Task Order 27
Study of Digital Learning Resources for Instructing English Learner Students

Task 4.4 (Part 8) Case Study — District Title III Director or Coordinator for English Learner (EL) Services Interview Protocol

July 11, 2016

Study of Digital Learning Resources for Instructing English Learner Students

Task 4.4 (Part 8) Case Study — District Title III Director or Coordinator for English Learner (EL) Services Protocol

Prepared by:

Philip Vahey
Daniela Torre
Kaily Yee
Savitha Moorthy
Kea Vogt
SRI International

Annette Zehler
Eva Chen
Jennifer Flynn
Karin Katterfeld
Adrienne von Glatz
Westat

Yesim Yilmazel-Sahin
OneWorld Linguistic Consulting, LLC

Study of Digital Learning Resources for Instructing English Learner Students

District Title III Director or Coordinator for English Learner (EL) Services

Interview Protocol

Our interview today focuses on how technology resources, or as we term them, Digital Learning Resources, or DLRs, are used in this district in instructing English learner, or EL, students. Please consider DLRs used in supporting EL students' learning of both language and academic content. We are interested in all of the different settings in which EL students are instructed, including both mainstream or general education classrooms as well as the instructional settings where EL specialist teachers work with EL students. We will also ask you some questions about general DLR use, so that we can understand the similarities and differences in the use of DLRs between in the EL and the general student populations.

Before we continue, I would like to review our consent form with you. [*Note to interviewer: Hand interviewee the consent form and highlight the following information: (1) the study team will protect or maintain confidentiality for data collected, except as required by law; (2) only the study team will have access to data with identifiable information; (3) responses will be aggregated; and (4) no individual will be identified by name in any reporting. After reviewing these highlights, please ask the respondent to read and sign the form before proceeding with the interview.*]

Definitions

Digital Learning Resources (DLRs) refer to individual applications, software, programs, websites, hardware, and other digital resources that engage students in learning activities and support students' learning goals. We have defined three categories of DLRs; individual DLRs from the different categories may be combined in a comprehensive package (what we call an "integrated DLR set"). In discussing DLRs with you, we are interested in the software or programs used for instruction; in addition, please indicate the hardware and infrastructure needed to support the use of a particular DLR.

English learner (EL) refers to students not born in the United States or students whose native language is other than English and students who come from non-English-dominant environments, whose skills in English are so limited that they derive little benefit from regular school instruction. "English learner" also refers to students who have no proficiency in English. *Note: If your district has an operational definition for EL students, then use your district's definition in responding.*

[*Note to interviewer: Hand interviewee the definitions sheet and briefly review the three categories of DLRs.*] Do you have any questions about these categories? We'll be using them in some of our questions in the interview today. Please feel free to refer to this sheet throughout the interview.

Background Questions

We'd like to start by learning a little bit about you and the context in which you work.

1. Tell us about your role and your responsibilities.

    a. How long have you been in your position?

    b. What is your background or experience in working with ELs?

c. Do you provide professional development (PD) for teachers, either mainstream teachers, EL specialists, or both? *[If yes]* Please describe it.

d. Does the PD that you provide address the use of DLRs? *[If yes]* Please describe it.

e. Does the PD address the use of DLRs with ELs? *[If yes]* Please describe it.

f. Do you assist the district in identifying DLRs for use with EL students? With non-EL students?

2. Could you characterize the EL population in your district? *(E.g., size, language groups, whether they are newcomer ELs or a long-term EL population, special challenges)*

a. Does your district use specific instructional programs or approaches to provide instruction to EL students in grades K–12? *(E.g., mainstream, pull-out, push-in, dual immersion, newcomer program) [If yes] Please describe it.*

3. Does the district have current or planned goals for using DRLs with ELs? For using DLRs with all students? [If yes] What are they?

a. Does it have specific goals for using DLRs to engage families of ELs? *[If yes]* What are they?

DLR Use With ELs

4. Has the district identified any DLRs for teachers to use specifically with ELs? *[If yes]* Which DLRs have been identified?

a. What purposes or goals do these DLRs address? *(E.g., specific content area learning, language development, social-emotional development)*

b. In your view, what features or functions of these DLRs make them useful for ELs? *(E.g., read aloud functions, translation, first language support)*

c. Are these DLRs intended for use with all ELs? Or are some DLRs specifically targeted to particular sub-groups of EL students? Are any of these DLRs also intended to be used with non-EL students as well?

d. Are these DLRs intended to be used by mainstream teachers, EL specialist teachers, or both?

5. Other than the DLRs purchased by the district, are you aware of other DLRs that schools or teachers use for supporting ELs? If so, what are they?

Identifying, Selecting, and Purchasing DLRs

6. Does the district have a specific process for identifying and selecting DLRs for use with ELs? *[If yes]* What is it?

a. *[If the district has a specific process in for identifying and selecting DLRs for use with ELs]* What characteristics, features, or functions does the district look for in choosing DLRs for EL students? *(E.g., practice, adaptive learning, translation, games or game-like elements, read-aloud)*

b. To what extent is this process similar to or different from how DLRs for general use are selected?

Professional Development and Support Around DLR Use With ELs

7. Does the district provide any professional development (PD) to teachers that focuses on the use of DLRs with EL students? *[If yes]* Please describe it.

[If the district provides PD to teachers focused on the use of DLRs with EL students, ask the following sub-questions; otherwise skip to the next question.]

    a.   Who provides the PD?

    b.   How frequently does the district offer this PD?

    c.   What topics does the PD cover?

    d.   Do mainstream teachers and EL specialist teachers receive different PD related to using DLRs with ELs? *[If yes]* Please describe any differences.

8. Apart from PD, does the district offer supports to teachers that focus on DLR use for ELs? *[E.g., coaching, technical assistance, IT support, other resources, etc.]*

    a.   Do mainstream teachers and EL specialist teachers receive different supports related to using DLRs for instruction? *[If yes]* Please describe any differences.

9. What additional PD or supports related to DLR use do you believe teachers of ELs need?

Barriers Related to the Use of DLRs With EL Students

10. Has the district encountered barriers that make it difficult for teachers to use DLRs with EL students? *[If yes]* Please describe these barriers.

(*E.g., Access to DLRs for EL students, access to PD around DLR use with EL students, difficulty in finding DLRs that EL students can use independently or that can challenge them appropriately, lack of alignment to ELs' needs, structural factors such as itinerant EL teachers who do not have a homeroom, teacher attitudes, inadequate connectivity or hardware*.)

    a.   Has the district been able to address these barriers? [I*f yes]* How has it done so?

Evaluation of DLR Use

11. How would you rate the success of DLRs being used in this district with ELs?

    a.   What do you consider the indicators of successful use?

    b.   What are the outcomes used to evaluate the use of DLRs with ELs?

    c.   In your view, what are the features or components of these DLRs that have made them useful for EL students?

12. Does your district have a process for evaluating the use of DLRs with ELs? *[If yes]* Please describe this process.

    a.   To what extent are you involved in this process?

    b.   How does this process inform or guide decision-making at the district about DLR use with ELs?

Gaps in DLRs

13. How could DLR be designed or used to better support the specific learning needs of EL students?

    a.   Are there any features or functions that you would like DLRs to include that would better support your ELs?

14. Are there lessons you have learned from using DLRs with ELs or supporting teachers in their use that you can share with other district administrators? If so, what are they?

This is the end of the interview.

Do you have anything to add regarding DLR use in your district or DLR use related to EL students?

Do you have any questions for us?

Thank you very much for your time.