

Turning Frustration into Success for English Language Learners

by **Susana Lafradez** on January 05, 2010 10:12:55 PM



This article addresses the topic of English language learners with language-learning disabilities. These students are faced with the additional challenge of having an underlying language learning system that is inadequate for learning any language. It is noted that student progress is greater when a speech language pathologist and classroom teacher collaborate to coordinate regular classroom learning with small group learning. Progress is also greater when strategies are consistently employed in the classroom on a daily basis as opposed to once or twice a week in a pull-out program.

The authors offers a number of strategies to help classroom teachers enhance the success of ESL students with language learning disabilities. Teachers should check for understanding of expectations, instructions and relevant vocabulary before students begin a task. Students with similar backgrounds can be seated near each other so they can help each other with instructions and understanding. Advance organizers should be utilized to help students know what is going to occur, repeating as necessary. Teachers should employ good questioning techniques by asking a question, allowing ample wait time and then calling on someone. This should cause students to pay attention; and it will also give them a chance to develop an answer before being called on. Teachers should check for understanding of content with questions that are higher than knowledge level. They should speak slowly; avoid using slang and idiomatic speech; use multi-sensory instruction, hands-on activities and frequent modeling; relate information, as much as possible, to students' prior knowledge; and scaffold instruction.