

Can Modified Reciprocal Teaching Strategies Improve Kindergarten English Language Learners' Comprehension and Enjoyment of Read Aloud Books?



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Keywords

Modified reciprocal teaching, kindergarten English Language Learners, reading comprehension strategies, reading enjoyment, read aloud books

Abstract

After three kindergarten English Language Learners stated that listening to stories was “boring,” the researcher investigated whether modified reciprocal teaching strategies could help the students better understand and enjoy listening to read aloud books. Reciprocal teaching consists of instructing students in four reading comprehension strategies: summarizing, questioning, predicting and clarifying. Although reciprocal teaching has been modified for several different groups, including the mainstream kindergarten classroom, the researcher performed a case study based on anecdotes and classroom observation and discovered that the modified reciprocal teaching strategies needed further adaptation to be effective with beginning English Language Learners.

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Significance

I am a fourth-year educator, currently teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) to students in grades K-5. Previously, I taught high school English and middle school ESL, so teaching younger students is a new experience for me this year. I chose English education as my undergraduate major because I enjoy reading, and I wanted to share my enthusiasm for books with my students. Some of my best childhood memories involve attending story hour at the library or sitting in my grandmother's lap reading stories.

In my earlier teaching experiences, I have worked with many students who claim they don't enjoy reading. I have always attributed this to the fact that teenagers believed there were more interesting ways for them to spend their time, that the required reading materials were not engaging to them, or that they didn't want to appear "uncool" to their peers by admitting to enjoying books. Even though I was accustomed to hearing students state that they dislike reading, I was still shocked when I first met a group of kindergarten beginning English Language Learners (ELLs) who claimed that they didn't enjoy listening to stories. When I asked them to explain why, they all agreed that the stories were "boring." When I pressed for more information, they were unable to tell me why they felt that way. I was unsure whether they were "bored" because they didn't understand the books, wanted to be doing something more active, or were simply repeating a phrase they had learned from their peers or television. I especially wondered if they had simply not had very much experience listening to books that they enjoyed. No matter what the reason, I felt compelled to at least try to determine if finding the right books and helping them understand the stories might motivate them to want to hear more.

My initial research into reading instruction theory led me to several studies that mentioned the importance of reading aloud to children. According to Armbruster, Lehr, and Osborn (2003), "reading aloud to children has been called the single most important activity for building the knowledge required for success in reading" (p. 8). Further, Mooney (1990) states that reading to students helps to develop the listener's interest in books and desire to be a reader. As my job as

an ESL teacher is to help students develop their reading skills, I hoped that reading to my students might serve several purposes: to help them increase their reading comprehension skills, to help them realize that stories are enjoyable, and to motivate them to want to learn to read the stories independently.

Delving further into the study of teaching reading comprehension skills to young pre-readers, I discovered an article by Myers (2005) entitled “The Princess Storyteller, Clara Clarifier, Quincy Questioner, and the Wizard: Reciprocal Teaching Adapted for Kindergarten Students.” I learned that reciprocal teaching involves instructing small groups of students to analyze texts by explicitly teaching them specific reading comprehension strategies. Since she was working with pre-readers, Myers modified the original concept of reciprocal teaching by selecting stories that she read to the students, rather than texts that the students read independently. This study was very interesting to me, and I became curious to find out whether the same intervention strategy could also be modified to work with my students. To answer my questions, I decided to investigate the following: to what extent and in what ways could I use the reciprocal teaching method to support the reading comprehension and enjoyment of my kindergarten ELL students?

Review of the Literature

Strategy Instruction

Much has been written about what good readers naturally do to comprehend what they are reading. Armbruster, Lehr and Osborn (2003) state that good readers are purposeful and actively monitor their comprehension, so they know whether or not they understand what they are reading. They intuitively ask and answer questions, recognize story structure, and summarize as they go.

However, developing good reading skills does not come naturally to every student, and struggling readers need to be instructed in these types of strategies (Pressley & Harris, 1990). To be effective, strategy instruction must be directly taught, with the teacher guiding or modeling the techniques while students practice until they can perform them independently (Armbruster et al., 2003; Sporer, Brunstein & Kieschke, 2009). Instruction should continue until the students learn the strategies, which can take several weeks or months (Pressley & Harris, 1990).

