represent the fastest growing portion of the student population (NCTE, 2008).

Emergent Bilinguals are a diverse population of students with unique language, academic, and social-emotional needs (Ibreiseth, 2015). Based upon these demographic data trends, it is apparent that the fast growing Emergent Bilingual student population demands more attention from both practitioners and policy makers in education. Moreover, it is imperative that Emergent Bilingual education programs and teachers be provided adequate resources and professional development to meet the academic needs of Emergent Bilingual students and prioritize the preservation of each student’s diverse language and culture.

Knowing that this population is continually growing, these students must be equipped with real-world skills they can learn in the classroom. Specifically, speaking skills are a critical language skill to master, and this skill serves as the foundation for all other language skills to include reading, writing, and listening (Nunan, 1995; Leong and

Ahmadi, 2017). In my experience and in research that is supported by other professionals, speaking is an overlooked skill in many of today's classrooms for Emergent Bilingual students (Leong and Ahmadi, 2017; Mazjub and Abu, 2010). I explore this problem further in a detailed examination in my problem of the study and in my review of the literature.

Statement of the Problem

Limited Speaking Opportunities in Classrooms for Emergent Bilinguals

Speaking is a critical skill that many Emergent Bilingual students struggle to master, especially with limited verbal opportunities in the regular classroom. Under the *No Child Left Behind Act* in 2001, each state is required to assess the progress and proficiency of Emergent Bilinguals (EBs) through four language domains recognized by the English Language Proficiency Standards (ELPs). Listening, reading, and writing opportunities are often the focus of a public high school classroom, whereas the speaking domain is pushed aside. Literary researcher, Kaur Singh's work further supports the idea that speaking is undervalued in classrooms because pronunciation, grammar, and fluency are not prioritized (2015). Based on my review of the literature and my experiences working with EBs, I contend that teachers need effective, interactive instructional strategies to strengthen and increase these students' speaking competency.

Although speaking is an overlooked skill for EBs in public high schools, this is a foundational skill to mastering a language. Many researchers, including Türkben's study on the effects of interactive strategies to improve students' speaking abilities confirm that mastering communication skills is met through the prioritization of speaking skills

(2019). Like my personal experience working with EBs, this study recognizes the need to integrate speaking opportunities to strengthen students' mastery of a new language.

While research supports the argument to integrate speaking opportunities for EBs in high school classrooms, it is important to recognize that students often experience speaking anxiety, which may contribute to the lack of communication practice. Often referred to as a student's learner ego or a student's silent period, teachers should be aware of the fragility of an EB's comfort level when speaking, especially when they are classified as a beginner speaker (Wang, 2020; Wright, 2010). Supporting this research, I propose that teachers should work closely with EB students and receive their input concerning their speaking engagement in class. My research aims to consider EBs' learner ego in their speaking involvement. I will conduct interviews with current high school EBs to give a voice to this population so that teachers can adapt their instruction to target specific learners' needs.

The Problem Within a High School Regular Classroom for Emergent Bilinguals

Intentional speaking engagement opportunities must be introduced to EBs to fully develop language mastery. Within the context of high school, teacher and researcher Pauline Gibbons' experience exploring student-teacher relationships in language development provides evidence that a classroom must have a well-planned spoken language program (Gibbons, 2003). Gibbons supports my personal observations in claiming that some classroom students may "spend over 90 percent of their time listening to teachers or doing individual seatwork" rather than participating in activities that exercise classroom talk (24). This is an issue for EBs because they need intentional time to exercise their speaking skills. My research aims to uncover students' perspectives

about specific instructional activities they consider most helpful concerning their engagement in classroom talk.

The Value of Speaking Skills

Oral language skills should be equally valued in the high school classroom in order to give EBs a fair chance to improve all areas of mastery in a new language. Writers of the Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) model, a research-based approach to language acquisition, assert that students need oral interaction to deepen their content knowledge and support their reading and writing skills (Vogt, 2010). Speaking opportunities for EBs should not be given priority to other skills, but this language domain is often overlooked in the regular classroom. High school EB student feedback in this study will demonstrate types of instruction they find most helpful to their learning needs, specifically regarding speaking abilities.

As my experience and research reveals, EBs' are not given adequate speaking opportunities to provide a foundation of language mastery and strengthen necessary communication skills. Teachers must work alongside their students to integrate interactive, meaningful instruction that engages EBs in communication practices. It is important to recognize beginner students' learner ego or silent period, and work to create activities and speaking engagement that fits their comfortability level. Now that this problem of limited speaking opportunities for EBs has been discussed, I propose ways to determine best practice instructional strategies to increase their level of speaking engagement in the high school classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this descriptive multiple-case study is to discover students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom. Personal interviews with three Emergent Bilingual students will include a new perspective within second language acquisition research. This one-on-one authentic discussion with high school EBs will uncover specific instructional strategies that these students find most helpful. This data will strengthen regular classroom teachers' pedagogy to consider the specific needs of EBs, specifically in techniques that promote improving their speaking skills.

In addition to discovering EBs' perspectives on regular classroom pedagogy, I will share in the learning experiences of these students by observing in their regular classrooms. These weekly observations will allow me to pinpoint the types of instructional strategies that best promote opportunities for students to speak aloud and thus strengthen their speaking ability. Second language speaking proficiency research indicates that the more frequently speech is produced, the greater a student's speaking proficiency increases (Iwashita, 2008; Crossley & McNamara, 2010). These weekly classroom observations will demonstrate which types of instructional strategies are most effective in producing student speech output, thus informing better practices that target the strengthening of Emergent Bilinguals' speaking abilities. By combining these students' input with my observations of classroom strategies related to personal speaking growth, I will effectively determine best practices for regular classroom teachers. These best practices will be specifically tailored to foster the greatest output of speaking for EBs, thus strengthening the often overlooked speaking domain of ELPS.

In the following section, I present my research questions that are informed by my review of the research literature and are aligned with the variables represented in my purpose of the study statement.

Research Questions

As previously discussed in the statement of the problem and purpose of the study statements, EB students' experiences in the public high school classroom too often fail to provide adequate speaking opportunities. The lack of speaking engagement and instruction that values communication skills significantly hinder EBs mastery of speaking and in turn, fuels their anxiety levels. Too often, high school classrooms undervalue the production of speech, reducing EBs language acquisition development and knowledge.

Drawing from research within the field of second language acquisition and development, these research questions were designed to measure students' perceptions of instructional strategies that promote and encourage their speaking skills. In addition to the cited research in my review of the literature, two theoretical frameworks informed the variables measured in this study. Vygotsky's *Constructivist Theory* and Long's *Interactionist Approach* were integrated into what the research questions measured and how the answers would be analyzed and interpreted when revealed in the data.

The following two research questions were operationalized throughout the data collection procedures and data analysis protocols used in this descriptive multiple-case study.

1. What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?

2. What type of instructional strategies best promote opportunities for high school Emergent Bilingual student engagement, specifically to improve the student's speaking ability?

Need And Significance

The findings of this study will benefit regular classroom teachers as they gain insight into the perspectives of their Emergent Bilingual students' needs and pedagogical requests. Harper and de Jong (2011) point out in discussing misconceptions about teaching Emergent Bilinguals, that many teachers in the mainstream classroom have a vague understanding of how second language development occurs. With this acquired research on the EB perspective, teachers will have data that points to the most effective types of instruction for producing speech among these students. Teachers may integrate these specific instructional strategies if they have not already, or they may choose to focus more on the instructional strategies that are most effective for improving EBs' speaking abilities.

For EBs, this research allows them to share their voice in a space that is too often dominated by teacher talk. Many scholars' work demonstrates the need for verbal participation from EBs to create a space that builds their cognitive and social skills. The consensus is that a teacher's engagement should be equal to the student's speaking engagement (Marquez, 2020; Herrera & Murry, 2016). This study will give EBs an opportunity to be heard about specific strategies that they perceive are most helpful in producing speaking engagement.

These students will benefit from this study as their teachers begin to tailor instruction to prioritize their speaking skills at the same level as their reading, writing, and listening skills – skills required by states' second language programs (Texas

Education Agency, 2019). It is often emphasized that speaking is the most difficult of the four language skills to acquire, and strategic instructional strategies should aim to increase speaking as a foundation for other language skills (Bailey and Savage, 1994; Egan, 1999). With the importance of this research clearly explained now, I will share the theoretical framework that frames this study, including Vygotsky's *Constructivist Theory* and Long's *Interactionist approach*.

Introduction of the Theoretical-Conceptual Framework

The two theoretical frameworks that guide this descriptive multiple-case study that seeks to discover best practice instructional strategies to increase students' speaking skills in high school classrooms, are Lev Vygotsky's *Theory of Constructivism* and Michael Long's conceptual *Interactionist Approach*, emphasizing output. Both of these theoretical and conceptual frameworks serve to ground this study's purpose, research questions, and research design by upholding the tenants of Constructivism and the Interactionist Approach.

The theoretical framework that informs the type of instructional strategies aimed at increasing EBs' speaking skills is Lev Vygotsky's approach to child learning development, the *Constructivist Theory*. Vygotsky's work explains that learning is a socially constructed process (1978). Furthermore, he places a direct emphasis on the role of language in cognitive development (1978). These foundational ideas of constructivism fit snugly with the concept of strengthening Emergent Bilingual students' speaking skills through interactive instructional skills. By including EBs in the conversation about their learning, their voice is valued as they co-construct their learning development, specifically increasing their speaking skills. Vygotsky's constructivist theory has been

studied closely with second language acquisition, and many researchers use his concepts including the zone of proximal development, social interaction, and the role of social and cultural situations, to guide investigation into second language development (Elson, 2015; Mahn, 2012; Vygotsky, 1986).

In addition to Vygotsky's *Constructivist* ideals, I lean on the role of interaction in my discussion and analysis of second language acquisition. The interactionist hypothesis, proposed and later adapted by American psycholinguist Michael Long, considers the process of learning and speaking a language through the interplay of input and output, while also considering learners' cognitive resources and individual differences (Loewen & Sato, 2018; Long, 1981, 1996). This theory's reliance on the output, or the production of verbal language, is a great theoretical framework for my study because I, too, value each Emergent Bilingual's opportunity to exercise speaking the new language. Initially, I sought to find ways that Krashen's second language acquisition theories would support my work, but he does not ascribe an important enough role for language production in the process of learning another language (Loewen & Sato, 2018; Liu, 2015).

In contrast to Krashen's theories, the emphasis on the interactionist approach draws upon Swain's Comprehensible Output Hypothesis, which claims that output is a major causal factor of second language development (Swain, 1985; Loewen & Sato, 2018). Additionally, the framework of interaction sees value in language development through peer interaction, which I anticipate as a main factor of students' speaking opportunity in the regular classroom. Many components of the interactionist approach support the problem I have discovered of a lack of speaking opportunities for Emergent

Bilinguals, and this theory's value on speech output supports the type of engagement I will be questioning students about and looking for in my observations.

I have chosen to combine the tenants of Vygotsky's *Constructivist Theory* and Long's *Interactionist Approach* to create an integrated theoretical-conceptual framework that provides a context to determine the most effective instructional strategies to increase EBs' speaking skills. I lean on *Constructivism* as I consider the types of instruction that depends on social interaction in the language acquisition process of these students. Additionally, the *Interactionist Approach* supports the idea that when students participate in more speaking opportunities, their language knowledge will develop. Now that I have discussed the frameworks that inform my study, I clarify the terms used in language acquisition and development to establish the definitions I refer to throughout this study.

Definition of Key Terms

Nationally, many different assessments, progress descriptors, and terms surround the educational world of Emergent Bilinguals. The following table may help to identify terms used in many school districts, as well as to clarify terms throughout this paper.

Table 1.1 Key Terms used in Language Acquisition Programs

Emergent Bilingual	This is an additive term to describe students in U.S. schools who are learning English. This term focuses on the unique potential for bilingualism by these students learning English in school. (Garcia, 2008).
ELL (English Language Learner)	This term describes an active learner of the English language who may benefit from various types of language support programs. This term is used mainly in the U.S. to describe K-12 students.
ESL (English as a Second Language)	Formerly used to designate ELL students, this term increasingly refers to a program of instruction designed to support the ELL. It may also refer to multilingual students in higher education.
LEP (Limited English Proficiency)	The U.S. Department of Education uses this term to refer to ELLs who lack sufficient mastery of English to meet state standards and excel in an English language classroom. It is becoming increasingly popular to use the term “English Language Learner” as its emphasis is on learning rather than a student deficiency.
EFL (English as a Foreign Language)	This term describes non-native English-speaking students who are learning English in a country where English is not the primary language.
1.5 Generation Students	These are graduates of U.S. high schools who enter college while still learning English and may include refugees and permanent residents as well as naturalized and native-born citizens of the U.S.. Also includes undocumented immigrants and DACA recipients.

This table is adapted from the Policy Research Brief of English Language Learners produced by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE).

Introduction of Research Design

The purpose of this descriptive multiple-case study is to discover Emergent Bilingual students’ perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom. In addition to acquiring data to determine the most effective instructional strategies to produce speaking engagement, I aim to specifically highlight the voices of EBs in this research to determine their self-perceived needs. When

a researcher seeks to explore the voices of individuals involved in a phenomenon, the most appropriate methodology is a qualitative research design. To capture a full picture of best classroom practices and students' voices, I used a descriptive multiple-case study design.

A descriptive case study is a focused and detailed report that carefully scrutinizes and articulates questions about a phenomenon at the outset of the study (Mills et. al, 2010). A multiple-case study consists of single cases, usually presented as separate chapters or sections, as well as a cross-case analysis (Yin, 2014). By combining these two types of studies, I can provide the stories of three Emergent Bilingual students after interviews and observations and thoroughly compare the analyses of these students to determine notable patterns. Descriptions and commentary from this study will strengthen my cross-case analysis. The nature of the descriptive multiple-case study allows me to use and combine multiple sources of qualitative and quantitative evidence to achieve a holistic and descriptive view inside the areas of the speaking domain for an EB (Yin, 2003; Coulthard, 2016).

I have carefully crafted these research questions to answer the “what” of questions that describe the perceptions of Emergent Bilinguals and the level of opportunity for engagement that results from the types of instructional strategies they receive. Yin’s case study design explanations affirm this type of questioning in stating that “what” questions are exploratory and propose areas for further inquiry (Yin, 2014). In order to gain an in-depth perspective of EBs’ experiences with beneficial pedagogy specifically aimed at increasing their speaking competency, my first research question is as follows:

1. What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking ability?

To further analyze the effectiveness of specific types of instruction meant to engage Emergent Bilingual students' speaking skills, I will observe three high school EB students with my second research question to guide my exploration:

2. What type of instructional strategies best promote opportunities for high school Emergent Bilingual student engagement, specifically to improve the student's speaking ability?

