The Effects of Using the Rosetta Stone Program to Advance Language
Skills in English as a Second Language Students

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Abstract

This proposal is to determine the effect of using the Rosetta Stone Program to advance the language skills of English as Second Language (ESL) students. Twenty 5th grade students will be used in this study. Ten students will participate in the Rosetta Stone Program, and ten students will serve as the control group. The experimental group will receive access to using the Rosetta Stone Program during their 5th grade year. A pretest and posttest will be given to all participants to measure growth in their language skills. The English Language Development Assessment will serve as a pre and post assessment.
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Students who come from other countries have a hard time adapting to our American Culture and find it hard to learn the English Language. As an English as a Second Language Teacher it is my job to find ways to make this transition easier.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this study is to determine the effect of using the Rosetta Stone Program to advance the language skills of ESL students.

**Review of Related Literature**

Rosetta Stone allows students to work independently at their own pace on language-skills development, while teachers are freed up to focus on interactive classroom activities, as stated in the Electronic Educational Report by Rosetta Stone communications director Duane Sider. Using the software program helps teachers meet the diverse needs of the classroom language learners who may have different learning styles or levels of fluency in their native language, he said. Rosetta Stone’s commitment is to immerse the student in the language being taught with an emphasis on speaking the language, Sider said. The program is built on easily recognizable images and real-life simulated conversations with speech recognition technology providing feedback and guiding pronunciation. (Electronic Educational Report 2009)

The Washington Elementary School (WESD) Phoenix and east Glendale, Arizona, began using the Rosetta Stone Classroom language-learning program in 2005 to help drive achievement and integrate its large population of non-English-speaking students into its education system. A year after introducing the program into all of the WESD's language lab computers, the language-learning solution was expanded to be made available on every computer in the school district.
Each year after introducing the program, students have experienced English-language gains, and the ESL programs have been able to increase their funding, staff and participation. (Technology & Learning 2009)

Jan. 20--The Rosetta Stone language learning program has helped millions of people in the U. S. master foreign languages from German and Japanese to Spanish and Swahili.

Advertisements for the program have touted how the government has used the program to orientate emissaries and federal agents assigned overseas.

Now Barbour County Primary School (BCPS) has also employed this renowned language learning tool to help Spanish speaking students learn to master English.

"Many of these students already know a little conversational English," said Susan Young, the librarian at BCPS. Young teaches students through the Rosetta Stone program at BCPS.

"It's the academics of English that they have trouble with," she added.

The Rosetta Stone program helps the students master areas in grammar, spelling and composition.

For example, first grader Yolanda Reyes was working on spelling and identifying sounds. When she logged into her program, the computer asked her to read out several numbers into the headset/microphone device attached to the computer.

Young says this indicated that she would be asked to read or pronounce words later on in her lesson that day.

Other students, such as Jose Gonzales, were not prompted to test their microphone. Instead, Gonzales had to match nouns with the appropriate tense verb as well as match the overall sentence with a picture.
Even if students aren't required to read aloud in the lesson, Young always encourages students to read their sentences aloud. (Woo 2009)

When teaching a foreign language, some teachers believe that total immersion in the language and culture of the language-speaking target country is the best way to learn. This approach has been a fairly popular one since World War II, and one which emphasizes quick acquisition of a language at a conversational level. Some of the CD-ROM-based foreign language tutorials focus more on building spoken and auditory vocabulary skills, while others approach instruction in a more comprehensive, if still not traditionally grammar-oriented manner. (Damarais, 1995)

The LPGA is adopting a policy that will require its member golfers to speak English or face suspension. All players who have been on the tour for two years could be suspended if they fail to pass an oral evaluation of their English proficiency starting at the end of the 2009 season. The tour announced the policy to its South Korean membership in a mandatory meeting Aug. 20 and has spoken to many players from other countries. The tour in 2007 established a program that includes tutoring services available to players and language-learning software from the Rosetta Stone Language Program. (Steve, LPGA)

Part of the camp's funding provided the Rosetta Stone English programs on computers in Heritage Park's activity center. The language program was intended to help the refugee women, who are often isolated. In African culture, the women often learn only a dialect while the men learn the dialect, a national language and sometimes French or another language. (Flowers, 2008) August, Carlo, Dressler and Snow (2005) also found that English language learners who experienced slow vocabulary development were less able to comprehend texts at the grade level than their English-only peers. Such students were likely to perform poorly on assessments in
these areas and were at risk of being diagnosed as learning disabled. The adoption of proficiency-based principles in L2 teaching does not mean using new methods of instruction, but rather providing maximum opportunities for students to perform communicative linguistic tasks in a variety of contexts and with a given degree of accuracy. Students need to internalize vocabulary in order to understand and access it effectively, and need to develop personalized vocabulary in order to talk about their own worlds (Glisan, 1988).