Reciprocal Teaching

According to Palincsar and Klenk (1992), most teachers spend more time teaching poor readers decoding skills, or how to sound out words, instead of comprehension skills, leading students to believe that reading is simply, “saying the words right and fast” (p.212). Pilonieta and Medina (2009) note that studies suggest that less than 1% of classroom time is dedicated to reading

comprehension, and then the focus is usually more on *assessing* students' comprehension, such as by asking text-based questions, rather than on *instructing* students in comprehension strategies.

In response to the lack of classroom reading comprehension instruction, Palincsar and Brown developed reciprocal teaching in 1984 to help seventh and eighth grade students with poor reading comprehension skills. The goal was to teach these students to do what good readers do automatically, i.e., constantly monitor whether or not they comprehended the material and use specific reading strategies to clarify confusing text (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). According to these authors, the reciprocal teaching method involves instructing students in four reading comprehension strategies: summarizing, questioning, clarifying, and predicting, as described below.

Reciprocal Teaching Strategies

<p>Summarizing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retelling important events in a story in sequence using details
<p>Questioning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking text-based questions requiring "yes or no" or short answers • Shows teacher whether students are listening to the story
<p>Clarifying</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying confusing words or sentences and seeking meaning • Asking more complex questions to determine whether the listener understands the meaning of the story. • Answers may require more analytical reasoning and are not always found in the story
<p>Predicting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using prior knowledge and text clues (i.e., title and illustrations) to guess what will happen in the story

Table 1

The teacher provides "scaffolded instruction," by actively teaching and participating in the lessons at first and then gradually providing less and less support as students become able to use the strategies independently in small group dialogues designed to help them increase their understanding of increasingly more complex literary texts. The components of reciprocal teaching are summarized in Table 2.

Reciprocal Teaching Elements

<p>Teacher Provides Direct Strategy Instruction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces and defines the four strategies (summarizing, predicting, questioning and clarifying)
<p>Students Become Actively Involved</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teacher selects "reader-friendly" texts • Teacher leads students through interactive dialogue, providing specific wording to model • Students participate at their own levels, with teacher guidance and feedback
<p>Teacher Gradually Relinquishes Control to Students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students assume the role of teacher by taking turns leading their peers through the same types of dialogues in small collaborative reading groups discussing more complex texts that they have read independently • Teacher provides support on an as-needed basis only • Students eventually begin to internalize the strategies, so that they can use them independently in their own academic reading

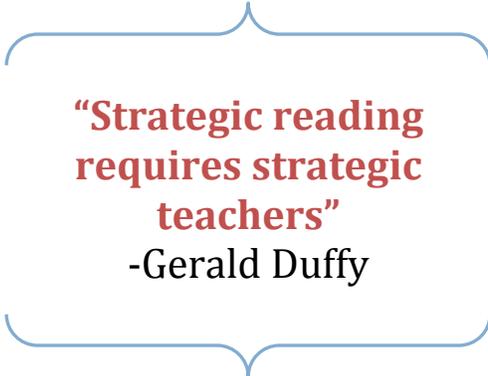
Table 2

In a pilot study of 37 seventh grade level students who were introduced to and used reciprocal teaching for 15 days of intervention, reading comprehension scores on daily assessments increased from an average of 40% to an average of 80% (Palincsar & Brown, 1984). In addition, the authors also noted that the students' teachers commented on the students' improved "thinking" skills. Specifically, teachers reported that students were better able to find important information and organize their ideas about the texts.

Studies of Reciprocal Teaching

Since the initial pilot study by Palincsar and Brown, many other studies have shown positive correlations, although not necessarily causal relationships, between reciprocal teaching and reading comprehension assessment scores. Hacker and Tenent (2002) note that various studies of reciprocal teaching in groups ranging from age seven through adulthood all showed increased reading comprehension scores. Brown (1988) also notes that students are motivated by social interaction through problem solving, such as trying to understand a common story, and she states, "reciprocal teaching seems to enhance student engagement and motivation" (p. 317).

However, Hacker and Tenent (2002) also note that “reported difficulties with implementation and practice are not uncommon” (p. 699). In their study, not all students actively participated in the small group interactions, and some small groups centered on personal conversations, instead of literary discussions. In addition, many teachers “found it necessary to maintain highly scaffolded instruction” (Hacker & Tenent, 2002, p. 702). Teachers also noted difficulties assessing whether students were internalizing the strategies or only repeating classmates’ responses.