I have selected three Emergent Bilingual students using purposive sampling. This is a method that is widely used because the researcher chooses the participants knowing they will provide information-rich cases for an in-depth study (Lopez and Whitehead, 2012). Because of my experience at the midsize suburban high school, I have developed relationships with a few Emergent Bilingual students who I felt would feel comfortable speaking knowledgeably about their speaking experiences in the classroom.

I will be obtaining data in several ways in an effort to achieve triangulation for my research. First, I will conduct individual interviews with each Emergent Bilingual student. Second, I will obtain information through a pre and post observation questionnaire for each student to answer individually. Third, I will be collecting data through observation as I record notes for each student's speaking behavior within their regular classroom. I will further explain my methodology in Chapter Three.

Conclusion

Everyone deserves a voice in the classroom. My research seeks to give Emergent Bilingual students the opportunity to share their perspective on best instructional practices that encourage them to speak freely in the regular classroom. My descriptive

multiple case study research with three high school EB students will reveal specific instructional strategies that produce the most speaking output from these students. The speaking domain is a critical skill within the regular classroom that is too often forgotten. This research will provide new perspectives for ways in which EB students can strengthen their speaking abilities, and it will provide practical pedagogical techniques for regular classroom teachers to use to engage their students' in conversation, thus strengthening these students' speaking abilities. The idea of prioritizing speaking skills within the regular classroom for EBs is a crucial need recognized by linguists and other researchers as my literature review will further discuss.

CHAPTER TWO

Review of the Literature

Introduction

I would like to tell you that you are looking good today. In order for me to communicate this comment in an intentional and direct manner, I need to use my communication skills. Sure, I could write a note to you, but even Plato distrusted writing because “it took ideas out of one’s mind and put them on paper” (Hagaman, 26). Dell Hymes, a prominent linguist, defines communicative competence as a term in linguistics to explain “a language user’s grammatical knowledge of syntax, morphology... as well as social knowledge about how and when to use utterances appropriately” (Mazjub & Abu, 2010). This ideal of communicative competence encompasses the four domains that Emergent Bilinguals strive to meet according to Texas’s ELPS (English Language Proficiency Standards). Specifically, exercises within the domain of speaking allow EBs to interact effectively with others and encourages the student’s overall communicative competence.

The following literature review addresses the problem that there are limited speaking opportunities for Emergent Bilinguals in the classroom and calls attention to the need for these students’ voices to be heard. To restate the purpose of the study, my research seeks to discover Emergent Bilingual students’ perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom. This review of the literature emphasizes this need in arguing for sound pedagogy that targets the specialized

needs of Emergent Bilinguals within a regular classroom. These arguments unfold in four steps. First, this literature review surveys the scholarship on the need to emphasize speaking skills for EBs in the classroom and reinforces the idea that this domain is often limited. Second, this literature review brings best practices for Emergent Bilinguals into the picture, specifically teaching strategies that target strengthening speaking skills. Third, this literature review demonstrates the benefits and challenges of EB education, which is important to consider when reading the findings of my research from personal observations of EBs in their regular classrooms. This literature review concludes with an in-depth discussion of the theoretical frameworks of Vygotsky's constructivism and Long's Interactionist Approach, which is used to support and inform this research study.

The Need to Bring Back Speaking Opportunities

The need for speaking English well is a global concern (Turkben, 2019; Singh, 2015; Ali, et.al, 2019). Many researchers and teachers of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) report similar attitudes toward the speaking development of English. Many research studies begin with similar introductions that voice this spark in the importance of speaking skills (Ali et. al, 2019; Kuen et. al, 2017, Peercy et.al, 2015). One study begins "Saudi EFL students [feel] a need for improving speaking or communication skills [because English] is sought after by companies in the job market" (Ali, et.al, 2019). Similarly, another research introduction's first line states, "Oral communicative learning of English is a vital subject for Malaysian second language learners to prepare them for the workplace in the future" (Kuen, et. al, 2017). In addition to global pulls toward speaking English, the importance of effective communication remains a key standard in schools in the United States. The American Psychological Association points out the

need for teaching effective speaking skills by factually stating that in our Western society, people's perceptions of an individual's success, maturity, and intelligence is directly correlated to a person's verbal skill (Rive, 1993). Speaking is an important ability not just for our Emergent Bilingual students, but for EFL learners and all persons in our society.

Concerning the importance of speaking skills in the classroom, David Nunan's *Language Teaching Methodology* textbook for teachers asserts that speaking skills are the most important aspect of learning a second or foreign language, and true success is measured on the ability to converse in the language (Nunan, 1995). Additionally, Rivers' research explored language use outside the classroom and discovered that speaking is used twice as much as reading and writing skills combined (Rivers, 1981). Much of the research in second language scholarship supports the idea that speaking skills are the foundation of reading and writing skills (Leong, Ahmadi, 2017; Reed, Spicer; 2003). Based on the above findings and claims, speaking is a critical skill that will influence the future success of Emergent Bilingual students, though many challenges often stand in the way of this communicative success.

Challenges to Increasing Speaking Opportunities in the Classroom

Many factors contribute to the lack of prioritizing speaking activities for Emergent Bilinguals in the regular classroom. Oftentimes, both teachers and students have regarded "speaking and listening skills... as being too difficult to cope with, so generally students are not willing to participate in tasks focusing on these two skills" (Mazjub, Abu, 2010). Another factor mentioned here is the challenge to motivate students to speak in the target language (Mazjub, Abu, 2010). Although it is a difficult

skill to implement in the regular classroom, speaking skills are a crucial aspect of mastering a language.

A specific challenge that affects many beginning language speakers is their self-perceived readiness to engage in the language, especially in public settings. This notion reinforces the long-standing theory of linguist Alexander Guoira's second language ego concept, in which the learner takes on a new mode of thinking, feeling, and acting as part of their new identity when learning a second language (Wang, 2020). Wang further suggests that this second language ego is especially sensitive to criticism and may often face limitations in a non-welcoming environment such as a classroom. Furthermore, scholars and researchers point out, "speaking has been overlooked in schools and universities due to different reasons like emphasis on grammar and unfavorable teacher-student [speaking] proportions" (Leong, Ahmadi, 2017). Thus, teachers must be aware of their students' learner egos as they engage in classroom talk with beginning EB students.

Another reason that speaking skills are inevitably practiced less than other language skills is because students spend more of their time, approximately 90%, listening to their teachers (Marquez, 2020; Wright, 2010). A strategic classroom that seeks to promote students' speaking abilities should balance the proportion of teacher-to-student talk, intentionally giving students space to voice questions, discuss, and collaborate. With these struggles of speaking inclusion in mind, I bring up specific, research-based instructional strategies meant to encourage speaking opportunities among EBs. These instructional strategies will be examined in my research and discussed in detail in the next section.

The SIOP Model's Role in Teaching Emergent Bilinguals

Knowing that speaking skills are overlooked or considered too challenging raises the question of what to do for these Emergent Bilingual students. The Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) Model was specifically developed to make content material more comprehensible to English learners (Echevarria, 2010). This model uses eight components to create effective material and learning strategies for EB students. To name a few, these components include the use of: strategic content and language objectives, graphic organizers, contextualized vocabulary, comprehensible input, and interactive activities to strengthen the four domains of language (Vogt & Echevarria, 2010). This is a heavily researched and field-tested model that gives an overview of ways to present content so that it reaches EBs (Echevarria, 2010). More schools need to implement this research-based, highly effective model for their language development programs.

Even worldwide, this model has impacted many students. For instance, the director of the Language Center at the South East European University in Macedonia attested that after lessons were redesigned in alignment with the SIOP model and all four language domains were considered, students achieved higher scores in every area of achievement, even participation and attendance (Kareva, Echevarria, 2013). Specifically, a school in Boston's state assessment scores increased from 20 points below the state average to .2 points above the state average after teachers were trained in the SIOP model and worked closely with EBs (Kareva, Echevarria, 2013). Even worldwide, this model has impacted many students as the director of the Language Center at the South East European University in Macedonia explains that lessons were redesigned in alignment

with the SIOP model and all four language domains were considered (Kareva, Echevarria, 2013). Students achieved higher scores in every area of achievement, even participation and attendance. Plus, eight students who had failed the year before passed the course thanks to the instructional strategies implemented because of the SIOP model (Kareva, Echevarria, 2013). The SIOP model is clearly an effective way to teach Emergent Bilinguals.

Instructional Strategies Targeted at Strengthening Emergent Bilinguals' Speaking Abilities

In addition to implementing effective strategies suggested by the SIOP model, there are many research-based instructional strategies that all teachers can use to strengthen their students' speaking language development. Though fewer models are specifically aimed at teaching high school EB students, Dong's research recognizes the need for improved EB instruction at the secondary level within all-subject classes (Dong, 2019). This researcher devotes a chapter of her work to a discussion on ways to promote EBs' participation in subject matter discussions and points out that the concept of a classroom discussion is a foreign concept to many EBs (Dong, 2019). Dong suggests first understanding a sense of each student's language, cultural, and prior knowledge difficulties, as well as learning more about the student's native country and culture. This knowledge will help inform the teacher's instruction by making classroom discussion more relevant, motivational, and meaningful to students (Dong, 2019). In addition, Dong's work highlights additional strategies that promote EBs' speaking opportunities and skills, including:

- Model the desired behavior and speech.

- Modify teacher talk, questions, and directions.
- Provide ELLs with ample opportunities to interact with their peers.
- Teach academic and disciplinary vocabulary during the discussion.

Like Dong's coherent instructional strategies that target an Emergent Bilingual's speaking skills, an EFL study in Turkey demonstrated much success with increased speaking skills using similar instructional strategies. This study investigated the effects of interactive teaching strategies versus the results of traditional teaching methods (Turkben, 2019). Post-test results from both groups demonstrated a much higher significant effect on the speaking skills of students that received interactive teaching instruction (Turkben, 2019). Furthermore, a similar study aimed at investigating ways to increase upper middle school EBs' oral language skills found that oral language development contributed to their overall academic proficiency (Fisher and Frey, 2018). This study determined that language or sentence frames, small group needs-based grammar instruction, and intentional time devoted to student talk were the best intervention practices that strengthened EBs' speaking skills (Fisher and Frey, 2018).

There are several researched-based instructional activities that are effective in promoting EB student speaking engagement. Specifically, interactive activities used to teach speaking to EB students are much more effective than a repetition of drills or a memorization of dialogues (Kayi, 2006). Instructional strategies that researchers and experienced high school teachers have found to be effective in promoting speaking skills include: discussions, role play, group work, sentence frames, simulations, verbal brainstorming, storytelling, interviews, picture narrating, and engaging dialogues (Kayi, 2006; Gantenhammer, 2015; Ferlazzo and Synnieski, 2018; Mohr and Mohr, 2007). As

you can see, there are many ways to engage EB students in their learning and promote these students' speaking skills.

Using any of these interactive instructional strategies in the high school classroom will positively impact EB students' learning. Students may often fear making mistakes, but these activities promote fun and are encouraging to EBs (Gantenhammer, 2015). Such interactive instruction positions students in a more active role in the learning process and helps them develop speaking skills that are necessary in life (Kayi, 2006). Mohr asserts that many teachers often miss opportunities to help EBs communicate in class, so the need for intentional, structured activities is crucial (Mohr and Mohr, 2007). Additionally, Jennifer Gonzalez from the Cult of Pedagogy insists that extra measures taken to support language learners will help all students, not just Emergent Bilingual students, grasp concepts better (Gonzalez, 2014). These scholars and veteran teachers' research encourage today's teachers to implement interactive and intentional instructional strategies to best serve EB students and their class as a whole.

The Necessary Connection Between Teachers and Emergent Bilingual Teachers

Teachers constantly have many students and needs to attend to in their classroom, so they should rely on help from the Emergent Bilingual teacher when planning instruction to meet the needs of their EBs. A true partnership between the mainstream teacher and the Emergent Bilingual teacher provides a meaningful support system for EBs (Hoffman and Dahlman, 2007; Peercy et.al, 2015). Recent studies of mainstream teachers reveal that many new and preservice teachers feel inadequately prepared to teach EBs (Molle, 2013; Lucas et.al, 2008). Collaborative work between classroom teachers and EB teachers is essential for the success of these students (Hoffman and Dahlman,

2007; Peercy et.al, 2015). As this research demonstrates, once a working relationship is established between a teacher, especially a new teacher, and the Emergent Bilingual teacher, EB students will have a greater chance of success.

Emergent Bilingual teachers can offer a background of knowledge in language standards and classroom teachers can hone their teaching practices for all students (Peercy et. al, 2015). As these two types of teachers work well together, EBs can more easily identify connections between regular instruction and English content (Hoffman and Dahlman, 2007). It is suggested that the EB teacher can preteach vocabulary that will be used in the regular classroom, while the mainstream teacher embeds this vocabulary in their instruction (Hoffman and Dahlman, 2007). With a better knowledge of vocabulary, EBs speaking proficiency will increase (Khan et. al, 2018). This collaborative relationship between teachers offers EB students connections between content and language acquisition, vocabulary knowledge, and a likelier chance of increased speaking ability.

I have explained ways that teachers can achieve success with EB students through the use of the SIOP model, interactive instructional activities, and collaboration with the Emergent Bilingual teacher. Now, I discuss factors that benefit and challenge EB education.

Benefits and Challenges to Emergent Bilingual Education

Benefits of Emergent English as a Second Language Programs

All students work to improve their communication skills while they are in school. In Texas, effective communication and oral presentation abilities are important standards

according to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Standards throughout all grades and subjects (TEKS, 2017). Emergent Bilingual education aims to provide students with meaningful activities that engage and challenge students in ways that will teach them more about the language and language structures (Hill, Miller, 2013). The goal of this specific education, especially when using the term “Emergent Bilingual” rather than “English Learner,” considers the students’ native languages as a form of additive bilingualism to preserve the culture and language of the students and to provide students with ways to connect their prior knowledge to language usage in a new language (Bauer, 2009). EB education aims to engage, challenge, and value students in ways that will positively impact their language development.

EB education has been researched to provide many benefits, including a welcoming and comfortable environment to these students. Most language acquisition programs for learning English are structured in a separate class that serves as a safe, welcoming classroom environment in which English learning can occur (Lucas et.al, 2008). The teacher of this class ideally serves less than twenty students per period and can more easily focus on creating a non-threatening space in which students can practice their English, comfortably ask questions, and establish close relationships with peers (Lucas et. al, 2008). Although this is still the goal for EBs in regular subject classrooms, an EB-specific class has more space to focus on the student’s individual progress and success.

To explain further about the concept of meeting an individual EB student’s progress, specific EB classrooms can target specific learning outcomes to address a range of needs. If there are ever gaps in background knowledge in the content that an EB

student is learning in the regular classroom, EB education provides these students with opportunities to fill in these gaps of knowledge (Brown, 2004). Emergent Bilingual education also focuses on teaching students a range of useful vocabulary, which in turn results in higher academic success (Brown, 2004; Senechal and Cornell, 1993).

