

Integrating the Secondary School Foreign Language Classroom through Multiple Learning
Activities.

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Abstract

Foreign language teachers experience difficulties in teaching students with learning disabilities. The challenge is to teach students with and without disabilities in the same classroom while having no background knowledge of how to teach towards all these students. Through observations and interviews with two foreign language teachers, the use of a variety of methods can help teachers and students succeed. For student's success, foreign language teachers use many different strategies and assistance from special education teachers. The use of multiple learning activities in the classroom has shown that all students can learn a foreign language.

Introduction

Foreign language teachers often face the challenging task of teaching students with disabilities. This is a challenge for foreign language teachers because they were until recently not required to teach students with disabilities and often do not have a teacher's aide proficient enough to assist them. They also do not have the background teacher preparation to effectively teach students with disabilities.

I have been studying the German language since high school. I went on to pursue it in college and will soon have a teaching certificate to teach the language at the high school level. Looking back on my college education, I felt that I was not fully prepared to teach students with disabilities. I took one course that related to students with disabilities and the course was basically about the different disabilities, and not how to teach students with disabilities. I felt that having no real background information on teaching students with disabilities will make it a challenge for me when I obtain my teaching certificate and had my own classroom. This realization has led me to investigate how to integrate a foreign language classroom while maintaining the standards for all students. With the new laws and regulations, the jobs of foreign language teachers are becoming more difficult. Many foreign language teachers are unprepared when it comes to teaching students with disabilities, and often times there are no teacher's aides or teaching assistants in the foreign language classroom.

My overall goal for this study was to find ways to help foreign language teachers in the classroom, which is now being integrated with students with disabilities. I wanted to discover activities and ways of teaching that will include all students learning a foreign language, whether they are advanced or have a learning disability. I wanted to be able to help with the transition for teachers from a foreign language classroom which before had few students with minor learning

disabilities, to a new kind of classroom which will include students of all levels and abilities. My driving question was: how can I help with the transition of integrating students with disabilities into the foreign language classroom without holding the rest of the students behind?

Literature Review

In reviewing literature for this study, a few themes emerged: a) many other countries are already encouraging all students to learn a foreign language, b) using different activities helps students, and c) there is a difficulty learning a second language for anyone, not just those with disabilities. Many other countries are already encouraging all students to learn a foreign language. McColl (2005) argues that "...all young people in the European Union, whatever their disability, whether educated in mainstream or segregated schools/streams, have equal rights to foreign languages education" (p. 103). The purpose of McColl's (2005) was to justify why all students should be included into the foreign language classroom. While doing the research she uncovered many compelling facts about why all students should be included into all classrooms.

Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe stated that:

Language learning is a powerful tool for building tolerant, peaceful and inclusive multicultural societies. The experience of learning a new language helps to develop openness to other cultures and acceptance of different ways of life and beliefs. It raises awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and promotes tolerance of people with a different lifestyle. (McColl, 2005, p. 104)

This quote justifies the reason behind all students being integrated into the foreign language classroom. It gives a clear and concise rationale as to why students should be integrated into the foreign language classroom and why foreign language teachers should be overcome the difficulty they have to teach all students. All students should have the chance to learn a second language.

Using different activities helps students

Leons, Herbert, & Gobbo, (2009) explained the reason students have difficulty in learning a foreign language, is because of, “phonology, morphology, and syntax” (p. 43).

Weakness in phonology affects a student’s ability to process the sounds of the language. Weakness in morphology results in students having poor appreciation of word roots, tenses and inflections. Weakness in syntax means that students lack an understanding of grammar and how word order affects meaning.” (Leons et al., 2009, p. 43).

The study was geared towards Spanish as a second language college students with learning disabilities and took place for three years, from 1996-1999. At the end of the case study there were eight recommended practices to help teachers in a foreign language classroom engage and teach students with disabilities. Leons et al. (2009) recommended,

- 1) Make careful curricular choices; be conscious of pace.
- 2) Build in support for students with weak language processing.
- 3) Use multimodal (multisensory) teaching methods.
- 4) Structure activities for success.
- 5) Use instructional and assistive technology whenever appropriate.
- 6) Actively employ learning strategies in the classroom, help students become more strategic, and foster metacognition.
- 7) Provide one-on-one instruction and give students access to tutors.
- 8) Create a supportive in-class environment, encourage student-faculty contact, monitor affective issues, and make language learning fun.

Through using the eight recommended practices teachers in the foreign language classroom can eliminate difficulties teaching students with disabilities.