**“Strategic reading
requires strategic
teachers”
-Gerald Duffy**

According to Duffy (1993), reciprocal teaching is effective, but only when teachers modify the lessons to meet the needs of their individual students. “What students are aware of all too often is isolated strategies learned for their own sake rather than how to use integrated sets of strategies within an overall global plan for being strategic” (Duffy, 1993, p. 243). In other words, reciprocal teaching lacks the component of teaching students how, why, and when to use these strategies independently outside of the reading groups. Duffy elaborates by stating that “strategic reading requires strategic teachers,” who are able to combine the components of reciprocal teaching along with their own judgment to help students develop a comprehensive skill set, instead of seeing reciprocal teaching as a “prescription to follow” (p. 245).

Rosenshine and Meister (1994) reviewed 16 studies of reciprocal teaching and criticized the lack of formal written guidelines for implementing the program. They state that although follow-up studies by Palincsar and associates reported positive results by other teachers using reciprocal teaching, there were few sample dialogues and no checklists given to help ensure teachers were actually using the same specific reciprocal teaching strategies in the classroom. Furthermore, Rosenshine and Meister (1994) claim that since teacher-student dialogue is such an important component of reciprocal teaching, there needs to be some way to assess whether teachers are effectively providing high quality instruction before determining whether the intervention is effective.

Adapting the Strategies for Young English Language Learners

For ESL teachers, assessing students’ reading comprehension deficits can be difficult, because “those needing the most help with reading instruction... may not be able to articulate clearly, accurately, or reliably what is going on inside their head due to lack of verbal ability or lack of awareness” (Casanave, 1988, p. 317). Teaching comprehension strategies thus creates a way for students and teachers to discuss reading difficulties and tools for correcting them. Even though kindergarten may seem an early time to start working on reading comprehension strategies,

“research shows that English learners can benefit from English literacy instruction well before they have developed full control of the language orally” (Peregoy & Boyle, 2005, p. 62).

According to Van Kleeck (2008), achievement gaps in oral language skills are firmly established even before children start school, and “children who start behind tend to stay behind.” Van Kleeck (2008) states that using “school talk” (p. 631) by asking students literal questions to show what they know about the story helps even preschool students build knowledge and develop higher thinking skills, such as inferring, evaluating, and comparing and contrasting, which foster reading comprehension.

Most reciprocal teaching studies do not specifically address the ELL population. However, Padron (1992) noted that bilingual third, fourth, and fifth grade students who participated in reciprocal teaching groups performed better at generating questions and summarizing than those who simply had additional reading instruction. She further states that “approaches such as...reciprocal teaching which provide scaffolding may be important strategies that should be considered for second language students” (p. 46).

The reciprocal teaching techniques have already been modified for several specific populations, including primary grade students. Coley et al. (1993) and Pilonieta (2009) both used modified reciprocal teaching for first graders, and Gregory and Cahill (2010) and Myers (2009) used the method in kindergarten classrooms. Besides the obvious modification of using read aloud stories rather than independently-read texts, another change included spending much more time explicitly instructing students in the techniques. Palincsar and Brown initially spent five days introducing middle school students to the reciprocal teaching strategies and 25 days total instructing students in how to use them (Hacker & Tenent, 2002). Primary grade teachers required much more time to model and facilitate the techniques before students were able to work independently. Pilonieta and Medina (2009) spent 24 weeks teaching the strategies to their first grade classes, and Coley et al. (1993) noted that it took an entire year for a first grade class to become independent in using the strategies. Some teachers changed the strategy names or definitions to make them more relevant to younger children (Myers, 2009). In addition, several teachers used interactive materials, such as hand signals (Gregory and Cahill, 2010), cue cards with pictures (Pilonieta and Medina, 2009), and puppets (Myers, 2009).

Results of reciprocal teaching with younger students have varied. Gregory and Cahill (2010) noted that not all of the kindergarten students in their study were able to master all of the skills,

“Research shows that English learners can benefit from English literacy instruction well before they have developed full control of the language orally”

-Suzanne Peregoy & Owen Boyle

but all students were able to show evidence of engaging with the text to construct meaning. Pilonieta and Medina (2009) also noted that the students achieved the intangible results of looking forward to participating in using the strategies together and enjoying hearing the stories read aloud. Myers (2009) noted that her students felt empowered to learn that it is appropriate to ask questions when trying to understand what they read or hear.

In summary, much has been written about the effects of explicit reading comprehension strategy instruction since reciprocal teaching was developed in 1984. In addition to the critical research, several studies have been also been conducted which adapt or modify the techniques for different populations. Researchers have used the strategies with children as young as kindergarteners and with bilingual students, but I could not find a specific study mentioning the use of reciprocal teaching solely with non-reading ELLs. Therefore, I decided to attempt to modify reciprocal teaching even further to discover its effects in my classroom.