Curriculum and instruction surrounding EBs is a necessary and ongoing development in schools, as this population continues to grow (Lamar University, 2021). Individualized experiences within the EB classroom allow students to flourish at their own pace and address their specific needs in connection to their regular classroom. Now, I turn to the discussion of challenges facing the EB population in schools today.

Challenges to Emergent Bilingual Education

Although EB education has been structured to provide engaging, meaningful activities and individualized attention to students through an EB classroom, many challenges face this population. As mentioned previously, new and preservice teachers often feel inadequately prepared to teach Emergent Bilinguals well (Molle, 2013; Lucas et.al, 2008). As many teacher do not feel as if they possess the necessary skills to teach these students, this can lead to ineffective instruction for EB students. Similarly, other research reveals that while teachers in U.S. schools remain predominantly White, the diversity of students, to specifically include the ELL population, has shifted to include many more linguistically and culturally diverse learners (Peercy et. al, 2015; Landsman and Lewis, 2011). In fact, the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) provides information comparing the percentage distribution of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools by race/ethnicity, found below in the following figure (NCES, 2019).

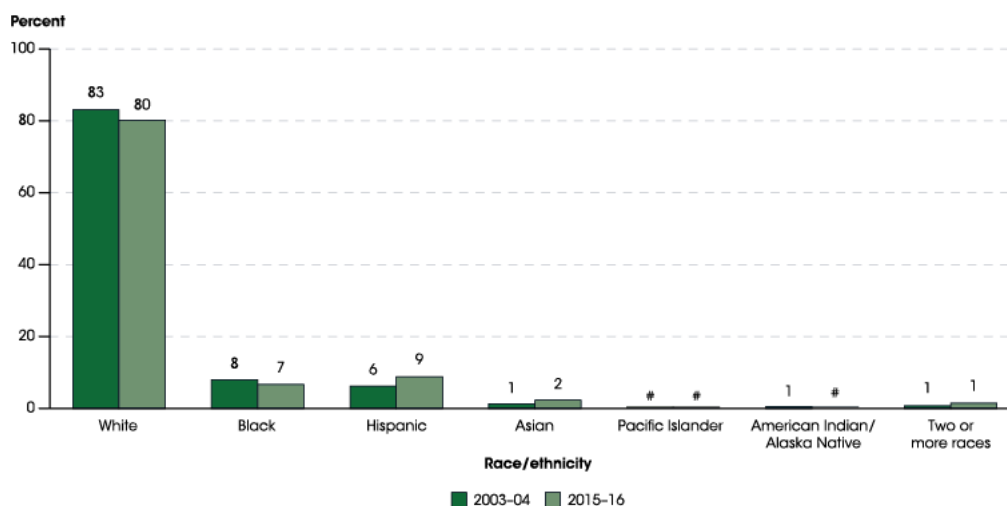


Figure 2.1 Percentage of the Diversity of Teachers in Public Schools in 2003-04 Compared to 2015-16 (NCES, 2019)

This figure demonstrates that the number of White teachers over the past thirteen years has remained close to 80%, again the overwhelming majority of teachers' race/ethnicity (NCES, 2019). This statistic is related to challenges of Emergent Bilingual education because research indicates that having a teacher with the same race or ethnicity can have positive impacts on a student's motivation and achievement (NCES, 2019). Furthermore, as I mentioned the differences in terminology earlier, these English language acquisition programs are suffering from linguistic discrimination because the terms for these students and much of their curriculum is produced by a predominantly White viewpoint, rather than a multicultural, additive viewpoint.

Issues in curriculum are a constant challenge for the growing EB population. Academic outcomes for Emergent Bilinguals tend to be underwritten by deficit-oriented discourse (Shapiro, 2014; Crumpler et.al, 2011; Gutiérrez & Orellana, 2006). Too often, White educators view culturally diverse students through a deficit lens, and this is

harmful to the quality of education that Emergent Bilingual students receive (Marx, 2001; Shapiro, 2014). It is important to continue making strides to promote English language acquisition as an additive educational program and to continue to view these students as assets to the classroom. Schools and EB students would benefit from a greater diversity of teachers.

Another factor that weighs into the challenges of Emergent Bilingual education is a concern around graduation rates. Due to systemic issues, EBs may often display disengagement from school environments, resulting in lower percentages of graduation rates (Sugarman, 2019). Although EB education has made great strides over the years, recent statistics point out the need to pay more attention to this population and their graduation status. Graduation rates vary by state, and while states like New York and Louisiana saw low graduation rates at 31% and 36% in 2017-18, some high rates were also to be celebrated in West Virginia and Arkansas with rates of 93% and 83% (Office of English Language Acquisition, 2020). Overall, the median state-level EB graduation rate was 68.4%, which leaves this subgroup of students with much room for improvement (OELA, 2020). With these unfortunate statistics, EB education needs to focus attention on increasing measures to help these students feel motivated to stay in school and graduate.

Three reasons have been posited to account for EB's lower graduation rates, dropping out, and failure in school. As the Migration Policy Institute's research demonstrates, EBs have higher dropout rates because of academic and social disengagement, a diminished opportunity to learn, low teacher and administration expectations, disparity in teacher quality, and consequences of accountability systems

(Sugarman, 2019). My research aims to allow these students' voices to share what they wish their school and teachers did differently to help them succeed, as well as evaluating the type of teaching strategies that Emergent Bilinguals experience in the regular classroom. Recognizing its importance through the supporting literature provided, I will now closely examine the theoretical frameworks that value student contribution in learning.

Theoretical-Conceptual Framework Explained

I rely on two theoretical frameworks to shape my understanding of effective Emergent Bilingual education to inform my research. Vygotsky's developmental constructivist theory and Long's interaction approach serve as the structures that guide my understanding of second language acquisition.

Vygotsky's Constructivist Theory

Vygotsky's Sociocultural Development Theory proposes that social interactions lead to cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1986; Sanders and Welk, 2005). This constructivist theory relies on the interplay between the learner and others, in which the student learner must actively participate in the learning process by using speech, memory, or writing (Vygotsky, 1986; Sanders and Welk, 2005). This concept of constructivism in learning supports the idea that Emergent Bilinguals need interactive, meaningful instructional strategies and activities to best support their learning, especially in strengthening their speaking skills (Mahn, 2012; Elson, 2015). EB students' instruction should rely on the tenants of Vygotsky' Constructivist theory to better engage their learning through real-life social development.

Additionally, Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development (ZPD) is a form of scaffolding learning, which is an instructional strategy that is well suited to teaching Emergent Bilinguals (Walqui, 2006; Sanders and Welk, 2005). The SIOP model, a well-known EB framework meant to make content comprehensible, encourages the use of scaffolding a student's learning so that "they are gradually able to be successful independently" (Vogt et. al, 2010). Like the concept of scaffolding learning, Vygotsky's ZPD theory supports the idea of building an Emergent Bilingual student's speaking skills by gradually building on to speech patterns that the learner already knows (Sanders and Welk, 2005). Knowing that the basic unit of language is conversation, correct sentence structure and proper grammar will follow (Vygotsky, 1986; Bakhtin, 1981). Vygotsky's idea that language must be scaffolded through the zone of proximal development supports the idea of scaffolding learning and speaking skills in EB education.

Collectively, all students (with a greater emphasis on EB students) will benefit from the intentional, researched methods that Vygotsky proposes in his Constructivist theory. Following this theory, a teacher should not consider their classroom a makeup of individual zones of proximal development. Instead, teachers must view their class as a part of a collective, interrelated zones of proximal development (Faulkner et.al, 1998). Instructional strategies that lean heavily on constructivist ideals will likely produce opportunities that promote speaking among Emergent Bilingual students, so my research will look for the effect of this methodology.

Long's Interactionist Approach to Second Language Acquisition

I further rely on Long's Interactionist Approach to inform my study. The concept of classroom-based interaction is a core construct of second language development (Long, 1996; Loewen & Sato, 2018). The core components of interaction consist of input, negotiation for meaning, and output. This last component, output, heavily informs and supports my inquiry and research. With more opportunities for output, research supports the idea that students' speech will improve (Loewen & Sato, 2018; Pica et.al, 1996; Zhang, 2009). I rely on Long's research component of output because I aim to uncover instructional strategies that engage students in speaking to overall promote Emergent Bilingual students' speaking abilities.

As this theory suggests, an increase in student output leads to an increase in the student's speaking ability. Output, defined as the language that learners produce during meaning-focused interaction, plays a major role in second language acquisition (Long, 1996; Loewen & Sato, 2018). Although Krashen's second language acquisition theories are given much of the spotlight in language development, his models oversimplify the construct of input, and unfortunately do not value output as much as Long's Interactionist Approach (Loewen & Sato, 2018; Liu, 2015). This approach, specifically the concept of output, informs my study's background research, methodology, and analysis of results.

Long's Interactionist Approach is well suited as a framework of my study because of its focus on output. The approach's focus on output strongly draws from Swain's Comprehensible Output Hypothesis, which claims that output is not only a representation of second language development; rather, it is a causal factor in several ways (Swain, 2005; Loewen & Sato, 2018). First, this hypothesis posits that learners need to produce a

language in order to process a language semantically (Swain, 2005). Second, Swain proposes that output allows learners to test their linguistic hypotheses, such as new structures in communication, and receive feedback for correction and improvement (Swain, 2005). Third, output functions as a key component of second language acquisition because it is a metalinguistic function that enables learners to control and internalize language knowledge (Swain, 2005). Output is important in language use because it facilitates practical use of the language and in turn, a development of language fluency and automaticity (DeKeyser, 2001; Loewen & Sato, 2018). Throughout my study, I will examine ways that an EB student's speaking engagement, or output, is used practically to develop their language knowledge.

A specific part of output that Long's interactionist approach addresses is peer interaction (Long, 1996). This component of output supplements my research because I anticipate a fraction of the speaking opportunities that Emergent Bilinguals engage in are owed to peer interaction. My research will aim to discover what type of instructional activities best promote this output during peer interaction because it "leads to frequent feedback and opportunities for testing out or practicing the language" and gives learners a more comfortable context for experimenting with the language (Loewen & Sato, 2018; Long, 1996). These researchers argue that peer interaction is the most common type of interaction in many communicatively oriented classrooms (Loewen & Sato, 2018; Long, 1996). My research will specifically focus on the output that is encouraged for Emergent Bilingual students, targeting the types of instructional strategies that prompt students to speak, even in peer interactions. Now that I have shared my reasoning for the use of these two theoretical frameworks, I summarize my review of the literature.

Summary and Conclusion to the Review of Literature

The intent of this comprehensive review of literature was to demonstrate that the problem of limited speaking opportunities in the regular high school classroom is a significant factor in limiting Emergent Bilinguals students' academic success. The sequence of the literature review provides both a historical and contemporary perspective of the evolution of this important topic of research. The scope of the literature review is intentionally focused on the negative impact on the academic development of Emergent Bilingual students' when opportunities to actively develop and practice verbal language acquisition skills are not provided in the high school classroom. Through this well-aligned sequence and scope of the review of literature, this study sought to discover Emergent Bilingual students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom.

This review of literature has explained the importance of including activities that value speaking skills in the classroom. The background research presented throughout this literature review offers research and practice-based support behind the idea that speaking skills are the most important second language skill to master within a second or foreign language because true success of a language is measured in the ability to converse (Nunan, 1995). This review has established the importance of implementing effective instruction because speaking is a foundational concept of achieving mastery of a language.

To fully realize the importance of speaking skills in learning a second or foreign language, it is essential to understand the role of the teacher in providing Emergent Bilingual students' access and opportunity to practice their speaking skills. This literature

review presents a discussion that includes a logical sequence and comprehensive scope of the best instructional strategies that facilitate EBs active use and practice of second language verbal skills. In particular, the Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol (SIOP) model and other theory grounded and practice-based learning activities supported by researchers and experienced classroom teachers are discussed in this review of literature.

This literature review has presented both the benefits and challenges that Emergent Bilingual students' confront in education today. Benefits of EB education include the implementation of engaging, intentional activities to strengthen all domains of mastering English. Plus, separate EB classes allow time for individualized learning and additional vocabulary development. Challenges facing EB education are lack of educator diversity, issues in curriculum, and low graduation rates. I include this conversation of the negative aspects of EB education to raise awareness of the need to support EB education more, as well as to reveal that this study's findings will help inform future curriculum that includes the voices of EB students.

This literature review concludes with a thorough explanation of the theoretical frameworks that ground my study's purpose and support my data analysis and interpretation: Vygotsky's *Constructivist Theory* (1978) and Long's *Interactionist Approach* (1981). The tenants of the Constructivist Theory support effective EB instructional practices because activities focus on social development and a scaffolding of learning. Long's Interactionist Approach, especially honing in on the concept of output, frames my study because I look for an increase in speaking engagement, or output, as a way to improve an EB's speaking skills.

Now that I have presented a broader understanding of the research that supports and informs Emergent Bilingual education, I transition into a discussion of the methodology I used in my study. It is important to note that just as this study's problem, purpose, and research questions are framed and supported by research literature in Emergent Bilingual education, the methodology and methods for this study are grounded in qualitative research literature. In the following chapter, I will provide a detailed description and discussion of the descriptive multiple-case study research design that served to operationalize this study.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology and Methods

Introduction

The review of literature has established that teaching oral communicative learning, especially to Emergent Bilingual students, is a crucial yet challenging goal for the classroom (Mazjub and Abu, 2010; Leong and Ahmadi, 2017). By using intentional, interactive pedagogical ideas and listening to input from EB students, both teachers and students will face new measures of success in all aspects of the speaking domain. As the review demonstrated, the current problem schools encounter is that there are limited speaking opportunities in the classroom for EBs, as well as insufficient research from the perspective of an EB in their learning process (Ali et. al, 2019; Kuen et. al, 2017, Peercy et.al, 2015).

My research seeks to uncover types of instructional strategies that are most effective to engage Emergent Bilinguals' in speaking opportunities, thus increasing their speaking domain. This research will contribute to the purpose of the study, which is to discover Emergent Bilingual students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom.

The research questions that anchor this descriptive multiple case study that proposes to discover Emergent Bilingual students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom are as follows:

1. What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?
2. What type of instructional strategies best promote opportunities for high school Emergent Bilingual student engagement, specifically to improve the student's speaking ability?

It is a major problem that Emergent Bilinguals experience few speaking opportunities daily in their regular subject classrooms. Speaking activities are incorporated less often than reading, writing, or listening activities because it is challenging and difficult, learners' second language egos are sensitive, and teachers often spend too much time lecturing (Mazjub, Abu, 2010; Wang, 2020; Marquez, 2020). This research addresses this problem of limited speaking opportunities by narrowing in on effective pedagogy that is student-approved and has observable success by measuring student engagement. The purpose of this descriptive multiple-case study is to discover students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom.

