Using the SIOP Instruction Model for Narrative Writing: A case study of a teacher's experience of using the model in a high school setting

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Abstract

Adopting a qualitative case study method, the purpose of this study is to contribute to the breadth of the existing literature to explore *how* a single English as a Second Language (ESL) teacher applies the Sheltered Instruction Observational Protocol (SIOP) model during a classroom unit on narrative writing. Analysis of a teacher interview, a classroom observation report, and three students' writing samples determined that the teacher conceptualized the model as a framework she could personalize with her creativity and knowledge of her students. Particularly, the teacher reported the best use of four SIOP components: building background, interaction, strategies, and assessment. Implications for classroom teaching include: the SIOP model is best interpreted as a guiding framework, direct instruction and teacher-student conferencing can work in conjunction with the principles of the SIOP framework, and the importance of teacher versatility in their instructional techniques to address student needs.

Keywords: Emergent Bilinguals; Case Study; High School; Narrative Writing; Sheltered Instruction

Introduction

Narrative writing is a skill that all students need to achieve at all grade levels (Common Core State Standards, 2017; WIDA, 2014), including those students who speak English as a second language (ESL). García (2009a) suggests using the term Emergent Bilinguals (henceforth, EBs) to reflect "the children's potential in developing their bilingualism; it does not suggest a limitation or a problem in

comparison to those who speak English" (p. 332). Narrative writing is difficult to teach because students are required to view, read, as well as express ideas, thoughts, and feelings both imaginatively and creatively. In the content instruction of English Language Arts, it is necessary to identify the language demands and obstacles of narrative writing for EB students to better support their development in this area.

Sheltered Instruction is an approach that integrates content and language. The goal of this approach is to address EB students' academic and language learning needs so that they acquire content and language in a more accessible way (Freeman & Freeman, 2014). Developed by a set of language education scholars in the early 2000s (Echevarria & Vogt, 2010; Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2008), Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP) is one of the popular models that falls under the Sheltered Instruction approach (Echevarria, Richards-Tutor, Canges, & Francis, 2011). Several research studies have addressed the effectiveness of implementing the SIOP model to facilitate EB students' learning in content and language (e.g., Echevarria, Richards-Tutor, Canges, & Francis, 2011; Short, Echevarria, & Richards-Tutor, 2011; Short & Himmel, 2013).

Many ESL teachers have adopted the model in their classrooms. The established studies on the SIOP model provide quantitative data demonstrating student improvement on assessment measures in content areas such as science and mathematics. There are at least two lines of inquiry that have been under-examined. One line of inquiry is into the teacher experience using the SIOP model. A second line of inquiry is the application of the SIOP model to content instruction of English Language Arts . To our knowledge, there are few studies that examine how the SIOP model interfaces with narrative writing. To this end, we developed a qualitative case study lens to examine how a single teacher in an ESL context utilized the SIOP model to serve EB students during a high school unit on narrative writing development.

Literature Review

The Language Demands of Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is a vital skill for EB students to acquire because it not only builds their motivation in the learning process, but it also sets a foundation for their acquisition of other types of writing (Fredricksen, Wilhelm, & Smith, 2012). Writers are expected to develop and follow the rules of language use when constructing a narrative piece. Such language use includes sentence structures, the use of various tense verbs, adverbs, proper nouns, and personal pronouns (Chin, 2000; Reid & Byrd, 1998). Using present participles is also a common strategy in narrative to make writing more descriptive (Stratford, 2001) but can be a challenge for EB students (Wong & Conley, 2016).

Narrative writing presents another layer of challenge to language learners, requiring them to use appropriate forms, organization, a variety of vocabulary, sentence structures, clear time sequence, and narrative strategies including dialogue and point of view (Olson, Scarcella, & Matuchniak, 2015). As such, the language demands of narrative writing are taxing for EB students. In addition, studies (e.g. Wong, Armento, & Staggard, 2015; Wong & Conley, 2016) indicate that EB students tend to have difficulty distinguishing between a summary and a narrative and that ample instruction on the differences between these genres is necessary. Successful narrative writing requires students to craft a story with a clear opening, climax, and resolution, which elaborates on character, event, or emotional arc. Thus, entering narrative worlds presented in English-language texts may take some adjustment for EB students. As García (2009a) and Valdés (1997) state, there are many factors beyond language acquisition that influence EB students' academic success, such as their affective needs (Doyle & Bramwell, 2006; Krashen, 1985). Therefore, they may need explicit support to connect a personal story, non-fictional tale, or a fictional yarn that is familiar to them with those that are not.

