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

Task 4.4 (Part 11) Case Study — School Principal Interview Protocol

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School Principal

Interview Protocol

Our interview today focuses on how technology resources, or as we term them, Digital Learning Resources, DLRs, are used in this school for 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. When answering questions, we would like you to think about how DLRs have been used for instruction with ELs in the current school year.

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 or 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, 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 position and experience.

    a. How long have you been principal at this school?

2. Please describe the EL population in this school. *(E.g., size, language groups, whether they are newcomer ELs or a long-term EL population, special challenges)*

a. Does your school provide services for EL students? *[If yes]* What services are provided? *(E.g., mainstream, ESL pull-out or push-in, dual immersion, newcomer program)*
b. From your perspective, how prepared are your teachers and staff in general to work with EL students?

3. What are your expectations for how teachers should use DLRs for instruction at your school?

a. Do you have different expectations for how teachers should use DLRs to teach ELs versus teaching students in general?
b. Has the school set goals related to how DLRs can be used to engage the families of ELs? *[If yes]* What are they?

4. How do you view the use of DLRs for instruction?

Use of DLRs

5. On the basis of your classroom observations, what proportion of your teachers use DLRs for instruction? [If any teachers use DLRs, proceed with the following questions; otherwise, skip to the next question.]

a. Are there specific DLRs that most of the teachers use? *[If yes]* Which ones are they?

b. Do teachers use some DLRs with their non-EL students that they do not typically use or that they use differently with their EL students (or vice versa)? If so, why?

6. Does your school or district require teachers to use specific DLRs as part of their instruction? *[If yes]* Which ones are they? How have teachers reacted to this requirement?

c. Are there any that the school or the district encourages teachers to use? *[If yes]* Which ones are they?

Barriers Related to the Use of DLRs With ELs

7. Is the school equipped to support the use of DLRs in classroom instruction? *(E.g., computers for students, internet connectivity)*

8. Does your school face barriers that affect the use of DLRs for teaching and learning?

a. Do different or additional barriers affect DLR use with EL students? Can you provide a specific example of what you view as a barrier related to using DLRs with EL students?

9. Are you aware of challenges that EL students face when using DLRs outside of the classroom? [*If yes*] Could you provide specific examples?

Identifying, Selecting, and Purchasing DLRs

10. Does your school use a specific process for identifying and selecting DLRs? *[If yes]* Please describe it.

[If the school has a process for identifying and selecting DLRs, proceed with the following questions; otherwise, skip to the next section.]

a. Who is involved in the process?

b. What characteristics, features, or functions does the school look for when choosing DLRs?

11. Does your process for identifying, selecting, or purchasing DLRs for EL students differ from your general process for purchasing DLRs? *[If yes]* Please describe this process?

a. What characteristics, features, or functions do you look for in choosing DLRs for EL students? *(E.g., practice, adaptive learning, translation, games or game-like elements, read-aloud)*

Evaluating the Use of DLRs With ELs

12. How would you rate the success of DLR use in your school for the instruction of students in general?

    a. What outcomes does the school use to evaluate DLR use?

    b. Are these or other DLRs being used successfully with ELs in particular? Why or why not?

    c. Are there any additional indicators of successful use of DLRs specifically with ELs students? *[If yes]* What are they?

    d. Are there features or components of these DLRs that you believe have made them useful for EL students?

Professional Development and Support Around DLR Use With ELs

13. Does your school offer professional development (PD) or support to teachers that focuses on using DLRs with students in general? *[If yes]* Please describe.

    [If the school offers PD or support for teachers, proceed with the following sub-questions; otherwise, skip to the next question.]

    a. Who provides this PD or support?

    b. How frequently does the school offer this PD or support?

    c. Is PD or support offered to teachers that specifically concerns the use of DLRs with ELs?

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

14. Are there systems or structures in place to facilitate teacher collaboration concerning the use of DLRs? *(E.g., during grade-level team/PLC/COP meeting) [If yes]* Please describe them.

15. Do you have suggestions for additional PD or supports that could be offered to teachers to help them use DLRs more effectively with ELs? *[If yes]* What are they?

Gaps in DLRs

16. How could DLRs be designed to support the specific learning needs of EL students better?

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

17. Are there lessons you have learned about using DLRs with ELs that you can share with other educators? *[If yes]* What are they?

This is the end of the interview.

Do you have anything to add regarding DLR use related to ELs or students in general?

Do you have any questions for us?

Thank you very much for your time.