Researcher Positionality

As mentioned in the introduction, I feel a personal connection to this research as it answers questions I developed during my time with several Emergent Bilingual students as an intern at the midsize suburban high school located in Central Texas. To best answer these questions, I am grateful to depend on the relationships I have established with these EBs to gain authentic interview conversations. I interviewed and observed one of the students I know and worked closely with the Emergent Bilingual coordinator to select two additional participants. My position in this study allowed me to give a voice to EB students so that they can share openly about successful teacher strategies, explain factors

that may be inhibiting their progress in the classroom, and speak personally about their learning process.

Additionally, I believe I bring a unique and relatable perspective to this study as I can relate well to the process of being a language learner. During my undergraduate studies at Baylor University, I studied abroad in Costa Rica for a month and was immersed in the Spanish language and in Spanish schools. Although I had some background knowledge of the language, I was able to experience learning a language through comprehensible input, familiar and repetitive vocabulary, and immersion in the culture. This trip allowed me to experience a taste of the world that Emergent Bilinguals experience daily at school. This researcher perspective allowed me to empathize with struggles of my students and helped me to understand the perspectives of these learners better.

The relationship I have previously established with an EB student and their teacher allowed me to gain access to my research site easily. My experience as a language learner abroad helped inform the scaffolding of my interview questions as well as creating a deeper sense of empathy with these students' learning processes. I have discussed my researcher positionality and I now turn to an explanation of the theoretical-conceptual framework application.

Theoretical-Conceptual Framework Application

I have selected to frame my study with Vygotsky's constructivism theory and Long's interaction approach. Emergent bilingual models such as the SIOP model and researchers' discussions emphasize the need for EB education to be interactive and meaningful, echoing Vygotsky's research that learning is a socially developed process

(Vogt, 2010; Lucas et. al, 2008; Vygotsky, 1986). Long's interaction approach values output, which supports my research questions about the types of instructional activities that produce the most speaking engagement from EB students (Long, 1996).

This framework has guided my research questions in this study because I consider the value of speaking skills in conversation with other language skills such as reading, writing, and listening. Both Vygotsky and Long value communication as a tool to develop and connect thoughts and as a method to show increased language competence (Vygotsky, 1986; Long, 1996). In addition to focusing my study on the value of speaking, these frameworks directed my thinking of the research questions when I considered the impact of instructional strategies on EBs.

The constructivist theory poses the social aspects of the classroom and communication at the center of a student's development and language learning (Vygotsky, 1986). Furthermore, the value of output, specifically considering peer interaction informs the way that I shape my observations of the classroom. For example, while a teacher may not appreciate too much side conversation during a lesson, though it is not well-timed, this type of communicative behavior is actually the type of output that should be valued in the development of Emergent Bilinguals' speaking ability.

These two frameworks have instructed my data collection and my data analysis as I am better informed of instructional strategies to look for and classroom environments to examine when considering the effectiveness of a regular subject teacher's approach to teaching EBs. I will evaluate whether or not the student has received ample social time such as group or pair work to further their development according to Vygotsky (1986). I will consider each instructional strategy's purpose and its connection to the EB student's

output with Long's interaction approach in mind. I will pay most attention to which types of strategies and activities promote the most output from students so that I can best inform teachers how to incorporate these strategies daily to benefit EBs.

Research Design and Rationale

The research design I have chosen is a descriptive multiple-case study. According to Yin, case study research is best applied when research addresses descriptive or explanatory questions (Yin, 2013). To be more specific, a descriptive case study is used to describe a particular phenomenon within its context and can be used to expand on a theme found by survey research (Yin, 2013).

My rationale for conducting a descriptive multiple-case study is situated in the fact that I examine the natural experiences of Emergent Bilingual students within their regular classroom environment. The descriptive approach that I take to data collection and data reporting allows me to provide a balance of researcher's voice and participants' voices representing the rich thick descriptive data that brings a depth of understanding to the participants' perspectives on best teaching and learning practices that promote speaking skills within the regular high school classroom.

Just as I was intentional in choosing a descriptive approach to this case study, the choice of structuring the participants as separate cases, or more precisely, multiple cases, allows me to compare and contrast the three participants' perspectives and experiences through individual within-case analysis and collective cross-case analysis. The focus of this study's problem and purpose are well-suited for a multiple-case study that includes several instrumental, bounded cases whose data provides an in-depth understanding of a phenomena taking place in a contemporary setting (Mills, 2010; Yin, 2014).

For the purpose of research, I wanted to gather multiple perspectives of an EB's classroom experiences with speaking activities. With this clearly identified purpose and the nature of the problem being studied, the choice of a descriptive multiple-case study perfectly fit the research design used in this study. The result of these methodological decisions is a study that provides rich, thick, descriptive data from multiple participants' perspectives and experiences. This study is bounded by a common phenomenon, analyzed through research-based theoretical lenses, and reported as a holistic account of Emergent Bilingual students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom.

Site Selection and Participant Sampling

I strategically chose a midsize suburban high school located in Central Texas as the site to conduct research. As a Baylor Intern and Teaching Associate during my undergraduate years, I worked alongside several great teachers and students at this school, several of whom were Emergent Bilingual students. It was here that I recognized a problem with EB education. These students are not receiving adequate speaking opportunities in their regular classrooms. The purpose of this study is to discover Emergent Bilingual students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom. I selected this research site because I am familiar with a few EBs by name and I know a few faculty members at this school. Nolen and Talbert (2011), qualitative researchers and educators, suggest that researchers know about their subject or topic before entering the setting, as qualitative researchers who have a broad theoretical knowledge are more likely to identify promising leads or emerging assertions with this background knowledge (2011). My background knowledge

of Emergent Bilingual education began at this school. After investigating this topic more thoroughly on my own, I felt ready to return and gather more data to fuel my understanding of these students' experiences and uncover what they personally suggest would be helpful in their regular classrooms to improve their speaking skills.

The sampling strategy I used to select my participants is the method of purposive sampling. This strategy is widely used because the researcher may select participants knowing they will provide information-rich cases that will result in an in-depth study (Lopez and Whitehead, 2012). I knew two, male Emergent Bilingual students well through my recent experience as an Intern at this high school. Although one student has since grown out of the language program, I worked with one student whom I had in class last year as an Intern. I used sound judgement to enlist the help of these students with my research. To obtain my second and third participant, I spoke with the EB teacher to choose two additional students at different levels of proficiency who speak different languages.

All three students were chosen based on their classification as an Emergent Bilingual and their willingness to speak knowledgeably about instructional strategies that help improve their speaking skills. I chose students with whom I have worked closely before and knew they would provide applicable, informative details about their unique and challenging experiences as an Emergent Bilingual (Creswell and Poth, 2018). The careful and deliberative application of purposive criteria-based sampling allowed me to meet the standards of trustworthiness (i.e., credibility, dependability, confirmability, transferability) and authenticity essential for a well-developed qualitative research design (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

Participants' Background Information

As discussed in the previous section, criteria-based purposive sampling was used to identify and select the three high school Emergent Bilingual students who represent the three cases for this study. To ensure the utmost care and protection of each of the participants in this study, pseudonyms were given to each participant and all ethical standards of research were applied to provided confidentiality to each of the participant cases.

As a measure of criteria for selection to add to the trustworthiness of the study, I considered the speaking proficiency level of each student, according to their TELPAS (Texas English Language Proficiency Assessment System) ranking. To obtain trustworthiness in this study, I chose students with different backgrounds and different speaking proficiency levels to exercise credibility, specifically the use of data triangulation as these three students presented different viewpoints (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Most relevant to the study, I obtained the students' speaking proficiency levels, which indicate their level of progress in the speaking domain within the English Language Learning program established by Texas. The beginner proficiency level is beginner, and the placements progress to intermediate, advanced, and advanced high. After students' surpass the TELPAS scores of an advanced high level, they test out of the program and no longer receive additional help with their language skills. The three students I have purposively selected vary in gender, race, TELPAS speaking proficiency level, and native language spoken.

The following participant case tables provide a brief demographic snapshot of each participant’s case. More details about each participant’s story, context, and situation will be provided in chapter four.

Table 3.1. Samuel’s Participant Case Table

Participant Case	Samuel
Age	16
Gender	Male
Race/Ethnicity	Hispanic, Puerto Rican
Native Language	Spanish
TELPAS Speaking Proficiency Level	Advanced

Table 3.2. Naomi’s Participant Case Table

Participant Case	Naomi
Age	16
Gender	Female
Race/Ethnicity	Asian, Unknown
Native Language	Vietnamese
Grade Level	Junior
TELPAS Speaking Proficiency Level	Intermediate

Table 3.3. Klaude’s Participant Case Table

Participant Case	Klaude
Age	15
Gender	Male
Race/Ethnicity	Black, Unknown
Native Language	French
Grade Level	Freshman
TELPAS Speaking Level	Beginner

As you can see, these students will present a level of diversity in their within-case analysis section. Now that I have discussed the purposive sampling methods used to obtain these three EBs, I move on to discuss the procedures to collect data.

Data Collection Procedures

Following the site selection and participant sampling procedures, careful planning and consideration took place before the data collection phases began. Each participant received a thorough explanation of the study and were recorded giving permission to proceed with the study and were informed they could withdraw at any time during the research study. Participants were also ensured that all “off the record” comments would remain confidential (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Once the participants were fully informed of the scope and sequence of the study, I collected data in three parts.

Semi- Structured Interview Protocol

For the first phase of my study's data collection, I implemented an individual semi-structured interview with each student to identify student perspectives in their learning. Second, I used a student pre-observation and post-observation questionnaire to aid in the trustworthiness of my study (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Third, I observed students in their classrooms to collect data about the types of instructional strategies that prove most effective in producing students' speaking engagement.

All phases of data collection included protocols that guided the semi-structured interviews, student questionnaires, and participant observations used in this study. All research design choices were directly aligned with the purpose of the study and the study's two primary research questions. For example, to address my first research question, "*What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?*" I conducted a ten-question semi-structured interview with the three high school Emergent Bilingual students. These interviews allowed me to gain each student's personal perspective about ways that their classroom teacher's instruction has benefitted and can continue to benefit their speaking skills. I recorded and transcribed each student's interview to identify findings within each student's data (e.g., within-case analysis) as well as across all of the participants' data (e.g., cross-case analysis).

The interview protocol developed for this study included ten interview questions that are aligned with the variables being measured in research question one. The interview protocol is provided below to offer a more focused perspective on the scope and sequence of the questions asked of all participants. Table 3.4 Interview Question,

Research Question, and Theoretical Framework Congruence, provides a snapshot of information that demonstrates the congruence between the study's interview questions, research questions, and theoretical frameworks.

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

1. Which class is your favorite?
2. Why is this class your favorite?
3. Which class do you feel like you learn the most in?
4. Why do you think you learn the most in this class?
5. What are some of the best ways that your teacher can help you?
6. How do you like to learn new vocabulary words?
7. Do you feel comfortable speaking in your regular classes? Why or why not?
8. What would encourage you to speak in class more?
9. When you do speak in class, why do you practice speaking?
 - Working with a partner
 - A teacher is talking to you
 - You have a question
 - You are participating in an activity (a game, a read-aloud)
 - Talking to a friend
10. What do you wish your teachers knew about you?

Table 3.4. Interview Question, Research Question, and Theoretical Framework Congruence

Interview Questions	Primary Research Question Addressed	Application to Theoretical Framework
1. Which class is your favorite? 2. Why is this class your favorite?	What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?	Constructivism is an effective method to producing necessary output to improve students' speaking skills, but what do students find enjoyable that is related to these theories? Enjoyability is related to comfort and a student must be comfortable before engaging in speaking.

(continued)

Interview Questions	Primary Research Question Addressed	Application to Theoretical Framework
3. Which class do you feel like you learn the most in? 4. Why do you think you learn the most in this class?	What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?	Constructivism and output are researched, effective ways of increasing students' speaking skills, but are the best classes employing these theories? In students' experiences, what makes a learning environment effective?
5. What are some of the best ways that your teacher can help you? 6. How do you like to learn new vocabulary words?	What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?	Do students perceive constructivist elements as an effective way of learning?
7. Do you feel comfortable speaking in your regular classes? Why or why not? 8. What would encourage you to speak in class more?	What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?	What can teachers do to effectively make a student feel comfortable enough to produce more output?
9. When you do speak in class, why do you practice speaking? - Working with a partner - A teacher is talking to you - You have a question - You are participating in an activity (a game, a read-aloud) - Talking to a friend	What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?	Which constructivist elements are most effective in producing output in the students' experiences?

(continued)

Interview Questions	Primary Research Question Addressed	Application to Theoretical Framework
10. What do you wish your teachers knew about you?	What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?	Are there other instructional activities related to constructivism or output that teachers can use to help?

It is important to note that the development and implementation of the interview protocol was grounded and guided by qualitative research methods represented in the qualitative research literature. For example, Jacob and Ferguson (2012) recommend that interview questions should be guided by research, stated as open-ended questions, and begin with the basics. Furthermore, as one of the leading language acquisition frameworks, the Sheltered Instructional Observation Protocol (SIOP) model and other research in EB education suggests, I provided scaffolding and comprehensible input to the ways in which I conducted all interviews (Echevarria, 2010).

On the first day of scheduled interviews with each participant, I introduced myself, clearly explained the purpose of the research, and distributed consent forms with the assistance of the EB coordinator and Professional Development Site Coordinator. I translated each document to the student's native language and gave them a copy of the same document in English so that they could refer to both languages. To scaffold instruction concerning the students' interview, I gave them a translated list of interview questions with the questions also stated in English two days ahead of the actual interview. This timeline allowed students to glance over the questions and think about their answers before I spoke with them more deeply about this subject. I also added pictures to their

copy as a way to offer comprehensible input in addition to my explanation of each document.

For each day that I conducted interviews, I provided each student necessary accommodations and greeted them with a “hello and good morning” in their native language. I used Google Translate to communicate that they were always encouraged to speak however they felt most comfortable, either in their native language or in English. I read each question slowly and pointed to appropriate pictures, giving students time to reread the question I asked on the document that I translated to their native language. I aimed to ensure the students’ comfortability above all else. I learned and used phrases in each of the student’s native languages such as, “Great,” “Thank you,” “Okay, good idea,” to remind students that I cared about their answers and appreciated their time. I recorded the interview and later transcribed each discussion.

Pre and Post Questionnaire Protocol

The second phase of my study’s data collection used a pre-and post-instructional strategy questionnaire that assessed (i) the Emergent Bilingual students’ perceptions of their speaking skills in various areas prior to exposure and to best practice instructional strategies and (ii) their perceptions of whether they believe their speaking skills had increased after exposure to the instructional strategies used in a regular high school classroom. This additional step of using the student pre-post questionnaire allowed me to obtain data about the students’ self-assessment of their speaking abilities before I observed their participation in the classroom. Additionally, I used the students’ post-observation questionnaire to compare the notes I made regarding my assessment of the students’ perceived increase in speaking skill abilities.