One technique to help teachers and students meet the language demand of narratives is to have a writing rubric that specifically targets those areas (Gottlieb, 2006; Peregoy & Boyle, 2013). Using the 6-Traits Writing Rubric, consisting of ideas, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions, is one way to assess narrative writing (Spandel, 2005). The categories and descriptors

in the rubric help teachers focus on specific areas of instruction and improvement while also serving as an effective tool for student self-assessment (Porath, 2010).

Sheltered Instruction Observation Protocol (SIOP)

As a sheltered instruction method, the SIOP model offers teachers a framework to integrate content and language instruction for EB students (Baker, 2011). Specifically, there are eight components of instruction according to the model. The eight components are: 1) lesson preparation, 2) building background knowledge, 3) comprehensible input, 4) strategies, 5) interaction, 6) practice and application, 7) lesson delivery, and 8) review and assessment (Echevarria, Vogt, & Short, 2017). The SIOP model allows teachers to plan and teach using a variety of techniques, including the use of EB students' dominant language to make content concepts and the target language accessible to them. SIOP's stance on this issue, along with leaders in the field of bilingual education including García (2009b), holds that student preferred language plays a supporting role in K-12 sheltered immersion environments.

Several studies have addressed the benefits of the model and how implementing it has helped EB students achieve higher scores in content and literacy assessment (Kareva & Echevarria, 2013). Other studies have also reported the effectiveness of the SIOP model by comparing the test scores of students who were taught under the SIOP model versus a traditional method (e.g., Echevarria, Richards-Tutor, Canges, & Francis, 2011; Short, Echevarria, & Richards-Tutor, 2011; Short & Himmel, 2013). For example, Echevarria et al. (2011) examined the effects of using the model to promote middle school EB students' academic language and content learning in science. Results showed that the students in the SIOP group outperformed those who were in the traditional classrooms in their multiple choice, vocabulary, reading, and writing test scores.

On the other hand, researchers began to question the effectiveness of the SIOP model as well as the validity and the reliability of the results of the studies above. Crawford and Reyes (2015) as well as Krashen (2013) challenge the studies supporting the model (e.g., Echevarria, Richards-Tutor, Canges, & Francis, 2011; Short, Echevarria, & Richards-Tutor, 2011; Short & Himmel, 2013) as not convincing in that they were unclear on how many of the participants were EBs

and how many of them were monolingual English speakers. These researchers also critique the model for its absence of additive schooling as well as cultural relevance and responsiveness. Finally, the What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) reports in their summary analysis that no existing studies of the SIOP model meet WWC research design standards. Therefore, the WWC is unable to draw any research based conclusions about the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of SIOP to improve outcomes in this area (What Works Clearinghouse, 2013).

Given the unique challenges of narrative writing for EB students and the conflicting research on the effectiveness of the model, we extend our research through a different methodological lens to examine how an ESL teacher implemented the model to support her EB students in a unit on narrative writing. We believe approaching the question through a qualitative lens that focuses on the teacher experience--with supporting evidence in student artifacts--sheds new light on how the SIOP supports instruction in the classroom setting, and thus serves continued sheltered instruction scholarship. As such, the purpose of this study was to adopt a case study design to qualitatively examine how an ESL teacher uses the SIOP model to facilitate EB student facility with narrative writing in the context of a high school ESL classroom. The following research question guided the present study:

> RQ: What insights can be drawn about how an ESL teacher utilizes the SIOP model components to support high school EB students' development of narrative writing skills?

Methods

Adopting the exploratory case study method (Yin, 2003) this study attempted to explore how an ESL teacher used the SIOP model to support her high school EB students in the context of an unit on narrative writing and how the model functions from the perspective of the ESL teacher.