Encouraging students

By encouraging all students, you as a teacher are allowing those weaker students to come forward with what they need help on and therefore stopping them from falling through the cracks. “Young people need us to set the “do-able” tasks and to be prepared to provide whatever support they need to in order to experience themselves as successful learners etc. ” (Leons et al. , 2009, p. 44).

Foreign language educators need to support understanding the difficulties that students with learning disabilities and AD/HD face in order to create learning experiences that are structured for success and that do not create barriers to learning or unnecessary anxiety for the student. (Leons et al. , 2009, p. 44)

This study assisted my research because it gives very specific recommendations as to how to help students with disabilities in the foreign language classroom.

Multiple intelligences

Brualdi (1996) suggests that “Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences provides a theoretical foundation for recognizing the different abilities and talents of students.” (p. 4-5).

These seven intelligences are easily defined as,

- a) Linguistic Intelligence--involves having a mastery of language. Linguistic intelligence is an important factor when learning a foreign language for obvious reasons.
- b) Logical-Mathematical Intelligence--consists of the ability to detect patterns, reason deductively and think logically.
- c) Musical Intelligence--encompasses the capability to recognize and compose musical pitches, tones, and rhythms.

- d) Spatial Intelligence--gives one the ability to manipulate and create mental images in order to solve problems.
- e) Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence--is the ability to use one's mental abilities to coordinate one's own bodily movements.
- f) The Personal Intelligences--includes interpersonal feelings and intentions of others—and intrapersonal intelligence--the ability to understand one's own feelings and motivations.

Teaching towards the different learning styles or multiple intelligences can help students who learn in different ways than just through lectures. Teaching a foreign language is difficult and by using different methods such as verbal and bodily- kinesthetic can get the student's brains thinking in a more active manner. The whole idea behind teaching a foreign language is so that students can take that information and actively use it.

Activities for the classroom

Banks (2008) breaks down a variety of teaching styles and methods to use in the foreign language classroom to help students with disabilities. For example, “activities that strengthen the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence are: manipulatives; flashcards; dance; acting out an event (TPR); field trips; scavenger hunts; dialogues; and movement games like board races; vocabulary fly swatters; and Simon says” (Banks, 2008, p. 39).

It is clear from this review that there is a lack of information on students with learning disabilities in the foreign language classroom. Much of the research has been done in foreign countries and little is known about teaching students with disabilities at the secondary level in the United States. This study investigated how teachers in the foreign language classroom can effectively include students with disabilities.

Methodology

Sampling

Two foreign language teachers, one special education teacher and one student with a disability from a rural school in Central New York agreed to participate in the study.

Teacher Participants

G (German teacher)

The German teacher has been teaching for thirteen years and teaches seventh through ninth grade levels. In her classroom she has between fifteen and thirty students per class.

S (Spanish teacher)

The Spanish teacher has been teaching for over twenty years and only teaches seventh and eighth grade levels. She also has between fifteen and thirty students in each class.

P (Special education teacher)

The special education teacher has been teaching for six years at this school district and mainly deals with small groups or one on one instruction. She does not teach any core subjects but more so tutors the students she does have contact with.

The three teachers approved their participation in the study by signing an informed consent letter. In the letter I introduced myself and the study, giving the teachers a brief overview of the study. They were assured confidentiality and anonymity. They could also withdraw from the study without penalty. This letter allowed me to make observations in the teacher's classroom and use the information collected for my study, it also allowed me to interview the teachers and use their answers for my study as well (Appendix B).

Student participation

C (student with disability)

The student was a first year Spanish student. He was in seventh grade and had a passing average in the foreign language classroom. He signed and returned a consent form as well as a signed one from his parents/guardians (Appendix E, Appendix F). This was convenient sampling and therefore can not be generalized.

Students in the classroom were given a letter for themselves and their parents to introduce myself and the study, and to answer questions as to why I was in their classroom (Appendix C, Appendix D).

Instruments

I used interviews and observations as tools for collecting my data.

Observations: The observations focused on what activities the teachers were using in their classroom. Focusing on the activities gave this study an insight as to what the teachers use to help their students learn in the foreign language classroom. Going into the observations I did not have any predetermined information that I was looking for other than to observe each activity the teacher used for the specific topic of the day. Observations were made in four different classes and each class was observed twice.

Interviews: I was able to conduct interviews with the German teacher, a special education teacher, and one student. Each of these three interviews had different questions that guided it. (Appendix G, Appendix H, Appendix I). The questions focused on the foreign language classroom and what activities are being used to help students with disabilities. Other questions were focused on receiving help or assistance in the foreign language classroom. The main purpose of using interviews as an instrument in this study was to get more in depth answers from

people closely related to the foreign language classroom and students with disabilities in these classrooms.