The pre- and post-questionnaires were an essential data collection protocol that provided more data that informed the analysis and interpretation of results. While the interview and observation protocols were the primary sources of data collection for the study, the questionnaire allowed me to capture data that would not be available to me using these two primary methods of data collection. For example, because I observed students once a week, there were four days during the week that I would not be present to observe many of the instructional strategies being used to increase the students' speaking skills. Simply put, I would miss important data that may very well inform my study's results. Realizing this potential gap in the data collection cycle, early in the development of my study's data collection plan, I chose to use the pre and post-questionnaire that would allow me to obtain data from each of the student participants based upon their experiences with and perceptions of the effectiveness of the instructional strategies in facilitating the development of their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom.

The questionnaire that was used in this multiple descriptive case study was developed from a 2017 study in Malaysia that assessed the effectiveness of oral communication strategies used to develop language learners' strategic competence (Kuen et. al, 2017). After reviewing the fidelity of Kuen, et al. data collection and data analysis protocols, I determined that the assessment scale used to evaluate the effectiveness of oral communication strategies with a Malaysian participant sample would effectively measure a similar relationship between the instructional strategies used in a regular high school classroom (observation and interview data) and each Emergent Bilingual student's perception of whether their verbal language skills had improved as a result of the

instructional strategies (questionnaire and interview data) used in a regular high school classroom. To ensure that the Emergent Bilingual students participating in this study were able to accurately compare and contrast their pre-observation questionnaire responses to their post-observation questionnaire responses, each EB student was provided a copy of their original questionnaire responses to facilitate accuracy in comparing and contrasting their pre and post responses.

Figure 3.1 represents the pre and post questionnaire that used a modified assessment scale developed by Kuen, et al. (2017).

The questionnaire is formatted as follows:

Student Name: _____
 Class to be Observed: _____

Circle which number represents how you feel about your speaking ability in _____'s class.

1. Speaking confidence to others

1 = I do not feel confident to speak in front of others.

5 = I feel VERY confident speaking in front of others.

1 2 3 4 5

2. Fluency of speaking

1 = I always have errors when I speak.

5 = I rarely have errors when I speak.

1 2 3 4 5

3. Vocabulary

1 = I do not know very many English words yet.

5 = I know A LOT of English words.

1 2 3 4 5

4. Enjoyment of speaking English

1 = I do not enjoy speaking English.

5 = I enjoy speaking English very much.

1 2 3 4 5

Figure 3.1. Student Pre- and Post-Observation Questionnaire

The third phase of my study's data collection involved observations of each of the three Emergent Bilingual students in their regular high school classroom. Just as the semi-structured interview protocol was most closely aligned with research question one, the observation protocol was designed to answer my second research question, What type of instructional strategies best promote opportunities for high school Emergent Bilingual student engagement, specifically to improve the student's speaking ability? As previously noted, all sampling, data collection, and data analysis protocols were designed to align with the purpose of the study and to facilitate the operationalization of the research questions posed in this descriptive multiple case study.

Once a week over a span of two months, I spent one period each week, totaling three period observations in a week, observing and recording meticulous fieldnotes focusing on the instructional strategies used by the teacher and the student's verbal engagement in response to the instruction. The observation protocol allowed me to efficiently and effectively observe both the teacher's instructional actions and the student's learning responses during a one-hour class period over a two-month timeframe. Throughout the two months, I observed and recorded in my fieldnotes multiple styles and types of instructional strategies employed by the teacher in a regular high school classroom.

Methods for Recording Observation Data

The design of the observation protocol included designated spaces to record student learning responses and teacher instructional actions. In the teachers' classrooms, I anticipated multiple instructional methods would be used. Along with recording the observed pedagogies, I also made notes on what purpose the instructional strategy served

in relation to language acquisition and student speaking engagement skills; the frequency of verbal engagement by the Emerging Bilingual students; and the level of speaking skills exhibited by the EB student in response to the teacher's instructional strategies.

It is important to note that my review of research literature informed and guided my observations and fieldnotes. For example, when observing the teachers' choice and use of instructional strategies, I would frequently refer to the research literature to help me identify a particular instructional strategy being used and also to guide my fieldnotes in recording the types of learning responses that should be prompted by the instructional strategies. Throughout the Chapter Four Results discussions, I frequently reference and explain the types of instructional strategies and activities that I observed in the classroom and based upon Emergent Bilingual research literature, whether these teaching strategies are considered best practice in increasing the speaking skills of EB students (Dong 2019; Kayi, 2006; Gantenhammer, 2015; Ferlazzo and Sypniewski, 2018; Mohr and Mohr, 2007).

Table 3.5 offers an example of the type of observation fieldnote-table that I used to record the type of instructional strategies being used by the teachers and the learning responses exhibited by the EB students in their regular high school classroom.

Table 3.5. Data Collection Table for Instructional Strategies Used and Speaking Engagement Results

Type of Instructional Strategy Observed	How This Strategy Is Used	Level of Student Engagement (1-3 overall, 3 is highest form of engagement)	Student Speaking Time (record student responses and number of times they speak/activity)
Ex: Group work	Ex: Test review	Ex: 2, the student followed along with what classmates said, but contributed very little to group discussion	Ex: “Yes.” “What does this mean?”

The three data collection protocols described in detail throughout Chapter Four Methodology and Methods, were each selected based upon their appropriateness in collecting the types of data that answered the two primary research questions of this study. The semi-structured interview, questionnaire, and observation protocols facilitated the collection of rich, thick, and descriptive data that allowed me to effectively compare, contrast, and ultimately analyze the three Emergent Bilingual students perceptions of whether the instructional strategies being used in their regular high school classroom effectively promoted an increase in their speaking skills. It is this attention to detail in the design and implementation of this study’s descriptive multiple-case study research design that serves as evidence of methodological and data triangulation, and what Lincoln and Guba define as achieving Trustworthiness (1985). In the following sections I explain how this study achieved the measures of Trustworthiness in the methodology and methods implemented to meet the purpose of this study to discover Emergent Bilingual students’ perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom.

Judging the Fidelity and Trustworthiness of the Study

In the previous discussions regarding data collection protocols used in this study, I referenced the attention I gave to achieving Trustworthiness in the methodology and methods chosen for this study. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe Trustworthiness as credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability of the data collected and analyzed. According to Lincoln and Guba, these measures of Trustworthiness are achieved by triangulating the data through multiple forms of data collection and data analysis, and when appropriate different phases of purposive participant sampling. Creswell and Poth further suggest using the triangulation of data sources, methods, and even investigators as an additional technique to provide trustworthiness for a qualitative research design (2018).

Although I did not include an additional investigator (i.e., researcher) in this study as Creswell and Poth referenced, I did carefully follow the four tenants of Trustworthiness outlined by Lincoln and Guba. Drawing from the research of A.K. Shenton's seminal article, "Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects" (Shenton, 2004), the following discussion is offered as evidence of my intentional focus on meeting the standards of triangulation and tenets of trustworthiness in the design and implementation of this descriptive multiple case study that sought to discover Emergent Bilingual students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom.

Credibility

I ensured credibility, or internal validity, in the data collection protocols and the findings by sharing my interview and observation fieldnotes with students after transcribing the data so they could confirm that data depicted an accurate recounting of the discussions and observations. To establish a greater degree of confirmability, I also shared my observation notes with teachers after I observed each class to confirm that my observations of the instructional strategies used and speaking engagement produced was accurate. These efforts display the concepts of member checking and triangulation, which are elements of trustworthiness in qualitative research (Given, 2008; Salkind, 2010).

In addition to member checking my interview and observation notes, triangulation is used amongst the three types of data collection protocols I employ. The pre- and post-questionnaire identifies shortcomings from my weekly student observations. This questionnaire allowed students to identify their perceived growth in four areas of the speaking domain so that my notes do not misrepresent the students' success. The questionnaire also triangulated my data because it supported students' answers from their interview, addressing again their level of comfortability to speak aloud in class. Students must answer similar questions through verbal interaction and written interaction, which ensures that data I collect matches and accurately represents the students' voices. According to Guba, Brewer, and Hunter (1989), the use of different methods compensates for individual limitations I may face, so the use of three data collection protocols contributes to the trustworthiness of my study.

Transferability

Transferability is evident in this study because of the use of thick and rich data description that accurately details the discussions and observations to ensure that the study's findings can be transferred to similar contexts and situations (Ryle, 1949; Given, 2008). I consistently provide a) the location of the study, b) a profile of the students who contributed to this study, c) the data collection methods that were employed, d) the time period over which data was collected. This description and transparency of my study makes it possible for this study to be replicated elsewhere. It is my hope that this study, although only sharing from the perspectives of three students and their classroom experiences, can inform other regular subject or Emergent Bilingual teachers striving to improve their instructional practices or provide help specifically with an Emergent Bilingual's speaking skills.

Dependability

Like the tenet of credibility, the fidelity of the data are dependent upon the consistency of how I, the researcher, collected, analyzed, and reported the transcribed data and the care I took in representing data patterns revealed by this study. Consistency and care in data collection, analysis, transcription, and reporting are essential steps in achieving dependability of the data and the entire study. To verify the precision of my data collection and analysis, my thesis advisor reviewed my research plan prior to entering the field and ensured that the techniques of data collection and analysis I used were accurate and consistent (Given, 2008).

To further establish dependability in this study, I asked the Emergent Bilingual teacher represented in this study to review the data transcripts as an added layer of

dependability. Perhaps the most rigorous test of the dependability of this study was achieved through an inquiry audit (Given, 2008) performed by my thesis advisor who read through all drafts of this study, including data transcripts, to verify the consistency of my data collection and analysis methods and the reporting of the data from raw to finished form. An additional degree of dependability was also established when the members of my thesis committee read the penultimate draft of this thesis as part of the rigorous research review process required by my university.

Confirmability

Finally, my study achieved confirmability of the data, as well as the consistent and careful implementation of the data collection and data analysis methods, as all authorized parties involved in this study had full access to the interview and observation fieldnotes, questionnaire responses, audio recordings, and the multiple drafts of this thesis now presented in its final form. To confirm the accuracy and integrity of the data collected, analyzed, and reported, I performed member checking to ensure that all data were recorded and interpreted accurately and fairly (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). My fieldnotes were written in a straightforward, neutral, and factual manner and an audit trail detailing my observations and interpretations of the data was performed by the participants in this study and my thesis advisor (Korstjens and Moser, 2018). Finally, as previously discussed in the data collection section of this chapter, each student was provided their pre-questionnaire responses to assist in the comparison and contrast of their responses when completing their post-questionnaire. This simple, yet essential, step in the data collection process illustrates the importance of detail in designing and conducting a descriptive multiple case study or any qualitative research design.

Trustworthiness was achieved through the multiple stages of designing and conducting this study. Within each stage of the process, triangulation of the methods protocols (e.g., site selection, participant sampling, data collection, and data analysis) and the storage, transcription, and reporting of the data was accomplished. The four tenets of trustworthiness were fully integrated into the development and implementation of the study's research design. Through the triangulation of the study's methods, the four tenets of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability were interdependent variables in achieving the purpose of this descriptive multiple case study to discover Emergent Bilingual students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom. Now that I have shared how I took many measures to establish the trustworthiness of this study, I present a discussion of the data analysis procedures.

Data Analysis Procedures

Each phase of this descriptive multiple-case study was designed to be interconnected in order to establish methodological congruence. The establishment of methodological congruence becomes important when conducting a multiple case study where three separate cases must be considered independent studies when first selecting participants through purposive sampling and then collecting and analyzing the participants' data in the first phases of the study. At the same time, these cases are later examined across each other and are connected when moving into the second, and even third, phases of data analysis when the cases must be considered as a whole. The following description of the data analysis protocols used in this study provide detail on how each participant case was treated as a stand-alone study through the early stages of

data analysis and then brought together during the later stages of data analysis for the purpose of reporting emergent and overarching themes that are revealed through the data.

To accomplish both individual case and collective case data analysis, I turned to the Creswell Data Analysis Spiral to accurately analyze and interpret the narrative data collected through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires, and observations. I carefully followed each of the five steps of Creswell's Data Analysis Spiral, beginning at the top of the spiral and narrowing into detailed findings and implications reported in Chapter Four of this thesis. The following Figure 3.2 offers a visual overview of the Creswell Data Analysis Spiral that served as the framework for all data analysis protocols used in this study.

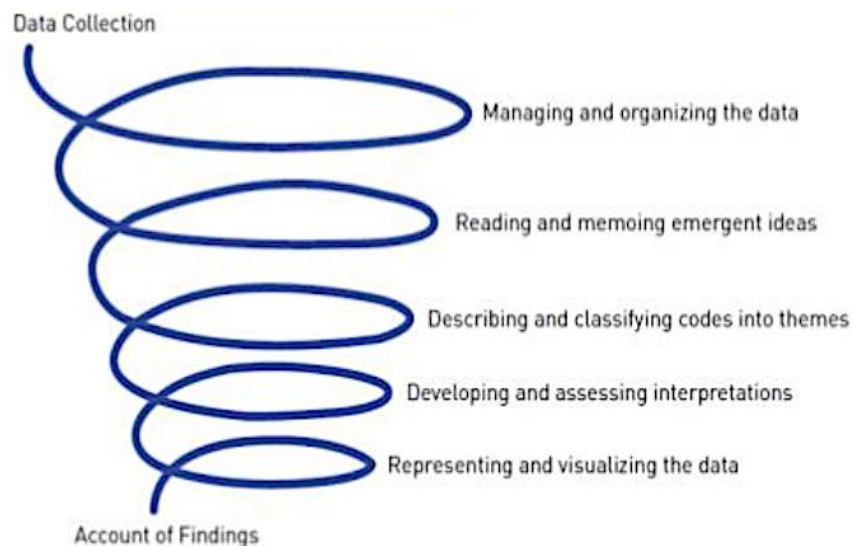


Figure 3.2. Creswell's Data Analysis Spiral

Pattern Matching-Coding-Categorization

During and after the data collection process, I initiated the first step of the Data Analysis Spiral as I managed, organized, and first separated the data into the three data collection protocol categories (i.e., interviews, questionnaires, and observations). I transcribed all interviews and even translated the participants' interviews where necessary. After the data were clearly organized, I began rereading and making initial memos in the margins of my interview and observation notes.

Pattern Matching and Within-Case Framework Analysis

Since the process of Pattern Matching continues throughout the entire qualitative data analysis process, I moved into the second step of the Data Analysis Spiral by refining my initial data codes and forming early-stage categories that might serve as an organizational structure for data clustering. It is at this second stage of reading and memoing emergent ideas that I initiated within-case framework analysis (Yin, 2017) which involved me focusing on each individual case's data to read through all data collection protocol transcripts and memo significant patterns of data. This process of memoing allowed me to individualize my focus on each case's data, organize and reorganize the data codes and categories, and apply the lenses of the theoretical frameworks used in this study for initial within-case framework analysis. This process of more advanced pattern matching and within-case framework analysis continued several rounds through each individual participant case.