Research context

The study took place at a public high school in the northeastern United States. The classroom was an ESL class with a total of seven intermediate level EB students who represented culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. The

class focused on developing students' academic language in the four modalities (reading, writing, speaking, and listening) through literacy content instruction. Each ESL class met for a 90-minute period daily. The study examined a unit on narrative writing in which students explored character point of view. The unit contained a 12-lesson segment in which the teacher of this study included all eight SIOP components in her instruction. The duration of the study lasted approximately two months. Over the 12-lesson learning segment, both application and lesson delivery from the SIOP components focused on the content and language objectives. The content objectives focused on 1) expanding character actions and thoughts with supporting details, 2) providing introduction and conclusion in the story, and 3) expanding character actions and thoughts with adjectives. The language objective focused on the students' ability to use present participles in their narrative. Table 2 outlines the activities and techniques implemented in each lesson and how the SIOP model components informed classroom activities and teacher instructional techniques.

Table 2. Outline of Activities and Techniques Implemented with Each SIOP Component during Each Lesson

Lessons	Activities/Techniques	Components of SIOP
Lesson 1	• Students wrote Essay 1	
Lesson 2	• Presented content objectives • Defined a narrative • Presented writing samples to students	• Lesson Preparation; Lesson delivery • Background Knowledge • Background Knowledge and Comprehensible input
Lesson 3	• Worksheet: Had students describe five life events at each instance, including dialogue, feelings, imagery, impact or reactions • Showed story excerpts • Class discussion on cultural aspects in the story	• Lesson Preparation; Background Knowledge; Comprehensible input; Practice and Application • Background Knowledge • Background Knowledge and Interaction
Lesson 4	• Anticipatory questions related to the story and students' personal thoughts • Step by step instruction of the learning task	• Background knowledge and Strategies • Comprehensible input
Lesson 5	• Discussions with peers and teacher about the character they selected • Wrote a narrative of the chosen character	• Lesson delivery; Interaction • Practice and Application

Lesson 6	• Teacher showed a quick demonstration on how to perform self-critique • Self-critique using guideline provided • Revised based on self-critique	• Comprehensible input • Lesson Preparation; Review and Assessment • Practice and Application
Lesson 7	• Teacher showed a quick demonstration on how to perform peer-critique • Peer-critique based on guideline provided • Revised based on peer-critique	• Comprehensible input • Lesson Preparation; Review and Assessment • Practice and Application
Lesson 8	• Introduced the grammar feature (language objective) • Explicit instruction on the grammar feature • Provided examples and scenarios on how to use the grammar feature • Used sentence frames based on students' personal experience	• Lesson Preparation; Lesson delivery • Lesson delivery • Comprehensible input • Practice and Application
Lesson 9	• One-on-one meetings with teacher, focusing on the grammar feature with scaffolding strategies based on individual needs	Interaction
Lesson 10	• One-on-one meetings with teacher, focusing on the grammar feature with scaffolding strategies based on individual needs	Interaction
Lesson 11	• One-on-one meetings with teacher, focusing on the grammar feature with scaffolding strategies based on individual needs	Interaction
Lesson 12	• Student wrote Essay 2	

Participants

Adopting convenience or availability sampling (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), writing samples of three EB students in the same ESL class and the teacher were selected for the study. The teacher, Jen (pseudonym), had been an ESL teacher at the high school level for over six years at the time of the study. She is a native speaker of English and speaks Spanish as her second language. Attaining a Master's degree in teaching with an ESL endorsement, Jen obtained knowledge in different second language acquisition theories and received training about various language teaching approaches and methods, including the SIOP model. The ESL endorsement program also provided her with many strategies for teaching content to EB students. Jen had also taken an intense course of study in writing effective SIOP lesson plans and incorporating strategies that develop learners' academic literacy. Jen explained although she had abundant training in SIOP, she had never

implemented the model solely in her classes prior to the study. Instead, she mainly focused on students' sentence structures through explicit instruction. Thus, she was interested in discovering if SIOP would benefit her students, and if so, how.

As mentioned above, there were seven students in the class originally, but only three of them were able to participate in the whole process with no absences or missing work. The three EB participants' writing samples were from Moon (10th grade), Sue (9th grade), and Mat (9th grade). They were from Ecuador, China, and Egypt respectively. Moon had been in the U.S. for seven years with a 4.2 WIDA proficiency level (similar to B2 in the Common European Framework or intermediate high level in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) while Sue and Mat had been in the U.S. for two years with a 3.5 WIDA proficiency level (similar to B1 in the Common European Framework or intermediate mid level in the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages) at the time of the study. The teacher reported that of the three student participants, Mat had refugee status. All names appearing in this study are pseudonyms. Table 1 shows the descriptions of these three student participants.