In addition, Adelson-Goldstein (1998) described the importance of developing ESL students’ active vocabulary, discussing active versus passive vocabulary, selection of active vocabulary for development, and vocabulary development and the communicative framework.

Wesche & Paribakht (1994) described a classification scheme developed to examine the effects of extensive reading on primary and second language vocabulary acquisition and reports on an experiment undertaken to test the model scheme. The classification scheme represents a hypothesized hierarchy of the degree and type of mental processing required by various kinds of vocabulary exercises. These categories include: (1) selective attention; (2) recognition; (3) manipulation; (4) interpretation; and (5) production. This hierarchy was tested in an ESL classroom by comparing the vocabulary gains of learners in a thematic reading program with those in the same reading program in which some readings were replaced by vocabulary enhancement activities. Results indicated that although both groups in the reading program experienced substantial gains in word knowledge, those performing vocabulary enhancement techniques along with reading activities learned more words and achieved greater depth in their knowledge of these words than those students exposed to extensive reading alone.
Hypothesis

It is hypothesized that the ESL students using the Rosetta Stone Program will score significantly higher than the ESL students who do not use the program with respect to language skills.

Operational Definitions

The English Language Development Assessment is an assessment that annually assesses English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension and is used to report annual progress or attainment of English proficiency for all students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) in kindergarten through grade 12. The ELDA is vertically linked across grade clusters and has five levels of performance descriptors ranging from level 1, which has a realistic definition of English proficiency for beginners, to level 5, which has a rigorous definition of full English proficiency. This is a practical measure of English proficiency as shown through its established reliability and validity.

Method

Research Design

This study will utilize the nonequivalent pretest posttest control group design. The independent variable will be the implementation of the Rosetta Stone Program to ESL students. The levels include Rosetta Stone and the control group. The dependent variable will be to advance the language skills of English as a Second Language Students.

Sample

A convenience sample of twenty ESL 5th grade students will be used for this study. Ten students will participate in the Rosetta Stone Program, and ten students will serve as the control group. The study will take place at a public elementary school serving students in Pre-K through
5th grade. All of the students who participate in this study are non-English speakers. The students in this study are 9-10 years old.

**Instrumentation**

The instrument used in this study is The English Language Development Assessment (ELDA). The ELDA is an assessment that annually assesses English proficiency in listening, speaking, reading, writing, and comprehension and to report annual progress or attainment of English proficiency for all students identified as limited English proficient (LEP) in kindergarten through grade 12. ELDA is vertically linked across grade clusters and has five levels of performance descriptors ranging from level 1, which has a realistic definition of English proficiency for beginners, to level 5, which has a rigorous definition of full English proficiency. This is a practical measure of English proficiency as shown through its established reliability and validity.

**Procedures**

Twenty 5th grade students will be used in this study. Ten students will participate in the Rosetta Stone Program, they will be given daily assignments that will be created based on their pretest results from the ELDA. The other ten students will not participate in the Rosetta Stone Program as the control group and will be instructed as usual. The Rosetta Stone program has been described to users in the following way: “Rosetta Course is the cornerstone of your experience as you learn a language. You will learn exclusively in your new language, without translation, quickly gaining the confidence to communicate. The Rosetta Stone immersion based learning method immediately teaches you to think in a new language by connecting words with vivid imagery in real-life contexts to convey meaning. Rosetta Course keeps track of your progress along the way and you can reinforce your learning on the go with the Audio Companion. Rosetta
Course is divided into units with Lessons and Focused Activities. Core Lessons will teach you your new language, while Focused Activities build skills and reinforce the language you've learned. At the end of each unit, a conversational Milestone prepares you for live practice in Rosetta Studio®. There are four core lessons and a Milestone within one unit. There are four units per level.” (Rosetta Stone, 1999-2014)

**Data Analysis**

In order to determine whether a statistically significant difference exists between ESL students using the Rosetta Stone Program and those who do not with respect to language skills the ELDA results will be analyzed using an independent t-test. The analysis of qualitative data will attempt to identify common themes that were observed in the data.
References


Rosetta Stone (1999-2014)