Pattern Matching, Within-Case Framework Analysis, and Cross-Case Thematic Analysis

After identifying the initial memos that stood out because of their connections to the focus of this study, I followed the next steps of the spiral and classified the earlier codes into larger themes to identify larger statements that emerged out of these students' interviews and observations. Although steps three and four of Creswell's Data Analysis Spiral are separate functions within the qualitative data analysis process, I've combined these two steps of describing and classifying codes into themes and developing and assessing interpretations for the purposes of describing the data analysis protocol used in this study. As previously noted, the process of pattern matching is continual throughout qualitative data analysis and is a meticulous process of analysis and synthesis that requires an intentional formula of organizing, deconstructing, and reconstructing the data (Talbert & Sanguras, 2020).

In the third and fourth steps of the Data Analysis Spiral, I established solid categories based upon the consistency of the data codes and the application of the tenets of Vygotsky's *Theory of Constructivism* (1978) and Long's *Interactionist Approach* (1981) which were operationalized as the theoretical frameworks for this study. Within-case framework analysis continued through the application of the lenses of these frameworks which resulted in each case's data being categorized, analyzed, and interpreted. It is at this stage that the process of Cross-Case Thematic Analysis begins with the analysis of categorical data across all cases in search of patterns of data clusters that may be identified as overarching themes. I conducted several rounds of cross-case thematic analysis giving close attention to assessing the data clusters and emerging themes contained in the data collected through semi-structured interviews,

questionnaires, and observations. Throughout this process, I constantly referred back to my theoretical frameworks and research questions to ensure I was accurately applying the theoretical lenses to interpret the emerging data themes within the parameters of the purpose of my research.

Final Pattern Matching, Cross-Case Thematic Analysis, and Results Representation

The fifth step of Creswell's Data Analysis Spiral guided the final phases of the cross-case thematic analysis as emerging themes were established and confirmed by reviewing the early coding and categorization data patterns, the within-case framework analysis data patterns, and the emergence of data cluster patterns that would become emergent themes. After establishing that the emergent themes met the four tenets of data trustworthiness (e.g., credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability), I continued the process of refining the data. I examined examples of the EB students' narrative data excerpts to ensure that the data aligned with emergent themes derived from the within-case framework and cross-case thematic analyses protocols, and the conceptual and visual representation of the data in the tables and figures I developed that are represented in Chapter Four of this thesis.

Great care was taken in triangulating the data analysis process through the application of the multiple stages of individual and collective case analysis represented in the steps of Creswell's Data Analysis Spiral (Figure 3.2) and each phase of pattern matching, within-case framework analysis, and cross-case thematic analysis (Figure 3.3). Through triangulation of the data analysis protocols, congruence of applications of the theoretical frameworks as aligned with the research questions and overall purpose of this

study, methodological and data trustworthiness was achieved. This will become more evident in the representation and discussion of the data in Chapter Four.

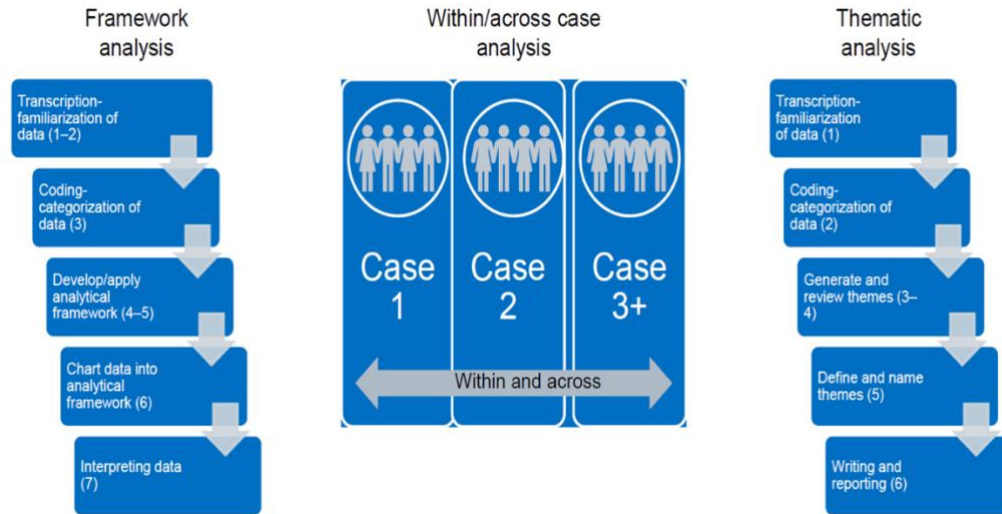


Figure 3.3. Case Analysis Framework

Summary of the Methodology and Methods

This methodology section has been a mouthful, but its extensiveness is used to achieve trustworthiness and obtain data that represents the EB students while answering the research questions well. I employ a descriptive multiple-case study to discover EB students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom. One student from the high school I interned at during my undergraduate experience was happy to come along for the ride! I used purposive sampling to obtain three EB students whom I interviewed, had complete pre and post-observation questionnaires, and observed once a week for two months. I ground my study in the theoretical framework of Vygotsky's *Constructivism Theory* (1978) and Long's

Interactionist Approach (1981), which I consistently apply to my pattern-matching analysis of each case.

To break it down simply, my study follows the steps of Creswell's Data Analysis Spiral. First, I organized the data. Second, I formed early-stage categories within individual cases. Third, I classified these categories into themes and began a cross-case analysis with emerging themes. As the last step of this process, I reviewed earlier coding patterns and double checked that narrative data within-case and across cases aligned with the themes I developed. This study achieves trustworthiness for the ways that I member check my information, provide thick and rich description for each case, and use the students' questionnaires to triangulate the data. Now that you know how I interpreted my long lists of notes, I explain significant findings that pave the way for the future of EB education in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results

Introduction

When I approached the Emergent Bilingual instructor at the midsize, suburban high school in Central Texas to explain my research interests, it was obvious that she was a bit frazzled and overwhelmed in her classroom. Her EB students were loudly laughing, drawing on the board, kicking their feet up on their desks, and showing each other videos on their phones. Less than half of them were sitting in their seats. She apologized for the chaos in her classroom but I was amazed! With her help, these students had created wonderful relationships with each other and felt comfortable in this classroom. The quiet, struggling Samuel I knew from my internship previously was most definitely NOT the same Samuel jumping over desks in an effort to make the students around him laugh. The chaos was great! It was evident that this teacher had constructed a buzzing community of learners by connecting students of different backgrounds and languages. Knowing this level of student flourishing can occur in an Emergent Bilingual classroom, I was all the more determined to discover EB students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom.

With consent from the Emergent Bilingual teacher and the students I researched, I began to collect data through individualized student interviews, pre- and post-observation questionnaires for self-assessment, and weekly observations of three Emergent Bilingual students. First, at the end of November, I conducted individualized student interviews and

gave them their pre- observation questionnaire on the same day. Next, I observed each student in one class period per week from the beginning of December to the end of January. After my observations were complete, in February, students completed their post-observation questionnaire.

With the data I have collected from each participant's case, I have closely analyzed and interpreted results following the steps of Creswell's Data Analysis Spiral, closely using the coding, categorizing, and thematizing process of pattern matching. I present my findings beginning with the participant's profile, exploring themes developed within this participant's case using student interview and observation data, and finally I draw connections to cited literature and discuss the case's connection to the theoretical framework. Throughout the discussion of results, my analysis focuses the data on answering the main research questions:

1. What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?
2. What type of instructional strategies best promote opportunities for high school Emergent Bilingual student engagement, specifically to improve the student's speaking ability?

At a glance, this chapter begins with within-case analysis through the case profile reports, moves into an overarching cross-case analysis of results, and ends with a conclusion section indicating a summary of all analysis of cases.

Case Profile Reports

Samuel

Samuel was eager to see a familiar face on campus and was so excited to talk with me. In just a year's time, he had grown out his curly hair and become much more self-

assured. It was obvious he was a leader and natural joker in his EB classroom, and I was happy to see he had made many friends in this class. Samuel is a sixteen-year-old junior who moved from Puerto Rico two years ago. His native language is Spanish, and he told me he only speaks Spanish at home, even with his younger brother who is a freshman currently at the same high school. Samuel's TELPAS scores from the previous years indicate he is at the intermediate level of mastering the English language, but most interestingly, Samuel scored "Advanced" for the speaking domain, while he scored Intermediate in reading, writing, and listening. He likely shows the most improvement in this domain because, as the data reveals, he is often found speaking with many of his classmates. It was a privilege to learn from Samuel in his interview and observe his learning in his Agricultural Mechanics class.

Samuel's Interview Results in Relation to Research Question 1

As mentioned in Chapter 3, student interviews were aimed at collecting data to answer the first research question, What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills? Samuel's interview yielded the following theme: Instructional activities that involve an EB student's interests are likely to produce more speaking engagement.

During several of his interview answers, Samuel spoke passionately about his love of sports, family connects, and time in Puerto Rico. When I asked Samuel about his favorite class, he immediately responded, "Can I say gym?" After I laughed and said yes and encouraged him to tell me why, he replied, "Because I like to run and do exercise. I'm from a family who plays basketball, soccer, and American football." Furthermore, when I asked what types of situations he felt like he spoke most in, in addition to saying

that he spoke most often with his friends, he added, “Also, when there are games I like to play and answer.” These responses demonstrate Samuel’s interest in speaking and participating in class when sports and games are at the center of instruction.

As Samuel discussed, sports are a focus of interest in his life. Second language acquisition researchers Asgari, Ketabi, and Amirian (2019) emphasize the importance that student interest plays in second language learning. Building upon Renninger’s second language acquisition study, it is noted that student interest in learning results in heightened levels of interaction and increases student concentration and motivation to learn (Asgari et.al, 2019; Renninger, 2000). John Eidswick’s (2010) studies in second language knowledge further insists on the importance of interest in second language learning and suggests that teachers should attempt to use attractive topics to design classroom activities. Sebastian shared that he was interested in sports and liked participating in game-like instruction. This supports the research discussed by the researchers above, and provides more evidence to the theme: Instructional activities that involve an EB student’s interests are likely to produce more speaking engagement.

Based on researched ideas and Samuel’s interview conversation, teachers should build relationships with their students to discover their interests and create instructional strategies that promote speaking engagement aimed at their student’s interests. Samuel’s interview supports ideas put forth in Vygotsky’s *Theory of Constructivism* (1978), used as a part of my theoretical framework. This theory speaks of the developmental stages a learner proceeds through as they are constructing understanding around a topic, and by connecting learning material to a student’s interests, content becomes comprehensible and learning is more applicable to the developmental stage of the student (Vygotsky,

1978; Vogt, 2010). If Samuel's teachers would integrate examples of sports and gamify their curriculum often, these steps would encourage Samuel to engage in speaking opportunities, thus supporting the second half of my theoretical framework, Long's *Interactionist Approach* (1987). Using instructional strategies targeted at Samuel's interests will allow him to more confidently and comfortably speak about a topic, thus promoting his speaking skills (Long, 1987).

Samuel's Observation Results in Relation to Research Question 2

I knew I needed to observe Samuel in his Agricultural Mechanics class because I had once substituted for this class and as opposed to his earlier state of isolation and disenchantment with learning in his English class, Samuel truly came alive in his Ag Mechanics class. He was always an active participant in class by participating in individual welding assignments and cleaning up with the class. When given the opportunity to choose his seat, he chose to sit near some other boys and made an effort to talk with them. As a total count for all weeks that I observed Samuel in this class, I recorded a total of approximately 33 different times he communicated with a peer, and approximately 18 different times he communicated with his teacher. As results indicate, Samuel had a special gift for teaching others how to weld, and he was often seen coaching others with their welding technique and operation of tools. It is important to note that I mainly observed Samuel inside the welding shop, which was always extremely noisy and chaotic. Despite these obstacles, Samuel provided many opportunities to track his speaking engagement through different instructional strategies that were applied, answering the second research question, What type of instructional strategies best promote opportunities for high school Emergent Bilingual student engagement,

specifically to improve the student's speaking ability? I developed the following significant themes related to Samuel's speaking engagement through individual observations:

- Community workstations increase the amount of EB student speaking engagement.
- EB students can engage in teaching exercises when they are able, to increase their speaking skills.

Samuel's case observations develop these two themes that demonstrate the role of cooperative learning in language development. Community workstations and student teaching exercises engage EBs in speaking exercises that promote their speaking skills. Calderon, Slavin, and Sánchez (2011) work to identify components of effective language instruction and find that cooperative learning activities gives students "regular opportunities to discuss the content and to use the language of the school in a safe context" (11). These instructional strategies that value small group communication are also supported by Vygotsky's Constructivist framework, which values instruction that emphasizes language development through social interactions (Vygotsky, 1978). Additionally, the framework of Long's Interactionist Approach is supported through the idea of these community workstations and teaching interactions because natural, student output is produced, thus strengthening EBs' speaking skills (Long, 1981).

Samuel's interview results have demonstrated themes of student interest in building EB speaking ability, as well as themes of cooperative learning through the observation of community workstations and student-teaching exercises. I now move into discussions to answer the research questions from Naomi's interview and observations.

Naomi

In my discussion with the Emergent Bilingual teacher in determining two other students to inform my research, she recommended Naomi, referring to her as the “mother” of the group. From my brief interactions with the class as a whole, I could see Naomi’s care for other students in the way that she helped others with their homework. During the interview process, it was clear she spent time thinking of the best way to answer each question before she shared her thoughts. She was a bit shy when I talked conversationally with her, but she was always engaged in class during observation days. Like Samuel, Naomi came to this high school two years ago, and she and her family speak Vietnamese. Naomi’s TELPAS scores indicate that she is an intermediate speaker. In fact, she scored at the intermediate level in all domain, including reading, writing, and listening. I learned quite a bit from Naomi’s thoughtful interview answers and observations in her Biology class.

Naomi’s Interview Results in Relation to Research Question 1

My interview with Naomi sought to capture her voice in answering my first research question, What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills? The following words from Naomi’s interview stuck with me as I began typing out my results chapter. She ended her interview by insisting that her teachers should, “Just speak English to me. Speak to me so I can learn more.” Her words echo throughout this study as teachers are encouraged to use intentional instructional strategies that produce speaking engagement from EB students. Furthermore, the following theme was

developed from Naomi's interview: Teachers can provide resources such as a dual language dictionary to promote speaking engagement for EB students.

To address Naomi's final comment, "Just speak English to me. Speak to me so I can learn more," I strongly support her claim using my theoretical framework of Long's *Interactionist Approach* (1981). Long argues for student engagement in output that negotiates for meaning, connects with learners' internal capacities, and productively uses output (Long, 1981; Hoang; Thu, 2009). Naomi's cry for her teachers to engage in more English conversations with her affirm Long's theory. Teacher-student conversations should be valued as they engage EBs in negotiating meaning, connect with learners' capacities, and use the language productively.