Procedure

After being approved by the Human Subjects Committee (HSC) at SUNY-Oswego meetings were arranged with school administration to seek permission to continue with this research project. I met with the principals of both the middle school and high school to obtain permission to conduct research in their buildings. After permission was granted I emailed five foreign language teachers explaining my research and asking for permission to use their classrooms. Two of the five teachers responded positively and were given informed consent forms to sign.

The teachers were reminded that this was completely voluntary and that any information they shared would be kept completely confidential and their identity will be kept anonymous throughout my research. They were also reminded that they could withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. During this week three classes were observed, two German classes and one Spanish class. Each class period consists of eighty minutes of instructional time, and both teachers had specific activities for the students to do during the full eighty minutes.

The first class observed was a seventh grade Spanish classroom. There were eighteen students, one teacher and one teacher's aide in the classroom. The second class observed in this second week was a seventh grade German classroom with about 16 students and one teacher, no teacher's aide. The third class observed was another German classroom with about the same set up as the previous one.

During all six observations the focus was on the activities used by the teachers for the topic they were teaching at the time. There were no checklists for these observations; what was

recorded in these observations were just the activities; I was not looking for certain ones or any specific technique used by the teachers.

Also during this second week, two interviews were conducted. The first one was with the German teacher and the second with the special education teacher. During these interviews I started out with the predetermined questions in Appendix G and H, but did come up with different questions based on some of the responses. I made sure to record the interviews using a video camera, so that I could look back on them for analysis.

The following week some more observations and interviews were completed. I observed another seventh grade Spanish class with about twenty students, twice during this week. The same procedure was followed as the previous week; I made observations in the classroom about the activities used by the teacher.

During the fourth week one more interview was conducted. The one and only interview was with a student in the Spanish seventh grade classroom. The student was reminded before the interview started that it was voluntary and that I would not use his name in any of my findings and results. This interview only lasted about fifteen minutes.

For the four weeks of data collection I was able to observe four different classes at least twice each, and interview three participants.

Results

Helping Teachers with Students with Disabilities in the Foreign Language Classroom: Observational Data

Conclusions from Observations in the Foreign Language Classroom

A total of eight observations in four different foreign language classes were conducted. During these observations the activities used by the teachers for the topics being learned were

observed. The activities were then sorted through and classified into groups. The groups consisted of whole class activities, small group, and individual. Both of the two classrooms used for the observations were set up in a similar way. The desks were set into rows where all students could easily see the smart board.

Examples of the activities used in the Spanish classroom were number matching on the smart board. For a whole group activity the students would see a numerical number and be expected to match it with the Spanish word for that number. There were different variations of this activity where the students were expected to match numbers with the Spanish words. An individual activity used was having the students get out the objects in the classroom that the teacher said in Spanish. She then repeated the objects in different orders having the students physically put the objects in the order that the teacher had said. An example of a small group activity that was observed in the Spanish classroom was a clock worksheet; the students were allowed to work in small groups to complete a worksheet where the students needed to write the time in Spanish next to the clocks on their paper.

In the German classroom the activities were different. For example a whole group activity was having the students get up out of their seats and sing a song in German with hand movements. For small group work the students had partner work, which is a dialogue that is in German that the students read to each other over and over so they got the feeling of the language and specific sayings. For individual work the students were to write out their school schedule in German, just like students in German speaking countries would do.

After sorting the data from the observations into these three groups it was then sorted by Gardner's Multiple Intelligences, linguistic, logical-math, musical, body-kinesthetic, spatial, interpersonal, and intrapersonal. The goal of this specific sorting was to see how often each

teacher used which methods in their classrooms. The next step was to break it down into three groups of visual, audio and kinesthetic learning.

In using Gardner's Multiple Intelligences categories, it is easily seen that both teachers use linguistic and spatial the most in the activities they use. In the Spanish classroom many of the assignments were based on spoken or written Spanish. For example, the teacher said an object in Spanish and the students were expected to hold up that object. Many of the spatial activities involved pictures of the objects or vocabulary words that the students were learning.

After analyzing the data from the observations, the results were very different from each teacher. The Spanish teacher used a lot more Linguistic, logical-math, and spatial activities and no musical or kinesthetic activities. See figure one below. On the other hand, the German teacher used quite a bit of musical, spatial, and kinesthetic activities. See figure 2 below.