Methodology

Subjects

For my investigation, I chose three kindergarten ELL students, whom I work with daily for 30 minutes for small-group, pull-out ESL instruction at an elementary school in Westerville, Ohio. Westerville is a suburb of Columbus, and the district's school enrollment is diverse. Of the 14,294 students enrolled in the 2008-2009 school year, 7.8% were identified as Limited English Proficient (Westerville City Schools, n.d.).

For privacy, I will call the students Abdul, Cecilia and Jose. Abdul's parents are natives of Ethiopia, although he was born in the United States. His first language is Amharic, and he attended private preschool for one year. Cecilia's first language is Vietnamese, and she was also born in the United States. Jose's parents are natives of Mexico, and his first language is Spanish. Neither Cecilia nor Jose attended preschool prior to entering kindergarten. All three students scored at the Emergent level for reading, writing, listening and speaking on the pre-kindergarten ESL screening assessments recognized by the Ohio Department of Education and used by my district (Ohio Department of Education, n.d.).

Planning the Lessons

Since the reciprocal teaching intervention does not provide specific protocols for implementing the program in the classroom, I decided to use Myers' (2005) modified reciprocal teaching research study as a model. I planned a series of reciprocal teaching lessons using read-alouds and puppets for 10 to 15 minutes per day, three times per week for 12 weeks. My plan was to use a new story each week, and because Myers chose familiar fairy tales, such as *The Three Little Pigs* with her students, I also decided to use popular fairy tales.

Since Myers (2005) also noted the importance of teaching the individual strategies before using them in an actual reciprocal teaching lesson, I planned to spend one week instructing students in each of the four strategies (summarizing, questioning, predicting and clarifying). I wanted to model the strategies by stopping at strategic points and having the puppets model thinking aloud as I read the story. Then I planned to use the remaining eight weeks to have the students use the puppets themselves to integrate all of the strategies together in the reciprocal teaching model.

I decided that data would include student interviews, anecdotes, and my daily classroom journal and that I would evaluate the qualitative data by analyzing common themes.

Findings

Grabbing Their Attention

My research began on a frustrating note. I sent permission slips home with the students, explaining that I needed to have them signed and returned so that they could participate. After one week, I had received only one signed form, so I sent home duplicate copies. As I was challenged by a language barrier, I contemplated how I was going to be able to start my research in a timely manner. In a moment of desperation, I pulled the puppets out of the closet and modeled what we would be doing during our reading time. Suddenly Jose remembered that his permission slip was actually in his backpack, and Abdul brought his the next day. I was pleased that the puppets were already motivating the students.

Initial Attitudes

Prior to starting the sessions, I administered an informal pre-intervention survey, asking the students individually whether they liked to hear stories. Cecilia and Jose first said no, but when I asked if they had any favorite stories, they stated that they did. Abdul said he only listened because "I have to." To assess their knowledge of the ideas behind the strategies, I also asked what they usually did when they didn't understand something they heard in stories. Cecilia said,

“I don’t know.” Jose responded, “go on the computer” (when I asked him to explain, he said he didn’t know). Abdul stated that he would “ask her” (the teacher).

Further Modifications

Although Myers had already adapted reciprocal teaching for kindergarten students, I soon discovered that I needed to further modify the methods for use with my group of ELLs. The students do not have the same kindergarten teachers and had not listened to the same stories at school. For the first session of reciprocal teaching, I chose what I believed to be a fairly simple, repetitive book to use to introduce the summarizing strategy (see Table 1): *Rebus Bears* by Seymour Reit (1997), based on *Goldilocks*. However, when I asked the students prior to reading the book if they had ever heard of the story of *Goldilocks*, Abdul stated that he had but could not recall any characters or events. The other two students did not recognize the story at all. The book was listed as appropriate for ages 4-8 and contained 32 pages, which proved to be too long to hold the students’ attention. In the middle of the first reading, Jose asked, “We’re done now?” and Abdul said, “Yeah, this is boring.” After listening to the rest of the story on the first day, none of the students were able to tell me anything that had happened in the plot. After the third day, the students were able to recall a few facts from the book, such as “the girl broke the chair,” but only Cecilia was able to put three pictures of events from the story in the correct order.