Furthermore, Naomi's response to my question, "What are some of the best ways that your teacher can help you?" reveals valuable implications for teachers that apply to ways they can increase EBs' speaking engagement. Naomi's first response thanked her teacher for giving her a Vietnamese/English dictionary. She further explained, "I learn new words from my dictionary, [especially when] I can't use Google Translate." This idea of providing students with vocabulary to build their speaking abilities is reinforced by August and Carlo's (2005) study that elaborates on the critical role of vocabulary for language learners. As students come to know literal word meanings, this increases their general word knowledge, eventually resulting in high speaking performances as word knowledge increases. Naomi was grateful her teacher had thought to give her this helpful resource, so schools should be providing dual language dictionaries and promoting their use as students begin to learn English.

Naomi's Observation Results in Relation to Research Question 2

I observed Naomi in her last class of the day, Biology. Her teacher immediately made an effort to tell me that she was one of the brightest students in the class and always produced top quality work. She wore her mask during my observations due to precautions taken during Covid-19, but it was usually pulled down beneath her mouth, so I could still obtain an approximate reading of her level of speaking engagement. When she was given the opportunity to choose her seat in class, she chose to sit by herself, thus cutting off more possibility for student interaction and speaking opportunities. As a total count for all of the weeks that I observed Naomi in this class, I recorded a total of approximately 2 different times she communicated with a peer, and approximately 16 different times she communicated with her teacher. However, it is important to note that because she is more reserved, she often nods to another student or to a yes/no question from her teacher rather than verbally speaking. After sorting through Naomi's observation data, I developed the following themes in consideration of her speaking engagement.

- EB students most often speak aloud in class when responding to a question posed to the whole class.
- When the teacher asks about a certain term and prefaces it with a verbal sentence stem such as, "This word starts with the letter a/b/c...", EB students are more likely to respond.

Naomi's observation notes and themes reveal simple instructional strategies that teachers can implement to boost their students' speaking engagement. Whole-class questions offer a low-stakes environment for Emergent Bilingual students because all students are expected to answer. Tsou's study on verbal participation of language

learning in the classroom indicates that turn-taking discussions can lead to anxiety in new speakers, whereas questions aimed at the entire class are more effective in producing learners' speaking engagement (2005). Plus, this instructional strategy of aiming questions at the entire class, in which all students respond, rather than singling out a student is supported by the theoretical framework of Long's Interactionist Approach (1981). As students feel comfortable producing more output, their speaking language competency will improve.

Furthermore, Naomi verbally responded often when her teacher prompted students to answer by framing the question with the phrase, "This word starts with the letter a/b/c...". Like this leading phrase, sentence stems are a common, effective way to engage students in language acquisition. (Vogt, 2010; Baylor, 2017). This phrase from Naomi's teacher can be seen as a way to verbally use sentence frames to encourage speaking engagement from EBs. This instructional strategy is also supported by Vygotsky's *Theory of Constructivism* (1978), because the idea of scaffolding the learning according to one's zone of proximal development can be seen in these verbal sentence stems.

Naomi's interview results showed the importance of teachers sharing valuable language tools such as a dual language dictionaries with EB students to promote vocabulary development, which further promotes speaking development. Her observation results indicated that questions posed to the whole-class invite EB students to share their answers aloud verbally in a low-stakes manner, as well as revealing the importance of verbal sentence stems. I now turn to the discussion of Klaude's interview and observation findings.

Klaude

The third student that the Emergent Bilingual teacher introduced me to was Klaude. He was the only student in her class that spoke French, and he was very quiet. This interview was a great exercise and a true testament to Klaude's willing character, because he is a Beginner student in all domains of his language acquisition of English. I encouraged him to speak both in English and French, and he frequently spoke French to answer a few of the interview questions. He was a shy student who had only a few months to reflect on his speaking experiences in an English-based classroom because he only recently moved to America. Most interestingly, during his first semester Klaude was enrolled in five learning language labs, meaning he learned each course's content from his iPad. He admitted it wasn't his preferred method of learning, and fortunately, his counselors transitioned his learning to the regular classroom during his second semester.

Klaude's Interview Results in Relation to Research Question 1

Klaude's interview revealed instructional strategies that teachers can implement to help EBs learn a concept in a new language. Although his comments rarely pinpointed speaking-specific instructional strategies, the integration of the above themes in language acquisition will likely spill over into an EB's speaking domain, as research indicates that listening and processing are foundational to developing speaking skills (Hinkel, 2012; Caruso et.al, 2017). I was able to translate Klaude's interview with help from a friend to obtain the following themes:

- EBs may better process the information that is taught when their teachers write notes or illustrate diagrams on the board.

- EBs may prefer learning new vocabulary words by watching television in English and listening to others speak.

Because he was shy and a beginner speaker, many of Klaude's interview responses, both in French and English, are short and to the point. When I asked what his teachers could do to help him more, he responded, "I prefer when they write on the whiteboard. It makes it easier to understand." Similarly, after I asked how Klaude enjoyed learning new vocabulary, he replied, "Listening... listening to television and people speaking. Pictures help." In his response, Klaude alludes to the importance of making content comprehensible, as discussed and developed by Stephen Krashen, a leading figure in second language acquisition theories. The use of comprehensible, pedagogical aids such as pictures and realia to support the content that is taught helps promote understanding and language acquisition knowledge (Krashen, 1982). The theoretical framework of Vygotsky's *Constructivist Theory* (1978) emphasizes Klaude's words. Through the depiction of ideas on a whiteboard and the pictures displayed with sounds from a television to accompany a teacher's instruction, learning is made more understandable and meaningful, supporting the idea that learning is an interactive process (Vygotsky, 1978, Mahn, 2012).

Klaude's Observation Results in Relation to Research Question 2

My observation data is lacking during Klaude's first semester, as he sat by himself and only interacted with his iPad in class to complete his learning lab courses. I was the only one who spoke to him during the first half of my observations. In fact, during my observations, I recorded that Klaude spoke approximately 0 times with his peers and approximately 3 times with his second semester, in-person teacher. Klaude

became noticeably more excited as his classes transitioned to in-person learning during his second semester. Though he was absent once, I was able to observe him twice in his “new” Spanish class. In this second semester Spanish class, he was surrounded by students, but I was discouraged to see that he did not interact with them once. I analyzed Klaude’s observation notes from both semesters to develop the following themes concerning an EB’s speaking engagement:

- EB students may feel more comfortable pointing to their iPad screen rather than verbally asking for help.
- EB students are more likely to engage in speaking by answering questions posed to the whole class.

Although Klaude had to adapt to a new learning environment during his second semester, this proved to be a greater learning experience because he was spoken to more often and given the opportunity to speak back. Because Klaude is a beginning speaker and still has a fragile learner ego, it is important to remember that he is likely in his silent period (Wang, 2020). Klaude’s thematic results reveal ways that beginning speakers can be presented with speaking engagement opportunities in a low-stakes environment, such as whole-class questions and teacher check-ins. Above all, it is important to help students like Klaude establish their comfortability in class, so that they can take the next step when they feel ready to speak aloud.

Klaude was the third and final student I interviewed and observed in an effort to answer the purpose of my study – to discover Emergent Bilingual students’ perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school

classroom. I now summarize interview and observation findings within each individual participant's case.

Within Case Analysis Summary

Interview Results in Relation to Research Question 1

Three high school Emergent Bilinguals were willing to share about their experiences and contribute to answering the research question, What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills? Samuel's interview revealed that teachers should strive to incorporate the interests of their students when creating instructional strategies to strengthen EB students' speaking skills, as supported by research on student interest in language acquisition (Asgari et.al, Renninger, 2000; Eidswick, 2010). Naomi's interview supported the theoretical framework of Long's *Interactionist Approach* (1981) through her wish for her teachers to speak more English to her so that her speaking skills would improve. Klaude's interview emphasized the importance of using comprehensible input in lessons, supporting Krashen's language acquisition theories (1982).

Observation Results in Relation to Research Question 2

To best answer my second research question, What type of instructional strategies best promote opportunities for high school Emergent Bilingual student engagement, specifically to improve the student's speaking ability? I observed three EB students in their classrooms. Observations of Samuel's in-class speaking engagement revealed that an EB student's speaking ability can be increased by implementing community

workstations and student-teaching opportunities. To support this observation, research in language development finds that cooperative learning activities give students a way to discuss new language in a safe context (Calderon et.al, 2011). Observations of Naomi in class highlighted ways to prompt verbal responses through whole-class questions and verbal sentence stems. This builds upon Long's *Interactionist Approach* (1981) because as students are placed in comfortable speaking situations, they are more likely to produce more output, which results in increased speaking skills. Observations of Klaude's in-class speaking engagement shed light on the verbal situations of a beginner speaker who is likely still in their silent period (Wang, 2020). His observations also revealed that low-stakes speaking engagement such as teacher check-ins are appropriate for his comfort level with speaking.

I have presented and summarized participants' within-case reports that analyze the significant interview and observation findings for each specific case. I now transition into discussing a cross-case analysis discussion.

Cross-Case Analysis of Interview Results Discussion

Samuel is boisterous and lovable in class. Naomi is the brilliant, quiet student that is usually one step ahead of all other students. Klaude is the shy but carefree student that is always listening to every word said in class. Although Samuel, Naomi, and Klaude are different students with different strengths and interests, their cross-case analysis yields significant findings that contribute to the second research question, *What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?* I now transition into the discussion of significant findings across cases of the three Emergent Bilingual students.

As I previously discussed in my Methodology section, I analyzed and interpreted results from these students' interviews individually at first, but then I zoomed out of individual cases and applied codes and created themes that were applicable to all three cases. The categorized codes listed below lead into larger discussions involving the theoretical framework and implications for classroom teachers' pedagogy. The categories I established in a cross-case analysis of the students' interview responses include:

- Comfortability with speaking in class

(on being asked, "Do you feel comfortable speaking in your classes?") Samuel: "I feel uncomfortable. I don't like it." Naomi: "No. They ask me the questions but I say 'slower.'" Klaude: "Only in gym. Not in other class."

- Relationship with teacher

(on being asked, "Do you like your teachers?") Samuel: "Yes, they are very nice." Naomi: "Oh yes! They help me to study." Klaude: "Yes, yes."

- Speaking engagement in partner versus group work

(on being asked, "Do you talk in groups? Do you prefer partner or group work?") Samuel: "No. Normally I just wait for them. I do what they give me. I like working with someone who can speak the same language as me or someone with patience." Naomi: "Very little, because they talk, so I just...(no follow-up). I talk with friends so I like partners." Klaude: "I like alone so I can concentrate better. Or partners."

- Teacher's speaking engagement with student

(comments throughout interview) Samuel: "When my teachers use conversation words and use translations, I like that." Naomi: "Just speak to me so I can learn more."

Klaude (on being asked 1. if his teachers talked to him a lot and 2. If he wished his teachers spoke to him more): “Yes and no. No.”

- The role of translations

(on being asked about some of the best ways a teacher can help) Samuel: “Like right now, you gave me the questions in English and Spanish so I can learn from both.”

Naomi: “When I study in Mrs. Hollar’s class she translates Vietnamese for me. I like that!” Klaude: I prefer to communicate using my tablet.”

An elaboration on these categories reveals larger themes in my research for sharing these students’ voices in their learning. These themes include the following findings, in relation to the categories mentioned above:

- Students do not currently feel comfortable speaking in class because they cannot process responses in English quickly enough and feel pressured to speak correctly.
- All students admitted to liking their teachers a lot, which equated to feelings of wanting to perform better for their teacher and engage in practicing their speaking skills though it is often difficult.
- Students engage in speaking more often in partner work compared to group work. In group work, students wait for others in their group to do the work and they do not contribute to the conversation because there is no need and the other students often speak too quickly to allow adequate processing time.
- Students preferred to practice speaking by answering questions from their teacher (rather than initiating conversation).

- Students found it helpful to use Google Translate at times and prefer when their work is given to them in their native language as well as English.

One student voiced her appreciation for the English-Vietnamese dictionary she was given by her teacher and explained that she uses it often.

Applying the Theoretical Framework to the Cross-Case Analysis

First, I consider the interview results in conversation with Vygotsky's constructivism theory. I rely on two core ideas of constructivism in this analysis. I examine the ways that these students actively participate in exchanges between themselves and others, in which participation in the learning process occurs by using speech, memory, or writing (Vygotsky, 1986; Sanders and Welk, 2005). Constructivism supports the idea that Emergent Bilinguals will best grasp mastery of speech in English through meaningful, interactive activities (Vygotsky, 1986; Mahn, 2012). In investigating the influence of constructivist theories on the students' perceived and voiced speaking engagement in class, I find that this theory greatly supported the ways in which students shared that they practiced their speaking skills.

The role of constructivism comes into play as students shared that they perceive they speak most when answering questions from a teacher or participating in partner work. Each of these activities serve as an exchange that uses speech and memory with another person to recall constructs of English and put new learning into practice. In the eyes of the students I interviewed, these are situations that are comfortable ways to practice strengthening their speaking skills. Although group work also serves an interplay with others that relies on speech and memory, students felt more pressure in these circumstances and also felt absent from the conversations taking place. This is important

to note. Although group work upholds constructivist ideals, Emergent Bilingual students are easily excluded from main conversations. As teachers incorporate ideas of constructivism in their classroom aimed at strengthening Emergent Bilinguals' speaking skills, direct questions and partner work, in addition to conversational peer talk are most effective according to student interviews.

Second, I consider the role of Long's interactionist approach, specifically the idea of output, in conversation with the student interview findings. Simply put, this framework supports the idea that the more the students have opportunities to practice speaking, their ability to speak the language will increase (Long, 1996). Student interviews identified that often they did not feel comfortable speaking in class, so this serves as a barrier to improving these students' speaking skills. However, as teachers strive to create a welcoming low-stakes environment for producing output among Emergent Bilingual students, they should also keep in mind that these student interviews revealed, again, that most output naturally occurs when answering direct questions from the teacher (aimed at the entire class or individual questions) and when engaging in partner work. With this information in mind, teachers can strive to create a classroom in which they frame their direct instruction with questions, sit these students next to a partner, and allow time for students to check-in with their friends and exercise conversational speech.

The following congruence table, Table 4.1, illustrates my above notes concerning the cross-case analysis in conversation with my theoretical framework to answer my first research question, *What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking skills?*

The cross-case analysis discussion pertaining to the interview results I have discussed highlights that students are not comfortable speaking in their classes, emphasizing the need for teachers to take measures to promote EB students' comfortability. Furthermore, the students' relationships with their teachers were impactful and motivated their speaking performance. As revealed in this discussion, it is also important for teachers to utilize partner work to promote speaking engagement and pose questions to their students often, as this is a preferred method of speaking. Lastly, translations such as Google Translate and dual language dictionaries aid the development of students' output. I now transition into the discussion of the cross-case analysis regarding the students' observation results.