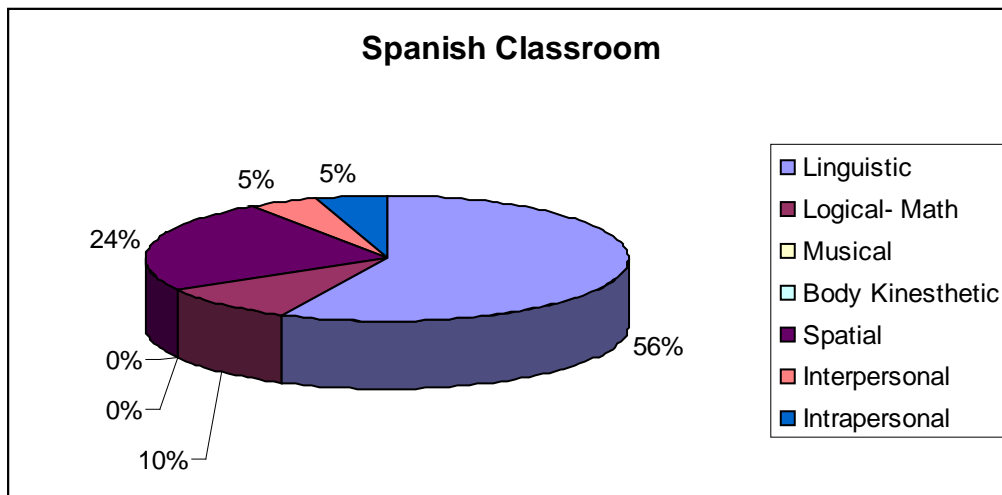


Figure 1

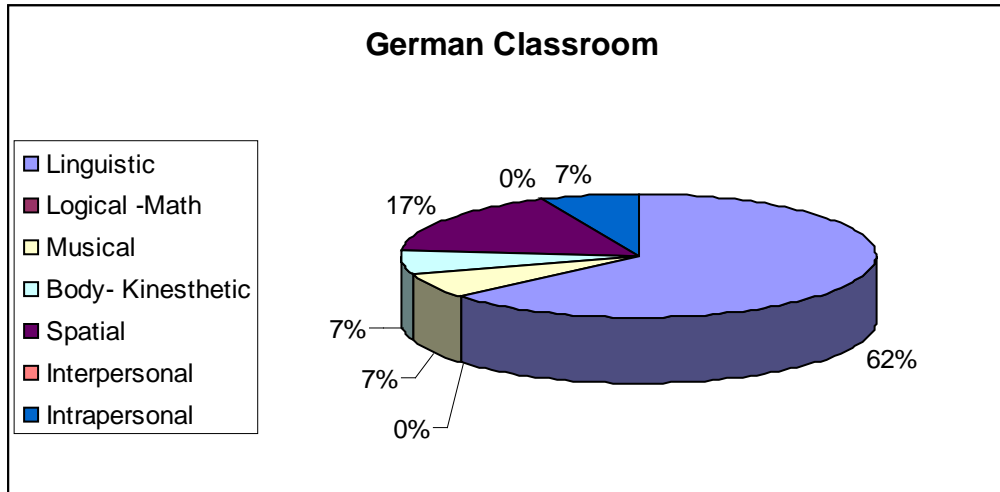


Figure 2

After the break down of the multiple intelligences was the further analysis of visual, audio, and kinesthetic. Here it was found that many of the activities used in the Spanish classroom were both audio and visual, such as when the teacher would say an object in Spanish and the students held up the object that was previously said. Whereas in the German classroom, all three were often used in the same activity, for example, the moving exercise, the teacher says the direction in German and shows the students with her body and then the students create that same movement with their own bodies. Here the teacher's methods differ, but they are both still having success in teaching all students a foreign language.

This data shows that both teachers have different activities that work for students in their classrooms. One thing that both the teachers do in common is that they both plan many short activities for the same class period. Each activity in both classrooms was between five and fifteen minutes; the activities kept changing and therefore giving the students a variety of ways to learn the new material. For example, the German teacher went over the new vocabulary by first showing a flashcard and stating the word in German and English out loud to the class. Then she had each student get a white board and marker. She then said one of those new vocabulary

words in German, with the flashcard showing and the students were expected to write the English meaning of that word. This gave the students a chance to see and hear the word, and then a chance to see, hear, and write the English equivalent of the word. Overall, the observations gave a great amount of data and analyzing it put the data into perspective for this study.

***Helping Teachers with Students with Disabilities in the Foreign Language Classroom:
Interview Data***

During both interviews there were some reoccurring themes. In both interviews the teachers kept repeating that more communication between the foreign language teacher and the special education teacher would help. It was also mentioned in both interviews that meeting in the beginning of the year to discuss special needs students and what will help them in the classroom would be beneficial.

The first interview was with a German teacher, and focused on her current classes that have students with disabilities. It also focused on what she believes will improve her teaching towards students with disabilities.