I continued to teach the summarizing strategy with a second fairy tale and experienced similar results. I chose *The Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza* (1999), based on the story *The Little Red Hen*, which was also 32 pages long and listed as appropriate for ages 4-8. Again, the students were not familiar with the original story. Although they were more engaged and laughed at certain parts of the story, the students still struggled to recall events and could not put three events in correct sequential order, even after spending five total sessions over a two-week time span re-reading the same story.

I also initially spent a large part of the allotted time working on the classroom rules and managing behavior for our read-alouds. The students initially had difficulty staying seated, keeping their hands to themselves, and taking turns answering questions. When they did participate, they often responded with comments unrelated to the stories, such as asking whether I had any candy or whether it was almost time to return to their classrooms.

In the meantime, I found that the students really enjoyed the puppets, but they were too distracted by them to focus on the stories. The boys enjoyed trying to hit them and fight over them, and Cecilia wanted to kiss them. After three days of unsuccessfully trying to re-focus the students’ attention on the stories I was reading, I returned the puppets to the closet.

I had already deviated from my initial plans by spending three weeks on the summarizing strategy, and students were still unable to recall events from the story or put them in sequential order with picture cues. Frustrated, I spoke to an experienced mentor teacher. Although a standard of beginning ESL students is to “recall and sequence information from fictional texts, with support” (Ohio Department of Education, 2007), my mentor explained that summarizing is a very difficult skill for young students to master. She stated that I could probably easily spend the entire 12 weeks and longer helping students learn to use that strategy alone. Therefore, I decided that rather than continuing with summarizing, I would move along and spend the next week working on predicting (see Table 1), a strategy that she felt would be easier for the students to perform.

I also decided to modify my book selections. On the advice of a fellow teacher, I searched for basic picture books that would be shorter and more engaging for my students. I found that *Here Comes the Big Mean Dust Bunny* (2009) and *Rhyming Dust Bunnies* (2009), both by Jan Thomas, were more appropriate for my group, especially since we had also been working with rhyming words in our phonics sessions. Although these books each have 40 pages, the words on each page are much fewer and the pictures and plots much more vivid and interactive. The reading level for each is listed as “baby to preschool.”

Thinking Sticks

Although I had dismissed the puppets, I still wanted the students to be an active part of the lessons as they continued to learn the reading strategies. One of the problems with the puppets was that they were all different, and each child wanted to use the same puppet. To solve this problem, I decided to make each student identical props to use as “thinking sticks.” I downloaded clipart symbols to stand for each strategy: a question mark to symbolize both questioning and clarifying, a boy reading a book for summarizing, and a wizard symbol for predicting. I laminated and glued the pictures to wooden craft sticks so that each child could have one of each. This also solved the problem of having students talk out of turn, because they were happy to raise their thinking sticks when they wanted to take a turn responding.

After I implemented the thinking sticks, modified the reading material, and changed the order of the strategies, the lessons began to go more smoothly. I used *Here Comes the*



Big, Mean Dust Bunny to introduce the predicting strategy (see Table 1). This book was much easier for the students to understand, and after the first reading, they remembered the events in the story and made predictions based on what they already knew was coming next. The book was also more interesting to the students. Jose even stopped me in the hall before class to ask if we were going to read it again. Cecilia began to memorize and anticipate the words on future readings and “read” along with me when she could. Cecilia was also the most likely to volunteer to share her predictions, and the two boys would often repeat what she said.

Since the children started to show that they could make predictions about the picture books very well by the third readings, I decided to combine the questioning strategy (see Table 1) with the “reciprocal” aspect in week seven by allowing students to take turns acting as the “teacher” and asking their peers to make predictions and answer questions as I read the story. This posed a new problem, because the students were not used to asking basic questions of each other. To practice, I asked them simple questions, such as, “What did you have for lunch?” After they gave their answers, I then asked them to ask me what *I* had for lunch. At first, they instead told me again what *they* had had for lunch. We began practicing this skill while traveling to and from the ESL classroom every day (a long walk up a flight of stairs and down two hallways). Students would hold up their thinking sticks, say “I have a question” and ask each other “What is your favorite show?” or “Do you like Batman?” I also used asking questions as an exit ticket (“Before we go back to your classroom, ask Jose what his favorite color is, and tell me what he says.”) It took a few days, but the students were able to use the questioning strategy enough so that we could use it during the “reciprocal” activities. Asking questions about the story still proved difficult for them. Often their “questions” would actually be statements, such as “I see the dog’s paw prints in that picture!” Therefore, when we stopped at strategic points, I would whisper a question to “the teacher” for him or her to repeat for the other two. After choosing someone who had raised a thinking stick to respond and listening to the answer, “the teacher” would determine whether the answer was correct.