Table 1. Participants

Participants	Age	Grade	Years in the U.S.	Country of Origin	First Language	WIDA Proficiency Level	Formal Education in Home Country	Note about the Participants
Moon	17	11th	7	Ecuador	Spanish	4.2	Yes	• Lived with family in the U.S. • Enjoyed reading and was creative and motivated to learn • Struggled with sentence structures in writing
Mat	14	9th	2	Egypt	Arabic	3.5	Unknown	• Lived with aunt/uncle in the U.S. • Motivated to learn, but did not like to make mistakes • Refused to talk about family and life in home country even when asked • Refugee status
Sue	15	9th	2	China	Mandarin	3.5	Yes	• Lived with aunt in the U.S. • Motivated, hardworking, and creative • Did not volunteer to talk about her life in China • Struggled with run-on sentences

Researcher positionality

Each researcher brings their own positionality to the case study process (McKinley, 2017) so it is important to clarify each one's positionality in regard to the qualitative study. All three study authors have direct experience with the SIOP model in the context of teacher certification, but all wondered how it exactly works in the actual classroom. Of the three authors, two of them were teacher educators who teach graduate level courses in ESL methods including sheltered instruction approaches. Another author was a graduate student obtaining her graduate teaching degree and an endorsement in teaching ESL.

Data Collection

To support the validity of the findings, we adopted the triangulation method (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015) in the data collection process. The data for this study derive from: a) an one-on-one interview with the teacher, b) teacher reported classroom observations, and c) the three students' writing samples (Essay 1 and Essay 2) that were collected at the beginning and end of the learning segment. Below, we described the three data sources in detail.

One-on-One Interview

A semi-structured teacher interview was conducted by the first researcher in English within one month after the end of the SIOP learning segment. Interview questions, developed beforehand, addressed the following topics: 1) SIOP lesson delivery, 2) student writing development, 3) student engagement in SIOP instruction, and 4) teacher experience of adopting the SIOP model in this context. Appendix A contains sample questions from the interview. The interview lasted for approximately 90 minutes and was recorded and transcribed.

Teacher Reported Classroom Observations

Bolger, Davis, and Rafaeli (2003) describe journals as a valuable source of data collection. Therefore, Jen wrote a reflective journal entry after each of her lessons describing in detail a) her instruction, b) student reactions, and c) student writing performance. Her reflective journaling became teacher-reported classroom observations for the purpose of this study.

Students' Writing Samples

Prior to the study learning segment, the students read an excerpt from the story Run Away Home by Patricia McKissack as a class. After that, they were asked to select one of the main characters and write the story in narrative form from any point in time they chose (e.g., before the story occurred, during the storyline, or after the ending). They were also free to change elements of the story. The objective was for them to construct their own version of the story from the perspective of their chosen character. This piece of writing served as Essay 1 for the purpose of this study. Upon completion of the 12-lesson unit, the participants were asked to write a story about the same character based on what they had learned during the unit about narrative writing; this piece of writing served as Essay 2. The two writing samples were graded by the teacher using a 6+1 traits writing rubric: *Genre, Ideas/Content, Organization, Voice, Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Conventions*. Each trait was evaluated on a six-point scale. These two artifacts of student writing, Essay 1 and Essay 2, became data for this study showing student development towards the content and language objectives.

Data Analysis

Through ongoing and recursive analysis methods (Merriam, 1998) we, the researchers independently began the process by studying the data and summarizing the main points of our findings in relation to our research question. As a case study, our interest was in how the three forms of evidence combined together to develop an account of how Jen applied the SIOP model to the narrative writing unit. To support the credibility of the qualitative data analysis as a whole (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), we applied inter-rater examination to our analysis of all data available. Analyst differences were addressed by returning to the data for secondary analysis and discussion. We presented the results of the findings to Jen for verification to ensure validity (Maxwell, 2013).