Here are some of the responses that were gathered from this interview. The only time she received help with students with disabilities in her classroom is when she sought out help through other professionals in the school. The German teacher stated, “That is the fault with this system, where it would be really helpful if at the beginning of the year we could sit down with their special education teacher or guidance or parents to discuss what are the issues with these students and how we could help them.” When the teachers do not know these students coming into the classroom, it is difficult to make lessons that the students will learn from, and therefore information on the student in advance would help start the school year off with the student learning instead of the teacher taking time to figure out how the student learns.

Activity	Learning the subjects in school
Movement and Verbal Cues	Proximity along with half German and half English directions.
Visuals	Picture with vocabulary words, and objects around the classroom,
Modifications	Extended time, spelling waved, copies of notes

Table 1: Strategies used in the classroom.

When asked about the activities used in the classroom that help students with disabilities the German teacher had many different tricks to help these students (see table 1). She said that she uses a lot of movement and verbal cues for the students. She also uses a lot of visual pictures, such as a picture with the vocabulary words. She also has a few modifications that students with disabilities in the classroom receive. She has students with time extended, spelling waved, and copies of notes, all of these modifications help her students with disabilities succeed in the foreign language classroom.

The second interview with a teacher was with a special education teacher who works with many of the students who are currently in a foreign language. She, however, does not really help the students with their foreign language assignments because she knows little of any foreign language. Her role in helping foreign language teachers with students with disabilities is to support teachers and give advice on activities that will help the students learn in these classrooms. Sometimes she gives encouragement and sometimes just gives techniques.

Her opinion on students with disabilities in the foreign language classrooms was very vague. "I'm not sure that every kid has to learn a foreign language. I wish I knew the importance

of it.” The reasons for the school to require all students to learn a foreign language is not clear to her as shown by this comment, “I don’t think that all things are right for all kids or wrong for all kids.” This quote explains that not everything for students should be forced on all students. Why should all students be required to take certain classes? In regards to why students with disabilities should be included in the foreign language classroom she said, “I think it’s a good opportunity, but if students are trying to meet other requirements, it doesn’t make it on to the priority list, it’s just one more thing that competes for their time and you know they are struggling anyway. I would rather see them get the core classes, frankly I would rather see them get reading and math and learn how to take care of themselves. But that’s not up to me.”

Theme	Comment
Core classes come first.	“I think it’s a good opportunity, but if students are trying to meet other requirements, it doesn’t make it on to the priority list, it’s just one more thing that competes for their time and you know they are struggling anyway. I would rather see them get the core classes, frankly I would rather see them get reading and math and learn how to take care of themselves. But that’s not up to me.”
Importance of learning a Second language.	“I’m not sure that every kid has to learn a foreign language. I wish I knew the importance of it.” “I don’t think that all things are right for all kids or wrong for all kids.”

Table 2: Reoccurring themes from special education teacher’s interview.

During this interview it was clear that the teacher is not in agreement with including all students in the foreign language classroom. She is not sure why all students should learn a foreign language and why the district is forcing them to take one.

Student Participation

When asked what activities he liked and learned from in the classroom he stated “Matching, games at my desk, whole class games, and also the smart board.” He also likes songs that he can remember the words to and going up to the board to answer questions. These seem like all students would like them and they do not really stand out as activities geared towards students with disabilities. He also pointed out that he thinks tests are hard and that he only studies sometimes. The student also dislikes homework which is normal as well.

Strategies	Student Comment
Songs	“I like songs because then I can remember the words better.”
Teacher Aide	A teaching aide is in the room to help this student stay focused and working.
Games with the Smart board	“I like to go up to the Smart board because it is fun and I like to play games.”

Table 3: Students views on strategies that can help.

Discussion

The purpose of this research was to find ways for teachers of a second language to include all students, even those with disabilities. Foreign language teachers often face difficulties when teaching inclusive classrooms. This is mainly due to the fact that foreign language teachers have no experience teaching students with disabilities, they also often do not have a teaching

aide in the classroom to help them with such students. Throughout my research I believe that there were many great findings such as the information from my interviews and observations.

My interview with teacher G, gave a great insight into what a teacher of a foreign language is thinking while having students with disabilities in the classroom. What modifications the student needs what activities would help the student out best and now she knows where to find the help but it is sometimes difficult to make that contact with so many other things going on in the beginning of the school year. I have learned through this interview that having a meeting with a special education teacher about the special needs students can help start the school year off with the right start. The idea is for the teacher to learn how their student's best obtain information and to create lesson plans that will be useful. By giving students with disabilities modifications such as extended time, copies of notes and waving spelling they can succeed in the classroom.