The concept of clarifying (see Table 1) actually came about naturally during week 11 through a question about a particular story. When I asked, “Do you think the children were scared?” Jose answered, “I would be scared!” This was the first spontaneous text-to-self connection that I had heard in our sessions. To introduce the students to the concept of clarifying, I asked them to clarify the concept of “fear” by asking “Can you think of a time when you have been afraid of something? What happened? Do you think the children in the story feel the same way?” Due to the complex nature of these questions, I did not ask the students to ask clarifying questions of their peers. We had two weeks to practice the clarifying strategy before the 12-week intervention ended, and I did not have time to revisit the summarizing strategy with the students.

Conclusion

Summary of Student Reactions

During the first few sessions using the reciprocal teaching strategies, the students' comments showed that they were making few connections to the texts. Jose even resorted to "potty talk" when I asked him what the first story was about, responding, "poopy." When I asked them simple text-based questions, such as, "Where did the girl sit when she went into the Bear Family's house," all three students often automatically answered, "I don't know."

However, by the end of the sessions, all three students regularly used the thinking sticks to raise their hands and answer questions asking them to predict, question, and clarify. They seemed to grow more confident in their abilities to perform the skills, using phrases such as, "I know!" and "I think...".

In addition, all three students definitely exhibited more enthusiasm toward coming to the ESL classroom. I noticed that Jose, the student who normally participates the least in the small group, became the most animated when it was his turn to act as the teacher. None of the students was able to generate questions independently when acting as teacher without my "feeding them" the words to ask, but all three said that they enjoyed the role and made sure that I went in order, so that each child had equal turns. I informally asked the students individually whether they had ever "played school or teacher" at home prior to the lessons, and all said no. However, after beginning the intervention, Cecilia asked "Where did you get that book? I want to take it home to read to (her baby brother)." Perhaps the biggest change was that I did not hear the words "bored" or "boring" after week three of the intervention.

On the post-intervention interviews, all three students said that they did enjoy hearing stories. When asked about the best story they had ever heard, Abdul even mentioned a book that he originally called "boring:" *The Little Red Hen Makes a Pizza* (Sturges, 1999). I was not surprised that the students could not verbalize how to incorporate any of the specific reading strategies. When I asked this time what they could do when they don't understand something in a story, Cecilia and Jose still answered, "I don't know," and Abdul now said, "Sound it out."

Summary of Teacher Reactions and Recommendations

Although I read many research studies involving the modification of reciprocal teaching for younger students, I found that few mentioned the inclusion of LEP (Limited English Proficient) students in the study populations, and I could find no study that solely focused on the effects of reciprocal teaching on LEP students. As a new elementary ESL teacher, I truly wasn't sure what to expect by using the reciprocal teaching method with my kindergarten ESL students. I was excited by the successes of Myers' study (2005) and hoped that I could replicate them in the ESL classroom. However, I soon learned that even the modified strategies used by Myers needed further adaptation for my students, as shown below.

Further Reciprocal Teaching Modifications for Beginning ELL Students

Modified Reciprocal Teaching for the Kindergarten Classroom	Further Modifications for Beginning ELLs
Select familiar stories (such as popular fairy tales) and read orally	Realize that students probably have not been exposed to common stories and select more basic materials (picture books)
Allot sufficient direct instructional time initially to ensure students understand the strategies	Allot even more time to introduce, practice, and review the strategies. Allow time to address behavioral expectations (respectful listening, taking turns speaking, etc...)
Use puppets as props to help students understand the four strategies	Develop alternative, less distracting materials that encourage student participation and turn-taking
Provide students with dialogue to mimic as needed before students are able to use the strategies independently	Provide ongoing active teacher participation, acting more as a "peer model," by pretending not to know the answers and "thinking aloud," since students require much more instruction and practice using the strategies

Table 3

Overall, I learned that one of the best components of reciprocal teaching for my population is its flexibility. When I determined that the original books I had chosen were not a good fit for my classroom, I was able to easily use the same strategies with simpler books to mesh with my students' ability levels. When summarizing proved too difficult at first, I was able to change the order of instruction to less complex strategies. I also learned that even though my students were not necessarily able to articulate how to use the strategies, they were still learning how to talk about stories. They enjoyed the books and looked forward to coming to class to see what the

new “book of the week” would be, which I hope will lead to their continuing to enjoy listening to stories and wanting to begin to master learning to read on their own as they continue to progress through the ESL program.

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