Findings

The teacher interview provided insights into how Jen applied the SIOP model in the course of her unit on narrative writing. The rubric evaluations illustrated improvement towards the lesson objectives for all three students. Of the three

participants, Moon consistently scored the highest on the 6+1-trait writing rubric on Essay 1 (30 out of 42) and 2 (36 out of 42). Sue, on the other hand, showed the greatest improvement between Essay 1 (16 out of 42) and 2 (33 out of 42). Her Essay 2 was organized with clear order and structure, compared to her Essay 1 which had little organization to it. Her introduction and conclusion in Essay 2 also contained more supporting details over her first essay. The excerpts below show Sue's introduction in Essay 1 as compared to Essay 2.

Essay 1: "Every day Sky's family need go to the fields to work very hard they make was not much money, but can allows them to eat three meals for a day."

Essay 2: "Daily, Sky's family needed to go the fields to work very hard as they did not make much money; but it allowed them to eat three meals a day. They grew nutritious vegetables, such as tomatoes, cabbage, and carrots. They also grew some paddys. Each day, they just ate 2/3 food, because they didn't have enough, such as rice, or vegetables and a little meat."

In addition, Sue showed progress between Essay 1 and 2 in how vividly she described the personality of characters. For example, when describing the character's family, Sue simply stated in Essay 1 that Sky's family was poor but they were hard working. In comparison, she described in Essay 2 the unconditional love from Sky's parents by providing details to support the idea. She wrote,

Sky's mom said, Their enemy were find us, so you dad and me think let you go first, We will to pin down their, and delay some time to let you enter the train. Sky just go into the train don't say anything anymore; we love you, Sky, you should remember it..I love you, son.

Mat showed slight progress in word choice and organization between Essay 1 (14 out of 42) and Essay 2 (16 out of 42). Contrary to Essay 1 in which he repetitively used "so," "sad," and "happy" throughout, Mat expanded his adjectives to words such as "sorrowful", "dejected", and "mournful" in Essay 2. In terms of organization, Mat's Essay 2 was more coherent in that he made good use of transitional phrases, such as "A year from the day Sky came to the corssman" to show changing period. Although he was able to add minimal supporting details in Essay 2, both of Mat's essays were similar in characterization. In other words, his two writing samples were fairly identical and did not contain a great deal of narratives.

Jen agreed the SIOP model provided her a framework of what she needed to focus on in her lessons, yet it gave her a great deal of freedom to use various strategies to help students achieve different sets of required academic standards. In her words:

> *There's just so many [academic standards] sometimes. So, when I have to sit there and have to write it on my content objectives, it kind of like it tells me, okay, this is what we expect you to do and here's some pointers.*

Two of the elements of the model that guided Jen particularly in this learning segment were *Building Background Knowledge* and *Interaction*. She described her students as not having a strong background in dialects, Apache Indians, and colonization which were essential concepts for them to understand the story. As such, the model provided her a framework through which she could make sure the students understood those concepts. She stated,

> *Students were witness to authentic photographs of Plains Indians before their arrival to American boarding schools and afterwards. Introducing the culture and the history I think was really pivotal because they didn't have any other knowledge of that. And then explaining how dialect works and playing around with it.*

From the teacher reported classroom observations, Jen noted that she provided three anticipatory questions in lesson 4 for the students to consider for building background knowledge. The questions were: 1) Could anything change who you are at your core? 2) Do you think you could ever forget your native language? 3) Do you believe you could ever forget your family? These questions and the images generated a great deal of discussion: "At one point, students argued amongst themselves about whether or not one could truly forget who one was." Thus, this demonstrates that the component of *Interaction* supported the participants' understanding of new ideas thrust upon them during the *Building Background* phase.

While the model provided an outline for the teacher to plan her lessons, Jen believed that the strategies she used (self- and peer-critique, one-on-one meetings, and explicit instruction) during the lesson segment were more pivotal for the participants' progress. Guided by the component of *Assessment*, Jen explained that after grading the first essay, she realized that the participants' writing was not focused and organized at all. That was why she had to come up with self-critique

and peer-critique as a form of assessment to help the participants realize what they needed to improve. As noted from the observation, during the lesson delivery component, the students were asked to write a narrative of the chosen character, followed by self-critique using the guidelines provided. The self-assessment mainly focused on the students' opinion about their own writing and the sequence of events in the story. Next, the students performed peer-critique through which they shared their writing with a partner and provided feedback on each other's writing based on another set of guidelines given to them. The guidelines emphasized their understanding of their peers' characters, along with the use of supporting details and strategies, such as dialogue and imagery. Using the guidelines, Jen provided an example for the students of how to conduct self- and peer-assessment during the lesson segment. Jen recounted a self-critique exercise:

> *When they read…they couldn't follow their own train of thought. It wasn't until they were sitting there, forcefully having to read their own thing, then they say, Wait, wait. That doesn't make any sense. So, I think they're starting to realize with the self-critique.*

Then, the one-on-one meetings allowed her to focus on each student's needs which she found to be very effective. Jen said,

> *I saw a lot of improvement with that… and I want to give a little bit more of a voice to that and I think everybody needs it, especially when you are doing English or writing or something more in depth. So, one-on-one is always effective.*

When describing the participants' engagement during the lesson segment, Jen agreed that the three participants were all motivated to succeed, especially Moon and Sue. They had a strong desire to reach for creativity and they provided feedback to each other during peer critique. As the *Strategies* component suggests, Jen further stated that providing the participants the anticipatory questions was to jumpstart their thinking about their own reactions to the threat of identity loss that they could later transpose onto their character. For instance, Moon invoked the anticipatory questions provided by the instructor for Essay 2. By invoking the anticipatory questions provided by the teacher, Moon shows her awareness of the role writing strategies can play in her narrative writing. This connects directly to the SIOP component of *Strategies*. Moon not only wrote about the main character in the story, Sky, remembering his mother right up to the end of his life, but she also had the

character reaffirm his identity with his last breath: *In his mind the memory of his mother calling for him 'come boy', 'come' when in the last minutes of his life; he woke and with his last sigh said, 'I am Sky'.* This is further evidence of her developing ability to portray character point of view in complex ways using English.

Jen's language objective for the learning segment was for the participants to develop their use of present participle forms in their writing. Analysis of student writing samples found that the three students showed some improvement between Essay 1 and 2 in their use of present participles. To begin with Essay 1, only Moon attempted the present participle, while Mat and Sue did not. Moon attempted 5 present participles and used 3 correctly (60% accuracy). By the time the three students reached Essay 2, they were incorporating the grammar feature into their writing. Moon and Sue attempted to use the grammar feature in Essay 2, although they did not always do so accurately. For example, Moon integrated the present participle into her sentences a total of 11 times with 73% accuracy rate. On the other hand, Sue included the present participle a total of 5 times with 100% accuracy. Mat utilized the present participles in his second essay twice with an accuracy rate of 50%. When explaining why his two essays sounded somewhat identical, Jen explained that could be related to his personality of being rigid and how he was brought up. She explained,

> He wanted to do engineering and it's very exact…and he also had very, very strict guardians at home…there's no room for error. He'd give me something that was from the past that we had already said that he knew was correct.

Guided by the components of *Comprehensible Input, Practice and Application*, as well as *Lesson Delivery*, Jen considered in what ways the students would understand the language feature (i.e. present participles) and its application, as well as how she could deliver the instruction based on student ability and needs. Therefore, she decided to facilitate one-on-one conferences with students that included explicit instruction. In the classroom, Jen gave instruction on present participles using different scenarios and examples. Sentence frames were also offered to the students to complete based on their personal experience. Upon completion of this class activity, Jen conducted a one-on-one meeting with the students, provided scaffolding strategies based on each student's understanding of the targeted feature and their individual learning needs. For example, Jen pointed out some

sentences and asked the students to try to change them using the grammar feature. The students were able to ask questions and express concerns during the meeting.

When explaining what was effective in facilitating the student progress toward the language objective, Jen emphasized it was these two strategies of conferencing and explicit instruction during the learning segment. By conducting a one-on-one conference, she saw significant improvement in the participants' learning. She remarked, "At least they are thinking about it…that shows me they're paying attention." She also believed that explicit instruction was necessary in order to help the participants acquire accurate language use. During the one-on-one meetings, she sat with each student by giving them plenty of examples, working on one sentence at a time, and explicitly told them how they should change their verbs and sentences to present participles. She said explicit instruction was necessary because "it was an introduction, but I think there needs to be a lot of repetition. There probably should have been a lot more repetition on my end." Another reason why the teacher believed one-on-one meetings and explicit instruction were effective was because Moon and Sue still used present participles in their writing after the learning segment. She said, "Sue is stellar because she uses everything and…three lessons past and she'll use it again." In sum, the teacher believed that the model provided her an outline of what to include in the lessons, but her techniques used within the model were what facilitated the participants' acquisition of language.