The observations gave a great insight into the activities that both the Spanish and German teachers use to help all students in their classroom learn. The teacher interview gave good information on how she plans her lessons to help students with disabilities and what she believes would be helpful for teachers to learn so that they can successfully teach students with disabilities in the foreign language classroom in the future. She usually plans her lessons with a lot of small activities that keep the students attention. She will also repeat the same information in many different ways such as in a song or through actions. The interview with the special education teacher gave some ideas of how they help foreign language teachers but also showed that she is not sure why all students need a second language. Then the student interview was not so helpful mostly because the student was shy and not every talkative. He mostly said that he

liked Spanish and the games that he got to play. All the information that was gathered does have meaning and is helpful in this study in some way or another.

Limitations

This research had some limitation. The main limitation was time, the study only took about a month and most of that month was taken up by trying to get permission and scheduling times to meet with teachers and make observations. The schedule of the teachers and my own schedule were not very flexible, therefore making the observations limited and only allowing me to get two interviews.

Another limitation was that I used convenient sampling. With convenient sampling I was only able to observe two teachers and not get a wider range of participants. I believe my research would have been more productive with a greater amount of participating teachers to observe and interview. The limitations of convenient sampling also lead me to my limitation of a small sample group. With a larger sample group I would have been able to collect more data and have a variety of interviews from teachers of foreign languages.

Terry Davis, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, made a very good point that all students should learn a foreign language and that the experience of new cultures is extremely important for everyone.

Language learning is a powerful tool for building tolerant, peaceful and inclusive multicultural societies. The experience of learning a new language helps to develop openness to other cultures and acceptance of different ways of life and beliefs. It raises awareness of linguistic and cultural diversity and promotes tolerance of people with a different lifestyle. (McColl, 2005, p. 104)

McColl (2005) study reminds us why all students should learn a foreign language and supports the idea of integrating the foreign language classroom. This idea concurs with my study as teachers shared the many activities they used in the classroom.

Banks (2008) focused on activities in the classroom to help all students to be successful including, “activities that strengthen the bodily-kinesthetic intelligence are: manipulatives; flashcards; dance; acting out an event (TPR); field trips; scavenger hunts; dialogues; and movement games like board races; vocabulary fly swatters; and Simon says” (p. 39).

Throughout this whole process there has been much information supporting the idea that with the right activities in the foreign language classroom, all students can learn no matter their ability. Many of the activities were observed during this study. Teacher G used many activities where the students were acting things out which relates to bodily-kinesthetic intelligence. Teacher S used a lot of games on the Smart board. The teachers observed used many different activities that relate to Banks’ (2008) research.

Interpretation of Results

The activities a teacher plans for each class are going to either help their students succeed or not. It seems that the best way for students to grasp the information needed is by planning out what activities will best focus on their learning styles. By including a lot of visual and auditory activities, the foreign language teachers in this study were allowing the students many chances to see and hear the new language they were trying to learn. In my opinion, by learning the ways students learn best will help teachers become successful at teaching all students.

Planning many short activities during the class period also helped the teachers in this study succeed in teaching all students in their classroom. All of the activities planned whether they were visual, auditory, logical-math, or any other activity were between five to fifteen minutes. I concluded that by using shorter activities the teachers were able to keep the students’ attention for a longer period of time. Many students cannot stay focused for a long period of

time, especially if they have a hyper activity disorder. It is completely plausible that the teachers keep the activities short so that the students can keep focused better.

Foreign language teachers need to understand their students and their student's needs. This research also shows that all students can be successful in the foreign language classroom, by using multiple activities that are targeted towards all the different learning styles in the classroom. Foreign language teachers who teach students with disabilities should be in close contact with special education teachers who can help with designing lessons to target students with disabilities different learning styles.

Recommendations

This study was conducted in a very short time span and should be improved by continuing it with more observations and interviews. I believe that in the future more information could be collected and analyzed to help teachers of foreign languages. It would have been helpful to have put more of a focus on the students with disabilities and what they believe helps them learn in the foreign language classroom. This research did not really get a chance to ask students with disabilities what they think about learning a foreign language and what they believe would help as far as learning activities. This research could be expanded in many ways, not only in the foreign language classroom, but also in other classrooms. Students with disabilities are being integrated in all classrooms and there should be a greater effort to help teachers change their teaching styles so that they can accommodate all students.

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Appendix A- Letter of Permission from Principals

Dear _____,

Hello, my name is Laura DeFalco. I am currently a graduate student at SUNY Oswego in the curriculum and instruction program. I have been asked to create an action research project which is a way for educators to find solutions to problems within their classrooms. My focus is on integrating the foreign language classroom. I want to find ways to help students with disabilities learn a foreign language. Also to help teachers with effective strategies for teaching towards all students, even those with disabilities.