Table 4.1. Codes, Themes, and the Application of the Theoretical Framework for Cross Case Analysis Interview Results Congruence

Code Determined from Cross-Case Analysis (Interviews)	Theme Determined from Cross-Case Analysis	Application to Theoretical Framework
Comfortability with speaking in class	Students do not currently feel comfortable speaking in class because they cannot process responses in English quickly enough and feel pressured to speak correctly.	<u>In order for</u> Vygotsky's constructivism and output to occur, teachers must take measures to ensure their students' level of comfortability.
Relationship with teacher	All students admitted to liking their teachers a lot, which equated to feelings of wanting to perform better for their teacher and engage in practicing their speaking skills though it is often difficult.	Teachers must work to establish open, foundational relationships with their students so that students are encouraged to produce output and participate in activities that exercise Vygotsky's constructivist theories. (continued)

Code Determined from Cross-Case Analysis (Interviews)	Theme Determined from Cross-Case Analysis	Application to Theoretical Framework
Speaking engagement in partner versus group work	Students engage in speaking more often in partner work compared to group work. In group work, students wait for others in their group to do the work and they do not contribute to the conversation because there is no need and the other students often speak too quickly to allow adequate processing time.	Although Vygotsky's constructivist theories are effective, students consistently share that partner work is more effective than group work in producing output.
Teacher's speaking engagement with student	Students preferred to practice speaking by answering questions from their teacher (rather than initiating conversation).	When teachers want students to produce output, teachers should ask students questions that require more than a yes/no answer.
The role of translations	Students found it helpful to use Google Translate at times and prefer when their work is given to them in their native language as well as English. One student voiced her appreciation for the English-Vietnamese dictionary she was given by her teacher and explained that she uses it often.	Translations and translation resources aid the development of students' output.

The cross-case analysis discussion pertaining to the interview results I have discussed highlights that students are not comfortable speaking in their classes, emphasizing the need for teachers to take measures to promote EB students' comfortability. Furthermore, the students' relationships with their teachers were impactful and motivated their speaking performance. As revealed in this discussion, it is also important for teachers to utilize partner work to promote speaking engagement and

pose questions to their students often, as this is a preferred method of speaking. Lastly, translations such as Google Translate and dual language dictionaries aid the development of students' output. I now transition into the discussion of the cross-case analysis regarding the students' observation results.

Cross-Case Analysis of Observation Results Discussion

I now examine significant findings across cases from the data collected in the students' classroom observations to best answer the question, *What type of instructional strategies best promote opportunities for high school Emergent Bilingual student engagement, specifically to improve the student's speaking ability?*

As I previously discussed in my Methodology section, I analyzed and interpreted results from these students' observations individually at first, but then looked at the larger picture and applied codes and created themes that were applicable to all three cases. The categorized codes listed below lead into larger discussions involving the theoretical framework and implications for classroom teachers' pedagogy. The themes I established in a cross-case analysis of the students' observations include:

- Student speaking engagement varies depending on their TELPAS proficiency level
- Students are more likely to engage in speaking when they are seated next to others
- Student speaking engagement varies depending on student personality
- Individual student check-ins serve as an effective way to produce speaking engagement
- Nodding and hand signal responses often replace a verbal answer from a student

To address the first two thematic statements, here is a chart that depicts the students' speaking engagement during my weekly observations. As you can see, the higher the proficiency level within the speaking domain, the more speaking is produced with the teacher and peers. It is also worth noting that Samuel was always seated next to others, giving him more opportunities to speak with others, whereas both of the other students were only surrounded by other students for one semester.

Table 4.2. Speaking Engagement Based on Student Proficiency Level Congruence

Student Name	Student Proficiency Level in Speaking Domain	# of times student spoke to teacher	# of times student spoke to a peer	Seated next to other students?
Samuel	Advanced	18	33	Yes
Naomi	Intermediate	16	2	Yes during 1 st semester, No during 2 nd semester
Klaude	Beginner	3	0	No during 1 st semester, Yes during 2 nd semester

Teacher implications that arise out of these observations include the need to place Emergent Bilingual students near others in the class. Samuel also spoke more often because he had established more confidence and knew more vocabulary as an Advanced speaker, but he was also in a class that offered community workstations. These collaborative spaces were crucial in producing higher levels of speaking engagement and would work well in any classroom to facilitate collaboration and output. To address the third theme in the same vein of this conversation, it is important to recognize that each

individual Emergent Bilingual student has a different personality. Naomi and Klaude were not only in the beginning stages of their speaking ability, they were also shy students who were new and relatively new to the school district. Regardless, I affirm that teachers should intentionally place EB students next to other classmates.

In each of the student's cases, one-on-one conversations never failed to produce output. An instructional strategy that can be incorporated to increase EBs' speaking engagement is to hold a brief conversation that uses questions such as, "How are you today?", "Is there anything unclear about today's lesson?", or "How can I help you with this?" Because the final theme asserts that sometimes a verbal response is replaced with a nod or hand signal, asking open-ended but relatively simple questions can produce more speaking engagement from students. These cases proved that students are willing to talk individually with their teacher, and it may be the only speaking engagement they receive at school depending on their proficiency level with speaking and their personality. Because each student that I observed had frequent check-ins with their teacher, this likely contributed to the students' interview responses explaining that they all liked their teachers. Individual student check-ins serve many great purposes for Emergent Bilingual students.

Applying the Theoretical Framework to Observation Results

I consider the ways that Vygotsky's constructivism theory and Long's output theory support and frame the student observation findings. I use the following congruence table to illustrate the ways in which the theoretical framework supported my observations of students' speaking engagement in their classrooms.

Table 4.3. Themes and the Application of the Theoretical Framework for Cross-Case Analysis Observation Results Congruence

Theme Determined from Cross-Case Analysis (Observations)	Application to Theoretical Framework
Student speaking engagement varies depending on their TELPAS proficiency level.	Teachers must be aware of the student's speaking proficiency level and provide on-level constructivist strategies to produce output. Expected output will vary based on a student's proficiency level.
Students are more likely to engage in speaking when they are seated next to others.	Constructivist activities that target interaction and social exchange are important for increasing a student's output.
Student speaking engagement varies depending on student personality.	Constructivist theories are effective in producing output most times, but student personality also plays a role in the level of speaking engagement.
Individual student check-ins serve as an effective way to produce speaking engagement.	Constructivist theories do not always have to occur with other students. Teachers can facilitate conversations with students to produce output.
Nodding and hand signal responses often replace a verbal answer from a student.	Asking open-ended questions will likely produce more output from students.

As depicted above, constructivist theories lie at the heart of producing speaking engagement because of its emphasis on the social-cognitive development. In the case of producing output from beginner, shy students, meaningful interaction with the teacher is crucial to build a strong relationship in which the student begins to feel comfortable sharing aloud. Seating students next to others also supports constructivist theories as students will more often be engaged in learning process that occur using speech or memory, which are foundational exercises to language acquisition (Vygotsky, 1986; Sanders and Welk, 2005).

Combined Summary of Student Interview and Observation Results

I was grateful to interview and observe Samuel, Naomi, and Klaude to best answer the research questions,

1. What instructional strategies do high school Emergent Bilingual students perceive to be most helpful in the regular classroom to improve their speaking abilities?
2. What type of instructional strategies best promote opportunities for high school Emergent Bilingual student engagement, specifically to improve the student's speaking ability?

Beginning with the within-case interview analyses, Samuel's interview revealed that individual student interests should be considered when considering ways to increase a student's speaking engagement. This finding supports research that emphasizes the importance of student interest in learning to increase student concentration and motivation (Asggari et.al, 2019; Renninger, 2000). Naomi's interview reinforced the main idea proposed by the second half of my theoretical framework, *Long's Interactionist Approach* (1981), through her comment, "Just speak English to me." Like Long's output theory asserts, speech production results in an increase of speaking skills. Furthermore, Klaude's interview revealed that students recognize they can benefit from comprehensible input, an idea put forth by second language acquisition researcher, Stephen Krashen (1982).

Next, the within-case observation analyses revealed a variety of results that helped inform types of instructional strategies that promote EB's speaking engagement. First, Samuel's observation results demonstrated the effectiveness of community workstations and student-teaching exercises to the development of a student's speaking engagement. Research that supports these findings values the implementation of

cooperative learning activities because small-group communication is valued, thus increasing an EB's speaking engagement (Calderon et.al, 2011; Vygotsky, 1978). Naomi's observations proved that effective ways to produce output include posing questions to the whole class and prompting students to speak through the use of verbal sentence stems such as, "This word starts with the letter a/b/c...". These effective instructional strategies stem from the idea of Long's Interactionist Approach (1981) theory of output. As learners feel comfortable speaking in certain types of situations, their output increases, thus increasing their speaking competency (Long, 1981). Finally, Klaude's observational results focused on ways to provide low-stakes speech opportunities for beginning students to include individual student check-ins, so that teachers are conscious of the student's silent period and learner ego (Wang, 2020).

Transitioning to themes and discussions within cross-case analyses, interview findings across cases revealed that generally, students are not comfortable speaking in their regular classes, which emphasizes the need for teachers to take measures to promote EB students' comfortability. Teachers' relationships with students were rated positively and contributed to the level of student achievement. Furthermore, each student explained that they are more likely to speak in partner work rather than group work, and would rather answer questions posed to them instead of initiating talk. These instructional strategies are informed by the theoretical framework of both Vygotsky's *Constructivist Theory* (1978) and Long's *Interactionist Approach* (1981) because partner work is a social, interactive process that develops a new language, and increases the student's production of output, resulting in stronger speaking skills. Lastly, the role of translations is crucial in the development of language acquisition.

Observation findings across cases revealed that students are more engaged in speaking based on their TELPAS speaking proficiency level and when seated near others. Instructional strategies that result in student output include individual student check-ins and asking open-ended questions. The theoretical framework of constructivism and output supported the observation findings because students spoke more often when engaged with other students.

I briefly mention that the student pre- and post- observation questionnaire served as a way to triangulate my study. My analysis of the students' responses in these questionnaires indicated that their interview discussions were supported strongly by their written responses to the questionnaire. All data was affirmed by the student questionnaire.

I have provided the overarching themes for the within-case analyses of the interview and observation results, as well as summarizing the themes for the cross-case analyses for both the interview and observation results. I now narrow in to discuss further implications of this study.

Implications of the Study

Throughout my experience working with EB students, I found that reading, writing, and listening skills were simple to exercise, but rarely would anyone make conversation with these students. Speaking is a foundational aspect to mastering a new language, but it is often disregarded and forgotten in public high school classrooms (Singh, 2015; Türkben, 2019). Based on my review of the literature and my experiences working with EBs, I contend that teachers need effective, interactive instructional strategies to strengthen and increase these students' speaking skills.

I embarked on this near 100 page journey of research by using a descriptive multiple-case study to discover Emergent Bilingual students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom. There is a need for this study as EB students' voices are almost never valued in their educational process, and their insights provided great implications for their teachers and all high school teachers. Furthermore, this study is vitally important for all educators to consider because Emergent Bilinguals comprise the fastest growing student population today (NCTE, 2008). With a growing percentage of EBs in a classroom, teachers must stay up to date on instructional strategies that can help these students succeed.

Current curriculum recognizes that EB students must advance to higher proficiency levels throughout the year so that their TELPAS score can improve and students can eventually test out of the program. But making these gains with students is not always explained as clearly for teachers. I propose a course or a section of a course should be added to undergraduate teaching programs that gives aspiring teachers a first-hand experience with helping Emergent Bilingual students. Too often, these experiences place undergraduates in an Emergent Bilingual classroom, which is a great experience in learning instructional strategies to help these students, but gives a false idea of how to help these students in the classroom they will actually be teaching in. Regular content teachers must do more to benefit, hear, and help their EB students.

In two of the three classrooms I observed, EB students sat alone. Teachers must be conscious about their seating charts and strategically place these students around others so that they can benefit from social interaction (Vygotsky, 1978). Furthermore, in addition to sitting alone, it was heartbreaking to see that Klaude was never greeted and

rarely even looked at by his teacher. These students cannot be slipping between the cracks. Professional development about creating speaking opportunities for these students is a way to call attention to the needs of these students. Principal observations on teacher effectiveness can look for ways that EBs are treated and valued, so that teachers can receive feedback that these students need a caring teacher.

Curriculum must be changed to view these students as an addition, rather than a hindrance to education. Evolutions in terminology are making gains in this area, but teacher instructional strategies can always be perfected and strengthened to emphasize EB students' speaking engagement. In considering the term "Emergent Bilingual" are schools really taking steps to preserve and value a student's native language? EB is a great, additive term, but this study could evolve into discovering ways that these students' native voices need to be valued more. The bottom line remains to be this: Emergent Bilinguals must always remain a top priority in educational conversations today.

Conclusion

Samuel, Naomi, and Klaude are just three examples of students who need more speaking opportunities in their class. After identifying the lack of speaking opportunities within public high schools for Emergent Bilingual students, I made sure to include these students' voices in their education to discover EB students' perspectives on best practices to increase their speaking skills within the regular high school classroom. Personal student interviews and observations revealed that teacher relationships are important for student motivation, knowing students' interests are helpful in creating instructional activities to promote speaking engagement, and whole-class response questions are more

likely to lead to student output. When questioning the value of an instructional strategy to promote an EB's speaking engagement, consider the framework of Vygotsky's Constructivist Theory (1978) and Long's Interactionist Approach (1981). EB students need strategies that promote social interaction through meaningful, interactive activities, and strategies that will encourage them to speak, as output leads to the development of speech (Mahn, 2012; Long, 1981).

Taking steps to include the voice of an EB student is not a difficult task. Incorporating these practical instructional strategies as discussed throughout this study mainly require teacher knowledge and effort. Sit EB students next to another student so that they can exercise speaking skills in greetings and tasks. Get to know your EB. What do they like? How can you build this into a conversation or an activity so they can speak knowledgeably and comfortably about something they know? Value partner work over group work so that EBs will not be left out of the conversation and practice their skills one-on-one with another student. Check-in with these students often and pose questions that show you care. Pose whole-class response questions rather than turn-taking response questions so that an EB can say the correct vocabulary word along with the other students.

Language can open or close a door. Undergraduate education students, when designing a lesson plan, consider ways you can differentiate the lesson to promote an EB's speaking engagement. Teachers, pay attention to the strengths of your EB students and try to adhere to the instructional strategies listed plainly in the above paragraph. Principals, take a look at the level of engagement of an EB during your next classroom observation and find gentle ways to encourage your staff to use lessons and strategies that

apply to the needs of EBs. Curriculum designers, let us all view this growing population as an asset to the classroom and implement culturally responsive pedagogy that includes strategies aimed at EBs. To Emergent Bilinguals, continually look for ways to use your voice to open new doors.

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