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Tech-Talk: Using Technology to Teach Bilingual Students

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Research Question
How can technology be used to teach language arts skills in a bilingual setting?

Literature Review
SMARTboard: Hur and Suh (2012) noted that students’ second-language vocabulary acquisition improved significantly after using SMARTboard.

iPad: Kucirkova, Messer, Shechy, and Panadero (2013) found that the use of iPad applications encouraged student collaborative skill building and increased engagement with language arts content.

Internet: Yunus, Nordin, Selehi, Embi, and Salehi (2013) discussed how the Internet provided students with practical applications of the target language, such as online newspapers.

Methodology
Bilingual kindergarten classroom
Technology center utilizing SMARTboard, iPad, and Internet.
Skills: setting, visualization, sequence of events, and phonemic awareness
Qualitative analysis of field notes, student assessments, and questionnaires.

SMARTboard Interactivity
- Analysis of assessments and field notes showed that SMARTboard use encouraged student interactivity, presented opportunities for group discussion, and increased students’ self-confidence in expressing original ideas.
- All students indicated in questionnaires that they would prefer to use SMARTboard in place of traditional classroom materials.

Figure 1: Student uses SMARTboard to sort animals in appropriate settings.

iPad Storytelling
- Analysis of assessments and field notes showed that the iPad encouraged hands-on application of learned content, addressed multiple learning styles, and presented opportunities for student engagement.
- 3 out of 4 students used the iPad activity to successfully recall the storybook’s sequence of events.

Figure 2: Student illustrates sequence of events from iPad storybook.

Internet Collaboration
- Internet provided students with examples of words beginning with learned letters (ex. Beluga for B).
- 3/4 students indicated a desire to use the computer for future phonemic awareness lessons.

Internet Collaboration
- Internet use provided situational examples of the second language, encouraged collaboration among peers, and invited students to apply own knowledge of learned content.

Conclusion
- The technology increased students’ interaction with new content and aided in comprehension of target skills.
- I wish to further investigate how prior exposure to technology impacts students’ perspectives of its instructional use.
- Teachers can effectively use technology to meet the learning needs of bilingual students.