Seeing as I do not have a classroom of my own, I would like permission to observe a rural school in Central New York's foreign language classrooms. I plan to obtain permission from parents/ students and of course the teachers involved in this research. I will reinforce that all students' names will be kept anonymous and that participation is completely voluntary. I have already completed a critical review and research proposal which I would gladly make copies of for you.

Also this project has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee at SUNY Oswego. If there are any further questions for the HSC of SUNY Oswego please feel free to contact Dr. Friedman at Barry.Friedman@oswego.edu. Along with the approval of the HSC this project will be closely followed by my faculty supervisor Faith Maina. If there happens to be any questions for my faculty supervisor please feel free to contact her at Maina@oswego.edu.

It would be a great pleasure to use your school district as a base for my research. Please let me know in writing if this could be possible.

Sincerely,

Laura DeFalco

Appendix B- Letter of Informed Consent from Teachers

Dear _____,

Hello, my name is Laura DeFalco. I am currently a graduate student at SUNY Oswego in the curriculum and instruction program. I have been asked to create an action research project. This is a way for educators to find solutions to problems within their classrooms. My focus is on integrating the foreign language classroom. I want to find ways to help students with disabilities learn a foreign language. Also to help teachers with effective strategies for teaching towards all students, even those with disabilities.

I currently do not have a classroom of my own and would like to use your knowledge in the classroom for my research. I hope to use your classroom for observations so that I can make connections between your classroom activities and the students learning. I also hope that I can have a short interview with you about the foreign language classroom and students with disabilities. I assure you that confidentiality will be maintained and that your names will not be used in any of my results. I would also like to inform you that this is completely voluntary and that you allowed withdrawing at anytime without penalty.

This project has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee at SUNY Oswego. If there are any further questions for the HSC of SUNY Oswego please feel free to contact Dr. Friedman at Barry.Friedman@oswego.edu. Along with the approval of the HSC this project will be closely followed by my faculty supervisor Faith Maina. If there happens to be any questions for my faculty supervisor please feel free to contact her at Maina@oswego.edu.

If you would allow me permission to observe and interview you please return a letter of written consent.

Sincerely,

Laura DeFalco

Appendix C- Letter of Introduction for Parents and Students

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

Hello, my name is Laura DeFalco. I am currently a graduate student at SUNY Oswego in the curriculum and instruction program. I have been asked to create an action research project. This is a way for educators to find solutions to problems within their classrooms. My focus is on integrating the foreign language classroom. I want to find ways to help students with disabilities learn a foreign language. Also to help teachers with effective strategies for teaching towards all students, even those with disabilities. Seeing as I do not have a classroom of my own, I would like permission to observe the middle school foreign language classrooms.

This letter is to inform you that, I would like to observe your students teachers over the next couple weeks to see how certain activities help students with special needs in the foreign language classroom.

I assure you that confidentiality will be maintained and that your student's names will not be used in any of my results. My main goal in the classroom is to observe the teachers and will not be focusing on the students. Your students will be informed that I am there to observe the teacher and they should go on with their normal activities. I do not plan on interrupting class time. I would also like to inform you that this is completely voluntary and once again that the students are not the focus of my observations.

This project has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee at SUNY Oswego. If there are any further questions for the HSC of SUNY Oswego please feel free to contact Dr. Friedman at Barry.Friedman@oswego.edu. Along with the approval of the HSC this project will be closely followed by my faculty supervisor Faith Maina. If there happens to be any questions for my faculty supervisor please feel free to contact her at Maina@oswego.edu.

Sincerely,

Laura DeFalco

Appendix D-Letter of Introduction for Students

Dear Students,

Hello, my name is Laura DeFalco. I am currently a graduate student at SUNY Oswego in the curriculum and instruction program. I have been asked to create an action research project. This is a way for educators to find solutions to problems within their classrooms. My focus is on integrating the foreign language classroom. I want to find ways to help students with disabilities learn a foreign language. Also to help teachers with effective strategies for teaching towards all students, even those with disabilities. Seeing as I do not have a classroom of my own, I would like permission to observe the middle school foreign language classes.

I would like to observe your teacher over the next couple weeks to see how certain activities help students with special needs in the foreign language classroom.

I assure you that confidentiality will be maintained and that your names will not be used in any of my results. My main goal in the classroom is to observe the teachers and will not be focusing on any of the students. You have been informed that I am there to observe the teacher and that you should go on with your normal activities. I do not plan on interrupting class time. I would also like to inform you that this is completely voluntary and once again that you as students are not the focus of my observations.