Discussion

Although it may not be clear as to whether it was Jen's instructional decisions or the model that facilitated students' writing development in this learning segment, the data show that the model did assist her in deciding how to best help her students. This demonstrates that teachers' instructional decisions and knowledge about second language acquisition remain crucial factors to improve their teaching to meet the needs of their students, specifically EB students.

However, with a model that supports both second language acquisition and academic content needs for EB students, it benefits them greatly in the learning process. Implementing the SIOP model allowed the teacher to focus on important objectives of narrative writing and academic language in her instruction. Through the model, she was also able to use various strategies she deemed necessary to

facilitate the participants' learning of narrative writing. Below, we discuss how the SIOP model components facilitated, through the lens of the teacher, the participants' narrative writing and academic language development.

The component *Lesson Preparation* played an important role. With clear objectives, the teacher focused on helping the participants achieve the objectives through activities, discussions, as well as self- and peer-assessments. In the process, she emphasized the necessity of a multi-faceted approach to the task of understanding character perspective during narrative composition. An analysis of student's writing supports this view. Although Moon and Sue demonstrated a more significant improvement in narrative writing than Mat, all of the participants showed progress towards both the content and language objectives.

The findings showed that *Building Background, Interaction, Strategies, Assessment,* and *Practice* were beneficial to the participants' writing development. The *Interaction* component, employed at both the class level and the individual level, elicited clarification of their ideas and development of their storylines, which promoted equality of participation, as suggested by García (2009b). Because there are many aspects that impact EB students' academic success (García, 2009a; Valdés, 1997), with the SIOP model as a means of guidance, educators are able to hone in and use specific elements of the model to support EB students' learning and affective needs (Krashen, 1985), especially in complex genres such as narrative writing.

Our understanding of Jen's teaching practice carries implications for ESL instructors in similar teaching contexts. First, the findings underscore for practitioners that the SIOP model is best interpreted as a guiding framework and not a formulaic series of prescribed teacher steps. Jen demonstrated in multiple ways that she benefited from the general framework of SIOP but that she worked best as she adapted to what her EB students needed during the course of the narrative writing unit. A second implication that can be drawn from the findings is that direct instruction and teacher-student conferencing can work in conjunction with the over-arching principles of *Interaction* and *Practice/Application* that define the SIOP framework. We see this in Jen's practice of assessing student needs during the unit and adapting instructional tasks in response. A final implication that can

be drawn from our case study is for the importance of teacher versatility in their instructional techniques and their self-confidence to "leave the script" in an effort to address student needs in the classroom, no matter how unexpected.

Conclusion

This study provides a qualitative account of how an ESL teacher used the individual SIOP model components to support her EB students' development of narrative writing and language forms, such as present participles and thus makes a unique contribution to what is known in the literature about how sheltered instructional models work. The elements of *Lesson Preparation, Building Background Knowledge, Comprehensible Input*, and *Interaction* were vital in guiding the teacher to make instructional decisions according to the students' needs in this context.

Future research can address the limitations of the current study. First, we relied on the teacher's reflective journals as self-report classroom observations. Also, the three focus students represented very different levels of English language development and various first language backgrounds, which made it difficult to draw conclusions at the group-level. Thus, a similar study that includes systematic classroom observations by an individual external to the classroom and/ or a group of students who share in their English proficiency level or language backgrounds can provide further insight into how ESL teachers implement the SIOP model in their classrooms and student engagement. Additional studies are needed to capitalize on the research protocol followed in the current study.

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Appendix A. Sample Questions of the Teacher Interview

1. Can you describe your training in SIOP?
2. What narrative strategies did you focus on? Why did you pick these strategies?
3. What was your lesson planning process like? What did you consider?
4. Within the model, what methods did you utilize? How?
5. What worked and what didn't?
6. How was students engagement under the model?
7. Did they struggle during the process? How so? What made them struggle?
8. How did the model help the students learn narrative writing?
9. Did other factors other than the methods impact their progress?
10. Did you have any challenge using the methods/model? What were the challenges?
11. What was your overall view about the model?