This project has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee at SUNY Oswego. If there are any further questions for the HSC of SUNY Oswego please feel free to contact Dr. Friedman at Barry.Friedman@oswego.edu. Along with the approval of the HSC this project will be closely followed by my faculty supervisor Faith Maina. If there happens to be any questions for my faculty supervisor please feel free to contact her at Maina@oswego.edu.

If you have any questions please feel free to ask me before or after your class period.

Sincerely,

Laura DeFalco

Appendix E- Letter of Informed Consent for Parents

Dear Parent/ Guardian,

Hello, my name is Laura DeFalco. I am currently a graduate student at SUNY Oswego in the curriculum and instruction program. I have been asked to create an action research project. This is a way for educators to find solutions to problems within their classrooms. My focus is on integrating the foreign language classroom. I want to find ways to help students with disabilities learn a foreign language. Also to help teachers with effective strategies for teaching towards all students, even those with disabilities. Seeing as I do not have a classroom of my own, I would like permission to observe the middle school foreign language classes.

I would like to interview your student to see how certain activities help students with special needs in the foreign language classroom. I would like your permission to use your child's opinions/ work in my study.

I assure you that confidentiality will be maintained and that your student's names will not be used in any of my results or even asked on any interview. I would also like to inform you that this is completely voluntary and that students are allowed to withdraw at anytime without penalty.

This project has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee at SUNY Oswego. If there are any further questions for the HSC of SUNY Oswego please feel free to contact Dr. Friedman at Barry.Friedman@oswego.edu. Along with the approval of the HSC this project will be closely followed by my faculty supervisor Faith Maina. If there happens to be any questions for my faculty supervisor please feel free to contact her at Maina@oswego.edu.

If you would allow me permission to interview your children please fill out and return this form.

Sincerely,

Laura DeFalco

I give permission for _____ to be interviewed for the action research project. I understand that my child's name will not be used in any way in the research project and that this is completely voluntary. I understand that Laura DeFalco will be conducting the research and that I as a parent may ask to see her research proposal at any time during this action research project.

Parent/ Guardian

Date

Appendix F- Letter of Informed Consent for Students

Dear Students,

Hello, my name is Laura DeFalco. I am currently a graduate student at SUNY Oswego in the curriculum and instruction program. I have been asked to create an action research project. This is a way for educators to find solutions to problems within their classrooms. My focus is on integrating the foreign language classroom. I want to find ways to help students with disabilities learn a foreign language. Also to help teachers with effective strategies for teaching towards all students, even those with disabilities. Seeing as I do not have a classroom of my own, I would like permission to observe the middle school foreign language classes.

I would like to interview you to see how certain activities help students with special needs in the foreign language classroom. I would like your permission to use your opinions/ work in my study.

I assure you that confidentiality will be maintained and that your names will not be used in any of my results or even asked on any of my interviews. I would also like to inform you that this is completely voluntary and that you allowed withdrawing at anytime without penalty.

This project has been approved by the Human Subjects Committee at SUNY Oswego. If there are any further questions for the HSC of SUNY Oswego please feel free to contact Dr. Friedman at Barry.Friedman@oswego.edu. Along with the approval of the HSC this project will be closely followed by my faculty supervisor Faith Maina. If there happens to be any questions for my faculty supervisor please feel free to contact her at Maina@oswego.edu.

If you would allow me permission to interview you please fill out and return this form.

Sincerely,

Laura DeFalco

I give permission for _____ to be interviewed for the action research project. I understand that my name will not be used in any way in the research project and that this is completely voluntary. I understand that Laura DeFalco will be conducting the research and that I as a student may ask to see her research proposal at any time during this action research project.

Student

Date

Appendix G- Foreign Language Teacher Interview Questions

1. How long have you been teaching a foreign language and which language do you teach?
2. Have you received any assistance from other professionals in the special education area?
3. How do you feel about having a teaching aide in the foreign language classroom?
4. What kind of modifications do you have for your students with disabilities in your classroom?
5. What activities have you found that help students with disabilities?
6. Over the recent years what have you learned about teaching students with special needs?

Appendix H- Special Education Teacher Interview Questions

1. What are your thoughts on students with disabilities in the foreign language classroom?
2. What is your role in helping students with disabilities in the foreign language classroom?
3. Have you found any tricks or activities that really help students with disabilities in learning a foreign language?

Appendix I- Student Interview Questions

1. What foreign language are you currently taking and for how long have you been taking this foreign language?
2. What are your thoughts about your foreign language class?
3. What are your favorite activities and why?
4. What do you find to be challenging or difficult?
5. Do you feel that you will continue with a foreign language in the upcoming school years or do you plan to take other subjects?